

# PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTOPSY

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## RESULTS

In an Italian cold case that we have studied, this technique of Psychological Autopsy (PASIC) succeeded in obtaining some biological material, coming from the crime scene, that had been secretly hidden for over 50 years by the interviewee. The aim of our work was also to coordinate the activity of the interviewer, trying to avoid the repetition of interviews that would lead to an alteration of the answers to the questions posed. In a first phase, questions with open-ended answers were preferred. In the subsequent phases we asked questions formulated in a specific way. We have been careful not to formulate questions already asked. For each case of Psychological Autopsy, we pointed out that it is important that only one operator handles the interview.

## CONCLUSIONS

In our case history that started in 2014, we have applied an innovative psychological autopsy protocol. Our model is based on a smaller basic structure than the classical MAPI. Another feature is that we apply a personalized protocol to each case.

Each case studied presented common characteristics in terms of modus operandi, type of weapon and social context. On the basis of these variables, we devised the possibility of defining rapid protocols adapted to the characteristics of each individual case. In this way, we have made it more effective to listen to people who have in some way had direct or indirect relations with the victim. The advantages were mainly sustained by a reduced possibility of tainting the statements of the person being listened to. Our method was therefore more effective and faster in obtaining strategic information from an investigative and criminodynamic point of view.

## FROM MAPI TO PASIC (PSYCHOLOGICAL AUTOPSY STRUCTURED ON INDIVIDUAL CASES )

**Preamble:** The new application methodology involves the use of knowledge areas and no longer a closed response to the well-known points of the classic MAPI.

**Structure:** The first cognitive area includes a collection of information aimed at obtaining general data. In this first area, personal, social, socio-cultural and environmental information is collected. In this area, every useful method for a rapid improvement of compliance will be immediately established, supported by a relationship of trust and confidentiality between the parties.

The second area is aimed at asking for an open narrative of "generic" memories of events.

The third area aims at an increasingly specific interview: the relationship between the interviewee and the victim (family relationships, friendships, professional acquaintances, casual acquaintances...).

The fourth area, defined as the criminodynamic area, requires the subject to describe the facts or his hypothesis about the criminal event (criminodynamic version).

The fifth area concerns the identification of the means used in the criminal event (white weapon, firearm, cables...), the search for suggestions, opinions about any relationship between weapon, perpetrator and victim.

**Instructions:** Only one single operator, and always the same one, should deal with the subject heard in the psychological autopsy.

The individual practitioner should carry out questioning and open listening using non-suggestive methods intended to be directed exclusively at the person involved in the psychological autopsy (1/1 ratio). Should the interviewee direct us to a third party who knows more information, a new and independent psychological autopsy will be carried out with the intervention of a new operator.

**Effectiveness:** Simple, quick to apply, protected from suggestions, backed by high confidentiality and with high guarantees between the parties. The criminologist is particularly effective because, at least in this activity, he or she does not play an authoritative role and this situation makes it much easier to establish a confidential and trusting relationship between the parties.

## MAPI (MODELO DE AUTOPSIA PSICOLOGICA INTEGRADO)

### RETROSPECTIVE PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATION UP TO ONE MONTH BEFORE HIS DEATH

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 19. Integration sphere  | 20. Cognitive sphere |
| 21. Sphere of relations   | 22. Affective sphere |
| 23. Pipeline sphere   | 24. Power supply     |
| 25. Sex   | 26. Hygiene habits   |
| 27. Sleep   | 28. Activities       |
| 29. Language  | 30. Syndrome         |
| 31. Nosological diagnostics   |                      |
| 32. Conflicts in the socio-economic sphere                              |                      |
| 33. Conflicts at work   |                      |
| 34. Judicial conflicts  | 35. Criminal history |
| 36. Background of violent events not prosecuted under criminal law      |                      |
| 37. Antecedents when minor  | 38. Stay in prison   |
| 39. Antisocial habits   |                      |
| 40. Type of dwelling  |                      |
| 41. Area where the dwelling is located                                  |                      |
| 42. Composition of the dwelling   |                      |
| 43. Condition of the dwelling   |                      |
| 44. Psychological aspects of the murdered                               |                      |
| 45. What were the most interesting aspects for him (her)                |                      |
| 46. Treatments received   |                      |
| 47. Signals issued up to two years earlier                              |                      |
| 48. Recent losses (less than one year)                                  |                      |
| 49. Relationship with the author(s) of his death                        |                      |
| 50. Place where the event took place                                    |                      |
| 51. Time of the fact  |                      |
| 52. Presence of third parties   |                      |
| 53. Ingestion of alcohol or other substances by the victim before death |                      |
| 54. The victim was carrying weapons at the time of his death            |                      |
| 55. Means used by the victim  |                      |
| 56. Possible reasons for the event                                      |                      |
| 57. The victim-victim relationships were of...                          |                      |
| 58. The victim felt for the victim...                                   |                      |
| 59. At the time of the events the victim ...                            |                      |

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to propose an innovative technique for a Psychological Autopsy.

In comparison with the classic MAPI, our technique is structured around each single case adapting the interview to the environmental circumstances and to the social-cultural characteristics of the examined subject instead of focussing on, for example, the kind of gun used in the criminal event.

Our proposed method of Psychological Autopsy will improve the interviewee's confidence and compliance, and allows the interviewer to obtain information that would otherwise go undetected through a standardized investigation.

In one of the cold case that we have studied, this technique of Psychological Autopsy has succeeded to obtain some biological material, coming from the crime scene, that had been secretly hidden by the subject for over 50 years.

## MAPI (MODELO DE AUTOPSIA PSICOLOGICA INTEGRADO)

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. Name:   | 2. Address:        |
| 3. Date of birth:  | 4. Place of birth: |
| 5. Area lived in until the age of 16   |                    |
| 6. Sex   | 7. Racial group    |
| 8. Marital status  |                    |
| 9. Schooling achieved  |                    |
| 10. Employment   |                    |
| 11. Religious beliefs  |                    |
| 12. Personal Pathological Background   |                    |
| 13. Family Pathological Background and Sociofamilial History   |                    |
| 14. Toxic habits   |                    |
| 15. Favourite and/or most frequently consumed drink  |                    |
| 16. Frequency of consumption   |                    |
| 17. Quantity consumed  |                    |
| 18. CAGE (internationally recognised and used questionnaire to detect alcohol abuse and/or alcohol dependence) |                    |