

A Case of Schizophrenia Presenting with Anthropophagy

Ilda Kapo¹, Anila Kazaferi¹, Gentian Vyshka², Bledar Xhemali³

¹ Department of Forensic Psychiatry, Institute of Legal Medicine, Tirana, Albania

² Faculty of Medicine, University of Medicine, Tirana, Albania

³ Department of Forensic Pathology, Institute of Legal Medicine, Tirana, Albania

Abstract

Background: Dismemberment of a corpse during or following a murder is a notorious occurrence, however cannibalism as a practice dates back to very remote times, mostly as a part of ritualistic events. A non-ritualistic cannibalism might entangle a diversity of psychiatric disturbances, albeit direct links are arguable and difficult to uphold in judicial proceedings.

Case report: Authors report the case of a non-ritualistic and isolated behavior of cannibalism. An Albanian male aging in his late thirties, known to his village for being antisocial and callous, with very few interpersonal links and recently returned from immigration, killed a youngster aged 15 years. After beheading the corpse, he was found on the crime scene

and arrested while cooking and consuming the viscera of the massacred body. The law enforcement officers took several pictures from the obscene place, and requested a thorough psychiatric evaluation of the perpetrator.

Conclusion: Insanity defence was raised in the case we're describing, and upheld in court. The fact that the perpetrator was diagnosed with schizophrenia only after that the criminal event took place, made the initial deliberation very difficult. Also, the extreme rarity of such a cruel act, and the natural interest of mass media and public, has rendered this event an issue of large debating.

Keywords: cannibalism, anthropophagy, schizophrenia, insanity defence, cruelty, dismemberment.