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Maslow's Holistic Psychology and Humanistic Religion

1. Introduction

One approach to the contributions of various systems of psychology toward human growth is to study them from the perspectives of reductionism which is linked with mechanism, and of holism. Reductionism, in psychology, explains human nature and behaviour in elementalistic terms. Holism, on the other hand, holds that there is an essential principle in every person, which synthesizes him or her as a unified whole.

The important philosophical sources of mechanistic reductionism in modern psychology can be identified as Cartesian dualism, psychophysical parallelism, empiricism, and positivism, among other positions. Psychological systems such as structuralism, functionalism, behaviourism, and Freudianism shared certain mechanistic characteristics. There was, however, a break from the reductionistic trends toward holism in psychology, as manifested by the neo-Freudians, Gestaltists, organismic psychologists, and humanistic or "Third Force" psychologists. Abraham H. Maslow was the leader of the last group. The shift toward holism was not sudden, but slow and gradual. Based on the affinity toward holism, we can classify various movements in this direction in psychology as preventive holism, descriptive holism, and integral holism.

Maslow's holistic theory of human nature was first unveiled in his theory of human motivation, popularly known as the "need-hierarchy theory." There he uncovered his new vision of human nature, its goals, potentialities and their actualization, culminating in peak-experiences which are the highest moments of self-actualization. A review of his assumptions on human nature seems to be in order, for a better understanding of his holistic positions.

I

2. Holistic Theory of Human Nature

a) *Man as Holistic*

Maslow's holistic theory of human nature and growth sees man as an integrated whole, having an inner nature which organizes him into a whole. He summarized his views in this regard as follows:

- 1) We have each of us an essentially biologically based inner nature which is to some degree 'natural', intrinsic, given, and in a certain limited sense, unchangeable, or at least unchanging.
- 2) Each person's inner nature is in part unique to himself and in part species-wide.
- 3) It is possible to study this inner nature scientifically and to discover which it is like (not to invent but to discover).
- 4) This inner nature, as much as we know it so far, seems not to be intrinsically or primarily or necessarily evil. Basic needs, the capacities are,...either neutral, pre-moral or positively good. Destructiveness, sadism, cruelty, malice, etc., seem so far not to be intrinsic, but rather they seem to be violent reactions against frustration of our intrinsic needs, emotions, and capacities.
- 5) Since this inner nature is good or neutral rather than bad, it is best to bring it out and encourage it rather than suppress it. If it is permitted to guide our life, we grow healthy, fruitful, and happy.
- 6) If this essential core of the person is denied or suppressed, he gets sick sometimes in obvious ways, sometimes immediately, sometimes later.
- 7) The inner nature is not strong or overpowering and unmistakable like the instincts of animals. It is weak, delicate, and subtle, and easily overcome by habit, cultural pressure, and wrong attitude toward it.
- 8) Even though weak, it rarely disappears in the normal person. Even though denied it persists underground pressing for actualization.¹

1. Abraham H. Maslow, "Personality Problems and Personality Growth," in *The Self: Explanations in Personal Growth*, ed. Clark E. Moustakas (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1956), pp. 232-242.

It was his conviction that any science seeking knowledge of persons necessarily has to approach them as whole, integrated units. "If I want to learn something more about you as an individual person-then I must approach you as a unit, as a one, as a whole."²

b) *Motivation Theory*

Maslow first published his new outlook on human nature and growth in "A Theory of Human Motivation" in *Psychological Review* in 1943.³ His ideas were in accordance with the basic concepts of a wholesome motivation theory. He expounded in detail his "New Vision" on human nature and growth in his major book, *Motivation and Personality*, first published in 1954.⁴ Aptly enough, in the second edition of this book in 1970, Maslow wrote that "the title I had first planned to use for the book was "Higher Ceilings of Human Nature,"⁵ which was reflected in the title of another of his books published posthumously, namely *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*.⁶

He summarized the main concepts which are fundamental to a comprehensive theory of human motivation as follows: (1) A sound motivation theory should be based on the concept that an organism is an integrated whole. (2) The somatically based drives, such as the hunger drive, have to be considered not typical in human motivation. (3) A wholesome motivation theory should centre itself on the basic and ultimate goals rather than partial and superficial one's, upon ends rather than means. (4) Any motivated behaviour, preparatory or consummatory, should be regarded as means by which basic needs are expressed or satisfied. (5) All organismic states should be understood as motivated and as motivating. (6) Human needs are arranged in hierarchies of prepotency. That means the appearance of one need usually presupposes the satisfaction of another more prepotent need. (7) Classification of motivations must be based on

2. Maslow, *The Psychology of Science: A Reconnaissance* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1966), p. 11.

3. *Idem*, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review* 50 (March 1943): pp. 370-396.

4. *Idem*, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1954).

5. *Ibid.*, p. ix.

6. Maslow *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: The Viking Press, 1971).

goals instead of drives. (8) Motivation theory should be human-centred rather than animal-centred. (9) Behaviour has to be explained both in terms of the organism and the field in which it acts. (10)-Motivations are only one factor influencing behaviour. Behaviour is also influenced by biological, cultural, and situational factors.⁷

c) *Hierarchy of Needs*

Maslow pointed out that there is a characteristic of imperativeness or requiredness for the basic need-gratifiers. This differentiated them from other need-gratifiers. "This requiredness is also responsible for the fact that the need is finally tied to its satisfiers by canalization . . ."⁸ According to him need-hierarchy consists of five levels of needs. These needs from the low to the top level are: physiological needs, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization.⁹

The basic needs arrange themselves in a fairly definite hierarchy on the basis of the principle of relative potency. Thus the safety need is stronger than the love need, because it dominated the organism in various demonstrable ways when both needs are frustrated. In this sense, the physiological needs (which are themselves ordered in a sub-hierarchy) are stronger than the safety needs, which in turn are stronger than the esteem needs, which are stronger than those idiosyncratic needs . . . called the need for self-actualization.¹⁰

Because the satisfaction of the basic, instinctoid needs is crucial in the healthy development of human personality, it is the duty of cultural, educational, religious and other agencies to foster the actualization of human potentialities. ". . . It should be at least one function of education, law, religion, etc., to safeguard, foster, and encourage, even to *teach* the recognition, expression and gratification of the instinctoid needs."¹¹ Maslow advocated that the society should provide the best "conditions for bringing human nature to full humaneness."¹²

7. *Idem*, "A Theory of Human Motivation," pp. 246-247.

8. *Idem*, "Some Theoretical Consequences of Basic Need-Gratification," *Journal of Personality* 16 (June 1948), p. 343.

9. *Idem*, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, pp. 35-51.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

11. *Idem*, "The Instinctoid Nature of Basic Needs," *Journal of Personality* 22 (March 1954): p. 345.

12. *Idem*, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 223.

d) *Deficiency Needs and Growth Needs*

The four lower levels of basic needs, according to Maslow, are deficiency needs or D-needs. He also called them lower needs, D-values, and deficiency motivations. He defined deficiency needs in terms related to neurosis.¹³

He observed the following as the main characteristics of the gratification of D-needs. (1) Their absence causes illness. (2) Their presence prevents illness. (3) Restoration of gratification cures illness. (4) Under some free-choice situations, deficiency need-gratifiers are preferred by deprived people over growth needs. (5) In self-actualized people, D-needs are found to be inactive.¹⁴

When the lower needs are satisfied the person moves on to fulfil other needs, which are designated by various terms such as higher needs, growth needs, Being (B)-values, Being (B) motivation, Being (B)-needs, metamotivation, metavalues, and meta-needs.¹⁵

Being values are attributed to Being or reality, perceived in peak-experience. They are the ultimate, irreducible goals attained by self-actualized people. Maslow listed these B-values as Truth, Goodness, Beauty, Wholeness, Dichotomy-transcendence, Aliveness, Uniqueness, Perfection, Necessity, Completion, Justice, Simplicity, Richness, Effortlessness, Playfulness and Self-sufficiency.¹⁶

As the higher instinctoid needs or B-values become prominent and demand satisfaction, fundamental changes take place in the motivational structure of the individual, eventually leading to what Maslow called "metamotivation." "... The psychological life of the person in many of its aspects, is lived out differently when he is deficiency-need-gratification-bent and when he is growth-dominated or 'meta-motivated' or growth-motivated or self-actualizing."¹⁷ He was of the opinion that the difference in the motivational dynamics of self-actualizing people and others is profound.

13. Maslow, "Deficiency Motivation and Growth Motivation," in *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*, ed. Marshall R. Jones (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1955), p. 3.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

15. *Idem*, *Motivation and Personality*, pp. 98-104.

16. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (New York: Van D. Nostrand Company, 1968), p. 83.

17. *Idem*, "Deficiency Motivation and Growth Motivation," p. 8.

From his studies Maslow gathered more insights regarding the nature and operation of higher needs or growth-needs. Some important ones among them are the following:¹⁸ (1) Maslow regarded higher needs to be later in evolutionary development. Man shares the lowest needs with all living beings, while the highest needs for self-actualization is his sole prerogative. "We share the need for food with all living things, the needs for love with (perhaps) the higher apes, the need for self-actualization with nobody. The higher the need, the more specifically human it is."¹⁹ (2) Higher needs develop ontogenically later in life. A human baby expresses physical needs first; after a few months from birth it shows signs of interpersonal contact and affection. Then follows autonomy, independence, achievement, and so on. (3) Higher needs are less required for survival. Their gratification can be postponed, and gradually they may even disappear from the fore-front. (4) Living at the highest need-level means freedom from concern over lower level needs such as lack of food, safety, love, etc. (5) Satisfaction of higher needs produces healthy subjective results such as longevity, happiness, peace, etc. Another result is better psychological health and freedom from psychopathology. (6) Higher needs requires the satisfaction of more preconditions, namely, other prepotent-needs. (7) Better environmental conditions in the areas of family, economics, education, etc. are necessary to make higher needs possible. (8) Those who have satisfied both lower and higher needs in a free-choice situation will emphasize higher needs. (9) Gratification of higher needs brings one closer to self-actualization.

3. Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is the highest plane of personality development. It is:

. . . an ongoing actualization of potential capacities and talents as fulfilment of a mission or fate or vocation, as a fuller knowledge of, and acceptance of, the person's own intrinsic nature, as an unceasing trend toward unity, integration or synergy with the person.²⁰

18. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, pp. 98-104.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 98

20. *Idem*, "Deficiency Motivation and Growth Motivation", p. 8.

For Maslow, self-actualized people meant psychologically healthy people. “. . . Healthy people have sufficiently gratified their basic needs for safety, belongingness, love, respect and self-esteem so that they are motivated primarily by trends of self-actualization.”²¹ When the pre-conditions are met, self-actualization becomes very natural. According to Maslow, self-actualized people have a special set of characteristics:

Self-actualizing people have a more efficient perception of reality. Maslow credited healthy people with holistic as opposed to rubricized perception. “It was found out that self-actualizing people distinguished far more easily than most the fresh, concrete, and idiographic from the generic, abstract, and rubricized . . . Rubricizing is a partial, token, or nominal response rather than a total one.”²² He reported from his studies of self-actualized people that such subjects “see reality more clearly: our subjects see human nature as it *is* and not as they would prefer it to be. Their eyes see what is before them without being strained through spectacles of various sorts to distort or shape or colour the reality.”²³

Growth-motivated people are more comfortable with reality because they perceive it realistically. “. . . They live more in a real world of nature than in the man-made mass of concepts, abstractions, expectations, beliefs, and stereotypes that most people confuse with the world.”²⁴ Because self-actualized people have a more realistic perception of reality, they more readily accept the realities of self, others, and nature. Maslow observed that there are different levels of acceptance. Furthermore, he held that healthy people lack over-defensiveness. They are not plagued by unnecessary or neurotic guilt-feelings. Healthy people, however, do feel guilty about their improvable shortcomings, undesirable habits, etc.

Growth-motivated people are more concerned about problems outside themselves. They are relatively independent of their environment, while deficiency-motivated people cling to their environment for satisfaction of their needs. The main concern of self-actualizers is self-development and inner growth.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality*, pp. 154-206.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 154.

They have become strong enough to be independent of the good opinion of other people, or even of their own affection. The honours, the status, the rewards, the popularity, the prestige and the love they can bestow must have become less important than self-development and inner growth.²⁵

4) Peak-Experiences as the Apex of Growth

Maslow conducted long and extensive studies on the phenomenon called peak-experience. From his interviews of eighty exceptional people, written reports of one hundred and ninety college students and others, he concluded that peak-experiences are "the happiest and most thrilling moments of greatest maturity, individuation, and fulfilment in a word, his healthiest moments."²⁶ He also held that the apex of human fulfilment and integration is attained in peak-experiences as the ultimate expressions of the instinctoid nature in a healthy personality. In such experiences, a human being attains the highest possible unity or wholeness of personality.²⁷

He seemed to think that peak-experience is a rising above one's ordinary identity for a brief period of time. It is the most profound and healthy experience within the potentialities of human beings. Peak-experience is seen as a culmination of basic need-gratification and the ongoing self-actualization. He regarded these to be uniquely absorbing experiences, exemplified in extreme form in religious ecstasy.

Maslow started making known his views of peak-experience by about 1956. He described different dimensions of peak-experience. "Peak-experiences are . . . epistemological and ontopsychological. They have to do with the nature of reality, of man's relation to it, of knowledge of it, and of the value inherent in it."²⁸

He identified two components of peak-experience.

We have found that the peak-experience contains two components—an emotional one of the ecstasy and an intellectual one of illumination. Both need not be present simultaneously.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

26. Maslow, *Toward a psychology of Being*, p. 97.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 103.

28. *Idem, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. vi.

For example, sexual orgasm can be extremely satisfying emotionally but not illuminate the person in any way. In confrontation with pain and death, a non-ecstatic illumination can occur . . .²⁹

He wrote elaborately on the illuminative aspects of peak experience in 1959. He used the concepts of "peak-experience" and "cognition of Being" interchangeably. Here "Being" is used to mean the whole cosmos. B-cognition was also used by Maslow synonymously with "plateau state," "Unitive consciousness," etc.³⁰ This was to emphasize the qualitative changes in perception during peak-experience.³¹ "B-cognition is transcending perception. Transpersonal and cosmocentric I can then look at human beings, pushing aside my identification, my interest, my stake in theory."³² Maslow saw similarity between perception in B-cognition and what Zen-Buddhists called, "muga" experience,³³ where there is a complete absorption with what one is doing. He held that we come to know Being more deeply in peak-experience.

B-cognition is holistic perception of reality as opposed to atomistic perception of it as non-connected parts. "This B-cognition is also phrasable as holistic vs. atomistic or discrete or broken up into non-connected pieces and episodes."³⁴ In peak-experience one perceives that "the universe is all of a piece and that one has a place in it — one is part of it, and one belongs to it . . ."³⁵ Maslow further described the holistic characteristic of peak-experience by the term "transcendence."³⁶ For him transcendence was a sort of transformation of consciousness resulting in a new and higher one, effected by the cognition of Being. He held that the highest values of Being,³⁷ i.e., B-values, are

29. *Idem*, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, pp. 191-192.

30. *Idem*, "Notes on being—Psychology," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 2 (Fall 1962): pp. 47-71.

31. *Idem*, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, pp. 74-96.

32. Lowry, ed., *The Journals of A. H. Maslow II* (Montercy, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1979), p. 1030.

33. Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 254.

34. Lowry, *The Journals of A. H. Maslow II*: p. 1030.

35. Maslow, *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. 59.

36. *Idem*, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, pp. 169-179.

37. *Idem*, "Notes on Being Psychology", *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 2 (Fall 1962) p. 53.

perceived in peak-experience.³⁸ Since B-values are the attributes of Being,³⁹ peak-experience is the "revelation" of Being. Maslow saw similarities between peak-experiences and mystic experiences in the religious sense.

This peak-experience was the 'revelation' (translated into whatever local language or conceptual system the prophet used it). Therefore to the extent that all the mystical experiences were the same, all religions were the same and should in principle agree on teaching whatever peak-experiences teach.⁴⁰

Maslow reiterated his belief in the commonality of peak-experiences and mystical experiences of the Christian mystics like St Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross and others, as well as the "Nirvana" of the Buddhists, the "Satori" of the Taoists, and the "Samadhi" of the Hindus.⁴¹ He was, however, quick to point out that there was nothing supernatural in these experiences. "... It has recently begun to appear that these 'revelations' or mystical illuminations can be subsumed under the head of the 'peak-experiences' or 'ecstasies' or 'transcendent experiences' which are now being eagerly investigated by many psychologists."⁴²

He appeared to be in total agreement with Laski⁴³ that the traditional trend to clothe mystical experience in supernatural garb is unnecessary because they are perfectly natural, human experiences. He wrote that "these experiences mostly had nothing to do with religion—at least in the ordinary supernaturalistic sense... They were natural and not supernatural experiences; and I gave up the name 'mystic experience' and started calling them peak-experiences."⁴⁴ According to him the sources of peak-experiences were mainly natural phenomena.

Elsewhere he continued his naturalistic line of thinking and said: 'I want to report that the two easiest ways of getting peak-experiences

38. *Idem, Toward a Psychology of Being*, pp. 91-96.

39. *Idem, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 134.

40. Lowry, *The Journals of A. H. Maslow*, I: p. 268.

41. Maslow, "Lessons from Peak-Experiences," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 3 (Summer 1963), p. 12.

42. *Idem, Religions, Values and Peak-Experiences*, pp. 19-20.

43. Margarita Lashki, *Ecstasy*, (London: Cresset Press, 1961).

44. Maslow, "Lessons from Peak-Experiences," p. 10.

...are through music and through sex... that there are many paths to heaven, and sex is one of them, and music is one of them".⁴⁵ He made it clear that peak-experiences was not theological or supernatural.

It is quite important to dissociate this experience from any theological or supernatural reference, even though for thousands of years they have been linked. Because this experience is a natural experience well within the jurisdiction of science, I call it the peak-experience.⁴⁶

II

5. Naturalistic Faith or Humanistic Religion

a) *Religious Experiences are Natural*

Maslow's distinction between peak-experience and mystical experience is clear in a definition he gave to the former in his book *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*. There he attempted to establish the thesis that religious experiences are natural experiences. He called "revealed religions", "high religions," whose intrinsic core, he held, was the "personal revelation or ecstasy of a prophet or seer."⁴⁷ Revealed religions try to communicate the original mystic experience of the lonely prophet to the rest of humanity. He criticised revealed religions for "possessing" the mystical illuminations to be their exclusive domain. He explained this trend as resulting from the strict dichotomy of religion and science during the nineteenth century. Religion, then, alienated itself from facts and scientific knowledge to the extent of being seen as an enemy of scientific knowledge. Religion also became the exclusive curator of values and spiritual issues.⁴⁸ Science went in the opposite direction of claiming the "actual" as its territory leaving the "ideal" to religion.

b) *Drawbacks of Traditional Religions*

Maslow charged that traditional religions reduced religion to rubrics and codes of ethics. He called them "safety religions," whereas the need was for "growth religions." He also thought that the

45. *Idem, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 175.

46. *Idem, Motivation and Personality*, p. 164.

47. *Idem, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. 19.

48. *Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. 11.

“sacred” got pathologized by isolating it to the “exclusive jurisdiction” of a priestly class. He contended that if the validity of the “sacred” solely rested upon the supernatural, then it is alienated from the world of nature and man’s nature.⁴⁹ Continuing his charge against organized religions, Maslow said that “. . . organized religion can be thought of as an effort to communicate peak-experiences to non-peakers, to teach them, to apply them, etc. Often, to make it more difficult, the job falls into the hands of non-peakers.⁵⁰ He wrote in his *Journal*: “I didn’t dare mention my élitistic conception that the educated need ‘churches’ far less than average and low-IQ people. Maybe morons need rules, dogmas, ceremonies, etc . . .”⁵¹

Another consequence of the dichotomy of science and religion was that it became impossible to scientifically study certain aspects of the abstract such as naturalistic religious experience, symbolism, etc.⁵² Maslow claimed that, just as various sciences freed themselves from religion, so the questions of values, ethics, spirituality, and morals need to become independent.

Maslow was not at home with institutionalized religions. Though he was born of Jewish parents, he never was an active member of that Faith. All his life, he attacked institutionalized religions and, in his own words, he wanted to “destroy” them.⁵³ He considered it his “call” to “take the word ‘religious’ out of the narrow context of the supernatural, churches, rituals, dogmas, professional clergymen, etc., and distribute it in principle throughout the whole of life.”⁵⁴

He called for a “naturalistic faith” or “humanistic religion” or “humanology.” In this sense, he stood for something similar to what Dewey called “common faith” or Fromm termed as “humanistic religion.”⁵⁵ Maslow thought that it was necessary to give a new definition of religion. He defined religion as “a state of mind achievable in almost any activity of life, if this activity is raised to a suitable level of

49. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

51. Lowry, *The Journals of A. H. Maslow*, I: p. 711.

52. Maslow, *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. 16.

53. Lowry, *The Journals of A. H. Maslow*, I: pp. 307-388.

54. Maslow, *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. xii.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 69.

perfection."⁵⁶ According to the new definition of religion, he thought "that what the mystics have said to be essential to the individual's religion . . . no longer needs rest only on tradition, blind faith, temporal power, exhortation, etc."⁵⁷ Many of the religious functions are explained by the concepts of metamotivation. Since B-values are independent and irreducible, they can substitute the eternal and the absolute. Immortality has a new meaning, namely, the B-values incorporated into the person transcends his death.⁵⁸

In his humanistic faith, God was defined "as 'the Being itself,' or 'the integrating principle in the universe,' or as 'whole of everything,' or as 'meaningfulness of the cosmos,' or in some other personal way . . ."⁵⁹ He reiterated that man does not need a supernatural God. He, in keeping with his humanism, claimed to be an atheist. "Because I have been, and am an atheist, I just don't get into any hassle over hidden loyalties and rebellions, as all the God people seem to do, however liberal or really religious or sincere they may be."⁶⁰

6. Naturalistic Value System

a) *Self-Validating Values*

Maslow believed that "the human being is so constructed that he presses toward fuller and fuller being and this means pressing toward what most people would call good values, toward serenity, kindness, courage, knowledge, honesty, love, unselfishness, and goodness."⁶¹ Like other naturalistic humanists Maslow believed in a system of naturalistic values. He characterized his times as valueless. ". . . the ultimate disease of our age is valuelessness; . . . this state is more crucially dangerous than ever before in history . . ."⁶² As hinted above, he was critical of the so-called "value-free science." His value system is pretty obvious in the following statement:

56. Maslow, *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. xii.

57. *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

58. *Idem*, "A Theory of Metamotivation: The Biological Rooting of the Value Life," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 7 (Fall 1967): p. 125.

59. *Idem*, *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, p. 45.

60. Lowry, *The Journals of A. H. Maslow*, II: p. 1286.

61. Maslow, *New Knowledge in Human Values* (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1959), p. 126.

62. *Idem*, *New Knowledge in Human Values*, p. vii.

Humanists for thousands of years have attempted to construct a naturalistic, psychological value system that could be derived from man's own nature, without the necessary recourse to authority outside the human being himself . . . It is my belief that developments in the science and art of psychology, in the last few decades, make it possible for us for the first time to feel confident that this age-old hope may be fulfilled. . .⁶³

What Maslow claimed was that his new theory of human nature, consisting of a set of values, ordered from lower to higher levels, culminating in self-actualization, and the values of Being or B-values being revealed in peak-experiences was the answer to the humanists' quest for a naturalistic value system.⁶⁴

He regarded B-values as crucial in the healthy life of a person. He explained away B-values in naturalistic terms: "Any admission of supernatural sanctions for goodness, altruism, virtue, 'will lead to . . . a doctrine of innate depravity of man (original sin) or any maligning of his animal nature, which very easily leads to some extrahuman interpretation . . .'"⁶⁵ This, according to Maslow, is quite unnecessary, because, "Explanation from the natural is more satisfying to educated people than is explanation from the supernatural."⁶⁶

b) *Intrinsic Conscience and Guilt*

The concept of natural goodness of man is related to the idea of 'intrinsic conscience,' which is biologically based in man's inner nature.⁶⁷ Self-actualized people discover Being-values in their own system functioning as an intrinsic conscience. In peak-experiences, the same B-values are discovered as the characteristics of Being. Hence there is a basic correspondence between peakers' interpersonal and transpersonal experiences of values. Such coincidence further higher sense of identity and wholeness in self-actualizers.⁶⁸ B-values become their motivational force. So Maslow maintained that we should include

63. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

65. *Idem, Religion, Values and Peak-Experiences*, pp. 36-37.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

67. *Idem, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p. 338.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

intrinsic values or B-values as fundamental components of what he called "intrinsic self." Intrinsic self consisted of "one's constitutional, temperamental, anatomical, neurological, hormonal, and instinctoid-motivational nature."⁶⁹

Because man is intrinsically value-oriented, any breach of B-values will result in "intrinsic guilt." "... any betrayal of truth, justice or beauty or any other B-value should be expected to generate intrinsic guilt, a guilt that would be deserved and biologically sound."⁷⁰

It is good, even *necessary* for a person's development to have intrinsic guilt when he deserves to. It is not just a symptom to be avoided at any cost but is rather an inner guide for growth toward actualization of the real self, and of its potentialities.⁷¹ Guilt-producing estrangement from the path of self-actualization is evil. It is reaction to ill-treatment, threat to one's safety, lack of well-being, etc.

The general picture that emerges from all this is that Maslow attributed the cause of guilt-producing failures to issues other than the individual himself. The Christian idea of "personal sin" has no place in his system. Even the so-called "intrinsic guilt" resulting from the failure to self-actualize, is ultimately caused by forces other than the individual. In a way, Maslow pictures the society as an obstacle in the individual's quest for growth—thus causing evil. In his system there are no absolute criteria for values. What is good is decided by looking into what each individual wants in each situation.

Human nature in all its uniqueness is basically a biological one. A human being's manifold expressions of distinctiveness from animals, even the peak-experiences, are "nothing but" the actualization of biologically based instinctoid potentialities. Maslowian teleology was limited in scope because the highest goal of human beings is peak-experience. His system favoured a relative value system.

7. Conclusions

Notwithstanding such limitations, Maslow's holistic psychology opened up a galaxy of new avenues in the field of psychology and in

69. *Ibid.*, p. 388.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 339.

71. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, p. 195.

the understanding of human growth in terms of the fulfilment of human potentialities. By way of conclusion a few important insights may be indicated here.

When the mainline psychologies denied that man has an essential nature, Maslow asserted that man has an inner core. This certainly can be considered to have furthered the cause of holism in psychology. The whole person, as Maslow saw him/her naturalistically, was the subject-matter of his psychology. He upheld the dignity of the human individual. The very affirmation of this concept is a contribution when we consider the outlook of psychological systems toward human persons, during his time.

The reassertion of human freedom, though seemingly extreme, was a move against the long reign of deterministic supremacy in the psychological understanding of human nature and growth. By bringing teleology back into psychology, the long-rejected final cause came back into psychology. It may even be said that shades of Maslow's need-hierarchy can be traced in the Thomistic concepts of hierarchy of being and teleology.

The positive aspects of personality, such as its innate goodness, strengths, potentialities, and so on were the chief concerns of Maslow. He emphasized the actualization and development of human potentialities. Educational methods, counselling, and vocational services can certainly profit from Maslow's personality theory. He revived the use of introspection in the study of subjective experiences. Detached observation had its place; at the same time, participant observation was also necessary. Hence, in Maslow, there was less concern about responses, reactions, or habits, whereas more concern was shown about peak-experiences and other subjective data.

In peak-experience, a human being reaches his/her highest point of unity and integration. The highest values in life are discovered in peak-experiences. Such values are the ideals or the "be-attitudes" for which Christians are called to strive. If we remove the excessive stress on the self, (seemingly verging on selfishness) laid by Maslow, his concept of self-actualization can be understood in relation to the "perfection" toward which Christians are called to strive.

Maslow used empirical methods to study "healthy people", or "good human beings," or self-actualizers in order to find out their characteristics. One can use empirical methods to study spiritual health, saintliness, mystic experiences, and the like. His emphasis on the need for values in psychology is important, because values remained a taboo for decades before him as far as psychologists were concerned.

Maslow advocated the complementarity and need for co-operation between psychology and philosophy. It took almost a hundred years after the separation of psychology and philosophy, for a psychologist to formally reaffirm that psychology and philosophy are complementary. He attempted to integrate psychology with naturalistic humanism. Christian scholars, however, can attempt to synthesize psychology with their belief and heritage.

The values discovered in peak-experiences are the attributes of "Being". One wonders whether Maslow's "Being" can be called the "unknown God of humanism." Maslow has given us an excellent interpretation of God naturalistically. His so-called "metavalue" are unharmed as long as he does not say that there is no more to be said beyond such naturalistic explanations. In case he denies all possible higher interpretations, he will be stepping outside his naturalistic method.

Maslow's psycho-philosophical contributions have given us some basic fabrics which could be used in the work "toward a reunification in psychology," toward an integral holism, or toward a holistic humanism, which emphasizes human growth and fulfillment.