

Analyzing Environmental Emotive Triggers in Terrorist Propaganda

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Abstract : The purpose of this study is to measure the intersection of environmental security entities in terrorist propaganda. To the best of author's knowledge, this is the first study of its kind to examine this intersection within terrorist propaganda. Rosoka, natural language processing software and frame analysis are used to advance our understanding of how environmental frames function as emotive triggers. Violent jihadi demagogues use frames to suggest violent and non-violent solutions to their grievances. Emotive triggers are framed in a way to leverage individual and collective attitudes in psychological warfare. A comparative research design is used because of the differences and similarities that exist between two variants of violent jihadi propaganda that target western audiences. Analysis is based on salience and network text analysis, which generates violent jihadi semantic networks. Findings indicate that environmental frames are used as emotive triggers across both data sets, but also as tactical and information data points. A significant finding is that certain core environmental emotive triggers like "water," "soil," and "trees" are significantly salient at the aggregate level across both data sets. All environmental entities can be classified into two categories, symbolic and literal. Importantly, this research illustrates how demagogues use environmental emotive triggers in cyber space from a subcultural perspective to mobilize target audiences to their ideology and praxis. Understanding the anatomy of propaganda construction is necessary in order to generate effective counter narratives in information operations. This research advances an additional method to inform practitioners and policy makers of how environmental security and propaganda intersect.

Keywords : propaganda analysis, emotive triggers environmental security, frames

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