

# **"We love death" – Jihadism and nihilism<sup>1</sup>**

**by**

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## Something goes wrong...

Welcome to my world full of hate and blood  
I am writing lines for my kids with blood  
In a world nobody knows what the day to come brings  
Children's souls cry quietly when the Black angel sings  
[...]

It is early, half past eight when I am woken up  
by the Ersan on my mobile and I'm moved to tears once more  
my life is a mess every day I get up  
I say my prayers every day before I leave house  
I pack my beats, I pack my texts,  
take bread for the doves, bismillah precedes every rhyme  
I walk down the street to the Kottbusser Tor  
sit down on a bench, feed the doves, think hardcore  
was the life I used to live  
every day being a test  
I am fed up with all this stress

I am alone out there without my kids  
my heart turned freezing cold like the worst winter  
on my way to the subway I notice the lime tree has died,  
Chuckies with dead eyes scream "To hell with this state"  
I don't give a shit about this world since it's all about money  
Deso Dogg the Black Angel falls, welcome to my world  
[...]

It is awkward the way life sometimes takes  
it is too late to regret when death is at stake  
So I am sitting here in the studio and I am confessing on the track  
Please Allah forgive my sins, sort out my mess  
I am desperate, every day looking for paradise  
I wish for my death for my life was lousy  
I've lost family, I've lost love  
I've lost brothers, wish I'd never been born  
That is Naseeb and I hope to remain there  
with every step, with all my deeds and all my rhymes  
It's gotten dark when I leave the studio  
I've forgotten to eat and my head is bonged  
I see a starry sky and a shooting star fall  
I whisper to Allah "Please don't let go of me"  
I would only do good deed on my way until I succeed  
with open hands I fall on my knee and whisper "Bismillah"

Welcome to my world full of hate and blood  
I am writing lines for my kids with blood  
In a world nobody knows what the day to come brings  
Children's souls cry quietly when the Black angel sings  
[...]

Ex rapper Denis Cuspert, formerly known as Deso Dogg has authored these lines. How does somebody, who in 2006 still desired to do good deeds, get to join the jihad, cut off peoples' heads, desecrate corpses and call for assassinations in Germany?

"Something goes wrong in a damn dumb way, right in front of our door, something you do not even realize or if you do, just somehow. It is half looking, half turning away from it." – these are the closing words of an article by Robert Misik in the journal TAZ about Firas H., aged 19, an Austrian jihadist.

"... something goes wrong in a damn dumb way". Indeed, and this something-goes-wrong is manifested best in the fascination, the jihad exerts on young people in Western European societies. How may this fascination be explained?

### **Four interpretative patterns of jihadist violence**

When considering the debate about jihadist violence, ideal-typically, four interpretative patterns may be filtered out: diabolizing, religionizing, socializing and ethicizing.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Diabolizing**

In a TV interview, recorded in Mosul, German jihadist Christian Emde, alias Abu Qatadah, predicts the victory of the Islamic State (IS): "We will win because we arouse fear in the heart of our enemies." To arouse this fear, one had to continue cutting of peoples' heads. In a conversational tone he says that the ones not converting would have to be killed. This were particularly true for Shiites: "Whether it is 100 million, 150 million or 500 million – we do not care about the number." Emde comes from Solingen (Northwest-Germany). Before he converted to Islam, he used to be a Protestant Christ. Journalist Jürgen Todenhöfer, who has engaged in many interviews with jihadists, describes him as "the intellectually and ideologically best-versed interview partner. His knowledge of history is comprehensive. His responses are merciless and piercing. He obviously has an official function in the IS media department [...]."<sup>3</sup>

In light of such an interview, reports by people having managed to escape as well as decapitation videos, mainly practiced by European jihadists said to be particularly cruel, how could one not consider jihadism as the personified evil, a spawn of the devil? We are justly filled with horror realizing that something like that is still possible in the 21st century. The IS crimes demonstrate a break with civilization, a relapse into barbarism.

Diabolizing represents an attempt to ban the horror by allocating a name to it: the evil. Moreover, it strengthens our sense of responsibility for the people threatened by the jihadist genocide. Diabolizing has its price too, though. It does not provide any analysis. Diabolizing, one enters the field of tautology, since from their evil deeds one concludes the evilness of people. Lingering on that level, one will face great difficulty finding an explanation for the fact that that many common people turn evil.

In addition, diabolizing does not have any self-critical potential. Who diabolizes, mostly externalizes. Nevertheless, this means a vanishing awareness of the fact that those brutal jihadists seem to come from Europe. They have been raised in Western societies and it was here that they have become prone to that barbarism.

### Religionizing

Apart from diabolizing, there are attempts to religionize violence. There is no Islamism without Islam. Consequently, there is no jihadism without Islam either. This derivation is often used for proving that the violence manifested in jihadism is religiously motivated.

Indeed, the Islam provides a pool of symbols and terms being exploited for legitimizing and intensifying this conflict. Still: monocausal religionizing of those atrocities conceals the perspective that jihadism is based on additional and maybe entirely different motives.

Notably, a look at the profiles of European jihadists reveals that religion is not allocated a main role in jihadism. The French prevention center *Centre de Prévention contre les dérives sectaires liées à l'Islam* has for instance profiled a typical jihad candidate as follows: "Most of them are between 18 and 21 years of age (43.3 per cent), about two thirds of them (63.3 per cent) grew up in atheist homes. A quite recent study states eight out of ten holy warriors to be children from atheist homes, two thirds [...] of them from the middle class."<sup>4</sup> Many jihadists were raised in families without any fundamentalist background; 20 per cent of them are converts.<sup>5</sup>

Within Europe, there are "most recruitments [...] in Belgium in percentages. Two to three thousand Egyptians have joined the IS, out of 70 million Muslims. There are 400 from Belgium, with only 400,000 Muslims. Islam scientist Olivier Roy concisely summarizes the findings of this statistic: "This is not the Near East standing up against the West."

The police and the Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz) conclude that German jihadists were impossible to be typically profiled.<sup>6</sup> The majority of jihadists is of male gender, was born in

Germany, has the German citizenship and is between 21 and 25 years of age. Half of them are married, some do have children. About 17 per cent of the jihadists are converts.<sup>7</sup> A number of jihadists has a criminal record. About a fourth of them is well educated. They either have a high school diploma or have graduated from a technical college, a part of them from university.<sup>8</sup> 21 per cent were unemployed or worked in the minimum wage sector.<sup>9</sup> It is to be noted that only every fourth jihadist from Germany completed secondary education.<sup>10</sup> At present, constitution protection authorities in Germany are very much focused on Salafism when analyzing causes. However, they increasingly recognize Salafism to be more than and to differ from religion for young people. Salafism rather stands for "a youth protest movement, at least more than it being a religious revivalist movement. [...] meanwhile, with regard to this, constitution protection authorities call it a trend towards a 'youth culture' and towards a new 'lifestyle'."<sup>11</sup>

Any attempts of religionizing jihadist violence are most of all problematic for the reason that they nolens volens contribute to stylizing violence for the "Holy War" as done by the jihadists and thus eventually upgrade their violence as part of the war of religions.

### Sociologizing

Numerous articles describe jihadists as the impoverished, materially and socially weak, uneducated, criminals. A report by the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution refers to the fact that about a fourth of the jihadists has never completed any educational qualification and is ergo uneducated. What is putting this picture into a completely different perspective is the fact that a part of the jihadists has dropped out of school in order to join the jihad.<sup>12</sup> To automatically conclude from the fact that somebody dropped out of school to his stupidity is an erroneous conclusion anyway. That is to say, jihadists are not any dumb. They are able to gather information after all. Furthermore, they require certain linguistic proficiency and knowledge of countries. Moreover, among the jihadists, there are people that were well off materially, that could afford a lot and had a prosperous future before them.

Such sociologizing often serves the purpose of marginalizing this violence and hence, of suppressing it. Attempts of this sort aim at excluding the perpetrators from the center of Western societies.

### Ethicizing

To overcome the dualism between good on the one hand and evil on the other hand and in order to understand the perpetrators' motivation to act, it seems reasonable to ethicize violence. By ethicizing, perpetrators are looked at as

agents that take ethics as a basis for their acting in the light of which this acting appears to be good acting. This interpretation provides an explanation for why these perpetrators are apparently completely unaware of their guilt since from their point of view, they not only display a proper behavior but a good one as well. From their own perspective, they are the good guys and us, the others, are the evil ones.

Ethicizing jihadist violence may very well be helpful in comprehending the action motivation of these perpetrators. It runs the risk though to believe in the justifications the perpetrators use for themselves and hence, to confirm them. However, the crux of ethicizing is the incapability to differentiate between ideology and ethics. This is because one ethics is pitted against the other: it is the ethics of jihadists here and the ethics of the West there. What ethics will prove correct, will not be any result of a discourse. The respective good must assert its claim against the other good in order to win acceptance as the good, and that is by military means if no other option is available.

Diabolizing, religionizing, sociologizing, ethicizing – these are four interpretative patterns of jihadist violence. Each contains an element of truth. Admittedly, taken by itself, each of them is not only insufficient but misleading. Instead of looking in one's own mirror, such attempts result in avoidance discourses, which hence prevent a self-critical approach.

### **Jihadism as terrorism**

"We will win because we arouse fear in the heart of our enemies." – these words by Christian Emde were already quoted above. Jihadism means to teach people fear by spreading terror. As is well known, to spread terror is desired by any form of terrorism. In order to understand jihadism, it is thus pivotal to interpret it as terrorism in the first place.

Terrorism comprises a specific form of rationality, which can be read off its features. One of the main features of terrorism consists in eliminating any relation between decisions made by terrorists and individual fates. French mountaineer Hervé Gourdel, who was beheaded in Algeria in September 2014, for instance, did not have anything to do with decisions made by terrorists. This hiatus between victims and terrorists makes it incredibly hard if not even impossible to predict the terrorists' goals. The reason for such "irrational" actions is apparent: Terrorists strive for undermining the confidence in the coexistence of humans, and that is in a fundamental way. They aim at a collapse of humans' personalities. The more irrational terrorist actions seem, the more rationally they were calculated. They want to unsettle. It is part of the enforcement potential of the jihadist terror in particular to not be able to imagine the degree of their atrocities.<sup>13</sup> This is what jihadist terror has in

common with any other form of terrorism. The profound unsettlement, when faced with jihadists attacks, is not merely based on the incalculability of its violence but most of all, on its excess, disinhibition and dissolution. Eventually, jihadist terror aims at mass destruction.

This disinhibitory violence of jihadist terror puts it in the vicinity to religious terrorisms, since mass destruction seems to be a specific feature of religious terrorism. Commonly, terrorists go to great length emphasizing that their actions stand out against mere violent crimes.<sup>14</sup> It is exactly for that reason that so far no terrorism has been able to do without any interested third party or third party to be interested. This third party served the purpose of legitimizing its violence.<sup>15</sup>

Over a long period of time, involving a third party has led to the fact that attacks were performed with conventional means, not with means of mass destruction. This appears not to be true or less true for a religiously motivated terrorism, since it does not necessarily need a third party – that is to say, not a worldly third party. Whereas a worldly third party may revoke the terrorism its ideological basis by publicly announcing the terrorism to contravene its interests, this interventionist delegitimization ceases with regard to an otherworldly third party. This also holds true for the kind of applying violence. Thus, it is hardly surprising that by this religious foundation, terrorism has gained a novel, a disinhibitory dimension.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, religious terrorisms are particularly fatal as can be seen in the number of their victims.<sup>17</sup> This impact is not least caused by the idea of a cosmic war that does not know any compromises.

### **Jihadism as active nihilism**

Considering the jihadist terrorism, a more complex phenomenon comes into play indeed, since here a disinhibition comes to light that cannot sufficiently be explained as an expression of a religious-extremist phenomenon. Jihadism is hatred that is declared to be the actual life purpose and that everything is subordinated to, even the individual will to survive. This hatred is only subsequently sacred.

Such hatred is an expression of an active nihilism. Active nihilism means the activation of the incapability to express an empathetic no to the unexistence of the other, even at the expense of the own unexistence. To put it differently: Jihadism is the deliberate neutralization of the inhibition that makes humans incapable of depriving the other of their right to life. The will to cause the death of the other turns into the own life purpose, since the perpetrator is willing to sacrifice his own life for that. Neutralizing this capacity to be empathetic is the prerequisite of this will.

In order to fathom the causes for this active nihilism, it is recommendable to get concerned with the nihilistic tendencies in Western societies.

### **Nihilistic tendencies in Western societies**

When talking about nihilism with regard to Western societies at present, it is all about a specific life experience: about living in alarming meaninglessness, hopelessness and lovelessness.

In her juvenile book "Nothing", which had initially been banned only to be rewarded prizes afterwards, Danish author Janne Teller describes a spreading meaninglessness, rich in resentment.<sup>18</sup> The author, a former macroeconomist, tells the story of a group of seven graders that is provoked by a fellow student. He does so by sitting on a plum tree, spewing the same sentence at them day in and day out, namely that nothing meant anything.<sup>19</sup> In order to demonstrate the opposite, the students force one another to deliver each other what is of significance to them: sandals, a bicycle, braids, a golden hamster, a prayer rug, a flag, a crucifix, a child's coffin with the mortal remains of the little brother, a right index finger and so forth. This way, a pile of meaning results. When this pile is finally destroyed, the kids' aggression, which has accumulated when producing the pile of meaning, turns into murderous plans. Full of hatred, the provocateur is killed. The narrator, one of the girls involved, summarizes the situation as follows: "It was meaningful to hit Pierre Anthon. Meaningful to trample him under foot. That was full of meaning. Even when he was down and was not able to fight back any longer and even when he was not trying any longer".<sup>20</sup> The words "nothing means anything" could not be deleted from the kids' memories though, even after annihilating the provocateur.

Time and time again, the book refers to the ignorance adults show, who permanently suppress the fact that the children had long recognized that nothing in the world meant anything, and that adults just act as if anything meant something. Ultimately, the children discover meaning in something that should not be given any meaning to: aggression, violence, murder. The book is about the kids' nihilism, which is a product of the adults' lives and school.

These kids suffer from a lack of meaning. They try to create meaning. From an empathetic understanding, meaning may not be established though; meaning may only occur. When trying to produce meaning, the opposite turns out.

### **Idle violence**

The nihilistic mood described in this book is anything but literary fiction. In spite of the reduction of juvenile violence in Germany since 2008, there are forms of violence originating in a destructive desire. Authors, psychologists,



sociologists and police presidents too report of it as an absolute, idle and blind violence, a violence for its own sake.

These forms of violence are an expression of meaninglessness or of perverted meaning. By their wrongdoing, these new violent criminals seem to receive compensation for something that our society is lacking: meaning. Destruction may hence provide them with an ultimatum of meaning. This meaning, however, is no longer a yes to life, but is a yes to nothing.

Such aversive behavioral patterns, directed towards others, mostly occur individually. They may nevertheless be mobilized on a collective level and be activated politically, as can be seen in jihadism. They not only result from economic crises. They are first and foremost caused by genuine psychic, virtually spiritual distress.

Jihadism is not an expression of a "clash of civilization" but rather a "civilization of clash"<sup>21</sup>. In this "civilization", violence becomes a habit. Whenever violence becomes a habit, it becomes part of the identity of the self. Suffering and death of the victim seem to convey an absolute sovereignty to the perpetrator going along with absolute freedom: freedom of moral, of society, of civil and cultural constraints, not least of the fear of death.<sup>22</sup>

The passion of violence is not unconscious though.<sup>23</sup> Radicalization presupposed the willingness for radicalization. The perpetrator "exactly knows what he does" – and he does what he wants to do. By this self-disinhibition, he experiences self-expansion: his little ego outgrows itself. Every human life is mortal. "Death is inevitable. Nobody may escape it. [...] In death we are all equal. Death is [...] the absolute force." The little ego of the jihadist cannot cope with this. It fears death. By executing death on others, it feels as somebody participating in the force of death. To participate in this force seems to give great satisfaction to them. The jihadist "gains unparalleled self-importance. He is able to manage everything. By killing others, he gets liberated of his own death. [...] A consciousness of negative sovereignty goes along with that." By his disinhibited violence, the jihadist apparently gains a "double victory" by transcending his own mortality as well as the limits of his social existence. This is how he advances to be the negative hero. Now, you may not declare yourself a hero, you are declared a hero by others. Conventionally you would think that these atrocities evoke disgust and revulsion. Far wrong: they exert some fascination. The perpetrator appears to be larger than life size. He attracts all attention.

Jihadism means readiness to die. This readiness to die originates in a fear of death though. To escape it, the jihadist abuses the other one as a death conductor. Death always concerns the others. That is to say, if death concerns the jihadist himself, it is only as a collective death, as a crowd running into

death or as death in the crowd. Running into death, he is entirely unconcerned since in the crowd, he is spared the burden of his own private death. On top of that, hatred acts like a delirium. Death loses its power over somebody drunken by hatred. Ideology intensifies these tendencies.

For the jihadist, violence turns into religion. But what is a religion about if violence turns into religion? A religion of violence knows but this one. It makes violence its life form. A dissolution results for the reason that such violence does no longer have any sense of reality. Such violence cannot be explained when having in mind the well-known forms of religion.

### **Jihadism as a fascist syndrome<sup>24</sup>**

Jihadism has many symptoms in common with European fascisms. Therefore, it is revealing to interpret it as a fascist syndrome. Fascism aims at maximizing and ontologizing inequality. Its followers have a pronounced sense of superiority. The leader principle is irrevocable for any form of fascism. For one thing, a maximization of inequality culminates in the leader principle; on the other hand, it is exactly this identification with the leader that prevents "the development of the self and hence, the development of true self-determination and responsibility"<sup>25</sup>. Moreover, fascism is characterized by a continuous mobilization. This is supposed to prevent lethargy. Therefore, anonymous processes have to be personalized and emotionalized continually.<sup>26</sup> The unification of this movement is based on a paranoid, cohesive conception of the world. A pivotal aspect of the fascist syndrome is that "by a total politicization, the entire personality [...] is 'taken up on its promise' and any other loyalty (family, religion, individual conscience etc.) is disabled". By its self-abandonment for the sake of the much larger whole, the individual finds "redemption from guilt and individual fear of death". "Toughness, intolerance, ruthlessness become virtues of the clearly sadomasochistic 'novel human' that, masked by total idealism, is in favor of fanatic and nihilistic extreme 'Final Solutions' and that wants to implement this instantaneously."

Whereas in civilized societies it is about the inhibition of aggression, it is about authorizing aggression in fascism.

It is fascism in particular where an intimate relationship with violence becomes obvious. Although there are other forms of rule that are extremely violent, fascism uses "violence not only unhesitatingly and promptly, but prefers it to other means as well". Here, violence is of a libidinous nature. The letter of confession by Al-Qaeda with regard to the Madrid attacks, 191 people fell victim to on 11 March 2004, vividly expresses this libidinous nature of violence: "You love life and we love death." As well known, the battle cry of the Spanish fascists went: "Viva la Muerte – Long live death!"

Wanting to fight jihadism requires an understanding that susceptibility to fascism does not merely have its roots in economic crises, "susceptibility to fascism is first and foremost caused by genuine psychic distress, by 'spiritual' crises. [...]"<sup>27</sup>.

When talking about psychic distress here, it does not mean the perpetrators suffer from a psychic disorder. This assumption would be risky for three reasons: firstly, because it exposes mentally ill people to the suspicion of being potential terrorists. Secondly, because it does not take into account the rationality of terror. Thirdly, because it ignores the perpetrators' willingness for radicalization.

French political and Islam scientist Olivier Roy demands: "You've just got to listen in what way the converts, hundreds of which set out for Syria, justify their radicalization. They all say the same. Their life had been idle and people had made fun of them."<sup>28</sup> This denominates neuralgic points in present Western societies: the spreading feeling of emptiness and exclusion.

Thus, when talking about jihadism one must not keep silent about nihilism in Western societies.

## **Identity disorder**

A cause analysis concerning the attraction of jihadism in this part of the world ought to consider the increasing inequality in our society, broken home scenarios as well, in particular missing fathers, belated vindictive feelings too, which arose from the experience of discrimination of parents and/or grandparents. Besides, prisons are of essential significance as locations of radicalization. However, the most crucial question is probably the one of the mental state of the young jihadists.<sup>29</sup> As profiles illustrate, jihadists had lost hold at one or several points in life. Young people with massive identity disorders are appealed by jihadism. These are among others: insensitivity, process melancholy, loss of control, the experience of a fragmented body.

### **Insensitivity**

The feeling of inner emptiness forms whenever humans may not develop an identity, which "has its roots in the compassion with others"<sup>30</sup>. Such an atomized identity is instable. It is incapable of charity and self-love. This incapability gives birth to self-hatred. It is especially young jihadists that embody such instable identities. Their killings are not least a result of self-hatred projected onto others.<sup>31</sup>

## Process melancholy

Nihilism forms whenever the sense of possibility dries up. Many things in society are constantly changing. An increasing number of people has the impression to have no impact at all on these processes of change any longer. This is the background for a "process melancholy" (P. Sloterdijk) to be spreading, which is the feeling that everything will just continue without me having a share in it.

## Loss of control

That any sense of what is possible seems to have gotten lost, becomes apparent in light of the fatigue and paralysis symptoms massively spreading. Burn-out and depression are less caused by a lack of 'have got' but rather by a lack of being, by a lack of being recognized. Being recognized is the source for a strong self. This source dries up whenever the fear of losing control of their lives is spreading among people. Young people growing up in a "hotel civilization" (H. James), which is characterized by comfort, ease and content, cannot mature since such life creates childishness. Childishness does not strengthen though. It weakens. With an increasing loss of control, the feeling to be excluded from society grows. This is the reason why more and more people feel humiliated.

## Experience of a fragmented body<sup>32</sup>

What is to be considered moreover is that young people always experience a social placeness together with a bodily uncertainty. Social and bodily fragmentation are irrevocably interwoven. Humans targeting at a destruction of other bodies have a "fragmented body". Fragmented bodies are reliant on an extreme tension equalization since the human organism is geared for homeostasis, which means, humans want to relieve tension. Killing then means the "homeostasis of the fragmented body set free for action". In this connection, the "possible psychophysical turbulences of the late adolescence" have to be minded as well.

## Counterforces

Nihilism forms when the senses of possibility and finiteness dry up. Anti-jihadism has to establish the basis for experiencing self-efficacy and forming resilience. Young people are dependent on experiencing self-efficacy because this represents the basis for a sense of possibility to be developed: "Only if what is can be changed, is what is not the be all and end all." (T.W. Adorno) Change represents a strong anti-jihadist power.

In respect of present and future challenges, young people require resistivity or resilience as well. Therefore, such social conditions have to be provided that enable them to gain the basic skills they require in order to lead a good, meaningful, in a word, humane life. Such life is a life, where finite and vulnerable beings have exact knowledge of the fact that their life is finite and that their condition is vulnerable. Meaningful life is always concerned with this knowledge.<sup>33</sup>

With respect to jihadism, such politics are needed that, as philosopher Martha Nussbaum has demanded in agreement with Mahatma Gandhi, perceive the connection between the psychological and the political equilibrium. The political fight for liberty and equality is according to Gandhi: "most of all a fight [...] that is contended in the innermost of a human because compassion and respect conflict with anxiety, greed and narcissistic aggression."<sup>34</sup>

Violence, as it is glorified in jihadism, is a reaction to that fear of the own weakness and vulnerability. Jihadism is the fear of being human. What matter are life forms "conveying the message to young people that all humans are finite and vulnerable, and that this aspect of human life is neither odious nor shall it be rejected but rather [characterizes human life and (J. M.)] may be mastered by mutual acceptance and support."<sup>35</sup>

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## Comments

- 1 This essay is based on my book "Der Dschihad und der Nihilismus des Westens. Warum ziehen junge Europäer in den Krieg?" (Bielefeld 2015). Parts of this book were taken over in here. Comprehensive references are given therein. I would like to thank the publishing house transcript for their permission. The essay was originally published in German: "Wir lieben den Tod" – Dschihadismus und Nihilismus" in: Kirche und Gesellschaft 430 ([www.ksz.de](http://www.ksz.de)). It was translated by Antje Kaufmann.
- 2 This differentiation was inspired by D. Pollefeyt, The Kafkaesque World of the Holocaust: Paradigmatic Shifts in the Ethical Interpretation of the Nazi Genocide, in: J. K. Roth (Ed.), Ethics after the Holocaust: Perspectives, Critiques, and Responses, St. Paul 1999, 210-242.
- 3 J. Todenhöfer, Inside IS – 10 Tage im "Islamischen Staat", München <sup>3</sup>2015, 72.
- 4 T. Avenarius/H. Leyendecker/A. Rühle/C. Wernicke, Euro-Dschihad, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung from 12 January 2015.
- 5 cf. H.-H. Bremer, Frankreich und der Dschihad, in: Der Tagesspiegel from 20 November 2014.
- 6 The following summary of findings by the constitution protection authorities is based on: G. Mascolo, Klug, kriminell, großer Freundeskreis, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung from 24 September 2015, and N. Busse, Arbeitslose und Straftäter ziehen in den heiligen Krieg, in: Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung from 27 November 2014.
- 7 cf. G. Mascolo, see above.
- 8 cf. *ibid.*

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- 9 N. Busse, see above.
- 10 This number is not refuted by current numbers (ibid G. Mascolo). Study by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution. Jihadists from Germany are less skilled, in: <http://www.n24.de/n24/Nachrichten/Politik/d/5381614/dschihadistenausdeutschlandsin-dweniggebildet.html> (last access date: 5 August 2015).
- <sup>11</sup> L. Kaddor, *Zum Töten bereit. Warum deutsche Jugendliche in den Dschihad ziehen*, München 2015, 46.
- 12 See also: F. Federl, *Phänomen PopDschihad. Männlich, muslimisch, jung gesucht*, *Der Tagespiegel* from 23 January 2015.
- 13 cf. to these explanations on terror rationality: J. P. Reemtsma, *Terroratio. Überlegungen zum Zusammenhang von Terror, Rationalität und Vernichtungspolitik*, in: W. Schneider (ed.), *“Vernichtungspolitik”. Eine Debatte über den Zusammenhang von Sozialpolitik und Genozid im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland*, Hamburg 1991, 135-163, 158.
- 14 cf. W. Palaver, *Terrorismus: Wesensmerkmale, Entstehung, Religion* (2002), in: [http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/leseraum/texte/161.html#F\\_13](http://www.uibk.ac.at/theol/leseraum/texte/161.html#F_13) (last access date: 26 April 2015).
- 15 cf. H. Münkler, *Asymmetrische Gewalt. Terrorismus als politisch-militärische Strategie*, in: *Merkur* 1 (2002), 1-12, 11; also: W. Palaver, see above.
- 16 cf. W. Palaver, see above.
- 17 B. Hoffman, *Terrorismus – der unerklärte Krieg. Neue Gefahren politischer Gewalt*, Bonn 2007, 147.
- 18 cf. J. Teller, *Nichts. Was im Leben wichtig ist*, München 2010.
- 19 cf. T. Sprekelsen, *Wie man zum Fanatiker wird*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* from 23 September 2010.
- 20 J. Teller, see above, 134.
- 21 J. Joffe, *Fluch der Ideologie*, in: *Die Zeit* from 18 May 2013.
- 22 cf. W. Sofsky, *Traktat über die Gewalt*, Frankfurt <sup>2</sup>1996, 56-62.
- <sup>23</sup> See also: W. Sofsky, see above, 57.
- 24 cf. F. Hacker, *Das Faschismus-Syndrom. Analyse eines aktuellen Phänomens*, Frankfurt 1992, 35. 42 et seq.
- 25 A. Gruen, *Wider den Terrorismus*, Stuttgart 2015, 19.
- 26 For the following quotations see: F. Hacker, see above.
- <sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, 132/133.
- 28 *“Hauptsache Held sein”*. *Spiegel* interview with Oliver Roy 4/2015, 90-92, 91.
- 29 cf. K. Theweleit, *Das Lachen der Täter: Breivik u. u. Psychogramm der Tötungslust*, St. Pölten/Salzburg/Wien <sup>2</sup>2015, 186.
- 30 A. Gruen, see above, 16.
- 31 cf. *ibid.*, 17.
- 32 See: K. Theweleit, see above.
- 33 cf. *ibid.*: M. Seel, *Versuch über die Form des Glücks*, Frankfurt 1999, 83.
- 34 M. C. Nussbaum, *Nicht für den Profit! Warum Demokratie Bildung braucht*, Überlingen 2012, 45.
- 35 M. C. Nussbaum, see above, 50.

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### **About the author**

Jürgen Manemann (Prof. Dr.) is head of the Research Institute for Philosophy Hanover. His research focus is on political philosophy, political theology, environmental philosophy and economic anthropology.