How Islamic State is using Strategic Communication to mobilize support for its cause?

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Introduction

Strategic Communication (SC) has become a key instrument to understand international relations dynamics as well as matters of war, security and strategic affairs. This is mainly thanks to the new communication environment that contributed to the proliferation of new state-challengers able to use communication strategically in the so-called war of ideas. Nowadays, Western countries are faltering at countering the rise of Islamic extremism, especially against the Islamic State (IS), which is using sophisticated techniques of SC to mobilize support for its cause.

The purpose of this essay is to analyze what SC is and how IS is using it to achieve political and social transformation challenging the status quo in Middle East. Despite having lost control over several territories in Syria and Iraq, the Islamic State is still managing to appeal and mobilize support through a smart use of SC, hindering Western countries to counter the menace of global jihad.

This essay is divided in three sections. The first one deals with the complexity and ambiguity of the concept of strategic communication that challenges to find agreement on its definition, its core elements and its relationship with other related terms, such as propaganda. The second section focuses on the new media ecology and the consequent emergence of political and social actors that attempt to challenge other states in the so-called battle of ideas, that is to produce, project and disseminate appealing strategic narratives to win over others. The third section deals with the case study of IS, on how this terrorist organization is using strategic communication sophisticatedly to alter the status quo and achieve its strategic objective.

What is Strategic Communication?

As mentioned above, national governments and non-state actors are recognizing the important role strategic communication plays in international relations. However, because of the complexity and ambiguity of the term, the international community is still far from consensus on a universally agreed definition.[1] In this paper, it is used Farwell's definition of SC, intended "[…] as the use of words, actions, images, or symbols to influence the attitudes and opinions of targeted audiences to shape their behaviour in order to advance interests or policies, or to achieve objectives".[2] Nevertheless, the existing literature seems to agree more easily on SC's general nature and what can be qualified as its core activities. According to Christopher Paul, there are four main elements that he defines as unassailable cores without which SC cannot be meaningful.[3] First, it is the attempt of an actor to inform, influence and persuade targeted audiences; second, in order to define communication as strategic there is the

1. James P. Farwell, "Persuasion and Power: Art of Strategic Communication", Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012, p. xvi, accessed at: http://kcl.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=1325115.

2. Ibid., pp. xviii-xix.

3. Christopher Paul, "Strategic Communication", Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2011, accessed at: http://psi.praeger.com/doc.aspx??x=x&d=/books/gpg/A3077C/A3077C-57.xml&original_url=doc.aspx?x=x&d=/books/gpg/A3077C/A3077C-57.xml&ws=WS_PSI&as=doc.aspx&token=C9903F5F3FDD0C-0C894C2EF16E2E820B&count=!.

requirement of setting clear objectives that actors attempt to achieve; third, actors need to communicate these aims respecting coordination and avoiding information fratricide and inconsistency; forth, it is necessary for actors to acknowledge that actions communicate as well, mostly louder than words too.[4]

Even without an agreed definition of SC, some scholars attempted at defining the core activities that can be qualified as SC, such as Professor Taylor who affirmed that the four main pillars of SC are: Information Operations (IOs); Psychological Operations (PSYOPs); Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy.[5] Furthermore, a similar classification appears in the White House 2010 National Framework for defining Strategic Communication in which it "[…] refers to (a) the synchronization of words and deeds and how they will be perceived by selected audiences, as well as (b) programs and activities deliberately aimed at communicating and engaging with intended audiences, including those implemented by public affairs, public diplomacy, and information operations professionals".[6] Drawing from the latter definition, it is important to note that both Information Operations (IOs) and Psychological Operations (PSYOPs) are exclusively military functions therefore they represent prerogatives of the U.S. Department of Defence (DoD). However, U.S. DoD classifies PSYOPs as a sub-category of IOs, differently from Professor Taylor. In Joint Publication 1-02 of the U.S. Department of Defence, IOs are defined as "[T]he integrated employment, during military operations, of information-related capabilities in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision-making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own […]".[7] Furthermore, Farwell defines public affairs as an attempt of national governments to influence by informing the public.[8] In this practice, governments tend to inform both media and domestic audiences without omitting anything, even if inconvenient at the beginning. However, Farwell argues that public affairs qualifies as SC as it is not just about informing, but also influencing, as governments attempt to inform the public by presenting facts in the most favorable way, influencing the perceptions of the audience over a specific fact.[9] Following, a Congressional Research Service (2009) defines public diplomacy as "[…] a government's effort to conduct foreign policy and promote national interests through direct outreach and communication with the population of a foreign country".[10] It is worth noting that these activities are not mutually excludible, but can be rather pursued in combination to support a specific interest.[11] Indeed, these functions can be all qualified as SC as their overall aim is to strategically inform, influence and persuade both domestic and foreign audiences for the support of national interest or objectives.

However, there is a more controversial aspect of SC that concerns its relationship with propaganda. Indeed, the existing literature appears to be divided whether to consider the latter as an activity of SC or not, that ultimately seems to depend on which definition of propaganda someone might use.[12]

4. Ibid., in "Introduction: The Promise and Peril of Strategic Communication".
5. Philip M. Taylor, "Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications", in Routeledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy, ed. by Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor, New York: Routledge, 2009, p. 14.
6. The White House. National Framework for Strategic Communication, Pursuant to Section 1055 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, March 16, 2010, p. 2, accessed at: https://fas.org/man/eprint/pubdip.pdf.
7. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Washington D.C., Joint Publication 1-02, November 8, 2010, p. 110.
8. James P. Farwell, "Persuasion and Power: Art of Strategic Communication", Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012, p. 5.
9. Ibid., p. 42.
10. Kennan H. Nakamura and Matthew C. Weed, "Summary" in U.S. Public Diplomacy: Background and Current Issues, Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 18 December 2009, accessed at: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R40989.pdf. 11. Paul Cornish, Lindley-French Julian and Claire Yorke, "Strategic Communications and National Strategy" Chatham House Report, September 2011, p. 17, accessed at: https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/public/Research/International%20Security/r0911stratcomms.pdf.
12. Christopher Paul, "Strategic Communication", Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2011.

Because in history the term received a negative connotation, several scholars argue that propaganda implies manipulation as well as falsification of communication in order to spread and persuade individuals over a specific political or religious view thus national governments tend to distanced themselves from it. For instance, Marlin defines propaganda as "[t]he organized attempt through communication to affect belief or action or inculcate attitudes in a large audience in ways that circumvent or suppress an individual's adequately informed, rational, reflective judgement".[13] However, other scholars offer alternative definitions that may imply resemblance to SC. For example, Jowett and O'Donnel describe propaganda as "[…] the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of propagandist".[14] Additionally, Farwell argues that propaganda qualifies as strategic communication as it aims at informing, influencing and persuading the perceptions and behaviors of targeted audiences.[15] It can be argued that by addressing the information environment in which SC is taking place today the difference with propaganda appears even more blurred. Indeed, the new media ecology offers several means and opportunities to insurgent groups to achieve governmental change and social transformation through the use of SC, proving it is no longer an exclusive tool of states. Bolt defines this attempt as an evolution in the new information environment of the old theory of Propaganda of the Deed (POTD) that he defines not as a form of conventional propaganda, but rather a form of strategic communication used by insurgent groups to win the battle of ideas.[16]

The war of ideas and the new media ecology

As mentioned above, national governments are becoming more aware about the increasing capabilities of state-challengers to use SC as a tool for political and social change. This is true especially with the widespread of Islamic extremism in the West after 9/11. The former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair during his speech on the London Bombings 7/7 declared: "What we are confronting here is an evil ideology. It is not a clash of civilisations - all civilised people, Muslim or other, feel revulsion at it. But it is a global struggle and it is a battle of ideas, hearts and minds, both within Islam and outside it".[17]

To understand how state-challengers such as terrorist organizations are using SC as a new weapon it is important to address the new media environment in which SC is being conducted. Indeed, the new media ecology of the 21st century has severely influenced international relations' dynamics. Castells affirms that power is the most fundamental instrument that builds new international orders, but because there has been the emergence of a new media ecology, which means increasing opportunities to communicate thus exercise power, power is more diffused.[18] He defines power as "[…] the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favor the empowered actor's will, interests, and values".[19] He continues by saying that "[p]ower is exercised by means of coercion (or the possibility of it) and/or by the construction of meaning on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their action".[20] Castells believes that in the new communication environment a major change has

13. Randal Marlin, "Propaganda and the Ethics of Persuasion", Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 2012, p. 22.
14. Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnel, "Propaganda and Persuasion", Newbury Park: Sage Publications, 1992, p.7, accessed at: http://sttpml.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/propaganda-and-persuasion.pdf.
15. James P. Farwell, "Persuasion and Power: Art of Strategic Communication", Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012, p. 25.
16. Neville Bolt, "The Violent Image: Insurgent Propaganda and the new Revolutionaries", London: Hurst, 2012, p. 32.
17. "Full text: Blair Speech on Terror", BBC, July, 16, 2005, accessed at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4689363.stm.
18. Manuel Castells, "Communication Power", Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd edition, 2012, pp. 10-17.
19. Ibid., p. 10.
20. Ibid.

been the transition from mass-communication to mass-self communication "[…] being the process of interactive communication that can potentially reach a mass audience, but in which the production of the message is self-generated, the retrieval of messages self-directed, and the reception and remixing of content from electronic communication network is self-selected".[21]

The rise of the Internet and social media increased the chances for many more individuals of what he calls the global network society to attempt at using communication strategically.[22] Subsequently to the increasing opportunities to communicate, the new information environment lead to the proliferation of new political and social entities that may seek to challenge national states and the international status quo through the creation, projection and dissemination of strategic narratives thus SC. Lawrence Freedman, who first used this expression, defined them as "[…] compelling storylines, which can explain events convincingly and from which inferences can be drawn[…]".[23] Following, Miskimmon et al. define strategic narratives as "[…] means for political actors to construct a shared meaning of the past, present, and future of international politics to shape the behaviour of domestic and international actors"[24], thus to conduct SC and eventually win the battle of ideas. From this definition, it is possible to argue that the ultimate aim is to achieve behavioral influence through compelling and attractive narratives. Therefore, the idea of strategic narratives is closely linked to Nye's conception of soft power that he formulated once he realized hard power was not sufficient anymore to win wars.[25] Indeed, as Castells did, also Nye recognizes that power may be used either through coercion or through attraction.[26] He defines soft power as the ability to attract, which he argues has the ultimate aim to influence others' behaviors and achieve a desired outcome.[27] In order to be attractive and achieving behavioral influence and eventually to shape how people conceive their identity and interests, actors need to produce strategic narratives according to a specific goal, the available types of communication and by addressing the media environment in which strategic narratives will be disseminated.[28]

First, goals are prerequisites to define narratives as strategic and they can be long, medium or short-term.

Second, according to the goals actors want to achieve they may choose from different communication forms such as persuasion, argumentation, rhetorical force or rhetorical coercion.[29]

Third, it is important that narrative constructors project strategic narratives in the media ecology that nowadays has been severely influenced by the emergence of the Internet and social media. In order to choose which communication tool is most suitable for the dissemination of the narrative, there is the need for a well and deep understanding of the audience actors may intend to target.[30] Furthermore, Betz suggests that narratives need to be vertically coherent in order to be successful and appealing.[31] He argues that narratives operate at different levels,

21. Ibid., p. xix.
22. Ibid., pp. 24-38.
23. Lawrence Freedman, "The Transformation of Strategic Affairs", Florence: Taylor and Francis, 2013, p. 22, accessed at: http://kcl.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=1207127.
24. Alister Miskimmon, Ben O'Loughin and Laura Roselle, "Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order", New York: Taylor and Francis, 2014, p. 2, accessed at: http://kcl.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx-?p=1637505.
25. Joseph S. Nye, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power", The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 616, (2008), p. 94, accessed at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25097996.pdf.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Alister Miskimmon, Ben O'Loughin and Laura Roselle, "Strategic Narratives: Communication Power and the New World Order", New York: Taylor and Francis, 2014, p. 8, accessed at: http://kcl.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx-?p=1637505.
29. Ibid., p.9.
30. Ibid., p.12.
31. David Betz, "The Virtual Dimension of Contemporary Insurgency and Counterinsurgency", Small Wars & Insurgencies, Vol. 19, No. 4, (December 2008), p. 522.

in which the strategic serves as a connection between other two levels. At the top, narrative constructors formulate an idealized vision of the world's future, while at the bottom there is the set of individual visions of people that start to think whether or not to engage in some sort of actions to either halt – if negative and dramatic – or maintain – if positive and rewarding – the idealized vision of humanity's future offered by the overarching narrative. In this framework, Betz argues that strategic narratives function as link between the other two levels in order that the top one resonates within most individuals at the bottom and achieve behavioral influence.[32] Nowadays, state-challengers, mostly Islamic terrorist organizations, seem to be extremely successful in achieving this vertical coherence and producing and projecting appealing strategic narratives, hindering Western countries to offer an alternative narrative to the global jihad.

The Islamic State and its Strategic Communication

The Islamic State (IS) is proving to be one of the most prominent terrorist organizations in using SC as an integral part to its military efforts. Despite having recently lost several territories in Syria and Iraq, IS still manages to be very powerful in the battle of ideas by producing and projecting consistent appealing strategic narratives mobilizing individuals to support its cause. According to a recent study, since the outbreak of the conflict in 2011 up to 30.000 individuals from more than 86 countries are estimated to have travelled to Syria and Iraq, most of whom have joined IS.[33] These results seem to confirm that IS is smartly using SC by developing appealing narratives to attract supporters. It builds them around a clear and comprehensive objective; by taking into account that actions communicate too and need to be consistent with words and by a strategic use of the new media ecology to disseminate strategic narratives according to the audience they aim to target. However, it is important to bear in mind that the exploitation of the new media ecology to broadcast narratives is not an exclusive feature of IS, but it has been rather widespread across other terrorist organizations too, even though IS is using it sophisticatedly.

First, IS' main objective is to build a comprehensive society for all Muslim people and establish a Caliphate – that has been proclaimed on 29th June 2014 – over specific geographical territories where to enforce Sharia law and rule over the population.[34]

Second, in order to achieve such a political change, it has to build a master narrative, defined by Halverson et al. as […] a transhistorical narrative that is deeply embedded in a particular culture"[35] that would resonate and influence individuals' behaviors toward the engagement in some sort of actions that will contribute to achieving IS's strategic objective. IS created its simple and broad overarching narrative around the idea that the Muslim population is under attack by the West – referring to the expression 'War on Islam' rather than on Terror – and therefore it should engage in violent jihad as defence.[36] Additionally, it has based it on a misused interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence – the Salafi-jihadist one –in order to legitimize itself as the only entity authorized to establish such a Caliphate and to

32. Ibid., pp. 522-523.
33. The Soufan Group. Foreign Fighters. An Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq. The Soufan Group, December 2015, p.4, http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/TSG_ForeignFightersUpdate3.pdf.
34. Pelletier, Ian R.; Lundmark, Leif; Garner, Rachel; Scott Ligon Gina and Kilinc, Ramazan. "Why ISIS's Message Resonates: Leveraging Islam, Sociopolitical Catalyst, and Adaptive Messaging", Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, Vol. 39, N.10, (2016), p.874.
35. Halverson, Jeffry R.; Corman, Steven R.; Goodall, H. L., Jr.. Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p.14. http://kcl.eblib.com/patron/FullRecord.aspx?p=665893 (accessed December 14, 2016).
36. Russel, Jonathan and Rafiq, Haras. Countering Islamist Extremist Narratives: A Strategic Briefing. Quilliam Foundation, 2016, p.5, https://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/countering-islamist-extremist-narratives.pdf.

incite Muslims all over the world to unite and defend the Ummah through violent jihad.[37] According to a recent study, IS has been using other six strategic narratives to mobilize support around the concepts of: brutality, mercy, victimhood, war, belonging and utopianism.[38] These are then disseminated in the media environment through different channels and in several languages according to the target IS intends to reach.

Third, another striking feature of IS' SC has been the awareness that actions, mainly violent ones, communicate too and once they reflect words coherently, narratives have an exceptional impact. Indeed, the major SC technique used by ISIS is what Bolt defines as the updated version of the theory of Propaganda of the Deeds (POTD) which he defines as "[…] an act of political violence with the objective of creating a media event capable of energizing populations to bring about state revolution or social transformation".[39] He continues by arguing that violent actions may be firstly intended to achieve a military advantage, but secondly they might have a communicative impact too.[40] Therefore, IS projects the above mentioned narratives through the dissemination in the new media ecology of words and violent images representing its actions in order to resonate and attract an increasing number of people.

First, images and videos showing the brutality of IS's actions such as beheadings and executions represent a constant reminder of its supremacy and IS broadcasts them to attempt at demoralizing its opponents.[41]

Second, the reproduction of videos in which people pledge alliance to God and join IS are intended to show that IS reserves mercy just towards those who choose what they believe to be the only "true" interpretation of Islam.[42] These messages seem to be directed towards potential recruits in order to install fear of what could happen if they don't join. Following, IS attempts at portraying the Muslim population being under attack from the West, therefore it projects images and videos of Muslims people's sufferings with the aim to resonate in other individuals' personal grievances and eventually facilitate individuals radicalization processes.[43]

Fourth, the portraying of its army's power through images and videos of its victories on the battlefield is aimed at strengthening internal moral.[44]

Fifth, IS attempts at fostering a deep sense of belonging and of collective identity sharing by insisting on having one single Islamic State around the Ummah, and therefore it distributes videos, posts and images in different languages trying to reach Western Muslims as well.[45] According to the study, utopianism seems to be one of the most important and innovative narrative produced by a terrorist organization, as IS is trying to present itself as a real state by broadcasting images and videos of how good are live conditions in the Caliphate and how many services are offered to the population in order to attract potential joiners.[46]

Furthermore, IS is fully aware of the importance of winning the hearts and minds of people in order to achieve its strategic objective, especially because of the asymmetric nature of the conventional

37. David S. Sorensen, "Confronting the 'Islamic State'. Priming Strategic Communications: Countering the Appeal of ISIS", Parameters, Vol. 44, No. 3, (Autumn 2014), p. 25.
38. Charlie Winter, "The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy", Quilliam Foundation, July 2015, pp. 22-28, accessed at: https://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/the-virtual-caliphate-understanding-islamic-states-propaganda-strategy.pdf.
39. Neville Bolt, "The Violent Image: Insurgent Propaganda and the new Revolutionaries", London: Hurst, 2012, p. 2.
40. Ibid., p.3.
41. Charlie Winter, "The Virtual 'Caliphate': Understanding Islamic State's Propaganda Strategy", Quilliam Foundation, July 2015, pp. 22-23.
42. Ibid., p. 23.
43. Ibid., pp. 24-25.
44. Ibid., p. 26.
45. Ibid., p. 27.
46. Ibid., p. 28.

fight against the West where it is constantly losing ground. Moreover, IS also recognizes the increased opportunities of the new media ecology to communicate strategically bypassing geographical and institutional borders. Therefore, since its emergence, IS did focus on developing an effective media campaign that can been labeled as cyber jihad, which according to Hoffman and Schweitzer "[…] refers to use of 21st century technological tools and cyberspace […] in order to promote the notion of a violent jihad against those classified by its followers as enemies of Islam".[47] Indeed, IS seems to be the terrorist organization that relies most on an extensive use of the Internet and mostly social media as platforms for dissemination, recruitment and radicalization.[48] In addition to its online magazine Dabiq and high quality videos disseminated on mainstream websites such as YouTube, IS mostly rely on social media such as Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr to post and disseminate pro-jihadi content.

According to a recent RAND study, even if social media firms have been targeting and shutting down IS's related accounts, they still manage to be very active online, especially on Twitter.[49] This can be linked to the decentralized organizational structure developed by IS where through the establishment of an official central media wing, known as Al-Furqan, and of several other media outlets throughout its controlled territories, IS allows its members, supporters or just sympathizers to be active online independently.[50] However, Al-Furqan attempts at assuring that the messages that are promoted and broadcasted appear as unified and coherent, in the sense that they ultimately legitimate and support IS's actions and objectives.

Lastly, what can be argued is that IS is proving to be successful in merging its actions, either military or terrorist attacks, with what it is professing verbally. In contrast, it seems that Western countries are still struggling in countering its appeal. As Betz argues, the West is faltering at countering the rise of Islamic extremism mainly because it failed to consider the war of ideas as a crucial battlefield.[51] Moreover, because the West puts too much effort on its contribution to the intra Muslim conflict about which is the right interpretation of Islam, it did not focus on Western population, especially Muslims ones, and failed to offer appealing counter-narratives. Additionally, Betz continues that in order to produce attractive narratives, the West needs to grasp the important impact of coherence between words and deeds have on actors' credibility.[52] Without taking into account the dimension of SC into the overall warfare strategy to counter IS, Western states might have little chances to completely defeat it and avoid its re-emergence in a near future.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to provide a comprehensive framework on what strategic communication is in order to examine how it is used by what appears to be one of the most dangerous terrorist organizations, the Islamic State. Indeed, it seems that IS is winning the so-called war of ideas as it is still attracting an increasing number of new members despite losing control over several territories in Syria and Iraq.

47. Adam Hoffman and Yoram Schweitzer, "Cyber Jihad in the Service of the Islamic State (ISIS)", Strategic Assessment, Vol. 18, No. 1, (April 2015), pp. 71-72, accessed at: http://www.inss.org.il/uploadImages/systemFiles/adkan18_1ENG%20(5)_Hoffman-Schweitzer.pdf.
48. Ibid., p. 72.
49. Elizabeth Bodin-Baron, Todd C. Helmus, Madeline Magnuson, and Zev Winkelman, "Examining ISIS Support and Opposition Networks on Twitter", Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2016, p.xi.
50. Christina S. Liang, "Cyber Jihad: Understanding and Countering Islamic State Propaganda", Geneva Centre for Security: GSCP Policy Paper, (February 2015), p. 4.
51. David Betz, "The Virtual Dimension of Contemporary Insurgency and Counterinsurgency", Small Wars & Insurgencies, Vol. 19, No. 4, (December 2008), p. 514.
52. Ibid.

In the 21st century, international relations have been extremely altered by the new media environment, which lead to the proliferation of political and social actors that seek to challenge states and the international status quo. Moreover, the new media ecology provided these actors with increasing means and platforms to exercise power through strategic communication and appeal support. It should be noted that the Islamic State represents the major example of state-challengers using SC more sophisticatedly. Indeed, as it holds a clear and comprehensive objective, IS develops strategic narratives accordingly and exploits the new media ecology to disseminate them. However, what appears to be a striking feature is its coherence between its actions and words that lead IS to gain increasing appeal, legitimacy thus support.

This paper attempts at offering a useful framework for understanding the important role strategic communication is playing in the war of ideas; it points towards the necessity that Western countries do take SC into account when developing future countermeasures to halt its attraction.

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