

Article

The Genesis of William James's Psychology of Religion: From 'The Principles of Psychology' to 'The Varieties of Religious Experience'

John R. Snarey ^{1,2,*} , Eunil David Cho ³  and Shelby L. Hall ^{2,3}¹ Graduate Department of Psychology and Graduate Division of Religion, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322, USA² Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322, USA; halls@bu.edu³ School of Theology, Boston University, Boston, MA 02215, USA; eunilcho@bu.edu

* Correspondence: jsnarey@emory.edu

Abstract

William James's two psychological classics—*The Principles of Psychology* (1890) and *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902)—are widely read but rarely connected. How are James's psychological theories in *The Principles* applied in *The Varieties*? Most scholars say they are not. Our thesis is that, throughout *The Varieties*, James uses *The Principles* as the foundation for his psychology of religion. His chapters in *The Principles* on the brain, habit, the stream of consciousness, the subconscious, the self, attention, association, and emotions all contain passages that anticipate the main themes of *The Varieties*. These include the psychological roots of a sense of unseen reality, conversion experiences, mystical experiences, saintliness as a character type, and other religious topics. This article highlights ten conceptual connections between the two classic texts. We show that James's original and core psychological principles guided his approach to studying personal religious experience in *The Varieties*. In addition, some of James's psychological principles were broadened and enriched through their interaction with religious data. By placing the two texts in conversation, a more precise and deeper understanding of James's psychology of religion emerges.

Keywords: association; attention; character; conversion experience; emotion; habits; mystical experience; neural pathways; psychology of religion; religious experience; saintliness; self; stream of consciousness; the subconscious; temperament; will



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1. Introduction

The interdisciplinary William James (1842–1910) wrote prolifically, and his works continue to be widely read (cf. Beit-Hallahmi 2003; Croce 2010).¹ This ongoing interest is especially strong regarding his magnum opus, *The Principles of Psychology* (James 1890), and his second great work, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (1902). Both books can captivate and transform their readers (cf. MacLeod 1948; Richardson 2006). However, their readerships are sharply divided.

To psychology scholars, James's two-volume book, *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), is his most important work because it revolutionized the study of "finite individual minds" and states of consciousness and acted as a key milestone in understanding psychology as an independent natural science (James 1890, vol. 1, p. vi). In the 28 chapters of *The Principles*, James presents his groundbreaking conceptual tools—also known as principles—on brain

activity and plasticity, habit, the subconscious, the stream of consciousness, the self, attention, association, emotion, will, and personal temperament and character. These shaped and influenced how the developing American psychological community understood and studied the human mind. *The Principles* garnered James's recognition as "the foremost psychologist this country has produced" (Allport 1943, p. 95) and the widely echoed honorary title of the "father of American psychology" (McGeoch 1919, p. 8; Pajares 2003, p. 41).

To scholars of religion, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) is James's most important work, and, to psychologists of religion, it is regarded as the most significant of all the classics in the field (cf. Gorsuch and Spilka 1987; Morgan 2011; Starbuck 1904). In the book's 20 lectures, James (1902) explains how individuals experience religious "feelings, acts, and experiences... in their solitude, ...in relation to whatever they may consider the divine" (p. 31, emphasis in original). Harvard psychologist Gordon Allport (1961) concisely stated that *The Varieties* was James's second "psychological masterpiece" (p. xxii). In an admiring introduction to the Harvard edition² of *The Varieties*, J. E. Smith (1985) was also clear: "Few books written in this century on the subject of religion have had an initial impact and a continuing influence equal to that of William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience*" (p. xi). The praise from Allport and Smith is supported by David Wulff's (2005) compilation of survey results, showing that *The Varieties* is the most reprinted, translated, and cited of all of James's books and all books within the field of psychology and religion (p. 47). Not surprisingly, scholars of religious studies also recognize James as a founding father of their field (Hood et al. 2018, p. 27; Taylor 2002, p. 13).

Despite the importance of both books, three barriers hinder connecting them: (1) scholars of religion rarely read *The Principles*; (2) psychological scientists rarely read *The Varieties*; and (3) James himself, in *The Varieties*, almost never directly cites *The Principles*³ Therefore, many scholars of religion mistakenly believe that James had nothing relevant to say to them until *The Varieties*, while many psychologists mistakenly think that James's psychological writings ended with *The Principles*. This mutual avoidance is perhaps exacerbated by a degree of mutual suspicion between psychologists and religion scholars (cf. Alexander 1979; Carrette 2002; Heft 2017; Taylor 1996).

Nevertheless, a dozen or so thoughtful scholars have each detected a connective thread between *The Principles* and *The Varieties*, typically a lone link related to their area of specialization (e.g., Allport 1950; Alexander 1979; Belzen 2005; Capps 2015; Croce 2017; Hood 2002; Lamberth 1999; Levinson 1981; Myers 1981; Ruf 1991; J. E. Smith 1985; Taylor 1980; Wulff 1987). Among these discerning academics, Jacob Belzen best anticipates the spirit of the present article when he argues that the field of "psychology of religion," going forward, would do well to "turn to James's *Principles*, or to psychologies that are elaborations of it, in order to find" additional "new ideas and inspirations for developing" the field in "interesting, relevant" new directions (p. 74). Belzen shares our view that "this is also what James himself did" (p. 68).

Rejecting the idea of a complete separation or only a limited connection between James's two classics, we explore in this article the hypothesis that James used the same psychological concepts found in *The Principles* as the foundation for the religious ideas presented throughout *The Varieties*. From start to finish, James applied his psychological principles to illuminate the full spectrum of personal religious experiences.

2. Method: From *The Principles* to *The Varieties*

Some new readers of James have made clever (but mistaken) judgments about his books by claiming, "There are no principles in *The Principles*" and "There are few varieties in *The Varieties*."⁴ To understand what James meant by the words "principles" and "varieties,"

it is helpful to remember that James was a pragmatist and a pluralist. In *The Principles*, the term “principles” is best understood in a pragmatic sense. It refers to the main conceptual “tools” of psychology and the behavior patterns they uncover—not usually to fixed doctrines or eternal truths. In *The Varieties*, the term “varieties” is best understood in a pluralistic way. It refers not only to different types of religious experience but, even more, to the numerous gradations found between any two types of religious experience.

Below, we survey ten of the key conceptual tools James introduced in *The Principles* and then examine whether or how they were used in *The Varieties*. By metaphorically holding *The Principles* in one hand and *The Varieties* in the other, we can assess whether James’s psychological principles provided the foundation for his psychology of religion.

3. Results

3.1. Principle I. Brain Matter and Neural Pathways

On the first page of *The Principles*, James defines psychology as “the Science of Mental Life” (James 1890, vol. 1, p. 1). Accordingly, he then dedicates the first three chapters to neurology, identifying and describing the brain’s structures and their functions. One of his main goals is to show that brain matter matters because “the brain is the one immediate bodily condition of the mental operation” (p. 4). He stresses that understanding the brain is essential to studying the mind’s activities because mental life depends on cerebral conditions.

In Chapter II, James describes how the brain’s left and right hemispheres are each further divided into four lobes (frontal, parietal, temporal, and occipital), which, in turn, are divided into many distinguishable areas, each closely linked to specific mental and behavioral functions (p. 30). James refers to neurons as “nerve circuits,” underscoring their role in neural functioning. He depicts brain areas as localized way stations that receive input in the form of nerve currents in spatial-temporal patterns, which he compares to electrical currents (pp. 20–21, 656). In Chapter III, James discusses the general conditions of cerebral activity (such as blood supply, temperature changes, and chemical actions) before introducing the idea that neural matter is relatively flexible or plastic. In fact, James is credited with coining the term “neural plasticity” to depict the brain’s neural pathways’ ability to physically change in response to experience (pp. 104–8, 121–22), mainly referring to “changes in nervous paths associated with the establishment of habits” (Berlucchi and Buchtel 2009, p. 307; cf. Crosson et al. 2017).

James’s focus on neural processes that launched *The Principles* also launched *The Varieties*. James devotes Lecture I to “Religion and Neurology” for at least two reasons. First, he aims to establish that religious experiences have a neurological foundation. By examining “documents humains,” the personal writings of religious individuals, James studies their religious encounters (James 1902, p. 3, italics in original, pp. 13–15; cf. Boisen 1936; Gerkin 1984). He observed that these individuals often display “symptoms of nervous instability,” such as “exalted emotional sensibility,” “discordant inner life,” “trances,” and “melancholy” (p. 15). These qualities are evident, for instance, in his accounts of the religious experiences of notable “religious geniuses,” such as George Fox (Lecture I), John Bunyan (Lecture XIII), and Stephen Bradley (Lecture IX).

Second, James introduces his study with a chapter on neurology to reject early claims of neurological reductionism, also known as “medical materialism” (p. 21). Medical materialists believe that physical conditions entirely explain religious states of mind. James, however, believes (1) that religious experiences cannot be reduced to biological phenomena alone, and (2) that, although physiology plays a role in understanding religious experiences, physiology does not diminish their value (cf. Kime and Snarey 2018). Therefore, he warns against accepting the medical materialist view that the religious experiences of

non-neurotypical people are invalid (p. 15). More importantly, James reminds us that “scientific theories are organically conditioned just as much as religious emotions are” (p. 14). In other words, “Be they of religious or of non-religious content, they are equally organically founded” (p. 14) and could not be otherwise. James wants his readers to avoid habitually giving extra importance to, or dismissing, either science or religion; both are necessary for understanding religious experience within a pluralistic universe. Overall, the first chapter of *The Varieties* also repeats James’s position in *The Principles* that the material and immaterial aspects of being human are deeply interconnected (Croce 2017, p. 265).

3.2. Principle II. Habit

In Chapter IV of *The Principles*, James (1890, vol. 1) explores how “habits” develop through the brain’s plasticity. After distinguishing between innate habits (instincts) and learned habits, he explains that, from a purely “physiological point of view,” an acquired habit is essentially “a new pathway of discharge formed in the brain, by which certain incoming currents tend to escape” (p. 137). James explains that humans tend to form habits because we have bodies, and our nervous system’s living matter is adaptable. An activity may initially seem challenging, but with repeated practice, it becomes a habit. Repetition reinforces the same neural pathways, making energy flow more easily through them; however, this also makes it harder to change those pathways. Therefore, we become “walking bundles of habits” (p. 65). These habits allow the mind to focus on other tasks; they “diminish the conscious attention with which our acts are performed” (pp. 140–41). James states that the great goal in education and learning “is to make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy” (p. 122, italics in original).

The development of habits explains the stability and seeming invariability of behavior (p. 104), but James also stresses that habit change is possible because of the brain’s plasticity. He then describes a deliberate process by which a person can alter a habit (pp. 122–26). First, begin with a strong initiative, including accountability, commitments, and supportive environments. Second, changing a habit requires consistent practice and disciplined abstinence, often requiring ongoing suffering to break free from a prior habit. Third, take every opportunity to reinforce new habits without hesitation. In summary, people can gradually develop new, consistent behavioral patterns or “new habits” (p. 150; 1892, pp. 3–4; cf. Baldwin 1901a, p. 435). However, changing a constellation of habits through human effort is practically unlikely.

In *The Varieties*, James (1902) similarly distinguishes between religious impulses and acquired religious habits (pp. vi, 3–4, 97, 342), emphasizing the role of habit in the religiosity of both healthy-minded individuals and those with more troubled souls (e.g., pp. 97–98, 168–70). He also addresses the possibility of “habit change” in conversion experiences and saintliness (e.g., pp. 193–97, 271). In his first lecture on “Religion and Neurology,” James notes that the behaviors and rituals of members of religious groups are passed on by “tradition,” shaped by “imitation,” and maintained by “habit” (p. 6, cf. 47, 77). David Wulff (1987) points out that in *The Varieties*, “James deliberately passes over the ordinary individual’s piety” since for most people, religion is more likely to be “a dull habit” rather than “an acute fever” (pp. 6, 500). In Lectures IV and V on “The Religion of Healthy Mindedness,” James explains how these optimistic individuals habitually think about their ideals until they “wear” new neural pathways (pp. 97, 117, 135). Moreover, in Lecture IX on “Conversion,” James shows that gradual conversion experiences depend on “the building up, piece by piece, of a new set of moral and spiritual habits” (p. 206; cf. Bridgers and Snarey 2003).

In “sudden conversion experiences,” James recognizes a greater opportunity for large-scale “habit change.” His case studies of missionary David Brainerd (pp. 212–14, 253), coal

miner Billy Bray (pp. 249, 290–91), and Army colonel James Gardiner (pp. 220–23, 269) show that “to be converted” involves a powerful religious experience that replaces deeply ingrained habits with new religious ideas. These ideas, whether old or new, initially seem peripheral but then become central—forming the core of the person’s energy, with “the religious aims” fostering the development of new “habitual” behavior patterns (p. 196). For those who undergo either gradual or sudden conversion, the new habit center allows “habits of saintliness” to develop (pp. 6, 376). Therefore, after conversion, newly developed habits enable individuals to cultivate their “higher powers of mind” and maintain their new “moral and religious life” (James 1890, vol. 1, pp. 122, 315). To James, habit is foundational to understanding the persistent effects of conversion and other religious experiences.

3.3. Principle III. The Subconscious

In 1890, the idea of an unconscious or subconscious mind was still a new concept in psychology. As a result, in *The Principles*, James discusses unconscious processes in multiple chapters instead of a single unified section (James 1890, vol. 1). In Chapter VI, “The Mind-Stuff Theory,” James highlights the early and developing stage of this research by pointing out the inconsistent and confusing terminology used by writers. He also questions each of the so-called “ten proofs” of the unconscious mind (p. 164ff).

In Chapter VIII, “The Relations of Minds to Other Things,” James explores unconsciousness during sleep, fainting, and other unusual states, including abnormal mental conditions (p. 199ff). While discussing “unconsciousness in hysterics,” he underscores the distinctions made by French psychologists Pierre Janet and Alfred Binet between “primary” or “normal” consciousness and “secondary consciousness” or “unconsciousness.” They argued that during anesthesia, for example, “a secondary consciousness [was there,] entirely cut off from the primary or normal one but [was] susceptible to being tapped and made to testify to its existence in various odd ways” (p. 203).

In *The Varieties*, James advocated exploring the subconscious in full, even though previously in *The Principles*, he had asked challenging questions about the existence of an unconscious. Does this indicate a shift in James’s thinking? Perhaps, but not necessarily. J. E. Smith (1985), a leading James scholar, argues that the unconscious states in *The Principles* and the subconscious processes in *The Varieties* are distinct entities. Smith explains that the “unconscious states” relate to thought processes, not a different level of consciousness. James favored “subconsciously maturing processors” that become conscious. He credited Frederic Myers (1892a, 1892b, 1892c) with the discovery, citing his articles on “The Subliminal Consciousness.” Myers’s 1892 breakthrough arrived after the publication of *The Principles* (1890) but in time to be considered in *The Varieties* (1902), in which James states clearly and flatly that he prefers the term “subconscious” over “unconscious” (pp. 202–13). He aims to familiarize his audience with the involuntary, subconscious methods of the mind as they inform a person’s religious experience. As he has observed, the “acts and movements performed by the subconscious self are withdrawn from the conscious one, and the subject will do all sorts of incongruous things of which he remains quite unaware” (p. 208).

In Lecture IX on “Conversion,” for example, James asks us to consider this scenario: “You know how it is when you try to recall a forgotten name. Usually, you help the recall by working for it... However, sometimes this effort fails... Give up the effort entirely; think of something completely different, and in half an hour, the lost name comes sauntering into your mind...” (p. 205). Over the course of *The Varieties*, James’s idea of the subconscious evolves and develops into his concept of a bridge connecting an individual’s personal religious experience with post hoc rational understanding—linking personal psychology and theology.

For James, writing 12 years after the publication of *The Principles*, the concept of the subconscious has become “the most important step forward that has occurred in psychology since I have been a student of that science” (James 1890, p. 233; cf. Taylor 2002; Reed 1997). James comes to see how the subconscious is “the soil in which religious ideas and emotions germinate” (Capps 2015, p. x). Still, he does not completely ignore proponents of the unconscious (p. 234), but he continues to use “subconscious” as do Janet and Binet, and “subliminal” following Myers (1902, p. 233; cf. pp. 207, 239, 382). Just as he noted in *The Principles*, James remarks that the terminology in the field is not yet settled. Therefore, he humorously suggests that “if the word ‘subliminal’ is offensive to any of you... call this latter the A-region of personality, if you care to, and call the other the B-region...” (p. 483).

James, most fruitfully, explains the role of the subconscious in different religious experiences.⁵ These include conversion experiences—its sudden onset caused by subconscious incubation processes and developing ideas (pp. 207–15, 230–37); saintliness—subconscious influences involved in developing a saintly life driven by spiritual excitement (pp. 269–70); and mystical experiences—the subliminal region acts as a doorway or, as some prefer, has a doorway slightly ajar to varying degrees, allowing “openings” in normal consciousness to reach mystical states (pp. 379, 388–98, 524; cf. Bridgers, 2005).

3.4. Principle IV. The Stream of Consciousness

James (1890) titled Chapter IX of *The Principles* “The Stream of Thought” and explained that he preferred the metaphor of a stream because a watercourse naturally continues or “flows” (James 1890, vol. 1, p. 239). To explain how “conscious thought” or consciousness flows, James analyzes its five distinguishing qualities (James 1890, vol. 1, pp. 225–90). First, consciousness is personal—each mental state reflects the unique experience of an individual. Second, the flow of each person’s stream of consciousness is constantly changing—partly because each experience alters the brain itself. Third, each person’s consciousness is perceptibly continuous; following a gap feels connected to what came before. Fourth, consciousness is functional—it interacts with objects outside itself and helps an individual understand and adapt to the environment. Lastly, consciousness is selective—among multiple options, it compares and chooses some while ignoring others (p. 288).

Between *The Principles* and *The Varieties*, James renamed the “stream of thought” the “stream of consciousness” (James 1892) and also introduced his “field theory” (James 1896; 1899). According to this theory, a succession of “fields of consciousness” composes a person’s stream of consciousness, or inner life. Each field consistently features a “center” or focus of concern and a “fringe” or margin of no concern. The center can shift, sometimes by slow developments, but sometimes very “abrupt alterations of the whole field occur,” bringing peripheral elements into the center (1899, pp. 18–19). The succession of fields demonstrates that consciousness is a dynamic process involving both internal and external interactions (cf. Heft 2017, pp. 115–22; Lamberth 1999, pp. 87–95; McDermott 1967, p. xxxix).

In *The Varieties*, James makes good use of both: the “stream of consciousness” and “fields” within the stream. First, he directly cites an example from his chapter on the stream of thought in *The Principles* (1902, pp. 51, 62). James clarifies that the stream-of-consciousness technique is foundational to his psychological examination of personal religious experiences. It also clarifies why he focuses on individual religious experiences rather than institutionalized religion. James then discusses the subconscious, explaining the “fringe” or “margin” that vaguely surrounds every state of consciousness (p. 259). He describes how the fringe is not directly part of consciousness but represents the latent, preconscious, or subliminal aspect of thoughts (vol. 1, pp. 258–59). James sees all thoughts

as interconnected through a subconscious fringe. The impact of these concepts is quite evident in several chapters or lectures of *The Varieties*. We will highlight three examples.

In Lecture III on “The Reality of the Unseen,” James states that human consciousness has “a sense of reality, a feeling of objective presence, a perception of what we may call ‘something there’” (p. 58). He describes this as an “undifferentiated sense of reality,” including a transcendent or divine presence, and focuses on religious individuals with a strong “consciousness of presence” (p. 59). James’s idea of stream-of-consciousness also illuminates why individuals tend to perceive “unseen realities.”

In Lecture X on “Conversion,” James takes the step of offering a full definition of a mental “field of consciousness,” which draws directly from both *The Principles* (James 1890, vol. 1, chap. 9) and his subsequent “field theory” reports (1896). His definition, complete with a “center” and vague “fringe” or “margins,” provides a psychological explanation of abrupt conversion experiences, while also allowing for the possibility of a transcendent presence, regardless of how it is defined (cf. Lamberth 1999, pp. 131–45).

In Lectures XVI and XVII on “Mysticism,” James presents mystical states as a core aspect of religious experience. He introduces four criteria for mystical states of consciousness: ineffability, noesis, transience, and passivity (p. 381). These four characteristics are sufficient to identify a specific set of states within the larger stream of consciousness. The characteristics of the stream of consciousness, that is, are key to James’s understanding of mystical experiences (cf. Capps 2015; Natsoulas 2005).

In summary, in *The Varieties*, James effectively applies the concept of the stream of consciousness from *The Principles* and subsequent related ideas. By doing so, he enhances our understanding of the fluid, non-linear nature of the religious experiences he explores.

3.5. Principle V. The Self

“Consciousness of the Self” is the main topic of Chapter X in *The Principles*. James describes a person’s self, in its broadest sense, as “all that he CAN call his” (James 1890, vol. 1, p. 291). James then differentiates between the terms *I* and *Me*. He identifies the *I*, or “pure ego,” as “the self-as-knower,” which is marked by a sense of personal identity and continuity over time (pp. 292–93). Thus, the “*I*” offers the thread of continuity connecting our past, present, and future selves. This idea resembles older concepts of the “soul,” “spirit,” and “transcendental ego” (p. 343ff). Conversely, James equates the *Me*, or “empirical self,” with “the self-as-known,” which includes the empirical parts that one considers part of oneself. Within the *Me* or empirical self, James distinguished three selves: (a) *the material self*—which includes the physical body and possessions closely linked to it; (b) *the social self*—which involves the “recognition” a person gets from others, meaning “a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him”; and (c) *the spiritual self*—which encompasses a person’s “inner or subjective being” and the whole collection of one’s “states of consciousness” (pp. 296–97). James views the trinity of *Me* aspects hierarchically, with “the bodily *Me* at the bottom, the spiritual *Me* at the top, and the extra-corporeal material selves and the various social selves between” (p. 186). He states that the spiritual self includes “every impulse toward psychic progress,” whether the impulses are intellectual, moral, or religious aspirations (James 1890, vol. I, p. 309). In *Psychology: The Briefer Course* (1892), James further explains that the spiritual self is our most intimate self, serving as the “sanctuary” of the entire collection of our inner “states of consciousness” (pp. 181, 190). As such, it often offers “a direct revelation of the living substance of,” call it what you will—“Soul, Ego, or Spirit” (pp. 181, 200).

In *The Varieties*, James’s psychological concept of the self is prominently featured (cf. Barresi and Juckes 1997; B. Smith 1993). One could argue that James’s ideas about the self mainly served to shift from “the religious soul” of scholastic theology to “the spiritual self”

of *The Principles*. James, however, would probably respond that he really does not mind what one calls it—"soul, ego, or spirit." The important point is that, by applying his model of the self to autobiographical accounts of religious people, insights can be extracted that provide a basic framework for understanding various religious experiences.

In Lectures IV to VIII, on the religion of the "Healthy Minded" versus the "Sick Soul," James explores how religious people often can be characterized as "healthy-minded" personalities with "unified selves" or as "sick-souled" personalities with a "morbid-mind" and "divided self."⁶ Specifically, James observed that unconverted people who are sick-souled frequently exhibit "a certain discordancy or heterogeneity" in their sense of "self," often with an "incompletely unified moral and intellectual constitution" (1902, p. 167). We present three graphic cases.

In Lecture IX, James recounts the conversion of 23-year-old farmer Stephen Bradley, illustrating the complex nature of the self "as if the possibilities of character lay disposed in a series of layers of shells" (1902, p. 189, cf. pp. 190–93). James explains how this conversion experience shapes Bradley's spiritual self in a way that echoes James's description of the spiritual self as "the sanctuary within the citadel of our personal life" in *The Principles* (James 1890, vol. I, pp. 297, 303). James emphasizes how Bradley begins to understand and nurture his own moral and religious goals—two vital aspects in forming and developing the spiritual self in relation to his view of God. Additionally, James suggests that the self also gains unity through "self-loss" in mystical experiences, referring to the loss of all worries, which allows mystics to experience peace and harmony. Ralph Hood (2002) reasons that this unified self, formed through mystical experience, is what James refers to as the more profound "spiritual" or "soulful" self.

In Lecture XIX, James explores prayer, a topic he had previously discussed in *The Principles* (vol. 1, p. 316). James sees prayer as a personal religious act through which individuals develop their spiritual selves. He applies this idea to the prayers of two men—George Müller, a Christian evangelist in Bristol, England, and Karl Hilty, a law professor in Bern, Switzerland. James observed that Müller's prayers are all petitionary; he openly shares general needs but not specific details of temporary wants. He believed that all prayers would be answered if one trusted enough and prayed directly to the Lord. In his memoir, Müller describes asking God for help with major losses, appointment delays, understanding Scripture, and always expecting answers that influence his decisions. Müller's spiritual-self viewed God as his "business partner," a practical, private deity concerned with his immediate life (Cho 2019, pp. 645–46).

Karl Hilty, in contrast, prays to experience "the disappearance of all fear" and achieve "inner security." Hilty is a believer who relies on God's guiding presence, which subtly influences him. Unlike Müller's God, who responds to every petition, Hilty's God offers guidance, providing help at the right moment so Hilty can remain calm and live with a sense of divine guidance. For Hilty's spiritual self, prayer is about patiently waiting for the right moment and receiving this guidance, shaping a view of God as a guiding, caring presence. James found that Hilty's spiritual self is more developed and philosophical than Müller's, but, nonetheless, each man has created an image of God that he needed (Cho 2019, pp. 646–47).

3.6. Principle VI. Attention

James shines a spotlight on "Attention" in Chapter XI of *The Principles*, demonstrating that attention is just that—what you choose to shine a spotlight on (James 1890, vol. 1, p. 402). He explains that people only notice a small portion of the sensory input available because their consciousness is limited compared with the vast amount of sensory information around them. The sensory impressions that become conscious are those that hold "interest"

for the individual at that moment. “Attention,” he states, “is the taking possession by the mind, in clear and vivid form, of one out of several simultaneously possible objects or trains of thought. Focalization, concentration, of consciousness are of its essence” (p. 403). He insisted that “each of us literally chooses by his ways of attending to things, what sort of a universe he shall appear to himself to inhabit” (p. 424).

Although not all sensory information reaches conscious awareness, it contributes to the fringe of experience at the margins of one’s preconscious thought. As this distinction shows, James categorizes attention into different types, which he interestingly titles “The Varieties of Attention” (vol. 1, p. 416). He initially separates sensorial attention (focusing on objects perceived through one or more senses) from intellectual attention (directed at ideas or mental representations). He also clarifies that both types of attention—sensorial and intellectual—can be passive or voluntary. Passive attention occurs immediately because it is instantly grasped, whereas voluntary attention requires effort because the object is not immediately understood. Voluntary attention always requires effort because the stimulus is not naturally engaging but becomes so through association with something else that is. Since effort is involved, no form of “voluntary attention [can be] sustained for more than a few seconds at a time” (p. 420). Instead, maintaining attention involves a series of successive efforts to refocus the mind on the task at hand.

In *The Varieties*, James echoes *The Principles* and explains that religious experience also depends on what an individual chooses to focus on. But, of course, in *The Varieties* “the object of James’s concern and his method have been greatly expanded since he published *The Principles*” (Alexander 1979, p. 424; Allport 1950). James, that is, broadens the scope to include spiritual, mystical, and all dimensions of reality. He uses the principle of attention, for example, when discussing the differences between those who are happily “healthy-minded” and those who are morbidly “sick-souled,” noting how their mindfulness is shaped by what they focus on. We will present two of James’s examples.

James cites the “dominant idea” from the personal account of a healthy-minded woman: “‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me even as thou wilt,’ and a perfect confidence that all would be well, that all was well... I had no consciousness of time or space or persons, only of love and happiness and faith. I do not know how long this state lasted, nor when I fell asleep, but when I woke up in the morning, *I was well*” (1902, p. 121, italics in original). The woman in this account concentrates her attention on the idea that “all will be well.” Consequently, her experience of truly “being well” is shaped by her focus on this idea. Those James refers to as “mind-curers”—members of the Mind-Cure Movement who follow “a deliberately optimistic scheme of life” who see positive objects and topics of attention as “forces” exercised by religious experience—still rely on what an individual chooses to focus on (1902, p. 94).

Conversely, James describes a letter from a man writing from a French asylum. The letter reveals that his consciousness is consumed by the feeling of evil, causing him to see no good in the world. His focus on evil excludes all good, demonstrating how attention can both exclude and emphasize (1902, p. 149). Religious mystical experiences, trance states, and motor automatisms involve passive attention; however, voluntary attention can also foster them. James notes that mystical states can be aided by voluntary actions such as fixing attention or bodily practices. The oscillation between passive attention and voluntary attention in spiritual activities, such as Benedictine practices, demonstrates the dynamic role of attention in religious experience (1902, pp. 134, 381, 488; cf. Combs et al. 2010).

3.7. Principle VII. Association

“Association” is introduced in Chapter XIV of *The Principles* (James 1890, vol. 1). James explains that “objects once experienced together tend to become associated in the

imagination so that when any one of them is thought of, the others are likely to be thought of also, in the same order of sequence or coexistence as before" (p. 561). Therefore, associations are formed through external sensations and a person's intellect, such as when one learns a new skill. Once associated, thoughts of objects appear in the mind as connected entities. Any link between two objects can basically be reduced to their association in the mind, whether or not this connection is "rational." A new association can also form based on recency, vividness, and emotional closeness. The resulting object seems to be mainly influenced by chance, as "no doubt it is determined by cerebral causes, but they are too subtle and shifting for our analysis" (p. 577). Basic associations then lead to more complex systems of interconnected objects. James and other psychologists of his era proposed that associations occur through association fibers (neural pathways) connecting different brain regions. For instance, senility was thought to involve a return to simpler associations due to the atrophy of these fibers (cf. Baldwin 1901a, p. 80). Although James considers association primarily a physiological process, he notes that associations are guided by a "general interest," that is, by the cognitive process of attention. Consequently, individual groups of ideas and objects are formed through the principle of association. Some groups of associations take precedence over others because of the focus of attention or neural pathways established by prior experience or habits.

In Lecture IX of *The Varieties*, James's first lecture on "Conversion," he uses the same conceptual framework he introduced in *The Principles*. He even directs his audience to "the chapter on Association" in any "treatise on Psychology" (p. 193). When one revisits James's frequently referenced chapter on "Association," it becomes clear that association is central to James's understanding of the cognitive process necessary for conversion in *The Varieties*. There, James states that each and every "aim" that one pursues "awakens a certain specific kind of interested excitement and gathers a certain group of ideas together in subordination to it as its associates" (p. 193). James also clarifies that each time "one aim grows so stable as to definitively expel its previous rivals from the individual's life, we tend to speak of the phenomenon, and perhaps wonder at it, as a *transformation*" (1902, pp. 193–94, italics added). Conversion aligns with this model of transformation as a distinct shift from one internal system of associated ideas to another, with the new system filled with religious content that eclipses the prior associations.

In *The Varieties*' Lecture IV on "Healthy-Mindedness," James uses the principle of association as a key conceptual tool. He shows that an individual can cultivate specific religious feelings through an intentional practice of association. For example, he describes the general associative tendency of the healthy-minded, "which looks on all things and sees that they are good" (p. 87). Furthermore, James demonstrates that a person can develop other religious feelings through deliberate or purposeful practices of association. As mentioned earlier in the section on "Attention," James again cites literature from the Mind-Cure Movement: "High, healthful, pure thinking can be encouraged, promoted, and strengthened. Its current can be turned upon grand ideals until it forms a habit and wears a channel. By means of such discipline, the mental horizon can be flooded with the sunshine of beauty, wholeness, and harmony" (p. 117; cf. Capps 2009). Similarly, James notes that associative processes are also found in other religious practices. For example, he describes a Catholic practice of recalling an image of God for protection and comments, "All the external associations of the Catholic discipline are of course unlike anything in Mind-Cure Movement, but the purely spiritual part of the exercise is identical in both communions..." (1902, p. 116). James discusses the opposing mindset in Lecture VI, "The Sick Soul," describing those for whom "evil is no mere relation of the subject to particular outer things, but... a wrongness or vice in his essential nature" (1902, p. 134). A person's overall religious outlook is influenced by their associations with self and the world.

3.8. Principle VIII. The Emotions

“The Emotions” are the focus of Chapter XXV of *The Principles* (James 1890, vol 2). James notes that, while the varieties of emotional excitement are countless, they can be functionally divided into two categories: “coarser” emotions (e.g., fear, anger, joy, etc.) and “subtler” emotions (e.g., moral, intellectual, aesthetic feelings) (James 1890, p. 468ff; James 1892, p. 374ff). Building on this distinction, he introduces a new theory—that bodily changes in response to a stimulus happen before we experience and recognize the emotions. Before James’s work, emotions were thought to start when a person perceives a stimulus that causes an emotion, which is then followed by a bodily reaction. The Victorian scientific community believed this was “obvious,” but James considered this theory unsupported by evidence (Barbalet 2004). Instead, James revolutionized the understanding of emotion by proposing that “the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion... We feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble” (p. 449, emphasis in original). To illustrate how emotions originate from bodily changes, James offers a hypothetical but now well-known example of a man encountering a bear. “Common sense says...we meet a bear, are frightened, and run,” but James says, “this order of sequence is incorrect” (James 1890, pp. 449–50). Instead, the man sees the bear, experiences a series of bodily reactions—his heart races, his throat tightens, his nostrils flare, and he begins to run—and, as a result, he feels fear—that is, his mind interprets the physiological responses as the emotion of “fear.” As is well known, this idea of emotions was later called the James–Lange theory of emotion (cf. James 1884; Lange 1885; Coleman and Snarey 2011).

In *The Varieties*, James (1902) documents that emotion is perhaps the most basic psychological element of individual religious experiences, and he acknowledges that reading *The Varieties* is like being “literally bathed in sentiment” and “emotionality” (p. 486). James, nevertheless, does not explicitly label his discussion as an application of the James–Lange theory of emotion but, rather, simply shows how intense physical and mental states can predict powerful religious experiences. The following three examples illustrate how his theory of emotion served his interpretation of religious experiences.

In Lectures IV and V on “The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness,” James notes that advocates of the Mind-Cure Movement tend to be optimistic, healthy-minded, and able to “let go” of negative emotions (p. 177). He highlights that the emotional aspects of the religious experiences of healthy-minded individuals seem to form the foundation of belief, so that, as Gerald Myers points out, “The will to hold that belief is already in place” (Myers 1985, p. 476).

As a second example, James uses multiple case studies to demonstrate that conversion experiences, particularly instant conversions, can be triggered by the “explosive intensity” of more intense religious emotions, which compel mental restructuring (pp. 162, 173, 198). Fear, grief, hope, and love are key examples of explosive emotions that often precede conversion. Similarly, emotional energy shifts to the new ideas: “To say that a [person] is ‘converted’ means, in these terms, that religious ideas, previously peripheral in his consciousness, now take center stage, and that religious aims become the habitual focus of his energy” (p. 196). James also explains that some individuals may be unable to experience an instant conversion because they lack or suppress the religious-emotional sensitivity needed to imagine the reality of the unseen (pp. 53–77, 204).

Third and finally, in Lectures XVI and XVII on “Mysticism,” James explicitly describes religious emotions as embodied. For instance, when considering the mystical experiences reported by Saint Teresa, he notes that it “involves organic sensibilities, for it is spoken of as something too extreme to be borne, and as verging on bodily pain” (p. 412). Thus, James concludes, “I do believe that feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic

and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue" (p. 431).

3.9. Principle IX. Will

James addresses "Will" in chapter XXVI of *The Principles* (James 1890, vol. 2). He explains that the only immediate results of the will are immediate bodily movements, and that more complex actions require sustained voluntary attention. Voluntary movements that result from this attention are secondary, not primary, functions of a person. Thus, James writes: "A supply of ideas of the various movements that are possible," which was "left in the memory by experiences of their involuntary performance," is therefore "the first prerequisite of the voluntary life" (p. 488, emphasis in original). The volition to perform an action, that is, builds on the remote traces of involuntary action left on our minds. James notes, "We have now brought things to a point at which we see that attention with effort is all that any case of volition implies" (p. 561). This combination of attention, effort, and volition creates and constitutes human will. James further claims, "The essential achievement of the will, in short, when it is most voluntary, is to attend to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind" (p. 561, emphasis in original). For James, this is an "achievement," due to the mind's propensity to shift its attention, especially when the object of attention is an anti-impulsive conception (p. 565). The sentiment that a belief is an act of the will, not a simple result of rationalistic understanding, evokes his famous 1897 essay, "The Will to Believe," which is also well echoed in *The Varieties*.⁷

In *The Varieties*, James notes that what primarily characterizes the religious life is willful attention to the idea that "there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves hitherto" (p. 53). To be religious, one must have this kind of willful belief, which James also calls "the religious attitude of the soul" (p. 53). Some religious traditions also include systems of attentive effort and willful action. James writes, "The basis of the system is 'orison' or meditation. . . ." The first goal of orison "is the mind's detachment from outer sensations, for these interfere with its concentration upon ideal things" (1902, p. 406). These conscious practices may create the necessary conditions for mystical and conversion experiences.

James further examines the role of willpower in conversion. As previously noted, James describes two types of conversion experiences: volitional (gradual) and self-surrender (sudden). First, the "volitional" individuals experience conversion in "a conscious and voluntary way" by gradually developing "a new set of moral and spiritual habits" (p. 206). Many people have a voluntary religious conversion—a gradual process achieved through repeated, systematic practices similar to those of practitioners of other organized activities (e.g., athletic pursuits). Borrowing an example from Edwin Starbuck's research (Starbuck 1899), James explains that "[a]n athlete...sometimes awakens suddenly to an understanding of the fine points of the game and to a real enjoyment of it, just as the convert awakens to an appreciation of religion" (p. 206). Second, the self-surrendered converts, on the other hand, experience conversion when their personal will is fully "given up" (p. 208). The change occurs suddenly, often when subconscious work unexpectedly becomes conscious, rather than through a deliberate act of will. But James does not see the difference between the two types as radical. Those who have experienced either type of conversion—volitional or self-surrender—have both, at some point, experienced a sense of relinquishing their will to action.

In *The Varieties*, we see growth in James's thoughts on the will because he now recognizes the limits of the volitional will concept that he introduced in *The Principles*. As John Smith (1985) explains, James's account of the self-surrender experience sheds "new light"

on “the limits of the will to believe,” given that “the person in despair is unable to believe that his despair is illusory and that he lives in a world of hope” (p. xxxiv).

3.10. Principle X. Personal Temperament and Character

The psychology of personality was another emerging area of study in 1890. Thus, instead of including a single chapter on the topic in *The Principles*, James concentrated on two key aspects of personality: “temperament” and “character,” which are particularly useful for distinguishing individuals (James 1890, vol. 2, pp. 537–38; 1902, p. 261). *Temperament* refers to the stable traits that define a person’s personality. It is believed that a person’s temperament, or temperament type, is largely inherited, with qualities that remain relatively consistent over a lifetime (cf. Baldwin 1901b, p. 672). To differentiate thinkers, James describes opposing temperaments as ideal types, such as tender-minded rationalists versus tough-minded empiricists (cf. James 1911, pp. 5–10). James always views these two contrasting types as representing two ends of a continuum that can be divided by many gradations. *Character*, on the other hand, refers to the personality aspects shaped by habits (cf. Baldwin 1901a, p. 173). Thus, a person’s character or character type is learned, as indicated by references to character as an objective set of socially ingrained professional, moral, or religious habits (James 1890, vol. 1, pp. 125, 191–92). James suggests that the personal character of many adults is fundamentally formed during the years “between twenty and thirty,” after which their character may “set like plaster” (James 1890, vol. 1, pp. 121–2; cf. Robinson and Sedikides 2009).

In *The Varieties*, James concludes that “religious thought is carried on in terms of personality, this being, in the world of religion, the one fundamental fact” (p. 491). Throughout *The Varieties*, James repeatedly demonstrates that personality differences are crucial in understanding variations in people’s religious experiences (cf. Ruf 1997; Croce 2013). This idea helps James identify various temperament types often found among religious individuals as well as different character types (James 1902, pp. 168–69; cf. Bridgers 2005).

The concept of *temperament* is used by James, for example, in Lecture I on “Neurology,” in which he suggests that individuals with a tendency toward a “neurotic temperament” might actually be better at experiencing mystical states than those with more neurotypical temperaments. He continues, “[I]t might well be that the neurotic temperament would furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity [of a higher realm]” (p. 25).

In Lecture VIII on “The Divided Self,” he also notes that a person with a potentially inherited neurotic temperament “is simply a [person] of sensibility in many directions, who finds more difficulty than is common in keeping his spiritual house in order and running his furrow straight, because his feelings and impulses are too keen and too discrepant mutually” (pp. 169–70). Another memorable comparison of personality temperaments—optimistic and pessimistic—appears in Lectures IV–V on the religion of “Healthy-Mindedness” versus Lectures VI–VII on the religion of “The Sick Soul.”⁸

The concept of *character* is also used in *The Varieties*. James’s Lectures XIV and XV on “The Value of Saintliness” are prime examples. Saintly individuals display a range of innate temperaments, but James discovered that the habit-based character of mature religious adults is notably similar. He concludes, “The collective name for the ripe fruits of religion” in terms of character is “saintliness” (p. 272). However, James also notes that not all religious fruits are “ripe” or mature, even among those socially elevated to sainthood. For instance, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque’s mystical experience led to a theopathic religious condition or an “excess of devotion” (p. 343).

In Lectures XVI and XVII on “Mysticism,” James continues to discuss character: “The ‘other-worldliness’ encouraged by mystical consciousness makes this over-abstraction from practical life” particularly prone to occur among those mystics whose “character is

naturally passive and whose intellect is feeble.” Nonetheless, James adds, “in natively strong... characters, we find quite the opposite results. The great Spanish mystics, who carried the habit of ecstasy as far as it has often been carried, appear, for the most part, to have shown indomitable spirit and energy, and all the more so for the trances in which they indulged” (p. 413).

4. Conclusions

The 1890 publication of *The Principles* established James as a leader in the field of psychology, but only two years later, in *Psychology: The Briefer Course* (1892), did James offer a critical reflection on the future of psychology as a scientific discipline. He notes that “psychology as a natural science” does not necessarily mean “a sort of psychology that stands at last on solid ground” (p. 334). He challenges his readers to consider how psychology remains in a “particularly fragile” state, such that its “assumptions and data must be reconsidered in wider connections and translated into other terms” (pp. 334–35). James accepted his own challenge by putting psychology into a broader conversation with religious experience. In 1902, this ambitious effort culminated in James’s second masterpiece, *The Varieties*.

In our investigation of the subtle, complex relationships between *The Principles* and *The Varieties*, we observed that James employed his own psychological ideas as the primary theoretical foundation for explaining the psychological dynamics underlying individuals’ interior religious experiences. In this new light, another question arises. How could the connection have been overlooked? After all, the subtitle of *The Varieties*, “a study in human nature,” clearly states that it is part of “human nature” to have religious sensitivities (cf. [Angell 1911](#); [Capps 2015](#)). It also shows that James is continuing, rather than abandoning, his work as a psychologist of human nature (J. E. [Smith 1985](#); cf. [Hood and Spilka 2012](#)). James even states on the second page of *The Varieties* that he will present his Gifford Lectures “as a psychologist,” so it is not surprising that the lectures would be packed with key concepts from *The Principles*. So, again, how could the connection have been overlooked?

Three reasons for this blind spot were outlined in the introduction: scholars of religion rarely read *The Principles*, psychologists seldom study *The Varieties*, and James himself only rarely cites *The Principles* in *The Varieties*. That said, what else could be contributing? We can suggest a fourth factor, based on our classroom experience of teaching *The Varieties*. James’s general conceptual approach was to broaden the meaning of familiar terms rather than invent an entirely new vocabulary. He is well known, of course, for adding “streams of consciousness,” “neural plasticity,” and “the psychologist’s fallacy” to our vocabulary. More often, however, he provided new, insightful, and expanded meanings for existing terms such as attention, emotion, habit, and will. Readers of *The Varieties* who have never read *The Principles* may mistakenly assume they understand the whole meaning of James’s familiar-sounding terms and, thus, feel no need to open *The Principles*. This problem can be moderated, however, by assigning [James’s \(1892\) *Psychology: The Briefer Course*](#) prior to reading *The Varieties*, or, at a minimum, by providing students with a glossary of James’s psychological terms used in *The Varieties*, along with their Jamesian definitions.

Our investigation also revealed that the relationship between James’s psychological principles and his analysis of religious varieties is a dynamic two-way process. Not only did *The Principles* underpin *The Varieties*, but while writing *The Varieties*, James also further developed his psychological principles based on his enriched understanding of religious experience. The extensive empirical data on how individuals develop religious sensibility, encounter divine figures, or experience intense emotions all contributed to James’s psychology. We noted earlier that *The Varieties* documented specific advances in James’s psychology of the *subconscious* (it exists, and is the realm where religious thoughts

and feelings originate), psychology of attention (which recognized an expanded or radically empirical field of objects), emotion (which offered a more concrete example of emotion's importance in the form of a person's religious experience), will (which gained increased recognition of the limits of the will to believe), and personality (which revealed more subtle variations in temperament and character). Here, we see vividly the unexpected pragmatic fruit of holding *The Principles* in one hand and *The Varieties* in the other.

In summary, the overall connection between *The Principles* and *The Varieties* is based on smooth intellectual transitions rather than direct citations. The process of moving from a broad analysis of psychology to a specific application of that analysis in a religious context demonstrates both how James's psychological principles provided the foundation for his psychology of religion and also how the world of religious experience broadened and sharpened his psychological principles through their interaction with religious data. James's innovative approach is a significant part of his scholarly legacy and a noteworthy contribution to both psychological and religious studies. Those who follow his lead will continue to enrich contemporary studies of religion.

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Notes

- ¹ Contemporary "William James studies" are thriving, including a journal by that very name. Since the 1980s, the flow of scholarly articles discussing his ideas has increased steadily, accompanied by many journal "special issues" focused entirely on James's works and ideas, and extending his influence into the twenty-first century (e.g., Cárdenas and Herbert (2023); Croce and Snarey (2002); Ferrari (2002); Haye et al. (2017); Lewis (2017); Madsen (2003); Schneider (2010); Slife and Wendt (2009); Snarey (2003); Valsiner (2008)).
- ² Harvard University Press (HUP) reissued all of James's books over a decade (1975–1985). Each volume corrected all known textual errors, included an index prepared according to modern standards, and featured an introduction by a contemporary expert. We consider the HUP editions invaluable for scholars of William James. Unfortunately, the volumes are far too expensive for nonspecialists, and they have sometimes gone out of print. In contrast, photo-reproduced copies of the original editions of *The Principles* and *The Varieties* are inexpensive and readily available (e.g., Dover Books, Peter Smith, Prometheus Books, Scholar Select). Because these reprinted editions match the pagination of the original editions, they also facilitate cross-referencing citations in journal articles about James's works over more than a hundred years. In this article, all citations of James's works follow the pagination of the first editions.
- ³ James rarely cites *The Principles* in *The Varieties*. Why? To this reasonable question, we share our hunches: First, it is relevant that the content of *The Varieties*, unlike that of *The Principles*, was first delivered as a set of public lectures. Given that he was the speaker and he was using his own concepts, citations may have seemed superfluous or even immodest (Snarey and McLendon 2024). Second, James likely wanted to keep his psychological tools unobtrusive so his audience would remain focused on the subject at hand—religious experience. Interjecting citations for psychological concepts would distract his original audience and

perhaps his subsequent readers. Third, the two books are different types of works with somewhat different citation conventions. *The Principles* is more academic and textbook-like, with an explicit goal to educate, whereas *The Varieties* is relatively more artistic and evocative, with an implicit goal to enlighten.

These student statements were harvested from the senior author's "William James Seminar" on James's psychological, religious, and philosophical writings. The quoted students implied but did not claim originality for their mistaken judgments.

James also speculates about "supra-normal cognitions" and supposes that such states would nourish a person's religion (James 1902, p. 484). This idea slightly differs from his concept of the subconscious. He describes supra-normal cognitions as heightened states that occur when the door to the subliminal or subconscious mind is unusually wide open. In this state, various phenomena may happen, such as "mystical experiences," sensory or motor "automatisms," "hypnotic" states, and possibly "supra-normal cognitions" like "telepathy." James speculates that it is the "supra-normal cognition" of individuals who dwell "deep in the religious life" that provides them with a greater ability to access the subconscious realm and, in turn, to shape religious history. Essentially, just as a sub-conscious layer underlies our normal conscious life, James hypothesizes that a supra-conscious layer may be connected to or aligned with religious experiences.

James generally uses the phrases "the sick soul" (James 1902, p. 127), "the divided self" (p. 166), and "the morbid mind" (p. 134) as synonyms.

In section IV of his essay, "The Will to Believe," James argues that religious belief or non-belief is an act of will (i.e., a willingness to believe, courage to believe, or right to hypothesize), not simply a result of rationalistic understanding. He writes, "*Our passionate [sic] nature not only may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds.*" James continues, "[F]or to say, under such circumstances, 'Do not decide, but leave the question open,' is itself a passionate decision – just like deciding yes or no – and is attended with the same risk of truth" (James 1897, p. 11, italics in original). This sentiment was foreshadowed in *The Principles* when he stated, "We never disbelieve anything except for the reason that we believe something else which contradicts the first thing.... The true opposites of belief, psychologically considered, are doubt and inquiry, not disbelief." (James 1890, vol. 2, p. 284).

James's *The Principles* and *The Varieties* were two of the primary sources for Carl Jung's ideas about personality types, as well as his psychology of religion. Erich Fromm (1950) first observed that James had anticipated many of Jung's ideas, and Eugene Taylor (1980) published a more detailed review of James's impact on Jung. Increasingly sophisticated reviews have been published by Bryon Day (1990), Sonu Shamdasani (2003) and Melo and Resende (2019).

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