BOOK TITLE: Arabs in Treatment: Development of Mental Health System and Psychoanalysis in the Arabo- Islamic World

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For those working with Arab Muslim clients in the treatment of trauma and various mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and addiction, it is critical to understand the religious and cultural factors which influence treatment and compliance with health care. *Arabs in Treatment: Development of Mental Health System and Psychoanalysis in the Arabo-Islamic World* is an excellent, comprehensive insight into those religious and cultural factors. Author Dr. Yana Korobko has extensive experience as a psychoanalyst, working with clients who have been through trauma and others with various mental health conditions. She has a background in psychological debriefing, political psychology, international relations, conflict prevention, interfaith and intercultural dialogue, and promoting mental health culture in the Middle East North African (MENA) region. She completed a Master's Degree in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy from the Universite Nice Sophia Antipolis, a Master's Degree in Psychology from the Kyiv National Taras Shevchenko University, a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in International Relations from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Internationales HEIP, and a Certificate in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from Yale University. Dr. Korobko has used her training and expertise to work with such organizations as UNESCO and UNICEF, in addition to diplomatic roles with the Embassy of Turkmenistan and the Embassy of Ukraine in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Her experiences contribute to the content of the book.

Arabs in Treatment: Development of Mental Health System and Psychoanalysis in the Arabo-Islamic World includes an abstract, list of abbreviations, tables and charts, glossary, and overview, along with an introduction, and conclusion. The book is divided into three parts, totaling 18 chapters. Interspersed throughout the text are quotes, Quranic passages, statistics, and historical evidence to support the author's points. The author uses sociology, psychology, anthropology, medical journals, and evidence-based research to contextualize the narrative.

Part 1 is the Historical Interactions between Psychoanalysis and Islam, which serves to introduce the historical background and in-country examples with statistics from the World Health Organization (WHO). It begins with an overview of the Jahaliya period, with historical, political, economic, and social conditions, and continues with cultural worldviews from pre-Islamic times to the advent of Islam. In chapter 2, she makes the case for Muslim identity being interconnected with Arab identity, thus forming a double identity. Dr. Korobko introduces the history of Arab Islamic medicine. She illustrates her points through her discussion on various plants and medicinal substances as well as different symptomology such as *waswas*, which is a term for obsessive thoughts or compulsive acts. The first mental hospital, qualifications of early mental health practitioners, and early psychology are all presented, which set the stage for how mental health for Arab Muslims has evolved until the present time. The Pre-Colonial and Colonial periods are described, and the chapter on the Post-Colonial period is divided into sections with information about mental health by country. This includes Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Gulf Cooperation Countries, and Saudi Arabia. Mental health policies and resources in the Arab countries are discussed. The use of charts and tables which break down the statistics is helpful for readers to more easily grasp the information presented. Part 1 also includes a breakdown of national legislature on mental health, common mental health disorders, mental health hospitals, education and training for psychologists, national budget for mental health expenditure, and research on mental health by country.

Part 2 is The Structure of the Muslim Psyche, which introduces the identification for the main signifiers of the Muslim Psyche in the MENA region, with cultural underpinnings. It begins with a look at the lineage of prophets and religions, with a discussion of angels, jinns, and the devil with how these relate to mental health and psychology. Dr. Korobko then presents Muslim archetypes and complexes, ranging from Bedouin identity to hijab to polygamous marriage in Islam. Customs and taboos are explored, with a discussion on destiny and fate, also known as *naseeb*. Feminism, virginity, and sexuality are explored as concepts in Islam, along with the concepts of Id, Ego, and Superego. Other topics presented in this section are Arabic language, mythology, Islamic arts,

the notion of Allah, Judgment day, the Quran, and life and death. This section helps readers to have a clearer overall understanding of the Arab culture and Muslim religion in order to understand how these play a role in mental health and well-being of Arab Muslims.

Part 3 is Mental Health Disorders in the Contemporary Arab World, which takes a closer look at specific mental health conditions with symptomology and treatment constraints in the MENA region. Prevalent mental health conditions in the MENA region are presented, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, hysteria, psychotic disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), mental retardation, autism, and suicide. Dr. Korobko establishes the impact of culture on depression and anxiety in the Arab Muslim world, as well as genetic and familial links for various mental health conditions. In addition, she discusses the impact of war and trauma on health not only for individuals, but across generations. Psychotherapy as it relates to Islam is discussed, followed by conclusions in chapter 18. A comprehensive list of electronic resources is included at the end, on different topics such as mental health statistics, hospitals, professional organizations, news sources, universities, and humanitarian organizations providing mental health care services.

This is an excellent book for those looking to understand more about the Arab culture and the religion of Islam as it relates to mental health and overall well-being. It is thorough and gives a broad perspective on different historical topics within Islam and the Arab culture, as well as information about the mental health care system as a whole in the MENA region, by country. Whether working with Arab Muslim clients in the Middle East or around the world, clinicians who serve these clients will benefit from having this understanding and knowledge in order to provide more culturally competent care. Those interested in a particular topic or Middle Eastern country can find the information they need since it is easily presented. According to Dr. Korobko, only two countries so far, Lebanon and Iraq, have conducted national surveys using world mental health surveys from the World Health Organization. Thus, this identifies research implications for future studies.

The book could have been strengthened by addressing in greater detail psychotropic medications and the stigma surrounding medication for mental health and challenges to obtaining these medications. It would have been beneficial to readers who work with Arab Muslim clients in the Western world if there were comparisons between the Arab and Western world, as no mention was made about Arab Muslims living outside the MENA region. In addition, there is little mention of challenges faced by refugees in obtaining mental health services, thus offering insight into effective strategies to assist refugees who have been through trauma which would have strengthened the book. Overall, the book was well-written and is highly recommended to anyone who

wants an introduction to Arab Muslim mental health, or for those who want to strengthen their cultural competence in serving these clients.

Reference

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