

Adevelop the Concept of Suicide in a Philosophical Context

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Abstract: *Suicide-related issues are among those that have been the focus of philosophers of all time. The attitude to the problem of suicide as a social phenomenon from biblical times to the present should also be talked about by today's students, so the research work with gifted students will be effective, because today's children wonder who they are, what their mission is and the meaning of life and death raises the question of the social meaning of suicide. Philosophy and religion, law and duty, social and public are intertwined here. Christianity considers suicide a sin. Although there are examples in the Old Testament where cases of voluntary death look like heroic deeds. Suicide becomes an absolutely sinful act at a certain historical time, when it has become too frequent. Adjustments to Christian ethics with its prohibitions were made by the Enlightenment and the right to shorten one's life became one's personal choice. The article presents the research of gifted students on the question of attitudes towards suicide from ancient times to the Middle Ages (group 1); attitudes towards suicide from the Middle Ages to the present (group 2); attitudes towards suicide from the New Age to the present (group 3). The research work is carried out for the purpose of condemning any manifestations of suicidal behavior, deep understanding of this problem from the most ancient times to the present.*

Keywords: *Will to live, instinct for self-preservation, death of the individual, existential emptiness, altruistic suicide, social norms, suicidology.*

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Introduction

Turning to the specific problem of self-realization of gifted students in research activity, it should be noted that we consider self-realization as the interaction of a student with his inner and outer world. The external world is an educational space expressed in an activity form. Observing and evaluating the transition of a pupil's potential capabilities into the creative activity product created by him/her, we establish a pupil's achievement of the aggregate educational product consisting of the internal and external ones.

It is difficult to assess the priority of internal or external product. In the internal educational product, we mean experience, knowledge, skills of a schoolchild. The external one is the material product created by the student as a result of creative activity. They can solve a problem, do research, work, paint a picture, etc.

But often by the external educational product we assess the result of the activity. Although, in our opinion, the personal growth of the student is no less important indicator of the development of creativity and generally the result of activity. Nevertheless, personal growth can be tracked as a result of purposeful monitoring (Maksymchuk et al., 2020).

Today, the problem of the development of gifted students is primarily related to the new conditions and rapidly changing demands of society. A solution to the problem seems to be possible in the organization of targeted education for people with pronounced abilities in any field. Traditional approaches to organizing the educational process fail to cope with their tasks. Therefore, the research work of gifted students is becoming increasingly popular and teaches the modern student how to select, conclude, and systematize material. Let us consider the result of the research topic "Suicide, its history of origin, causes and consequences", which can be presented and defended by the applicants of education both in the lessons of health basics and in extracurricular activities, because the concept of mortality, the finality of human life and as a result the choice between life and death - the awareness of this accompanies a person all the time. Therefore, every suicidal act is relevant across time: it was so before and it is so today. Individual and societal diseases do not pass, so analyzing suicide in any epoch foreign and domestic researchers identify the same problematic issues.

Koni (1898) and Osetrova (2006) prove in their scientific works that thoughts about death come at different ages: childhood, youth, old age, it always has its explanation. In the process of struggling with them, worldview precepts, orientations of activity are formed. These orientations with life

attitudes equalize in rights both instincts of self-preservation (the urge to life) and self-denial (the urge to death). If the latter prevails, suicidal action can occur. In the opinion of Monk (1987), Śliwa et al.,(2021), from complete capture to absolute prohibition, from crime to heroic deed - such evaluative judgments were given to suicide actions in the history of mankind. Ideology or religion with their doctrine as the basis of life is what stipulates the evaluation of suicide in a certain society. According to scholars, the level of intellectual development of society, its social structure and type of worldview are of great importance. At the same time we must not forget that the suicidal decision is made largely due to the perception of that image of death, which the consciousness produces. Therefore, it is obvious that both internal sphere - mental, and external - social are involved in making a suicidal decision. Today's technocratic thinking determines the dramatic position of man in the world with his relations with society and nature. All this determines the logic of developing the concept of suicide in a philosophical context. Without the intervention of philosophy, it is impossible to solve, or at least explain, the acute suicidal situation in the world. It is philosophy that should serve as the basis of suicidology, because in its foundations it has the possibility to discover the essence of suicide. And this essence does not lie on the surface. The true nature of suicide is in the combination of internal and external motives of this phenomenon. It is philosophy that can explicate the essence of this phenomenon, without being dispersed into a multitude of potential components.

We must admit that the development of philosophical suicidology today is insufficient when compared with clinical suicidology or the psychology of suicide. Yet, the study of this phenomenon was based on philosophers. Therefore, it is philosophical suicidology in general theoretical terms that is extremely fruitful and its achievements are used by other scientific disciplines that study the phenomenon of suicide.

The purpose of this article is to investigate gifted students' attitudes toward suicide from ancient times to the Middle Ages (group 1); attitudes toward suicide from the Middle Ages to the Present (group 2); attitudes toward suicide from the New Age to the Present (group 3). The goal of this research work with gifted students is to condemn any manifestation of suicidal behavior, a deep understanding of this problem from ancient times to the present.

A study of attitudes toward suicide from ancient times to the Middle Ages

The work of gifted students usually begins with a study of the topic, selection of literature, division into groups, and responsibilities in the groups. Therefore, the task of the first group is to study the theoretical aspects of the question. "Suicide" literally means "to lose oneself". For Jews, suicide is forbidden: you were not created of your own free will, so you were not born of your own free will, you do not live your own free will, you will not die of your own free will, and you will not have to answer and report to the Almighty. A person should not approach his death. The human body belongs to God, and no one has the right to destroy His property. The suicide rejects God's judgment and neglects eternal life, he is a murderer, a grievous sinner, and does not deserve to mourn. The law combines rejection and suicide with understanding and compassion for the mentally ill, drunk, and minors.

In front of Saul (one of the three suicides in the Book of Kings), everything he lived for dies: children, the army, the country. The wounded king "...said to the servant who had the care of his arms, Take out your sword and put it through me, before these men without circumcision come and make sport of me. But his servant, full of fear, would not do so. Then Saul took out his sword, and falling on it, put an end to himself" (Bible, 2022a). Blinded and humiliated, Samson, in the name of God, buried himself and his Philistine enemies under the rubble of a house (Bible, 2022b).

Ancient Greek philosophers are not in solidarity in assessing the right to commit suicide. Pythagoras (2009) and Aristotle (2022) are against suicide and oppose the Epicureans, Cynics, and Stoics; Plato (Plato et al., 1997) and Socrates (Socrates of Athens, 2022) have an intermediate position.

Plato (Plato et al., 1997) proposed burying suicides separately, without a monument, but without denying the teacher, the example of Socrates (Socrates of Athens, 2022) showed: the suicide of the "ideal human" is an exception for a higher power (this coincides with the opinion of the first Christian theologians about the martyrs for the faith) (Dialogue between Plato, Fedon, n.d.). In Phaedo, the immortal soul of Socrates travels to good places on the path to perfection (Dialogue between Plato. Fedon, n.d.). Referring himself to the "perfect exception", a certain Cleombrotus of Ambracia rushed into the sea, reading this dialogue (Montaigne, 2022).

Epicurus urged not to give up fate, but if necessary, feel free to abandon it and come out of life with beautiful words on his lips: "I have lived a great life!" (Epicurus & Strodach, 2019). This idea of the Epicureans merges with the idea of the Stoics, but only in this. For the Stoics, suicide is a virtue, a liberation, an advantage over the gods. Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, falls and breaks his little finger at the age of 98 (Svevo & Schmitz, 2022). The sign is clear and the philosopher commits suicide: life loses its value when a person cannot hope for happiness for himself or others.

In Sparta, suicide was condemned, but the legendary Lycurgus (Plutarch & Dryden, 2013), having received the revelation that his laws are successful and the state will reach the highest glory, as long as citizens are loyal, so he starved himself not to release them from the oath.

The late Cyrenaics, occupying a niche between Socrates (Socrates of Athens, 2022) and Epicurus (Epicurus & Strodach, 2019) denied the possibility of happiness for a person (pessimism): pleasure as a higher good was hopelessly defeated by unbearable suffering and they preached death by starvation as an effective medicine. The philosopher Simon of Cyrene so eloquently argued the hardships of life and the consolation of death in his speeches in Alexandria that he was nicknamed the "teacher of death" (Neff, 2013).

In pagan Rome, with the cult of pleasures, suicide was romanticized as an act of liberation, victory over the immortal gods. Durkheim (1994) agreed that the knowledge of the early history of Rome is inaccurate: fragments of the "Law of the XII Tables" do not mention suicide. Suicide is criminal in three cases: a suicide is a convicted criminal, a soldier (equated to desertion) or a slave who has no power over his life; the first avoids punishment, the others harm the state (master). If a melancholy slave killed himself in the first six months of purchase, the owner demanded a refund. However, if the one who sold the slave kills himself before the court, he kept the honor and property of the family.

Cato, "Don Quixote of the Roman aristocracy" and a supporter of the Stoics, reread the dialogue "Phaedo" twice and kills himself: with the death of the Republic, freedom is lost (Addison & Henderson, 2004). Lucan (1993) says that Cato sided with the losers, while God sided with the victors. By the way, Lucan also committed suicide (Polikarpova, 2011).

The eternal law has given one way into life, but many - away from life, as from disease and the hangman. The door is open to all. "It is good to die" - to avoid the risk of living badly if persistently pursued by misfortune. But the wise and courageous should not flee from life. Death is not the point: to die with honor is as beautiful and right as to live with honor. Suicide is an affirmation of freedom. Seneca compares Cato's suicide to the

death of a wounded gladiator, who receives the death blow of his opponent without a groan.

Nero (who cut his own throat three years later) accused Seneca of conspiracy and offered to choose the method of suicide. Rubens has a painting, *Death of Seneca*: the philosopher slit his wrists in a large pelvis and shared his impressions with his students at the same time. A woman painstakingly sketches the first signs of death. Legs weakened, but held by physical strength and fortitude, Foucault (1996).

Dido, the founder and queen of Carthage, unable to withstand the betrayal of her beloved, stabs herself with a dagger. Dido's death is replicated in paintings, operas, and tragedies as a symbol of sacrificial love. Trajan in the early II century AD banned the cultivation of aconite in connection with the increase in "suspicious poisoning" – it is an ancient example of restricting access to suicide. In the *Digests of Justinian* (the 6th century AD), a compilation of Roman civil law, suicide "for no reason" is condemned, because a person who does not spare himself/herself, will not spare others.

Attitudes toward suicide from the Middle Ages to the Present Times

The study of the development of suicide continues with gifted students in the second group, exploring the most significant issues and signs of the times.

In Christianity attitudes to suicide were negative, but the Donatists ("schismatics" of the Carthaginian Church, the 4th – the 7th centuries) sought holiness through the cult of suicide. The Orthodox Church has acquired a strong protector in the person of Blessed Augustine. A cathedral was convened in Carthage in 411, and representatives of the Donatists were invited there. Augustine won a complete victory over the Donatists. Five church councils confirmed Augustine's views on suicide as a sinful act and systematized the punishment for it.

Thomas Aquinas (13th century), in line with Aristotle's ideas, saw suicide as a threefold sin: against the Lord who gives life, against social order and against his own nature (self-preservation), the suicideer arrogantly turning away from God. With a strict unequivocal "no" St. Thomas stigmatizes the ancient "situational questions": whether a Christian can kill herself under threat of violence and whether self-destruction in the name of the Lord is permissible (Aquinas, 1981).

Since the 16th century, based on the sixth commandment "thou shalt not kill", suicide is recognized by the Catholic Church as murder, even if the victim is mentally or physically ill. Suicides of martyrs are condemned as a permissible act: suffering is sent to atone for sins and eternal life. It is forbidden to bury, bury the victims of suicide in the consecrated land, their

property is confiscated. Those who attempted suicide were excommunicated and sent to hard labor as murderers.

In the afterlife, the souls of suicides are doomed to eternal hellish torment. Among the carefully delineated circles of the “Divine Comedy” of Dante Alighieri, the seventh circle is for rapists over themselves and the estate (players and wasteful), senseless fighters of their property. A little higher (first circle) – tyrants and robbers (in tune with the current notion of deviant behaviour). Harpies feed on their leaves in the Suicide Forest. On the day of judgment, the suicidal person does not find the flesh: it is not ours that we dropped.

In the “thaw” of the Enlightenment to replace the sinful human from birth, who lives under the oppression of original sin came a human who claims the right to life and death. By committing suicide, a person externally and internally demonstrates disagreement with fate and place in the universe. Conscience allows this step, and it means destroying the image of God in the heart. Human “dies” spiritually. This is the death of the individual.

The era of unconditional condemnation of suicide was receding. The evolution of attitudes to suicide is associated with the development of a scientific worldview and habitual ideas about the world.

For Montaigne (16th century) suicide was a "holy" way of honorably withdrawing from life an incapacitated person who had become a burden on society. Th. More also permitted the voluntary death of a terminally ill person. Montaigne (16th century), struck by the “noble suicides” of antiquity in the name of duty and love, without reducing them to the absolute, considers the victim of suicide insane: “Just as I do not break the laws against thieves, when I carry what belongs to me, or I take my wallet with me, and I am not a pallium when I burn my forest, just as I am not subject to the laws against murderers when I take my own life”(Montaigne, 2022).

Spinoza, following Plato, writes not only of the cowardice of suicide, but considers it the result of the lack of life-strengthening circumstances in the environment: those who rely on themselves have a soul stricken with impotence; their nature has suffered a total defeat in the struggle with external circumstances. Spinoza is invariably precise, distinguishing between the internal moment of the suicidal, a soul stricken with impotence, and the external, a struggle with external circumstances.

Halbwachs (1930) calls for people to regain their innate freedom, breaking down all the usual arguments against suicide and showing that the said act is free from all sinfulness and is not subject to any condemnation in accordance with the opinions of all the ancient philosophers. A man is not obliged to do good to society by harming himself: it makes no sense to drag

out a miserable existence infirm, incurably ill. An unbearable life is a sign from above.

Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thinkers see suicide as an immoral act, an affront to human dignity. In Kant's conception, moral external coercion is replaced by unquestioning internal coercion. Suicide violates the logical and aesthetic expediency of nature and man as an egoistic act, a defeat of self-love with an ambiguous desire to die and improve life. Aversion to suicide is characteristic of classical philosophy (then existential philosophy), as is the Christian worldview (Beauchamp, 1996).

"The Philosophy of Right", (1820) states that in suicide there is a negative will to free oneself from everything, to give up any goals, to abstract oneself from everything instead of the fascinating knowledge of the world.

The death of an acquaintance prompted Goethe (he had once contemplated death after falling in love with someone else) in "The Sorrows of Young Werther" (1774) to show the romantic's conflict with the world and the unattainability of love: the sensitive young man unsuccessfully seeks the mutuality of a married respectable lady. The novelist motivated the hero's suicide not only by unhappy love, but also by a defeated ambition.

The heretical individualist Nietzsche recognizes the right to suicide if it will save the cause of life for his followers. The philosopher is skeptical about suicide from boredom, boredom or unrequited love.

The French Revolution decriminalized suicide in a whirlwind of bloody bacchanalia. The prosecution of suicides was then ended in other European countries.

But Bonaparte (who had reread "Werther" seven times), concerned about "non-combat losses" in the army, assured soldiers that one must be able to overcome heartache. It takes no less willpower and courage to endure mental adversity than it does to withstand a volley of enemy fire. And he forbade reading Werther. Napoleon believed that death as an act of desperation is cowardice. Of himself he said that suicide was not consistent with his principles, nor with the place he occupies on the world stage and called himself a man condemned to life. At the same time the emperor never parted with a bottle of opium.

Since the early nineteenth century suicide became a "medical fact," but in some countries the law still punished those who attempted an "unsuccessful" exit from life. Suicide was eliminated from criminal offenses, becoming a subject of interest for psychiatrists. By explaining suicide only with medical reasons, society stigmatizes the deviant minority and reduces social responsibility for the individual act.

In the Russian Empire, up until the reforms of Peter the Great, suicide was "in the hands" of church laws. Legislation of Peter the Great's time, the Orthodox Church, as well as the Catholic Church, was strict to suicide. According to the Military Statute (1716), suicide as a grave crime was punished with a corpse. The mentally ill (melancholy) were buried outside the cemetery, "but not in a dishonorable place." Only in 1905, Article 710 was excluded from the Charter of the Medicinal, according to which the body of a suicide was to be dragged by the executioner to a "dishonorable" place and buried there.

Attitudes toward suicide from the New Age to the Present

About the attitude towards suicide from the newest times to the present investigate gifted students of the third group and come to the conclusion: at the turn of the XIX-XX centuries suicide is a social, ontological, medical problem, a sign of social pessimism, protest, loss of the meaning of life during a moral and metaphysical (spiritual and psychic) crisis. "The Silver Age," killed by the war of 1914, marked the decline of the mindset: mental fatigue and social apathy with the satiety of feelings, "loneliness in the crowd." Philosophical and aesthetic discourse emphasized the existential emptiness and deadlock of the "change of milestones." V.V. Rozanov believed that the "expense of the soul" is almost the main source of "gratuitous suicides" or suicides as a "loss of the meaning of life." After 1905-1906 years suicide became a real household phenomenon in the Russian Empire, to which all used to. "Suicide" in the article of the popular dictionary (Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1900, volume 28) means the conscious or unconscious termination of human existence through fatal injuries or because of such physical conditions in which the vital bodily functions immediately or gradually fade away (Lyashchenko, 2018).

In the pre-revolutionary years of the early 20th century suicide of a pupil - the occasion for mass (thousands of participants) protests against the education system and the political system. The political meaning of suicide would emphasize revolutionary traditions. In 1889 Nadezhda Sigida was punished with 100 strokes for slapping a gendarme officer. On the same night she poisoned herself, as she declared in the execution. Nineteen convicts (3 of them women) joined her, six died. The prisoners took the opium (expired), but the investigation did not find out how they got it. The story caused a scandal: corporal punishment of women was forbidden, the political prison of the Kariya katorga (part of the Nerchinskaya katorga) was liquidated.

The totalitarian regime forbids its subjects the "loophole" of suicide and considers suicide attempts a relic or a sign of a neglected mental illness. Soviet newspapers of the 1920s reported suicides of Komsomol and Communists outraged by the "betrayal of revolutionary ideals" in connection with the introduction of the NEP, explaining them by an atypical weakness of the Soviet man (Onishchuk et al., 2020).

In emigration, the religious philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev in his article "On Suicide" (1931) gives a psychological portrait of a suicidal refugee, very similar to the "internal emigrant" in the USSR: he is oppressed by despair, hopelessness and isolation on himself. In his opinion, a suicide is a man who has lost all hope that the blessings of life can be granted to him. He hates his miserable, meaningless life, not the earthly life in general, not generally its benefits. The psychology that leads to suicide is less a psychology of detachment from the benefits of earthly life. It takes, on the contrary, a great aspiration toward the temporal and earthly, an oblivion of eternity and heaven, for a psychology of suicide to be formed.

During World War II, suicide to avoid capture was actually approved by Order No. 227 of the USSR People's Commissar of Defense of July 28, 1942 "On measures to strengthen discipline and order in the Red Army and banning unauthorized withdrawal from combat positions" ("No step back!"). The media spread reports of heroic deaths surrounded by the enemy and with them (altruistic suicide, according to Durkheim, for the sake of super-personal values), of dozens of aerial ramming. Political workers did not call for the self-sacrificing death of soldiers directly, but everyone was aware of the fate of the families of "deserters." Order No. 270 of August 16, 1941 "Order about responsibility of soldiers for surrendering and leaving weapons for the enemy" ordered to destroy the captured by all means, both by ground and air. And the families of captured Red Army soldiers were deprived of state aid. Hundreds of thousands of wounded and encircled were ordered to spend the last balloon on themselves (Honchar et al., 2021).

In the second half of the twentieth century in the West freedom of choice is at the center of existentialist philosophy: suicide does not require justification, but how to refuse to die when life is meaningless, why not kill yourself if life is not in harmony with common sense. According to A. Camus, man flees into suicide and religion from the absurdity of life and freedom, although life is only a game.

Foucault (1996) in *The Will to Truth* (1970) returned to the Aristotelian understanding of suicide as a violation of the relationship between man and the state. Respect for life is represented as a sanctity, a social priority, but leveled by social control, devalued by violent practices.

The forecast of the consulting company Network for the U.S. Congress is as follows: in the next 30 years suicide will become socially acceptable and long life will be perceived as an expression of selfishness. The absolute majority (up to 80%) at one time or another (especially teenagers and elderly people) have had thoughts of suicide, which does not mean its realization for the overwhelming majority, but about 10% of the population of different countries and at different periods of life are subject to suicide.

Against the background of detachment, liberated violence increased social control over life. The aspirations of society to keep everyone alive collide with the aspirations of some individuals to leave it. There is an urgent need for specialists to study the problem of suicide and to counsel those who are drawn into the abyss of "thanatos" (as Freud defined it). A new scientific field is emerging, suicidology, which studies suicidal behavior and ways of preventing suicide.

The first suicide prevention center was established in 1953 in England and was called Samaritans. The Reverend Fathers made their telephone numbers public so that lonely, confused, or suicidal people could seek help. In 1960, the International Association for Suicide Prevention was founded. Today, there are thousands of heterogeneous suicide prevention programs around the world. Services focus on potentially suicidal individuals. The principles of the services were anonymity and location outside psychiatric institutions. In 1966, the Center for Suicide Research and Prevention at the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health was established by E. Schneidman and N. Farberow, Halbwachs (1930). The Center included a crisis hospital and a telephone hotline. Psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers worked at the Center along with trained volunteers, including those who coped with a similar crisis.

Conclusions

The article presents the research of gifted students on the attitude to suicide from ancient times to the Middle Ages (group 1) and proves that today's technocratic thinking determines the dramatic position of man in the world with his relations with society and nature. All of this is what makes it logical to develop the concept of suicide in a philosophical context. Without the intervention of philosophy, it is impossible to solve or at least explain the acute suicidal situation in the world. It is philosophy that should serve as the basis of suicidology, because in its foundations it has the possibility to discover the essence of suicide. And this essence does not lie on the surface. The true nature of suicide is in the combination of internal and external

motives of this phenomenon. It is philosophy that can explicate the essence of this phenomenon, without dispersing it into a multitude of potential components. The article presents the results of a study of attitudes toward suicide from the Middle Ages to the present (group 2). The conclusion is that the attitude toward suicide was negative with the advent of Christianity, but the Donatists ("schismatics" of the Carthage Church, 4th-7th centuries) sought to achieve holiness through the cult of suicide. The Orthodox Church gained a strong advocate in Augustine the Blessed. In 411 a council was assembled at Carthage to which representatives of the Donatists were invited. Augustine won a complete victory over the Donatists. Five church councils affirmed Augustine's views on suicide as a sinful act and systematized the punishment for it. The attitude towards suicide from the New Age to the present time was studied by 3 group of gifted students and came to the conclusion that at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries suicide was considered as a social, ontological, medical problem, a sign of social pessimism, protest, loss of meaning of life during moral and metaphysical (spiritual and mental) crisis. times to the present time.

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The Author 4 collected material on attitudes toward suicide from the Present times to the present (material for group 3).

The Author 5 researched the effectiveness of research on gifted students.

The Author 6 selected scientific studies by Ukrainian and foreign scholars and compiled a list of literature.

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