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Hezbollah's Path to Popular Legitimacy“

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the transformation of Hezbollah from its origins as a Shi'ite religious social movement with a militant wing to a dominant Lebanese political party. It seeks to understand the *Party of God* as a rational actor that has strategically employed political discourse as a supportive mechanism for its political journey and as a means of increasing its domestic political and popular legitimacy. Borrowing from social movement theory, framing is applied to a collection of 18 political texts and speeches over a period of 24 years to analyze how Hezbollah, and especially party-head Hassan Nasrallah, employed strategic framing as it sought greater political integration and to widen its support base. Eight frames that were classified as either master frames, resonating with a wide Lebanese audience, or restricted frames, resonating with a limited Shi'ite audience, were applied to the texts. Based on the driving factors of deep-seated religious sectarianism and strong Lebanese national identity, it was hypothesized that the analysis would reveal a decrease in the Shi'ite religious frame and a strong increase in the nationalist frame over time. The anti-Zionist frame, recognized as a master frame that also resonates with Hezbollah's restricted Shi'ite constituency, was hypothesized to enjoy widespread usage throughout the analyzed time frame. The results of the analysis, which confirmed the hypothesis, reveal a downplaying of religious identity paired with an increased emphasis on nationalism and consistent use of othering as a means of increasing domestic legitimacy. This interplay between the instrumental use of religion, nationalism and othering in political discourse provides insight into what is likely a broader phenomenon among social movements, especially Islamic social movements and similar movements throughout the Arab world.

KEYWORDS: Hezbollah, Sectarianism, Nationalism, Religion, Shi'ite Islam, Islam, Social Movements, Framing, Discourse, Rhetoric, Lebanon

ABSTRACT

Diese Arbeit untersucht die Entwicklung der Hisbollah von ihren Ursprüngen als schiitische religiöse, soziale Bewegung mit einer starken Miliz, zu einer einflussreichen libanesischen politischen Partei. Diese Arbeit versteht die Hisbollah als einen rationalen Akteur, der den politischen Diskurs strategisch als unterstützenden Mechanismus für seine politische Transformation und als Mittel zur Stärkung seiner innenpolitischen und gesellschaftlichen Legitimität eingesetzt hat. In Anlehnung an die soziale Bewegungstheorie wird *framing* auf eine Sammlung von 18 politischen Texten und Reden über einen Zeitraum von 24 Jahren angewendet, um zu analysieren, wie die Hisbollah und insbesondere der Parteichef Hassan Nasrallah *strategic framing* einsetzte, um eine stärkere politische Integration zu erreichen und ihre politische Basis zu erweitern. Acht unterschiedliche *frames*, die entweder ein breites libanesisches Publikum ansprechen (*master frames*), oder die ein begrenztes schiitisches Publikum ansprechen (*restricted frames*), wurden angewandt. Angesichts eines tief verwurzelten religiösen Sektierertums und einer starken libanesischen nationalen Identität wird angenommen, dass die Analyse im Laufe der Zeit eine Abnahme des schiitischen religiösen *frames* und eine starke Zunahme des nationalistischen *frames* zeigt. Es wurde zudem die Hypothese aufgestellt, dass der antizionistische *frame* der zugleich als *master frame* gilt und mit der eingeschränkten schiitischen Konstituierung der Hisbollah in Einklang steht, während des gesamten analysierten Zeitrahmens häufig und konsistent verwendet wird. Die Ergebnisse der Analyse, die die Hypothese bestätigten, zeigen ein Abschwächen der religiösen Identität, gepaart mit einer verstärkten Betonung des Nationalismus und der konsequenten Verwendung von Andersartigkeit als Mittel zur Steigerung der innerstaatlichen Legitimität. Dieses Zusammenspiel von instrumentellem Gebrauch von Religion, Nationalismus und Andersartigkeit im politischen Diskurs liefert einen Einblick in ein Phänomen, das unter islamischen sozialen Bewegungen und ähnlichen Bewegungen in der gesamten arabischen Welt, ein wahrscheinlich breiteres Phänomen darstellt.

SCHLÜSSELWÖRTER: Hisbollah, Sektierertum, Nationalismus, Religion, schiitischer Islam, Islam, soziale Bewegungen, Diskurs, Rhetorik, Libanon

To Rami, hayete – for opening my eyes & filling my heart.

To Mama & Papa - without whom none of this would have been possible.

من أجل لبنان ، حيث يحيا الأمل في كل مكان

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Introduction

Hezbollah, the *Party of God*, is hardly understood despite being frequently discussed. The Lebanese militia-cum-political party with roots in Shi'a Islam has undergone a remarkable transformation since its inception in the 1980s. While the United States has classified Hezbollah as a terrorist organization since 1997,¹ declaring only Al Qaeda as more dangerous,² the European Union (EU) added only the party's military wing to its terrorism list in 2013, leaving the organisation as a whole off the list altogether.³ Domestically, the party began as a resistance movement during the Lebanese Civil War and became institutionalized over time, participating in legitimate elections for the first time in 1992 and marking its most recent electoral victory after winning a slim majority in the 2018 general election.⁴ Hezbollah's gradual rise to political power is remarkable, not least when considering the party's Shia'a Islamic origins in light of the country's age-old deep sectarian divides, which have been institutionalized in Lebanon's consociational political system.

This thesis seeks first and foremost to trace Hezbollah's path to political success within Lebanon, and the means by which it achieved this. While the aim is *not* to get entrenched in the discussion of whether the *Party of God* is in fact a terrorist organization, militia, or political party, characterizing Hezbollah will be a necessary step in better understanding the party, its origins, motives, and methods. In order to do this in the most pragmatic way possible, labels like terrorism will be avoided as a characterization of the *Party of God*, as these terms "may serve to obfuscate more they clarify."⁵ Instead, this thesis views Hezbollah's journey as that of a social

¹ U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," accessed January 8, 2019, <https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm>

² Ely Karmon, "Hizballah and the War on Terror," The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, July 30, 2002, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/hizballah-and-the-war-on-terror> as cited in Anisseh Van Engeland and Rachael M. Rudolph, *From Terrorism to Politics* (Routledge, 2016), 30.

³ Nadim Shehadi, "EU Listing of Hezbollah: Inevitable Decision with Unpredictable Consequences," *Chatham House*, July 24, 2013, accessed December 28, 2013.

⁴ Tom Perry, Laila Bassam and Ellen Francis, "Hezbollah allies gain in Lebanon vote, underscoring Iran sway," Reuters, May 7, 2018, Accessed December 28, 2013.

⁵ Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 2004), 22.

movement: from a resistance movement to a legitimate political party. Understanding Hezbollah as a new social movement and viewing it through the lens of Islamic activism provides an opportunity for a more in-depth study of a complex organization that is rooted in struggle. More specifically, given the complex hierarchical structure of the *Party of God*, I identify Hezbollah as a social movement organization (SMO). Thus, lifting the veil and “understanding that many—perhaps most—“terrorist” groups are far more complex social movements than typical definitions permit has significant theoretical and policy implications.”⁶ This lens provides the potential scope for analysing Hezbollah as a rational, strategic actor that has modified its goals and objectives over time to become successfully integrated into a political system it initially identified as irreconcilable with the values of Islam.

This thesis will thus set out to answer the question of how Hezbollah instrumentalized political rhetoric to successfully evolve into a legitimate domestic political party from its beginnings as a Shi’ite movement with a militia wing. To do this, I trace the transformation of the party during its most significant years, from its origins in 1985 to 2009. These dates have been selected firstly as to allow for a comprehensive, long-term period of analysis and secondly, as Hezbollah’s only two manifesto’s were released in 1985 and 2009 - 24 years apart - allowing for a direct analysis of the language used in two parallel documents. This time period also constitutes the years in which Hezbollah grew significantly as a domestic political actor, while not yet entering into what I consider to be the next phase of its development as a regional actor, triggered by its direct involvement in the Syrian Civil War. Finally, this study of Hezbollah as a political movement will focus on the discourse and rhetoric used by party-leader Hassan Nasrallah in a series of speeches held over the years. Hezbollah’s use of rhetoric, media and propaganda is unique and unparalleled not just domestically but also across the region. Nasrallah’s speeches have a cult-like following, with an audience of sometimes hundreds of thousands tuning in to his words.⁷ His charismatic persona combined with the thorough and complex media infrastructure Hezbollah has in place is a distinguishing

⁶ Ibid., 113.

⁷ Joseph Elie Alagha, *Hizbullah’s Identity Construction* (Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 129.

and effective tool for the party to build its image and spread its message.⁸ Thus, an analysis of Nasrallah's speeches held over a period of 24 years will provide insight into the strategic use of Hezbollah's rhetoric in moving from niche-specific messages that had a primarily Shi'ite religious agenda to gaining widespread, nationwide support. Building on the *framing technique* borrowed from social movement theory, it is predicted that over the years, Hezbollah employed specific frames that helped the party gain momentum and support towards achieving popular legitimacy. More specifically, I predict that the use of the "Lebanon-frame", or nationalism frame, will be employed more frequently to convey national rather than religious objectives, while the Shi'ite/Islamic frame will be less dominant than at the beginning. Other frames that have persistently high resonance across all religious denominations within Lebanon, such as that of anti-Zionism, will enjoy consistent usage. By adapting its messages, Hezbollah has successfully broadened its audience and has thus instrumentalized powerful rhetoric on its path to political and popular legitimacy.

In the context of this work, legitimacy refers to being recognized as a political actor within domestic political institutions. Popular legitimacy refers to that same level of political recognition at the civil level, and includes having a broad support base. In the case of Hezbollah, its strategic political and military manoeuvring laid the groundwork for the party's path to political legitimacy. This, in turn, was supported by the party's instrumental use of political rhetoric that helped broaden its support base and thus gain higher levels of popular legitimacy.

Chapter 1 of this thesis will start with a review of the existing literature on the subject, followed by the theoretical framework and methodology. Chapter 2 will trace the party's journey to political legitimacy, separated into key phases. Chapter 3 will look in depth at the frames that will be analysed in the empirical part, including frame selection, keywords and predicted frame usage. Chapter 4 looks at the interplay between framing, legitimacy and resonance, looking at which frames enjoy resonance among which factions of the populace. In Chapter 5, the methodology will be applied to the selected speeches of party leader Hassan Nasrallah to analyse the use of framing as a strategic mechanism for supporting the party on its road to

⁸ Júlia Palik, "Hezbollah's Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction," Grotius, May 25, 2018, accessed December 11, 2018, <http://www.grotius.hu/publ/displ.asp?id=IMIKAM>, 7.

political and popular legitimacy.

Chapter 1: Literature Review, Theoretical Framework and Methodology

1.1 Literature Review

There exists a fair amount of available literature analyzing the *Party of God* to different extents, with most of it exploring the unique organizational structure of the party, its extensive media and communications infrastructure, and its political transformation. I will briefly explore existing literature on Hezbollah, looking specifically at texts which are related to the research in this thesis, turning then briefly to the relevant literature on social movements, focusing specifically on Islamic social movements as is relevant here. Finally, I will assess literature on legitimacy and its relevance to this study.

Hezbollah as a Terrorist Organization

In terms of characterizing Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, most scholars seem to agree that this terminology is ill-fitting for an organization of such a complex nature. Alagha shies away from labelling Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, noting that this simply “fails to comply with Lebanese reality.”⁹ Further, he adequately recognizes the necessity of differentiating between terrorism and guerrilla warfare, the latter of which aligns more closely with several incidents during times of armed conflict within Lebanon.¹⁰ Palik identifies Hezbollah as a hybrid organization that successfully combines multiple identities - that of a political movement, terrorist organization, resistance identity and provider of social services - into one, which perhaps offers the most comprehensive attempt at defining the *Party of God*.¹¹ In identifying that labels like terrorism might undermine the complexity of the topic at hand, Wiktorowicz suggests that identifying terror groups as complex social movements could greatly benefit research on the subject.¹² While the Western world

⁹ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 65.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Palik, “Hezbollah's Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction,” 2.

¹² Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 113.

might be quite content to apply the terrorist label, we must also accept the reality that some of these groups, like Hezbollah, are recognized as legitimate political parties throughout the Arab world, argues Wiegand.¹³ Ranstorp identifies the label of terrorism as a misleading characterization that ignores the vast amounts of social services Hezbollah provides to the marginalized Lebanese Shi'ite community.¹⁴ This aspect of Hezbollah is uncharacteristic for social movement, further highlighting the unique nature of the *Party of God*.

Hezbollah's Transformation

The majority of literature that exists on Hezbollah is dedicated to the party's evolution over time, indicating that it is generally agreed upon that the *Party of God* has undergone a significant transformation since its inception. In her book, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, Judith Palmer Harik offers a comprehensive analysis of how the party has undergone significant changes over time. She notes that these changes have been strategic in nature at times, pointing out the use of a sort of ideological flexibility which allowed Hezbollah to appeal to more progressive and more traditional, religious factions of Lebanese society at the same time.¹⁵ Alagha, who notes that Hezbollah practices increasing openness with time paired with a change in the party's discourse, also identifies the ideological flexibility of the party.¹⁶ Wiegand writes that Hezbollah was essentially faced with the decision of adapting and conforming to the status quo, or of disbanding entirely, ultimately choosing the former and engaging in *Lebanonization* to achieve this goal.¹⁷ Hezbollah's move into the Lebanese political arena was paired with "ideological quietism",¹⁸ writes Saouli, a reference perhaps to the party's widely noted pragmatic "toning down" of Islamist rhetoric.

While scholars seem to agree that there has been a transformation towards the more tolerant and religiously inclusive, the literature is inconclusive concerning Hezbollah's

¹³ Krista E. Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 32, no. 8 (2009): 670.

¹⁴ Magnus Ranstorp, "The Strategy and Tactics of Hizballah's Current 'Lebanonization Process,'" *Mediterranean Politics* 3, no. 1 (1998): 106.

¹⁵ Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 3.

¹⁶ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 21.

¹⁷ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 673.

¹⁸ Adham Saouli, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: The Quest for Survival," *World Affairs* 166, no. 2 (2003): 74.

original aims and vision. Analysis of Hezbollah's original manifesto and statements made by party rulers in the early days of the party's formation indicate closer alignment with the Islamic Republic of Iran than with Lebanon, as well as the vision of a kind of Shari'a Law in Lebanon to replace the illegitimate consociational political system. However, that the party's intentions were to actually replace the Lebanese political system with an Islamic one has been contested by several authors, despite the emphasis Hezbollah placed on these claims in their earliest days.¹⁹ In his work on Hezbollah and the Shi'ite community in Lebanon, Ziad Majed claims that while the *Party of God* spoke about restructuring the political system, it ultimately chose not to act on this idea due to the difficulty of reconciling it with the reality of Lebanese society.²⁰ Joseph Alagha claims that introducing an Islamic state was a political ideology, rather than a political program of Hezbollah.²¹ Yuzri Hassan, on the other hand, says that the long-term ideological goal of introducing an Islamic order to Lebanon and abolishing the confessional system remains, but is pending until the Shi'ite population outnumbers other religious denominations within Lebanon. This demographic aspect, reflected in the doubling of the Lebanon Shi'ite population since 1932, Hassan argues, is a key strategic aspect of Hezbollah's success.²² Azani also expresses less optimism concerning Hezbollah's long-term goals, noting that simply participating in the political system doesn't mean that the *Party of God* has given up on its ultimate goal of overthrowing the existing regime with the aim of establishing an Islamic one in its place.²³ Thus, literature is inconclusive regarding Hezbollah's earliest intentions of creating an Islamic state in Lebanon. The starting point for the *Party of God's* transformation is therefore somewhat unclear. It seems, however, that it is agreed upon by most scholars that Hezbollah has successfully employed strategy, pragmatism and rationality in its political approach over the years.

Hassan makes the argument that framing the struggle and resistance against

¹⁹ Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 19.

²⁰ Ziad Majed, *Hezbollah and the Shi'ite Community: From Political Confessionalization to Confessional Specialization* (Aspen Institute, 2010), 4.

²¹ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 23.

²² Yusri Hazran, "The Shi'ite Community in Lebanon: From Marginalization to Ascendancy," *Crown Center for Middle East Studies*, no. 37 (June 2009): 3, accessed November 30, 2018, <https://www.brandeis.edu/crown/publications/meb/MEB37.pdf>.

²³ Eitan Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God: From Revolution to Institutionalization* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 75.

Israel as the primary objective reflects a pragmatic approach that has paid off for the *Party of God*, identifying it as a means of political mobilization and legitimization on their path to political success.²⁴ The idea that anti-Israeli sentiment and rhetoric is a unifying tenet among Arabs and can thus be instrumentalized for political purposes reflects the view of this thesis, which seeks to explore in more detail how this mechanism can be implemented through political rhetoric. Wiegand, too, recognizes the moderation of Hezbollah's objectives as a tool the party employed for achieving political goals, identifying rational choices made by the party as key to its journey to political legitimacy.²⁵ The degree of flexibility exhibited by Hezbollah is also identified by Palik, who writes that this allows them to adapt to changing domestic and regional circumstances.²⁶ Recognizing the relevance of the Lebanese political system and historic circumstances, Ranstorp identifies that perhaps the reason behind Hezbollah's pragmatic shift relates to the recognition by party leaders that the *Party of God* does not exist within a vacuum but within a political environment with certain restrictions.²⁷

Hezbollah, Transformation, and Discourse

The strategic use of discourse as a means of practicing political influence exists universally, albeit it on different levels. In the Arab world in particular, the political potential for speech and discourse is significant, as it remains a powerful tool for influencing and mobilizing the masses. Wiktorowicz rightly notes that societal and cultural discourse is key in waging Islamic struggles, which are less frequently waged through existing governmental institutions.²⁸ In Lebanon, images of politicians represent powerful symbology and respective allegiances. Posters of political figures decorate nearly every street corner and framed pictures of politicians placed alongside photographs of family members within homes are not an usual sight. Hezbollah has taken advantage of this by introducing a comprehensive communication and media presence, identified by Palik as an effective tool for building up the party's image internationally as well as domestically, and as a "soft-

²⁴ Hazran, "The Shi'ite Community in Lebanon: From Marginalization to Ascendancy," 5.

²⁵ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 670.

²⁶ Palik, "Hezbollah's Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction," 2.

²⁷ Ranstorp, "The Strategy and Tactics of Hizballah's Current 'Lebanonization Process,'" 108.

²⁸ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 16.

power tool in the battle for hearts and minds.”²⁹

Van Engeland and Rudolph are among those who recognize a discursive shift, alongside humanitarian work and deeply entrenched social networks, as one of the factors in Hezbollah’s political integration.³⁰ The concept of Lebanonization, for instance, has been identified by several authors³¹ as key to Hezbollah’s transformation process, and refers to an ideological or discursive shift away from the Shi’ite Islamic agenda to a more nationalistic, all-inclusive approach that better suits the politics of a nation divided along religious identities. Among the most extensive analyses of Hezbollah’s political discourse over time is Walid el-Houri’s doctoral thesis on Hezbollah.³² He analyzes the party’s use of media strategies, ranging from speeches to music videos, as a key component to its success as a resistance movement. El Houri identifies Hezbollah’s success in articulating its messages in a way that appeals to what he calls a “strikingly wide range of people,”³³ striking given the deeply entrenched sectarianism and identity politics that govern Lebanon. Finally, Ranstorp notes that by adjusting its rhetoric away from the creation of an Islamic republic towards one that is more compatible with the diverse Lebanese composition, Hezbollah has been successful at “cultivating a gentler image.”³⁴

Hezbollah as a Social Movement

There are few references in academia to Hezbollah as a social movement. In his comprehensive work on Islamic activism, Wiktorowicz draws a parallel between Hamas and Hezbollah, identifying both as complex social movements rather than terrorist organizations³⁵ but does not further expand upon the *Party of God* in this

²⁹ Palik, “Hezbollah’s Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction,” 8.

³⁰ Van Engeland and Rudolph, *From Terrorism to Politics*, 38-40.

³¹ See Wiegand, “Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party,” 673., Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 55, Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 92., Alagha, *Hizbullah’s Identity Construction*, 21., Ranstorp, “The Strategy and Tactics of Hizballah’s Current ‘Lebanonization Process,’” 130., Van Engeland and Rudolph, *From Terrorism to Politics*, 37.

³² el-Houri, “The Meaning of Resistance: Hezbollah’s Media Strategy and the Articulation of a People.”

³³ Walid el-Houri, “The Meaning of Resistance: Hezbollah’s Media Strategy and the Articulation of a People” (PhD Diss., University of Amsterdam, 2012), 2, accessed November 7, 2018, http://www.academia.edu/1500422/The_meaning_of_resistance_Hezbollahs_media_strategies_and_the_articulation_of_a_people

³⁴ Ranstorp, “The Strategy and Tactics of Hizballah’s Current ‘Lebanonization Process,’” 115.

³⁵ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 22.

regard. Wiegand recognizes that the foundation of Hezbollah is rooted in a protest movement of Shi'a Muslims³⁶ and identifies that, contrary to common understanding, Hezbollah was a political movement even from its early days.³⁷ She rightly identifies Hezbollah as the only provider of social services, including schools and hospitals, for large parts of the urban population.³⁸ The widespread provision of social services is another aspect that is unique to Hezbollah in the context of social movements, and once more confirms the somewhat indefinable, unique and complex structure of the *Party of God*. Palik, too, notes that what started as an Islamic jihadi movement has since become a full-fledged social movement,³⁹ while Saouli characterizes Hezbollah as a Shia'a Islamic movement.⁴⁰

Ranstorp notes the "highly sophisticated hierarchical organisational structure" of Hezbollah, thus supporting the recognition of Hezbollah as a social movement organization (SMO).⁴¹ In his article on Hezbollah, Karagiannis not only identifies the party as a social movement organization, but also explores the usefulness of the framing approach in tracing the party's growing popularity - much like this thesis intends to do. In a unique and insightful study, he applies diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing to Hezbollah's rhetoric, and also identifies two master frames used by the *Party of God*. As the only work that applies the framing tenet of social movement theory directly to Hezbollah, it gives useful insight into the mechanism this thesis intends to explore in more depth. The article stops short, however, of a detailed, structural analysis of Hezbollah's rhetoric over time and thus leaves room for a more in-depth analysis.

A seemingly growing field of literature that is relevant to this study is that of Islamic movements, to which Hezbollah belongs. Wiktorowicz identifies the necessity for deeper research on the subject of Islamic activism and Islamic movements, as conventional social movement theory is mainly reflective of Western liberal democracies, and thus not universally applicable.⁴² Research on the origins of

³⁶ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 670.

³⁷ Ibid., 673.

³⁸ Ibid., 674.

³⁹ Palik, "Hezbollah's Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction," 6.

⁴⁰ Saouli, "Lebanon's Hizbullah: The Quest for Survival," 72.

⁴¹ Ranstorp, "The Strategy and Tactics of Hizballah's Current 'Lebanonization Process,'" 106-107.

⁴² Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 4.

Islamic activism is diverse and without consensus. Different sources of activism have been identified, including as a reaction to secularization, as a response to socioeconomic factors, as a response to cultural imperialism or political strain explanations.⁴³ In the case of Hezbollah, it is plausible that all four theories, to different extents, provided the momentum for the party's formation. However, as Wiktorowicz rightly notes, these factors are present in most societies, but do not always produce social movements - there must thus be a focus on the movement itself as a "rational, organized manifestation of collective action"⁴⁴ rather than dismissing them as mere "coping mechanisms."⁴⁵

Wiktorowicz then applies three tenets of social movements - resource mobilization theory (RMT), opportunity structure and framing processes - to Islamic activism, Wiktorowicz notes that RMT views social movements as rational and organized activity that is channelled through social movement organizations and collectivizes individual grievances⁴⁶ - this applies directly to Hezbollah, which has successfully mobilized the deprived and ostracized Shi'ite masses into a successful political movement. Azani points out this link to Hezbollah in his comprehensive work on the *Party of God*, attributing the existence of these organizational systems to the rapid growth of the party and its activists in the early days.⁴⁷ Turning then to the political opportunity of the party, Azani also notes that when confronted with the decision to participate in Lebanon's elections in 1992, the party chose the pragmatic approach in order to advance the goals of the movement, noting that this highlights the fact that even among fundamentalism and radicalism, rationality and pragmatism can be found.⁴⁸ Azani rightfully identifies herein a substantial difference to what he calls radical approaches of trying to gain power through revolutionary methods - Hezbollah, instead, strategically combined top-down and bottom-up approaches to achieve its "long-term goal of ruling Lebanon."⁴⁹ Finally, Azani notes specifically the impact that the party's new leader as of 1992, Hassan Nasrallah, had in the continuation of Hezbollah's transformation process, pointing out his frequent media

⁴³ Ibid., 6-8.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 9.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 9-10.

⁴⁷ Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 73.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 75.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 76.

appearances and the use of his rhetorical skills to continue the party's integration into the Lebanese political arena.⁵⁰ He highlights the emphasis Nasrallah placed on the Lebanese nature of the movement during his speeches,⁵¹ thereby re-inventing the party as a patriotic movement with a target audience beyond the Shi'ite Islamic constituency.⁵² This thesis will assess and analyze the use of this rhetoric and the frames used by Hezbollah in order to achieve a discursive shift and thereby adjust its domestic political standing.

Legitimacy, Popular Legitimacy, and Communication

The link between changing political communication and increasing legitimacy of Hezbollah over time warrants a look at existing literature on the topic of legitimacy and popular legitimacy, and how these concepts relate to discourse. Political legitimacy is a very broad subject that has been approached from various angles, including how to define what constitutes a legitimate government, how legitimacy is measured and what tools governments and other actors have at their disposal to increase their legitimacy. In his work on measuring political legitimacy, Weatherford provides an overview on the different schools of thought. He presents two views of how to measure legitimacy, one being "the view from above" which uses the criteria of accountability, efficiency, procedural fairness and distributive fairness as indicators for government legitimacy.⁵³ He calls this macro-view of legitimacy, as it assesses government performance as a whole and on a grander scale. The second view is what Weatherford calls the micro-view, or "the view from the grass roots", in which he looks at the relevance of public opinion for measuring legitimacy.⁵⁴ This second view includes the "mass public's feelings of trust and favourability towards the government"⁵⁵ and the attentiveness of officials to what the citizens want and require.⁵⁶ In this second measure of government legitimacy, Weatherford notes that actions are placed above intention.⁵⁷ Thus, legitimacy is directly linked to how a

⁵⁰ Ibid, 91.

⁵¹ Ibid, 92.

⁵² Ibid., 92.

⁵³ Stephen M. Weatherford, "Measuring political legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 86, no. 1 (1992): 149-166.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 149.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 159.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 160.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 160.

government performs in the eyes of the populace. Tyler and Jackson identify a similar dichotomy in two key aspects to defining legitimacy. The first aspect is the authority of an entity or legal authority to dictate behaviour. The second aspect is having the trust of the people and the notion that authorities are acting with the citizens' best interests at heart, or that "power is being exercised in a way that is normatively justified."⁵⁸ McCullough, too, echoes the sentiment of other scholars on the subject that the perception of the state or non-state actor by the people is an important aspect of legitimacy. He says that "the 'legitimacy' of a state or of a non-state actor refers to the acceptance of its authority among both political elites and citizens"⁵⁹ alike.

Measuring Hezbollah's path to legitimacy will thus be two-pronged, relating back to Weatherford's two measures of legitimacy. Using Weatherford's "view from the grassroots" definition and Tyler and Jackson's concept of representing the citizen's best interests will be the dominant understanding of popular legitimacy used throughout this thesis. Popular legitimacy can thus be seen as a group consensus among the people about the political actor's policies, performance and aims, and how these align with those of the populace. A political actor that is thus seen to reflect the interests of the people in the broadest possible sense enjoys higher levels of popular legitimacy. The second measure of legitimacy is that of the perception and cooperation among the political elite, as McCullough calls it, and can be captured through the political integration of Hezbollah into the Lebanese political system and willingness of other political parties and actors to cooperate with and recognize Hezbollah as a legitimate political actor.

How, then, can political rhetoric, communication and discourse support a political actor's quest for popular legitimacy among a wide support base? Political communication is an indispensable persuasion tool at the disposal of political actors

⁵⁸ Tom Tyler and Jonathan Jackson, "Future challenges in the study of legitimacy and criminal justice," *Yale Law School, Public Law Working Paper* 264 (2013), as quoted in Tyler, T. R., & Jackson, J. (2014). *Popular legitimacy and the exercise of legal authority: Motivating compliance, cooperation, and engagement. Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 20(1), 78–95. doi:10.1037/a0034514

⁵⁹ Aoife McCullough, "The legitimacy of states and armed non-state actors: Topic guide," *Birmingham, University of Birmingham* (2015).

and leaders and has been so throughout history.⁶⁰ One of its key purposes and functions is the “formation of public attitudes, opinions and will.”⁶¹ Through political communication, state actors can “communicate their action to society in order to gain legitimacy among and compliance from the people.”⁶² Societies are comprised of citizens with a wide range of interests, background and political preferences. As such, successful political communication is not directed at individual sub-societal groups, but must be crafted in a way that appeals to the majority of voters, does not exclude anyone and gives the impression that the political actors can identify with the people.”⁶³ As legitimacy is derived from the public, political communication “can offer further legitimisation of any group that wields power.”⁶⁴

One of the ways in which political actors can gain legitimacy is through the manipulation of symbols, which serves the purpose of government self-portrayal as a promoter of popular values, says Hoyt in his study on legitimacy in the Arab World. Borrowed from the Weberian notions of legitimacy, he adds that other methods include utilitarian appeals, laissez-faire acceptance by the population of traditional methods and, if not otherwise earned, legitimacy can be gained through state coercion.⁶⁵ The easiest of these, being the most cost-effective, is through symbol manipulation. It is thus the preferred method.⁶⁶ Regarding this use of symbolism as a tool for legitimacy, Herrmann notes how in the Middle East some common trends have been independence from imperialism, nationalism and Islam. He notes that the Iranian Shah tried to use symbols of religion and nationalism to gain legitimacy, but resorted to coercion when symbol manipulation failed.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Lilleker, 5.

⁶¹ Ruth Wodak and Michal Krzyzanowski, *Qualitative discourse analysis in the Social Sciences* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 96.

⁶² Lilleker, 1.

⁶³ Lilleker, 11.

⁶⁴ Lilleker, 102.

⁶⁵ Hoyt, Paul D. "Legitimacy, identity, and political development in the Arab world," *Mershon International Studies Review* 42, no. 1 (1998): 173. See Amitai Etzioni, *The Active Society: A Theory of Societal and Political Processes* (New York: Free Press, 1968), pp. 313-395; and Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Free Press, 1947), pp. 324-386.

⁶⁶ Richard K. Herrmann, "The Middle East and the new world order: rethinking US political strategy after the Gulf War," *International Security* 16, no. 2 (1991): 42-75, as cited in Paul D. Hoyt, "Legitimacy, identity, and political development in the Arab world," 173-176.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 61-62.

Schlichte and Schneckener define legitimacy as the belief in the justification of a political organization and its activities,⁶⁸ and that local audiences provide the highest potential for providing an actor with said legitimacy.⁶⁹ Writing on legitimacy, religion and nationalism in the Middle East, Razi says that the level of legitimacy enjoyed by an actor is reflected in the positive or negative perception that the people have about said actor's political behaviour.⁷⁰ Parallel to Hoyt's argument about the relationship between legitimacy and the use of symbols in the Middle East, Razi identifies that political performance as an indicator of legitimacy rests upon the importance of shared values and norms, the latter of which are a product of subjective factors like history, ideology and tradition.⁷¹ He identifies nationalism and religion as two of the main sources of such legitimacy norms in the Middle East,⁷² both of which will be explored in more depth throughout this thesis.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

This section will first introduce aspects of existing social movement theory that are relevant to this analysis and will then build upon these tenets to arrive at the *strategic framing process*: a concept that identifies the strategic and instrumental use of restricted frames and master frames alongside political opportunities as a mechanism for maximizing movement momentum. First, however, it will dedicate a short section to understanding the importance of rhetoric and discourse in the context of this particular study by illustrating how the *Party of God* can and does use its available political communications infrastructure to widely disseminate its messages.

Why Rhetoric? Hezbollah's Media Presence

Rhetoric is a valuable tool employed by every political party, group and institution

⁶⁸ Klaus Schlichte and Ulrich Schneckener, "Armed groups and the politics of legitimacy," *Civil Wars* 17, no. 4 (2015): 413.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 419.

⁷⁰ Hossein G. Razi, "Legitimacy, religion, and nationalism in the Middle East," *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 1 (1990): 70.

⁷¹ Razi, G. Hossein. "The Nexus of Legitimacy and Performance: The Lessons of the Iranian Revolution." *Comparative Politics* 19, no. 4 (1987): 463 as cited in Razi, "Legitimacy, religion, and nationalism in the Middle East," 71.

⁷² Hossein G. Razi, "Legitimacy, religion, and nationalism in the Middle East," 75.

worldwide. Social movements, too, employ rhetoric as a mobilizing tactic, using the power of language to mobilize the masses in favour of the movement's aims. Rhetoric can be defined as "the science and art of persuasive language use."⁷³ Rhetoric holds a special place in Islamic activism, which is "rooted in the symbolism, language, and cultural history of Muslim society and as a result has successfully resonated with increasingly disillusioned populations suffering from political exclusion, economic deprivation, and a sense of growing impotence at the expense of outside powers and a faceless process of globalization."⁷⁴ Islamic social movements, such as Hezbollah, can benefit from the use of language and symbolism by articulating ways in which a marginalized sector of society has been wronged and by offering a way to remedy those wrongs through a collective effort. The *Party of God* is well aware of this, and has not shied away from maximizing its discursive potential: the media structure of Hezbollah has been heralded as among the most sophisticated, organized and wide-ranging of any similar movement in the entire Arab world.⁷⁵ Before switching to video material and Internet websites, Hezbollah used radio broadcasting as a mechanism for spreading its message. The first radio channel, Sawt al-Mustad'afin, began broadcasting as early as 1986, and the most recent station, Al-Nour, has won several awards throughout the region.⁷⁶ The party also produces a wide range of media, including music videos that feature imagery of military victories with patriotic music blaring in the background. The *Party of God* owns several news channels including its most well-known television station Al-Manar and longstanding news website Al-Ahed. Next to international news articles, Al-Ahed features an entire section dedicated to the Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah and offers an archive of transcribed speeches held by Nasrallah from 2000 until 2016, as well as transcriptions of interviews and several reports, all available in English and Arabic. Al-Manar is likely Hezbollah's most successful station, and was described by former chairman of the board, Nayef Krayem, as a political, social and cultural weapon.⁷⁷ From its relatively humble beginnings of broadcasting locally for only four hours a day, it is now among the most popular

⁷³ Ruth Wodak and Michal Krzyzanowski, *Qualitative discourse analysis in the Social Sciences*, 96.

⁷⁴ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 25.

⁷⁵ Olfa Lamoum, "Hezbollah's Media: Political History in Outline," *Global Media and Communications* 5, no. 3 (2009): 353.

⁷⁶ Thomas Rid and Marc Hecker, *War 2.0: Irregular Warfare in the Information Age* (Wesport: Praeger Security International, 2009), 149.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

television channels in the Middle East, with some ranking it only second to Al-Jazeera.⁷⁸

But beyond this media empire that Hezbollah has created, its efforts are complemented by the existence of its charismatic and influential party-leader, Hassan Nasrallah. “The authority of the spokesperson uttering the words is as important as the content,”⁷⁹ said Meijer, rightly identifying the potential of a charismatic leader in underlining a movement’s success. Nasrallah’s authority is unparalleled, and his symbolic presence reminds of other great historical Arab leaders like Jamal Abdul-Nasser, leader of the Arab nationalist movement in the 1960s and 1970s. An example serves to understand the following that Nasrallah has built up over the years and the benefit it serves Hezbollah in terms of reach; in 2006, Nasrallah’s public *Divine Victory* speech attracted an estimated 800,000 people *in person*, comprising nearly a quarter of the entire Lebanese population at the time.⁸⁰ His cult-like following extends beyond the reach of the Arab world even into “enemy” territory. In a poll in 2006, the Israeli public ranked Nasrallah’s speeches higher than those of their own political spokespersons on all accounts, including the level of conveyed authenticity and the feeling of certainty provided to the audience, even “waiting impatiently” for his speeches to air as a key source of information.⁸¹ Another article has dubbed Israel’s obsession with Hezbollah’s leader “the Nasrallah addiction.”⁸² Focusing on Hezbollah’s political rhetoric, disseminated through the aforementioned channels, is thus a justifiable approach to understanding the means by which the party use rhetoric to aid its journey towards popular and political legitimacy in Lebanon.

Hezbollah as a Social Movement

The purpose of this thesis is twofold. First, to apply social movement theory to

⁷⁸ Ibid, 150.

⁷⁹ Meijer, “Taking the Islamist Movement Seriously: Social Movement Theory and the Islamist Movement,” 282.

⁸⁰ Alagha, *Hizbullah’s Identity Construction*, 129.

⁸¹ Anat Breshkovsky, “Poll: Israelis believed Nasrallah over Peretz,” *Ynetnews*, March 9, 2006, accessed January 10, 2019, <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3299073,00.html>

⁸² Shlomi Barzel, “The Nasrallah Addiction,” *Haaretz*, January 21, 2008, accessed December 20, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/1.4982101>

Hezbollah with the aim of better understanding the *Party of God* as a new (Islamist) form of social movement (organisation). The second, primary focus of this study is to then apply the third tenet of social movement theory, namely the framing process, to Hezbollah's discourse over a period of 24 years to analyze how the party has applied different rhetorical frames. I hypothesize that this framing mechanism has been strategically used by Hezbollah as a means of keeping its original loyal Shi'ite constituency while simultaneously applying new, more general and patriotic frames to appeal to a wider Lebanese audience, thus supporting the *Party of God* in its successful transformation to a legitimate Lebanese political party.

There are a multitude of definitions on social movements. This thesis will use the definition used in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, which defines social movements as "one of the principal social forms through which collectivities give voice to their grievances and concerns about the rights, welfare, and well-being of themselves and others by engaging in various types of collective action."⁸³ Like other social movements, Hezbollah was born out of a collective grievance, namely that of the disenfranchised Lebanese Shi'ite population.⁸⁴ This collective grievance, then given a formal structure and organization in the form of a political party, gained widespread support for giving a voice to those who felt they had none. Given the hierarchical, highly structured organization of Hezbollah, the party is even more accurately defined as an SMO: "a complex, or formal organization which identifies its preferences with a social movement or a counter-movement and attempts to implement those goals."⁸⁵ I thus consider Hezbollah an Islamic social movement organization comprised of Islamic activists, which, since the late 1990s, have been recognized as "strategic thinkers embedded in a political context which influences choices and decisions."⁸⁶ In his review on social movement theory and the Islamist movement, Meijer identifies social movement theory (SMT) as one of the few theoretical constructs that takes Islamic movements seriously and, given the fact that it is influenced by rational choice theory, has the merit of characterizing the Islamist movement not as an inexplicable and erratic phenomenon, but rather as a rational

⁸³ David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi, eds., "Chapter 1: Mapping the Terrain." *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 3.

⁸⁴ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 671.

⁸⁵ John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1218.

⁸⁶ Wiktorowicz, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*, 14.

occurrence.⁸⁷ The use of strategic decisions allows for the possibility of transforming and adapting movement ideologies to changing circumstances.⁸⁸ Islamic social movements, as their more general counterparts, apply the same tenets of RMT, political opportunity structure and framing processes. Applying framing processes to Islamic movements is an especially useful method of analysis, as Islamic activism is considered as part of the new generation of social movements, which focus on constructing meaning and identity.⁸⁹

Understanding Framing Processes

Frames are the third tenet in SMT and refer to key messages that are utilized by social movements, or movement leaders, to translate daily hardships and events into symbolical messages with the use of mobilizing rhetoric⁹⁰ - they “diagnose a condition, provide solutions to problems, and motivate and support collective action.”⁹¹ David Snow and his colleagues have identified the process of cultivating these grievances as a social construction coined as framing processes.⁹² The *construct* of collective woes is essential to any social movement, constituting as significant an aspect as, for instance, structural vulnerability.⁹³ Thus, while other preconditions might exist for a social movement to take form, such as political, social or economic exclusion, they do not on their own constitute a social movement. For a movement to take form, daily hardships have to be collected and organized through rhetorical practices, thus giving the impression that shared grievances exist among members of a group, and that these might be alleviated through collective action. David Snow thereby highlights both the conscious and strategic nature of framing, which is used as a means of legitimating collective action.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ Roel Meijer, “Taking the Islamist Movement Seriously: Social Movement Theory and the Islamist Movement,” *International Review of Social History* 50, no. 2 (2005): 281.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 12.

⁹¹ Meijer, “Taking the Islamist Movement Seriously: Social Movement Theory and the Islamist Movement,” 282.

⁹² Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (Cambridge University Press, 1996): 5.

⁹³ Ibid., 8.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 6.

Frames “represent interpretive schemata that offer a language and cognitive tools for making sense of experiences and events in the “world out there.””⁹⁵ Shared understanding remains the basis of framing techniques throughout the evolution of social movements. However, more “mature” framing processes are more consciously strategic than their earlier counterparts.⁹⁶ This strategic evolution over time essentially reflects the growing awareness of movement entrepreneurs of the potential benefits that can be gained through applying frames in an instrumental manner.

The Strategic Framing Process

Islamic social movements can use framing processes to evolve from mere grassroots movements to legitimate political parties in a process hereafter referred to as the *strategic framing process* or *strategic framing*. Strategic framing refers to when movement entrepreneurs alter the framing process to achieve a distinct, political goal. It can be argued that framing processes as such are strategic from the outset - as they, by their definition, give linguistic shape to group grievances with the aim of mobilizing the collective. However, strategic framing here specifically refers to a change in the initial framing process that somehow alters or goes beyond the initial aims of the movement with strategic aims in mind. Strategic framing can include, but is not limited to, the adaptation of an existing frame, the introduction of one or several new frames, or the termination of a frame previously used - as long as the reason for this frame change is a political objective. This use of strategic framing mechanisms to achieve specific goals is often accompanied by some change in the economic, social or political environment in which the movement exists. Thus, the political opportunity structure, a concept from social movement theory that refers to “the degree to which groups are likely to be able to gain access to power and to manipulate the political system,”⁹⁷ is relevant to the prevalence of strategic frames and their employment in achieving or altering movement goals. Further, strategic

⁹⁵ Ibid., 15.

⁹⁶ Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, 16.

⁹⁷ Peter K. Eisinger, “The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities.” *American Political Science Review* 67 (1973): 25 as cited in Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, 23.

framing assumes the presence of rational, pragmatic movement entrepreneurs who instrumentalize strategic frames to gain specific goals. These goals can be economic but are most often political, and can vary from winning concessions, gaining movement recognition or institutionalization of the social movement. Since strategic framing is directly related to political opportunity structures, it is especially useful for the analysis of Islamic social movements, which tend to exist in countries with more easily manipulable political systems given lower levels of governmental stability and durability.

A key aspect of strategic framing is the use of master frames. Master frames, like framing processes, are a concept from social movement theory. Snow and Benford identify their function as ultimately the same as regular frames, but on a larger scale.⁹⁸ They identify master frames in relation to protest cycles and as a frame that can appeal to other movements within the same movement cycle as the social movement in question.⁹⁹ I build upon Benford and Snow's concept of elaborated frames, in which master frames apply more universally applicable ideas and thus allow for the master frame to resonate with a wider audience of aggrieved groups. In my theory of strategic framing, master frames, as opposed to restricted frames, are frames that are less movement specific and resonate with a wider audience and are thus strategically implemented by social movement entrepreneurs to increase their potential reach and mobilize greater masses in their favour. As such, the strategic framing process borrows from existing social movement theory, but elaborates on it by focusing specifically on the employment of strategic frames for specific political goals as tied to political opportunities through the use of master frames.

Azani outlines in his comprehensive work the use of a movement's ideological framework as a means of broadening the movement and recruiting new supporters. He identifies three key aspects of this framing procedure: Firstly, new recruits are more likely to join if the conceptual framework matches theirs. Secondly, the framework is fluid and able to be adapted and changed as necessary depending on events and the relationship between the movement and individuals. Finally, the

⁹⁸ David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest," *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (1992): 138.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 138-140.

consolidation and formation of the ideological framework lies with the movement core.¹⁰⁰ In the analysis of Nasrallah's speeches, I intend to demonstrate how Hezbollah has utilized all three elements of this framework to its advantage. Through the application of strategic framing theory, I will show that Hezbollah has (1) expanded its political aims and message in a way that matches the values of a wider domestic audience, (2) adapted its messages accordingly and strategically over time and (3) successfully maintained core messages that appeal to its original constituency.

1.3 Methodology

Case Selection

In order to examine the role of rhetoric in the political transformation of Hezbollah, this study will undertake a single-case study in which the *Party of God* and the use of its rhetoric is examined in detail over a period of 24 years. The reasons for selecting a single-case study are manifold. Firstly, the case of Lebanon as the political arena in which this transformation has and continues to take place is unique, given both the complex competing sectarian identities within the country and consociational democracy which is an attempt - successful or not - at institutionalizing these identities as a means of preventing domestic violent conflict between different societal groups. So, while the presence of numerous different religious affiliated groups with a history of tension and violence between them may not be unique to the region, the confessional political system as an attempt to remedy these differences *is* unique, and warrants an analysis. Secondly, Hezbollah is a unique actor in the region, wielding significant legitimate political power both domestically and regionally despite its origins as a militant Islamic resistance wing and its international classification as a terrorist organization. Beyond this, it has undergone a remarkable political transformation from its beginnings as a voice for the disenfranchised Shi'ite in the south of Lebanon to its gradual ascendancy to political power, marked most recently by the May 2018 election in which the party and its allies won more than half

¹⁰⁰ Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 11-12.

the seats.¹⁰¹ These factors provide the scope for an interesting and complex single case analysis, in which the ascendancy of a Shi'ite Islamic group can be studied against the backdrop of a deeply divided society in which political success is likely tied to the necessity of appealing to a wide range of confessional groups. On a more general basis, understanding Hezbollah as a rational, complex social movement organization with ties to Islamic activism provides the potential for viewing "terrorist organizations" through a new lens altogether, and bridging the gap between the conventional Western understanding of these actors versus the reality both at home and throughout the region.

The benefit of using a single-case study in this context is the level of detail and analysis that can be attained by applying a spatially and temporally in-depth analysis of a political party. Single case studies have been defined as "an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context."¹⁰² In this thesis, I seek to examine the power of rhetoric and discourse and how it can be employed with Islamic social movements on their path to political legitimacy by analyzing speeches held by party-leader Hassan Nasrallah over a period of 24 years. Thus, by answering the research question of how Hezbollah transformed into a political party with popular legitimacy through an analysis of changing rhetoric, this thesis will investigate a causal mechanism.

Research Design

In order to trace Hezbollah's path to political legitimacy as a reflection of the party's discourse and rhetoric, this study will carry out a discourse analysis of speeches held by Hassan Nasrallah over a period of 24 years, as well as the two party manifestos released by Hezbollah in 1985 and 2009 respectively. The analysis is thus spatially bound, with focus only on the party's success within the domestic political arena, and temporally bound between 1985 and 2009. These dates have been chosen for several reasons. Firstly, the party issued their founding manifesto in 1985. Defined

¹⁰¹ "Hezbollah's Nasrallah Declares Victory in Lebanese Election: 'Mission Accomplished'," *Haaretz*, May 7, 2019, accessed December 27, 2018, <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/with-hezbollah-set-to-make-big-wins-hariri-loses-seats-in-election-1.6069714>

¹⁰² Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (Applied Social Research Methods)* (California: SAGE Publications, 2009), 112.

as a “written statement declaring publicly the intentions, motives, or views of its issuer,”¹⁰³ a manifesto is a solid starting point for an analysis of the party’s communicated aims. Secondly, 24 years provides an adequately long time period to assess the political journey of a party that has been in existence for 34 years. Thirdly, the party released its second and final manifesto in 2009 and thereby offers a direct comparison in the party’s stated motives and aims. Finally, in the post-2010 era, Hezbollah entered into a new phase of evolution as it directly involved itself in the Syrian Civil War next door, thus marking a new chapter in the party’s journey in which it is not just a domestic, but also a regional actor.

I will then proceed to analyze the party’s founding manifesto in 1985, speeches held by Nasrallah from when he was elected party leader in 1992 until 2009, and the party’s second and final manifesto in 2009. In the period between 1992 and 2002, speeches will be analysed from 1992, 1997, 1998 and 2002. Thereafter, until 2009, one to two speeches per year will be analyzed. This is because, firstly, there are limited available speeches from the earliest days of Hezbollah and so available speeches were collected from several sources. Secondly, the amount of speeches held increased in the 2000s, which is likely indicative of greater emphasis placed on rhetorical capacity. In the case where several speeches were available per year, as is the case starting from 2006-2009, speeches that were held on annual occasions, such as anniversary speeches, were prioritized as they provide a more solid basis for a comparison and decrease the likelihood of changing rhetoric based on the occasion of the speech.

The speeches will be analysed using the framing processes tenet of social movement theory. Specifically, the presence and use of certain frames will be traced throughout the analysis. How the frames have been selected, as well as the sub-classification of frames into restricted and master frames is outlined in detail in Chapter 3.

¹⁰³ *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, s.v. “Manifesto,” accessed December 20, 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/manifesto>

Chapter 2: Hezbollah's Journey to Political Legitimacy

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a description of the evolution of Hezbollah's path to political legitimacy from its inception until today. It is hardly contested that Hezbollah has undergone a substantial transformation since the days of its inception; "Once reduced to pursuing merely military goals and fighting against Israel, Hezbollah for today has considerably expanded its *modus operandi* to become a regional power and a legitimate political party in Lebanon."¹⁰⁴ This chapter will take an in-depth look at Hezbollah's path to political legitimacy, and the ups and downs faced by the party along the way. As outlined in previous chapters, legitimacy here is measured in terms of political integration, as well as perception of government performance among the public, with a more positive view of Hezbollah indicating a higher level of popular legitimacy. Now recognized as a legitimate political party with a wide support base and a broad agenda, a thorough understanding of Hezbollah requires a look at the party's political evolution from its origins as an Islamic Shi'ite resistance movement with predominantly military and Shi'ite religious objectives to the actor it has today become. In order to do this, I will divide Hezbollah's journey into four distinct phases, tracing specific political victories along the way. This should serve as an overview to the strategies and methods the *Party of God* applied to simultaneously integrate into the Lebanese political system and appeal to a wider constituency.

Phase One: Religious Beginnings (1985 – 1991)

Hezbollah was founded in 1985 - five years before the end of the Lebanese Civil War. The country's bloody civil conflict lasted from 1975 to 1990, claimed more than 100,000 lives and further divided the nation along sectarian lines. The *Party of God* was born out of this crisis, as is often the case with the emergence of Islamic social movements.¹⁰⁵ In its early days, the *Party of God* was defined by its military capacities and by strict adherence to Islam. Militarily, its mission was to liberate the

¹⁰⁴ Palik, "Hezbollah's Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction," 6.

¹⁰⁵ Azani, 28

South of Lebanon from Israeli occupation. Ideologically, its agenda was based on the belief in Islam, jihad, and the jurisdiction of the jurist-theologian.¹⁰⁶ At this stage of the party's journey, Hezbollah had a low level of legitimacy. It enjoyed a certain level of popular legitimacy among the Shi'ite Lebanese constituency in the South of Lebanon where the party has its origins, but was neither a recognized political party nor had any popular appeal outside its limited Shi'ite religious following. It was in this phase, however, that Hezbollah saw first political stirrings, namely as the *Party of God* defined itself in opposition to its main rival - the Amal Movement,¹⁰⁷ a Shi'ite political party that started as a militia formed by the extremely influential Lebanese-Iranian religious leader Musa Al-Sadr in 1975.¹⁰⁸ Amal was formed with a somewhat similar objective of defending the disenfranchised Shi'ite population in Lebanon's South from Israeli aggression and from government neglect,¹⁰⁹ much like Hezbollah would later claim to fight for as well. The main difference that quickly materialized between the seemingly twin movements, then, was the dominantly reformist and secular approach taken by Amal, strongly opposed by Hezbollah's mission and vision which purported an Islamic religious outlook that embraced Iran's model of clerical rule and strongly opposed Lebanon's political system, deemed unreformable in the eyes of the *Party of God*.¹¹⁰

Hezbollah released its first political manifesto 1985, in which it outlined its objectives, purpose and vision. In it, Hezbollah stops short from calling directly for the formation of an Islamic republic to replace the Lebanese government, "corrupt to its core"¹¹¹ as it is, but clearly states that once the Lebanese are free to choose their own fate, they will chose Islam.¹¹² Some assert that in this open letter, Hezbollah directly called for a revolutionary top-down process that replaces the apostate Lebanese government with the rule of Islam.¹¹³ Thus, it is evident that at this earliest stage of the party's

¹⁰⁶ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 671.

¹⁰⁷ In Arabic the name is *Harakat Amal*, which literally translates to the Movement of Hope, see: Augustus R. Norton, *Amal and the Shi'a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon*, No. 13, University of Texas Press, 1987, 10.

¹⁰⁸ Rami Siklawi, "The dynamics of the Amal movement in Lebanon 1975-90," *Arab studies quarterly* 34, no. 1 (2012): 6-7.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹¹⁰ Augustus Richard Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah in Lebanese Domestic Politics," *The International Spectator* 42, no. 4 (2007): 477.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 39.

¹¹³ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 20.

development, it made little effort at integration and pursued a strictly religious agenda rather than focusing on attaining political legitimacy.

It was also this stage of the party's evolution that saw the most violence. Groups linked to Hezbollah kidnapped foreigners and held them hostage, sometimes for up to seven years, and the infamous Imad Mughniyah, also linked to Hezbollah, masterminded the hijacking of flight 847 that was heading from Rome to Athens.¹¹⁴ Being linked to these forms of violence further undermined the legitimacy of Hezbollah, which acted not under the auspices of the Lebanese government nor in the name of its citizens but as an independent non-state actor. This would soon change, however, as politically, major changes were underfoot.

In the late 1980s, members of the Lebanese parliament met in the Saudi Arabian city of Ta'if in an attempt to put an end to the fighting and reform the Lebanese political system. The meeting resulted in the Ta'if Agreement, ratified by the Lebanese parliament in 1989. While one of its main goals was the deconfessionalization of Lebanon, this was commonly viewed as a somewhat unrealistic goal given the nature of Lebanon's history and competing factions. A major change introduced by Ta'if, however, was the establishment of Christian-Muslim parity: the 108 seats in the chamber were now divided equally among Christians and Muslims, starkly opposed to the previous set-up which saw a ratio in favor of the Christian population.¹¹⁵ This was much to the dismay of Lebanon's Christian population, which had enjoyed a degree of dominance throughout the country's history. Hezbollah's stance towards Christians at this time did little to make the agreement more palatable: Hezbollah directly identified the Maronites as hypocrites in its 1985 Open Letter, exempting them from any level of tolerance the party might show other religious groups.¹¹⁶ Further, there was hardly any political dialogue between Hezbollah and Christians during this phase,¹¹⁷ a political stalemate that was only worsened by Ta'if: The agreement was strongly opposed by the Maronite General Michel Aoun, who had also been selected to head Lebanon's interim government in 1988. Violently opposed to Syrian involvement in the country, Aoun was sent to France on house

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 41-42.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 462.

¹¹⁶ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 35.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 34.

arrest in 1990 after his troops were ultimately defeated with the help of the Syrian troops.¹¹⁸ The tense relationship between Hezbollah and Lebanon's historically dominant Christian population would prevent the *Party of God* from enjoying legitimacy and popularity both at the institutional political level and among the people.

Early victories that Hezbollah *did* enjoy can largely be attributed to Syrian strong-arming rather than a significant degree of popular or institutional support. Despite also calling for Syrian withdrawal from the country within two years, Ta'if gave Syria a greater role in post civil war Lebanon. The Ta'if Accord called for Syria's help in re-establishing central governmental control in Lebanon through the disarmament of all militias - a clause that was ultimately carried out with the exception of Hezbollah, which was deemed the sole militia that was allowed to keep its weapons. The decision that Hezbollah would remain armed was ultimately made by the Syrian president and in accordance with Iranian leadership. In turn, Hezbollah would have to shelve its aspirations at forming an Islamic republic for the time being, but in return would gain the right to continue its armed struggle in the South, which was slowly being recognized by the government as a national resistance effort.¹¹⁹ Thus, Hezbollah succeeded in gaining early victories under the auspices of its foreign allies. This, in turn, would enable Hezbollah to continue its resistance efforts in the South against Israel, which would ultimately lend it the first strong push towards gaining legitimacy both in the eyes of the people and the government. Supported by a common hatred for Israel, public opinion about the *Party of God* slowly began taking on a new form; despite lingering suspicions about Hezbollah's ultimate Islamic vision for the country, a consensus began to form that the party had done well fighting Israelis in the southern battlefield and should be allowed to continue.¹²⁰ Ultimately, Hezbollah's efforts in fighting the Lebanese enemy helped pave the way for its eventual popularity.

Phase Two: Rise to Power (1992 - 2000)

Hezbollah's first phase of development was defined mostly by its ideology, religious

¹¹⁸ Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 45.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 47.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 49.

outlook and military agenda. The party enjoyed support among a local Shi'ite constituency but had limited support on the political arena and among the wider Lebanese constituency. Politics, and political legitimacy, was not yet on the radar of Hezbollah. On the contrary, Hezbollah had publicly declared the Lebanese political system as illegitimate and that involvement in it would be a departure from the core moral values of the party, namely those of Islam. The question of participating in politics, however, changed in nature as the country's 1992 elections - the first in twenty years due to the Lebanese Civil War - loomed on the horizon. Whether Hezbollah would participate, thus "desert[ing] its principles and Islamic vision"¹²¹ was suddenly omnipresent and caused a cleavage within the party ranks. Certain members of the party, like dogmatic party member and former Hezbollah Secretary General Subhi al-Tufayli, were strictly against the prospect of participating in the elections as it was seen an act of going against the party's fundamental purpose as a revolutionary force. Others sought a compromise in which members would run independently and not in the name of the party.¹²² The question of whether the party's political participation was legitimate was finally sanctioned by Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, and was then put to the vote within the party, where 10 out of 12 members agreed to participate in the Lebanese parliament.¹²³ It was deemed not an acquiescence, but a means of broadening their target audience, thus increasing their legitimacy, and effectively making the changes Lebanon needed.¹²⁴ Ultimately, the decision to play politics was made for several reasons. First, it was hugely popular within the disenfranchised Shi'ite community who saw this as an opportunity to have their voice heard within the greater political arena.¹²⁵ It was, however, also strategic on behalf of Hezbollah. It provided the *Party of God* with greater access to government resources and other strategic benefits like recognition within a political institution.¹²⁶ Third, and perhaps most importantly, it was recognized as an opportunity for secretary general to-be, Hassan Nasrallah, as a means of guaranteeing the party's struggle against Israel, given Lebanon's changing circumstances. Ideological rigidity, insisted upon by certain party members like Tufayli, would do little to gain the national legitimacy that was necessary for

¹²¹ Ibid., 480-481.

¹²² Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah*, 100.

¹²³ Ibid., 100-101.

¹²⁴ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 675.

¹²⁵ August Richard Norton, *Hezbollah*, 101.

¹²⁶ August Richard Norton, "The Role of Hezbollah in Lebanese Domestic Politics," 481.

widespread Lebanese support for Hezbollah's actions in the South.¹²⁷ Thus, the 1992 election is decidedly key in an analysis of Hezbollah's journey to political legitimacy. It is essential to understand the strategy and method employed by the *Party of God* in this decisive phase of the party's evolution. Hezbollah used *taqiyya*, the practice of strategic fibbing,¹²⁸ to remain intentionally ambiguous on the party's vision for Lebanon's future - it successfully employed ideological flexibility that convinced non-Shi'ites and members of other confessions of a shift towards a pragmatic political approach, all the while never quite extinguishing its commitment towards Islamic values, thus still maintaining the support of true believers. And it paid off: Hezbollah celebrated a decisive victory at the polls, winning the largest single party bloc in the newly formed parliament with 12 out of 128 seats.¹²⁹

Following its electoral success, the period from 1992 until 2000 was one where Hezbollah saw an increase in its popular legitimacy, reflected in an overall growing level of support. This is attributable mostly to a combination of three factors: the provision of social services, the strategic use of politics and, perhaps most significantly, Hezbollah's military victories.

In terms of social services, Hezbollah has been *and still is* the sole provider of many services in one of Beirut's poorest and largest suburbs, the Shi'ite stronghold Dahiyeh. Beginning in the post-war era, Hezbollah began providing a range of services, including basic services like garbage removal, the provision of adequate toilets, drinking fountains, desks and light fixtures within public schools, as well as essentials like hospitals that offer excellent health care services at minimal cost. Although these services are provided in a Shi'ite neighborhood, the party's actions are appreciated on a grander scale - "if it were not for Hezbollah's cooperation in providing these basic utilities for the crowded suburbs, the government would have faced great social disorder and disruption."¹³⁰ Thus, Hezbollah's social efforts helped it gain support not only on the civil level, but also on the institutional one.

The 1996 parliamentary elections saw Hezbollah lose 3 seats in parliament, but still

¹²⁷ Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 57.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 59.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 52.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 85.

win the largest single bloc party in the legislative chamber, as in 1992. What is noteworthy, however, of the 1996 elections is that the relative defeat of Hezbollah at polls sparked Nasrallah's decision to finally cooperate with Amal, and thereby reach the largest possible Shi'ite electoral base. This cooperation initiated a long-lasting political friendship between the two parties that would later become instrumental to Hezbollah's political successes, as is covered in more detail in *Phase Three*.

Several scholars have suggested that instead, the municipal elections of 1998 provide a better measure of Hezbollah's growing support base, especially when considering that the municipal elections are less a reflection of political power plays and rather reflect more the will of the grassroots population.¹³¹ While Hezbollah was expected to do well, the 1998 elections revealed just to what extent the *Party of God* was able to encroach on Amal's territory. Hezbollah won several significant victories in these elections, including a landslide victory in Dahiyeh - in part thanks to the provision of social services mentioned above - dealing a blow to Amal leader Nabih Berri. In the South, the struggle remained close, but Harik notes that here, too, Hezbollah proved to be a "potent threat to Amal in its traditional stronghold."¹³² Thus, electoral results in the early days of Hezbollah identify a shift towards growing support for the movement as a Lebanese political actor.

But perhaps most significant in supporting the *Party of God* on its path to political legitimacy in the period from 1992-2000 were the military victories celebrated by Lebanon and accredited to Hezbollah. In the summer of 1993, Israel launched Operation Accountability in retaliation for a Hezbollah shelling of northern Israel after Israeli forces violated the Security Zone, an area in South Lebanon that was still occupied by Israel until its withdrawal in 2000. Former Israeli President Shimon Peres used Operation Accountability as an opportunity to hold accountable the Lebanese government - hence the name - asking it to take responsibility for Hezbollah and "decide whether Hezbollah represents it or not."¹³³ With this, Peres hoped to back the Lebanese government into a corner and force it to reprimand

¹³¹ Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 95 and Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 125- 126.

¹³² A. Nizar Hamzeh, . "Lebanon's Islamists and local politics: a new reality." *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 5 (2000): 753 as cited in Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 107.

¹³³ Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism*, 115.

Hezbollah. However, this did not work as the government instead stood behind Hezbollah's activities in the South, indicating for the first time unified institutional backing for the *Party of God*. The 1996 Operation Grapes of Wrath conflict between Israel and Hezbollah provided another opportunity for the *Party of God* to make political strides, both among the public and political elite. Despite the widespread destruction of infrastructure caused by the Israeli use of airpower, the Lebanese government was unwilling to stop Hezbollah's counter-activities in the South. Sunni Prime Minister Hariri justified his hands-off policy towards Hezbollah by citing the strong public support the *Party of God* enjoyed, and that going against them would be political suicide.¹³⁴ Instead, the government opted to nationalize the resistance and claim the resistance efforts as a national effort that encouraged solidarity from all corners of the country. This is hugely significant as an indicator for increasing political legitimacy - the *raison d'être*, namely resistance, of the *Party of God* was recognized as a shared objective of the state and shows a level of political integration of Hezbollah, as well demonstrating clearly for the first time that the goals of Hezbollah and Lebanon were one and the same. But even on an international level, Hezbollah began to enjoy a small degree of legitimacy in this phase. After historic Qanaa massacre, in which a purportedly misfired Israeli shell hit a UN base in Qanaa that was sheltering Lebanese villagers and resulted in 98 dead and 101 wounded, the United Nations condemned Israel for the Qanaa attacks and the USA was tasked with seeking Syria's help in brokering a ceasefire between the two countries. The resulting document was known as the April Understanding, in which the US, France, and Israel signed in writing that Hezbollah has the right to resistance activities in the Security Zone, thereby recognizing Hezbollah's activities as legitimate, and marking a huge victory for Hezbollah by further helping it shed its terrorist image.¹³⁵ The expansion of Hezbollah's popular support base during this time was commonly noted among government officials, and even then-Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri "held the opinion that the movement had attained wide popular support as a result of Israel's activities in operation "Grapes of Wrath."¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Ibid., 118-119.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 122-123.

¹³⁶ Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 106.

What followed were several impressive demonstrations in support of Hezbollah. The question of Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon that was now becoming prominent during the office of Prime Minister Ehud Barak marked another victory for Hezbollah, which had set in motion the gears for Israel's departure. The *Party of God* now had to exercise caution in how they would behave and help orchestrate the withdrawal in a way that would maintain their earned image of a legitimate actor, rather than a terrorist organization.¹³⁷ How could Hezbollah induce Israeli departure as soon as possible, but without the use of force? In 1997, Hezbollah got ahold of Israeli military plans and managed to ambush Israeli soldiers planning an operation on Lebanese territory, all while videotaping and subsequently broadcasting the attack. This public victory was a further humiliation for Israel and another victory for Hezbollah in terms of popular legitimacy. It was around this time that Hezbollah's television channel Al-Manar TV rose to fame as the main television outlet for watching resistance activities in the South. It is said to have "boosted Hezbollah's national, Arab and Islamic revolutionary image to all-time highs in a region searching for heroes."¹³⁸ The impact of Hezbollah's sequential victories needs to be emphasized and understood. In a region that was defeated by Israel time and time again, an Arab country was suddenly "winning." Harik recalls a procession celebrating Hezbollah through a major Beirut street, whereby a jubilant man exclaimed: "This is the first time I remember that there has ever been a victory over the Israelis to celebrate in this part of the world!"¹³⁹ The general consensus, both domestically and throughout the region, was that Hezbollah was performing well and in the interests of Lebanon.

The *Party of God* was also strategic about maintaining the delicate balance between religion and the national struggle, and made sure to maintain the religious aspect of *jihad* in the South by televising the lengthy burial processes of all the fighters lost in the struggle.¹⁴⁰ This helped it maintain its support from the religious Shi'ite constituency while also expanding its support base. In terms of increasing its popular and political legitimacy, perhaps among the most brilliant moves carried out by the *Party of God* during this crucial time was extending an olive branch to the Lebanese Christian community. Hezbollah diplomatically approached the mounting tensions

¹³⁷ Ibid., 126.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 133.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 133.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 134.

among Christian villagers who feared they would be subject to hostility by Hezbollah militants, especially in light of the fact that the South Lebanon Army (SLA), comprised mostly of Christians, had been fighting alongside Israel in the struggle for the South. Instead of sowing division, Hezbollah made a direct effort to reach out to these Christians and said that they, too, were victims of the Israelis rather than complicit.¹⁴¹ When Israel finally left the occupied territories in the South on May 25, 2000, Lebanon was victorious and Hezbollah was the hero. The departure was captured on video and broadcast on Al-Manar TV, emphasizing the role that Hezbollah and Islam played in this significant victory.¹⁴² Nasrallah held several speeches, emphasizing two core aspects of the groups strategy: firstly, this was a victory for all of Lebanon and not for any specific party or movement and second, the role of Islam and the 1,276 martyrs who died in the struggle for liberating the South to date.¹⁴³

The party's success was evident in the 2000 parliamentary election, where Hezbollah gained an additional 3 seats, bringing it back up to 12 seats. It is clear that from 1992 until 2000, "the struggle in South Lebanon was changing some minds about Hezbollah."¹⁴⁴

Phase Three: Consolidation (2001 – 2009)

Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon was a much-celebrated event, but it was not, as some had hoped or predicted, the end to Hezbollah's resistance activities in the South. Whether Israeli departure posed a threat to Hezbollah's *raison d'être* was quickly dismissed by the party itself, which albeit now had to find a more creative way to market its Israel strategy in a way that was still palatable to the Lebanese populace.¹⁴⁵ Ultimately, Israeli withdrawal was perceived as a clear victory by Lebanese and regional actors alike, thereby further consolidating Hezbollah's quest for political legitimacy.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 136.

¹⁴² Ibid., 139.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 140.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 134.

¹⁴⁵ Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God*, 224.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

Nasrallah took the opportunity in 2000 to clarify once more that Hezbollah's weapons were to be used only as weapons of resistance for the protection of state security, and that disarmament discussions could only resume once Lebanon no longer needed the resistance. On the national level, the debate concerning whether Hezbollah should disarm raged on with senior politicians divided on the subject.¹⁴⁷ Overall, though, Hezbollah enjoyed increased legitimacy in the period from 2000 - 2005 despite continued control of its armed militia forces in the South.¹⁴⁸ Events in Lebanon in 2005 would set the backdrop for a reshuffling of power alliances in Lebanon, ultimately lending greater political legitimacy to Hezbollah.

In February 2005, just four months after having announced his resignation in protest of Syrian intervention in Lebanon, Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri was assassinated via car bomb in Beirut. Hariri's assassination shook Beirut to its core, and sparked a new era of sectarian division and a new political order within the country. Syria was a primary suspect in his assassination and the resulting widespread protests against Syria led to its eventual withdrawal within two months of the assassination. One such protest that had called for the withdrawal of Syria and the end of its political influence in Lebanon was the Cedar Revolution, a peaceful mass demonstration that took place over a span of two months and also called for an international investigation into Hariri's assassination and free parliamentary elections. Two important political camps that still shape Lebanese politics today were born out of the Cedar Revolution: The March 8 alliance and the March 14 alliance. The March 8 alliance is named after a mass counter-demonstration on March 8 that thanked Syria for its positive role in Lebanon and especially its role in putting an end to the country's civil war. The March 14 alliance, anti-Syrian in nature, shared the vision of the Cedar Revolution. The March 8 alliance is, unsurprisingly given their pro-Syrian stance, a predominantly Shi'ite group comprised of Hezbollah and Amal, former enemies who had since begun working together for strategic political reasons, and other pro-Syrian groups. March 14, on the other hand, was made up mostly of Sunnis and was also known as the Hariri camp.

Hezbollah participated in the 2005 elections, the first since Syrian withdrawal and

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 227

¹⁴⁸ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 676.

won 14 seats - an increase of two seats.¹⁴⁹ In a speech, Nasrallah announced the party's intention to fully participate in the Lebanese political system including the cabinet and, in accordance with positive elections results, participate in cabinet with two ministers for the first time. The move was publically welcomed by Prime Minister Siniora, who said that he is "very pleased and honored" at Hezbollah's presence in the cabinet.¹⁵⁰ The decision to participate in government in this new, more present way was sparked by the absence of Syria, which had thus far offered a sort of political patronage for Hezbollah.¹⁵¹ The withdrawal of Syria thus forced Hezbollah to engage politically in a previously unheard of way, and encouraged the *Party of God* to form stronger allegiances with other major players in Lebanon if it wanted to continue on its upward political trajectory. It was, in short, a somewhat turbulent time for Hezbollah. The party's close alliance with Syria made it suspect to many in the assassination of the Prime Minister Hariri, and with Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon, Hezbollah had also lost its main protector. During this period after Hariri's 2005 assassination, "overt government support for Hezbollah came to an abrupt halt."¹⁵² The notion, therefore, that Hezbollah now had to fend for itself and thus increase participation in politics was not met without tension in the newly formed cabinet.

As Hezbollah teetered on the edge of political uncertainty, a new solution that strengthened the party both in the political arena and among the populace was needed. In perhaps its most strategic move to date, Hezbollah entered into a historic agreement with the Christian Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), headed by General Aoun. Aoun, who had been stringently anti-Syrian, had lived in exile in France from 1990-2005 where he was granted asylum after coming under threat by Syrian forces in Lebanon. Nasrallah met with General Aoun in a symbolic church near the green line, which had been the separating barrier between predominantly Christian East Beirut and Muslim West Beirut during the Civil War. Together, the party heads, who for years at been at political odds, signed a ten-point understanding that covered political, economic and security issues.¹⁵³ This genius move signalled the beginning of a March 8 alliance that was now comprised of Shi'ites and the Christian majority.

¹⁴⁹ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 119.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 120.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 676.

¹⁵³ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 121.

After this alliance, there has been a visible shift in the domestic balance of power in Hezbollah's favour.¹⁵⁴

The domestic political instability suffered by the assassination of Hariri and Syrian withdrawal escalated to a new level in the summer of 2006, when Hezbollah's kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers resulted in the July War - the most destructive war that Israel ever launched against Lebanon.¹⁵⁵ Israel had initially planned to destroy Hezbollah entirely, but settled instead for destroying infrastructure in Shi'ite strongholds. The damage undid much of post-civil war rebuilding efforts and both sides suffered heavy losses. The Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni admitted that "the strongest army in the world could not disarm Hezbollah," while Nasrallah admitted that he would not have kidnapped those two soldiers had he foreseen the consequences.¹⁵⁶ Although Hezbollah faced plenty of backlash back home for inciting a war that inflicted huge amounts of damage on the country's infrastructure, it still "emerged from the crisis enjoying much more popularity than before."¹⁵⁷ In an unprecedented move to end the war, Hezbollah joined the cabinet in accepting the deployment of the Lebanese army to the South, a move that it had previously rejected. It accepted UN Resolution 1701 and UN Resolution 1559, both of which called for the disarming of Hezbollah. Thus, it is evident that "as a survival strategy Hizbullah changes as circumstances change."¹⁵⁸ In addition to these concessions, Hezbollah spearheaded the post-war relief efforts.

Hezbollah's strategic attempts at making concessions in return for a necessary image-boost that would remind the people that the party was acting in their interests and in those of the country worked. The divine victory parade that took place in September 2006 was a testament to this public support, as more than 800,000 people, or nearly one fourth of the Lebanese population, gathered to hear Nasrallah address the nation. Visitors included members of parliament, members of cabinet, politicians, clergy and Arab dignitaries alike.¹⁵⁹ In terms of public support *across all sects*, Hezbollah did emerge stronger from the 2006 war. A poll found that almost 64

¹⁵⁴ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 130.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 127.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 123.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 134.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 129.

percent of Lebanese said that Hezbollah's political position within Lebanon was now stronger than before the conflict, including more than half of surveyed Sunnis and Christians. Nearly half of those interviewed said their view of Hezbollah was improved by the events.¹⁶⁰ Another poll found that 87 percent of Lebanese supported Hezbollah's military response, including strong majorities of more than 80 percent across the four major sects.¹⁶¹

Emboldened by its newfound level of popular and political support, as well as its blossoming alliance with the FPM, Hezbollah relished the increased political standing and backing from another major Lebanese sect that it gained through Christian support. Hezbollah now aimed at gaining veto power in the parliament, which could be gained through a parliamentary alliance with the FPM - the party that received the most votes in 2005.¹⁶² Hezbollah gave the cabinet a one-week ultimatum for the formation of this government with veto power for Hezbollah and its allies. This move resulted in political deadlock for 18 months, hurting Hezbollah in terms of popular support.¹⁶³ Al-Arabiyya TV channel carried out a poll that measured Hezbollah's popularity during this phase, determining that support for the *Party of God* plummeted from 74 percent to 54 percent. The reasons cited for this decrease in support include blame for the 2006 July War but also Hezbollah's role in inciting sectarian tensions. This deadlock period was paired with severe civil unrest.¹⁶⁴

Despite this dip in the party's popularity, Hezbollah's political engineering paid off. After five days of negotiations, Hezbollah finally got its veto power. The Doha Accord, an agreement mediated by the Arab League, was signed between the March 8 and March 14 coalitions in Doha, Qatar on May 21, 2008. It consolidated Hezbollah's increasing political strength by granting it veto power in the country's

¹⁶⁰ Gallup, Inc. "Lebanese See Hezbollah as Politically Stronger After Conflict With Israel." Gallup.com. November 17, 2006. Accessed March 24, 2019. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/25489/lebanese-see-hezbollah-politically-stronger-after-conflict-israel.aspx>.

¹⁶¹ "Poll Finds Overwhelming Majorities in Lebanon Support Hezbollah, Distrust U.S." WorldPublicOpinion.org. Accessed March 24, 2019. <http://worldpublicopinion.net/poll-finds-overwhelming-majorities-in-lebanon-support-hezbollah-distrust-u-s>

¹⁶² Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 130.

¹⁶³ Ibid, 130-131.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 132.

next national unity 30-member cabinet by a margin of 11 ministers.¹⁶⁵ This success was followed by another when Hezbollah and the Lebanese Salafi movement signed an understanding to ward off the prospect of civil discord between Shi'ites and Sunnis.¹⁶⁶ This series of political victories for the *Party of God* reflects the reality that "Hizbullah succeeded in exercising hegemony over the Lebanese public sphere and political system through a bottom-up process by engaging in the political game through alliances, mainly with the FPM as well as other members of the Lebanese opposition, as long as such alliances suit its purposes and serve its policies."¹⁶⁷

In 2008, a survey asked people for whom they vote if there were upcoming national elections. Not surprisingly, responses fell along sectarian lines with each sect-affiliated political party garnering the most votes among Shi'ites, Sunnis, Christians and Druze respectively. Hezbollah, however, despite still gaining the most support from Shi'ites, was the *only party* that gained a significant amount of support from non-Shi'ites. After the option of not voting at all, voting for Hezbollah was the second most popular option at 16 percent.¹⁶⁸

The 2009 parliamentary election saw a small dip in seats won by Hezbollah, which won 12 seats instead of the previous 14. In terms of *public support*, however, the total amount of votes won by March 8 exceeded that of their opponents by more than 100,000 votes.¹⁶⁹

In November 2009, Hezbollah released its second and latest manifesto. In line with his charismatic personality and the need to maintain his public persona, Nasrallah read the manifesto via video to a live audience in Dahiya, the Beirut Shi'ite stronghold where he enjoys among the highest levels of popularity. The manifesto has been characterized by many as a significant shift for Hezbollah, as it "reflected a degree of political maturity and rhetorical restraint."¹⁷⁰ In response to a question that arose after the release of the manifesto, Nasrallah himself claimed that there exists

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 142.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 144.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 143.

¹⁶⁸ Mansoor Moaddel, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," *Population Studies Center* (January 2008): 8.

¹⁶⁹ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 152-153.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 155.

no contradiction between *waliyat al-faqih* (the guardianship of the Islamic Jurist) and the formation of a strong institutionalized Lebanese state.¹⁷¹ It is perhaps precisely because of Hezbollah's increased political legitimacy over the years that the *Party of God* finally accepted the system it is now a substantial part of.

From 2010 until Today: A New Era?

Since 2010, Hezbollah has seen a mix of victories and small defeats. Mostly significantly, however, Hezbollah has become a regional actor that has been actively involved in the Syrian Civil War, fighting alongside the Syrian regime, which has presented a potential dilemma for the level of legitimacy the party enjoys back home. Thus, this final phase of Hezbollah's journey includes the previously unprecedented aspect of regional involvement.

The Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) that was set up to investigate the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri started its work in 2009, much to the dismay of Hezbollah, which perceived the STL as a Western tool. Saad Hariri, son of Rafiq and then prime minister, refused to disavow the STL and at the same time continued to insist on disarming Hezbollah.¹⁷² In 2011, the tribunal issued arrest warrants for four Hezbollah members in the death of Rafiq Hariri. As political tensions raged between the two competing factions, all 10 Hezbollah-aligned members of cabinet, and one additional Shi'ite minister who had been assigned by then-president Michael Suleiman, resigned in January 2011 in protest of the ongoing investigation, resulting in a government collapse. Thus, a new parliamentary vote for leadership took place, after which Alagha notes "Hizbullah virtually succeeded in ruling Lebanon after it obtained a majority of 68 MPs in the 128-seat legislature."¹⁷³

Also contributing to domestic and regional turbulence in 2011 was the start of the Syrian Civil War next door in which Hezbollah was soon militarily involved. The party's involvement in its neighbor's squabbles was highly controversial. The *Party of God* was often called hypocritical, as it had been an outspoken supporter of the Arab

¹⁷¹ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 176.

¹⁷² Norton, *Hezbollah*, 159.

¹⁷³ Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction*, 188.

Spring throughout the Middle East, but quickly changed course when the revolutions reached Syria and threatened its main ally, the Assad regime.¹⁷⁴ The party's involvement in Syria also led to the heightening of sectarian tensions in Lebanon, manifest through local violence and car bombs, which were at their peak in 2012. In 2013, parliamentary elections were set to take place but were repeatedly postponed due to political deadlock. It has been suggested that Hezbollah has perhaps become too confident of late. Its involvement in the Syrian Civil War has resulted in some damage to the party's reputation, with questions arising as to the party's loyalty to Lebanon versus other regional actors like Iran and Syria. Supporters of Hezbollah, on the other hand, ascertain that given the geographical border shared by Lebanon and Syria, Hezbollah's involvement was necessary to secure Lebanon's borders and prevent an influx of ISIS fighters into Lebanon.

Despite the backlash Hezbollah faced, a survey from 2014 revealed that 41 percent of Lebanese still had a favourable view of Hezbollah during this turbulent time, with 31 percent of Christians maintaining a favourable opinion of the *Party of God*.¹⁷⁵ Another survey that traced public opinion of Hezbollah from 2007 until 2013 noted an increase from a 35 percent favorable view in 2007 to 41 percent in 2013.¹⁷⁶ Regarding Hezbollah's involvement in Syria, public opinion of the *Party of God*'s performance was still overall very positive. 62.6 percent thought that the party's military efforts on the border achieve the protection of Lebanon. Only 34 percent wanted Hezbollah's forces to be replaced with UNIFIL troops and only 30 percent agreed with the claim that extremist threats to Lebanon are a result of Hezbollah's intervention in Syria.¹⁷⁷

The May 2018 election results revealed a clear victory for Hezbollah and its allies. Hezbollah won 13 seats and March 8 together won 68 seats. March 14, on the other hand, lost 10 seats. The main loser of the 2018 elections was certainly Saad Hariri's

¹⁷⁴ Norton, *Hezbollah*, 160-161.

¹⁷⁵ "Views of Hezbollah." Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project. June 30, 2014. Accessed March 24, 2019. <https://www.pewglobal.org/2014/07/01/concerns-about-islamic-extremism-on-the-rise-in-middle-east/pg-2014-07-01-islamic-extremism-06/>.

¹⁷⁶ "Hezbollah Topline and Survey Methods." Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project. June 01, 2015. Accessed March 24, 2019. <https://www.pewglobal.org/2013/06/07/hezbollah-topline-and-survey-methods/>.

¹⁷⁷ "ثُلثا المسيحيين حزب الله يحمي لبنان" Al-Akhbar. Accessed March 24, 2019. https://al-akhbar.com/Politics/40024/ثُلثا_المسيحيين_حزب_الله_يحمي_لبنان/.

Future Movement. Hezbollah's victory at the polls marks the greatest electoral victory the party has celebrated thus far, despite the serious backlash it has faced for its involvement in Syria. For Hezbollah, this final phase of its political journey enters into a new era. For the first time, the *Party of God* has expanded its mandate from a resistance force with the purpose of protecting Lebanon from Israel to involvement in regional battles. Whether Hezbollah has become overconfident in its ability of maintaining popular support regardless of its actions remains to be seen.

Conclusion

This chapter has served the purposes of providing an overview of how a party that started as small resistance force in a politically, socially and economically disadvantaged enclave of Lebanon strategically used its military, social and political prowess to manoeuvre its way into what it has today become; "an organization that represents a broad community"¹⁷⁸ and "one of the constituent pillars of the Lebanese political system."¹⁷⁹ From a social movement-militia hybrid that did not participate in politics and enjoyed support only from a restricted Shi'ite constituency, it is now the only political party in Lebanon that enjoys *some level* of cross-sectarian support¹⁸⁰ and has orchestrated alliances with major players from across the political elite. Its path to political legitimacy is thus illustrated twofold. First, it is reflected in growing levels of popular support, which in turn are measured in surveys, second-hand sources of public perception of Hezbollah's performance, and Hezbollah's performance at the polls. Secondly, Hezbollah has become increasingly institutionalized over time, has formed strong alliances with cross-sectarian parties and plays the political game like any other Lebanese political party.

Its most recent involvement in the Syrian Civil War indicates that the party is perhaps ready to move beyond the scope of its original mandate. While it has undoubtedly grown in terms of popular support and political relevance throughout the country, whether Hezbollah will truly be able to maintain its levels of support in this next phase of its development remains to be seen. The speech analysis of Nasrallah will

¹⁷⁸ Van Engeland and Rudolph, *From Terrorism to Politics*, 37.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 175.

¹⁸⁰ Mansoor Moaddel, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," *Population Studies Center* (January 2008): 8.

thus end in 2009, as it follows a clear trend in increasing and consolidating power for the *Party of God*, whereas the period thereafter is still history in the making.

Chapter 3: Frames

Having looked in depth at the successes and challenges faced by Hezbollah on its path to increasing political and popular legitimacy, this next chapter will now turn to the framing analysis to see how the rhetoric used by Hezbollah fluctuated and evolved in accordance with its political evolution. The frames have been divided into two categories: restricted frames and master frames. Restricted frames refer to frames, or messages, that are restricted to the original movement identity as it was communicated, thus intended to mobilize and resonate with the initial movement constituency. In the case of Hezbollah, these frames have been identified as those that resonate with the party's Shi'ite Islamic base. Master frames, on the other hand, are frames that resonate with a wider audience and can thus be instrumentalized in the strategic framing process as a means of gaining movement support on a grander scale. In this study, master frames are those that support Hezbollah on their path to popular legitimacy and therefore include frames that resonate with the Lebanese population as a whole, rather than resonating only with the Shi'ite constituency. Restricted frames and master frames are depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Hezbollah: Restricted Frames and Master Frames

	Frame	Description	Master Frame (MR)/Restricted Frame (RF)	Justification for MF/RF
F1	Shi'ite frame	Core frame of Hezbollah. Includes language resonating with marginalized Shi'ite population.	Restricted Frame	Resonates with disenfranchised Lebanese Shi'ites and thus restricted frame in nation strongly divided along sectarian lines.
F2	Iran frame	Language that promotes and supports Iran and its leaders.	Restricted Frame	Connections to Iran are strictly along sectarian lines (Shi'ite).
F3	Syria frame	Language that promotes and supports Syria and its leaders.	Restricted Frame	Mutual political support between Syria and Hezbollah is a bone of contention for many.
F4	Anti-Zionism frame	Language that vilifies Israel, blames Israel for grievances.	Master Frame	Resonates across the Lebanese populace. Anti-Zionism is a platform for all political parties and societal groups.
F5	Nationalism frame	Lebanese patriotic and nationalistic language.	Master Frame	Unifying message for all Lebanese.
F6	Sectarian Unity Frame	Language that emphasizes unity between different Lebanese sects	Master Frame	Unifying message for all Lebanese - mitigates fears of Shi'ite dominance.
F7	Anti-colonialism (anti-West) frame	Language and messages that demonize the West, particularly the United States of America.	Ambiguous	Common history of colonialism shared by all Lebanese, but relationship to Western countries differs depending on political affiliation.
F8	Anti-Saudi Arabia/Gulf frame	Language that targets Saudi Arabia especially, but also other Gulf nations.	Ambiguous	Strong allegiance to Iran (Shia'a) against Saudi Arabia (Sunni) - these proxy conflicts play out on a political level in Lebanon.

The analysis will investigate if and how Hezbollah's political narrative has changed over time. This thesis hypothesizes that we will see a shift in the frames utilized by Nasrallah slightly away from certain restricted frames that address mostly Hezbollah's original Shi'ite constituency, and towards a dominance of master frames that appeal to a wider Lebanese audience. As such, frames that clearly juxtapose Shi'ite rhetoric, meaning along sectarian lines, to pan-Lebanese rhetoric across

different sects have been selected. There are two frames that are neither master frames nor restricted frames, F7 and F8, which constitute the anti-colonialist/anti-Western frame and the anti-Saudi Arabia/anti-Gulf frame respectively. Attitudes towards these frames *do* fall along sectarian lines, but *do not* fall along the Shi'ite/Other divide that we plan to assess in this analysis. Existing data has been used below to further explain and justify these frame selections.

Selection of Relevant Frames

Three restricted frames and three master frames have been identified based on several factors. Both F1 and F2 are rather straightforward frames, as Hezbollah was founded as a Shi'ite movement by Lebanese Shi'ite clerics, with the ideological backing of Iran.¹⁸¹ In a survey carried out by Mansoor Moaddel that reveals preferences of members of Lebanon's four major confessions of Druze, Sunni, Shia'a and Christian, only 18 percent of Lebanese Shi'ites rated the role of Iran in Lebanon as very negative, as opposed to Sunnis, Druze and Christians, each with a percentage of more than 70 percent agreeing that Iran's role in Lebanon is a very negative one.¹⁸² F3 is a little more nuanced and stems from Syria's role in Lebanon as a broker between Hezbollah and the government all while ensuring Hezbollah could continue as a resistance movement and remain armed, albeit under the condition of not using violence for domestic objectives.¹⁸³ Moaddel's survey once more gives us the facts: Only 39 percent of Shia'a believe Syria's role in Lebanon is very negative, as opposed to again more than 70 percent of all other confessions who take this view.¹⁸⁴ Thus, while the Shi'ite allegiance to Syria cannot be said to be as strong as to Iran, there is clearly still a divide in this regard along sectarian lines.

F4 relates to a long-standing history of conflict with Lebanon's southern neighbor - before, during and after the Lebanese Civil War. 82 percent of Christians, 89 percent of Druze and Shia'a and 93 percent of Sunnis agree that Israel's role in Lebanon is very negative. Thus, there is agreement among members of all sects on the negative

¹⁸¹ Palik, "Hezbollah's Transformation: 34 Years of Identity Construction," 8.

¹⁸² Mansoor Moaddel, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," *Population Studies Center* (January 2008): 8.

¹⁸³ Wiegand, "Reformation of a Terrorist Group: Hezbollah as a Lebanese Political Party," 674-675.

¹⁸⁴ Moaddel Mansoor, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," 8.

role of Israel in Lebanon. F5 relies on the assumption that Lebanese, generally speaking, share a strong national identity. Moaddel's survey demonstrates that a much higher percentage (at least twice as many) of members across all four confessions identified as "Lebanese, above all" than as either Muslim or Christian above all.¹⁸⁵ F6 ties back to F1 in terms of deep-seated political tensions along sectarian lines within Lebanon and relates directly to the political system that is divided along confessional lines. Given the existence of multiple minorities in Lebanon, with the three biggest comprising Shia'a Muslims (28.4 percent), Sunni Muslims (28.7 percent) and Christians (36.2 percent),¹⁸⁶ there is a very fragile balance between the minority groups and fear of one group dominating over the others. Thus, political rhetoric that doesn't place emphasis on one religious group over others (F1), but that takes an inclusive, unified approach (F6) constitutes a master frame.

In addition to the restricted frames and master frames, two ambiguous frames have been included as well. F7 deals with the attitude towards the West, most dominantly the USA, and toward the former colonial occupying power of France. These relationships are not as straightforward as one might predict. Moaddel's survey reveals that while approximately 60-70 percent of both Muslims sects and of Druze see the role of the United States in Lebanon as very negative, only 51 percent of Christians share this view.¹⁸⁷ The range is even greater when it comes to France. Druze have the least positive view of France's involvement in Lebanon, with 51 percent characterizing it as very negative, while this view is shared by only 42 percent of Shia'a and 36 percent of Sunnis. Only 29 percent of Christians see France's role in Lebanon as very negative.¹⁸⁸ Despite this, the anti-colonial/anti-West narrative is certainly a relevant rhetorical aspect and the analysis of the presence and potential fluctuation in the use of F7 might provide useful insight. F8 is the second ambiguous frame, and deals with negative rhetoric towards predominantly Saudi Arabia, but also other Gulf countries. Here, too, the attitude towards these countries falls along confessional lines but not along those that are being examined

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁸⁶ "The World Factbook: Lebanon," Central Intelligence Agency, February 01, 2018, accessed January 15, 2019, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/le.html>.

¹⁸⁷ Moaddel Mansoor, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," 8.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

in this thesis. As expected, the Shia'a have the most negative view of Saudi Arabia, with 65 percent viewing their role in Lebanon as very negative. 43 percent of Christians share the view of the Shi'ites, but only 19 percent of Sunnis and 13 percent of Druze respectively view the Saudi role in Lebanon as very negative.

Simplified, the analysis will look at predicted shifts in Hezbollah's rhetoric between Shi'ite rhetoric and non-confessional or confessional-inclusive rhetoric. Thus, while analysis of the usage of F7 and F8 might certainly yield some insightful results, their use does not tell us much in terms of strategic framing in this particular case. An increase in the use F7 might please the Sunnis and Shi'ites, but displease the Christians and thus doesn't qualify as strategic framing with the aim of appealing to as many Lebanese as possible. An increase in F8, on the other hand, might please the Shi'ites and, to an extent, the Christians, but not so with the Druze and Sunnis. In order to analyze the usage of certain frames, I have identified some preliminary keywords per frame. These can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Frame Selection: Keywords

	Frame	Master Frame (MR)/ Restricted Frame (RF)	Keywords
F1	Shi'ite frame	Restricted Frame	Shia'a, Sunni, Christian (divisive), Ali/Hussein, Martyr, Jihad, Mujahideen, Islamic Resistance, Wilayat al Faqih, Islam (divisive)
F2	Iran frame	Restricted Frame	(Islamic Republic of) Iran, Khomeini (founder Islamic Republic of Iran), Khomeini (Supreme Leader)
F3	Syria frame	Restricted Frame	Syria, Bashar al-Assad, Hafiz al-Assad
F4	Anti-Zionism frame	Master Frame	Israel, Zionist, Enemy, Jews
F5	Nationalism frame	Master Frame	Lebanon, Beirut, Lebanese, Resistance, Patriot, Nation (and similar references), Unity, South, Palestine/Jerusalem
F6	Sectarian unity frame	Master Frame	Sunni, Christian, Shia'a (unified), Islam (unified)
F7	Anti-colonialism (anti-West) frame	Ambiguous	France, United States, West, colonialism (and similar)
F8	Anti-Saudi/Gulf frame	Ambiguous	Saudi Arabia, Gulf (and similar)

Simply analyzing the frequency and usage of a word as such does not suffice. Rather, the way in which many of these keywords are used is essential for classifying them in accordance with the appropriate frame. For instance, the word *Christian* can be used in F1, if the word is used with a negative connotation, or in F6, if the word is used in a way that indicates unity across different sects. Thus, understanding the context in which the words are used is essential for an accurate and revealing analysis. Because not all speeches are the same lengths, the frequency of the specific keywords will then be divided by the total amount of keywords per speech in order to get a ratio that tells us about the increased, decreased or unchanged usage of keywords, and thus frames, over time. Several conclusions will then be derived from this analysis, including the frequency of certain

frames per speech and a change in frequency of frames over time.

Figure 3 shows how frame usage is predicted to fluctuate over the analysis period of 24 years.

Figure 3: Frame usage prediction over time

	Frame	Master Frame(MR) / Restricted Frame (RF)	Prediction
F1	Shi'ite frame	Restricted Frame	Decrease
F2	Iran frame	Restricted Frame	Unchanged
F3	Syria frame	Restricted Frame	Unchanged
F4	Anti-Zionism frame	Master Frame	Unchanged - dominant frame
F5	Nationalism frame	Master Frame	Increase
F6	Sectarian unity frame	Master Frame	Increase
F7	Anti-colonialism (anti-West) frame	Unclear	Slight Increase
F8	Anti-Saudi/Gulf frame	Unclear	Slight Increase

In accordance with the theory of strategic framing processes, several predictions for how the frames will be used over time have been identified. The most important strategic frame changes will be with F1, F5 and F6. Use of F1 will decrease, as it speaks to the Shi'ite constituency and can thus lead members of other sects to feel threatened by fears of Shi'ite dominance. It might only decrease slightly, however, so as not to lose too much support from Hezbollah's original constituency. F5 and F6, on the other hand, are frames that specifically speak of unity on the confessional front, maximizing national sentiment and sectarian unity respectively, and are thus predicted to increase. The use of F4 is predicted to remain consistently high, as this frame has been identified as the *dominant frame* that Hezbollah could use consistently throughout its evolution as it appeals to both the original Shi'ite constituency and the Lebanese population as a whole. Its use is thus also strategic as it has the benefit of appealing to the domestic masses, but rather than a strategic increase or decrease over time, F4 reflects a consistency in Hezbollah's initial rhetoric as well as over time. Most significant will be the change in Shi'ite religious rhetoric (F1) and nationalist rhetoric (F5): it is hypothesized that nationalism and

nationalist rhetoric was the key tool used by Hezbollah on its path to increasing popular legitimacy, and that this was paired with a decrease in Shi'ite religious rhetoric.

Understanding the different frames employed by a political party, movement or actor brings us closer to understanding its political aims, motives and strategy. Identifying which frames can be used is the first step in comprehending the dynamics of the political arena in which the actor functions. However, to fully grasp the complexities of how the framing technique can be used as a mechanism for increasing political legitimacy, we must now look at frame *resonance* in a little more detail. Chapter 3 will thus look more in depth at which frames resonate with which societal subgroups, from which we will be better able to conclude how these frames can be used as a persuasion tool among these different subgroups.

Chapter 4: Frames, Legitimacy and Resonance

“Nasrallah’s words—though not universally popular—appear to resonate across the country, with support for his defiant stance often transcending communal and sectarian boundaries.”¹⁸⁹

Having established that framing is a means of increasing a party’s legitimacy through disseminating messages that improve public opinion of and public support for an actor, this next chapter will focus on resonance, or how certain frames appeal to specific audiences. Political communication would be simple if it implied that any actor seeking election could address societal sub-groups on an individual basis.¹⁹⁰ Given however that this does not reflect reality, political actors hoping to sway the general public in their favour using political communication must structure their rhetoric in a way that appeals most broadly to the general public. Specific messages for key sub-audiences can be interspersed, but must be balanced in a way that does not exclude another group. This is especially the case in Lebanon, a country both politically fragile and historically plagued by sectarian divisions. This chapter will thus look at groups of frames employed by Hezbollah and assess with which audience

¹⁸⁹ t Sewart, "Lebanon’s National Identity: Walking between raindrops?", *The Levantine Review* 1, no. 2 (2012): 179.

¹⁹⁰ Lilleker, 11.

these messages enjoy resonance, which should further illuminate the instrumental use of strategic framing on the party's path to political legitimacy.

Shi'ite Empowerment: A Voice for the Voiceless

The Shi'ite sectarian frame is a logical starting point, as Hezbollah's journey began as a Shi'ite religious and social movement in south Lebanon. Lebanon was historically defined by Maronite Christian and, to a lesser extent, Sunni dominance. The vision of Lebanon held by Maronites was not a religious inclusive one, and did not include a place for Lebanese Shi'ites.¹⁹¹ This Maronite version of nationalism sparked Shi'ite mobilization due to economic and political marginalization,¹⁹² as the Shi'ite population represented "the single largest community in Lebanon with the least political representation."¹⁹³ Thus, it was within this context that a party like Hezbollah emerged as a voice for the disenfranchised Shi'ite of Lebanon. Early activists like Musa Sadr began working on improving Shi'ite status in Lebanon and including them in the national narrative. From its earliest days, the Shi'ite social movement was religious in nature. Shi'ites were marginalized not based on their geographic location, political beliefs or ethnicity, but were excluded in entirety based on their Shi'ite identity. This likely spurred on the formation of strong religious association during the post-war era, as "unlike before the war, the dominant Shi'ite voices existed within a religious framework¹⁹⁴" and there was little dissociation between the social movement and its religious identity. Sadr, for instance, "united and mobilized a vast range of Shi'ites by drawing on Shi'ite imagery, making parallels between the suffering of Imam Husayn at Karbala and the situation of the Lebanese Shi'ites, and representing the situation as a subaltern between an arrogant establishment signifying the state, and an oppressed community."¹⁹⁵ It was within this context that Hezbollah was born, and used strong Shi'ite religious language and symbolism to demonstrate that it represented the oppressed and disenfranchised Shi'ite population in Lebanon. Language that appeals to specifically Shi'ite and/or strongly religious imagery thus did and continues to resonate with the

¹⁹¹ Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon: Transnational religion and the making of national identities*, (Columbia University Press, 2008), 23.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 32.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 25.

original Hezbollah constituency. At the same time, in an effort to maintain peaceful coexistence among Lebanon's diverse religious identities, public expressions of faith and piety are generally frowned upon; the religious element of the Shi'ite social movement, including religious traditions, symbolic imagery and Shi'ite Islamic rhetoric can be likened to "the performance of religious difference."¹⁹⁶ Having been forcefully represented by the Sunni community in Lebanon under the common hat of Islam, Shi'ites began to establish themselves as a separate political identity over time. As always, the rise of one demographic is seen unfavourably by another, and "the assertion of Shia political communal identity came about at the expense of Sunni political power."¹⁹⁷

The Shi'ite religious frame is thereby one that still resonates widely among the original Shi'ite Lebanese constituency, but logically enjoys no resonance among Lebanon's other religious affiliations.

Sectarian Unity and Nationalism

The notion that the Shi'ite religious frame is one that is sectarian in nature, and therefore resonates only with a specific sub-societal group, is relatively self-evident. It also provides a good starting point for looking now at two more strategic frames employed by Hezbollah, and how they resonate with the Lebanese populace. The sectarian unity frame refers to language that promotes some kind of equality and unity among Lebanon's three major religious groups: Sunnis, Shi'ites and Christians. It is, in this sense, directly opposed to the Shi'ite religious frame. While the Shi'ite religious frame appeals only to the Shi'ite constituency, the sectarian unity frame has a high level of resonance among the general populace as it directly draws upon language that calls for overcoming differences in light of Lebanon's history of sectarian division. Lebanon is still reeling from the memory of the civil war, which ended not even 30 years ago and laid bare the frailty of the nation. Its political system is an institutionalization of confessionalism, and while it has managed thus far to keep the country out of another major internal conflict, the system is a constant reminder that division and fragmentation lay barely beneath the surface of the

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 29.

¹⁹⁷ Asad Abukhalil, "Syria and the Shi'ites: Al-Asad's policy in Lebanon," *Third World Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (1990), 1.

country's peaceful facade. Religious affiliation just scratches the surface of division in Lebanon: the Lebanese individual "was always a Druze, a Maronite or Sunni before he was a Lebanese; and he was always a member of the Arslan or Jumblatt Druze clans before he was a Druze."¹⁹⁸ In the Middle East specifically, nationalism is one of the primary sources of legitimacy, whereas microloyalties, like those affiliated with religion, sect or clan, are likely to sew conflict.¹⁹⁹ These underlying factors have strengthened Lebanese resolve to act together as a unit not defined by religious affiliation, and while voting trends reveal that sectarian division is alive and well in Lebanon, language which purports a unity among Lebanon's Christians and Muslim is praised nationwide.

This relates directly to the nationalism frame, which is another unifying frame in a country otherwise divided. The civil war "taught us that the country must remain united, nothing can replace it, and a person's existence is meaningless outside the national context."²⁰⁰ How better to do this, and to evoke feelings of unity in the face of hardship, than by using nationalistic discourse that creates the image of a united Lebanese front behind which all its citizens stand with a common goal and purpose. The fact that nationalistic rhetoric resonates with a cross-sectarian, overarching Lebanese audience is reflected in the results of a poll carried out in 2008 that found that among Sunni, Shi'ites and Christians, more than 40 percent of all those asked expressed that they are very proud to be Lebanese. More than 60 percent answered that they are Lebanese before they are Muslim, Christian or Arab.²⁰¹ In a World Values Survey carried out in 2013, 80 percent expressed that they are proud to be Lebanese, with nearly half stating that they are "very proud."²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Thomas Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* (New York: First Anchor Books, Random House, 1995 as cited in Hannah Sewart, "Lebanon's National Identity: Walking between raindrops?", *The Levantine Review* 1, no. 2 (2012): 179.

¹⁹⁹ Hossein G. Razi, "Legitimacy, religion, and nationalism in the Middle East," 75.

²⁰⁰ Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon: Transnational religion and the making of national identities*, 29.

²⁰¹ Mansoor Moaddel, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," *Population Studies Center* (January 2008): 7.

²⁰² R. Inglehart, C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez-Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin & B. Puranen et al. (eds.). 2014. "Lebanon 2013," World Values Survey: Round Six - Country-Pooled Datafile Version: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp>. Madrid: JD Systems Institute, 106.

Othering: Us vs. Them

The anti-Israeli narrative has been crucial for Hezbollah from its inception until today. It has played the counterpart to the party's nationalist narrative, with the Lebanese nationalist perspective playing the role of "us", juxtaposed to the Israeli "them." And it has been wildly successful using this narrative, as the anti-Israel frame resonates broadly across the Lebanese populace. To characterize the relationship between Lebanon and Israel as strained would be a gross understatement. The fact that there has been some form of conflict between Lebanon and Israel since the latter's independence in 1948 is not unknown, but few know the extent of the animosity Lebanese feel for their southern neighbours. Historically, legally, and socially, Israel is, has been, and will remain the enemy. Legally, for example, Lebanese are not allowed to communicate with Israelis *at all*: they cannot do business with Israelis, cannot buy Israeli products (even abroad), and are not allowed to speak to Israelis even outside the country. They cannot even speak on the phone with an Israeli, and a foreigner who has visited Israel cannot step foot into Lebanon.²⁰³

The reasons for these strict laws are manifold, and relate to the violent history the two countries share. Lebanon is still at war with Israel; from the civil war through today, the countries have engaged in several violent conflicts. Israel occupied large parts of Lebanon until withdrawal in 2000, and Lebanon claims that Israel still occupies a small strip of land in the south known as the Shebaa Farms. As with the nationalist narrative, having a common enemy has served as a unifying force for Lebanese, for whom shared animosity towards Israel is perhaps the only thing they can truly agree on. This is reflected in several public opinion polls. A survey in 2008 found that at least 80 percent of surveyed Shi'ites, Sunnis, Druze and Christians all had a "very negative" view of Israel,²⁰⁴ demonstrating that anti-Israeli sentiment is cross-sectarian. The average percentage of Lebanese that agreed that Israel's role in Lebanon is very negative was 87 percent, by far the highest percentage of all as compared to views of other countries, for which views were much more skewed depending on confessional association. This indicates a high degree of consensus

²⁰³ "The rules of Lebanese-Israeli engagement." Now. September 18, 2011. Accessed April 6, 2019. https://now.mmedia.me/lb/en/reportsfeatures/the_rules_of_lebanese-israeli_engagement__

²⁰⁴ Mansoor Moaddel, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," 8.

on the question of Israel. A more recent survey in 2016 measured the attitudes that Middle Eastern countries had toward other countries. In Lebanon, opinion was split almost down the middle for countries like the United States, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran. In the case of Israel, 100 percent of the representative sample had an unfavourable view.²⁰⁵

The second, more nuanced case of othering falls along the lines of Western enemies, closely related to anti-colonial sentiment. Without going into detail about the country's experience with colonialism, suffice to say that history reveals a creation of Lebanon, like other Middle Eastern territories, that was forged along arbitrary borders that served the interests of European powers rather than those of inhabitants and "had little regard for the socio-economic and cultural realities pre-existing on the ground."²⁰⁶ Despite this shared colonial experience, perceptions toward former colonizing powers are mixed. In fact, the total average percentage of Lebanese across all four major confessions that perceive France's role in Lebanon to be "very negative" was only 36 percent, thus scoring the best in terms of Lebanese opinion about foreign powers. Among Christians, only 29 percent shared this sentiment. The negative view of France is highest among Shi'ites, with 42 percent perceiving France's role as a very negative one. In terms of resonance, the anti-colonial frame is thus hard to classify. Vague references to colonialism might resonate across the populace on account of shared history, but specific references to the colonizing power, France, might not go over so well, especially among Lebanese Christians.

The United States is the other major actor in the othering narrative and resonance of this anti-western frame is similarly complex to characterize. At 62 percent, the general consensus that the role of the United States in Lebanon is very negative is significantly higher than that of France, but views vary from 51 percent among Christians up to 72 percent among Shi'ites and Druze. Resonance is thus contextual, and is likely more widespread among times of warfare like in the 2003 US-Iraq war.

²⁰⁵ "Middle East 2016. Current Conditions and the Road Ahead." Zogby Research Services, LLC. November 2016. Accessed March 31, 2019. <http://www.zogbyresearchservices.com/index/#/new-gallery-5>

²⁰⁶ Kais M. Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: Nationalism and the state under the mandate* (IB Tauris, 2002), 9.

The same can be said for Saudi Arabia, Hezbollah's major regional enemy. Only 42 percent of Lebanese characterize Saudi Arabia's role in Lebanon as very negative, but a clear split in perception falls very evidently along sectarian lines: only 19 percent of Sunni perceive Saudi Arabia's role in Lebanon as very negative, while 65 percent of Shi'ites share this view. In sum, only Israel enjoys widespread, consistent resonance in the Lebanese us vs. them narrative, while frame resonance of other regional and global actors depends largely on context and identity of the message recipient.

Regional Influences

In addition to Israel, the United States and Saudi Arabia, there are two other important regional actors that warrant a closer look. Iran and Syria are two countries to which Hezbollah refers quite frequently throughout its political communication, painting these countries as friends rather than enemies. Tracing briefly the origins of these frames is essential for understanding how they can be strategically employed and with whom they resonate. Syria has been a key ally of the Lebanese Shi'ite community since the civil war, and has played an instrumental role in the rise and sustenance of Hezbollah as a major domestic political player. The Lebanese Shi'ite alliance with the Syrian Assad regime "is characterized by the rise of the political and military power of the Shi'a community and the decline of the Sunni political establishment, which has traditionally favoured an alliance with conservative (primarily Gulf) Arab countries."²⁰⁷ Like Iran and Saudi Arabia, Syria thus represents one of the many regional actors that have found their place within a deeply divided society, using Lebanon as an arena to play out regional power struggles.²⁰⁸ Given that historically, Lebanon and Syria were both seen as part of Greater Syria, there is still a special connection between the two countries which has, at times, made Syria somewhat possessive over its smaller neighbour. Syria thus strategically established itself in a position of dominance in Lebanon, and the alliance between Syria and Lebanese Shi'ites materialized as one of mutual benefit. On many occasions did Hezbollah help its big brother maintain dominance in Lebanon,²⁰⁹ while Syria has long done the same for Hezbollah and the Shi'ite community. The connection

²⁰⁷ Asad Abukhalil, "Syria and the Shi'ites: Al-Asad's policy in Lebanon," 1.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 1.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 14.

between Syria and Hezbollah is therefore best characterized as a strategic political alliance of mutual benefit. Syria has long been a sponsor of Shi'ite interests in Lebanon, and has been accused of offering disproportionate support to Hezbollah. Syria has evidently chosen a side in the sectarian divide in Lebanon, and is thereby directly associated with the Shi'ite quest for political dominance. Hezbollah's involvement on behalf of the regime in the Syrian Civil War once more laid bare the level of interconnectedness between the two players, much to the dismay of non-Shi'ite Lebanese. Thus, the Syria frame is one that falls along sectarian lines, and enjoys a high level of resonance among Lebanese Shi'ites, but poses a potential threat to other confessions.

Like Syria, Iran seeks political and military dominance in Lebanon.²¹⁰ Unlike with Syria, however, Iran's relationship with Hezbollah and the Shi'ite community is one that goes beyond mutual political interest; it has been likened "to that of children and their parents."²¹¹ Hezbollah was founded on a school of thought that follows the ideology of *wilayat al-faqih*, the radical ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran that seeks to impose the rule of Islam.²¹² But even beyond Hezbollah, Iran has always had strong ties to the Lebanese Shi'ite community in Lebanon, evidenced for example by the fact that many Lebanese clerics came from Iran or trained in Iran.²¹³ Musa al-Sadr, often remembered as the one who first gave a voice to Lebanon's disenfranchised Shi'ites, for instance, was Iranian born. Ultimately, however, it was the financial and operational support provided to Hezbollah for its foundation that transformed the nature of Lebanese-Shi'ite relations.²¹⁴ Beyond merely directly linking Lebanon's Shi'ite community directly to Iran, "strategic successes against Israel have in turn made Iran a pivotal player in Levantine politics and broadened Iran's appeal generally in the Arab world."²¹⁵ And while this close-knit alliance has benefitted Hezbollah in uncountable ways, it has also contributed to heightened

²¹⁰ Ibid., 14.

²¹¹ Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon: Transnational religion and the making of national identities*, 160.

²¹² Hussain Abdul-Hussain, "Hezbollah: A state within a state," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 8 (2009), 68.

²¹³ Hokayem, Emile. "Iran and Lebanon." The Iran Primer. Accessed April 07, 2019. <https://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-lebanon>.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

sectarian tensions.²¹⁶ Further, as in the case of Syria, Hezbollah's ties to Iran have led many to question the *Party of God's* loyalty. It is no secret that Hezbollah's owes its existence and its ability to function both militarily and politically to its big brother Iran - and many fear that if faced with a choice, Hezbollah would place the interests of Iran over those of Lebanon. Thus, as the Iran frame is one that is inextricably linked to Hezbollah, it resonates only with the Shi'ite Lebanese constituency. Like in the case of Syria, and perhaps even more so, its use might be perceived as a threat to Lebanon's non-Shi'ite communities, who fear Iranian dominance.

Chapter 5: Framing Analysis of Speeches

Chapters 2-4 have laid the groundwork for the empirical study of Hezbollah's use of political rhetoric over time. Chapter 5 now seeks to answer the question: How has Hezbollah used rhetoric and deployed different frames with different levels of resonance to help it transform from its beginnings as a Shi'ite militia into the popular political force it has since become? The framing analysis of Hezbollah's use of discourse as a tool on its path to popular and political legitimacy will end in 2009. Starting from the release of its first manifesto in 1985, over a period of nearly 25 years until the release of Hezbollah's second and final manifesto in 2009, this period represents the time frame which allows for an in-depth analysis of the party's political trajectory and its rise to popularity within Lebanon. Thus, throughout this time period, 18 documents were analyzed according to the framing process laid out in previous chapters. These documents include the first and second manifesto, in 1985 and 2009 respectively, and 16 political speeches held by party-head Hassan Nasrallah between 1992 and 2009. The texts were collected from a variety of sources, including two books and a variety of internet sources (see Appendix 1). Due to time and language constraints, the selected texts were pre-translated into English. The translations were double-checked with a native speaker and were found to be accurate. Extra attention was paid to translations regarding specific wording such as *jihad* versus *holy war*, which has the same meaning but could either be left in the original Arabic wording or translated into English.

The use of eight frames, of which three were identified as master frames, was traced

²¹⁶ Ibid.

throughout the political texts. These master frames were defined as frames that enjoy a high level of resonance across the diverse Lebanese populace: the nationalist frame, the anti-Zionism frame, and the sectarian unity frame. The selection of these frames as master frames are contextualized by the political arena in which Hezbollah has fought its way to political recognition and legitimacy: Lebanon's complex demographic make-up, a history of war and sectarian cleavages, a political system that institutionalizes existing divides, and powerful regional actors vying for political influence and control are the daily realities of Lebanese politics. The necessity for a unified national identity as a survival mechanism in light of these divisive forces thus make up the first and most dominant master frame (F5). A second master frame is almost equally important, as it channels the unified national identity towards Israel as the common enemy, diverting division away from internal cleavages and allowing instead for a strong "us versus them" narrative behind which all Lebanese can rally (F4). The final master frame is the sectarian unity frame, which expresses unity among the Lebanese populace and the notion that religious identity and loyalty comes second after national identity and patriotism (F6). Three restricted frames were also traced throughout the analysis: the Shi'ite religious frame (F1), the Iran frame (F2) and the Syria frame (F3). They were selected as restricted frames due to their high level of resonance with Lebanon's Shi'ite population, but low level of resonance with the rest of the populace as has been explored in more depth in previous chapters. Finally, two frames were included in the analysis for which the categorization as a master frame or restricted frame was unclear: the anti-colonialism frame and the anti-Saudi/anti-Gulf frame. They were categorized as ambiguous due to the complexities regarding their resonance and the inability to classify them as frames that either resonate with all Lebanese or with no Lebanese except the Shi'ite population. The manifestos and speeches were then analyzed thoroughly and key words selected for each of the frames were highlighted. They were then taken as a ratio of the total amount of framing language used in each text, so that frame use over time can be compared accordingly. The emphasis in this discursive analysis was placed specifically on selected words, rather than interpreting prose, metaphors or sentence structure. Through looking at the frequency of these words, their use, increase or decrease over time can be aligned with Hezbollah's political journey, and any emerging trends will shed a light on how Hezbollah's rhetoric has changed as the movement evolved.

In Chapter 3, the specific frames, their definition, justification and respective key words were outlined in detail. In line with the strategic framing process, predictions were then made regarding the use of the frames throughout Hezbollah's evolution. Of the three master frames - nationalism, sectarian unity and anti-Zionism – it was predicted that the first two would increase as Hezbollah's seeks to increase its popular legitimacy through integrating into the Lebanese system and appealing to a wider audience. The anti-Zionism frame was expected to remain unchanged and consistently high, as it reflects both the initial mandate of Hezbollah as well as the sentiment of the greater Lebanese populace. The greatest and most significant changes were hypothesized to be within the nationalism frame and the Shi'ite religious frame, as Hezbollah was expected to exchange the restricted frame for a master frame with a pan-Lebanese resonance. The Iran frame and the Syria frame were predicted to remain unchanged, while the anti-colonial frame and the anti-Saudi/Gulf frame were expected to increase slightly.

Framing Analysis: Results

In order to visually represent lengthy and detailed data and analyze potential trends, the frame-use percentages will be graphically represented. This should also allow for a comparison between the different frames.

Table 1: Ratios (%) of frames used by Hezbollah over time

Speech (Year)	Shi'ite Frame (F1)	Iran Frame (F2)	Syria Frame (F3)	Anti-Zionism Frame (F4)	Nationalism Frame (F5)	Sectarian Unity Frame (F6)	Anti-Colonialism Frame (F7)	Anti-Saudi/Gulf Frame (F8)
Manifesto 1 (1985)	0.366	0.034	0.000	0.155	0.159	0.041	0.210	0.034
Speech 1 (1992)	0.410	0.082	0.000	0.131	0.279	0.016	0.082	0.000
Speech 2 (1997)	0.536	0.007	0.000	0.146	0.311	0.000	0.000	0.000
Speech 3 (1998)	0.207	0.052	0.069	0.319	0.328	0.000	0.026	0.000
Speech 4 (2000)	0.183	0.026	0.022	0.183	0.546	0.031	0.004	0.000
Speech 5 (2002)	0.070	0.047	0.047	0.395	0.279	0.000	0.163	0.000
Speech 6 (2003)	0.040	0.000	0.152	0.081	0.414	0.172	0.141	0.000
Speech 7 (2003)	0.092	0.011	0.080	0.080	0.276	0.253	0.207	0.000
Speech 8 (2004)	0.055	0.000	0.000	0.091	0.273	0.455	0.127	0.000
Speech 9 (2004)	0.042	0.000	0.181	0.078	0.590	0.030	0.078	0.000
Speech 10 (2005)	0.061	0.013	0.055	0.164	0.556	0.051	0.100	0.000
Speech 11 (2005)	0.056	0.013	0.106	0.156	0.572	0.025	0.069	0.003
Speech 12 (2006)	0.145	0.000	0.000	0.291	0.545	0.000	0.018	0.000
Speech 13 (2006)	0.041	0.019	0.009	0.160	0.668	0.050	0.053	0.000
Speech 14 (2007)	0.111	0.006	0.015	0.157	0.525	0.099	0.083	0.003
Speech 15 (2008)	0.078	0.000	0.000	0.253	0.638	0.000	0.031	0.000
Speech 16 (2009)	0.177	0.044	0.024	0.197	0.463	0.017	0.078	0.000
Manifesto 2 (2009)	0.075	0.018	0.004	0.169	0.557	0.029	0.149	0.000
Average	0.153	0.021	0.042	0.178	0.443	0.071	0.090	0.002

Figure 4: Graphic representation of all frames used by Hezbollah over time

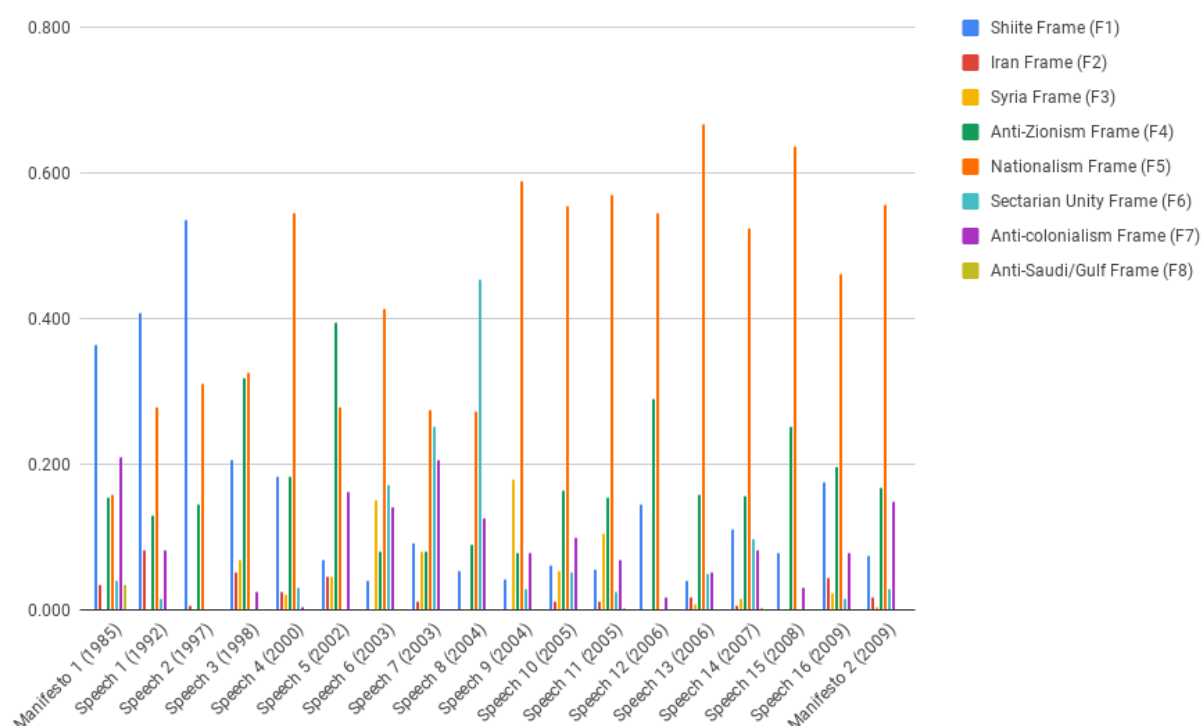
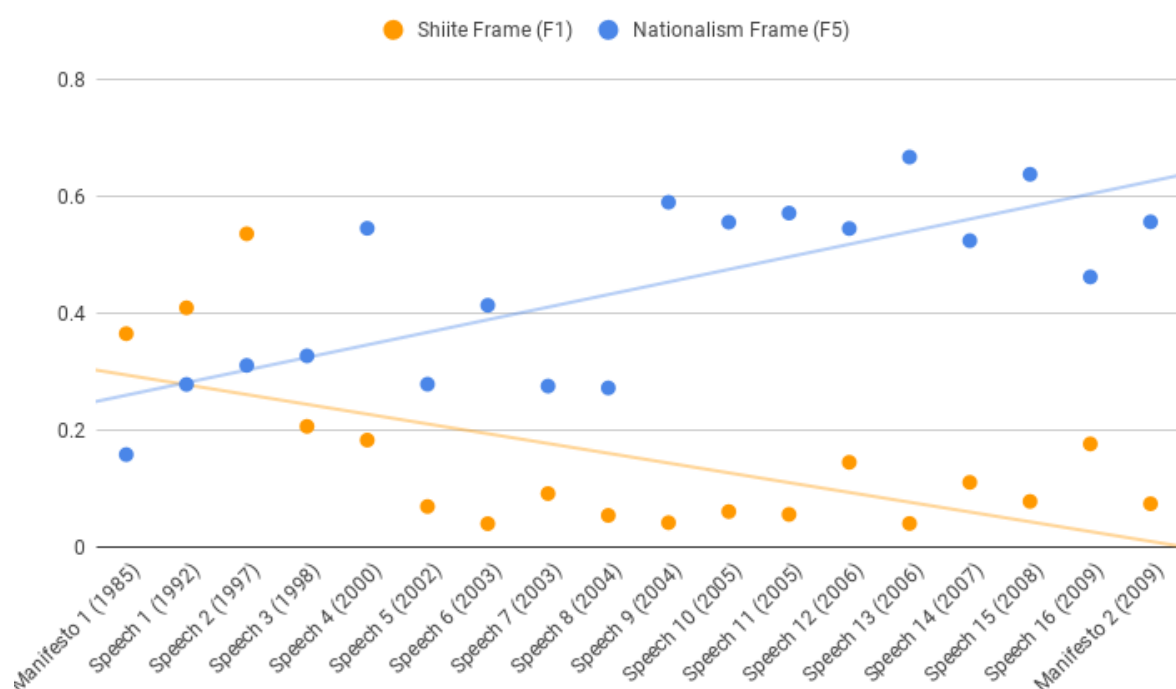


Table 1 depicts the raw data of the analysis, which is graphically represented and categorized according to the speech or text in question in Figure 5. Looking at this visual representation, the first clear impression is that some frames enjoyed far wider usage than others. The nationalism frame, F5, enjoyed usage up to nearly 70 percent at times, whereas other frames hardly reached 10 per cent. The Shi'ite frame, F1, also reached levels higher than most other frames, at one point exceeding 50 percent. Due to these rather large differences, it makes sense to look at the frames on separate graphs that will portray the data in a more clear and concise way. As it was predicted that F1 and F5 will witness the greatest change overall, they will be looked at first.

Figure 5: Religion vs. Nationalism



The key words selected for the nationalist frame, F5, are those that play upon evocative language that strikes a chord with a broad Lebanese audience through the use of words like Lebanon, country, nation, unity, patriot and resistance. Palestine and Jerusalem, too, are words included in the F5, as being directly linked to Lebanon's relationship with Israel, the liberation of Palestine from Israel is a national issue behind which a majority of Lebanese rally. As predicted, the use of nationalist rhetoric used by Hezbollah increased over the analyzed period of 24 years. In the earliest days of the party's formation, the use F5 was as low as 15 percent of rhetoric used. Over time, the graph captures a consistent increase in F5, with an all-time high of 66 percent. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, the use of F5 peaks in 2000 and 2006 - following the liberation of the south of Lebanon and the 2006 July war with Israel respectively. Both of these events marked victories for Hezbollah and presented opportunities to employ strategic framing to benefit from the country's patriotic surge. Also as predicted, F1, the Shi'ite religious frame, shows a clear downward trend. From initial highs of above 30 percent and even up to more than 50 percent in 1997, Hezbollah substantially decreased the use the restricted Shi'ite frame over time. As opposed to somewhat more consistent upward trend of F5, the

use of F1 plunges rather sharply in 1998, decreasing further down to a mere 5 percent of rhetoric in 2003 and then remaining around these low levels. Interestingly, the Shi'ite religious frame shows a slight resurgence in 2006, as was noted with the nationalist frame - this could indicate that at times where Hezbollah is emboldened by domestic victories, it uses this opportunity to address its loyal Shi'ite constituency as well as upping the Lebanese nationalist rhetoric. The use of F1 reaches 17 percent in 2009, which is high compared to previous years. This is likely explained by the nature of Speech 16, held in commemoration of Martyr's Day and thus used as a specific opportunity to address the religious martyr's who have given their life for Hezbollah's cause. Also notable is the direct comparison between the first and second manifesto, released 24 years apart as a political communication of the party's aims, goals and visions for Lebanon. In the first manifesto, F5 enjoyed less than half the use of F1, at 16 and 37 percent respectively. In the second and final manifesto, the Shi'ite religious frame comprised merely 7 percent of the used language, whereas the nationalist frame comprised 56 percent.

Figure 6: Anti-Zionism Frame

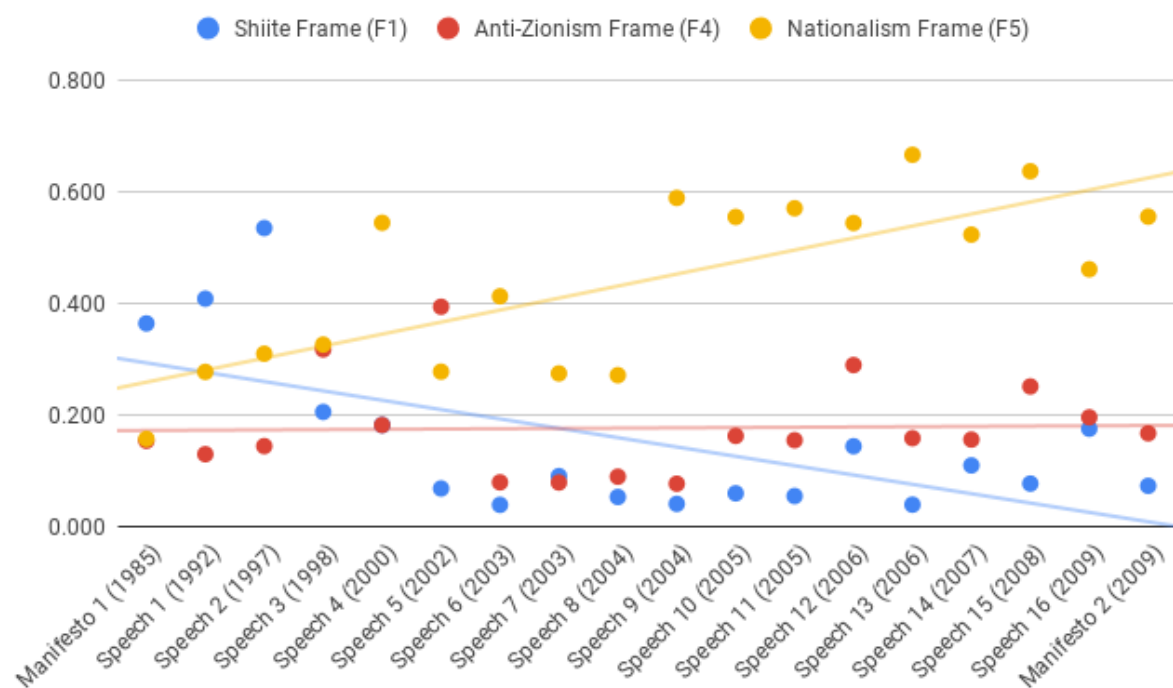
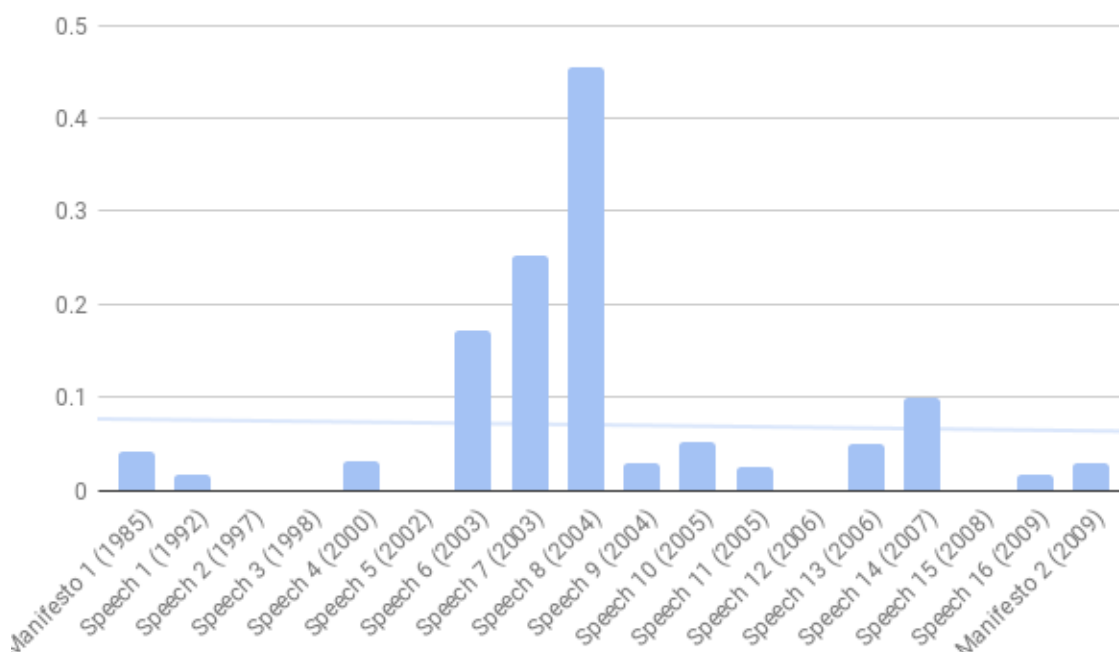


Figure 6 depicts the usage of F4, the anti-Zionism frame against F1 and F5, as F4 was the only other frame that enjoyed an employment level comparable to the nationalist and Shi'ite religious frames. F4 is characterized as a master frame, as

language that vilifies Israel reflects a sentiment shared among the vast majority of Lebanese. Beyond this, it is the only frame that enjoys resonance among both the broader domestic audience *and* the original support base for Hezbollah in its earliest days: the Shi'ite constituency. Thus, the prediction was that the anti-Zionism frame would enjoy consistently high usage over time, without much change in employment for strategic purposes. As predicted, the trend line in Figure 6 reveals strong and consistent usage of F4 between 1985 and 2009. In early speeches and texts, F4 was used at a high level, but lower than both F1 and F5. Since around 1998, when F1 marked the largest decrease in usage, the anti-Zionist frame has been rather consistently placed in between the Shi'ite religious frame, which is always lower, and the nationalist frame, which is always the highest by quite a margin. Thus, on average, F4 enjoys consistent usage levels of on average 18 percent, marking the second highest frame usage, between an average of 15 percent for F1 and 44 percent for F5.

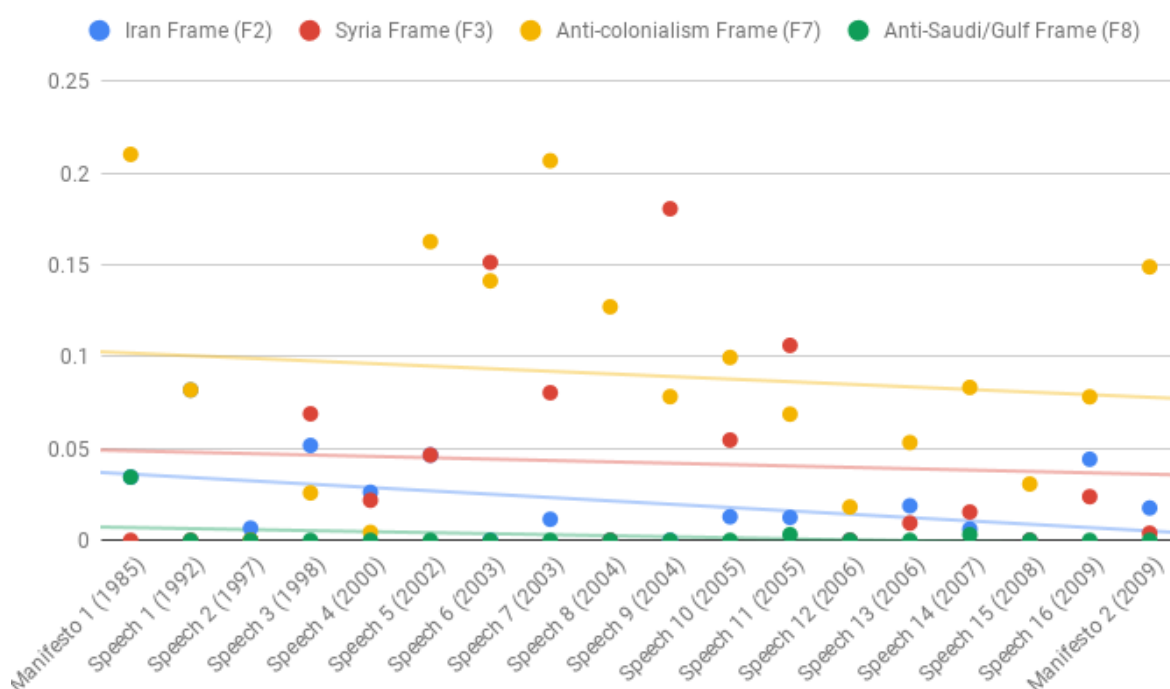
Figure 7: Sectarian Unity Frame



Turning now to Figure 7, which captures the use of F6 on sectarian unity, yields some interesting results. Given the sectarian nature of Lebanon's everyday reality, it was predicted that F6 would increase over time as Hezbollah tried to position itself not as a Shi'ite religious party, but as one that wants equal treatment for all, independent of national and transnational religious affiliation. The data, however,

reveals no clear trend at all, with erratic usage that even slightly decreased over time. This slight dip, however, can be explained by one particular speech in 2004 in which F6 comprised 45 percent of the language used. In this particular speech, Nasrallah was addressing the issue of suicide bombing in Baghdad, calling for unity among all Muslims be they Shi'ite or Sunni, and condemning those who plant the seeds of sectarianism throughout the Middle East. Thus, no conclusive statements can be made about the use of F6. An explanation could be that the language looked at specifically for this frame were key words like Sunni, Shi'ite and Christian - words that a politician is likely to shy away from even when calling for unity, as they tend to remind of existing societal divisions. The increased use of the nationalist frame might be a more strategic approach for calling for unity and loyalty to the country over other affiliations, rather than addressing the different groups directly.

Figure 8: Iran, Syria, anti-Colonialism and anti-Saudi/Gulf frames



Finally, Figure 8 captures the usage of the remaining frames on Iran, Syria, anti-colonialism and anti-Saudi/Gulf rhetoric: F2, F3, F7 and F8 respectively. These were captured on the same graph as they all enjoyed such low usage compared to the other frames, that grouping them together graphically provides the clearest image of trends for comparative purposes. Starting with the restricted Iran frame, it was predicted that its use would be unchanged. In fact, it shows a slight decrease over

time. Overall, however, the use was quite low compared to other frames, with the highest level being only 5 percent in 1998, and often not being mentioned at all. Still, the decrease can be explained through the direct religious and ideological connection to Iran that Hezbollah shares, and the message this sends to the Lebanese populace, the non-Shi'ite majority of which are negatively inclined towards Iran and its influence in the country. Thus, being directly linked to the Shi'ite religious frame, a slight decrease in F2 as Hezbollah seeks to make gains in popular and political legitimacy is not surprising. With an average use of only 2 percent, the Iran frame has seemingly never been a dominant one for Hezbollah contrary to the strong association often made between the movement and its regional ideological patrons.

The Syria frame, F3, is for the most part unchanged as predicted. Looking at the graph, its employment is relatively erratic and doesn't reveal any trend over time. The peak of use for F3 is in 2004. This makes sense, given that it was the time in which Syria was facing immense pressure to withdraw from Lebanon, posing a direct threat to Hezbollah. Beyond that, not much can be said about F3. It enjoyed an average usage rate of 4 percent, which is rather low, but still double that of Iran. This could imply that perhaps the Syrian connection is either more important to Hezbollah, or represents one which the party feels does not present as much of a conflict with its new, patriotic political image as the connection to Iran. As the Syrian connection to Hezbollah is a political rather than religious one, perhaps Hezbollah perceives F3 usage as more politically appropriate and less threatening to other societal subgroups than F2.

F7 and F8, capturing anti-colonialist language and language that negatively portrays the countries of the Gulf and especially Saudi-Arabia respectively, were defined as ambiguous frames. As explained in previous chapters, both are complex issues that are very split along sectarian lines and thus, from the perspective of Hezbollah, cannot be employed in a strategic, straightforward manner without offending or isolating a large constituency. F7 includes words like the United States, France, colonialism and references to the West and Europe. Out of these, attitudes towards the United States are the most unified, with 62 percent of Lebanese finding American

influence in Lebanon very negative.²¹⁷ Thus, perhaps not surprisingly, references to the United States comprise by far the highest usage within F7, with occasional references to the West or colonialism, and almost no reference at all to France. Attitudes toward France, despite its colonial history with Lebanon, are the least negative across all sects, and are especially low among Christians.²¹⁸ Overall, the anti-colonialist frame is employed throughout the duration of the analysis at an average rate of 9 percent, thus higher than the two restricted Iran and Syria frames. Finally, a look at the second ambiguous frame F8 reveals that its use is negligible, and consistently low. While attitudes toward Saudi Arabia and its allies are dominantly negative among the Lebanese Shi'ite constituency, the 2008 survey reveals that this is not the case among Lebanese Sunnis and Christians.²¹⁹ Thus, Hezbollah stayed away from the use of F8 throughout its political evolution until 2009. F7 and F8 might both represent time-restricted frames, implying that they have been or will be of more relevance throughout history or in the future. Colonialism, for instance, might have been a more dominant frame in earlier days of Lebanese decolonization. Concerning F8, a further study of how Hezbollah has changed its rhetoric since its involvement in the Syria Civil War might be insightful, as Saudi Arabia was positioned alongside forces directly opposed to Hezbollah, Iran and the Syrian regime in the regional proxy war.

Weaknesses

This section serves as a brief overview of the shortcomings of this study. Many of the weaknesses in this thesis relate to the fact that certain data is difficult to come by, and requires scraping together information from a variety of different sources. In the section on Hezbollah's rise to popular and political legitimacy, this was measured by looking at political alliances, increased political cooperation on the elite level, and election results and public opinion surveys for popular legitimacy. More information on public opinion of Hezbollah over time would have given a more accurate and complete overview on how these opinions have changed in the party's favor, but they simply do not exist. The idea of gauging shifting public opinions by looking at

²¹⁷ Moaddel Mansoor, "Ethnicity and Values Among the Lebanese Public: Findings from a Values Survey," 8.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

how Hezbollah was portrayed over time in independent newspapers or journals was considered but had to be dismissed, as the search for an independent media source that does not have sectarian or regional affiliations was unsuccessful.²²⁰ Beyond this, none of the media have reliable archives that date back far enough for this study. In terms of shortcomings in the analysis itself, these are also mostly related to data collection. The speeches themselves were collected from a variety of sources, including books, websites, and news archives (see Appendix 1). They were pre-translated, due to time and language constraints. The translations were, however, cross-checked with a native speaker to confirm their accuracy. In the same vein, speeches in the earliest days of the party's formation are sparse and very difficult to come by. There is thus more data for the later years of the party's formation than in its early days. Some of the speeches collected from the very early days are only available in an abridged form, which is another shortcoming of this analysis. Speeches were selected on the basis of being as similar as possible to one another in terms of events or days on which they were held. Occasionally this wasn't possible and certain language might therefore be used more frequently on a specific commemoration or event than on another day. Still, it is precisely because of many of these factors, and the difficulty of attaining reliable, complete data from Lebanon, that this study was deemed of utmost importance. It is often in areas of the world where data is not openly and easily available that the compilation of a wide variety of sources provides first insights into a fascinating phenomenon that lays the groundwork for further research.

Further Research

This thesis has undertaken a comprehensive study of how Hezbollah has utilized the power of language and political rhetoric as a means of increasing its political and popular legitimacy at home. Framing, borrowed from social movement theory, was applied to a series of speeches and political texts produced by Hezbollah over a period of 24 years. There are several ways in which further research can build upon the findings in this study. The heavy focus throughout this analysis was on the message itself, and how Hezbollah packaged distinct messages with different levels

²²⁰ "Lebanon's Media Landscape." Fanack.com. March 23, 2017. Accessed April 21, 2019. <https://fanack.com/lebanon/society-media-culture/lebanon-media/>.

of resonance in a way that would transcend age-old sectarian divisions and resonate with a broad audience. While the importance and role of the message has thus been explored in depth, the notion of the messenger and the media through which the message is disseminated require a closer look. Though both the role of party-head Hassan Nasrallah and the significance of Hezbollah's media empire were mentioned in earlier chapters in relation to framing, message dissemination and target audiences, neither were explored in any detail. Thus, further research that ventures into the exploration of the role of the messenger and the media within this context would likely provide more detailed insight into the studied phenomenon.

Another avenue worth exploring is to build upon the methods and theory applied in this thesis, but extend the timeframe to the present, focusing specifically on the years that Hezbollah became involved in the Syrian Civil War. In this context, it would be particularly interesting to see whether certain frames, especially the anti-Saudi Arabia/anti-Gulf frames were instrumentalized more frequently as Hezbollah's role in Syria saw it side with old friends against the regional superpower, Saudi Arabia. Thus, analysing Hezbollah's use of political communication as a regional rather than domestic player will likely yield insightful results.

Conclusion

This thesis has undertaken an in-depth analysis of Hezbollah since its formation more than 30 years ago with the ambitious goal of understanding how a hybrid organization in a complex, conflict-ridden region of the world can use political discourse to support its evolution into a political party that enjoys political and popular legitimacy. In common Western media outlets, Hezbollah is still characterized as an Islamist terrorist group with irrational, violent and unpredictable aims that pose a global threat. In fact, when looking at the origins of the *Party of God*, the circumstances under which it gained significance and the political arena within which it functions, it becomes abundantly clear that labels like terrorism only obfuscate reality: Hezbollah wears many hats, among them an Islamic social movement, a militant wing, and a political force to be reckoned with both in Lebanon and the region. What began as a voice for the disenfranchised and marginalized Shi'ite population in Lebanon has since evolved into an influential political party with

strong nationalist inclinations and resonance across a large segment of the fragmented Lebanese political landscape. As a party that has always placed great value on its political communications, evidence in the development of a strong media network within the early days of its formation, this study has looked at how Hezbollah has employed political rhetoric over time to support the *Party of God* in this remarkable evolution from a movement on the side-lines to a main political domestic actor. Hezbollah has undergone a number of strategic image transformations that have helped the party integrate into the complex Lebanese political landscape while never quite retiring its Shi'ite Islamic image entirely. In its flag for instance, which includes the use of green (the color of Islam) and the party name stemming from a verse of the Quran, it changed the text at the bottom of flag from the original "the Islamic revolution in Lebanon" to "the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon" when it began participating in politics in the 1990s.²²¹ The wording of the latter phrase implies a resistance movement that fights on behalf of the Lebanese system, as opposed to the first, which implies an overthrow of the existing system. To be sure, Hezbollah's provision of social services and consistently strong military showing are factors that have significantly contributed to the party's growing levels of public support and respect from both a civil and elite political audience. But in a country that is so sensitive to its divisions, a Shi'ite religious movement with an initial vision of an Islamic state in line with that of the Islamic Republic of Iran would be unable to grow, evolve and make significant strides in terms of political and popular legitimacy without a change in public political discourse that is more in line with the general Lebanese consensus. The two key aspects that were thus analyzed were whether Hezbollah's political rhetoric changed over time, and if so, whether as predicted this would see a decrease in Shi'ite religious rhetoric in exchange for an increase in nationalist and patriotic rhetoric. The analysis yielded three main conclusions that provide insight into a complex political actor and also potentially provide wider regional insights. First, rhetoric that negatively targets Israel was as relevant to Hezbollah's strategic political objectives in its earliest days as 25 years later, reflected in a high and consistent usage of anti-Israel rhetoric. Second, the Shi'ite religious frame has seen a notable decrease over the years, from being the most dominant frame during the party's formation years to becoming only the third most

²²¹ Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah*, cover page.

relevant frame. This was expected, given that restricted nature of the Shi'ite religious frame and the resulting comparatively low level of resonance with only one specific segment of Lebanese society. Still, it remains an important narrative for Hezbollah that allows it to maintain the link to its original and strongest support constituency, and thus remains one of the three most used frames even as the party became more integrated politically. It is thus not one that Hezbollah is ever likely to give up entirely. Finally, use of the nationalist frame saw the most significant change over time, noting a substantial increase over the period of 25 years. Essentially, the nationalist frame not only replaced the Shi'ite religious frame in terms of usage, but far exceeded it and has comprised around 50 percent of Nasrallah's speeches since 2004, sometimes reaching nearly 70 percent. In a country still reeling from a decades-long civil war, sectarian fragmentation, exploitation of divisions by proxy powers, regional instability and a sense of frailty reflecting the reality that the smallest political hiccup might plunge Lebanon into a new era of violent conflict, a strong national identity provides a much-needed dimension of cohesion and unity. Looking beyond the direct implications of this study for the case of Lebanon and Hezbollah, the findings likely represent a trend that is not unique to this case. In the context of the Middle East, the use of nationalism and othering in political communication are likely effective tools for increasing political legitimacy, as both discursive mechanisms promote a common identity rooted in a shared struggle. In a region defined by deep-seated ethnic, religious, tribal, and political divisions, using language that appeals to a broader support base rather than a specific constituency can thus be an effective political tool for achieving popular and political legitimacy domestically.

In Lebanon, nationalism functions like a superficial band-aid underneath which fresh wounds still fester. It is for this reason that the nationalist frame has been a strategic frame that repositions Hezbollah as a force for all of Lebanon, and not just an Iranian proxy fighting for Shi'ite dominance. It is in this way that Hezbollah has used framing to demonstrate to the people and its political allies that it is a rational actor that has Lebanon's national interests at heart, and in this way has increased its political and popular legitimacy over a period of three decades. What remains to be seen is whether the *Party of God* will continue down this self-established path of consolidating domestic power and protecting Lebanese interests at home, or whether it will choose to reposition itself once more as a potential regional giant.

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Appendix 1: Speeches and sources

Text	Date	Source
Manifesto 1	1985, February 16	Alagha, Joseph Elie. <i>Hizbullah's Documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto</i> . Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011, 39.
Speech 1	1992, February 18	Nasrallah, Sayyed Hassan, Nicholas Noe, and Nicholas Blanford. <i>Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah</i> . London, UK: Verso, 2007, 51.
Speech 2	1997, September 13	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 169.
Speech 3	1998, May 7	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 187.
Speech 4	2000, May 26	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 232.
Speech 5	2002, October 22	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 278.
Speech 6	2003, March 13	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 282.
Speech 7	2003, April 22	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 294.
Speech 8	2004, March 2	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 310.
Speech 9	2004, March 14	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 319.
Speech 10	2005, May 25	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 335.
Speech 11	2005, October 28	Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Nicholas Noe and Nicholas Blanford, <i>Voice of Hezbollah</i> , 352.
Speech 12	2006, July 17	Workers Revolutionary Party. "I AGAIN PROMISE YOU THAT WE WILL WIN' – Hasan Nasrallah Speaks to the Lebanese People." The News Line - Daily Newspaper. Accessed April 28, 2019. https://wrp.org.uk/news/1324 .
Speech 13	2006, September 22	"Hizbullah SG Full Speech on on 22-09- 2006." Alahednews. Accessed April 28, 2019. https://english.alahednews.com.lb/709/447 .
Speech 14	2007, August 14	"Sayyed Nasrallah Speech at Rayah Stadium on Divine Victory Festival." Alahednews. Accessed April 28, 2019. https://english.alahednews.com.lb/742/448#.W3wR_y2B1fQ .
Speech 15	2008, August 14	"Sayyed Nasrallah: Futile Campaigns against Resistance, Zionists." Alahednews. Accessed April 28, 2019. https://english.alahednews.com.lb/4858/449#.W3wSmy2B1fQ .
Speech 16	2009, November 11	"H.E. Sayyed Nasrallah: Send All Your Powers..our Geography and Resistance Will Devour You!" Alahednews. Accessed April 28, 2019. https://english.alahednews.com.lb/9510/450 .
Manifesto 2	2009, November 30	Joseph Elie Alagha, <i>Hizbullah's Documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto</i> , 115.

Jahn

On my honour as a student of the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, I submit this work in good faith and pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on it.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jahn', written in dark ink.