

PSYCHOBIOGRAPHY AS A SCIENTIFIC METHOD

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Introduction. One of the most complex evolving relationship to conceptualize is between the discipline of psychology and the study of an individual's life (Runyan, 1996, p. 19). Psychobiography is the analysis of personality and the creativity of individuals through qualitative research methods and theories. Psychobiography originated from Sigmund Freud's investigation of the Leonardo da Vinci's art in 1910. The classical Freudian psychobiography focused upon analyzing, understanding developmental as well as the dynamic factors of the artist's creativity. The connections and correlations made by Freud's research provided insight to psychoanalysts on the personality and functioning of an individual's mind (Kőváry, 2011, p. 739).

The research on psychobiography as a scientific method indicates that from 1910 till 1960, more than 300 articles were published by other psychoanalysts to investigate the personalities of various artists (Kőváry, 2011, p. 740). Henry A. Murray used idiographic approach to explore an individual through life stories that became widespread as personology but, it was strongly criticized not only for unreliable data management, dogmatic interpretations but also overloaded with psychopathological concepts (Kőváry, 2011, p. 740). In the 1950 and '60s, psychoanalysts started using the nomothetic approach in personality research that focuses upon universal laws.

In the 1970s and 1980s, applied psychology and personality psychology started accepting life story analysis (Kőváry, 2011, p. 740). In the 1990s, the nomothetic

approach and acceptance of life story analysis made psychobiography more popular among psychoanalysts. The popularity not only aimed to redefine the methodological way of the method but also the theoretical background which turned into “a renaissance of psychobiography”.

The Journal of Personality in 1998 issued the publication with writings of Irving Alexander, David Winter, McAdams, Richard Ochberg, Runyan, and others, on a thematic issue on psychobiography that was published as a book later. In the 1990s, various psychoanalysts started focusing upon integrated narrative perceptive with emphasis on personological and psychoanalytical traditions (Kőváry, 2011, p. 740). According to Anderson (2003), psychoanalysts in the 20th century shifted their psychobiography research from the original Freudian theory to psychoanalytic self-psychology and object relations theories. Elms (2007) in his study focuses upon how psychoanalysts are not only exploring and making continuous research in the field of psychobiography but are also shifting their analysis from single biographies to multiple case psychobiography.

Aim. This paper aims to introduce psychobiography as a scientific method, its genesis and present the prospects of the future psychobiographical research on the lives of two most renowned terrorists in the world, Ajmal Kasab and Joanne Deborah Chesimard.

Materials and methods. Psychobiography is a qualitative method. To analyze and examine the life study of Ajmal Kasab and Joanne Deborah Chesimard, our research will first focus and find the primary data through autobiographies, diaries, letters, and confessions. The secondary data will be collected through various newspapers, articles, journals, and essays. After complete collection and verification of data, our work will focus upon the applied theoretical framework and will use Irving Alexander's: Primary indicators of psychological saliency as well as William Todd Schultz's Keys to identifying prototypical scenes method to organize and select the significant parts of the data. This will help us in identifying the complex life of the terrorist. The concept of “Identity as a life story” will help in organizing and interpreting data; the character, ideological settings, nuclear episodes, generativity

will help in understanding how narrative complexity influence the thematic lines.

Once the data is collected, critical examination of sources is conducted and we will make interpretations and hypotheses. Based upon hypotheses, we will study background theories and critically test the explanations and interpretations. With the help of the proposed interpretation, we will work upon a life history account. Through background theories and knowledge, we will examine various historical, social, psychological, and political factors that can help in the critical evaluation of the account. Therefore, we will be able to analyze the life history accounts of both the terrorists.

Results and discussions. The results of our preliminary study show that Ajmal Kasab was a Pakistani militant who attacked Mumbai and killed around seventy-two innocent individuals. The Mumbai trial court sentenced him to the death penalty as he got convicted for mass murder, conspiracy, and more than seventy other offenses. On the other hand, Joanne Deborah Chesimard is the first female added to the FBI Most Wanted terrorist list. She was a social activist who got convicted with six charges, including first-degree murder during a shootout. She was sentenced to a life imprisonment, but escaped. This study aims to further explore the life of both the terrorists and understand the psychological background of the crimes that the terrorists committed. It also aims to examine whether there is a direct or an indirect relationship between the act of crime committed by the terrorists and the cultural and political movements in their country and the world.

One of the few reasons this paper examines the life of Ajmal, and Joanne is that the life memories and events of both the terrorists possess the quality of prototypical senses. For example, in the case of Ajmal, he suffered from a developmental crisis whereas Joanne suffered from a family crisis during her early life. No one is born a criminal or a terrorist. The debate of nature and nurture is one of the oldest unresolved questions in the field of psychology. This study aims to shed light on the psychological as well as the developmental factors of both the terrorists from their childhood to their death in order to understand the effects of nature and nurture on an individual.

Conclusions. To sum up, this paper introduced psychobiography as a scientific method, its development over the time and its particularity. The preliminary research results on criminal psychology and the lives of two terrorists Ajmal Kasab and Joanne Deborah Chesimard were discussed.

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