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DOES SUICIDE ALWAYS HAVE TO BE PATHOLOGIC?: CONTEMPLATING RATIONAL SUICIDE

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While nothing is more universal and inevitable than death, nothing is more private and avoidable than suicide. Patterns of suicide and attitudes towards suicide exhibit wide variations between societies and between different ages in the same society. Thus, the study of suicide gives us the opportunity to investigate about one of the most perplexing and important aspects of human culture, namely, the malleability of moral attitudes.

With this presentation it is aimed to review the concept of rational suicide, meaning the cases where there is no conditioning mental illness. Given the wide scope of the topic, it will be addressed here, though superficially, from various viewpoints: literary, philosophical, sociological, moral, medical- psychiatric, among others.

It is concluded that suicide should not be regarded as a sine qua non condition of mental illness and that this may constitute a "strategic" answer, congruent with a certain philosophical perspective, in personal crisis situations.