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Philosophical Background of Teaching Maslow's Motivation Theory

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This article discusses some aspects and the terms of Maslow's theory of motivation. The start point is holistic approach as methodological basis of "third power" in psychology. Observe Maslow's philosophical explications from psychoanalytic theory and behavioral theory. Discover philosophical roots of "self-actualization" phenomenon. As a result of previous discussions, raises the question about the possibility of interpretation of the main provisions of his theory as a philosophical-anthropological.

Keywords: motivation, personality, holistic approach, self-realization, self-actualization, Maslow's theory, transpersonality.

Philosophical revolution going now becoming more apparent. It's like a tree, all the branches of which were at the same time to bear fruit. Its influence is felt in all areas of science, in all spheres of human activities.¹

Introduction

On the background of the growing interest in the study of the question of what is man that led eventually to the anthropological turn in the philosophy of the 20th century, fragmentation occurs anthropological disciplines. This means as increasing specialization and towards a more comprehensive approach to the study of man with one hand, and to the "smearing" of the overall picture of the knowledge of the person on the other. Regarding the need to collect anecdotal evidence of ethnology, ethnography, biology, etc. fell in his time on the lot of philosophy. Today, a similar

problem to restore a complete image of man falls on philosophical anthropology, forced to synthesize both empirical data provided by «well-established» methodologically natural-science disciplines, as well as relatively isolated and «fuzzy» theoretical and methodological developments actually anthropological disciplines.

In the early 20th century anthropological turn in philosophy preceded revolutionary theorizing Freud and C.G. Jung have shaped the face of modern psychology. How philosophical wore Freud's theory, so it was «anthropological» as directly involved understanding the psychological

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essence of man, unconscious earlier part of his nature.

Freud's work today is on a par with classics like psychology and philosophy. No one disputes the contribution of Freud and Jung in modern philosophy in general, and in philosophical anthropology (especially in psychological anthropology), in particular.

In the second half of the 20th century the dominant psychological «forces» Freudianism and behaviorism forced to surrender their positions and give way to a «third force» in psychology – humanistic direction. The most «revolutionary» founder of humanistic psychology today assumed to be Maslow.

Can we consider Maslow as much a philosopher as we allow ourselves to be treated as such Freud or Jung? Can we think of his work as much philosophical as psychological?

Holistic approach

The whole thing comes down to understanding the theoretical assumptions of which came Maslow, and those issues that set himself this thinker. The methodology of the study of human Maslow laid so-called holistic approach defining further the image and character of his theory: “personality is an integrated, organized whole” and therefore “more motivated personality as a whole rather than its individual parts.”

As a philosophical term, the concept of “holism” in the 20s years. XX century, introduced H. Smuts, who dealt with problems of interpretation of evolution and fundamental physics. In his monograph «Holism and Evolution» Smuts attempted to construct a Common “natural philosophy” interpretation of contemporary physical and biological theories, relying mainly on Darwin's evolutionary theory. The main outcome is the creation of Smuts term expressing, in his opinion, the fundamental principle of the existence of the cosmos:

“We find thus a great unifying creative tendency of a specific holistic character in the universe, operating through and sustaining the forces and activities of nature and life and mind, and giving ever more of a distinctive holistic character to the universe. This creative tendency or principle we call Holism. Holism in all its endless forms is the principle which works up the raw material or unorganised energy units of the world, utilises, assimilates and organises them, endows them with specific structure and character and individuality, and finally with personality, and creates beauty and truth and value from them.”²

Maslow's holistic approach to becoming a methodological basis of theoretical research. Its use extends to the rights and assumes such a setup in which the researcher starts from the idea of man as a holistic mind-body structure, not reducible to the sum of its component systems and subsystems, and the existing and functioning as a whole – a personality. Describe a person as a person also means the need to consider it as a solid framework in which co-exist and co-operate various subsystems.

Such an approach is conceptually contradicts prevailing in behaviorist psychology of that time settings, limiting the subject matter of psychology behavior : «Psychologists must discard all reference to consciousness , when we no longer need to delude ourselves into thinking that the mental state can make the object of observation « and « we (as psychologists) are not interested in obtaining data on the process of adaptation , which applies the animal as a whole, we are not interested in finding how these different responses are associated and how they decay to work out thus a systematic framework for the prediction of response and control of as a whole.»³

Reflecting on the problem of so-called “basic fundamental principles of psychology,” Maslow concludes that “the search for

fundamental primordial itself reflects the general outlook, scientific philosophy, which supports the concept of atomistic world, according to which the complex things are built from simple elements.⁴ So, the founder of the behavioral trends in psychology John Watson argued that “with behaviorist psychology point of view is a purely objective, experimental science which needs introspection as little as a science such as chemistry and physics.”⁵

Scientists try to reduce complex to a simple: “the analysis is used for this purpose is carried out separation of an object or phenomenon into smaller components until you cannot find an indivisible element,” such as “stimulus” and “response” (or “answer” the stimulus) in behaviorism. There are indivisible elements of which is constructed to describe the behavior of man. If in relation to other sciences such approach may be applied, then «it is not applicable in psychology»⁶ – concludes Maslow.

Dissatisfaction reductionist orientation of psychological science, reflecting the mechanistic conception of the world and man, forcing Maslow seek philosophical foundation of the new methodology of the humanities.

Maslow insists that examine individual behaviors or mental states should as part of the personality, part of the whole, to avoid possible conflicts. As an example, he suggests that consideration of radicalism among individuals. The same behavior from a psychological view can mean opposite things: «radicalism is a form of expression, which is based may lie completely different motivation, different character structure. One person it arises out of hatred for their brethren, and the other, on the contrary, because of love for them. If you study radicalism itself as a phenomenon is unlikely to come to that conclusion. ⁷ Thus, Maslow shows how classical schemes applicable in psychology, if we consider the person as a whole, i.e. treat it holistically.

His approach to the study of personality, “holistic rather than atomistic, functional rather than taxonomic, dynamic and not static, purposeful, and not mechanical,”⁸ definitely has its roots in the philosophical search for a new methodology for the humanities, seeking to go beyond the narrow confines of “classical” scientific method.

In the broadest sense, the theoretical concepts of Maslow stood from contemporary “mainstream” not only because of the introduction to the psychology of a holistic approach, but also because of principled shift in emphasis in the understanding of human nature, the dynamics of its development as a person and its essential characteristics. However, it is important for us, out whether Maslow in his intuitions beyond psychology, can we say that his concept is addressing issues of philosophical anthropology? If he enters there the problem field of philosophical anthropology?

Maslow makes a fundamental emphasis on the fact that people initially, i.e. by its nature, tends to mental and physical health, harmony with oneself and the world, and to maximize their potential disclosure, i.e. to self-realization.

Man as a living (biotic) being seeks, primarily, to meet the “basic” or physiological needs, but as a person, he is committed to safety, respect, love, and, finally, to the disclosure of their own potency or self-actualization.

Psychoanalysis and behaviorism

Certainly, Maslow repelled by the most influential in the middle of the 20th century theoretical models that have shaped the study of certain specific, and therefore understanding person. First – Psychoanalytic – placed the emphasis on pathology and the very existence of man represented as more or less successful confrontation to unconscious impulses and inclinations, seeking to “absorb” the conscious

part of the personality. Of course, studying pathology, psychoanalysis sought to find ways to cure mental illnesses, but in the end it deals with the psychological health as a relative control "space" of consciousness of "chaos" of the unconscious. In other words, the psychoanalytic world does not go in his understanding of human nature further his ability to control his unconscious, to remain within the normal range.

According to Maslow, psychoanalysis does not answer the question of how to study mental health. «Motivational life of people suffering from neurosis, in principle, should not be used as an example of healthy motivation», so psychoanalysis does not provide us with the necessary methodological settings in the study of healthy people.

The second theoretical model – behavioral – focus on behavior, reducing the complexity of the apparatus of the psyche to the formula "stimulus-response". Phenomenon of consciousness, as well as unconscious, remain outside the interest of behaviorism, which reduces the existence of man in the world to the "stimulus" and "response" to it.

Radical reductionism behaviorist approach is certainly unacceptable to Maslow, based on a productive synthesis of all the accumulated experience of science and philosophy. Behavioral studies provide a rich empirical material for any psychologist or anthropologist, but the theoretical interpretation of this material is limited by the behaviorists reductionist approach to understanding human. As an illustration, we can show Maslow reflections data obtained from animal experiments, which mainly focused behaviorism" white rat – is not a person, but, unfortunately, it is necessary to repeat this again, because too often the results of animal experiments perceived as the main data, based on which we must build a theory of human nature. Of course, the data relating to animals can be

very useful, but only provided a cautious and prudent approach to them "," theory of motivation must be anthropocentric, and not to focus on the animals."¹⁰

While recognizing the merits of authoritative theoretical positions, Maslow drew their common flaw: ignoring healthy and fully functioning person as a phenomenon, the cause of which is dominant in science reductionist worldview.

Higher manifestations of humanity, the human spirit cannot be adequately written in the narrow confines of the classical method. Maslow's revolutionary thinking is simply to shift the focus from disease to health: "Any worthwhile motivation theory has to deal with higher capacities of healthy and strong personality along with defensive maneuvers of crippled spirit. Be taken into account and to interpret what great care and better human beings. We never reach such an understanding, exploring only sick people. We must pay attention to healthy individuals. Motivation theorists should be guided more positive benchmarks. "It is at the stage of postulating human beings as striving for self-realization by its very nature, Maslow goes beyond psychology, its methodological and conceptual installations.

Self-actualization

In the book "The New Frontier of human nature," Maslow developed a new approach to a depth that goes beyond psychology, immersed in the problem field of philosophical anthropology.

This shift has far-reaching consequences: a healthy person cannot be understood and described in terms that are suitable to describe the pathology and even the norm. There is a need in the construction of the new terminology that characterizes the new man for psychologists hand, previously neglected psychological science. The fact that psychology did not have the terminology suitable for describing healthy natural: the

very question of the construction of the new terminology, the expansion of the boundaries of established semantic language psychologists, the findings of scientists beyond psychology in the problem field of philosophy.

Since the idea of revising the norm, it was necessary to begin with the identification of the essential characteristics of human existence, so far the new terminology is rather philosophical and anthropological than psychological.

Thus, the most common term fit, according to Maslow, to describe a healthy person – self-actualization or self-realization.

Examining self-actualizing people Maslow, as a result of their observations identifies the following characteristics: the perception of reality or a “sharp” cognitive abilities, adoption – a tolerant attitude toward the world and other people;

spontaneity, centering on the issue, as opposed to centering on his own ego; penchant for privacy, autonomy;

freshness of perception or spontaneity; peak experiences, human relationship, humility and respect for others, ethics, a sense of humor, creativity, initiation resistance to the cultural norms, values and resolution of conflicts (social, philosophical, “life” in the broadest sense)¹¹.

Presented number of characteristics unlikely used to be inherent to modern average person at least half. However, the essence of Maslow's “breakthrough” is just an attempt to draw attention to all the healthy, strong, harmonious finally sublime, that is in man in general, and what should be oriented philosophy and psychology. In fact, if you look at the questions posed by Maslow in “New Frontiers of human nature”: “If (as is, in my opinion, been sufficiently shown) a person is chooses decisive asylum animal, the question of implementation choices and decisions must necessarily be affected in any attempt to define man as a biological species. However,

the implementation of elections and decisions vary in quality, wisdom, effectiveness. Then the question arises: who choose well? Where did he come from? What is the history of his life? Can we teach this skill? What prevents this? What helps it?

This, of course, is simply a new form of the old philosophical questions: “Who is the wise man? What it is?” And also – old axiological questions: “What is good? What is desirable? What should you ask for?” – Can we continue to claim that he still psychologist, not a philosopher of psychology, Freud or Jung?

The term “self-actualization” on the one hand, establishes a holistic methodology in Maslow's position, because to self-actualize can only personality as a whole but not any particular part of it, on the other hand – emphasize processuality of human existence, because it always refers to the process of “self-actualization” – not some static state of personality.

But most importantly, “self-actualization” – is an attempt to describe and understand the essential characteristics of a person, it is fundamentally different from the rest of the living. “Higher needs” considered “in its biological basis, as one of the sides of human nature or the hallmarks of human species.”¹²

Moreover, the need for self-realization – it's not just the essential characteristic of a person, but it is fixation of the boundaries of “peak” human capabilities at this historical stage of its development.

Transpersonality

It is important to say a few words about the topic of transpersonality that Maslow also actively developed in his later works. In particular, he has made some contribution to the understanding of man as a subject transpersonality “Metaindividual transpersonality in its extreme, is the loss of human consciousness and depersonalization.

On this was beautifully written by Maslow. As an example, he cited the meditation, which achieves a concentration on something lies elsewhere relative to the observer, and achieving a state of selflessness, preoccupation with something.”¹³ Like Freud, explore the depths of the mental world of human communication and culture, especially Maslow noted phenomenon transpersonal relationship to culture. From the analysis of the relationship of self-actualizing

person (transcending subject) to the culture, you can display that transpersonality “expresses an enhanced and multiplied personality configuration of individual personalities, penetrating beyond the boundaries of the culture and image of the space of intercultural interaction. However, she embodies the creative and broadly originitive activity of man.”¹⁴ Here Maslow offers fertile ground for further cultural, philosophical and anthropological discoveries.

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Философские предпосылки учения

А. Маслоу о мотивации

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В статье рассматриваются некоторые аспекты и термины теории Маслоу о мотивации. Отправной точкой построения методологии является холистический подход, легищий в основу построения «третьей силы» в психологии. Рассматриваются философские рассуждения Маслоу о психоаналитической теории и бихевиористской. Исследуются философские корни феномена «само-актуализации». В качестве результата изложенных аргументов поднимается вопрос о возможности толкования основных положений его (Маслоу) теории как философско-антропологической.

Ключевые слова: мотивация, личность, холистический подход, само-реализация, само-актуализация, теория Маслоу, трансперсональность.
