



# The Enigma of the Suicide Bomber: A Psychoanalytic Essay

*Franco de Masi*

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## **The Enigma of the Suicide Bomber: A Psychoanalytic Essay** Franco de Masi

This book, intertwining the psychoanalytic approach with the historical, sociological and political analysis that confirms the complexity and many-sidedness of the subject, deals with the devastating phenomenon of suicide terrorism.

The behavior of suicide terrorists cannot be understood making use of psychopathological categories. Whereas a suicidal terrorist attack can be described as a crime against humanity, its protagonists cannot be classified only as criminal or insane. This book examines carefully the process of dehumanization that characterizes this collective behavior and provides some biographical accounts in order to understand how such horrendous crimes can be committed by a human being. This destructive cruelty is possible only with a leading role of a political or religious organization operating like a psychotic part, which is integrated in a traumatized community. The author draws a distinction between local terrorism with nationalistic traits stemming from the traumatic conditions of a community and another form of terrorism that is irreducible as it originates from a grandiose and totalitarian plan imbued with revengeful feelings that arise from an omnipotent narcissistic wound.

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