

## **BREIVIK CASE" AS AN EXAMPLE OF MORAL SUICIDE**

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**Summary:** The general philosophical meaning of suicide is still often connected with the problem of free will, which translates incorrectly not only into everyday life but also into philosophical treatises. The connection of suicide to the problem of free will is mentioned by the stoic, Seneca, who named suicide a liberation from the necessity of nature.

**Keywords:** suicide, moral suicide, physical suicide, suicide typology, casuistry, Another one, the limits of free will, motive and move.

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### **Introduction -Suicide as a general philosophical problem**

The general philosophical problem of suicide came into the world lexicon of ethics, psychology and sociology in XX century. World wars and cataclysms forced a human being to doubt in the belief of his might and his unlimited power over nature, which caused (or provoked) individual or even massive cases of self-deprivation of life based on different backgrounds.

That's why Kantian ethics, that stand for human autonomy, have been sharply criticized especially by the

philosophies of the XX century and particularly by the philosopher O. Weininger: "Kant's lonely man does not dance or laugh; he neither brawls nor makes merry; he feels no need to make a noise, because the universe is so silent around him" (Weininger 1906: 98).

The general philosophical meaning of suicide is still often connected with the problem of free will, which translates incorrectly not only into everyday life but also into philosophical treatises. The connection of suicide to the problem of free will is mentioned by the stoic, Seneca, who named suicide a liberation from the necessity of nature.

F. Nietzsche connected the ascetic ideal with the desire of deriving free from life by the «Wille zum Nichts», J. Hillman, who guided studies for C.G. Jung, conceived of suicide as a release of a human being from deep inner worries. A lot of thinkers understand (perceive) suicide as a relief or an act of free will in other words. The phenomenon of suicide has been expressed in the philosophy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century so frequently that it was even referred to by one of the key representatives of existentialism, A. Camus, at the beginning of his work, "The Myth of Sisyphus" ("Le Mythe de Sisyphe"): There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy" (Camus 1955: 3).

The problem of suicide also offers a general quandary in philosophy, which affects the question of free will and just how easily a human makes a choice to keep living or to die consciously. The question of freedom touches the basics of philosophical models in general, which are relevant to the problems of first principle, prime cause, spontaneity, motivation, categories of necessity, randomness (eventuality).

From the first point of view, it seems that Breivik`s action is not connected to the problem of suicide at all. This impression appears just because the majority of people understand suicide as a physical act of self-destruction, but we shouldn't forget that an action is a result of a clear motive and motives determine action.

Breivik`s action does not end with his self-murder, - he didn't want that. But the question is if he crossed the line of morality and responsibility by killing other people. In this case

we should raise a problem of moral suicide as a *condition (state)* when the subject *loses promised borders even* though he does not destroy himself physically.

#### **“Breivik`s case”**

It is known that on 22 of July 2011 on 3:25PM there was an explosion in the Governmental district of Oslo. As a result seven people died on site, one person passed away in hospital because of injuries, 92 people got injuries and 15 of them were wounded.

An hour and a half after the explosion in the center of Oslo Breivik had reached the ferry of the Utoya Island. There was an AUF`s summer camp, where 655 young people at the age of 14-25 years old were staying at that time. Breivik started shooting people on the Island and killed 69 of them.

Breivik`s action as a model of behavior cannot find any reasoned thinking in the consciousness of intelligent human beings. But even in court Breivik defiantly acted like a person who didn`t regret what he had done. Driven by political slogans, he found an excuse for himself by following Voltaire`s principle of “*a small evil for a bigger cause*”.

Owing to the topicality of this particular event, it is important to force ourselves not to get side-tracked by the views of the masses but to try to determine the core and the source of Breivik`s actions. Thereby “Breivik`s case” should be comprehended as a specific situation, when his free will derived from a *false idea* that found expression in a murderous act.

The core questions of the limits of free will appear at that time when a person is losing the reason that freedom grants. These criteria may be and must be ‘Another’ subject . The meaning of “Another” was conceived in the works of M. Buber, J-P Sartre, G. Marcel. The relativity of “Me & Another” is relevant not only in understanding moral interaction but also in the coexistence of civilizations, - Breivik forgot about the moral foundation of this relativity and went exactly against multiculturalism and acceptable reason.

#### **If the subject destroys Another one**

Hypothesis: indirectly he destroys himself: his moral entity, since he almost commits a suicide. If one imagines a

closed society of individuals who exist in a hostile environment and one of these individuals decides to destroy another, this must lessen his own chances of survival. The world of nature can be antagonistic to us and a human being can lose the distinction that makes him a human being. Of course, such a situation is more possible in a confined environment, for example, in the primitive communal system, where the very climate appears as a determinant for human existence and behavior.

The ethics of Kant also contain the idea of moral suicide in conjunction with the attempt to take the life of another human being. In "The Metaphysics of Morals" he develops an idea about the concept of liability and responsibility in relation to another subject (human being): "Man can therefore have no duty to any beings other than men: and he thinks he has such duties, it is because of an *amphiboly* in his *concepts of reflection*, and his supposed duty to other beings is only a duty to himself. He is led to this misunderstanding by mistaking his duty *with regard to* other beings for a duty *to* those beings" (Kant 1991: 237)

The obligation and purpose of a human should be antithetical with hatred on any level: "But *hatred* of man is always hateful, even when it takes the form merely of completely avoiding men (separatist misanthropy), without active hostility toward them. For benevolence always remains a duty, even toward a misanthropist, whom one cannot indeed love but to whom one can still do good" (Kant 1991: 203).

That's why an individual ruins his moral condition by neglecting this obligation and purpose. And in the case of hatred towards Another which ends with collapse and even death, his animal egoism triumphs whilst ruining his moral attitude towards "Me & Another".

In short, there is no essential difference between moral suicide and physical suicide, the end is still the destruction of morality and mentality, which means the obliteration of borders of freedom.

These types of self-destruction (moral and physical) demand that we consider this phenomenon more scrupulously. Perhaps the difference between moral and physical self-destruction consists in the motivation and the direction of an act and also in the time sequence: moral

suicide comes after the murder of other people — physical suicide comes when there is no ability for moral suicide to potentialise as life is already extinguished.

Let`s imagine this thought in the form of matrix.

<b>Specific difference</b>	<b>Motive</b>	<b>Act</b>	<b>Result</b>
<b>Moral suicide</b>	Directed inside	Could be directed inside or outside of yourself	Executor is physically alive
	for the suppression of remorse	for the destruction of other subjects	
<b>Physical suicide</b>	Directed inside	Directed inside	Executor physically hasn't exist already
	for the ability of moral self-perfection destruction	for the destruction of yourself	

Tab. 1. Motive and Move vector of the direction while suicide

In both cases of self-harm and harm to others, liability is absolute. As such, we cannot talk about any moral law in action. However, to understand the character of Breivik`s action deeper we should look through the typology of suicide. *The key factor that defines moral or physical suicide is always the motive.* Depending on the motive, we can identify the following types of drive for the ending of life: 1. “domestic suicide”; 2. “philosophical self-murder”; 3. “political self-murder” or a self-murder caused by a political motive

All this typology could be applied to moral suicide so as to physical.

<b>Specific difference</b>	<b><i>Domestic</i></b>	<b><i>Philosophical</i></b>	<b><i>Political</i></b>
<b><i>The nature of action's reason</i></b>	External reasons (e.g. poverty, financial debt, unrequited love and so forth).	Internal reasons: the disharmony of personality with the outward things.	External reasons: rights and dignity abuses of one person or groups of people
<b><i>Action's content</i></b>	The situation on the emotional level seems to be unsolvable by your own	Unacceptance of the world as an idea based on the abstract level of thinking	Unacceptance of certain social mechanism or standards
<b><i>Action's purpose</i></b>	Self-deliverance from the problems.	Realization of the idea "for the oneself"	Realization of the idea for the good of society

Tab. 2. Suicide typology

Here it should be explained that self-sacrifice (the motivation of the idea of service to society) in the case of self-destruction for the sake of the human race – we can conclude that Breivik did not take part in moral or political murder. Actually Breivik had no reason to destroy other people because his existential needs were not primary - that's why there is no metaphysical justification for his actions. His hatred for liberalism, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, the dissemination of Islamic ideas and so on provides only a theoretical objection to life and not an excuse for murder. His

political objections could have found theoretical answers in the democratic process that he failed to trust in.

Breivik's action is the action of a coward and of an individual without conscience, who sought to punish others for societal grievances yet to minimize the possible damage to his own life. Breivik wanted to live, that is why he laid down his gun in front of the policemen thus signaling the value he placed on his own existence.

We should understand therefore that moral destruction does not equate to physical destruction. But the destruction of one's internal moral world is the giving in to one's own animal nature — and making moral norms simply relative.

When moral freedom is undermined, legal justice must intervene. The Norwegian legislative system is perhaps far too liberally disposed towards the likes of Breivik. Just twenty-one years in prison will not compensate the victims' families nor probably change the man himself.

*(Translated into English by Ekaterina Shevtsova; Edited by Andy Zneimer)*

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