

A Study of Religious Consciousness
as Revealed in
Autobiographies of University Students

PART I

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem

Religion has long been the subject-matter for human being within the fields of philosophy and theology.

The psychological study of religion, in the sense of modern science, started only late in the 19th century when Stanley Hall of Clark University wrote his first article, "The Moral and Religious Training of Children and Adolescence" in the *Princeton Review*, 1882.¹ Succeeding investigators opened the scientific inquiry of religion, employing systematic, empirical methods in order to analyze religious conversion and thus placing it within the general perspective of the natural sciences.² Around the end of the 1920's, studies were made chiefly on conversion experience, religious instincts.

Since 1930 the psychological study of religion, together with the development of Personality Psychology, Social Psychology, and Neo-Freudism, has come to inquire into religious problems with the help of the scientific knowledge from these fields and relating it to cultural and social phenomena. It seems to be the general trend in the field of religious psychology at present to look at religion more as one of the phases of the social life of man.³ (The development of the psychological study of religion will be reviewed in Chapter II.)

The fact, however, is unmovable, and should not be forgotten that whatever views on religion there may be, or whatever the general trend of religious psychology at present may be, religion does exist; religion exists in the individual as his own core-value which determines his whole personality. There are cases that those who have a religious view of life, show infantile and neurotic behaviors. This seems to be, however, due not to the primary function of religion, but to the uniqueness of their personalities.

Meanwhile we know that religion more often plays its function in the individual as a healthy, constructive, dynamic, integrating power. Religion is the core-value of the individual which ultimately determines his behavior. Religion shows the individual life's meaning, giving him the ultimate adjustment to life beyond the problems of personal or social adjustment which have been treated as if they were the ultimate problems of the human-being.

In spite of the fact that religion is the most personal and most important value of the individual, it seems that in the fields of science dealing with human nature, religion has failed to be given deserved and proper attention, G. W. Allport says in the very beginning of his challenging book, *The Individual and His Religion*

“ Among modern intellectuals... especially in the universities ... the subject of religion seems to have gone into hiding. Is it because the educated portion of mankind is learning to live with less finality and is coming to distrust embracing formulae of all types? Or is it because in their zeal to liquidate pseudo-knowledge and to discover truth in a piecemeal fashion the universities have found it necessary quietly to adopt a thoroughgoing secularism? Whatever the reason may be, the persistence of religion in the modern world appears as an embarrassment to the scholars of today. Even psychologists, to whom presumably nothing of human concern is alien, are likely to retire into themselves when the subject is broached.

During the past fifty years religion and sex seem to have reversed their positions... Scarcely any modern textbook writers in psychology devote as much as two shamefaced pages to the subject ... even though religion, like sex, is an almost universal interest of the human race.”

Adolescent Psychology, which was developed from the investigation of the religious conversion of youth, now seems to be treating the subject-matter as a subordinate subject of the field,⁴ leaving it in the hands of Social Psychology, and Religious Psychology which is “ the other of the twins. ”⁵

Thus, the author feels a strong necessity that much more attention should be paid to the subject of religion in the fields of science, to look at it just as it exists, and to recognize that religion is the core-value of the individual which determines his whole personality.

B. The Purpose of the Research

This research is made under the author's hypothetical thought that religion is the individual's core-value which determines his whole personality in the sense of integration and constructiveness, and that religion gives the individual the ultimate solution for his ultimate problem, the meaning of life.

The purpose of the research is to inquire into the following points :

First of all, what religious consciousness youth has at present : what percentage of them have definite religious consciousness ; and what spiritual consciousness those have who do not show a religious faith.

Secondly, the development of religious consciousness : how they come to have religious consciousness ; what factors and in what way those factors affected their religious growth.

Thirdly, the experiences of religious awakening ; how the religious awakening took place in the individuals ; what spiritual struggles they had until their awakening experience, especially, how often the questionings of the ultimate problem, the meaning of life, were made ; and what was the effect of the religious awakening upon the individual's whole personality, that is, how his ultimate problems are being solved, and what new attitude he has acquired toward life.

It is not the intention of the research to find the individual's 'attitude toward' or 'view on' religion, but his own 'subjective' religion itself as spontaneously revealed.

This research is made also with intention of the historical and descriptive analysis of the individual's religious consciousness, trying

to see it as it is, and to reveal its feature in the historical perspective, rather than to make a hasty generalization in terms of frequency derived from many cases.

C. The Procedure

In order to attain the purpose and intention of the research, several following points were considered.

The source of data was limited only to the 50 comprehensive autobiographies selected at random out of those which were written by the junior and senior students of the International Christian University. Comparatively a few researches have been made since William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*, which have used the descriptive method with personal documents, especially autobiographies.

On analysis of the autobiographies there are some point to be considered, which will be mentioned together with the characteristics of the autobiography as a source of data for the research in Chapter IV. The two major points are: first, that the analyser should step aside from the first vivid impression of the stories, and avoid the impressionistic interpretation;⁶ and secondly, that clear distinction must be made between experiences mentioned and not-mentioned, and between the record of experience and the interpretations made upon the record by the writer.⁷

The classification and analysis were made only according to the writers' own statements, expressions, and descriptions. For example, in the category of 'those who have the religious faith' only those who clearly showed the fact in statements, expressions, or descriptions, were grouped. No attempt was made to exercise the Freudian way to seek for hidden meanings of the descriptions.

Quotations of the descriptions were put in quotation-marks with the identification code-number,⁸ so that the reader may easily relate even a single phrase quoted to the writer's whole story. By putting

the identification code-number to the quotations, it is also possible to check the analysis in the research, for certain purposes, in connection with the original autobiographies.

In every research the terminology should always be clear. When the subject-matter of the research is religion, however, one immediately faces the difficulty in attempting to set a definition of the term 'religion'. There may be no more difficult word to define than this term. In his book *A Psychological Study of Religion* (1912), J. H. Leuba gave 50 definitions of religion made by philosophers and theologians, including two of his own.⁹ There seems to be as many various definitions of religion as there are varieties of personality.

There are definitions which regard religion as a completely social phenomenon, such as those of Durkheim, T. Parsons, and Ames.¹⁰ They do not fit the concept of the term as used in this research.

William James defines religion as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine."¹¹ Pratt defines it as "the serious and social attitude of *individuals* or *communities* toward the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests and destinities."¹² G. W. Allport gives his own definition, though not of the term religion itself, but of the 'mature religious sentiment', conceiving it as "a disposition, built up through experience, to respond favorably, and in certain habitual ways, to conceptual objects and principles that the *individual* regards as of ultimate importance in his own life, and as having to do with what he regards as permanent or central in the nature of things."¹³ W. H. Clark describes religion as "the inner experience of the individual when he senses a Beyond, especially as evidenced by the effect of this experience on his behavior when he actively attempts to harmonize his life with the Beyond."¹⁴

These above definitions all stress the individual and his experiences. These are the definition which agree with the meaning of the term

religion as used in this research. The author will not attempt to produce another definition of the term here but only reaffirm that religion is a very personal thing, the core-value of the individual which ultimately determines his whole personality.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF STUDIES

Here will be made a brief historical survey of psychological studies on religion.

The beginning of the modern American movement in the study of the psychology of religion may be set at 1888, when Edwin Diller Starbuck published his volume entitled *The Psychology of Religion* (1912). Starbuck has been a student of William James at a time before James' own interest in the field had flowered, James' interest owing considerably more to Starbuck. Starbuck, after transferring to Clark University, continued his work there with the encouragement of G. Stanley Hall. His volume summarized his findings and was the first systematic work in the field.

At the same time, George Albert Coe had been carrying on researches in the field of religious psychology, in part with the use of hypnosis, in an attempt to link the religious reactions of people to their temperaments. In his book *The Spiritual Life* which came out in 1900, Coe reacted somewhat against the contemporary emphasis on conversion. He stressed the religious nurture of youth, and pointed out that for many the playing down of conflict and religious storm and stress leads to a more normal and fruitful type of religious development. Coe remained throughout his life a vigorous advocate of empirical methods in psychological study and religious education.

The most celebrated of all modern works on the psychology of religion is William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), with the sub-title of "A Study in Human Nature". A feature

of the book is the profuse use of concrete illustrations, for which he was indebted in some measure to Starbuck. Almost exclusively these are in the form of case material, as often as possible in the words of the subjects. The book also is marked by James' deliberate selection for study of extreme and highly individualized forms of the religious life. This represents at once his feeling that religion is basically an individual rather than a social phenomenon and his conviction that religion shows itself more clearly in extremes. James nowhere illustrates better the central tenets of his pragmatic philosophy' for which he is so well known. He insists that it is neither the origins nor the processes of the religious life that justify it so much as the results. No matter how disreputable the genesis of a religious impulse or how psychopathic the founders of a religious movement, if the consequent religious activities are beneficial or to society, the religion is thereby justified.

Stimulated by such pioneer works, interest in the psychology of religion grew during the next fifteen years. *The Journal of Religious Psychology* started publication in 1904, as *The American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education*, and continued until 1915. In 1910, *The Psychology of Religious Experience* by E. S. Ames was published. Ames was influenced by Harold Höffding's *The Philosophy of Religion*, published in 1906, and marks the point that religion has its origin in the attempt to conserve social values. Another book with considerable influence on psychologies of religion, which also emphasized the social roots of religion, was *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915) by the French sociologist, Emile Durkheim.

A very different approach is to be found in George M. Stratton's *Psychology of the Religious Life*, published in 1911, which sets forth the stimulating thesis that religion has its source in conflict within the individual. Still another important name during the heyday of the psychology of religion is that of James H. Leuba, who taught for many years at Bryn Mawr College. Leuba tended toward

naturalistic explanations of religious phenomena, pointing out, for example, the similarity of the reports of mystics to those of people who have been under the influence of drugs. He published *A Psychological Study of Religion* in 1912. This had been preceded by numerous journal articles and was followed by other books and articles, of which one was *The Psychology of Religious Mysticism* in 1925.

In 1920 there appeared the book which perhaps is second only to James' *Varieties* in this field. This was James B. Pratt's *The Religious Consciousness*. Though primarily a philosopher, he had done empirical research while a graduate student at Harvard in the field of the psychology of religious belief, and had published a book on it in 1907. As a deeply religious man himself, Pratt wrote with the authority of one who knew something of his subject at first hand. Since 1920 books on the psychology of religion, though there have been a considerable number, tend to be either or more restricted in scope than the works of Pratt and James. In 1922 Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy* ("Das Heilige") was published. This is an attempt by Otto to define the psychological experience of the apprehension of the holy, which he takes to be the central element in worship. This work is intuitive rather than empirical in its approach, and its insights are profound and stimulating. In the same year appeared *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion* by Robert H. Thouless of Cambridge University. Elmer T. Clark reported extensive research on conversion in 1929 in *The Psychology of Religious Awakening*. In this he compares conversion experiences of his day with those reported a generation or two before. Another interesting work on conversion had been translated into the English from the Italian two years before this, *Religious Conversion* 1924 by Sante de Sanctis. In 1929 there appeared a book on religion by a psychologist thoroughly trained and respected in his field, *The Psychology of Religious Adjustment* by Edmund S. Conklin.

In 1935 appeared *Normative Psychology of Religion* by H. N.

and R. W. Wieman; the next year, *The Psychology of Christian Personality*, by Ernest M. Ligon. The latter is an attempt to derive a definition of the religious life from a study of the Gospels. One of the most recent systematic books on the psychology of religion is Paul E. Johnson's *Psychology of Religion* published in 1945. This is a brief work, more appreciative of the positive values of religion than some. Johnson has very recently published an enlarged volume of the same title as the above one, which is, however, entirely new in theory and application. He published another title in the field, *Personality and Religion* (1957) in which he attempts to integrate religion and modern personality theory.

In 1950 Gordon W. Allport's *The Individual and His Religion* appeared, which seems much influential in calling the attention of both psychologists and religious scholars to the common ground between them. Like James, Allport emphasizes the individuality of religious experience, but he specializes in describing the systematically developed and reasoned type of religion that has more appeal for the intellect than do the passionate and extreme forms of religious experience that James describes.

One of the most up-to-date, comprehensive volumes in the field of the psychology of religion is Walter Houston Clark's *The Psychology of Religion*, which was published in 1958. This book is up-to-date and comprehensive in the sense that it includes many recent, as well as classical studies, and makes reference to other related areas, especially that of mental health.

This survey of the previous studies in the psychology of religion has been all too brief, but it will serve to show some background for this research.

CHAPTER III

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE UNIVERSITY FROM WHICH THE AUTOBIOGRAPHIES CAME

This research is based on the autobiographies written by the students of the International Christian University. A description of the characteristics of the university will be of some help for understanding and interpreting the results of this research. A brief survey of the characteristics of the university will be made here from the view-point of its educational goal, especially religious education.¹

A. Educational Goal

After "a half century of efforts and prayers by a number of farsighted individuals",² the International Christian University was established in 1949. Its College of Liberal Arts was opened in 1953.

The educational goal of the university, as is mentioned in the bulletin, is "to create an academic tradition of freedom and reverence undergirded by truth and to educate men and women to acquire international culture and discernment befitting the members of a democratic society in service to God and humanity."³

It is a special characteristic that all full-time faculty members must be Christian, who are sought not only in Japan but widely throughout the world. The number of students is limited to 180 in one class. The high ratio of the number of the faculty members to that of the students promotes personal contacts between the teachers and student. This university is an international and interdenominational christian university, which is open to students regardless of race, creed, nationality or sex.

B. Religious Education

Religious education at the university is done through the program

which includes the class-room study, and various religious activities. At this university it is sought to develop and maintain a dynamic religious program at the center of its campus life. This is based on the conclusion that "religion is a fundamental concern of humanity and an intrinsic reality of human history";⁴ the recognition that "philosophy of life or *Weltanschauung* that is adequate for university-educated citizens of the modern world must take full cognizance of religious truth";⁵ and the conviction that "this religious truth is rooted in the Word of God as revealed in and by Jesus Christ."⁶

A brief description of the religious program at the university will be made, referring to the courses in religion, and the religious program.

1. Courses in Religion

Here reference is made only to the required courses which are taken by all students.

There are required courses of Humanities in General Education usually to be taken in the freshman year. These courses of twelve units are designed to give the students an understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage; and attention is given to the fields of religion, philosophy, literature, music and art, both East and West. In regard to religion, the basic ideas in Christianity and Buddhism are taught.

There is a course of Introduction to Christianity which is to make the students intelligent about what Christianity means in the present age. It is a prescribed three-unit course in religion, which is normally be taken in the sophomore or junior year.

2. Religious Program

The religious program in this university includes: the Chapel Service, the Religious Emphasis Week, Bible-classes, prayer-groups, retreats, evangelical meetings, and the Sunday worship service on

the University Church.

The Chapel Service. The total university community joins in the service of worship held once a week during the hour set apart for this purpose, with messages brought by the members of the faculty or by visiting clergy or lay speakers. Attendance is not required but every member of the university community is invited to attend.

Religious Emphasis Week. Once each year during the first term the religious emphasis week is held with special services conducted every day. Students are also invited in small groups into faculty homes for intimate discussion of their religious concerns and problems.

Bible Classes and Prayer Groups. Many Bible classes and prayer groups are formed, often spontaneously, by students with cooperation and guidance from qualified members of the faculty. These are open to all persons.

Retreats. Retreats are held twice a year during the summer and spring vacations. Three to five days away from city They are open to all students, and usually about a hundred people attending them.

Evangelical Meetings. Evangelical meetings are held twice in the 2nd and 3rd terms with clergy or lay speakers.

The University Church. The University Church holds a bilingual worship service each Sunday morning, open to all persons, people of the neighboring community as well as campus people. The Church sponsors a Sunday school, a prayer meeting, a Bible Class, communicants' classes, young people's society, and retreats for students, and benevolent activities for the community.

There are also consulting-hours by the university-pastor which are open to all students. A total of about 400 students and other people made appointments with the pastor for counseling during the academic year 1957-58. 7

IV THE SOURCE OF DATA :

A. The Value of Autobiography

Among the methods of the psychological study of religion, there are the questionnaire method, the biographical method, the historical method, the comparative and genetic method, the experimental method, and others,¹ among which the questionnaire method seems to have more frequently been used. None of them alone is, however, a perfect method, each having its own characteristics and limitation.

In this research, the autobiography is used as the source of data, because it is most appropriate in attaining the purpose of this author. The autobiography, when it is the individual's historical, comprehensive, spontaneous description of the writer's mental life, has a priceless value as an information-source in inquiring into the individual's religious consciousness.

It goes without saying that when we attempt to understand the present stage of the spiritual development of the individual, it is always indispensable to grasp it in the historical background and in the whole context of life.

Religion is utterly subjective consciousness, so it is better grasped through the individual's own concrete expressions, rather than through abstracted forms such as highly generalized, simplified questionnaire items.

Religion is the individual's positive consciousness which reveals itself spontaneously, so it is better grasped in the form of non-topical autobiography, rather than through questions which may be suggestive and persuasive in producing answers.

The comprehensive autobiography is written through collecting memories of experiences which have been most impressive in one's life. It is written through deep introspection which sees to get into one's own core part of personality. It is, therefore, in such a description and record that religious consciousness, the individual's core-value is expected to reveal itself abundantly.

B. Setting of the Autobiographies

As the source of data for this research, 50 of the 91 autobiographies were used which were written in May 1957 by the senior and junior students of the International Christian University as the assignment in professor Yataro Okabe's 1957-spring Class in Educational Psychology.

We are able to know how these autobiographies were produced, through professor Okabe's report,² and as well from the replies which two of the writers made to the question about professor Okabe's direction of the assignment, who were one of the seniors and one of the juniors of the 1957 Class.³

One of the above two writers reported "in the beginning of the course in Educational Psychology in 1957 the professor announced the assignment to write our own autobiographies. It was to deal with a general life history, with no definite suggestion about its style or what part of the life history to describe. There was a period of about a month from this announcement of the assignment until the dead-line date." Professor Okabe makes it a rule to ask the students, at the end of the course as a part of the final examination, to make an interpretation of these autobiographies from the view point of educational psychology.⁴ He tells the students that the autobiographies will become his property, with some exceptional cases which will be returned to the authors.

Professor Okabe says, "I make it a rule to read good models⁵ of autobiographies before the students in the class, so that they may write better autobiographies...with a good result that the quality is generally increasing."⁶ To read models surely helps the students to organize their own autobiographies. One of the two writers reported, "I think the models gave me suggestions about what to include in my own, or how to organize mine. It was good to have time to follow up my own life by listening to others' chronological life-stories."

Both writers agreed that they included the following in the own autobiographies :

- (1) Chronological description of the happenings that might have great influence upon their own personality formation.
- (2) Their own values and views on life.
- (3) The events and persons which had great influence upon their own outlook for the future.
- (4) Growth after entering the university.

One of them included a description of the religious conversion, saying, "Which, I believe, was most important event in my life."

As the source of data a total of 50 random-samples were selected, taking the first 25 in alphabetical order from each class of the senior and junior students. The following autobiographies were omitted: those written by a few non-Japanese students, sophomore students, and one junior student whose age is 33, so that all the samples may be of the same nationality, and approximately of the same levels of spiritual maturity and experience of the university-life.

Among the 50 samples the number of men and that of women are the same, with more women in the juniors. The average age is 21.5, with range from 20 to 26 ; 41 students (82%) fall between 20 and 22 years of age. (Table I)

In the analysis and discussion, the junior and senior students are treated together.

C. General Features of the Autobiographies

The autobiographies used are of a comprehensive kind which describe the general life history, from birth through to the present, with much variety in style and length. The average length of the autobiographies is 22.1 pages (of Japanese copy paper of 400 letters), with range from 10 to 56 pages. (Table II)

Table I.

Sex and Age of the 50 Samples.

(A) Sex :

Class	Male	Female	Total
Junior	9	16	25
Senior	16	9	25
Total	25	25	50

(B) Age :

Class	Average age years old	Age							
		20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
Junior	20.6	15	6	3	0	1	0	0	
Senior	22.4	0	4	13	4	3	0	1	
Total	21.5	15	10	16	4	4	0	1	

Table II.

Length (Total Pages) of the 50 Sample Autobiographies.

Total pages	10-	20-	30-	40-	50-
Number of cases	23	18	6	2	1

Table III.

Amount of Reference to Religious and Spiritual Life in the 50 Sample Autobiographies.

Amount of reference in terms of page	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5	-6	-7	-8	-9
Number of cases	13	13	10	2	3	3	2	2	1	1

Thirty-seven autobiographies (74%) referred to religion or to their religious life and spiritual growth. Amount of reference to religion and spiritual life in their autobiographies is shown in Table III.

Thirteen among the 50 samples did not refer to religion at all. Nine of the 13 autobiographies are less than 15 pages in length.

Some writers said, "The experience of the religious awakening is something that I can never omit when I am to tell about my life. But as I wish to deal with it in another way, I shall omit it here." (012); or having described rather in detail the spiritual struggles until the religious awakening, and wrote, "As I have made a detailed description of the process of my religious awakening written on another paper, I would like to avoid mentioning it here." (039); and another saying, "(After coming to the university) my baptism, love, ... these are too fresh and hot to write down... I have not yet got courage and decision to be a guinea-pig of psychology." (070)

It is evident that the individual who describes his own religious experiences and life, is taking religion as the matter of great importance in his life. It seems, however, to be another problem that whether he makes a detailed description of them in his autobiography or not.

Some mention that they intend to omit the very experiences of religious awakening. Yet we find many important parts of their spiritual growth in their life-stories. Those parts help us to understand the core-experiences which they dare to omit, just like fragments off an old earthenware, many and large enough to tell the original whole body.

Some of them refer reactions toward the assignment of autobiography-writing in the preface or postscript. They mention that at first they hesitated to write their own autobiographies, because they felt uneasy to expose their own naked egos, or to touch on past pains and events that they did not wish to recall. Some were afraid that they might, consciously or unconsciously, do a fiction-making or modification upon the records of their own growth. But, with deep trust in the teacher who was to read them, they made a sincere effort to describe their own egos as they actually are. Some of them are thankful for the assignment as a precious opportunity for them to stop and look back upon their past

lives of twenty years. There was no single autobiography which expressed unwillingness to describe the writer's own life.

Some of the descriptions follow :

"When the assignment was set, I got disgusted at this course. I was in the state of mind that I did not wish to touch on my ego. I was afraid of creating a fiction of my self on the plea of an autobiography . . . But now I am thankful, in many ways, for this assignment gave me an opportunity to look back upon the path I have walked." (012)

"I have no nerve to expose myself. But, since I am to write, I shall try to write it as truly as possible. Yet I have to admit that in some points I might be tempted to justify myself or to express myself better. I shall write with my wholehearted trust on you." (029)

"When I am to make my autobiography as the record of my own spiritual wanderings, I feel the disgusting thoughts occurring that would deceive myself and the task itself, and even the teacher who assigned the task. I imagine my own ego that would, unconsciously at least, modify the very record of the growth in spite of controlling it by the utmost use of reason. I sincerely wish that you could read my true hidden mind which lies under the surface." (070)

"With confidence I would like to describe my past. . . Though I am tempted to recall only happy things, I sincerely wish I could look back, with a smile, even to the muddy paths I walked. . . But what should I do with the past pains which I do not wish to get touched by others or I myself do not want remember?" (721)

"I am glad that I could write an honest autobiography, which contains some points that I would have liked to avoid. I have been conscious of not fulfilling the duty, but describing my own real personality. I was happy that I had a good opportunity to look back upon myself." (085)

D. Evaluation of the Autobiographies

Thus far discussion has been given upon the general value of autobiographies as research-material to inquire into the individuals' religious consciousness, as well as the features of the selected sample-autobiographies. The intention of this sections is to check the adequacy of these autobiographies as the source of data for attaining the research purposes.

The evaluation of the autobiographies is done by checking the following points: validity, deception, effects of mood, and errors of memory. ⁷

Validity. Allport shows recent investigations which have established genuine measures of validity of personal documents, which are, however, not always usable. He also shows three nonquantitative indicators such as the general credibility of the subject, the plausibility of the document in terms of past experience, and the test of internal consistency or self-confrontation.

When the students recognize the meaning of the task of autobiography-writing in class of Educational Psychology, and moreover when they take it as a precious opportunity to look back upon their own past lives, as we have seen in some of their descriptions, then it is highly probable that their autobiographies gain high validity as the *records* of their own growth. The validity in terms of credibility and plausibility will be heightened by the writers' sincere and honest attitudes toward the task.

The impression the author has received reading the sample-autobiographies would evaluate the validity high in terms of self-confrontation. The fact that 74% of the autobiographies contain reference to their spiritual lives of the writers, reason for this validity indicates the evidence.

Deception. "Specious statements within personal documents range in type from unconscious rationalizations to deliberate hoaxes" says Allport. "The motives in deception are complex. Perverse

exhibitionism is not uncommon.”⁸ Allport thinks that the strict guarantee of anonymity and the scientific attitude help to reduce deception to a minimum.

In the sample-autobiographies of this research there is no anonymity. Professor Okabe says in his report, however, the writers’ recognition that their autobiographies are used only for the purpose of understanding themselves, for psychological studies, and that they are to be treated in strict confidence, helps to reduce deception. Their sincere attitudes and honest manners as seen previously, may well be thought of as a proof of the statement Professor Okabe made. The author has the same impression as that of Professor Okabe who says that “there have been found many which show sincere efforts to try to describe *facts* objectively, while hesitating to do so with a sense of shame.”⁹

Effect of mood (Unreliability). There is a criticism that autobiographies, as well as other personal documents like letters, diaries, and others, are heavily saturated with mood. Actually, however, this does not seem to be so serious a matter. Scarcely any autobiography is produced at one sitting. Allport explains that “so long as the composition is spread over a period of time, the effects of moods may be expected to counter-balance one another and to result in a fairly accurate picture of the prevailing temperament.”¹⁰

There was a period of about a month from Professor Okabe’s announcement of the assignment of autobiography-writing until the dead-line date.

Error of memory. There are errors of memory which are motivated by a desire to deceive the reader or by an unconscious wish to deceive oneself. But there are also errors of memory which are caused by a certain tendency to paint the whole of a period in the past with one color of happy or unhappy impression.”¹¹

Though errors of this kind may be common, yet not so troublesome, because it is not likely that individuals will forget the self-involved, personality-forming, epoch-making experiences in their

lives.

Allport suggests that the writers be given questionnaire-guides which may help them to keep events in mind while writing. In our case, the reading of the model-autobiographies in the class during the preparation period, may have served them with similar good effect.

There are still other problems, such as self-deception, blindness to motives, oversimplification, conceptualization, etc., which are much more important in a sense. They are large problems to be taken into account now in this discussion of evaluating our source of data. They are the problems of the whole area of psychology.

Skipping these problems here, it may be fairly concluded that the autobiographies which are used in this research, are valid as the source of data for attaining the research-purposes.

CHAPTER V

RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS AND GENERAL INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENT

The individuals' religious consciousness is varied, as Allport said, "The subjective religious attitude of every individual is, in both its essential and non-essential features, unlike that of any other individual."¹ It can hardly be classified into distinct categories. Keeping this in mind, a classification of the religious consciousness and the environmental backgrounds was made according to statements of the writers, so that we may, first of all, have some idea about the samples as a whole and about the courses of the individuals' growth.

As shown in the previous chapter, 13 of the 50 samples do not at all refer to their own religious consciousness or to religion in general. Excluding the 13, the 37 were classified as seen in Table IV. Let us follow each of the categories and see religious con-

sciousness that the individuals bear *at present* and their environmental backgrounds.

Table IV.
Religious Consciousness and Religious Background of the 37 Samples.

Religious consciousness	Total	From religious environment	From non-religious environment
Those who have the religious faith	17(34%)** M: 4 F: 13	14 (5)* M: 2 F: 12	3* M: 2 F: 1
Those who are seeking a faith	3 (6%) M: 1 F: 2	1 M: 0 F: 1	2 M: 1 F: 1
Those who are negative to religion	7 (14%) M: 5 F: 2	3 M: 2 F: 1	4 M: 3 F: 1
Those who have no special interest	10 (20%) M: 5 F: 5	4 M: 2 F: 2	6 M: 3 F: 3
Total	37(74%) M: 15 F: 22	22 M: 6 F: 16	15 M: 9 F: 6

* Those who were awakened after coming to the university

** Of the 50 samples

Table V.
Classification of Religious Consciousness and Religious Backgrounds of the 37 Samples.

Religious consciousness	Religious home			Church	Christian schools		
	Father	Mother	Both		Elementary	Jr. & Sr. High	
Those who have the religious faith	7 (2)	1 (1)	1	5 (1)	13	1	10
Those who are seeking a faith	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Those who are negative	1	0	0	1	1	0	3
Those who have no special interest	4 (1)	0	1	3 (1)	0	0	1
Total	13 (3)	1 (1)	3	9 (2)	15	1	15

* () Buddhists which are included in the preceding figure

A. Classification of Religious Consciousness

1. Those Who Have the Religious Faith

Among the 37 autobiographies which refer to religion, 17 (34%² of the 50 samples) clearly express or definitely mention that they have religious faith, all of them being Christian. The numbers of male and female students of the 17 are respectively four and thirteen.

They all clearly mention that they have the Christian faith, which expressed in various ways: "I was given the faith in Christ . . . through a strange guidance" (014); "such is my religious experience [of a sudden]³ through which I became a Christian" (027); "I was truly given the faith, and actually felt that I was saved" (039); "I had infant baptism . . . I became a Christian after the profession" (087); and so on.

Religious faith continues to grow. After some years or months following the religious awakening, what religious faith or consciousness do they have through religious activities and other experiences? We can know some aspects of their present religious consciousness through the descriptions which are expressed usually in the last part of their autobiographies. These are written with sincere reflections upon the past or present lives, decisions, and wishes for the future:

" . . . with my pessimistic nature haunting, or with occasional loss of interest in the Bible or the church, I am still amidst problems. And yet I have to say, 'I am a Christian.'" (012)

"[At the university] I find myself losing confidence in various respects. But I am no longer what I used to be in the old days. I do not lose hope. I believe it is my mission to live my life, the gift by God, with confidence and efforts to the last. I only thank God, whenever I think of my past happy lives . . ." (019)

" . . . I cannot but believe in the Gospel. I think that my life-purpose is to respond to Jesus' love. That is to serve God and man, but in reality I am repeating failure in loving others

and making myself humble. There is a great difference between the me that prays in the morning and me that prays at bed in the evening, reflecting on the day's life . . . But, I am growing little by little every day . . . I, such a being who sometimes almost loses interest in man in despair and solitude! And I, such a person, on the other hand, who is looking upward to live with the hope in God! Only God knows everything. I am satisfied just to be able to live." (021)

"The neurotic trouble has risen again, and I am caught by displeasure and uneasiness. 'Is this a man who believes in God?' often ask I. Yet, it is certain that the deep-rooted support on me exists in Christ." (029)

"I sincerely wish to be a man of humble, obedient, and generous mind who is loved by everybody. With this motto, I shall make my efforts to go over the difficulties before me . . ." (026)

"At present I am thinking of social work and evangelism as my life-work, though my parents are against my wish." (024)

". . . I have a special interest in Christian education. I wish to be a man who has an interest in man and loves man." (087)

Religious awakening. A definite religious awaken is usually followed by baptism. Among the 17 who have religious faith, mention that they received baptism; two of the 16 received the infant-baptism, one in the Elementary-school days, three in the junior high school days, three in the senior high school days, and seven after entering the university.

Table IV tells that eight (47%) of the 17 (or 16% of the 50 samples) were awakened after entering the university, and three of them, being from non-religious environments, met Christianity for the first time at the university.

The fact that among those who have the Christian faith, 47% of them were awakened after coming to the university and the rest 53% were awakened before that, may show that the peak of the distribution-curve of the religious-awakening age is around the third

year of the senior high school, 17 or 18 years of age. ⁴

Home. There are seven in which one or both parents have a religious faith. Among them, two are from Buddhist families, and five are from Christian families with four cases of both parents and one case of mother being Christian.

Church. Thirteen of the 17 Christians mention that they had been to church before entering university. Eleven among the 13 went to church-schools, including the above seven who are from religious families.

Schools. (Elementary school :) One of the 17 mentions that he went to a Christian Elementary-school. It is clear that seven of them went to non-religious schools, though nine of them do not mention the type of their schools.

(Junior and Senior high school :) Ten of the 17 mention that they went to Christian high schools. They are so-called mission schools which contain both the senior and junior divisions. The other seven went to non-religious high schools. Nine of the ten are those who had once been to Church-schools.

2. Those Who Are Seeking

Three (6%) of the 50 samples mention that they are seeking a religious faith. The following quotations may show some features of their present consciousness.

“ . . . It has to be ‘ Sollen ’ [or inevitability] for me to believe in God. It is not that God exists because men are suffering pains, or because men need God. But it has to be that God exists definitely whether men need it or not. I earnestly wish that I would be made to live by God. But I think, that should be the wish not only from man’s side, but also from God’s side. I sing hymns heartily in the chapel.” (078)

“ Christianity will not come close to a man as a seriously urgent matter, who does not make a thorough inquiry into himself. I have

repeated failure in surrendering myself before God at the last step, though understanding it theoretically at classes or retreats. After all my ego is my lord. . . whatever one wishes to get, must seek after it with a strong zeal, even to be prepared for the self to be dragged about by it; whatever it is, God, man's love, or learning. Though I hate myself who escapes couragelessly on the way of seeking after, I cannot help myself. At present I am seeking for, with an unsatisfied and lonely mind." (098)

"I am, now, making up my mind to become God's servant. I regret that I abandoned the opportunity [a friend's invitation to a church] at that time for myself which might have guided me to partake God's grace, as it seems to have been against God's will."(101)

One of the above three, a woman student (078), is from a Christian environment. She went to a church-school, has a mother who is Christian, and went to a highschool. The other two mention that they met Christianity for the first time at the university.

3. Those Who Are Negative to Religion

There are seven cases (14% of the 50 samples) grouped together under this item. They are much various in consciousness or attitude toward Christianity, none of them referring to other institutional religions.

They can be divided roughly into two groups: one group are three students who came from Christian highschools, among whom one being from a Christian family, and another one having attended church; the other group are four who are all from non-religious environment. One common characteristic among the seven is that they are all keeping themselves away from Christianity, being unsatisfied, or disappointed with it. Some of them think deeply and seriously about problems of religion and life, while some show emotional, rather than intellectual, negativism. The following

quotations will show some of the features.

Those who are from religious environment :

“A detached room in my house was used for the church fellowship which I often attended. The pastor was anxious about me, and naturally invited me to receive baptism. But I used to avoid it. That is not because I regarded Christianity as a bad superstition, but because I had a stronger interest and curiosity in other world [socialism, for one thing].” (017)

“When I entered the senior division of the high school, I kept myself away from religion . . . I felt I must not observe [the religious rituals at school without faith] which I felt unpardonable . . . [conflict between the growing *ego* and the teaching at school that ego-centricity is the biggest sin.]. At this university I have not grown hot or cold. Though I have a wish to be given faith, I have tried to avoid the religion . . . I have made up my mind not to call for God until I have fallen into the bottom of despair.” (030)

“ . . . Though admitting that Christianity is a good thing, I have been intolerable of its organization, the church.” (100)

Those who are from non-religious environment :

“I, with a strong self-importance, am disappointed with Christianity, and am still not understanding it. [He has mentioned that he was disappointed with the pastor only repeated ‘Just pray’ and ‘with Christians’ behaviors.] But in some future a day may come when I have to be confronted with Christ. Then I am sure that my life experience at this university will prove to be meaningful and helpful.” (023)

“Though I entered this university in order to seek for faith, I utterly failed in the point. Rather, I am moving toward a direction opposite to the religious faith.” (780)

“I had a repellent feeling toward Christianity before trying to understand it. Nowadays, I am beginning to learn about it, but it is not likely that I would have the faith in future.” (015)

“I once thought of asking Christianity for the help. But it was quite natural that any religious faith was not aroused by the pastor who looked wealthy and healthy with a rosy face and plump body. Rather, if I had been guided by a pastor of a similar class as we who are living poor lives, I would have been saved. I thought such people could never understand our real anguishes.” (092)

4. Those Who Have No Special Interest in Religion

There are ten among the samples who have no special interest in religion at present, though two of them had once a zeal for understanding Christianity. Four of the ten are from religious families, including one Buddhist family, and one of them received infant-baptism. Another one of the ten went to a Christian high school. Some features of their religious consciousness may be seen through the following quotations.

“I feel pain that I cannot still make myself meek before religion, perhaps due to my own egoism. I can not now find in myself such sincere emotions to believe in God’s existence and to pray before God as I had on entering this university.” (016)

“Though I have an interest in Christianity, I am not disposed to attend a Bible class at all, being busy with daily activities.” (033)

“(At ICU) I came to have a strong antagonism toward hypocritical Christians . . . In order to floor those Christians, I studied many books on religion. Perhaps I was educated by those books un-noticingly, until I came to recognize some significance of religion to life, and at the same time, I find myself at a loss ‘to be or not to be a Christian’ . . . But I am about to end my college life without finding a solution to the religious problem which is to have greatest importance in life.” (077)

“I sought for some strong power which would support me. I attended the Bible class, prayer-meetings, and the worship services . . .

As I gradually came to feel at home in the dormitory, I began to spend an easy and unconscious life as my needs and interests went. As a matter of course my seeking-mind for Christianity lacked in seriousness, and I came to be away from it.” (091)

“At present, though I don’t deny Christianity, I am a bystander. I now admit that Christians are happy men, and I feel lonely and small of myself as left behind . . .” (095)

B. Findings, and Problems Raised on Religious Awakening and Environment

1. Findings

The above results reveal a certain tendency of the influentiality of environmental backgrounds upon individuals’ religious growth.

Among the 22 who are from religious environments, 14 (64%) have religious faith, whereas three (20%) of the 15 who are from non-religious environment, have religious faith. (Table IV)

Seven (54%) of the 13 who were brought up in religious families, 13 (87%) of the 15 who used to go to church, and ten (67%) of the 15 who went to Christian high schools, have religious faith. (Table V)

Table IV shows that five (42%) of the 13 who are from religious environment, whereas three (20%) of those who are from non-religious environment, were awakened after coming to the university.

The above results indicate that the religious environment have a positive influential power on the individuals’ religious awakening. It is also clear that previous religious education influences the individuals religious growth after entering the university.

2. Problems Raised

So far we have glanced over the individuals’ religious consciousness and environmental backgrounds. Using simple statistics, we have examined how many of the samples have religious faith, and how many of them were brought up in religious families, attended church,

or went to Christian high schools. Thus we have found a certain tendency of the influentiality of religious environment upon the individuals' religious growth.

There are, however, very important questions left concerning how *in a concrete manner* the individuals have grown to have religious faith. Some who are brought up in a similar religious environment, grow in quite different ways to have religious faith; or sometimes they grow toward quite opposite directions.

'How each individual has grown to have a religious faith,' this is the primary concern in this research. In order to inquire into this point, attention will be paid first, to the interactions between the individuals and these religious environments such as home, church, and schools; what stimuli the individuals were given there, and what reactions they had, positive or negative. Spiritual growth is promoted by interactions with environment.

Secondly, special attention will be paid to the personal or inner factors which would affect the individuals' religious growth. They are situational conditions and psychological needs. The individuals' efforts for religious awakening will be also considered.

The analysis of religious growth will be made by examining mainly those 17 cases which show religious faith.

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This is Tsutomu Saeki's thesis presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the International Christian University for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education in February 1962, which was written under the guidance of Marie F. Bale, with Professor Yataro Okabe as the thesis adviser.

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NOTES

CHAPTER I

1. Ryusei Ueno, in *Shukyo Shinrigaku* (Religious Psychology) (Tokyo, 1935), p. 6f, also mentions about Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) who was a pastor of the Prespitarian church in the United States, and made a detailed analysis and observation of the religious experiences, publishing his accomplished work, "A Treatise concerning the Religious Affections," 1747.
2. G. A. Coe, in *The Psychology of Religion* (Chicago, 1916), p. 1, lists the following studies as the earliest articles bearing on the topic: A. H. Daniels, "The New Life," 1893; J. H. Leuba, "A Study in the Psychology of Religious Phenomena," 1896; W. H. Burnham, "The Study of Adolescence," 1891; E. G. Lancaster, "Psychology and Pedagogy of Adolescence," 1895; E. D. Starbuck, "A Study of Conversion," 1897, and "Some Aspects of Religious Growth," 1898; and these were succeeded by followings devoted largely or wholly to conversion and kindred phenomena: E. D. Starbuck, "The Psychology of Religion," 1899; G. A. Coe, "The Spiritual Life," 1900; William James, "The Varieties of Religious Experience," 1902.
3. Takenaka, Shinjo, *A Research on the Psychology of Religion* (Tokyo, 1957), p. 514.
4. Hiroshi Chiwa, in *Seinen Shinrigaku* (Adolescent Psychology) (Tokyo, 1957), p. 181, mentions that "the main stream of the Adolescent Psychology seems to think it wiser to avoid religion, and to leave it in the hands of Social Psychology, saying that religious life is an adapting-pattern to the culture and tradition."
5. Megumu Imada, in "Shukyo-Ishiki no Hattatsu" (Development of Religious Consciousness), *Seinen-Shinrigaku Koza* (Lectures of Adolescent Psychology) I (Tokyo, 1955), p. 101, explains that S. Hall is the mother of both Religious Psychology and Adolescent Psychology, who thought the religious awakening as the very characteristics of the adolescence; this view of Hall's was succeeded in the following studies, namely his own volumes, *Adolescence*, vols. 1 & 2, 1914, and Starbuck's *The Psychology of Religion*, 1899, the former being the very start of Adolescent Psychology.

6. White, R. K., "Black Boy: A Value Analysis," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (1947) 42, p. 441.
7. Allport, G. W. *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science* (New York, 1942), p. 77.
8. To each of the autobiographies is attached the identification code-number, which was put to almost every quotation, only changing all the original code-numbers in the same way to subtract seven hundred, and identification of every quotation being still possible.
9. Pratt, J. B., *The Religious Consciousness* (New York, 1920), p. 1.
10. Clark, W. H., *The Psychology of Religion* (New York, 1958), p. 19 f. Talcot Parsons defines religion as "a set of beliefs, practices, and institutions which men have evolved in various societies"; and Ames as "the consciousness of the highest social values."
11. James, William, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York, 1902), pp. 31-32.
12. Pratt, p. 2; it should be noted here, as W. H. Clark (*op. cit.*, p. 21) explains, that the word "social" is used by Pratt in the sense that the religious person feels that he has a relationship to what he conceives of as the divine; this concept of the word "social" appears in Johnson's definition of religion as "personal cooperation with a trusted Creator of Values," (Johnson, P. E., *Psychology of Religion*, New York, 1959, p. 30).
13. Allport, G. W., *The Individual and his Religion* (New York, 1953), p. 56.
14. Clark, W. H., p. 22.

CHAPTER II

Bases on Clark, W. H., pp. 6-12.

CHAPTER III

1. This whole chapter is mainly based upon the *International Christian University Bulletin*, 1962-63.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
4. 5. 6. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
7. The Student Association of the International Christian University, *The ICU: 1957-58*, 1958, p. 16.

CHAPTER IV

1. Takenaka, pp. 40-56.

2. Okabe, Yataro, "A Study of Autobiographies, and Studies of Research, I," *ICU Bulletin of Educational Research*, II (1955), pp. 69-105.
3. The replies were made in January 1961 to the question: "What directions do you remember Prof. Okabe did when he made the assignment of autobiography? Please write everything you remember about it."
4. Okabe, p. 75.
5. There are three model autobiographies which Prof. Okabe reads in the class of Educational Psychology. He says that they are all full of truth and frankness. He read them all in the 1957 Spring Class.
Brief descriptions of the three model autobiographies are as follows:
(A) Written in Nov. 1952, by a woman student of Tokyo Univ., of 20 years, 20 pages in length. It is written chronologically from birth through her college life. Through the descriptions of her home environment, events, accidents, her reactions to them, the growth of her can be vividly traced.
(B) Written in May 1953, by a man student of St. Sophia Univ., no age given, 26 pages in length. He writes only about his religious life and his conversions, first from no religious faith to Protestantism, and secondly, a change from Protestantism to Catholic, though he intentionally omits detailed descriptions of specific events.
(C) Written in Nov. 1953, by a man sophomore student of Tokyo Univ., 13 pages in length. He wrote only about his Rugby Club, his frustrated personality and resulting compensations.
All of the three models are found to be written with sincerity and frankness.
6. Okabe, pp. 77-79.
7. Largely based on Allport, *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science*, pp. 125-191.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
9. Okabe, p. 77.
10. Allport, p. 135.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 135 f.

CHAPTER V

1. Allport, *The Individual and his Religion*, p. 26.
2. This is nearly the same with the results of other three investigations which used the students of the same university as sample: Prof. Okabe's (*op. cit.*, 1955): 34%; Lindstrom's 33%, (Lindstrom, David E., and others, *Change in Interest in Christianity among the Students of the*

International Christian University, 1955); Tanaka's: 36%, (Tanaka, Yoriko, "International Christian University Students' Interests Toward Christianity and Views on Life," 1960).

3. Brackets [] means interpretation or summarization of this author here as well as in following questions.
4. Megumu Imada (op. cit., p. 115 ff) makes a summary of the previous studies' results on the conversion-age that the Christian baptism comes largest in number at the age of 18 according to six studies made between 1910 and 1940. A recent study made by Kyoto Univ., 1953, shows that the average age of the "first conversion" is 16.24, "the second conversion" 17.48, and the "third conversion" 18.57.