## NOOLOGICAL SOCIOLOGY, UNDERSTANDING THE SPIRITUAL POWERS OF PEOPLE

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Abstract: Noological sociology cannot ignore the crucial contributions of psychology and we refer to those of C. G. Jung and V. Frankl. The two remarkable psychologists consider the spiritual dimension of the human being as one of the most important aspect in the understanding of man. The discovery of the colective unconscious and archetypes by Jung demonstrates the importance of spiritual experience that becomes the source and meaning of life. In his studies, Viktor Frankl shows that the modern man can lose the meaning in life and can be a victim of fatalism and fanatism living in an existential frustration. Those types of neurosis are very important for the noological sociology that warns about the problems in any society that ignores the spiritual dimension of social life in a demanding global world.

**Key words:** noological sociology, psychology of depths, psychology of hights, colective unconscious, archetypes, meaning.

#### 1. Introduction

Either we refer to archetypes, spiritual potentialities or the powerful forces of the will to meaning we must say that the study of man and society cannot ignore the category of spiritual powers, the noological dimension of human life. Any research that ignores or diminishes the importance of this force of cultural modeling would only simplify the complexity of human nature and society. For this reason, it is important to research the spiritual dimension of societies, an attempt made by noological sociology in studying the fundamental experiences in a society, but having in mind the contributions made on a psychological level by C. G. Jung and V. Frankl. We begin this study with some key

elements of noological sociology and in the last section of this study we analyse the basic psychological concepts and theories useful for this new type of understanding the society.

Before analyzing the noological theory of Ilie Badescu, we will also refer to Lucian Blaga's studies about unconscious. The Romanian philosopher identifies creative forces that help form the stylistic matrix. These creative forces that can be found in the spiritual unconscious of people can be decisive elements in understanding the spiritual history of people, all this elements being named by L. Blaga as "abyssal noology" [2, p.14]. Through this paradigm, the Romanian philosopher speaks about the unconscious spirit that shapes the stylistic matrix.

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The theory of stylistic matrix shows that a set of factors (spatial, temporal, axiological) forms "a complex of categories, which is imprinted from unconscious to all human creations, even life, because life can be shaped by spirit. The stylistic matrix, as a category, imprints itself, having shaping effects on art, metaphysical conceptions, doctrines, scientific visions, ethics and social attitudes" [2, p.109]. We must add that for Blaga the culture represents the way through which are expressed abyssal categories of unconscious, thus becoming possible the knowledge of this type of categories. Culture represents possibility of understanding the elements that have the origin in unconscious (because it is) full of virtualities, cultural creations giving a specific identity to every people.

The noological sociology of Ilie Badescu concentrates on two fundamental conditions in researching society. One is the understanding of the spiritual powers. of the vital resources of existence that have the integration capacity for individual and for the cultural identity of society. We have the possibility to understand society as creating cultural values. The other important condition for noological studies is related to disorder on society level that has the origin in the weakening of spiritual powers in a society, reflected as the lack of vitality and of cultural force. If we identify these spiritual powers as representative for individual and which have a creative force in history, another stage is to research the effects of this decrease or ignoring spiritual forces in society. If on an individual level there were identified the disorders of spiritual dimension as we will see in the studies of Jung, Frankl, the noological sociology becames a science opened for contributions brought by other sciences, like psychology, philosophy, history, in

understanding the rise and fall of societies, the strong or weak points of social life.

Having the premise that the spiritual dimension, noological one, decisive for man and society, may be the most important that influences and shapes the other social powers (economic, political, cultural), we could have a sociology that identifies in man and his community the spiritual creative forces that offer uniqueness, specificity and resistance.

The noological dimension characteristic for man can benefit from the psychology of archetypes of C. G. Jung and existential analysis of V. Frankl. The noological paradigm in sociology views spiritual resources, a type of potentialities reflected in social frameworks that have a peculiar relevance and gives identity, power to communities and people. This is a part of a sociological system of knowledge that concentrates on the spiritual life of societies, and offers a type understanding that can become very important in studying the spiritual disorders in societies. This kind of spiritual disorders can transform societies in amorphous masses, devitalized, without direction and strong creative meaning in history.

Spiritual knowledge of different societies is possible, we find out in the Introduction of *Noology*, throught a fundamental knowledge, *noosic knowledge*, explained by Ilie Badescu as a "lived knowledge". "The lived experience" it is an extremely important concept in the noological system of knowledge, along with the understanding of the force that comes from living spiritual frameworks, without ignoring fundamental teachings, values of each society.

The noological system is formed by *spiritual potentialities*, these energies or vital forces that manifest itself in spiritual frameworks (traditions, myths, religion) and are decisive in forging "a spiritual

power of a people, society in general, what it is materialized in culture" [1, p.58]. The lived experienced, according to this system, is based on virtualities that can be fulfilled in the noological framework under the form of , fields of lived experience. We define this as psycho-morphoses [1, p.82]. Another important aspect of these lived experiences is that they preponderant somatic (physical) or noosic (spiritual), whose model, according to Ilie Badescu, is the divine-human (teandrikos) This divine-human be perfection can understood individuation in Jung's theory, a process towards human perfection that can be balancing the unconscious with the conscious ones. After this spiritual evolution, man can achieve the wholeness of the Self, which symbol Jung attribute to Jesus.

Sociology is, according to Ilie Badescu, an understanding of the fight between somatic forces and spiritual ones that can have as a model the divine-human nature of Jesus. Noological sociology researching the exacerbation of somatic dimension (drugs use, consumerism, depression, neurosis, alcohool), a reality that can be seen as a diminished one, dameged in spiritual dimension of the individuals and societies. Ilie Badescu defines this type of sociology as a "sociology of new lived experience" [1, p.110], one that aspires to a certain social equilibrium that can generate cultural values and identity, in the same way as at the individual level, where the balance of conscious and unconscious forces can lead to individuation, to a wholeness of human being, having as model a divine-human nature.

For noological sociology "spiritual power of a people, of a society in general manifests itself entirely in "spiritual places" in which we can see a growth in number and intensity of social interactions

towards a wholeness of existence [1, p.167]. Thus, the absolute spiritual place in which man can find the wholeness of his existence it is considered by Ilie Badescu the relation of man with God. In analytical psychology of Jung the absolute spiritual place is the Self, with Jesus as its symbol, and this reality becomes the supreme meaning of man.

We will see that in Jung's archetypes we find a way of manifestation through myths, fairy tales, religious beliefes, legends or traditions. Also, for Ilie Badescu these frameworks represent the spiritual patterns of manifesting potentialities that "are relived under the form of *thinking categories*, collectively shared" [1, p.179], having a role to assure meanings for man and his community or society.

These categories are of extreme importance in noological sociology, I. Badescu affirming that the noological powers, along with economic and intellectual ones "represent the *defensive potential* of people, of 'surviving' in history, maintaining the identity of human being" [1, p.225]. We must not forget, the author warns us, that "the power of people is there spiritual unity" [1, p.393].

We said earlier that living in noological frameworks can lead to formation of spiritual fields (manifestations), named by Ilie Badescu psycho-morphoses. These ones can be used in the analysis of a society through identification of values lived and spread into society. Psychomorphoses are ,,those fields of lived spiritual values in a collective life of a society through the intense manifestations of spiritual groups or exceptional personality of that society" [1, p.684]. These lived manifestations can determine somato-morphoses (physical experiences) and noo-morpshoses (spiritual experiences). The balance between the two types is important in understanding of pycho-morphoses, like

the strugle in the human soul attempting to build the Self. The imbalance of these manifestations can lead to spiritual maladies, and this ideea is common to all three authors analysed here. We might say that the lack of a spiritual life or the oblivion of the divine spirit in the human being might lead to a life without meaning, V. Frankl would say, without purpose, in the terms of noological sociology.

#### 2. Discussions

We return now to C. G. Jung, who's studies are considered by Ilie Badescu a step in the man's evolution of spiritual knowledge. The author of *Noology* fits the manifestations of collective unconscious in the complex phenomenon of noomorpshoses which can offer an image of the spiritual imbalances. Frankl identified two types of neurosis (noogenic, collective), the collective ones being particular important in sociological research, without ignoring the noogenic ones.

About Jung's experiments concentrated on the forces of collective unconscious, about the contribution of the Swiss psychologist, included in the noomorphoses phenomenon (fields of intense manifestation of spiritual experiences), professor Badescu says that "Jung's experiments revolutionize all that we knew about the essence of noological process" [1, p.723]. In front of the overwhelming forces of the noo-morphoses, says Badescu, the only way to keep a certain spiritual balance is "through a continuous creative process" [1, p.723] and that "transforming the history in myth and the gesture in ritual, the historic event in legend and the daily life in pray, this is the only way that defends us from the risk of losing the chance to make part of wholeness. Spiritual lived experiences offer us the salvation effect of the great wholeness and in our soul brings a healing from the hardest disease of all, death" [1, p.711]. This last quote from the noological sociologist in the Romanian sociology can concentrate the fundamental idea of this study, helping us integrate the three authors in the paradigm that studies the spiritual dimension of human being.

We can approach the noological sociology through two stages. The first is the one that discover the spiritual powers which man attempts to conquer creatively in the spiritual manifestation specific to people or communities. The second stage requires an analysis of the lack of manifestations of potentialities, of living in spiritual frameworks that offer integration, force and meaning in history. Through these ways we have access to spiritual weakness and deficits of living without a meaning. Professor Badescu reminds us about consumerism and addictions of any type that weakens the man of his vital energy.

From our point of view it is very important for the noological sociology to understand and use the contributions brought by psychology, especially those of C. G. Jung and V. Frankl concerning the archetypes and the need of a meaning in life.

#### 2.1 Toward the Self

C. G. Jung, psychologist of the dephts of human soul, brings a remarkable contribution in understanding the origin, the force and the importance of spiritual manifestations of human being. Through the discovery of archetypes in the collective uncounscious Jung finds the image of God in the manifestations of human soul. This psychological conception about religion helps him to have a certain understanding of spiritual disorder that man confronts, especially in modern times.

Considering religion as ,,one of the oldest and general forms of human soul" [3, p.11] and religious experience as the highest value, regardless of it contents" [3, p.66], Jung introduces us into the world of the collective uncounscious and archetypes which helps us to understand the life and spiritual conflicts of the modern time. Whoever lives religiously, said Jung, discovers in the religious experience the source of life, the meaning and a belief that attributes value to the entire reality. This framework in which man lives allows him to gain a certain spiritual balance, meaning, and this idea is common to the authors analysed here.

Without ignoring the importance of God for the human soul, once the scientific revolution started, without annihilation of the spiritual dimension in understanding and researching of man from the beginning of time until now, Jung discovers an image of God in the human soul and a way that can help him evolve spiritually.

To understand the complexity of collective unconscious and manifestations of archetypes, we must say that Jung defines the conscience as those mental contents that are in relation with the Self. emphasising that the conscience is not identical with the psychic, because the psychic includes also the unconscious contents [5]. The Ego is that complex representations which forms the center of my conscience" [5, p.448], unlike the Self that is ,,the subject of my whole psychic, including the unconscious" [5, p.448], the entire psychological manifestations that reflect the unity and integrity personality [5, p.497]. The Self manifests in myths, fairy tales, dreams, through symbols like the cross, in duality (coincidentia oppositorum). The unconscious is formed, Jung tells us, from the *personal unconscious* – those contents of personal existence, forgotten, and of collective unconscious with elements that are not connected to the personal live, elements formed by the "mythological connexion, motives and images that can appear anywhere and any time, beyond migration or historical tradition" [5, p.472].

Another important concept in junginian system is the primordial image which has an archaic character, the archetype that it is "always collective which means common at least to entire people and historical periods" [5, p.464]. The manifestation of this primordial images can be discovered through the mythological motives, myths, symbols. The goal of analytical psychology is for Jung individuation, ,,the process of forming and individualization of especially the growth man, psychological individual as distinct human being from the collective psychology" [5, p.4731.

In psychology of depths the research of religious experience aims at those important religious manifestations for the fulfilment of the Self in individuation process. The evolving of human being means the union of opposites (coincidentia oppositorum) and the balancing of conscious and unconscious forces. This conflict of the contraries weakens the man, brings psychological problems and blocks the way to individuation.

Through the individuation, Jung analyses the most sacred figures of religions, speaking of Jesus as a symbol of the *Self*, in which we can find the union of contraries, the wholeness to which the man aspires. The fight against the Evil is the awareness of it, the heaving from unconscious, an important stage on the way to accomplishment of the *Self*, represented by individuation.

The divine and human nature of Jesus can be understood from a psychological point of view as it is realised in the process of individuation that means annihilation of conflicts between conscious and

unconsciousness contents, of unification of contraries for the fulfillment of the Christian ideal. From a psychological point of view, the image of Antichrist is considered by Jung as a Shadow of the Self, underlying that this part of an empiric Self cannot be ignored if we want to understand man as a totality. discovery of collective unconscious and of primordial images existing in it, is explained by Jung as tied to the religious forms in the history of humanity. The Church dogma, says Jung, replaced the unconscious collective and the weakening of these Christian teachings in the human souls transformed this deficit in a psychological problem and it contributed to the discovery of primordial images. Jung exemplifies with Christianity which, for many people, lost a certain force in living the faith. C. G. Jung considers this situation as "emaciation of Christian symbolism", the weakening of Christian images and ideas which became simple objects of faith, without truly living them by followers. Having this in mind Jung finds an explanation for the appeal of oriental mysteries and symbols, because , these images attract, persuade, fascinate and overwhelm and man feels the breeze of divinity" [6, p.18]. The forms of have collective unconscious been expressed by dogmas, rich symbols brought to surface and became reliance in the face of spiritual perils, they offered a meaning to life.

We must underline that archetypes "do not come from personal experience", "they have never been conscious" and "indicate the presence in psychic of certain universal forms" [4, p.53]. Archetypes "have been and are spiritual powers of life and they want to be taken seriously", Jung warns that they are "causes of neurotic disorders even psychotic" [4, p.162]. In a neurosis caused by personal motives, we find out from Jung experience, we do not find the

manifestations of archetypes, but ,,when came from general neurosis a incompatibility or from harmful situation that provokes neurosis to a large number of individuals, we must admit the presence of archetypes" [4, p.58]. This type of neurosis (we will also find them in Frankl's writtings when he studies the collective neurosis), is a "social phenomenon" in which is "relived that archetype that corresponds to a specific situation and enters in action the instinctual force hidden in archetype as explosive as it is dangerous" [4, p.58].

A prevalence of unconscious over the Ego can determine spiritual disorders, confrontation with those primordial images that have been denied, blocked, which can have a neurotic or psychotic nature. "Groups. communities, even entire populations can be victims of spiritual disease" [4, p.284], and the solution for the challenges of human soul is the touch of a climax of personality, of human spiritual achievement: individuation, a process which , came from the confrontation of the two fundamental realities of the soul" [4. p.294] consciousness and unconsciousness.

Jung demonstrates that people "are getting mental illness when they are confronted with insufficient or false responses at the questions of life" [6, p.173], that keeps them in a "spiritual narrowness". Their life does not have substance, does not have meaning" [6, p.173], and from here the way to a neurotic life is opened. The man of the past lived in a sacred world through myths and beliefs that insure integration and balance of contradiction forces of his soul. The modern man faces the secularization of life, with the painful question about the meaning of his life.

We could understand the warning of Jung, according to whom a collective problem can take the form of a personal difficulty, considering that any trouble on personal level can be "probably secondary, as a consequence of a bad change in social climate. That is why, in a case like that, the origin of disorder should not be looked in personal entourage, but most likely in a collective situation. Until now, psychotherapy has ignored this circumstance" [6, pp.273-274]

For psychology as well as for sociology the actual state of man is a challenge and needs a larger perspective to understand the complexity of social manifestations. To attain this goal, we need to start reconsidering the spiritual dimension which can help understanding the personal and social distress, of those factors that into an uninvolved transform man spectator of his own existence or in the social life. "The lack of meaning blocks the fulfilment of life and means disease. The meaning makes many things bearable, maybe everything" [6, p.386] Jung said without doubt. We will analyse now the importance of meaning with the help of logotherapy and existentialist analysis, represented by the studies of V. E. Frankl collective concerning neurosis noogenic neurosis.

We discussed so far the necessity to integrate the spiritual forces of collective unconscious into the scientific way to study human being as a way to obtain a wholeness represented by individuation. This *psychology of depths* which Jung practised attempting to understand the complexity of human being (also warning about imbalances that can appear if this Center is neglected) becomes a starting point for sociology, especially in the study of collective and noogenic neurosis with the remarkable contribution of Viktor Frankl.

Jung as well as Frankl attribute a crucial role to the spiritual dimension in research of man, but there is also another bridge that connects these two authors. That link is represented by responsibility and liberty without which the man cannot reach individuation or meaning.

The unconscious to which people succumb in different moments in history, in certain periods marked by "spiritual disease" affects the spiritual evolution of man and it's reflecting itself in society. In these moments we have the symptoms of collective neurosis identified by Frankl: fatalistic perspective over life, collective thinking, the lost of man in masses or fanatisism.

We agree with V. Frankl that the existence of a psychology of dephts has as counterweight "not a psychology of surfaces, but a psychology of heights" [7, p.276]. Either there is a psychology of depths preoccupied to balance the forces of conscious with those of unconscious having as goal the wholeness of man, either we appeal to psychology of heights in helping the man to find a meaning of his own life, we can say with certitude that the noological dimension is very important in social studies, for sociology as we saw it through the noological sociology of Ilie Badescu.

# 2.2. Noogenic neurosis and the meaning of life

Logotherapy, the "third Viennesse school of psychotherapy" [8, p.111], has at its core the meaning of life, the way in which man gives meaning to his life. Viktor E. Frankl states that logotherapy is based on will to meaning, in opposition with will to pleasure (Freud's school) and will to power (Adler's school). The contributions made by psychotherapy are focused on the understanding of spiritual disorders in modern times, disorders that are determined by problems in the will to meaning. We can identify them in neurotic problems of man and society. Before analysing the most important elements of

psychotherapy for sociology, we will introduce the main concepts of logotherapy.

The will to meaning assures a certain direction to man in understanding of his purpose, being capable of finding spiritual powers that are extremly important in facing the challenges of life, on the individual level, as well as social one. Frankl affirms that it is possible that man "can fall prev to feelings meaninglessness and vacuum" [7, p.23] in diverse social and personal conditions, and the salvation can come by finding the meaning, which represents "the possibility to change reality" [7, p.23]. Frankl identifies two ways by which the man can live his life meaningful: through creation, or by experimenting "something, someone that can mean living someone unique and special, meaning loving him" [7, p.23]. Creation and love are the frameworks of salvation and of meaning in life, and this is possible, Frankl tells us, through selftranscendence. Understanding of this specific human realities gives us the chance of diagnose and study noogenic neurosis, helping the man fighting with the spiritual troubles and wandering meaningless through life.

The Austrian psychiatrist presents a typology of *homo sapiens* in relation to this decisive criterion that is meaning: *Homo faber* – for which the meaning is creation, he can confront either with success or failure; *Homo amans* – for which love is the meaning in life. Speaking about love, Frankl says that "nobody can become fully aware about the essence of another human being unless he loves" [8, p.124]; *Homo patient* – which fights to give suffering a meaning, a purpose, and the poles in which his existence is flowing are fulfilment and desperation.

This will to meaning is very closed connected with existentialist frustration. Frankl realizes that the man of present day

is becoming frustrated on existential level which means that he can be defined by the feeling of absurdity, lack of meaning and existential vacuum. The consequences of this existential vacuum are that man ,,either makes what others do, and this is conformism, either they do only what others want for him, and this is totalitarian" [7, p.16]. In Frankl's theory the questions about the meaning of life are the proof of a "spiritual maturity" [7, p.16], because the man is trying to find and understand his meaning. Another consequence of this existential frustration is boredom. Frankl underlines, reminding us about Sunday's neurosis or the suicidal tendencies [8]. This existential frustration is not pathological, Frankl assures, but only optional pathogenic. But when it actually became pathogenic we have noogenic neurosis.

Man, according to Frankl, must be understood through three dimensions: somatic, psychic and the one that the psychiatrist considers specific to human kind, the spiritual. In this dimension, we find the source of the noogenic neurosis because "a man that has the tension of a conscious conflict or under pressure of a spiritual problem and finds itself in an existentialist crisis, can become neurotic" [7, p.193]. These frustrations and the lack of meaning can develop a specific type of neurotic suffering, can become a noogenic neurosis that has its origin not in a psychological dimension, Frankl underlines, but in a *noological dimension*, this one being the one that is related to his specific human dimension" [8, p.113].

Noogenic neurosis "can etiologically be deduced from the feeling of absurdity, from the doubt related to a meaning of live, from desperation that this meaning really exists" [7, p.16], and the man cannot find it or has the way blocked toward it. In his research, the psychiatrist established that masked forms of existentialist

frustration are drugs abuses, alcohool, suicidal tendencies.

The existential tension is desirable for a man in the process of achieving an existentialist meaning, it is not entirely negative, and this phenomenon is named noodynamic by Frankl. This implies the existence of two poles: meaning towards which man aspires and the man who has to accomplish it [8].

Another type of neurosis in Frankl's theory that can have a particular relevance for sociology is collective neurosis. "The existentialist vacuum, which is the masses neurosis in modern times, can be described as a personal form of nihilism, because nihilism can be defined as that point of view according to which the existence has meaning" [8. p.141-142]. symptoms that Frankl identified for this collective neurosis are: a provisional stance toward existence, man lives the day; a fatalistic attitude toward life; collective thinking, man loses itself in the masses, ignoring his personality; fanaticism, the rejection of others that are different [7].

Collective neurosis, Frankl explains, are determined by "escape of responsibility and shyness towards liberty" [7, p.207], and these are defining for *the human spirituality*. "But today's man is full of spirit, it's bored by it, and this saturation is the essence of contemporary nihilism (id).

Logotherapy, this re-humanized psychology as Frankl speaks about it, can cure the noogenic neurosis, starting from the mental, being a therapy that it's centered on the spiritual factor considering that this dimension develops the spiritual personal existence, named existential analysis" [7, p.209]. Logotherapy does not assume a religious dimension understanding of noogenic neurosis. Logotherapy becames the fight toward ,,the best fulfilment of the existential meaning" [7, p.212]. The warning of this therapy is that ,,we should not forget the noological element because of the psychological ones" [7, p.225]. This therapy has the purpose to help the man finding "the thing that he craves deep in his being" [8, p.116].

This therapy adapted to present times is considered by its founder as spiritual medical assistance that has the objective to cure the soul, different from spiritual assistance, which has the aim to save the soul [7]. Religion is considered by Frankl as having "a psycho hygienic effect because it gives a feeling of safety and an unparalleled spiritual anchorage. contributing immensely to maintain his spiritual balance" [7, p.272]. Frankl does not give logotherapy a religious dimension, although he believes that religion is very important because it offers , the supreme meaning of existence" [8]. This keeps ,,the solid field of belief" [8, p.131] and it is important to say that ,,we cannot object using the therapeutic effect of religious beliefs and, as a matter in fact, against using its spiritual resources" [8, p.131].

The purpose of logotherapy is to make the patient a responsible man, to let him choose his meaning according to a self-transcendence and distance from itself, these two elements are being considered by Frankl as "two basic anthropological characteristics of human being" [7, p.14]. This is the case because "as long as a man forgives itself by self dedicating to a cause or to a person that he loves it is more likely to be a better man" [8, p.123].

#### 3. Conclusions

Consciousness, responsibility, liberty are the values taken in consideration by the two psychologists with the purpose of the Self: discovery of meaning and the wholeness of life. Archetypal unconscious of C. G. Jung it's completed by the spiritual unconscious of V. E. Frankl, because "we admit the existence not only

of an instinctual unconscious, but also of a spiritual unconscious, and here we find the human soul, the human nature" [7, p.260-261].

After the analysis of the most important ideas of the three authors concerning the spiritual dimension of human being and society, we can resume shortly the way proposed by them for understanding, researching and solving the problems of the spiritual referential. For C. G. Jung the knowing of the collective unconscious and describing the way to balance the forces of conscious and unconscious is the way to accomplish the Self and acquire the human wholeness. For Viktor E. Frankl the research of neurosis helped him to discover a noogenic neurosis, characterized by the lack of spiritual power to discover, understand, and find the meaning of life. For *Ilie Badescu* the identification of spiritual frameworks in which are lived and brought to life the spiritual potentialities in the dimension of noomorphoses lifts the man at a spiritual level reflected also on other social powers, what assures a creative salvation and identity through history. In Jung's theory, the solution is the process of individuation, in Frankl's theory the solution is finding of meaning, and in Badescu's theory keeping the religious belief, searching for salvation. All these solutions could not be attained without two other dimensions of the existence: responsibility liberty, and all these three authors affirm it in the research of human complexity.

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