

Review Article

Suicide: Between Emotions and Culture

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Abstract: What is suicide? Why are people taking their own lives? Can this be counteracted in any way? Similar questions arise in many parts of the world. These doubts are independent of our religious experience, social norms and applicable legal rules. Doctors, psychologists, sociologists and other specialists are wondering what the cause of suicide is. It can be a mental illness. Dramatic situations leading to a nervous breakdown can also have a significant impact. Is suicide something bad? Is a sin an attempt on your own life? Will there be any punishment for the suicide? These questions are still valid. For Christians, an attempt on their own lives is an act against God. God is life-giving for them. Only he has the right to collect them. In this sense, suicide is a moral evil. Will this assessment always be accurate? Is authorized psychiatric treatment for people wanting to kill themselves? Is it possible to treat a man who does not want to live? When we treat disorders, do we take away the desire to die? Suicide is a phenomenon that is still a mystery. It also provokes many questions. The following text will attempt to answer them. The basis for the author's further reflection will be primarily Polish experiences related to the protection of mental health.

Keywords: suicide, mental health protection, human rights, treatment, mental illness.

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INTRODUCTORY REFLECTIONS

How does a man's time pass just before his death? Does man still have then or a moment to admit his mistake? Why does a man want to kill himself? Why does he decide to end his own life knowing that his loved ones will suffer? Is this not a crazy act? Can suicide be a sin at all, if it is madness? Similar questions become very loud among September 10, when World Suicide Prevention Day is celebrated. The World Health Organization (WHO) established it at the beginning of the 21st century in 2003. (Hołyst 2014, 19) The purpose of this initiative was to increase public awareness of the subject. These doubts also become louder on February 23. When the World Depression Day is celebrated. Depression is this disease that in many cases is the cause of the suicide action. (Document 2018, online). These international activities are to sensitize us to the drama experienced by other people. Thanks to them, some people can be sensitive to the tragedy we see somewhere. Social and media initiatives teach how to prevent suicide. (Szymanska 2016, 25) But why is suicide such a special drama? Is there a line in a man whose crossing leads him to his own death? Can we somehow help? How to fight for the life of a man who does not want to live? Is there hope for those who took their own lives?

A FEW STORIES

The first story directs us to an interesting movie. Ten years ago, it had its premiere production titled "Seven Pounds." The main role played in this film Will Smith. This film introduces the viewer to the extraordinary biography of a young man. He had experienced a great drama a few years earlier. As we find out, the main character has caused great suffering and pain to many people. Several other people died because of him. This experience meant that he began to take action, which can be directly referred to as "suicide." At one point he decided to take his own life. With this deed, he wants to help several people he has previously met, selected and recognized that they need help (Document 2019, online).

The second story proposed also relates to the film. I am talking about the production here. "Before you appeared." The drama mentioned here tells the story of a completely paralyzed man. He was a very active business man. Suddenly he was in a serious blow. Then he decided to use the assisted suicide procedure. He did not change his mind even at the request of his beloved person, i.e. a young woman whom he met. He wants to end a life that he associates with suffering. In this film we see several variants of suicide. The hero first imagines his own death. Then plans the course of his death. Finally, he takes his own life with the support of medical staff (Kozłowska 2016, online).

The Suffering of the Soul

Suicide is a special assassination attempt. It is "murdering yourself". It is also an unusual phenomenon in which psychologists, sociologists, theologians and suicidomats are interested. (Kosiba, Przybyszewska, Soltyszewski 2017, 86- 87, Kielan, Olejniczak, 12- 13) In olden times taking a life was met with a severe, social reaction. Not only the Catholic Church expressed firm opposition to suicide. In Great Britain, a suicide attempt ceased to be punishable - according to experts on the subject - only in the 1960s. Persuading another man to commit suicide is still punished. In many countries it is a standard of criminal law. (Zwolinski 2013, 610) Suicide action has been associated with strong social stigma in the past. In the Middle Ages, strict rules were introduced regarding the consequences of attempted suicide or suicide. The victims' family could have met:

- seizure of suicide property,
- church excommunication was imposed on the deceased,
- Subsequent, universal councils introduced a ban on burying victims of suicide act assisted by a Catholic priest (Stoklosa 2010, 89- 91).

The last of these rules was in force until the late 1970s, and therefore until the Code of Canon Law was reformed (Helios 2013, 27). Certainly, the teaching of the Catholic Church on suicide is not the most important element of the scientific discussion on the mental health of citizens of individual countries. It should be remembered, however, that the Catholic Code of Canon Law had special significance in building European legal norms (Kroczek 2006, 73- 87). In addition, the teaching of the Catholic Church is particularly important in the ethical context of social discussions. It is worth mentioning here the special importance of the teaching of John Paul II, who also (being an ethicist) spoke about the moral problem of suicides (Morciniec 2009, 538- 539). The current teaching of the Catholic Church on suicide is better known. However, it is worth reminding here. It has an important meaning. The death of a man who kills himself always leaves his loved ones with many questions. It is very difficult to find a rational answer to them (Kielan, Bobik, Cieslak, Dobaczewska 2017, 158- 164, Putowski M et al. 2015, 264- 268). The perspective of faith often helps. Is suicide a sin then? The answer to the question indicated here is primarily in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The document stated: "Suicide denies the natural pursuit of a human being to preserve and prolong his life. It is in deep contradiction with the proper love of self. It is also an insult to the love of neighbor, because it unreasonably breaks the bonds of solidarity with the family, national and human community, to which we have obligations. Suicide is opposed to love (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994).

Tadeusz Reroń reminds that suicide is an activity that violates a fundamental moral norm. We are talking here about the *nomine* "Do not kill" - directly resulting from the Ten Commandments. This author adds that the act of suicide is a crime. This action fundamentally contradicts the principle of respect for human dignity. The scientist also states that moral responsibility for suicide may be limited. Responsibility may also be canceled (reroń 2006, 76- 81). Here it is worth referring to the reality known in the norms of criminal law. A good example is the Polish Penal Code, which indicates that the crime is only:

- an act (or no act) that has been enshrined in law,
- then it was committed freely, i.e. consciously and voluntarily,
- a given person (perpetrator of an act) can be objectively attributed to guilt.(Article 1 of the Polish Criminal Code)

An act that does not meet one of these conditions is not a crime. Someone who would be forced to act in an internal (pathological) way is not free in their decisions (See more: Bidziak 2014, 175- 188, Burdziak 2014, 1-10).

Did the heroes of the above two stories, from the perspective of the Catholic Church's teaching, commit a sin? Are their actions condemning?

Positive Change

The analysis carried out in the article is not a place for judging human conscience. The doubt about the sinful nature of suicide acts is not relevant to the dead, but to those who live and suffer. Probably great suffering once accompanied families who buried the deceased in the cemetery, without the presence of a priest. Often these activities took place secretly from the community. In the old days it happened that the responsibility for suicide was often transferred to the relatives of the suicide victims (Michalska – Suchanek, 2011, 36). An important change can be seen in recent decades in this area. Piotr Morciniec presented this change in the "Encyclopedia of Bioethics". This author made it very clear that the Catholic Church in her moral teaching intensively refers to current scientific reports (Morciniec 2009, 538- 539). The results of suicidological studies clearly indicate that the act of suicide is most often associated with several elements:

- collapse of the human life situation,
- increasing aggression and self-aggression,
- a strong experience of pain, suffering and loneliness, and
- the appearance of depressive states and the desire to die. (Lebedowicz 2013, 9- 11, Rodziński et al. 207, 522- 524)

This Is why, as Morciniec recalls, taking action aimed at his own death as a result of:"

- experiencing mental disorder,
- strong, sometimes panic fear or
- serious fear of trial, suffering or torture,

Orders to look differently at the suicide act. The circumstances of this action usually remain a mystery. Morciniec also resembles a modification in the area of Catholic burial of the dead. This right also applies to those who have taken their own lives. The right discussed here can only be denied in two cases:

- if the funeral was associated with social scandal (the anti-religious views and behavior of the deceased were known),
- it was widely known that a person who commits suicide does so with full awareness and acceptance of his conduct (Morciniec 2009, 538- 539).

In the aforementioned Catechism of the Catholic Church, the discussed change took the form of specific regulations. **As indicated in the cited document:**

"KKK 2282 ... Severe mental disorders, fear or serious fear of trial, suffering or torture may reduce suicide liability."

The Catholic Church also draws attention to the need to maintain hope. As we read:

"KKK 2283 Hope should not be lost regarding the eternal salvation of those who took their own lives. God, in a known way, can give them the possibility of salutary regret. The Church prays for those who took their lives "(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994).

Suffering that continues

For several years in Poland, more people die because of suicides than in car accidents. It is indicated that in 2018 every 47 minutes there was a suicide act in Poland. Suicidomatics are able to better recognize and name disturbing symptoms that lead to a person being deprived of life. From time to time there are also high-profile stories related to this problem (Press Messenger 2018, online). It is worth referring the problem to specific people and specific situations. This action will allow us to better understand the complex nature of suicide attempts. Thanks to the above action, it will be possible to see the beginning of actions aimed at taking a life by a specific character.

At the end of August 2019, a member of the Polish parliament, Jagna Marczułajtis-Walczak admitted that she had recently found herself in a very difficult situation. She often thought about taking her own life. As it turned out - a little earlier - her third child was diagnosed with a very serious brain defect. As she emphasized herself, her location led to the appearance of severe depressive states. They were associated with suicidal thoughts. The cited politician noted: "I just looked at what bridge to leave, or how to

do it to kill myself with this child, so that he and I would no longer suffer." (Świdorski 2019, online). Such statements show a very clear and relevant correlation. On the one hand, we can see an extremely difficult to imagine drama. Man begins to experience a state that slowly exceeds his natural desire for life. Zygmunt Freud in the book "Man, religion, culture" emphasized that each of us has a desire to live. At the moment of danger to life, we know how to fight fiercely for our own lives and lives of people close to us. On the other hand, however, as the father of psychoanalysis pointed out, there is a "train to Thanatos" in us. We can even want to die in an incomprehensible way. (Citkowska-Kimla 2014, 58) George Carlin rightly points out that, paradoxically, sometimes we want death so badly, "as if our whole life depended on it." Antonia Kępiński assessed the more accurately discussed suicidal reality. In his opinion: "In young people suicide is a call for help, in old people it is only a call for death." (See, Szymańska 2016, 12) This "call" is often associated with:

- a mental crisis
- spiritual suffering,
- physical pain and
- loneliness. (Dudek, online)

As Zuzanna Gądzik points out: "Motivation to take on your own life can be different. Specialists in the field of suicidology among the most common reasons for suicide they mention e.g. unemployment, addictions, depression, death of a loved one, strong experience stress, loneliness, love professions, family misunderstandings, somatic illnesses and mental illness 1. The reason for taking your own life may arise in addition, from the religious beliefs they believe to be right seems to commit suicide for the proper benefit spiritual (Gądzik 2019, 28)." Often the appearance of suicidal thoughts is associated with internal confusion. Paulo Coelho reached similar waxes in his book "Weronika decides to die". In his opinion, people attempting suicide are often too weak to live but at the same time they are too strong to die (Coelho 1998, 29).

Suicide Remains

Suicide is a phenomenon that remains permanent. In dead people it is their direct cause of death. For people who have tried to take their own lives, it is "blism". Sometimes it is a very clear mark on the body that reminds how a person wanted to end his own life. Sometimes, it is a scar in the emotions that the suicidal act devastated. For loved ones who killed themselves, suicide is a wound that accompanies them and provokes questions that most often remain unanswered. How is it possible that a patient / someone close / human could take his own life? How could this happen, for example, in a hospital ward full of people? (See more: Czabański 2016, 83- 109) This question makes you aware that an act of suicide will always remain incomprehensible and a tragic secret.

Nowadays, psychiatrists know that more careful care should be given to patients who are, for example, in a state of strong mood change accompanied by resignation thoughts. It is not a secret, however, that the clinically particularly difficult moment is when the patient's mood improves. Sometimes - paradoxically - this is the most dangerous moment for him. This is the moment when he regains his strength, at which he can sometimes pretend to improve his health. Perfectly shows this reality quite a popular meme. We see many famous characters in this picture: they are mainly actors and singers. Among them are smiling: Robin Williams, Marilyn Monroe and Kurt Cobain. They are therefore people who have just died as a result of an attempt on their own lives. These people have experienced pain that they have kept deep inside for many years. Well-known singer Robbie Williams wrote very accurately suffering, which can be called soul pain. As he stated in one of the interviews during which he talked about his depression: "I am fighting with a disease in my head that wants to kill me. Sometimes it overwhelms me, and sometimes it helps me to get on stage." (Williams 2018, online). In turn, popular comedy actor, Robin Williams, referring to his own depressive suffering and loneliness, added: "I used to think that the worst thing in life is to be alone. That's not true. The worst thing in life is to be with people who make you feel lonely." (Williams 2016, online).

There is currently no cure for suicide. It is also difficult to locate the therapy, which would guarantee 100% that a given person will never experience thoughts that will direct him towards his own death. The above-mentioned Paulo Coelho described the main character of one of his books as the one who had thought about death for a long time: "Veronica hated everything, but above all the way she lived, never seeing hundreds of other Veronics who lived in her, who they were fascinating, crazy, curious of the world, brave, ready for risk." (Coelho 1998, 29) A similar "temptation to death", which is the only solution for some people, is sometimes met with a lack of acceptance by the future victim. In other words, it happens that a person thinking about death is still fighting hard for his own life. This can be seen in the poem of the famous Polish poet, Edward Stachura. In 2019, the 40th anniversary of the artist's suicide was mentioned. In the song "Time Flows and Kills Wounds" we read his call to a person thinking about death:

"Listen, abandoned by her,
Unknown my friend:
In his despair
Don't go out on the balcony, don't leave
Don't come to the pavement from above, don't
come
Don't run into the shadow trail, wait, wait a bit!
"

A few verses later, the poet outlines, filled with hope, ensuring:

"I swear to you that time is passing!
That time passes and kills wounds!
I swear to you I swear to you
I swear to you that time is passing!
That it kills wounds - I swear to you! "
(Stachura, online)

The "time" mentioned by Edward Stachura is probably one of the most important "therapists". The healing effect of time is, however, only possible when a second character appears next to the suffering person. It must be a man who wants to help. Polish politician, cited above, Jagna Marczałajtis-Walczak says in this context: "We found a warm and good person. She helped me, gave me strength. I understood that there are those who have even harder." (Świdorski 2019, online). Agnieszka Gmitrowicz also shows an important perspective. The cited specialist psychiatrist working with young people after suicide attempts indicates that loneliness is a key cause of many disorders that appear in young people. The mentioned researcher emphasizes: "Mothers come to me sometimes (...) who say: "I love my children very much", but when asked how they learn, what interests they have, they answer: "who would remember", so I don't ask any more (Paculek 2019, online)."

It is primarily child psychiatry that is an area that requires special investment from a state wishing to control epidemics of suicide in adolescents. This is a natural area of medical activities that are necessary in the prevention of suicidal behavior, as well as at the time of supporting patients who wanted to take their own lives. As already mentioned: similar tests are directly related to suffering, which is very real. It results from the appearance of symptoms of depression and anxiety disorders, from experiencing trauma. etc. Suffering is tangibly experienced by a person thinking about suicide. It is these internal experiences that direct a person towards a bridge, tower block, or gas stove. Similar places or objects - according to people thinking about suicide - are meant to help. Nowadays, it is necessary to create tools that will help reach a similar group of people before a tragedy occurs (Pużyński, 2006, 428- 431).

Hope in the Fight for Life

Searching for knowledge about the best prevention of suicidal behavior, we can find surprising information. The other person is the best medicine for the suffering of a person who wants to take his own life. It is the lack of another person that can lead to a tragedy. This reflects the content of history known in many countries. A man committed suicide by jumping from the famous Golden Bridge. Earlier, however, in a farewell letter he wrote: "I'm going towards the bridge. If even one person on the way smiles at me, I will not jump. "He jumped. (Bateson 2013, 49- 53) The scenario described here may look completely different. A

positive scenario is described by the story of one of the Poles. Tobiasz Lipiński wanted to take sonie's life in 2013 by jumping from the city viaduct. Suddenly the car stopped. The man sitting in it asked:

- "- Hey, are you OK? (...)
- Don't leave or I'll jump!
- Why do you want to kill yourself?

"Because the wife wants to leave," Tobiasz answered. - I don't have anyone else to live for. I am not important to anyone. I am stupid, poor, there is no place for me here.

- You have a child?
- Son.

- Then you have to live for him. You are no longer alone. Now you still have me, "said the man in the car and shook hands with Tobiasz (Władkowska 2014, online).

Suicide is a topic that interests: sociologists, psychiatrists, ethics, lawyers, theologians and probably many other specialists. When we analyze the issue in question from a spiritual (not psychological) perspective, we come to the conclusion that a person was suicidal because of rational inconceivable loneliness. It is a state in which man perceives reality in a completely different way. This reality is beginning to hurt him. It should be remembered, however, that the aforementioned pain can cause a person's life. Painful memories appear, sudden remorse joins in, the future of man is uncertain for him. These are similar areas that are the basic activator leading man to death.

Will Smith prepared his suicide very carefully in the film *Seven Souls*. His actions were so methodical and thought-out that he wondered what state his body would look like after the garbage. As it turns out, his corpse was to have a very important, even altruistic task. Theoretically, this hero knew what he was doing. Can we be sure of that? Would thoughts and resignation plans appear for this man were it not for the strong remorse that had destroyed him for many years? Perhaps he could have chosen a different path, wanting to redeem his guilt? Did he have to kill himself? Perhaps he fought with their own evil with another evil act?

The hero of the movie: "Before you appeared" was in a similar situation. He suddenly met someone who loved him as he was. For this person, the disability of the main character was not significant. His presence mattered. Analyzing the content of this film, one must conclude that the main character rejects love. He is a person who in some unique way cannot forgive himself the disability he experiences. This person consciously says "No !!!" to his own life.) A similar phenomenon can be seen in another movie. I am talking about the production here. "Between hell and heaven" (Robin

Williams in the lead role). We see his film wife here. Her suicide act involves two key sentences:

- I can't, I don't want to forgive myself anymore!
- Love will change nothing here! (See more: Mazurek 2010, online)

This film shows hell as the eternal depression of a man who constantly accuses himself.

"Before you appeared" is a production that glorifies assisted suicide, shows its greatest drama. This film shows a man who condemns himself. He doesn't believe in forgiveness. In similar situations, probably the presence of a second person is not always possible. A man in depression, a man experiencing suffering, and a man who rejects himself, can also move away from others. He often doesn't want to meet another person. Paradoxically, on the one hand, he is looking for help. On the other hand, prospects reject any help. Sometimes we have no possibility of practical help. Often, the attitude of rejecting support leads a person to suicide. These activities always raise questions, as mentioned. Uncertainty arises: What happens to the victim? There is no definite answer to similar questions. There is hope, however, which the following story shows.

Once to St. Jan Vianeaia, a priest from Ars, came a broken woman. She said her husband who didn't go to church committed suicide by jumping from a bridge. She states directly that he ultimately killed not only his body but also his soul. This priest was to say:

"Mrs, there is a small distance between the bridge and the water, but it just doesn't let you judge it."

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