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THE ETHICS OF SUICIDE

SIDNEY HOOK

I

"I take it that no man is educated," wrote William James in one of his letters, "who has never dallied with the thought of suicide." Yet James was no modern Hegesias. His philosophy was an affirmation, not a deep-seated denial or questioning of life. He relied upon the sense of instinctive curiosity and pugnacity to make life worth living for those "who have cast away all metaphysics to get rid of hypochondria." Only in some of the sacred books of the East and the mystic novels of Russia is the message written clear-gray on black: that the highest assertion of personality of one who has not asked for his existence is suicide.

The problem of suicide has generally been approached from the sociological and theological aspects. The studies of Masaryk[1] and Durkheim,[2] who followed the pioneer work of Quetelet, have been in the main scholarly researches into the statistical correlations between the character of the climate, the variation in age, the purchasing power of wages, and other indexes of the tone of economic life, and the suicide rate. And from a molar point of view, the positive coefficients discovered to hold between these diverse social phenomena have been very illuminating. But, as is quite evident, these investigations leave the heart of the individual question entirely unaffected. This is not a criticism so much as a reminder of the self-confessed delimitation of all studies based on large numbers. Nor, on the other hand, has current theological doctrine been more discriminating in its consideration of the particular case. The teaching of Western religion since the time of

[1] *Der Selbstmord als sociale Massenerscheinung* (Vienna, 1881).

[2] *Le Suicide* (Paris, 1897).

Augustine has been a resolute condemnation of all forms of self-destruction, and the criminal legislation of various communities has reflected these sentiments. Not so many years ago the penal code of the state of New York specified that any person guilty of an attempt upon his own life was guilty of a felony punishable by fine or imprisonment.[8] Only when it dawned upon our enlightened legislators that this statute was setting a premium upon truly effective attempts at suicide was the article repealed. It was practically saying to the hesitant: "Make a good job of it or you will be punished." To this day in many districts, a person whose complicity in such an unfortunate affair has been established may be tried for homicide.

There is another method of treating the problem, however, which is far more relevant and significant for the specific deed than either the absolute pronouncements of theology or the summaries and conclusions of sociology. It is the method of moral and philosophic analysis. From this standpoint, the individual suicide, just as any other individual act, is judged by a certain moral scale or standard. This is the only intelligent approach, for it is as clear that no knowledge of statistical tables will enable us to predict whether our friend who is trembling at the brink of destruction will take the plunge as it is that no moral judgment passed upon his act can be derived from a perusal of such figures. And it is also true that those who spell out with difficulty the letters of a supernatural revelation generally add moral support to their deliberate judgment. Now it is no exaggeration to say that traditional social morality in modern times has set its face sternly against suicide. Suicide has been interpreted as indicating a dry-rot of the soul, as a perverse and pernicious setting-at-nought of all

[8] Compare in the *Digest* of Justinian: *Mori licet cui vivere non placet.* I am not unaware that legislation of the kind referred to above has often been motived by a desire to insure the faithful performance of military service regarded as due from each subject. But it was not *this* particular kind of bad reasoning that influenced the state legislature.

human values, and finally as a cowardly flight from the duties and burdens to which human flesh is heir. This attitude is not confined to the great mass of people whose views, molded by press, school, and church, have been baked hard in the social crust. It is an attitude expressed everywhere by the official spokesmen of the official morality. Of forty-two French textbooks on moral education consulted by Bayet which treat of the question of suicide, forty condemn it outright, allowing no extenuating circumstances. And although some may see merely the wisdom of the ostrich displayed in the fact that of thirty-eight English and American texts examined by the present writer, thirty-two do not mention the subject at all (four express disapproval, two are noncommittal), it is the writer's impression that most of the authors who make no mention of the matter consider the question as closed beyond the need of discussion.

In the course of this paper, I shall try to show that any system of thought which absolutely refuses to countenance suicide as a rational possibility is either irresponsibly optimistic or utterly immoral. Admitting the right to take one's life under *some* circumstances, I shall attempt to sketch some of the cardinal doctrines of a theory of moral education designed to make suicide less prevalent in other trying moments and situations. To uphold a position of this kind has often required a great deal of temerity, for fools and obscurantists have not been loath to distort a particular justification into a wholesale recommendation. But that is the price we pay for not speaking out *plainly* rather than for speaking out at all.

Although the cult of suicide has been viewed as a psychical aberration peculiar to modern society and suicidal practices have multiplied many times over in the last century, reaching appalling figures in the last decade, hardly any modern philosopher has preached or advocated it as a way out. Almost all of the avowed pessimists more or less inconsistently have advised against it: Leopardi, Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, and

Nietzsche.[4] On the other hand, ancient philosophy on the whole seems to have regarded a self-inflicted death as justified when committed by the wise man. Plato and Aristotle, it is true, objected to suicide on the ground that the state loses a citizen; but both allowed it in extreme cases. Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and the entire Stoic school enjoined suicide upon those who were unable to free themselves from dominating impulses of envy, cupidity, or debauchery. To snuff out the candle of one's life was also permitted in the face of extreme difficulties. Saint Augustine, the most uncompromising opponent of voluntary death in the history of thought, scornfully points out the root incompatibility between the voluntaristic psychology of Stoicism and its cosmic determinism.[5] If there are no ills in life, is it not passing strange that the *wise* man should seek to end all in death? It would be just as rational, Augustine might well have said, for a man who complained not of the burden of life but of its brevity to shorten his natural life-span. Augustine is more consistent but hardly therefore more profound when in consonance with an unmitigated theological determinism he denied to men and women—even to outraged virgins—the right to hand their souls back to God. Plotinos, from the point of view of cultural continuity the last of the Greek philosophers, taught that there was to be no withdrawal from the evils of this world so long as there was any hope of the soul's progress in the upward way. But his theodicy was not so cruelly optimistic as to hold that there was always room or ground for hope.

Bayet, whose eight-hundred-page thesis on suicide and morality represents almost a lifetime of research, has found that the literary currents of French cultural life reflect a reaction to suicide which is apparently more complex than what has been called the traditional point of view.[6] He contrasts the

[4] An exception should be noted for Philip Mainlander (Baitz), for whom suicide is a way to salvation. Cf. *Philosophie der Erlosung* (Frankfort, 1894), pp. 350–51.

[5] *City of God.* Bk. XIX, chap. iv.

[6] *Le Suicide et la Morale* (Paris, 1922).

morale simple, which passes adverse judgment against all forms of self-destruction, and the *morale nuancée,* which evaluates the act by its motives and effects. The *morale simple* seems to be bound up with the social mores, the *morale nuancée* with social morality. Bayet finds that the arguments advanced against suicide fall under nine divisions.[7] These can really be reduced to five. Surprisingly enough, Bayet seems to be unacquainted with the simple yet effective argument propounded by Leopardi in his *Dialogue between Plotinos and Porphyry,* an imaginary conversation based on Porphyry's confession in his *Life of Plotinos* that Plotinos' intercession had saved him from doing violence to himself while wrestling with a stubborn mood of hypochondria.[8]

II

The major arguments advanced against suicide may be classified under the following heads:

1. *Suicide is a crime against society.*—This has been the chief objection leveled by rational morality. The resolution to cut the bonds that tie us to earth, it is argued, does not absolve us from the moral mandates we recognized as valid until that moment. The fact of our social existence implies the existence of certain social duties, the compelling power of which does not depend upon our acknowledgment of them, etc.

Now, it would be a very easy line of defense against this view to make detailed inquiries as to the exact nature of the duties which the individual owes society and whether these duties are morally compelling irrespective of the social status and opportunity of the person upon whom they are alleged to

[7] *Ibid.,* pp. 26–29.

[8] Another surprising omission in Bayet's book arises from his apparent unfamiliarity with Dr. Binet-Sangle's *L'Art de mourir* (Paris, 1919). Dr. Binet-Sangle is the most ardent and outspoken defender of voluntary death in all Europe. Developing a suggestion in Thomas More's *Utopia,* he goes so far as to advocate the founding of *un institut d'euthanasie* to be operated by the state under the supervision of a board of philosophers and physicians and to which souls in distress may apply for a truly definitive treatment.

be binding. This would raise too big a problem to be thrashed out here, but, like so many other questions of rights and duties, it implies that each one has in certain respects an equal stake in society. And this, by no means is everyone willing to grant. But we may counter with a more direct and effective response. Far from being a crime against society, suicide may actually further the welfare of society. The logic of utilitarian ethics leads inevitably to this position, to the surprise of a number of its professed adherents. The greatest good or happiness of the greatest number may sometimes be attained by personal sacrifice, as the annals of heroism and martyrdom well attest. Unless it is maintained that life itself is worth living—a position that is tantamount to the repudiation of all morality—I cannot see how personal immolation in order to foster and further the ends that give meaning to life can be categorically condemned before an attempt is made to ascertain the impelling motives and weigh the derivative effects. And if it is true that we can readily think of situations not so far removed from our daily experiences in which suicide would be a legitimate means to attain our ends, often a praiseworthy means, and sometimes even an obligatory means, then it follows that we can flatly contradict the first argument and retort that it is not altogether inconceivable that sometimes refusal to commit suicide would constitute a crime against society.

2. *Suicide is cowardly.*—Aside from the line of defense taken above, which in essentials covers every objection, it is evident that if by cowardice is meant *physical* cowardice, then there is presumptive evidence against it in the *behavior* of a great many suicides. Sometimes the implication seems to be that were a self-inflicted death conceived and executed without any hesitancy whatever, less blame would attach to it. This is absurd, for, other things being equal, the greater the hesitation, the greater the probability that the reflective energies are engaged in tragic debate. If by cowardice is meant *moral* cowardice, the shrinking and shirking from responsibili-

ties and obligations personally incurred, then the particular suicide has really been prejudged, a fact which is disguised from us because of confusing phraseology. In this last case, significant judgment can be passed on the specific event only after an analysis has been carried out in the same terms of our ethical vocabulary as we use for other events.

3. *Suicide is a violation of our duty to God.*[9]—In the absence of specific biblical texts, it is a much mooted point whether the sixth commandment can be extended to cover suicide; but having confined ourselves to questions of ethics, we are excused from entering into considerations of pure theology.

4. *Suicide is unnatural.*—The word "unnatural" ought to be stricken out from the pages of our ethical vocabulary. Too many proposals are dismissed with a word whose only intelligible meaning makes it irrelevant to ethical evaluation and whose promiscuous use, empty of any definite or concrete connotation, makes it positively pernicious, blinding those who mouth it to the fact that they have already passed judgment. If "unnatural" means "unusual," then courage, sacrifice, temperance, and every other good whose rarity is attested by the fact that it is regarded as an ethical ideal become unnatural. What else is meant by the word, save a definite indication of a vague disapproval, is difficult to say. Were it not for the platitudinous vacuity of so much ethical effusion on the subject, one would have to apologize for calling attention to the fact that the descent of the moth into the flame and the precipitate bolt of the rabbit into the jaws of the python are as natural as the self-preserving instincts of other creatures.

5. *Suicide is an insult to human dignity.*—The obvious retort is that we generally recognize certain kinds of life as much more insulting to human dignity than any suicide can possibly be. A political prisoner about to be tortured, fearing that a

[9] In the words of the edict of Louis XIV, *"un crime de lèse-majesté divin et humain."*

confession might be wrung from him in the throes of his agony, opens his veins. Another human being, helpless in the torment of an incurable, advanced stage of cancer, administers to himself an overdose of morphine. A third, subject to recurrent fits of insanity, in a lucid moment snuffs out the feverish flame of consciousness. Who will say that the lives these men fled were worthy of human beings, were conducive to noble, dignified living or complete personal expression? The medical tradition of enshrining the practice of keeping a patient alive as long as possible irrespective of prospects of recovery makes its grudging genuflections before the white cow of moral orthodoxy. Now, there may be adequate reasons for adopting this attitude in specific cases, but to erect reasons of occasion into inflexible principle of practice is too often prolonging the span of human life by degrading its level and diminishing its dimensions. Why should not the tenderness lavished upon a dumb, suffering dog be extended to an articulate human being who in the grip of a mortal ailment asks to be relieved from a "mattress grave"? It requires a brazen optimism, unless one believes in miracles, to reply that there is always room for hope. Such a reply, however, concedes the main point at issue, since it is tacitly admitted that it is not the sacredness of life but the hope of attaining a certain order of life which should determine the specific recommendation. In this connection we may recall that the lingering death urged by Schopenhauer upon all who would still the assertion of the will in themselves is a mode of suicide much more inhuman than a thousand direct measures could be.

6. *Suicide is cruel in that it inflicts pain upon one's friends and family.*—This last argument seems to be too simple and obvious to have much importance; but in the opinion of the writer, although far from being a conclusive argument against suicide, it is much more weighty than any of the others. It is the final and most effective argument that Leopardi puts into the mouth of Plotinos, "To reckon as nothing the grief and

anguish of the home circle, intimate friends and companions, or to be incapable of feeling such grief, is not wisdom but barbarity." Unless one is imbued with the most implacable distrust of the deliverances of introspection, he cannot but be impressed, if people whom he knows are ever to be taken at their word, with the fact that consideration for the peace of mind of one's friends and family is the most powerful deterrent to suicide. It is the common confession of those who have just grazed the abyss of darkness and fought their way back to the light again. And it is not to be wondered at that in a mental crisis the sympathies and bonds formed in the course of one's lifetime should tighten. The cruelty of which we are guilty can be excused when it is the result of a close adherence to nobler ideals than love and friendship. For how many do nobler ideals exist?

Of course this argument has no absolute force, for it does not touch that individual whose spiritual roots are not strongly intertwined with those of his fellows. It also breeds a spirit of exclusive emphasis upon love and friendship, forgetting too often that in this world even these must sometimes be sacrificed. We shall see, however, that what is sound in this objection may be of significance in suggesting the possible place for emphasis in a system of moral education.

III

"When the *taedium vitae* attacks a man it can only be regretted, not censured," wrote Goethe to Zeltner, whose son had committed suicide. *Taedium vitae* may be a malady of the soul; it is also more than that, since it is as often the result of reflection as of the lack of it. Life-weariness is not always begotten of the satiety consequent upon excess. Nor is the accession of such a mood an unfailing index of a spiritless melancholia or a progressive paranoia. A short-sighted jurisprudence and medical theory has often regarded acts performed in these moments as unmotived, and the poignant declarations of the literary testaments as revealing attitudes of

mind more in need of cure than of refutation. Yet the modern consciousness seems to be peculiarly subject to this spiritual lassitude. Wealth and station are no safeguards against it. The intricate web of disillusionment and despair in which the mind palpitating for vital experience is finally stilled has been subtly spun out for us in the modern novel—especially the Russian novel. In this section we shall make a brief excursion into the field of Russian literature in order to illustrate certain types of psychodramatic suicidal impulses, to lay bare their spiritual sources and tragic fulfilments.

Some years ago the novels of Dostoyevsky were used by Masaryk as source books in his courses in abnormal psychology at the University of Prague. They are even richer in their bearing on the phenomenology of the ethical and religious consciousness. The rapt religious soul—more than a little warped—is as much reflected in the moral dyspepsia of the character in *Notes from Underground* who begins his splenetic confession with "I am a sick man. . . . . I am a spiteful man," as in the cosmic mutiny of Ivan Karamazov, whose pitiful "Euclidean understanding" cannot make out how the polar parallels of good and evil ever can meet at infinity—at some remote moment of eternal harmony. The feverish romanticism of the unnamed character writing from an underground hole arises from his revolt against the insufferable certainty of mathematical and physical necessities. His failure to suppress or control his own spiteful impulses, to transform the world by a gesture, is expressed in a venomous perversity that takes a masochistic delight in ferreting out ugly motives in himself and others. No promise of a beatific harmony can console Ivan for the tears of one tortured child; and refusing to regard the presence of evil as one of the major perfections of the universe, he hastens "to return his entrance-ticket to God." Dostoyevsky believed that he who rejected the God-man of Christianity for the man-god of positivism and socialism was driven by the logic of his position to commit either suicide or

murder. This startling deduction was achieved not so much by reasoning as by those imaginative flights to which contemporary God-seeking spirits are given.[10] But the periodic crises and waves of startling conversions and hypostases which welled up after Dostoyevsky hurled his stone into the muddy stream of Russian life are symptomatic of the absolute antinomies which pervade Russian thought and politics. Raskolnikoff in *Crime and Punishment* is torn by the fancied dilemma of always killing or never killing. Kirillov in *The Possessed* believes that to recognize that there is no God, and not to recognize at the same instant that one is God one's self, is an absurdity. Identifying the attribute of godhead with self-will, he kills himself to establish his new terrible freedom. Stavrogin, having followed his senses and mind from one guidepost to another, is drowned in a sea of half-hearted negations. He ends it with a nail and soaped cord. Smerdyakov, whose heart and mind do not feel the living presence of God, seizes the casually uttered phrase of Ivan, "All things are justifiable," as a pretext to kill a dissolute wretch. Yet, even when he acts as his own hangman, he knows that he cannot expiate that death by his own.

The three generic problems which obsessed Dostoyevsky: (1) the existence of evil, (2) the validity of objective ethical standards as against ethical solipsism, and (3) the question of moral responsibility, were handed down to the next generation of Russian writers. They are the ideas which have set off the fuse to the powder magazine of more than one fervent soul. Soloviev follows Dostoyevsky in believing that morality can be founded only on the basis of a supernatural order, that atheism and moral anarchy are bedfellows.[11] Andrayev, dwelling upon the problem of evil, becomes preoccu-

[10] The distinction cannot be too sharply drawn between the modern mysticism which makes its leap to Nirvana at one bound and the mysticism of the type of Plotinos in which the beatific ecstasy crowns the dialectical ascent. There is nothing savoring of *Schwarmerei* in the latter variety.

[11] *Justification of the Good,* p. xix.

pied with death. Almost every line of his work is a variation on the same dismal theme. Merezkovski, a self-heralded disciple, having failed to erect a niche for Christ on Mount Olympus, has fallen a prey to intermittent moods of frenetic religiosity. To Dostoyevsky is indirectly due the long line of revolutionary Hamlets in Russian literature and life.[12]

After the abortive revolution of 1905, the spiritual currents of Russian life were at their ebb. The golden dreams and longings of the preparatory phase had become transmuted into a leaden despair. The sensitive-spirited sought an escape from the maddening horrors of an autocratic reaction. The three avenues of escape from themselves and an unendurable social milieu which opened up for them were suicide, mysticism, and sex.[13] In Artzibashev's *Sanine* the chief protagonist embodies the type of worldly-wise intelligence for whom all ideals and goals have the same status and relation among themselves as the natural equality of colors and sounds, and who openly proclaims the glorified egoism of a rapturous life of the senses. But the author, *malgré lui,* has cast others in a finer mold. Even Yourri, who had neither faith in life nor faith in death and who died by accident rather than by deliberate suicide, was above sneering at a man who lost his life in the wilderness in an attempt to save a friend. And then there is that timid creature Soloveitchik, who, sickened by the cruelty of man and nature, cannot blunder through, and creeps into a corner to die. Mystical fervor broke out in unexpected places. Vania in Ropshin's *Pale Horse* believes that it is wrong to kill, and yet he writes to his comrades from the prison cell in which he awaits execution for having assassinated the governor, "I did not feel in me the strength *to live* for the sake of

[12] *Vide* Masaryk, *The Spirit of Russia,* 2 vols. (London, 1919. Translated from the German.)

[13] Lenin, who as leader of the extreme socialist element bitterly contested all three tendencies, bitingly remarks in his pamphlet on *The Infantile Sickness of "Leftism" in Communism* that after the revolution of 1905, "pornography took the place of politics."

love, and I understood that I could and ought *to die* for the sake of it." George, the hardened practitioner of propaganda by the deed, as a result of his brooding on Vania and the ethics of terrorism suffers a paralysis of his revolutionary will. Overwhelmed by the sense of the futility and vanity of all things, the flame of his revolutionary fire reduced to ash, he shakes off the lingering touch of the natural beauty around him and goes out into the autumn night—his revolver with him.

What can save these religious souls?

IV

In view of the foregoing, it may appear not a little anomalous to offer anything in the nature of a moral propaedeutic to make suicide less prevalent. Yet there is no inconsistency involved, for we have not retreated from our main position that suicide is sometimes ethically justifiable. It is admitted that for a great number of suicides there seems to be no ethical necessity and that for even a greater number, the fleeing of this life is a sign of moral surrender. Of course this commits the writer to a belief in the objectivity of moral values, that is to say, to a belief that they are not completely dependent upon *our* recognition of them. The only view which would make suicide altogether justifiable is a thoroughgoing ethical solipsism. But it is yet to be established how a theory of radical solipsism can posit an ethics, since on this view the word "justifiable," lacking an intelligible opposite, is empty of concrete content. Everything or anything becomes justifiable if it is an adequate means of gratifying a conscious desire. The apparently diametrically opposed views that suicide is always justifiable or never justifiable, just as the formulas "this is the best of all possible worlds," "this is the worst of all possible worlds," or "everything is mental," "everything is material," are really different ways of expressing the same thing—in the point at issue, the absence of any standard of what is right or

wrong, good or bad. And it must not be forgotten that social *a*morality is social *im*morality.

If the sacredness of human life be invoked to furnish grounds against all forms of self-destruction, then we are duty bound in logic and in humanity to adopt the same attitude toward war and capital punishment. The converse, however, does not follow. The implications of an absolute interdiction of suicide resolutely carried out lead directly to the acceptance of a philosophy of non-resistance. The doctrine of non-resistance literally interpreted is self-defeating and contradictory. The only logically coherent derivative theory is one of *passive* resistance, which is not so much a religion as a social philosophy with a religious flavor.[14] It is insisted here that an absolute crime suicide can never be, for a moral crime consists only in the conscious surrender or betrayal of certain ideals involved in the specific act. For philosophers at any rate, it is not life itself, as Aristotle held forth long ago, that is worth living, but only the *good* life. We may define the good life differently, but no matter what our conception of the *good* life is, it presupposes a physical basis—a certain indispensable minimum of physical and social well-being—necessary for even a limited realization of that good life. Where that minimum is failing together with all rational probability of attaining it, to avoid a life that at its best can be only vegetative and at its worst run the entire gamut of degradation and obloquy, what high-minded person would refuse the call of the poet *"mourir entre les bras du sommeil"?* We must recognize no categorical imperative "to live," but to "live well."

From the above, two corollaries may be drawn significant for a theory of moral instruction: (1) No rational morality can compel us to perpetuate lives that are irretrievably blasted by accident or birth, or blighted by some horrible malady before which remedial measures are unavailing; and more im-

[14] For an elaboration of these theses see the writer's article on "The Philosophy of Non-Resistance," *Open Court*, January, 1922.

portant, (2) no social morality can be equally binding upon everyone unless a social reconstruction makes possible a more equable distribution of the necessities of life. The necessities of life are to be understood as functions of our material and cultural development. Specific recommendations, however, may be urged bearing more directly on suicide.

When life ceases to offer that which makes our activities meaningful and our purposes self-sustaining, the fatuity of bare living cannot but be poignantly brought home to the sensitive intelligence. Those who lose faith in a single exclusive ideal are sorely tempted to desperate measures. Precipitate action arising from too hasty conclusions concerning the futility of all things may to some extent be counteracted by presenting the moral life as an organization of specific, individual *goods* rather than as a holy quest for *the* good. We cannot, so to speak, live through one sense. Besides the possible depression which may attend the deprivation of stimuli, the danger with which all intense sense expression is fraught makes continued enjoyment of its exercise extremely precarious. Suicide is all too frequent among those who have lived for color only, or sound only, or love or power or fame only. The senses give out, the soul grows cold, and the world is too often refractory. Even the truth alone—be it austerely spelled as The Truth—does not save, for it is too easy to kill one's self by pressing on its sharp point. It is almost banal to repeat that the probability of succumbing to the feeling of *taedium vitae* is inversely proportional to the number of interests in which one is actively engaged. We should expect therefore that the aims of moral instruction should point toward (3) an ethical pluralism, a democracy of certain values, an emphasis not on the value of life but on the values of living, rather than toward an ethical monism or hierarchical scheme of values culminating in a *summum bonum.*

Leopardi's argument, together with the testimony of those whose tragic soliloquies have not eventuated into more tragic

deeds, seems to show that there are certain goods which make the feeling of human kinship and kindness beat more strongly within our breast. These goods, which must have a place in every moral creed or practice, are (4) love and friendship. As social and personal ties, their very existence implies a capacity for tenderness and sacrifice which makes inevitable hardships more endurable. The more we live in the lives of others, the more certain do our own lives become.

For those romantic souls, angels in revolt, who are moved to cosmic mutiny at the sight of man's pitiful finitude, his helplessness before unavoidable frustration, disease, and death, who at the cry of a kitten are like "to hurl their souls back into the face of God with a curse," we can offer as a religion a kind of inverted Manichaeism in which the supreme power is regarded as the personification of all the forces of evil and destruction in the universe. Masaryk concludes his study of suicide with a plea for a new religion. Here is a religion which is a bond that unites mankind—for once transcending national boundaries—against a common enemy.

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