



*Dr. Andreas Armbrorst* holds a Master in Sociology (University of Trier) and a Master in Criminology (University of Hamburg). He has worked as an intern, research assistant and researcher at the Nebraska Crime Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, the University of the German Federal Armed Forces (Helmut Schmidt University), the Hamburg narcotic police force, the Federal Criminal Police Office in Germany (BKA), the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law, the Institute for Prevention and Security Studies at the University of Hamburg and the Centre for Security and Society at the University of Freiburg. He also has a teaching assignment within the Master program in Criminology at the University of Hamburg. His research focuses on a wide range of criminological and sociological topics.

Many speculations revolve around the political goals of Islamists and jihadists. What is it that al-Qaeda think they can achieve through political violence? This book provides clear answers to this and other important questions. Based on the systematic analysis of claims of responsibilities and video messages of al-Qaeda leaders, it opens intriguing insights into the world view and mindset of the jihadi movement. Thereby it enables the reader to gain a clearer picture of the political-religious program of Islamism and to better distinguish between its radical and moderate political claims. This knowledge is important because political Islam and jihadi violence not only is an increasingly important topic in domestic politics, but also became, through the Arab Spring, a tangible factor in foreign affairs.

In al-Qaeda's ideology theological and political arguments are blended into a coherent media strategy. Political claims and grievances are convincingly backed up by quasi-journalistic evidence, whereas theological arguments are complemented by legal references to the Quran and Sunna. In addition, the jihadi leaders provide doctrines and strategies describing how the use of force can defend Islam against its perceived three existential threats – the global conflict, Arab despotism and secular governance. Theological and strategic considerations converge in al-Qaeda's rationale for violence.

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## Andreas Armbrorst Jihadi Violence

A study of al-Qaeda's media

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The Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law in Freiburg is part of the Max Planck Society, an organization dedicated to the advancement of basic research. The Institute is composed of a department of criminal law, led by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Ulrich Sieber, and a department of criminology, headed by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Hans-Jörg Albrecht.

In addition to the study of basic questions of criminal law, comparative law, and criminology, the Institute's research agenda focuses primarily on three central challenges epitomized by the terms "global society", "information society", and "new risk society": Crime is becoming more global; in so doing, it makes increasing use of international data networks; through the employment of technology and organization, its consequences for society as a whole – even in seemingly isolated cases – can be significant.

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