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REVIEW
ON THE
PSYCHIATRIC ASPECTS
OF HOMICIDE
AS
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
M.Sc.Degree. NEUROPSYCHIATRY
BY

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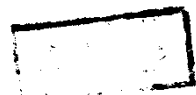
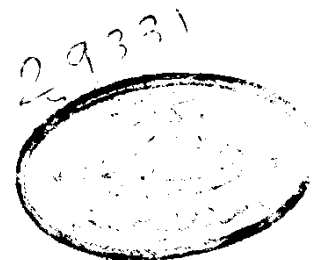
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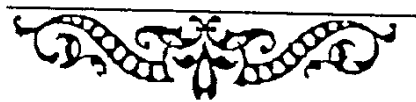
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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم





THIS WORK IS DEDICATED TO PROF.Dr. AHMED OKASHA.
AND TO ALL THOSE WHO WORK TO RELIEVE HUMAN SUFFERINGS.

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INTRODUCTION

AIM OF THIS WORK

Many Mental disorders psychiatric or neuropsychiatric, carry a potential risk of committing violent, assaultive or even homicidal behaviour.

This review is an attempt to define the underlying psychological mechanisms involved in these disorders that are considered as an important determining factor in homicide.

Many factors interplay in the genesis of the homicidal behaviour, so an attempt of defining these factors help to highlight the problem, as well as creating new approaches whether psychiatric, sociological or criminological to deal with this problem and improving our insight of it.

AGGRESSION : A FORMAL DEFINITION.

Aggression is any form of behaviour directed toward the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment.

Close examination, of this definition, reveals that it actually involves several complex features (Okasha, 1987);

First, it suggests that aggression is a form of behaviour—not an emotion, need, or motive. As such, it must be distinguished from emotions that may or may not accompany it (such as anger), motives that may or may not underlie it (such as the desire for vengeance), and negative attitudes that sometimes enhance its occurrence (such as ethnic and racial prejudice).

Second, this definition limits application of the term "aggression" to acts in which an aggressor intends to harm the victim.

A third major aspect of this definition involves the contention that only actions that harm or injure living beings be reviewed as aggressive in nature. As people sometimes do harm others purely by accidents, it seems important to distinguish between such actions and overt aggression.

Another major aspect of the definition contends that only actions that harm living beings should be viewed as aggressive in nature. This restriction is included because, in many instances persons assault inanimate objects, e.g. pillows, punching bags, walls, without intending to harm another living being and without, of course, producing such effects.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES.

Since aggressive behaviour is so characteristic of man, it might be supposed that the origin and determinants of human aggression would, long ago, have been established and agreed. Such, however, is not the case; and there is still considerable dispute as to whether aggression is an inborn, instinctive drive which, like the sexual instinct, seek spontaneous expression, or whether, on the contrary, it is merely a response to adverse external circumstances and not instinctive at all (Storr, 1968).

These different theoretical perspectives have taken many forms, but most seem to fall the following major categories;

Aggression as a drive.

Freud (1939) viewed aggression as a basic instinct. The energy of the death instincts builds up within the organism until it must be discharged—either outwardly in the form of overt aggression or inwardly in the form of self-destructive acts. Freud was pessimistic about the possibility of ever eliminating aggression; at best, its intensity could be modified by promoting positive emotional attachments between people and by providing substitute outlets (such as watching prizefights or engaging in sports).

A second explanation of human aggression that focuses largely on innate tendencies has been proposed by Lorenz (1966): aggression springs primarily from a fighting instinct that human beings share with many other organisms. Presumably, this instinct developed during evolution because it provided important benefits. For example, fighting often helps to disperse animal populations