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PATTERNS OF VIOLENT NON-STATE ACTORS' POWER IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA REGION: THE CASE OF HEZBOLLAH IN LEBANON

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ОБРАСЦИ МОЋИ НАСИЛНИХ НЕДРЖАВНИХ АКТЕРА У РЕГИОНУ БЛИСКОГ ИСТОКА И СЕВЕРНЕ АФРИКЕ: СЛУЧАЈ ХЕЗБОЛАХА У ЛИБАНУ

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Abstract

Conventional theories of International Relations argue that states are the primary actors and that control is the ultimate source of power. However, in today's globalised world with open, complex systems, it is evident that non-state actors, particularly violent non-state actors (VNSAs), play a significant role in shaping events. These groups can utilise protean power, which implies adapting and innovating, to achieve their objectives. To fully understand the actions and impact of VNSAs, it is essential to analyse their power dynamics. Therefore, this dissertation offers a framework for examining VNSAs' patterns of power, which integrates soft and hard power with control and protean power. As a result, the dissertation identified four distinct patterns of power that VNSAs practice. Through a case study of Hezbollah and an examination of its activities in Lebanon, the Arab world, and Israel, primarily using secondary sources, this dissertation argues that VNSAs employ these power patterns, ultimately seeking to establish control power through harnessing protean power. Acknowledging the presence of different patterns of power and their hierarchical relationships can enhance our understanding of the VNSAs' power dynamics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and their impact on the region.

Keywords: protean power, control power, soft power, hard power, VNSAs, MENA region, Hezbollah, Lebanon, Israel, the Arab world.

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Садржетак

Конвенционалне теорије међународних односа тврде да су државе примарни актери и да је контрола крајњи извор моћи. Међутим, у данашњем глобализованом свету са отвореним, сложеним системима, очигледно је да недржавни актери, посебно насилни недржавни актери (ННДА), играју значајну улогу у обликовању догађаја. Ове групе могу да искористе протејску моћ која подразумева прилагођавање и иновирање да би оствариле своје циљеве. Да би се у потпуности разумеле акције и утицај ННДА, неопходно је анализирати њихову динамику моћи. Стога, ова дисертација нуди оквир за испитивање ННДА образаца моћи, који интегрише меку и тврду моћ са контролом и протејском моћи. Као резултат тога, дисертација је идентификовала четири различита обрасца моћи које ННДА практикују. Кроз студију случаја Хезболаха и испитивање његових активности у Либану, арапском свету и Израелу, првенствено користећи секундарне изворе, ова дисертација тврди да ННДА користе ове обрасце моћи, на крају настојећи да успоставе контролну моћ кроз искориштавање протејске моћи. Признање присуства различитих образаца моћи и њихових хијерархијских односа може побољшати наше разумевање динамике моћи ННДА на Блиском истоку и Северној Африци (БИСА) и њиховог утицаја на регион.

Кључне речи: протејска моћ, контролна моћ, мека моћ, тврда моћ, ННДА, регион БИСА, Хезболах, Либан, Израел, арапски свет.

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List of Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
APP	Armed Political Party
ATGM	Anti-Tank Guided Missile
AUC	United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
ECB	European Central Bank
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IDF	Israel Defense Army
IR	International Relations
IRA	Irish Republic Army
IRGC	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
LTRO	Long-Term Refinancing Operations
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MNF	Multinational Forces in Lebanon
NATO	North-Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSAs	Non-State Actors
OMT	Outright Monetary Transactions
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation

SLA	South Lebanese Army
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
VNSAs	Violent Non-State Actors

"I'll drown more sailors than the mermaid shall;
I'll slay more gazers than the basilisk;
I'll play the orator as well as Nestor,
Deceive more slily than Ulysses could,
And, like a Sinon, take another Troy.
I can add colours to the chameleon,
Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,
And set the murderous Machiavel to school.
Can I do this, and cannot get a crown?
Tut, were it farther off, I'll pluck it down."

Richard III, William Shakespeare, Henry VI, Part 3, Act 3, Scene 2

Chapter 1: Introduction

When will the war commence? This has been and continues to be the question on everyone's mind in Lebanon since Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, 2023.[1] The aftermath of the attacks has only intensified the uncertainty surrounding the impending conflict between Hezbollah and Israel. The focus is not on whether the two sides will engage in battle but rather on the scale of the conflict unfolding. Will it be a full-blown war or a targeted operation? Will there be a ground invasion, or will it be confined to air strikes? Many also wonder if the upcoming war will resemble the July 2006 war.[2]

The recent events on October 7 have brought the traumatic memories of previous wars to the forefront for the Lebanese people. Recent border fire between Hezbollah and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) has reignited fears and concerns for the safety of their loved ones. Many Lebanese expats, especially those born after the civil war, had planned on visiting Lebanon but were forced to halt their plans due to the recent attacks. Sirine Baghdadi, a media executive in Dubai, is one of those post-civil-war generation expats. She has been following the news closely and admits that the days following the Hamas attacks have been filled with tears and fear for her family's safety. Being far from home, Baghdadi thought she would handle the situation better, but the events and her reaction to them have proven to be much more complex than she had anticipated.[3]

Another post-civil war generation expat who, due to the unfolding events, had to delay his plans to reunite with his family is Mahmoud Mardini, a 30-year-old academic residing in Cyprus. At just 13 years old, he experienced the horrors of the July 2006 war first-hand. He was confined to his apartment block in Beirut with minimal access to necessities like water and electricity for 16 days. Similarly affected by the traumatic events is Mia, a 31-year-old technology worker in Dublin, who still carries the emotional scars of living through aerial bombing. Although the war took place 18 years ago, and she now lives on a different continent, she still feels like the same scared girl from back then. She recalls how she would only feel safe enough to sleep during the day, believing that bombings were less likely to occur during daylight hours. She also remembers switching off all fans in her house because they sounded like warplanes, a testament to the lasting impact of her experiences.[4]

The post-civil-war generation who is on the edge after the October attacks in fear that Hezbollah will drag Lebanon into the conflict is fraught with memories of Lebanon's near collapse due to Hezbollah's actions and their impact on the nation. Mardini's poignant question: "Have we forgotten the August 4 Beirut Port explosion and the destruction it inflicted on us?" resonates deeply with Mia, who left Lebanon after that tragic event, feeling that staying in the country was like a death sentence.[5] Ramad Boukallil, a businessman, speaks to his generation's fears, stating that the people are weary and cannot endure much

[1] Josef Federman and Issam Adwan, "Hamas Surprise Attack Out Of Gaza Stuns Israel And Leaves Hundreds Dead In Fighting, Retaliation", *The Associated Press (AP)*, (October 8, 2023) https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-gaza-hamas-rockets-airstrikes-tel-aviv-11fb98655c256d54ecb5329284fc37d2

[2] Jamie Prentis and Nada Maucourant Atallah, "Lebanese Government Prepares Itself for Possible War", *The National*, (October 12, 2023) https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/lebanon/2023/10/12/lebanese-government-prepares-itself-for-possible-war/

[3] Fatima Al Mahmoud, "'Traumatised' Lebanese Expats Fear For Families As Tensions With Israel Flare", *The National*, (October 20, 2023) https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/palestine-israel/2023/10/20/traumatised-lebanese-expats-fear-for-families-as-tensions-with-israel-flare/

[4] Al Mahmoud, "'Traumatised' Lebanese"

[5] Al Mahmoud, "'Traumatised' Lebanese"

more. He notes Lebanon's struggles with economic collapse, COVID-19, and the port explosion.[6] The prevailing sentiment among the Lebanese is that the country cannot survive another war, a concern expressed by the current caretaker government ministers and echoed by Minister of Economy Amin Salam, who warns that the nation "could fall apart completely."[7]

For this generation, recent events such as the ongoing financial crisis and the devastating Beirut port explosion in 2020 may feel like just the latest in a long line of traumatic experiences. The first blow was dealt in April 1996, when Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath on Lebanon to put an end to rocket attacks by Hezbollah on Northern Israel.[8] The second and most significant event was the Second Israeli War, which began on July 12, 2006, after Hezbollah attacked an Israeli convoy on the border and captured IDF soldiers. This prompted Israel to declare war on Lebanon and impose an air and marine blockade.[9] That summer was supposed to be a time for celebration and rejuvenation after the unsettling events of 2005, which included political assassinations, mass protests, the withdrawal of Syrian troops, and elections.[10] Lebanese citizens eagerly anticipated a promising summer that would boost the economy and allow them to revel in long, busy days and lively, sleepless nights. They were eager to welcome back their expats and Arab visitors from the Gulf and mingle with European tourists. In 2006, Lebanon welcomed 1,063,000 tourists.[11] Unfortunately, the summer of that year turned into an exodus that began just two days after Israel declared war. As the post-civil war generation watched the ships carrying evacuees depart, they felt vulnerable because Lebanon, as a country, is weaker than a VNSA operating within its borders. As a result, it cannot adequately protect its citizens.[12]

In 2008, a new crisis emerged for this generation. The Lebanese government passed a law restricting Hezbollah's intelligence capabilities, which led to violent retaliation by the armed political party. The situation quickly escalated, with Hezbollah occupying Beirut and clashes occurring in North and Mount Lebanon.[13] This left many young people with unsettling questions about their future. Would they be able to continue their education? Would they need to evacuate their homes? Most importantly, would they survive the violence? Having grown up with stories of the Lebanese Civil War, this generation was all too aware of the devastating consequences of civil conflicts. They saw Lebanon as vulnerable and that VNSAs had historically been more powerful than the state, acting as a shadow government. While the clashes only lasted a week, the trauma endured. For this generation, Hezbollah would be the name and face of those VNSAs.

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[6] Jamie Dettmer, "Lebanese Hold Their Breath as Fears Grow Hezbollah Will Pull Them Into War", *POLITICO* (October 16, 2023) https://www.politico.eu/article/lebanese-hold-their-breath-as-fears-grow-hezbollah-will-pull-them-into-war/

[7] Jamie Prentis and Nada Maucourant Atallah, "Lebanese Government Prepares Itself For Possible War", *The National News*, (Oct 12, 2023) https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/lebanon/2023/10/12/lebanese-government-prepares-itself-for-possible-war/

[8] CNN, *Israel Pledges Continued Attacks on Lebanon; Demands Surrender by Hezbollah*, (April 12, 1996) http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/9604/12/israel.lebanon.pm/

[9] The Daily Star, *Timeline of the July War 2006*, (September 28, 2006) https://web.archive.org/web/20060928081123/http://www.dailystar.com.lb/July_War06.asp

[10] James Sturcke, "The Key Events in Lebanon Since the Assassination of The Former Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, In 2005", *The Guardian*, (February 12, 2007) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/dec/12/syria.lebanon1

[11] The World Bank, *International Tourism, Number of Arrivals – Lebanon*, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL?locations=LB

[12] Brian Knowlton, "Large-Scale Evacuations from Lebanon Begin", *The New York Times*, (July 19, 2006) https://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/19/world/middleeast/19cnd-flee.html

[13] Robert F. Worth and Nada Bakri, "Hezbollah Seizes Swath of Beirut from U.S.-Backed Lebanon Government", *The New York Times*, (May 10, 2005) https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/10/world/middleeast/10lebanon.html

The 2008 incidents were not the end; in the years after, Lebanon has come dangerously close to civil unrest as a result of Hezbollah's actions and their impact on the country. One such action that had a significant impact on Lebanon and contributed to the financial crisis was Hezbollah's interference in the Syrian Civil War.[14] Despite concerns expressed by the Lebanese about Hezbollah's involvement in Syria, including the death of Lebanese citizens on Syrian soil, major substantial criticism of the group has been limited.[15] As a result, Hezbollah has continued operating with little opposition, gradually gaining more power and control over the country. This interference has led to strained relations with Gulf countries and has caused Lebanon to suffer under the weight of Hezbollah's actions.

As such, the post-civil war generation faces a significant challenge in the form of a VNSA, which can declare war without seeking government approval and can paralyse a nation's political and economic stability if its demands are unmet. Hezbollah, which came into an undisputed power in the years that the post-civil war generation was born and since then started taking over the state gradually, is robust, immune to scrutiny, and beyond reproach. As such, this generation deserves some answers and explanations. Hence, this dissertation has been developed to shed light on Hezbollah's actions and behaviour from the post-civil war period in 1990 until the port explosion in 2020, hoping to provide some answers by understanding its patterns of power.

Moreover, the recent events in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have underscored the need for a deeper examination and understanding of VNSAs and their patterns of power. Thus, understanding Hezbollah is critical not only for comprehending the current situation in Lebanon but also for the broader MENA region, given its presence and influence. As a contemporary VNSA that competes with nations and sometimes assumes control, Hezbollah has become a model of sorts. Therefore, examining its actions and behaviour is essential to comprehend its patterns of power. This understanding will aid in developing a new theoretical framework to analyse other VNSAs' patterns of power, determining whether they share commonalities with Hezbollah or have their distinct patterns. By comprehending the patterns of power that VNSAs employ to achieve their goals, we can begin to address them and move forward. Therefore, with its direct and significant policy implications, this dissertation aims to shed light on the issue of VNSAs and their patterns of power.

This introductory chapter sets the stage by introducing the topic, presenting the main research question, and providing a brief literature review on VNSAs and power. It also outlines the intended theoretical and methodological approach and the dissertation's scholarly and policy relevance. Finally, the conclusion summarises the chapters to follow.

1.1. Problem Statement and Research Question

The MENA region has been marred by numerous wars and conflicts, with various actors shaping its tumultuous landscape. Among the influential actors who have played significant roles in the region's historical and contemporary contexts are the VNSAs. One of the earliest and most renowned VNSAs is

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[14] Abigail Hauslohner, "Hezbollah's role in Syrian civil war drives sectarian tension in Lebanon", *The Washington Post*, (April 27, 2013) https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/hezbollahs-role-in-syrian-war-drives-sectarian-tension-in-lebanon/2013/04/27/942ae1ac-ae5c-11e2-a986-eec837b1888b_story.html
[15] Joseph Daher, "The Consequences of Hezbollah's Military Intervention in Syria on the Lebanese Shia Population and Relations with Israel", *Observatoire du Monde Arabo-Musulman et du Sahel, Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique*, (September 26, 2017) https://www.frstrategie.org/sites/default/files/documents/programmes/observatoire-du-monde-arabo-musulman-et-du-sahel/publications/en/20.pdf

The Order of the Assassins (الحَشَّاشِين–al-Ḥashshāshīyīn), which operated from 1090 to 1275 AD. This clandestine militant group made a lasting impact on the region through its use of targeted killings and covert operations, seeking to influence political and religious dynamics during the medieval period.[16]

In the modern era, Hezbollah (حزب الله–Party of God) has solidified its position in the MENA region's complex mosaic of conflicts by emerging as its most significant player. Initially a covert militant group in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Hezbollah has evolved into a formidable political and military force deeply embedded in Lebanon's socio-political landscape. Its influence expanded beyond Lebanon, making it a significant regional player. Through the strategic use of conventional and asymmetric warfare, political manoeuvring and the provision of social services, Hezbollah has demonstrated its ability to adapt and thrive in a changing environment, cementing its position as a significant actor.[17]

Despite the considerable time gap spanning several centuries between these two VNSAs, there are remarkable similarities in their actions and behaviours concerning power dynamics. The Order of the Assassins and Hezbollah have exploited a combination of ideological dedication, strategic violence, and social influence to accomplish their goals. Their use of targeted violence and terror, alongside endeavours to gain mass approval, highlights a consistent strategical pattern of leveraging both fear and support to maintain and extend their power. For instance, The Order of the Assassins was known for its strategic assassinations of political and religious figures. At the same time, Hezbollah used military force, political manoeuvring, and social services to gain support and influence.

Therefore, throughout history, VNSAs in the MENA region have shown remarkable resilience and adaptability in response to crises. They have demonstrated an ability to thrive in uncertain conditions by innovating and improvising to survive. However, these groups have also displayed a persistent desire for power and control, often seeking to capture the state through their use of violence and aggression. By utilising both tactics, VNSAs can flourish in times of uncertainty while also exercising structural dominance and coercion in more stable situations. Thus, examining VNSAs' patterns of power is essential for several reasons. It offers insights into these actors' enduring strategies and tactics to navigate and influence their environments. Moreover, understanding these patterns can also highlight the broader implications for regional stability and international security. As such, this dissertation aims to answer one central question: What are the VNSAs' patterns of power in the MENA region?

To effectively address this inquiry, it is critical first to understand the specific type of power exerted by VNSAs. This dissertation argues that there is not one type of power that VNSAs apply. Rather, there are four different yet complementary types under which VNSAs act. These four types of power are Katzenstein and Seybert's control and protean power and Nye's soft and hard power. According to Katzenstein and Seybert, control and protean power combine the coexisting logic of uncertainty and risk. Theorising about risk is nothing new to political scientists; it involves how political actors anticipate and prepare for outcomes they can calculate and imagine. As such, analyses based on calculation and management are primarily associated with control power.[18]

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[16] Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Secret Order of Assassins: The Struggle of the Early Nizârî Ismâî'lîs Against the Islamic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005)

[17] Naim Qassem, *Hizbullah the Story from Within* (London: Saqi, 2010)

[18] Lucia A. Seybert and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power: Conceptual Analysis" in Lucia A. Seybert and Peter J. Katzenstein (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 3–26

On the other hand, protean power is the intriguing result of an actor's exceptional flexibility in adapting to uncertain circumstances. According to Katzenstein, this kind of power is best understood as something that arises in an environment of uncertainty and possibility rather than something actors own. Protean power views uncertainty as a fundamental aspect of political life, explaining how decision-makers in the political sphere—from state leaders to bankers and international migrants—can actualise outcomes that could have, by chance or circumstance, turned out very differently. Thus, analyses based on uncertainty, which are difficult to control and unpredictable, are typical of protean power.[19]

Depending on the circumstances, actors can apply soft or hard power while exercising control and protean power. Nye defines soft power as influencing others and achieving desired results through attraction and persuasion instead of force and remuneration. In contrast, hard power relies on coercion and transactional inducements.[20] As a result, it is worth exploring VNSAs' patterns of power that result from utilising protean and control power while combining them with hard and soft power. However, it is essential to note that a thorough examination of a case study is necessary to adequately answer these questions and fully comprehend VNSAs' patterns of power. Therefore, the following lines will present a general overview of VNSAs and power within the backdrop of the MENA region.

1.2. Literature Review

To comprehend VNSAs' patterns of power, it becomes inevitable to examine the literature covering their various types. Through this literature, it became evident that power studies examined VNSAs in terms of terrorism and deterrence more than in an attempt to understand those actors and their patterns of power.[21] Most studies regarding VNSAs have only been conducted to explain their various types and actions.[22] They highlighted their operational strategies, mainly how VNSAs take advantage of the weak states and why they emerged.[23] As important as these points are, they fall short of understanding the power that VNSAs practice to impose their will, capture the state, and reach their aim.

This gap in VNSAs' literature extends to the literature on power itself. The traditional approach to power observes the state as the only legitimate form of power and, hence, the only body capable of exercising

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[19] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power"

[20] Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept", *Journal of Political Power*, vol.14, no.1 (February 2021), 196-208

[21] Katarina Dalacoura, "Middle East Area Studies and Terrorism Studies; Establishing Links via a Critical Approach" in Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smyth, and Jeroen Gunning (eds), *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda* (London: Routledge, 2009). Keith Krause and Jennifer Milliken, "Introduction: The Challenge of Non-State Armed Groups", *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol.30, no.2, (August 2009), 202-220. Neil A. Englehart, "Non-state Armed Groups as a Threat to Global Security: What Threat, Whose Security?" *Journal of Global Security*, vol.1, no.2, (May 2016), 171-183. Raghda Elbahy, "Deterring VNSAs: Dilemmas and Implications", *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Science*, vol.1, no.1 (August 2019), 43-54

[22] Phil Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors and National and International Security", *International Relations and Security Network* (Zurich: Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, 2008). Eran Zohar, "A New Typology of Contemporary Armed Non-State-Actors: Interpreting the Diversity", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol.39, no.5, (2016), 425-450

[23] Paul Salem, "The Rise of Violent Transnational Movements in the Middle East: Historical Context, Dynamic Drivers and Policy Takeaways", *Middle East Institute*, Counterterrorism Series, Policy Paper (January 2018). Vincent Durac, "The Role of Non-State Actors in Arab Countries after the Arab Uprisings"*, IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook*, vol.1 (March 2015), 37-41. Anne Marie Baylouny, "Born Violent: Armed Political Parties and Non-State Governance in Lebanon's Civil War", *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, vol.25, no.2 (June 2014), 329-353.

power.[24] As a result, attention should be shifted elsewhere, mainly to the contemporary International Relations (IR) approaches to power, especially Pape and Mishali-Ram, who studied VNSAs' power.[25] These scholars revealed significant power variables in their studies, including ideology, leaders' character, communication, weapons, barter, diplomatic, and institutional powers.[26] However, they both fell short of providing a theoretical framework to examine VNSAs' patterns of power. In the more contemporary theories of power, mainly in the study of protean power, an attempt was made to show that VNSAs exercise protean power while applying hard power.[27] Nonetheless, the study did not move away from the narration of counter-terrorism, where it presented an argument about how states can exercise protean power to deter VNSAs.

Therefore, the existing literature on VNSAs and their use of power has significant gaps, particularly in offering a structured framework for analysing these actors' distinctive patterns of power. Despite the extensive research on VNSAs' operations, motivations, and impacts, there is a noticeable lack of a cohesive conceptual model that comprehensively addresses how these actors acquire, exert, and sustain power in various contexts. This gap hinders a systematic understanding of the complexities of VNSAs' patterns of power. Given the absence of a framework for exploring VNSAs' patterns of power in existing literature, it became essential to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for this purpose. Such a theoretical framework would integrate diverse theoretical perspectives and empirical findings to present a comprehensive understanding of VNSAs' strategic patterns of power.

1.3. Theoretical and Methodological Approach

The study of power is a crucial aspect of IR, and the issue of VNSAs has gained significant attention in light of the terrorist attacks which escalated at the turn of the millennia. This has prompted the need to develop a theoretical framework that can effectively explain the dynamics and tactics of VNSAs. In this dissertation, the focus is on exploring VNSAs' patterns of power in the MENA region. To achieve this, a theoretical framework must first be developed to examine the behaviour of a specific VNSA. This calls for a case study to analyse the actions of the chosen actor, which will then be studied through the lens of the framework to deduce its patterns of power. As such, Hezbollah has been selected as a single case study, with three subcases that follow the area of its operations: its actions in Lebanon, particularly concerning domestic affairs, its involvement in the Arab world's affairs, mainly its role in unsettling governments and involvement in civil wars and its continuous struggle against Israel.

The concept of power is a theoretical issue that has dominated the IR field for many years. There has been little agreement on defining power and what it entails.[28] However, this dissertation will commence from the assumption that traditional IR approaches to power fall short of comprehending the dynamics of power that VNSAs apply. Additionally, the controversy over VNSAs has raged for many years,

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[24] John Agnew, "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory", *Review of International Political Economy*, vol.1, no.1 (Spring 1994), pp. 53-80

[25] Meirav Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors Make a Difference: Theorizing Power Attributes of Nonstate Actors", *International Journal of Peace Studies*, vol.14, no.2 (Autumn/Winter2009), 55–82

[26] Leslie M. Pape, "The Sources and Limits of Political Power", *Social Forces*, vol. 18, no.3 (March 1940), 424–428

[27] Barak Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power: How Terrorists Navigate Uncertainty", in Lucia A. Seybert and Peter J. Katzenstein (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 188-208

[28] Daniel Drezner, "Power and International Relations: A Temporal View", *European Journal of International Relations*, vol.27, no.1 (March 2021), 29-52

including how to define them, who they are, and how to deal with them.[29] As a result, it is essential to develop a theoretical framework to examine VNSAs' patterns of power.

This dissertation crafted a novel framework that explores VNSAs' patterns of power through the lens of control and protean power while considering the specific types of power they employ—soft or hard—to attain their objectives. The fusion of control, protean, hard and soft powers has yielded four distinct patterns of power: *Predomination*, *Exhortation*, *Intimidation*, and *Adulation*. These patterns arise as control and protean power intersect with hard and soft powers, providing unparalleled insights into the power dynamics of VNSAs. For instance, *predomination* occurs when a VNSA combines control and hard power. This happens when the VNSA can control and manage the situation it finds itself in and when the type of power it wants to apply is force. *Exhortation* is the pattern VNSAs practice when exercising control power while applying soft power such as persuasion. *Intimidation* is the combination of protean and hard powers; it occurs when the VNSA is acting in an environment of uncertainty while applying hard power. *Adulation* occurs when the VNSA acts in an uncertain and unpredictable environment, yet it chooses to apply soft power.

However, scant attention has been paid to the power dynamics of VNSAs and how they utilise specific power combinations to achieve their goals and capture the state. Thus, the dissertation will research Hezbollah's actions and behaviour to gain insight into the intricate patterns of power where many forms and types of power converge.

Therefore, in pursuit of addressing the main research question: What are VNSAs' patterns of power in the MENA region? The dissertation presents two critical theoretical and empirical arguments that examine this significant issue.

Theoretically, the dissertation unfolds with two primary arguments; the first intricately explores the nature of the relationship between control and protean power, while the second delves into the amalgamation of various concepts of power, which give rise to the four patterns of power presented in this dissertation.

The first theoretical argument posits that all political actors, including VNSAs, seek to attain control power, giving them certainty and the ability to anticipate outcomes in risky situations. However, when actors face an uncertain environment, they often employ protean power, which enables them to improvise and innovate while striving to gain control power. Thus, VNSAs exercise protean power as a tactic to achieve control power. Consequently, actors may utilise both powers concurrently, depending on the context, to navigate challenges and accomplish their objectives.

Additionally, the dissertation argues that control and protean power are not isolated concepts but interact with other types of power, particularly soft and hard. This means an actor may wield control power through coercion and dominance over institutions, but they may not always rely on hard power. Soft power approaches can also be effective. Similarly, actors exercising protean power may not solely rely on soft power, as they can also utilise hard power to achieve their goals through innovation and improvisation. This combination results in four patterns of power - *predomination*, *exhortation*, *intimidation*, and *adulation* - which VNSAs practice in varying contexts and periods.

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[29] Phil Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors and National and International Security", *International Relations and Security Network* (Zurich: Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, 2008)

From an empirical standpoint, this dissertation, using Hezbollah as a case study, argues that the primary objective of this armed political party is to attain control power. However, operating in an uncertain environment, it resorts to protean power and leverages it to achieve its goal. Furthermore, by applying the theoretical framework of the four patterns of power, the dissertation reiterates that *predomination*, a combination of hard and control power, is Hezbollah's primary aim. To achieve this, the VNSA employs various other patterns, such as *intimidation*, *exhortation*, and *adulation*, depending on the circumstances and the type of power it deems most effective. This research provides a deeper understanding of VNSAs and offers practical insights into their strategies and tactics.

Consequently, the theoretical and empirical arguments present a novel approach to understanding VNSAs and power. While the existing literature associates VNSAs with control and hard power, this dissertation introduces the concept of protean and soft power to their realm, a unique perspective that enriches the discourse. Additionally, regarding power, the dissertation presents a unique framework and approach that links protean and hard power on one hand and control and soft power on the other, in sharp contrast without dismissing the common association of protean-soft and control-hard, hence producing four different patterns of power through a unique framework. This theoretical framework will also be an empirical asset since it will examine Hezbollah's patterns of power using a new approach.

1.4. Scholarly and Policy Relevance

This research was motivated by a desire to understand Hezbollah, one of the main VNSAs in the region, which has been racking its political life and stability for almost half a century by examining its patterns of power. The aim is to understand Hezbollah's internal and external actions to envision the region's future and perceive if stability and security would be possible. Therefore, the primary motive was to take one subject, Hezbollah, and examine it within three different environments, Lebanon, the Arab world, and Israel, with various dimensions and outcomes to discover its patterns of power through its behaviour and actions. Thus, the dissertation's idea was not initially driven by a theoretical ambition but rather by an empirical one. However, when the research and analysis process started, it became evident that Hezbollah was using both hard and soft power to achieve its goal while exercising protean power. This also occurred when it exercised control and applied soft and hard power. This combination of power exercised and power applied produced four patterns of power: *predomination*, *exhortation*, *intimidation* and *adulation*. Thus, this dissertation will contribute to the field of IR since it opens a new understanding of power relations and implementations.

This research empirical contribution is presented through an intensive examination of one of the most famous VNSAs, Hezbollah. Although it is considered a highly researched group, most literature focused on Hezbollah's military capabilities and internal structure, from which it derives strength.[30] Further vigorous exploration of its power reveals the importance of violence in Hezbollah's presence and continuity, yet there is a lack of examination and analysis of Hezbollah's patterns of power. This

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[30] Amnon Aran, "Containment and territorial transnational actors: Israel, Hezbollah and Hamas", *International Affairs*, vol. 88, no. 4 (July 2012), 835-855. Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (Princeton: New Jersey: Princeton University Press: Princeton, 2018). Adham Saouli, "Hizbullah, Hamas, and the Arab Uprisings: Structures, Threats, and Opportunities", *Orient*, vol.54, no.2 (2013), 37-43. Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hezbollah* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004). Marc R. DeVore & Armin B. Stähli, "Explaining Hezbollah's Effectiveness: Internal and External Determinants of the Rise of Violent Non-State Actors", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 27, no.2 (2015), 331-357. Rola el-Husseini, "Hizbullah and Regional Non-State Actors", in Samer Shehata (eds), *Islamist Politics in the Middle East: Movements and Changes* (London: Routledge, 2012), 166-182.

dissertation will propose unique empirical perceptions of the essence and factors of Hezbollah's social and political environment, which stands behind its violent actions, directing its designs and operations. The significance of this research lies in its attempt to understand VNSAs by pointing out their role in shaping policies internally and externally rather than attempting to understand them through the lens of security studies of terrorism. By delivering original empirical data on Hezbollah's patterns of power through its practices, this dissertation will contribute to the ongoing discussions on VNSAs as well as the broader study of power which actors such as Hezbollah can impose on weak and strong states alike, as it is evidence in Lebanon, the Arab States and Israel.

Moreover, the dissertation will better explain how VNSAs, through their practice of power that combines different patterns of power, capture the host state and exert influence on the region. The vision of this work is to bring a more expansive notion of policymaking based on evidence that VNSAs are capable and have their form of policymaking and a way to implement them. Hence, local, regional and international policymakers should comprehend the significance of realising Hezbollah's patterns of power before embarking on any ambitious policymaking. Furthermore, by explaining the strength of VNSAs' patterns of power in shaping policies, such evidence could help policymakers understand the need to consider the intensifying influence of VNSAs on the population and the system. Thus, different conceptions about the various forms of power practised by VNSAs can help policymakers and the wider population understand the patterns of power that VNSAs apply in future drawings and negotiations.

Eventually, any attempt for a solid policy to strengthen the state and protect all its subjects must consider the power of VNSAs. A thorough comprehension of Hezbollah's patterns of power is needed for Lebanon to witness constructive change and progressive development. Such an understanding will only pave the way for establishing new negotiations with Hezbollah and eliminating its sources by stepping forward and taking responsibility for the gaps Hezbollah has filled. Moreover, powers in the Middle East and abroad should realise that any negotiations with Lebanon that exclude Hezbollah and any policies directly targeting it are doomed to fail.

1.5. Dissertation Outline

After providing a brief overview of the PhD dissertation, it is time to outline its structure. The coming chapter will review the existing literature on VNSAs and power. The discussion of VNSAs definitions, typologies, ideologies and their influence on the hosting states, as well as their impact on neighbouring states, will be done in the backdrop of the MENA region since it forms the backdrop to this research. On the other hand, the section on power contains an extensive reading of the theories in the field, questions the applicability of the traditional IR theories to understand non-state actors (NSAs) actions and behaviours, and elaborates on the significance of the emerging theories in comprehending the overall picture of these actors and understanding their dynamics.

The third chapter is dedicated to the dissertation's theoretical and methodological framework. Two main theories are offered and discussed excessively for their archery significance in understanding VNSAs' patterns of power. Thus, a comprehensive summary of Lucia A. Seybert and Peter J. Katzenstein's theory of protean and control power and Joseph Nye's theory of hard and soft power chief theoretical features and assumptions are systematically discussed. The core aim is to integrate these two theories within the dissertation's analysis to grasp the VNSAs' patterns of power. After establishing the theoretical section, the chapter will present an account of the case study method that will be applied throughout the dissertation. The methodology section will also highlight the purposeful sampling in collecting the data.

Chapters 4 to 6 are devoted to the empirical analysis. These three empirical chapters are derived from the data analysis and are split into three main areas: Lebanon, the Arab world, and Israel. Such a division broadly corresponds to the dimensions reflecting Hezbollah's sphere of actions, relations and role in the region and the environment in which it exercises its power. On these grounds, Hezbollah operates, implementing its ideology, enforcing its political stand and performing its violent actions. Hence, Hezbollah's movements and positions are analysed in relation to the field in which it is acting. Such analysis will be conducted through the scope of protean and control power as well as soft and hard power, emphasising an alternative understanding of power and the importance of actions and narrations in fully comprehending the practices of VNSAs. Therefore, each chapter moves progressively from obtaining insights into Hezbollah's perspectives through a historical background to focusing on its actions through a chronological narration and concluding by stating the findings. The main aim of having three empirical chapters is to compare and contrast Hezbollah's actions and arrive at an overt conclusion about Hezbollah's patterns of power.

Thus, the fourth chapter will introduce the case study of Hezbollah concerning Lebanon. Throughout a chronological narration from 1990 to 2000 divided into four distinctive phases, the chapter will deduce Hezbollah's patterns of power. It will show how the armed political party exercise a distinct form of power by combining several elements. Also, it will show how Hezbollah employs protean power as a tactic to achieve control power while applying both hard and soft powers. Following the same mythological and theoretical logic of Chapter 4, the fifth chapter will present an account of Hezbollah's actions and behaviour within the Arab world. By analysing its interactions with various Arab countries' enemies and allies and with the Arab population, its patterns of power will become more apparent. The final empirical chapter will examine Hezbollah's patterns of power regarding Israel. It will be presented chronologically, covering Hezbollah's actions and reactions vis-à-vis Israel.

Using all of the previously discussed material as a starting point, the final chapter revisits and analyses the research findings before analysing the research's comprehensive theoretical implications. Furthermore, it assesses the dissertation's shortcomings and explores potential avenues for further investigation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter aims to conduct a comprehensive literature review of VNSAs and power. To achieve this goal, the chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section will focus on VNSAs, examining the main approaches and arguments of the dissertation's primary investigation and scholars. The subchapters will cover the definition of VNSAs and researchers' positions on this topic. They will explain how these views align with or oppose the dissertation's arguments and objectives. The second section of the chapter will investigate the concept of power. The literature on power will be used to define this concept in line with the dissertation's position and understanding. Additionally, the literature will highlight the primary theories and arguments regarding power and how they relate to or challenge the dissertation's stand and comprehension of power.

To grasp the full scope of VNSAs, it is crucial to define them, study their typology, and observe their operations. Given the focus of this dissertation on VNSAs in the MENA region, a meticulous literature review will be conducted to analyse their presence, actions, and impact on the region. Importantly, their profound influence on the host state warrants a dedicated subsection to explore the literature on the impact of VNSAs on their host state. The final subsection will examine the ideology that propels VNSAs, namely Islamism. This section will discuss the role of political Islam in shaping VNSAs in the MENA region. Ultimately, this research will significantly contribute to understanding Hezbollah's patterns of power, which is the focal point of the case study, by analysing its actions and behaviour as a VNSA.

The discourse surrounding VNSAs reveals their possession and utilisation of a unique form of power. This dissertation seeks to analyse VNSAs' patterns of power, a task that necessitates a thorough examination of the existing literature on power. However, defining power is a complex and multifaceted endeavour, given the absence of a consensus on its definition and components. Nevertheless, the first subsection will provide an overview of the debate on power and elucidate the perspective adopted in this dissertation. The second subsection will explore the literature's discourse on VNSAs and power, presenting the various perspectives of scholars on VNSAs and their approach to power. The third subsection will emphasise the need to develop a counter-strategy against VNSAs by demonstrating their impact on the host state's security, governance, and the region. Finally, the most significant subsection will feature scholars who have explored power and developed theories and techniques that align with this dissertation's objective of tracing VNSAs' patterns of power.

This chapter will eventually examine the discourse in the literature concerning VNSAs and their power to arrive at a definitive interpretation for the dissertation. Additionally, it will endeavour to identify the deficiencies in the existing body of work and leverage the theories and methodologies employed to address the topic of VNSAs and power, thereby augmenting the dissertation's comprehension of the matter and its objectives.

2.1 - Review of the Literature on Violent Non-State Actors (VNSAs)

The literature on VNSAs concerning geopolitics, economics, and other disciplines has been extensive. Scholars in political science, human rights, and law have examined these groups primarily in underdeveloped and unstable regions such as MENA, Latin America, South and Central Asia, and Africa. The prevailing assumption in the literature is that weak states plagued by poverty and insecurity are more susceptible to the emergence of VNSAs. Research has primarily focused on "terrorism, national security,

domestic rebellion and state power,"[31] or establishing a code of conduct for VNSAs by human rights lawyers. Case studies have predominantly been conducted in third-world countries, leading to proposed solutions that address economic[32] and political conditions[33] and the state's fragility,[34] incompetence, and violence.[35] It is worth noting that VNSAs' impact is not limited to the global south, but the literature has tended to overlook their influence on rich countries.

However, as VNSAs continue to profoundly impact the global stage, it has become clear that the traditional "greed versus grievance" approach is insufficient.[36] A new perspective is necessary to adequately address the complex issue of VNSAs and their geographical presence. This perspective allows for a broader understanding of the strategies used to gain power and how a state's ability to govern is directly tied to the expansion of VNSAs. Given the increasing number of VNSAs, it is essential to understand the root causes of their rapid growth. A closer examination reveals that political and economic weakness, domestic issues, and evolving concepts of sovereignty drive the emergence of VNSAs. To explore this phenomenon in greater depth, Diane E. Davis employs a historical framework to analyse the political and economic progress that shapes sovereignty and political loyalty.[37]

However, VNSAs' actions and impacts are not limited to the impoverished states from which they originated or operated. Instead, they have extended their reach to influence even the most prosperous nations. According to Davis, VNSAs' work extends beyond violent or armed actions, infiltrating "urban economies and transnational network of trade and accumulation, with some of them even structured around clandestine networks of remittances, thereby flying under the radar screen broadly cast domains of governance and sovereignty associated with the nation-state."[38] VNSAs use violence as a tool for political gain, economic stability, and survival. They can safeguard their established markets and critical

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[31] Diane E. Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors, New Imagined Communities, and Shifting Patterns of Sovereignty and Insecurity in the Modern World", *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol.30, no.2 (August 2009), 221-245, pp. 222-225

[32] Vadim Volkov, Violent Entrepreneurs: The Use of Force in Making Russian Capitalism (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002). Peter Lupsha, "Transnational Crime versus the Nation-State", *Transnational Organized Crime*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Spring 1996), 21–48; Marcel Fafchamps, "Networks, Communities and Markets in SubSaharan Africa: Implications for Firm Growth and Investment", *Journal of African Economies*, vol. 10, AERC Supplement 2 (2001), pp. 109–142. Abdou Maliq Simone, "Pirate Towns: Reworking Social and Symbolic Infrastructures in Johannesburg and Douala", *Urban Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2 (February 2006), pp. 357– 370; Samuel Munzele Maimbo, "Remittances and Economic Development in Somalia: An Overview", *Social Development Papers*, no. 38 (Washington DC: World Bank, 2006).

[33] Jane Perlez and Pir Subair Shah, "As Taliban Overwhelm the Police, Pakistanis Fight Back", *New York Times*, (November 2, 2008). Erica Goode, "Handshake Defuses a Standoff in Baghdad", *New York Times*, (September 4, 2008), p. 1.

[34] Enrique Desmond Arias, *Drugs and Democracy in Rio de Janeiro: Trafficking, Social Networks, and Public Security* (Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Ralph Rozema, "Urban DDR-Processes: Paramilitaries and Criminal Networks in Medellin, Colombia", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 40, no. 3 (August 2008), pp. 423– 452. Diane E. Davis and Anthony W. Pereira (eds), *Irregular Armed Forces and their Role in Politics and State Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[35] Marc von Boemcken, "The Business of War", *Ideas for Peace,* (December 2003), https://ideasforpeace.org/es/content/the-business-of-war/. United Nations Human Rights, *Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries as a Means Of Violating Human Rights And Impeding The Exercise of The Right Of Peoples To Self-Determination* (August 24, 2007) https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-mercenaries. Alissa J. Rubin and Andrew E. Kramer, "Iraqi Premier Says Blackwater Shootings Challenge His Nation's Sovereignty", *New York Times*, (September 24, 2007), https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/24/world/middleeast/24iraq.html

[36] Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors", pp. 222-225

[37] Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors", pp. 222-225

[38] Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors", p. 222

networks, ensuring the continued flow of goods. Consequently, VNSAs aim to compete with and, in some regions, even replace the sovereign state.[39]

The level of violence exhibited by VNSAs and their capacity can vary greatly depending on their target, whether it be a minor skirmish with security forces or a large-scale terrorist attack. The intensity of VNSAs' actions is often linked to the strength of their opponent. VNSAs typically employ a "paradoxical logic of strategy."[40] They are gradually escalating their use of violence from relational manoeuvres to direct clashes. The key to maintaining their violent capabilities lies in their access to material and non-material resources, with two primary forms of abilities: organisational and operational.[41] While violence may be used to gain power, VNSAs' primary strategy is to exploit the weaknesses of vulnerable states.

In line with the dissertation's goals, this literature review will focus on VNSAs in developing countries, particularly their operational strategies. The aim is to examine how VNSAs take advantage of fragile states and the lack of legitimacy to justify their existence, consolidate power, and gain legitimacy. To address this topic comprehensively, the section on VNSAs will be divided into four subsections. The first will explore the emergence and formation of VNSAs and provide an overview of their types and definitions. The second will bring the literature closer to the dissertation by examining VNSAs in the MENA region and analysing internal and external factors that contributed to their emergence. The third subsection will discuss the influence of VNSAs on the host state, making it relevant to the dissertation's case study. The fourth and final section will explore the role of political Islam in the formation and strength of these actors.

2.1.1. Historical and Definitional Discussions on VNSAs

Globalisation has brought about the emergence of Non-State Actors (NSAs) in IR. This new development has challenged the traditional notion of states as the sole players on the international stage. The power and decision-making are shifting from states to NSAs, which has induced IR state-centric theories to consider the significance of these actors in world politics. In this new era of multi-faceted players, it is crucial to develop a new approach to the dynamics of international relations that considers the role of NSAs. States have historically been the primary players in shaping policies and providing security, but this monopoly is being contested. It is essential to consider NSAs when examining political situations, primarily because they can significantly provide or deprive security; such a power is a weapon they use to exploit for political gain. Among the various types of NSAs are VNSAs, whose emergence has caused a stir in the political and security world. In this subsection, we will explore the types of VNSAs, their definitions, and the approaches used to examine their impact on international relations.

One of the most influential works on VNSA typology was by Phil Williams, who highlighted the various types of VNSAs in his article "Violent Non-State Actors and National and International Security."[42] He divides VNSAs into the following categories: warlords, militias, paramilitary forces, insurgencies, terrorist organisations, criminal organisations and youth gangs. According to his findings, warlords are

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[39] Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors", pp. 222-225

[40] Marina Eleftheriadou, "Elements of 'Armed Non-State Actors' Power: The Case of al-Qaeda in Yemen", *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, vol.25, no.2 (June 2014), 404-427, p. 407

[41] Eleftheriadou, "Elements of 'Armed Non-State Actors'", p. 407

[42] Phil Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors and National and International Security", *International Relations and Security Network* (Zurich: Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, 2008), 1-21, p. 9, https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/93880/vnsas.pdf

usually charismatic. They enhance the hierarchy within their groups, aim to capture power and have enough resources. Their interests are more important than the collective ones. Warlords usually control a particular territory, have their forces, and have a specific form of governance among the people of their region, who typically come from the same ethnicity.[43]

Another type of VNSAs, according to Williams, are militias that share numerous characteristics with the warlords; however, they usually lack a charismatic leader. They operate under a sectarian leader from the same ethnic, religious, tribal or communal group within the territory. As an armed body, they function within weak or failed states, away from any "formal security sector and central government command and outside the law."[44] Nevertheless, they have been security providers since they emerged to provide security where the central government failed, rendering them legitimate. The militias in Iraq after 2003 provide examples such as the Kurdish Peshmerga, Bader Organization and Mehdi Army. Despite their affiliations with foreign countries, they are considered sub-national organisations. Through these militias' actions, it can be deduced that their violence is not restricted to the defensive area. Instead, it becomes offensive against the central government or among themselves.[45]

However, there is a thin line between militias and paramilitary groups. The main distinction is that paramilitary groups are fractions of the official army or security forces. Sunil Dasgupta described them as "armed formations outside the regular military and police commands (…) poorly trained, lightly equipped, highly fragmented, frequently reorganised, but politically recruited and operated, enabling them and the regimes that control them to hold territory inexpensively."[46] The United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) is an excellent example of a paramilitary force. Insurgencies are another type of VNSA. According to the United States Department of Defense, they are "an organised movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through subversion and armed conflict."[47] They usually work within a specific territory; they try to legitimise themselves by diminishing the state's legitimacy and presenting themselves as alternatives. They typically aim to overthrow the government and take over rather than establish a new system. Hence, they only seek to capture power and rule according to their ideology or criteria within the borders of the current state rather than having global ambitions. Taliban in Afghanistan serves as an example of an insurgency group.[48]

Perhaps terrorist groups are the most known forms of VNSAs due to the 9/11 attacks by Al-Qaeda. Such groups practice terror as a means for their political aims. However, terrorist organisations fluctuate tremendously regarding their backgrounds and goals. According to David Rapoport, four waves of modern terrorism, anarchists, anti-colonial, socialist and religious movements, all of which had their military wings to bring down change. Those groups, upon achieving territorial control, a certain expanse of legitimacy, along with the population support, grow into insurgency groups.[49] At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it became apparent due to Al-Qaeda that terrorist organisations moved from being nationally oriented to becoming transnational, especially the movements with Islamic militant

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[43] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 9

[44] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 11

[45] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 11

[46] Sunil Dasgupta, "Paramilitary Forces and Security Reorganization", *GSC Quarterly*, no.12 (Spring 2004), Program on Global Security and Cooperation, Social Science Research Council

[47] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 12

[48] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 13

[49] David Rapoport, "The Four Waves of Modern Terror: International Dimensions and Consequences", in Jussi M. Hanhimäki, Bernhard Blumenau (eds), *An International History of Terrorism Western and Non-Western Experiences* (London: Routledge, 2013), 282-310

backgrounds.[50] Given the actions taken to limit the funding for terrorist organisations, those groups moved into criminal activities to find financial support. Then, some organisations developed to include illegal activities in their work, like the Irish Republic Army (IRA). In contrast, others, such as Hezbollah, established links with criminal organisations to get money from their revenues. While mentioning Hezbollah, another significant point emerges of the thin line which distinguishes terrorist organisations from insurgency groups. For instance, Hezbollah's social services and political role assisted the organisation in becoming a major political party in the presented area. Although terrorist groups' threat to the state's existence and legitimacy is not vital, the possibility of them expanding into insurgency groups with legitimate political roles makes them more critical and challenging to the state.[51]

The last type of VNSAs is criminal organisations and youth gangs. There are various types of them. While most operate locally, others have made the utmost of the globalisation waves, establishing what is known as transitional criminal organisations and controlling the various deeds of the underworld. Relation to the threats they might pose to the states' security and legitimacy usually is minimal; however, the stronger they get, the more challenging their role becomes, such as in Latin America, where various organised crimes are considered a real threat to the state's existence.[52]

In addition to Williams's mentioned typologies, Eran Zohar introduces four new types based on his analysis of various contemporary VNSAs. The first type is "secessionist organisations" fighting to establish a federal regime or complete independence. These organisations are known to "have a homogenous character and are domestically oriented."[53] Moreover, due to some of these secessionist organisations' sponsorship, they can have their military forces and run a state within a state. The second type that Zohar mention is the "radical left revolutionary."[54] Through the limited number of weapons they obtain by buying and stealing, they engage in guerrilla warfare, usually in rough terrain. These revolutions aim to take over the current social order and redistribute power within the country. The third type is the "sectarian-based revolutionary" groups that pursue "regime change to stop state marginalisation."[55] Such groups have the potential to become as efficient as the regular army, which is armed with heavy weapons. Finally, the fourth type in Zohar's category, considered the most powerful, is the "global revolutionary organisations."[56] They are religiously oriented, aiming to establish Islamic states domestically, regionally and internationally through jihad. To achieve their goal, they use violent actions like terrorist attacks and suicide bombings.[57]

The last type of VNSAs was mentioned by Anne Marie Baylouny, who considered it essential to differentiate between the VNSAs that are armed and hierarchically systematised with a political mission and vision and those lacking it. Baylouny attempts to explain this difference by comparing the militias in the MENA region, mainly those in Iraq and Lebanon, labelling them as "armed political parties (APP)" with those who fall under the Anglo-American concept of the militia.[58] She clarifies the APP as "the armed section of a political party, separate from the government, or simply an armed and hierarchically

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[50] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 14

[51] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 15

[52] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 16

[53] Eran Zohar, "A New Typology of Contemporary Armed Non-State-Actors: Interpreting the Diversity", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol.39, no.5 (2016), 425-450, p. 423

[54] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 423

[55] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 423

[56] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 423

[57] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 423

[58] Anne Marie Baylouny, "Born Violent: Armed Political Parties and Non-State Governance in Lebanon's Civil War", *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, vol.25, no.2 (June 2014), 329-353, p. 331

organised group."[59] Such a definition contrasts with the historical Anglo-American term where militias are attached to the state since they are "recognisable irregular armed force operating within the territory of a weak and/or failing state."[60]

VNSAs encompass a wide range of groups, and scholars often refer to them as "states-within-states, proto, quasi, mini-states or parallel governments."[61] This is particularly true when these groups have control over a specific territory and can exercise power, provide public services and engage in violent behaviour. While some scholars classify VNSAs as "Violent Transnational Movements," this label suggests that these groups lack a distinct political objective.[62] However, VNSAs are often against the state, its legitimacy, and official military control and use violence as a means to achieve their political and socio-religious objectives. Although some may classify VNSAs as terrorists, these groups do not identify themselves as such. Therefore, it is not helpful to analyse them within this framework.[63] This dissertation will refer to Hezbollah, its case study, as a VNSA that acts as a state within a state and as an APP to maintain objectivity and neutrality. While Hezbollah is known in Lebanon as *the party* (al-Hizib) and referred to as a terrorist organisation among some countries or an Islamic military resistance in others, this dissertation will avoid using labels that imply specific political agendas.

Defining VNSAs is a critical task but not an easy one. These groups are recognised as key players in causing "regime instability, political disorder, violent conflict and overall conditions of insecurity and violence."[64] However, the definition of VNSAs varies depending on the discipline examining them, including international law, political science, international relations, military practitioners, governments, and non-governmental organisations.[65] While scholars and practitioners characterise VNSAs differently, they all agree that these groups aim to achieve their objectives through violence. They operate independently and are not part of official state institutions, though some may receive indirect or direct support from some states.[66] Despite the lack of agreement on the definition of VNSAs, they are recognised as armed, non-state actors with minimal cohesiveness and a specific duration of violent campaigns. James W. Moore views them as an autonomously operating planned group that uses violence to achieve political ends.[67] In short, VNSAs are groups that strive for power and reshape society and its institutions through violence.

After establishing their types and definitions, it is essential to understand the various theories and approaches scholars use to comprehend the actions of VNSAs. J. Bernhard Compton argues there is no

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[59] Baylouny, "Born Violent", p. 331

[60] Richard H. Shultz, Douglas Farah, Itamara V. Lochard, "Armed Groups: A Tier-One Security Priority", *USAF Institute for National Security Studies* (Colorado: USAF Academy, 2004), p. 23

[61] Ian S. Spears, "States-Within-States: An Introduction to Their Empirical Attributes", in Paul Kingston and Ian S. Spears (eds), *States-Within-States Incipient Political Entities in the Post—Cold War Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 15-34

[62] Paul Salem, "The Rise of Violent Transnational Movements in the Middle East: Historical Context, Dynamic Drivers and Policy Takeaways", *Middle East Institute*, Counterterrorism Series, Policy Paper 2018-1 (January 2018), p. 2

[63] Salem, "The Rise", p. 2

[64] Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors", p. 221

[65] Keith Krause and Jennifer Milliken, "Introduction: The Challenge of Non-State Armed Groups", *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol.30, no.2 (August 2009), 202-220, p. 203

[66] Rob Grace, "Briefing Note: Frontline Negotiations with Non-State Armed Groups", *Harvard Humanitarian Initiative's Advanced Training Program on Humanitarian Action* (ATHA),2016, 1-10, p. 2 https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2016-07/nsag_literature_review_0.pdf

[67] James W. Moore, "The Grand Strategic and Strategic Roles of Armed Non-State Actors (ANSAs)", *Canadian Military Journal*, vol.15, no.1 (Winter 2014), 5-15, p. 5

proper overall theory for VNSAs, so he proposed a causal relation based on two factors - opportunity and cause. Opportunity factor refers to the structural weakness that allows VNSA groups to form, become active, and grow, while cause factors deal with legitimacy and societal structures. According to Compton, there is a vital problem when analysing VNSAs and their link to the international system since there is no "defined level of analysis."[68] He approached the topic by examining it from the perspective of "micro motivations (or opportunity and causes) for macro behaviour (similar to agent-based modelling)."[69]

On the other hand, Paul Staniland presents a more reasonable approach to examining VNSAs. He believes that researchers should discourse the more profound, factually resolute system of options that assists and harms insurgents and states by relating cross-group contrast with a thorough awareness of the context. He insists that rebels are a belligerent power and that they should be examined by their right rather than being linked to the state's perspective and power. Hence, Staniland proposes organisational theory in which he suggests various organisational types, claiming that scholars can move between them as such typologies are valuable for cross-group examination and analysis within the group.[70] Eran Zohar followed Staniland's organisational theory, intending to "reframe the conflict between states and NSAs by adopting a more comprehensive approach, focusing on the diversity of contemporary NSAs."[71]

However, there is another significant approach to examining VNSAs, which is the historical framework.[72] Bruce Hoffman's substantial work *Inside Terrorism* emphasises the importance of reviewing such groups in a historical framework.[73] Likewise, Raymond Hinnebusch asserts the importance of considering the historical approach, presenting the risk of neglecting the historical context in any analyses involving VNSAs.[74] This dissertation will follow the historical approach since it is crucial to understand the background behind the emergence of the VNSA under examination, Hezbollah, and its pattern of behaviour throughout its operational years to deduce its patterns of power.

2.1.2. VNSAs in the Middle East and North Africa Region

The MENA region is a prime example of the impact of VNSAs. This area stands out due to the number of VNSAs operating within the states and their influence on transactions. These groups challenge the state's system and territory, controlling security and pursuing their foreign policy. Addressing the issue of VNSAs in the MENA region requires an examination of the reasons for their emergence. Political and socio-economic situations provide fertile ground for such organisations to flourish, as the states are structurally weak. Drawing on existing literature, this section will highlight scholars' methods and analyses of the factors behind the emergence of VNSAs in the MENA region. The section will be divided into three themes. The first will present a historical background of the development of VNSAs throughout different periods. The second will introduce the main factor behind their establishment: the state's weaknesses and lack of legitimacy. The third will conclude by observing how VNSAs capitalised on such weaknesses to gain legitimacy and act as a governing force by providing services that the government failed to produce.

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[68] J. Bernhard Compton, "Violent Non-State Actors in the Middle Eastern Region", *Small Wars Journal* (August 2008), p. 3, https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/violent-non-state-actors-in-the-middle-eastern-region

[69] Compton, "Violent Non-State", p. 3

[70] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 424

[71] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 423

[72] Zohar, "A New Typology", p. 424

[73] Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), pp. 3-17

[74] Raymond Hinnebusch, *The International Politics of the Middle East* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003)

Scholars have taken a historical approach to examine the transnational dynamics that led to the rise of VNSAs in the MENA region. Among them is Shams uz Zaman, who argues that the current situation in the Middle East can be traced back to the policies of colonial powers that dominated the region after the Ottoman Empire. The artificial borders drawn by the West, based on economic interest rather than the region's ethnoreligious divisions, culture, and heritage, have contributed to a complicated array of problems. Even after European withdrawal, the rulers of newly created states were chosen based on loyalty to old colonial powers, which kept the masses under submission. As a result, modern Arab states have suffered from illegitimacy, fragility, and weak institutions. The state's existence is linked to that of the leader, making the country vulnerable to external intervention or internal revolution. Shams uz Zaman's analysis sheds light on the early emergence of VNSAs in the region by analysing the post-colonial period through a historical lens that considers local and external factors.[75]

Through this context of historical analyses, Paul Salem presents the state's weakness in the Arab world. He linked it to the legitimacy issue of the Arab regimes. Framed more broadly, the Arab republic regimes built their legitimacy on two main promises. The first is linked to what was seen at the time as the Arab world's primary cause: liberating Palestine. The second is more tied to the socio-economic well-being of the population. Those regimes promised grand reforms and progression, which they failed to deliver. Ultimately, people lost confidence in those regimes, and a surge of frustration swapped around, preparing a fertile ground for the emergence of VNSAs, especially those with transnational motives. If the authorities who branded themselves as secular socialist progressive republics could not fulfil the people's hopes and deliver the long-awaited resurgence, an alternative should be found.

Naturally, people were on the threshold of a flareup, fighting despair with faith. The general mood drifted towards religious ideologies and explanations to justify the weak secular regimes' failure to fulfil any promises. Hence, the stage was set for VNSAs with religious backgrounds to emerge. Such actors gained more popularity and legitimacy than current regimes since they seem to deliver on the lost promises.[76] Therefore, the military setbacks, economic challenges, and ideological turmoil profoundly impacted the region's social and political landscape. These factors led to a series of events in 1979 known as the "Black Wave."[77] Salem identifies these events as the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the takeover of the Great Mosque in Mecca by Islamist rebels, the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and the oil price boom of the 1970s. These developments marked the end of secular movements and progressive state-building efforts, paving the way for religious extremist groups to seize power and determine the course of events in the MENA region. Additionally, these events exacerbated the longstanding Sunni-Shia conflict, as both groups organised VNSAs to fill the void left by failed secular states.[78]

Following the same line of argument, albeit focusing on a different period, Vincent Durac attributes the emergence of VNSAs in the MENA region to state weakness and even its absence in some fields. In his short study, Durac presents a review to demonstrate the absolute variety that the NSAs concept holds and the degree of its comprehension. He did so by taking the MENA region as a case study through which he defines the concept of NSAs and VNSAs and their significant role. He focuses on the period during and after the Arab uprising, which witnessed an increase in civil societies and armed groups, many of

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[75] Shams uz Zaman, "Rise of Non-State Actors in the Middle East: Regional Dimensions", *IPRI Journal*, vol. XV, no.1 (Winter 2015), 51-65, p. 51

[76] Salem, "The Rise" pp. 5-6

[77] Kim Ghattas, *Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Forty-Year Rivalry That Unraveled Culture, Religion, and Collective Memory in the Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2020)

[78] Salem, "The Rise", pp. 9–11

which are backed by regional and international players. He concludes that states like those in the Middle East, which lack moral legitimacy, marginalise an actual number of their population by political, social, religious or economic measures and fail to offer security and basic needs for their people, are fertile grounds for VNSAs to spread and flourish. Hence, the VNSAs can present themselves as a product equivalent to the state and derive their legitimacy by enhancing their work in that which the state failed to achieve. Based on the above and given the complexity of MENA, Durac suggests that any resolution directed towards VNSAs should be addressed on three equal levels: domestic, regional and international.[79]

The Arab uprising, which caused civil wars throughout the region, occurred roughly a century after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. At that time, colonial powers Britain and France divided the Middle East and North Africa based on their economic interests, creating the first borders.[80] New players and more complex dynamics have emerged, leading to a second drawing of borderlines. The region is now transitioning from a post-colonial period to an era of neo-colonialism. The outcome is uncertain as different actors vie for power and influence. In her study, Kristina Kausch explores the geopolitical equation in the MENA region, highlighting significant changes due to structural fluctuations in the position and weight of certain players. This shift signals the end of a long period of political stability and the potential for new forms of hegemony and structure. The future system could take many forms, from "Islamist rule to sectarian divides or a new Middle Eastern 'Cold War'." [81]

Kausch points out five notable themes ranging between regional and international, through which an apprehension of the complex situation in the region can be possible. The first theme is the declining role of Europe and the US in the MENA region. The historical part that Europe played in dividing the region and reigning over it as a colonial power and the US's support for its dictators shattered this block's image. With the new wave of power games, the West is challenged on various levels, especially with the emergence of new actors. Although the USA attempts to gain independence from the MENA energy sources, the region remains vital for Western economic security. Hence, the US is trying to preserve its dominant power in the region ahead of Russia and China, competing over the Middle East's hegemony.[82]

Second, Russia and China emerged as game-changers in the region. Both countries are chief arm providers, making them stakeholders in the region's security. They are also countering the US's role and Western interests. Above all, Russia is trying to present itself as a contrasting image to the US regarding reliability and patronage. Such emerging interests introduce new players to the MENA region, adding complexity and quivering its status quo.[83]

Third, the revival of the Iranian-Saudi enmity, heavily played on sectarian lines between Sunni and Shia Islam, influences the region's security and opens the door for escalating numbers of proxy wars and regional tensions. While Iran could extend its influence in the past decade, such as in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon, Saudi Arabia has not been as successful. This competition can have one of two effects on the

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[79] Vincent Durac, "The Role of Non-State Actors in Arab Countries after the Arab Uprisings", *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook*, vol.7, no.1 (March 2015), 37-41

[80] James Barr, *A Line in the Sand: Britain, France and The Struggle that Shaped the Middle East* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2012)

[81] Kristina Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity in the Middle East", *The International Spectator*, vol.5, no.3 (September 2015), 1-15, pp. 1-2

[82] Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity", p. 3

[83] Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity", pp. 3-6

region: it will lead to more conflicts and wars, or this competition can "develop into a détente," decreasing the regional conflicts.[84]

Fourth is the rise of "swing states" such as Turkey and Qatar, whose economic and political power allows them to assert their foreign policy independence to manoeuvre and influence the game's direction in the region.[85] Such states favour cooperation and the ability to operate over belonging to a particular block and having rigid alliances. As much as the swing states' emergence added another layer to the complexity in the region, their presence might be of help as mediators, especially with and in favour of the West.[86]

The fifth is the escalating role of VNSAs in influencing regional dynamics. Several factors have contributed to the rise of VNSAs in the MENA region, with the state weakness and the fragility of central governance being the most crucial. These factors have impacted regional security due to the porous borders and the strength of subnational identities, particularly those based on religious and tribal affiliation. The proliferation of proxy wars has also bolstered these movements by providing them with financial and political support from regional and international powers.[87]

A thorough analysis of the literature's historical context is essential for comprehending the emergence of VNSAs in the MENA region and the domestic, regional, and international factors contributing to their establishment and support. Legitimacy and validation of actions are derived from these historical events. The case study of Hezbollah in this dissertation is no different, especially given the background and environment behind its establishment. In addition to the relationship with various regional powers, mainly Iran and the influence that Hezbollah's actions leave on other regional and international powers, such as Saudi Arabia, Israel and the West. Adopting a historical approach, as outlined above, will aid in analysing its actions, affiliations, relationships, impact on the hosting state, and power structure.

2.1.3. VNSA's Influence on the Host State

As previously mentioned, the rise of VNSAs in the MENA region can be attributed to various factors, including internal and external conflicts, ongoing warfare, and state fragility. This instability has allowed VNSAs to position themselves as a viable alternative to the state regarding social, political, and security matters.[88] By presenting themselves as a replacement for traditional governance, it becomes clear that VNSAs are seeking to gain power and control. They take advantage of the state's weaknesses and lack of legitimacy to achieve this. To fully comprehend the relationship between VNSAs and their host state, it is essential to analyse several key components that define these groups, such as their goals, funding, structure, use of violence, and relationship with the state and their supporters. This analytical framework is crucial for assessing the different VNSAs, as each group has unique characteristics and motivations.[89] If a VNSA seeks power, its ultimate goal is to govern. This can lead to a clash with the existing government or a gradual replacement of it until the VNSA takes over completely. As VNSAs continue to play a significant role domestically, regionally, and sometimes even internationally, their conflict with the state they operate in becomes inevitable, ultimately challenging the concept of "statehood and

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[84] Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity", p. 7
[85] Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity", p. 9
[86] Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity", p. 9
[87] Kausch, "Competitive Multipolarity", p. 10
[88] Benedetta Berti, "What's in a Name? Re-Conceptualizing Non-State Armed Groups in the Middle East", *Palgrave Communication,* vol. 2**,** article no. 16089 (November 2016), p. 1
[89] Williams, "Violent Non-State Actors", p. 8

sovereignty."[90] The distinction between VNSAs and the state becomes increasingly blurred, eventually leading to an alternative form of governance and potentially overtaking the state's leading role.

The rise of VNSAs has significantly challenged the traditional Westphalian concept of sovereign states, which is based on a "Weberian legal and practical monopoly" on the use of violence.[91] As a result, researchers tend to focus on studying VNSAs vis-à-vis the state. Authority and legitimacy are critical components for any entity that seeks to establish or maintain its sovereignty. The Westphalian system traditionally viewed the state as the only significant player in domestic and international affairs. However, in the presence of weak states and the circumstances that come with them, non-state actors, particularly armed groups, can gain control by presenting themselves as alternative authorities. By providing community services, VNSAs can establish their power and derive legitimacy.[92]

The concept of legitimacy is crucial for VNSAs. It may seem counterintuitive that violent groups operating outside the based state structure would prioritise seeking legitimacy, but this is often the case, particularly for organisations with a political agenda and a clear mission and vision. To this end, Christopher J. Finlay's "just war" theory has become a significant topic in political science and international studies.[93] Finlay argues that this theory creates what is known as "moral or legitimate authority," which gives VNSAs the belief that they have the right to wage war on behalf of the people they represent.[94] This is important because international law only grants the right to wage war to states, entities similar to states, and the UN itself. Finlay's argument highlights the significance of legitimacy for VNSAs, as it enables them to justify their presence and defend their actions. They can assert that they are acting with the consent of their victimised people, whose rights have been violated and exposed to political injustice.[95]

It is essential to understand the causal relationship between the state and VNSAs. Whether politically or economically, weak states are more likely to produce VNSAs. Once formed, VNSAs can cause "regime instability, political disorder, violent conflict, and overall conditions of insecurity and violence."[96] Some researchers, such as Peter Schmitz, suggest that VNSAs can imitate states to achieve their national and international agendas and bring about change. Reflecting on the above, Amanda Di Paolo investigates VNSAs in her paper, dividing it into two sections. In the opening, she reviewed the literature on VNSAs' relation to International Relations theories, asserting that IR scholars should take VNSAs more seriously. The writer argues that VNSAs follow the way NSAs imitate the states to influence global affairs, take over the state, and challenge the local status quo. In the paper's second section, she presented three case studies to prove that VNSAs can become very productive and influential by imitating the state's course.[97]

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[90] Benedetta Berti, "Violent and Criminal Non-State Actors", in Anke Draude, Tanja A. Börzel, and Thomas Risse (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Governance and Limited Statehood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 272-292, p. 272

[91] Krause and Milliken, "Introduction: The Challenge", p. 202

[92] Anne Marie Baylouny, "Authority Outside the State: Non-State Actors and New Institutions in the Middle East", in Anne L. Clunan and Harold A. Trinkunas (eds), *Ungoverned Spaces: Alternative to State Authority in an Era of Softened Sovereignty* (California: Stanford University Press, 2010), 136-152, pp. 136-137

[93] Christopher J. Finlay, "Legitimacy and Non-State Political Violence", *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, vol.18, no.3 (September 2010), 287-312, p. 287

[94] Finlay, "Legitimacy and Non-State", p. 287

[95] Finlay, "Legitimacy and Non-State", p. 288

[96] Davis, "Non-State Armed Actors", p. 221

[97] Amanda Di Paolo, "Battle for State Control; Lessons from Violent Non-State Actors Imitating the State: Colombia, Nicaragua, and Lessons for Iraq", *World Affairs*, vol.167, no.4 (Spring 2005), 163-174, p. 163

In this context, Paul Salem's policy paper, based on a framework of analyses, comes to light. He inspects the rise of VNSAs in the MENA and presents a way forward for the future by focusing on the "historical dynamics and systematic conditions."[98] According to Salem, "complex conditions" allow VNSAs to persist and flourish, yet these conditions differ in "levels and sectors."[99] He discusses four levels: the "meta-level of international and regional order, the macro-level of states, the meso-level of subnational communities, and the micro-level of the individual."[100] Hence, the factors influencing VNSAs are "political, socio-economic, ideological and cultural" and are divided into "push and pull factors."[101] According to Salem, scholars can develop a way forward for the future by understanding the functioning methods of VNSAs within the state in a symbiotic relationship.

Benedetta Berti's insightful chapter investigates the complex relationship between hosting states and VNSAs. She extensively analyses existing literature to categorise the diverse types of VNSAs, ranging "from private militias to insurgent and terrorist organisations, to drug cartels and street gangs."[102] Despite their differences, they share a common goal of obtaining governance. While previous analyses have primarily focused on a "narrow-security prism," recent academic work has started exploring VNSAs regarding governance.[103] Berti examines the various structures that VNSAs follow, depending on the environment and period in which they arise. Additionally, she explores their impact on the population, governance, and state sovereignty. VNSAs significantly influence domestic, regional, and international politics through their services, how they offer them, and who benefits from them. However, it is essential to avoid viewing the relationship between VNSAs and states as competitive or as if they are swapping roles. Upon closer examination, the relationship is much more complicated than that.[104]

Anne Marie Baylouny's research on armed political parties and non-state governance during the Lebanese Civil War illustrates the abovementioned arguments. Her work comprehensively examines how VNSAs organise and operate within their communities and territories, effectively assuming the role of a weak or absent state. Baylouny conducted a comparative case study of four VNSAs that "established complex political and economic institutions and administrative structures" in their territories.[105] Her data and interviews revealed that the armed political parties' desire for control and ideology, combined with Lebanese activism, led to the creation of alternative administrative public service institutions.[106] Baylouny also uncovered the Lebanese VNSAs' financing resources, including funds from international and regional powers, internal sources, and taxation on the people under their control. The economic cooperation among various VNSAs resulted in a militia economy that allowed them to provide services ranging from security and law enforcement to social welfare, healthcare, education, and consumer protection.[107] By offering these services, which the government failed to produce, VNSAs capitalised on the state's weakness and gained legitimacy.

The relationship between VNSAs and the people is a critical foundation for the VNSAs' existence, activities, and power, as it grants them legitimacy. The dynamics between VNSAs and their constituents

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[98] Salem, "The Rise of Violent", p. 1
[99] Salem, "The Rise of Violent", p. 1
[100] Salem, "The Rise of Violent", p. 1
[101] Salem, "The Rise of Violent", p. 1
[102] Berti, "Violent and Criminal", p. 272
[103] Berti, "Violent and Criminal", p. 272
[104] Berti, "Violent and Criminal", p. 276
[105] Baylouny, "Born Violent", p. 329
[106] Baylouny, "Born Violent", p. 329
[107] Baylouny, "Born Violent", p. 334

are responsible for their success in capturing power and influencing policy formation. VNSAs naturally fill the void in areas where the state is weak or absent. This is accomplished through various means, primarily related to services and the authority they create. Baylouny examines the link between the authority that VNSAs acquire and the services they provide to the community. Her study focuses on VNSAs in the MENA region. It analyses three variables: the primary basis for asserting their influence, the method they use to legitimise their existence, and the importance of their services to their communities. According to Baylouny, VNSAs significantly impact the population's governance and the state's sovereignty. She demonstrates that VNSAs influence domestic, regional, and even international politics due to their services, how they offer them, and who benefits from them.[108]

In brief, the crux of these debates stems from the state's perceived weaknesses, which often create a power vacuum for non-state actors to fill. One example of this dynamic is Hezbollah's control over South Lebanon, which illustrates how individuals may require permission from VNSAs to access services or take action. When VNSAs gain control over a territory, their administration and authority differ from that of states, with trust built on customs and moral traditions rather than legal foundations.[109] People view VNSAs as sources of authority, stability, and power due to their wide range of services, from necessities like clean streets and social welfare to more advanced offerings like security and law enforcement.[110] By providing these services, VNSAs gradually gain the upper hand in manipulating populations and establishing themselves as the ultimate authority. Over time, they may supplant the state as the anchor of stability, security, social welfare, and order.

The relationship between VNSAs, the state, and the population can be seen as a causal chain. VNSAs gain legitimacy through their security and social services. With this legitimacy, they challenge the state's sovereignty and establish themselves as peers to the state, rivalling its policies and reshaping the country. Pursuing this power, VNSAs resort to violence. Building on this conclusion, the dissertation will explore VNSAs' patterns of power by focusing on Hezbollah's actions and activities in Lebanon.

2.1.4. Political Islam's Role in Shaping MENA's VNSAs

While many factors contribute to the rise of VNSAs in the MENA region, ideology is a crucial factor that enables them to persist, stay motivated, and gain strength. For many VNSAs in the MENA, it is their religious ideology and interpretation of Islam that drives them forward. Since 9/11, Islamist groups have gained significant political power and influence, shaping military interventions, security strategies, and foreign policy decisions. Political Islam emerged in the Middle East after the decline of Arabism and its associated national, liberal, and socialist approaches. Scholars have written extensively about political Islam and Islamist movements, examining the topic from various perspectives, such as religious, political, and international relations. To understand the role of Islamist political groups in shaping the MENA, it is essential to explore their ideology, history, and position.

Many groups exist in political Islam, and Salafism is one of them. This term is derived from the Arabic word *Salaffiyah*, which means *ancestors*. Salafist groups encourage a return to the pure tenets of Islam during the time of Prophet Muhammed. The Salafi political movement is closely linked to Salafi jihadism, which views violence as a means to achieve political and religious goals. Those who oppose

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[108] Baylouny, "Authority Outside the State", pp. 136-137

[109] Annette Idler and James J.F. Forest, "Behavioral Patterns among (Violent) Non-State Actors: A Study of Complementary Governance", *International Journal of Security & Development*, vol.4, no.1:2 (January 2015), 1-19, pp. 1-2

[110] Baylouny, "Born Violent", p. 334

them or follow religions other than Islam are seen as infidels or *koufar* in Arabic. This Salafi approach has shaped the Islamist VNSAs' perspective on international relations, as they reject the idea of states, considering them a Western conception. As Fred Halliday notes, Islamist movements often claim that nation-states should not separate Muslims and should instead identify as members of one Islamic nation, *Umma*.[111] For Islamists, the Quran rejects any divisions among Muslim believers. They believe that all states are fabricated by "Western infidels" to divide the Muslim world.[112] Therefore, the only sovereignty they recognise is that of God rather than that of any state.[113]

To truly understand the influence and redistribution of power in modern Islamist groups, we need to look at their history. Salem argues that political Islam, particularly the radical strain, is a relatively new phenomenon that emerged from the failure of post-colonial Arab regimes to implement successful political systems. Attempts at democracy, military dictatorship, nationalism, socialism, and liberalism failed for various reasons, leading to significant political and economic disasters. As a result, Islamism emerged as a potential solution and radical actors with religious ideologies found fertile ground for pursuing their aims through violent means.[114]

The roots of violent Islamic movements can be traced back to the Balfour Declaration in 1917, which granted Palestine to the Zionists for the establishment of Israel. This sparked a never-ending struggle between Israel and the Arab world, particularly the Palestinians. Early Islamist movements, primarily in Egypt and Pakistan, were influenced by Western ideas, and some Muslims adopted a secular or liberal approach. Others, however, considered this to be blasphemy and clung to fundamentalist Islamic beliefs, eventually forming what we now know as Islamic movements. These groups found themselves outside the political game, dominated by military and secular politicians who oppressed and restricted their activities. This persecution justified the use of violence to achieve their political goals.[115] However, the Islamist movements underwent a significant shift after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, leading the US to arm and train young Muslim fighters worldwide and creating the concept of global jihad that transcends borders and overcomes all boundaries. Some scholars argue that the evolution of global Islamic jihad was partly due to Pax-Americana, which was powered by and found cover in the *New World Order*.[116]

Since the Arab Uprising and due to the current wave of VNSAs' involvement in the civil wars in the MENA region fighting or backing specific regimes, Marina Eleftheriadou claims that they have returned home to the *near enemy*.[117] To understand her claim, it is essential to comprehend the meaning of terms *near enemy* and *far enemy*. These two terms are linked to the ideology of jihad in Islam, especially when it comes to fighting. The *near enemy* is considered to be Muslim nation-states who are betraying Islam, the corrupt government, the secular system and the immoral society under which the oppressed Muslim population is living. In contrast, the *far enemy* is the non-Muslim states, such as the West, who are financing and supporting the corrupted Muslim nation-states to gain hegemony over the region.[118] These

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[111] Fred Halliday, *The Middle East in International Relations: Power, Politics, and Ideology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 240

[112] Halliday, *The Middle East*, p. 240

[113] Halliday, *The Middle East*, p. 240

[114] Salem, "The Rise", pp. 6-9

[115] Zaman, "Rise of Non-State Actors", p. 53

[116] Nadia El-Shazly and Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "The Challenge of Security in the Post-Gulf War Middle East System", in Raymond A. Hinnebusch and Anoushiravan Ehteshami (eds), *The Foreign Policies of the Middle East States* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, 2002), 71-90, pp. 72-75

[117] Eleftheriadou, "Elements of Armed", p. 419

[118] Eleftheriadou, "Elements of Armed", p. 419

two terms came into the spotlight in the '90s with Osama bin Laden, who raged a war against the *far enemy*, believing that this would automatically weaken the *near enemy*.[119] However, after the Arab Uprising and through the several actions of the Islamic VNSAs such as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Mahdi Army, the Houthis, etc., it became clear that these actors shifted their focus from the foreign states and societies to the domestic ones. Nevertheless, despite targeting the *near enemy* in recent years, fighting locally, and immersing themselves in the military conflicts and civil wars that are taking place in the MENA region, the *far enemy* holds on in the Islamic VNSAs' rhetoric.[120]

The dynamic between Islamist movements and the states they operate within is complex and often tenuous, with both sides seeking to exploit one another's weaknesses and further their interests and agendas. One expert who examined this relationship is Katerina Dalacoura. She classifies Islamist movements as non-state actors and analyses their role in international politics. Despite the potential threat these movements pose to national states, Dalacoura contends that they lack the ability and desire to dismantle the state system completely. She argues that Islamist movements remain subject to state control for two reasons: first, host states often leverage these movements to their advantage, and second, Islamist movements are not homogeneous and are influenced by the political and economic context of the state in which they operate. Ultimately, Dalacoura asserts that Islamist movements recognise the significance of the nation-state, even if they are ideologically opposed to it. As a result, many of these movements have opted to work within the existing state framework to achieve their goals and effect change.[121]

In summary, the emergence of the Islamic movements can be attributed to a combination of local, external, and ideological factors. Once established, these VNSAs often influence domestic and foreign affairs, ultimately reshaping regional and international power dynamics. By examining the history of Islamic movements in the region, it becomes clear that these groups play a significant role in shaping politics and security. In fact, since the turn of the century, Islamist movements like Hezbollah have emerged as the dominant VNSAs in the region, with secular groups diminishing in influence or ceasing to exist altogether. Despite some arguments to the contrary, Hezbollah's unique position demonstrates that it does not operate under the state's control; rather, it embodies the power and independence of the Islamic movement as a VNSA.

2.2. Literature Review on Power

This dissertation aims to explore the power dynamics of VNSAs. When discussing power, the traditional theories of international relations and nation-state interactions often come to mind. However, it is essential to acknowledge the significant role that NSAs have played in shaping political and social power throughout history. The 20th century saw a surge in NSAs due to globalisation. This does not mean that nation-state power has diminished, but new powers have emerged internationally.

Consequently, the concept of power has expanded to encompass novel methodologies beyond conventional ones. Rather than solely fixating on the dominant power wielded by nation-states in their

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[119] Lorenzo Vidino, "Jihadism Shifts back to the Near Enemy", *La Repubblica*, (September 10, 2021), https://www.repubblica.it/commenti/2021/09/09/news/i_due_nemici_della_jihad-317134795/amp/?ref=twhr&__twitter_impression=true, (Translated by the Program on Extremism at George Washington University)

[120] Eleftheriadou, "Elements of Armed", p. 419

[121] Katerina Dalacoura, "Islamist Movements as Non-State Actors and their Relevance to International Relations", in Daphne Josselin and William Wallace (eds), *Non-State Actors in World Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 235-250, p. 234

struggles against each other, the new approaches have begun to scrutinise NSAs and explore power from diverse perspectives beyond coercive control. Some examples of these new approaches include Joseph Nye's three powers - soft, hard, and smart power[122] - and Steven Lukes' three faces of power - decision-making, non-decision-making, and ideological power.[123] Finally, there is Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert's concept of protean power.[124]

Moving forward, this dissertation will diverge from traditional IR theories regarding power to explore VNSAs. To achieve this goal, the dissertation will utilise protean power to explain VNSAs' patterns of power while still acknowledging the contributions of Nye, Lukes, Pape, and Mishali-Ram's perspectives on power. The inclusion of both protean power and these other concepts serves two purposes: first, to demonstrate the relevance of protean power concerning different modern, non-traditional approaches to power, and second, to showcase that VNSAs' patterns of power can be analysed through a variety of contemporary power features beyond just protean power.

It is essential to acknowledge the connection between power and security. Therefore, in analysing the behaviour of VNSAs, we must examine what makes them powerful and how this impacts the security of the host country, neighbouring nations, and global security. A thorough understanding of VNSAs' power dynamics is crucial for effective deterrence and negotiation. To this end, an exploration of power-related literature is necessary. The first subsection will define power, while the other subsections will explore the relationship between power and VNSAs, followed by strategies for countering VNSAs, and conclude with key considerations regarding VNSAs within the broader framework of power studies.

2.2.1. Definitions of Power

International relations and political science revolve around the concept of power. Abraham Kaplan and Harold D. Lasswell famously posited that "the political process is the shaping, distribution, and exercise of power."[125] Despite its crucial role in the field, scholars have no consensus about the definition, nature, and methods of examining power.[126] This is evident in the literature, where various types of power are discussed, including "hard, soft, smart, sharp, network, social, ideational, discursive, productive, protean, symbolic, structural, and relational power."[127] This extensive list highlights the difficulty in conceptualising and defining power. Barnett and Duvall argue that "power works in various forms and has various expressions that cannot be captured by a single formulation."[128] As a result, scholars often choose to focus on the more operationalisable aspects of power, given the challenge of pinning down a precise concept.[129]

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[122] Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power", *Foreign Policy*, no.80, Twentieth Anniversary (Autumn 1990), 153-171

[123] Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005)

[124] Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert, *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)

[125] Abraham Kaplan and Harold D. Lasswell, *Power and Society a Framework for Political Inquiry* (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 75

[126] Daniel Drezner, "Power and International Relations: A Temporal View", *European Journal of International Relations*, vol.27, no.1 (March 2021), 29-52, p. 31

[127] Drezner, "Power and International Relations", p. 31

[128] Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall, "Power in International Politics", *International Organization*, vol. 59, no. 1 (February 2005), 39-75, p. 41

[129] Stefano Guzzini, "The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, vol.33, no.3 (June 2005), 495-521, p. 502

Interestingly, the concept of power is not as straightforward as one might assume. Instead, it requires explanation, leading to an ongoing debate among scholars and practitioners. Generally, power can be divided into two distinct positions. The first approach is adopted by international politics scholars who view power as a set of skills that specific indicators can measure. They assert that these skills are necessary for achieving particular outcomes. The second approach, championed by power theorists, challenges this notion by arguing that power is best understood in relationships between different players rather than as a collection of individual elements. The crux of this ongoing debate rests on differentiating between "free action and action shaped by the action of others."[130]

The debate surrounding power has resulted in three distinct perspectives. Robert A. Dahl defines power as making others do what they would not do otherwise.[131] However, Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz expanded on this idea and believe that examining the outcome of power is just as important as the actions of the actor exerting it.[132] Dahl argues that the focus should be on the actor's response to whom the power is practised.[133] Bachrach and Baratz disagree, stating that understanding the processes and issues behind the power employed by actor A is necessary for a complete understanding of power.[134] Steven Lukes further extended the discussion by claiming that the focus should be on the effects of structures that shape wants, needs, and desires. To fully understand power, both the subject and agent of power should be examined, along with the exercises and means of power and the structure within which it operates.[135]

One can confidently conclude that Clarissa Hayward's discourse on power, drawing from the works of Lukes and Foucault, effectively settled the debate. According to Hayward, "power should not be viewed as a tool employed by the powerful, but rather as social boundaries."[136] Consequently, power delineates the potentialities within a given field.[137] Actors can modify the nature and trajectory of power by implementing practices derived from their controlled domains of potentiality and discretionary powers. Power is considered a societal constraint that determines what is viable for individuals and groups.

2.2.2. Discussions on VNSAs and Power

Despite VNSAs' vital impact on international conflicts, traditional international relations theories tend to neglect their role. This is because the conventional dominant paradigm in international relations focuses solely on the state. Realism views VNSAs as illegal armed groups that need to be defeated by the military. While Liberalism and Idealism consider the role of actors outside the state, they focus on the non-violent actors operating within structural institutions.[138]

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[130] Clarissa Rile Hayward, "De-Facing Power", *Polity*, vol.31, no.1 (Autumn 1998), 1-22, p. 3

[131] Robert A. Dahl, "The Concept of Power", *Behavioral Science*, vol.2, no.3 (July 1957), 201-215, pp. 202-203

[132] Peter Bachrach, Morton S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power", *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 56, no. 4 (December 1962), 947-952

[133] Dahl, "The Concept", pp. 202-203

[134] Bachrach and Baratz, "Two Faces"

[135] Lucia A. Seybert and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power: Conceptual Analysis," in. Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 3–26, p. 7

[136] Hayward, "De-Facing Power", p. 12

[137] Hayward, "De-Facing Power", p. 12

[138] Berkan Öğür and Zana Baykal, "Understanding 'Foreign Policy' of the PYD/YPG as a Non-State Actor in Syria and Beyond", in Murat Yeşiltaş, Tuncay Kardaş (eds), *Non-State Armed Actors in the Middle East: Geopolitics, Ideology, and Strategy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 43-75, p. 47

Thucydides is widely recognised as the pioneer of international relations and the realist philosophy. Though he acknowledges the influence of domestic institutions and cultural disparities in the states he examines, his research primarily concentrates on states, particularly city-states, as the primary players in conflict. Subsequent realists, such as Machiavelli and Hobbes, highlighted the significance of powerful states in preventing disorder and preserving a balance of power. Despite some modifications made by neo-realists in later years, the state remained the central focus of analysis. Even with NSAs such as corporations and other economic entities gaining influence, Waltz contends that the states remain the most crucial actors in international relations.[139]

Alternative views to realism, such as idealism and liberalism, consider the involvement of actors beyond states. However, these perspectives often emphasise the positive impact of non-violent international organisations and democratic governments in global affairs, leading to a lack of attention towards the negative aspects of NSAs in international relations. Historical liberal thinkers like Locke, Kant, and Wilson were invested in establishing domestic and international institutions to prevent conflicts. They believed that non-state institutions could help reduce conflicts rather than intensify them.[140] Today's liberal scholars, such as Zacher & Matthew, Moravcsik, and Keohane & Nye, investigate the role of domestic politics and regime type in shaping states' international behaviour. However, their focus is primarily on how domestic audiences can mitigate conflict rather than how certain NSAs may exacerbate it. In addition, liberals tend to examine the influence of democratic citizens' views on the state's international behaviour.[141]

Therefore, Neo-realism and neo-liberalism are rationalistic in their approaches; hence, they do not consider NSAs to be forces to reckon with. The nature of both theories is "reductionist."[142] This implies they view the states' behaviour based on "materialistic egocentricity."[143] Hence, their framework assesses the decision-making course as a rigid "black box" from which individuals in the governmental spheres derive their decisions.[144] Neo-realism considers the state the leading player in the international arena; hence, all policies are drawn based on states' interests. Conversely, neo-liberalism observes the dynamics of international relations through the institutions. Therefore, neither theory can be followed to study epistemic communities and their influence.[145]

Nicos Panayiotides utilises the realist school of thought to analyse VNSAs, specifically ISIS, and their impact on the power dynamics of threats and influences in the MENA region. This approach encourages cooperation among various local and international players, including states and VNSAs, to combat their common enemy and facilitate a redistribution of power. However, Panayiotides acknowledges that political realism alone cannot fully account for the emergence of VNSAs like ISIS, given the role of religious identity, ideology, and psychology in their formation. Therefore, he advocates for using other

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[139] Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert, "Power Complexities and Political Theory" in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 267-301, pp. 283-297

[140] Drezner, "Power and International Relations", p. 31

[141] Drezner, "Power and International Relations", pp. 38-41

[142] Kamran Bukhari, "Constructivism & Epistemic Community: Theoretical Tools for Understanding the Crafting of Foreign Policy Toward Non-State Actors", *The MacMaster Journal of Communication*, vol.1, no.1, Article 4 (2004), 34-46, p. 43

[143] Bukhari, "Constructivism & Epistemic Community", p. 43

[144] Bukhari, "Constructivism & Epistemic Community", p. 43

[145] Bukhari, "Constructivism & Epistemic Community", p. 44

social science theories in conjunction with realism to understand this complex issue better, as he explores in his paper on the rise of ISIS in the MENA.[146]

John Agnew challenges the traditional theories of international relations, including realism, neo-realism, and liberalism. He argues that these theories rely on a limited understanding of territory, which places the state as the sole sovereign player and disregards the existence of other entities beyond the state's borders. Agnew terms this perspective the "territorial trap," as it confines researchers within the concept of the state and its territorial dominance, preventing them from recognising the significant roles of other players in both domestic and international spheres.[147] He contends that "territory does not necessarily entail the practices of total mutual exclusion," as it has been decoupled by factors such as "common market, military alliances, monetary and trading regimes."[148] Agnew's work identified three geographical hypotheses to support his critique of classical IR theories on territory. These include viewing state territory as a secure sovereign space, separating the domestic from the foreign, and positioning the state as a supra entity that exists before societies and contains them.[149]

Garett Pierman is another scholar who disputes the realist theory of state-centrism in international relations. He posits that any group with a shared identity, cultural background, shared narratives, and long-term aspirations can have a "strategic culture."[150] In his essay, he examined the concept of "strategic culture" concerning VNSAs, questioning whether they can claim one and establish a "grand strategy" among themselves.[151] Pierman's main objective was to investigate the potential impact of VNSAs with a "strategic culture" and "grand strategy" on the US's war on terror by analysing the aforementioned theoretical inquiries. Consequently, he conducted a case study on Al-Qaeda and the United States.[152]

Timothy Clancy has diverged from traditional theories to pursue fresh perspectives on understanding VNSAs. In his study of the rise of ISIS, Clancy offers an innovative theory of "emerging-state actors" who engage in unconventional warfare to take control of and govern territories. He positions this theory within the existing framework of VNSAs.[153] By utilising this theory, Clancy aims to uncover the true nature of ISIS, notably since emerging-state actors differ from VNSAs that operate in unstable states and engage in civil wars and guerrilla warfare. Clancy supports his theory with a dynamic simulation hypothesis called the "Emerging-State Actor Model (E-SAM)."[154] Researchers can use this model to perform experiments and analyse the actors' behaviour, possibilities, and relevance. This model's advantage lies in its ability to consider various conflicts and multiple levels within each conflict.[155]

Perhaps the most noteworthy research on VNSAs' power was conducted by Meirav Mishali-Ram, who took notice of VNSAs and their exceeding influence. She began her research by defining power as

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[146] Nicos Panayiotides, "The Islamic State and the Redistribution of Power in the Middle East", *International Journal of World Peace*, vol. XXXII, no.3 (September 2015), 11-24, p. 12
[147] John Agnew, "The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory", *Review of International Political Economy*, vol.1, no.1 (Spring 1994), 53-80, p. 54
[148] Agnew, "The Territorial Trap", p. 54
[149] Agnew, "The Territorial Trap", p. 54
[150] Garrett Pierman, "The Grand Strategy of Nonstate Actors: Theory and Implications", *Journal of Strategic Security*, vol.8, no.4 (Winter 2015), 69-78, p. 69
[151] Pierman, "The Grand Strategy", p. 69
[152] Pierman, "The Grand Strategy", p. 69
[153] Timothy Clancy, "Theory of an Emerging-State Actor: The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) Case", *Systems*, vol.6, no.2 (May 2018), 1-16, pp. 1-2
[154] Clancy, "Theory of an Emerging-State", pp. 1-2
[155] Clancy, "Theory of an Emerging-State", pp. 1-2

"relative and dynamic, requiring a multidisciplinary approach. It should be measured regarding events, rivalries and circumstances: power in context."[156] Mishali-Ram relied on Mansbach and Vasquez's study to measure VNSAs' power, which examined the creation of political actors. According to them, the actors' power is seen through their "characteristics such as unity, level of institutionalisation, legitimacy, media control, and others."[157] By analysing the ethnic VNSAs' political role and influence on local and world crises and using some of Mansbach and Vasquez's VNSAs' characteristics, Mishali-Ram developed a "theoretical index to assess the power status of VNSAs, taking into account their unique characteristics, advantages and weakness."[158] Her proposed index, categorised into four powers, made it possible to measure the "relative power status of political VNSAs participating in central world events."[159] The first category of power that Mishali-Ram presents is power type, which can be political or military. The second category is power resources, which refers to the VNSAs' capabilities, such as human resources and weaponry. Diplomatic power is the third category, linked to legitimising the VNSAs through the recognition and support they receive from some states. The fourth and last category is institutional power, which indicates the actors' level of power depending on their "discipline and coordination within the organisation and affects the extent of its efficiency."[160] According to Mishali-Ram, the power resources, institutional power, and power type reflect the essence of these actors. In contrast, diplomatic power demonstrates the involvement of these actors in international affairs and crises.[161]

2.2.3 Countering VNSAs: Governance and Security

The examination of VNSAs has traditionally been viewed through the lens of their relationship with the state, leading many to consider them a threat to the state itself. However, Neil A. Englehart argues that the danger lies in their impact on the human security of those residing within the territories under VNSA control.[162] Countering these organisations and their effects on human and state security is paramount. However, the current era of globalisation creates a challenging environment for such efforts, as VNSAs can spread and operate more freely.[163] Despite the task's difficulty, countering these groups remains crucial. Southern states may be too weak to stand against them, while the West is unlikely to achieve a complete military victory. In light of this, Reno suggests that we need to shift our perspective on and categorisation of states and instead focus on enhancing our understanding of violence.[164] Ultimately, the most effective means of containing VNSAs lies not in traditional military tactics but rather in gathering sufficient data and knowledge about these groups both within and outside conventional warfare.[165]

One effective way to combat VNSAs is through deterrence. In a paper, Raghda Elbahy examined the classical theory of deterrence and found that it has been criticised as politically incorrect and lacking in

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[156] Meirav Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors Make a Difference: Theorizing Power Attributes of Nonstate Actors", *International Journal of Peace Studies*, vol.14, no.2 (Autumn/Winter 2009), 55–82, p. 58
[157] Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors", p. 59
[158] Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors", p. 55
[159] Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors", p. 73
[160] Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors", p. 63
[161] Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors", p. 61
[162] Neil A. Englehart, "Non-state Armed Groups as a Threat to Global Security: What Threat, Whose Security?", *Journal of Global Security*, vol.1, no.2 (May 2016), 171-183
[163] Maj. Troy S. Thomas & Maj. William D. Casebeer, USAF, "Violent Non-State Actors: Countering Dynamic Systems" *Strategic Insights*, vol. III, no.3 (March 2004)
[164] Krause and Milliken, "Introduction: The Challenge", p. 217
[165] Englehart, "Non-state Armed Groups", 171-183

decency. As a result, it has been disregarded as a tool for studying, opposing, and dealing with state and non-state terrorism. However, it is essential to note that there is no clear definition of deterrence theory. Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke have presented a widely accepted definition of deterrence as "the persuasion of one's opponent that the costs and/or risks of a given course of action he might take outweigh its benefits."[166] Therefore, deterrence is a defence theory that uses the threat of force to deter or prevent another party from taking specific actions. Elbahy suggests that deterrence theory, which focuses on territory, sovereignty, and power, should be updated to include VNSAs. To effectively deter VNSAs, the focus should be on dismantling their structures based on "propaganda, operational success, strategic and tactical victories, leadership, public sympathy, social acceptance, religious motives, political legitimacy, freedom of movement, safe shelter, wealth, and other physical assets."[167] Therefore, "the classical deterrence theory may be re-applied to provide practical and empirical insights to confront contemporary threats and potential conflicts."[168] The effectiveness of deterrence can be increased by using direct and indirect force, non-military strategies, and models to confront possible enemies and impending acts of terrorism.[169]

While some scholars have debated deterrence as an approach to dealing with VNSAs, others have advocated for negotiation as a way forward. However, James W. Moore warns that even if VNSAs agree to participate in peace talks and accept a peace agreement, it does not guarantee success, as they may work against it secretly. Moore divides VNSAs into two groups: spoilers and partners. Spoilers regard "peace as a threat and resort to violence to undermine its prospects."[170] While partners "make a strategic commitment to achieving peace in the long run."[171] Ulrich Schneckener notes that VNSAs can act as "spoilers or governance actors."[172] Dealing with VNSAs presents a significant challenge to achieving peace and stability in a state, as these actors may play different roles depending on their interests. Schneckener proposes "a framework for analysing armed groups and engagement with international actors."[173] Following the Arab Uprising and subsequent civil wars, the international community had to negotiate with VNSAs. In her essay, Sukanya Podder suggests it is better to view VNSAs as partners to prevent them from acting as spoilers during the state-building period after a conflict. Podder identifies four main factors for differentiating between VNSAs: legitimacy, resources, reliability, and potential for partnering. She suggests that these factors can determine the success of state-building efforts.[174]

Considering the connections between VNSAs and certain states before taking action or engaging in negotiations is essential, as not all states oppose VNSAs. Some states provide VNSAs with logistical, economic, and political support, using them as proxies to fight against their adversaries. Zeev Maoz and Belgin San-Akca's "rational choice model" supports this claim, showing that states turn to VNSAs as

[166] Raghda Elbahy, "Deterring VNSAs: Dilemmas and Implications", *Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Science*, vol.1, no.1 (August 2019), 43-54, pp. 43-44

[167] Elbahy, "Deterring VNSAs", pp. 50-51

[168] Elbahy, "Deterring VNSAs", pp. 50-51

[169] Elbahy, "Deterring VNSAs", pp. 50-51

[170] James W. Moore, "The Grand Strategic and Strategic Roles of Armed Non-state Actors (ANSAs)", *Canadian Military Journal*, vol.15, no.1 (Winter 2014), 5-15, pp. 5-6

[171] Moore, "The Grand Strategic", pp. 5-6

[172] Ulrich Schneckener, "Spoilers or Governance Actors? Engaging Armed Non-State Groups in Areas of Limited Statehood", *SFB-Governance Working Paper Series*, no.21 (Berlin: October 2009), 6-28

[173] Schneckener, "Spoilers or Governance", 6-28

[174] Sukanya Podder, "Non-State Armed Groups and Stability: Reconsidering Legitimacy and Inclusion", *Contemporary Security Policy*, vol.34, no.1 (April 2013), 16-39

proxies to challenge the current international status quo and those states' positions.[175] Such an argument should be considered when examining the power of VNSAs, as it greatly influences their actions and strengthens their position, ultimately impacting how they are deterred or negotiated with.

2.2.4 The Main Points from VNSAs and Power Studies

Upon reviewing the literature on VNSAs and power, it is apparent that a shift in how power is perceived and utilised is necessary. Rather than being a mechanism for discipline in an unpredictable world, power should be viewed as a tool for managing crises and creating opportunities. This shift requires a broader understanding of power in politics and international relations and a willingness to incorporate supplementary forms of power - such as protean power - alongside traditional control power.[176] While this dissertation will focus heavily on protean power and its role in VNSAs' actions, it will also acknowledge the contributions of other notable power scholars, including Pape, Nye, Lukes, and Mishali-Ram. By doing so, a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of VNSAs' power can be attained, allowing for greater predictability and preparedness in the face of future challenges.

Leslie M. Pape is known for her significant contribution to political science, particularly her attempt to describe and explain the "sources and limits of political power."[177] In her seminal work, Pape identified two categories of political power sources: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic sources include physical prowess and excellent attributes like "personality, intellect, and voice."[178] On the other hand, outside sources are transportation and communication, weapons, barter, and ideology.[179] Pape also recognised that these power sources can act as constraints on political power, and a decrease in strength implies a loss of power.[180] Pape's insights on the sources and limits of political power continue to inform contemporary debates on the same topic, especially regarding VNSAs. Like states, VNSAs rely on technology and communication to achieve their goals and spread propaganda. They also need weapons to fight their enemies and defend themselves. Moreover, VNSAs developed a strategy for negotiation with states, where they trade the usage of their violence for political gains. However, these power sources can also be a hindrance to VNSAs. Losing their weapons, communication abilities, and ideology can strip them of their raison d'être, making them unable to play their intended political role. Since VNSAs are built on an ideology of hate and attack, they have little room for manoeuvring when the need for collaboration arises. This affects their bargaining power as well. These points are crucial to understanding the pattern of power of VNSAs in empirical chapters.

Pape's examination of power sources and limitations, combined with Nye's categorisation of power types, provides a comprehensive understanding of power dynamics. In his renowned essay, Nye outlined three distinct types of power: hard, soft, and smart. Hard power, which relies on coercion and physical strength such as weapons, has been prevalent in state and VNSA practices. However, Nye argues that soft power is more effective in today's era of globalisation and expanded competition from multinational corporations and non-state actors. Soft power is based on persuading others to align with one's goals

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[175] Zeev Maoz & San-Akca Belgin, "Rivalry and State Support of Non-State Armed Groups (NAGs) 1946-2001", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.56, no.4 (December 2012), 720-734

[176] Peter Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert, "Protean Power and Uncertainty: Exploring the Unexpected in World Politics", *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 62, no.1 (March 2018), 80-93, p. 90

[177] Leslie M. Pape, "The Sources and Limits of Political Power", *Social Forces*, vol. 18, no.3 (March 1940), 424–428, p. 424

[178] Pape, "The Sources", p. 424

[179] Pape, "The Sources", p. 425

[180] Pape, "The Sources", p. 426

rather than using force. This type of power relies on cultural and media influence instead of violent tactics.[181] Nye also introduced the concept of smart power, which combines hard and soft power elements. As Pape's research suggests, non-state actors often use communication tools, ideology, and barter alongside violence to achieve their objectives, indicating that they employ smart power.

Luke's perspective on power aligns closely with the understandings and categorisations of power presented by Pape and Nye. Specifically, he divides power into three distinct types: decision-making power, non-decision-making power, and ideological power. The first type involves direct power exerted by Actor A over Actor B through coercion or temptation. According to Luke's second dimension of power, the powerful party can control the intellectual sphere and public opinion by setting the agenda for debates and issues. Finally, Luke's third face of power is ideological. This type of power allows one to influence the behaviour and thoughts of others to the extent that they may act against their interests due to their adherence to a particular ideology.[182] Upon further examination, it becomes clear that Luke's dimensions of power share many similarities with Pape and Nye's theories and can be applied to states and non-state actors. Indeed, non-state actors have demonstrated their ability to exercise decision-making power through their use of violence and *intimidation*. They also possess non-decision-making power by controlling the agenda in host states. Finally, through their ideology, non-state actors can secure their existence, sustain themselves, and achieve their goals by exerting enormous influence over their followers.

The significance of Mishali-Ram's contribution to the study of VNSAs and power cannot be overstated. While her ideas were briefly mentioned earlier, grouping her work with other scholars is crucial to truly appreciate its value. Mishali-Ram's four categories of power - power type, power resources, diplomatic power and institutional power - align closely with the ideas of Pape, Nye and Lukes. Her recognition of the military and political power wielded by VNSAs, the importance of human resources in their operations, and their use of institutional and diplomatic power to gain recognition and legitimacy all highlight these organisations' immense influence.[183]

It became evident that the contributions of the four scholars, as mentioned earlier, are crucial to the development of the dissertation. By considering their theories, the thesis will analyse VNSA's power dynamics through the framework of protean power. This approach will shed light on the mechanisms that underlie VNSA's exercise of power and will serve as evidence of the pertinence of utilising the lens of protean power to observe their patterns of power.

2.3. Summary and Gaps to Fill

This chapter has examined the literature on the relationship between VNSAs and power. The aim was to combine these two topics, underline the studies exploring both areas and pinpoint gaps. Consequently, this section will summarise the findings and accentuate the specific gaps this dissertation intends to address.

Extensive literature has investigated VNSAs, exploring various themes and aspects. The typology introduced by Williams is of particular importance, as it aids in comprehending the nature of VNSAs and the actors involved. However, it is worth noting that not all VNSAs fit neatly into these categorisations.

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[181] Nye, "Soft Power", p. 166
[182] Lukes, *Power*, pp. 15, 20, 24 and 25
[183] Mishali-Ram, "Powerful Actors", p. 61

Additionally, research has shown that while state weakness is a significant factor in the emergence of VNSAs, external factors also play a role in their establishment and funding. The literature has also emphasised the impact of VNSAs on the state, particularly in terms of legitimacy and governance. VNSAs often work to strengthen themselves while weakening the state further. Another crucial point highlighted in the literature is the importance of ideology, such as Islamism in this dissertation's case, in recruiting members and justification of actions and setbacks. Despite these findings, the literature has yet to explore the means through which VNSAs capture the state and its institutions. While some scholars have touched on VNSAs' tactics to gain legitimacy and popularity, they have failed to explain the significance of their environment and their ultimate goal of capturing the state rather than conforming to the established status quo.

Despite the growing interest in studying VNSAs, literature on their power remains lacking. This is primarily due to the historical focus on state governance and relations in conventional IR theories, which view power as exclusive to the state. However, recent perspectives on power have opened up new avenues for exploring the power of VNSAs. Scholars such as Pape and Mishali-Ram have attempted to explain the power and limits of VNSAs, considering unconventional elements such as intrinsic power, like the leader's character and extrinsic powers, like communication and ideology. Additionally, the theory of protean and control power, introduced by Katzenstein and Seybert, has encouraged scholars to present case studies through this new lens. Mendelsohn was among the scholars who contributed by presenting the first attempt to regard VNSAs as actors exercising protean power, yet his focus was on the state. Despite these efforts, current research has only focused on the security implications of these VNSAs. As such, the available literature on VNSAs concerning power and security studies is limited to deterrence and counteracting terrorism. Thus, it is essential to shift the focus away from states and their security and instead explore the true power of VNSAs as independent actors.

This dissertation aims to address gaps in the existing literature surrounding the power of VNSAs. The study will concentrate solely on VNSAs' actions and behaviour, considering their environment and experiences. By doing so, it will be possible to identify their power tactics to gain control over the state and its institutions. This research will utilise contemporary power theories and introduce a new framework to understand VNSAs' patterns of power. Ultimately, the study aims to examine VNSAs as unique entities rather than merely a factor to consider when analysing state issues.

The upcoming chapter will present a detailed examination of contemporary power theories, focusing on Katzenstein and Seybert's control and protean power and Nye's hard and soft power. This analysis aims to establish a theoretical framework for studying a specific VNSA in the MENA region, namely Hezbollah, which serves as the case study for this dissertation.

Chapter 3: Theoretical and Methodological Framework for Researching the Violent Non-State Actors' Patterns of Power

Scholars and practitioners have long relied on traditional International Relations (IR) theories to interpret global events and project future trends. Yet, while invaluable in their own right, these theories often struggle to capture the full complexity of the rapidly evolving world, particularly in the face of emerging non-conventional actors. This emphasises the need for fresh theoretical perspectives to analyse political actors more effectively within their unique contexts.

Protean power is one of the theoretical concepts that emerged to fill the gap left by traditional approaches to power in IR. Defined as "the effect of improvisational and innovative responses to uncertainty that arise from actors' creativity and agility," protean power aims to understand the agile actors' actions in an environment of uncertainty.[184] Protean power, a theoretical concept that emerged to fill the gap left by traditional approaches to power in IR, advocates for a new approach to examining the actors and environment they operate within. However, it does not entirely discard control power, which is the traditional approach. Instead, it argues that both powers are essential to analyse and understand the unfolding events in the world. This comprehensive approach, which also incorporates Nye's soft and hard powers, is the lens through which this dissertation aims to research VNSAs' patterns of power, examining whether they utilise control or protean power or a combination of the two accompanied by soft and hard powers.

This dissertation adopts a qualitative research design and utilises the case study method. Specifically, it examines the power dynamics of Hezbollah at both the domestic and regional levels, focusing on three key aspects: violence, politics, and religion. The analysis will be conducted through the lens of protean and control power elements. The following sections will investigate the concepts of control and protean power, as well as soft and hard power and present the four patterns of power that actors can practice. They will also explain in detail the rationale behind choosing the case study method, particularly the selection of Hezbollah as a case study. This choice is significant as it accentuates the patterns of power among VNSAs, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of this complex field.

3.1. Control and Protean Power: Definition and Pattern

The pursuit, acquisition, and exercise of power, driven by a desire to control, rule over others, and impose one's will, is a complex phenomenon. Understanding the effects of these actions can be challenging, as they vary greatly depending on the context. If the consequences of actions are discussed in the light of risk, then the way to grasp the state of affairs is through a control power perspective. Yet, if uncertainty is the context of the actions' effects, then the way to realise the circumstances is through protean power perception. This suggests that both types of power are interconnected and essential for their mutual existence and growth. However, to fully understand the interplay between protean and control power, it is vital to understand the systems in which they operate.

The system, whether closed and intricate or open and complex, plays a significant role in shaping actors' behaviour. The critical distinction is that a closed system provides a platform for practitioners and

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[184] Lucia A. Seybert and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power: Conceptual Analysis" in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 3–26, p. 4

analysts to evaluate risk and make forecasts, while an open system encourages actors to innovate. Potentiality precedes determinacy and probability in an open system, starkly contrasting with a closed system.[185] Actors exercising control power tend to prefer the closed system. This is because the foundation of control power is based on anticipating consequences in closed systems. In contrast, actors practising protean power are more inclined towards the open system. This is because protean power is based on innovation and creativity, which are more readily fostered in an open system.[186] As such, it is essential to present the concepts of closed and open systems and their link to protean and control power.

Closed, Open and Complex Systems

To fully grasp the decisions made by actors and their utilisation of control or protean power, it is crucial to unearth the concepts of closed, open, and complex systems, as outlined by Katzenstein and Seybert. By crafting a sophisticated framework to aid in understanding international relations dynamics, the authors integrated their analysis within the larger systems theory framework, which studies various systems' interactions and temporal evolution with their environments.

Katzenstein and Seybert's framework defines closed systems as being relatively isolated from outside influences. This isolation is a defining feature of closed systems, which have clearly defined boundaries restricting interaction with their surroundings. While this isolation can make closed systems less flexible to external changes, it can also contribute to their stability and predictability. Therefore, some governments or regimes may try to function as closed systems by restricting external influences to preserve stability and control.[187] Given its status as an isolated nation, North Korea stands out as a prime example of a closed system in international relations. The government exercises strict control over its borders, the flow of information, and its economic interactions with the rest of the world. By limiting external influences, the regime can uphold internal stability through severe repression and propaganda. Despite its apparent internal stability, North Korea remains highly vulnerable to outside pressures such as international diplomacy and sanctions.[188]

Conversely, open systems are characterised by their essential interaction with the outside world. Such systems are dynamic and adaptive since they exchange resources, energy, and information with their environment. However, since the system must constantly adapt to outside influences, it adds complexity and unpredictability. Democracies and market economies are examples of entities that function as open systems. They interact extensively with the outside world, encouraging flexibility but also encountering instability.[189] The European Union is a prime illustration of an open system due to its strong economic, political, and social connections among member states, integrated markets, and open borders. Furthermore, the EU's institutions and policies are designed to adapt to changing circumstances, such as political or economic disruptions. It actively engages in extensive diplomatic, economic, and cultural exchanges with non-member nations, influencing and being influenced by global trends.[190]

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[185] Stefano Guzzini, "Protean Power as a Plea for an Open Social Ontology, Non-Efficient Causal Explanations, and Cautious Political Practice", *International Theory*, vol.12, no.3 (August 2020), 449 - 458, p. 454

[186] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 17

[187] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 17-25

[188] Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)

[189] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 16-25

[190] Peter J. Katzenstein, *A World of Regions: Asia and Europe in the American Imperium* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005)

However, in an open world of international relations, systems are rarely of one characteristic, which is what complex systems embody. They are systems with elements of both closed and open systems. However, they are differentiated by their complex interdependencies and non-linear component interactions. These systems are susceptible to outside influences and show emergent properties that are not predictable from a part-by-part analysis. Thus, the international system is complex, given its many actors, institutions, and non-state entities. Due to the international system's intricate relationships and non-linear interactions, its outcomes are frequently emergent and unpredictable.[191] An example of a complex system is the global financial system, characterised by its intricate interconnections and non-linear relationships among various entities and institutions. The complex web of connections between financial markets, institutions, and economies means that actions taken in one part of the system can have far-reaching effects in other areas. Unexpected behaviours, such as financial crises, can emerge and cannot be predicted solely by analysing individual components. The global financial system evolves as new regulations, technological advancements, and market conditions arise.[192]

Therefore, while an open system describes a theoretical framework where fluidity, interdependence, and opportunities for cooperation and exchange define interactions between system components, a complex system is a comprehensive framework used to interpret the interplay and dynamics among multiple components within a system. An open system promotes flexibility, adaptability, and collaboration among actors to achieve common goals. In contrast, the complex system recognises the intricate and interconnected nature of worldwide politics, where several actors, factors, and processes interconnect to determine results. Although open and complex systems vary, the fact remains that complexity theory draws attention to the open system's unpredictable, emergent characteristics. Such intricacy necessitates constant improvisation and successive approximation, creativity through repurposing, local expertise, and accumulated experience.[193] As a result, Katzenstein and Seybert linked the open system to that of the complex while examining protean and control power. They claimed that complexity brings risk, uncertainty, control, and protean power into one perspective.

Protean Power

Katzenstein and Seybert introduced the groundbreaking concept of protean power to IR. This innovative concept aims to fill the gaps in traditional international relations theories, offering a fresh and intriguing perspective on power. It goes beyond conventional power structures, providing a new lens to understand the world's dynamic changes. Protean power, as explained by its authors, refers to the ability of both states and non-state actors to shape, modify, and impact the global political sphere in flexible and innovative ways in an uncertain environment.[194]

The term protean comes from Greek mythology, inspired by Proteus, the shape-shifting sea god with the power of prophecy. When confronted with a question he had no desire to reply to, Proteus would escape by changing forms.[195] When someone or something is considered a protean, they possess remarkable versatility and perform several roles. Similarly, the concept of protean power conveys a capacity for

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[191] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 16-25

[192] Erin Lockwood and Stephen C. Nelson, "Incomplete Control: The Circulation of Power in Finance", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 166-187

[193] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 17-25

[194] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 4

[195] Robert J. Lifton, *Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), p. 5

adaptability and metamorphosis, inspiring entities to address multifaceted international challenges and attain various objectives. Protean power embodies a flexible and versatile approach to global affairs, requiring governments and organisations to use different resources, tactics, and alliances to navigate today's complex and ever-changing landscape, marked by rapid globalisation, advanced technology, and geopolitical instability. As a result, the notion of protean power has gained significant relevance, enabling entities to exert influence and achieve desired outcomes on the international stage. Protean power is characterised by adaptability, diversity of tools and strategies, innovation and creativity, networks and alliances, resilience, and sustainability.[196]

In summary, the ability to innovate and adapt in the face of unpredictability and uncertainty is a protean power. Flexibility, improvisation, and the ability to seize unexpected opportunities are key elements of this type of power. A compelling example of protean power is the Arab Uprising that started in 2010. Fuelled by social media mobilisation, impromptu protests, and grassroots activism, the uprisings that swept through the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region were largely unplanned. As a result, they embodied the elements of protean power, particularly adaptability, improvisation, and unpredictability. By rapidly organising and sharing information on platforms like Facebook and Twitter, activists and protestors could adapt to the oppressive policies of authoritarian regimes. Additionally, because the movements were primarily led by unorganised individuals and relied on the spontaneous actions of various social groups, governments struggled to anticipate or control their actions. Ultimately, foreign observers and local governments were surprised by the rapid spread and success of the uprisings in nations such as Egypt and Tunisia.[197]

Therefore, protean power refers to the ability of states and actors to adapt and innovate, utilising diplomatic engagement, economic leverage, military capabilities, and soft power assets like culture, ideology, and values. For instance, a state might use its economic leverage to influence another state's policy decisions, or a non-state actor might leverage its cultural influence to shape public opinion. This flexibility allows them to shape the international agenda and influence outcomes, ensuring they can withstand shocks and setbacks while maintaining strategic positioning and advancing interests.

Control Power

Risk is tightly linked to control power, which refers to an actor's ability, often a state, to control, influence, or regulate the actions of other actors or components within a system. This includes the power to shape decision-making processes, allocate resources, establish priorities, and create standards or regulations that govern relationships within a particular framework. The key characteristics of control power include domination and authority, manipulation and influence, resource allocation, institutional control, and resistance and contestation.[198]

The capacity to oversee and direct results by applying established structures, regulations, and resources is known as control power. It can promote stability, enforce order, or advance shared objectives. However, it can also consolidate power, stifle dissent, or perpetuate inequities within a system, highlighting its potential for misuse. Control power may sometimes require manipulation, persuasion, or

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[196] Katzenstein and Seybert (eds), *Protean Power*

[197] Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power, and the Limits of International Relations Theory", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 27-56, p. 51

[198] Katzenstein and Seybert, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 51

strategic communication to influence other actors' beliefs, perceptions, and preferences. Individuals or groups with control power can impact the decision-making process and its results by regulating the flow of information or framing issues in particular ways. Control power often involves controlling essential resources such as economic assets, military capabilities, natural resources, or strategic infrastructure. By controlling access to these resources, individuals or groups can use their power to shape outcomes and promote their interests within a given system.[199]

Control power entails influencing and guiding outcomes through established systems, laws, and resources. This power relies on stability, predictability, and applying formal mechanisms and hierarchical structures to maintain order. When used responsibly, control power can provide a stable foundation for crisis management and uphold critical societal values. The European Central Bank (ECB) response to the Eurozone crisis is an example of control power. The ECB utilised its institutional authority and economic tools to stabilise the euro and address the crisis. It exercised control over domestic economic policies by enforcing fiscal regulations and requirements for financial assistance to member countries. The ECB also stabilised the markets through initiatives such as the Long-Term Refinancing Operations (LTRO) and the Outright Monetary Transactions (OMT) program, which purchased government bonds and provided liquidity. In doing so, the ECB provided a stable foundation for crisis management in line with its explicit mandate to uphold price stability and support the euro.[200]

Therefore, control power involves influencing important institutions, organisations, or governance systems. This influence can extend to shaping policies, regulations, and outcomes, thereby significantly impacting the lives of others in society. This emphasises the importance of understanding and critically examining the exercise of control power, as it can have far-reaching implications for societal structures and individual well-being.

Comparison between Protean and Control Power

The main difference between protean and control power comes from the divergent understanding of the actions' effects within their context of uncertainty and risk.[201] Their difference even extends to the method of power operation. While control power aims to dominate in a world of risk where it can direct and diffuse, protean power is categorised by its ability to improvise in a world of uncertainties where it gets the chance to create and circulate among actors.

The variation between control and protean power is also seen in their environment—control power functions in the circumstances marked by the calculable risk that the actors involved have. A situation is a calculable risk when the odds of various outcomes are known or can be calculated using the available information. Thus, the capacity to control and minimise possible negative consequences through tried-and-true techniques and tactics makes this risk predictable.[202] With its actuarial science, the insurance industry demonstrates how businesses manage calculable risk. By analysing historical data, insurance companies assess the probability of natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes to set premiums. This allows them to effectively anticipate and mitigate their financial exposure by spreading risks across

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[199] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 9-16
[200] Katzenstein and Seybert, *Protean Power*
[201] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 5
[202] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 5-12

a wide pool of policyholders. In this way, statistical models and historical data play a crucial role in managing and distributing risk within the insurance industry under the category of quantifiable risk.[203]

In contrast, protean power soars in a situation of rooted incalculable uncertainty that actors face in times of crisis. Uncertainty refers to circumstances in which the likelihood of certain results is unclear or unknowable. This kind of uncertainty is characterised by the inability to make precise predictions based on historical data or statistical models and unpredictability and ambiguity.[204] The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) and blockchain technologies exemplifies a situation marked by uncertainty. Significant uncertainty surrounds the expansion and impact of new technologies such as blockchain and artificial intelligence. This uncertainty stems from the difficulty in predicting future developments or regulatory demands, as blockchain and AI's potential uses and societal effects are not yet fully comprehended. Consequently, businesses and governments must continually adapt their strategies to stay ahead of emerging technologies and unexpected disruptions. Therefore, technological disruptions create uncertain environments that require actors to exercise protean power in navigating the evolving landscape.[205]

Moreover, the distinction between control and protean power extends to the mode of analysis—the former concentrates on examining the fluctuation in the dynamics of power functioning under risk settings. Meanwhile, protean power expands its analysis to address the presence and potential power dynamics in uncertain environments. The control power agency is positioned by recognisable agents in terms of its capabilities, leading to probabilistic consequences. In comparison, the protean power agency lies in the capacity of the agile actors to attempt to discover an answer to problems that have unidentified effects on other actors and the system. Thus, control power primarily focuses on actuality, while protean power focuses on potentiality.[206]

In brief, the concept of protean power is distinctive because it challenges the "assumption that the world is dominated by calculable risk."[207] The advocates of the concept claim that events in world politics are uncontrollable and unpredictable manifestations of power. This challenges the prevailing narrative in IR that power is all about controlling people and events and being able to predict the future. Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert take issue with this outdated view of power, arguing that although logic indicates that a coherent, linear history is possible to control, we must look beyond this generic linear reality, which has begun to shape how we construct social reality.[208] However, Seybert and Katzenstein also acknowledge that "risk-based power calculations" are essential in understanding the overall picture of power and its impact on global politics when combined with the undeniable influence of uncertainty.[209]

This argument becomes clear by looking at Figure 3.1, which Katzenstein and Seybert provided to explain the political practices and power outcomes that emerge when actors' experience of the world contrasts with the attributes of the context they are working under. This figure clarifies that protean and control powers do not exist in a continuum. Instead, they result from the interaction between the context

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[203] Katzenstein and Seybert, *Protean Power*

[204] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 5-12

[205] Katzenstein and Seybert, *Protean Power*

[206] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 5-12

[207] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 3

[208] Andrew Abbott, *The System of Professions: An Essay on The Division of Expert Labor* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 169

[209] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 4

and the experience. Therefore, there are diverse political practices regarding control and protean power due to the impact of the context and experience.[210]

Attributes of Underlying Context

	Risky	Uncertain
Risky	Affirmation	Improvisation
Uncertain	Refusal	Innovation
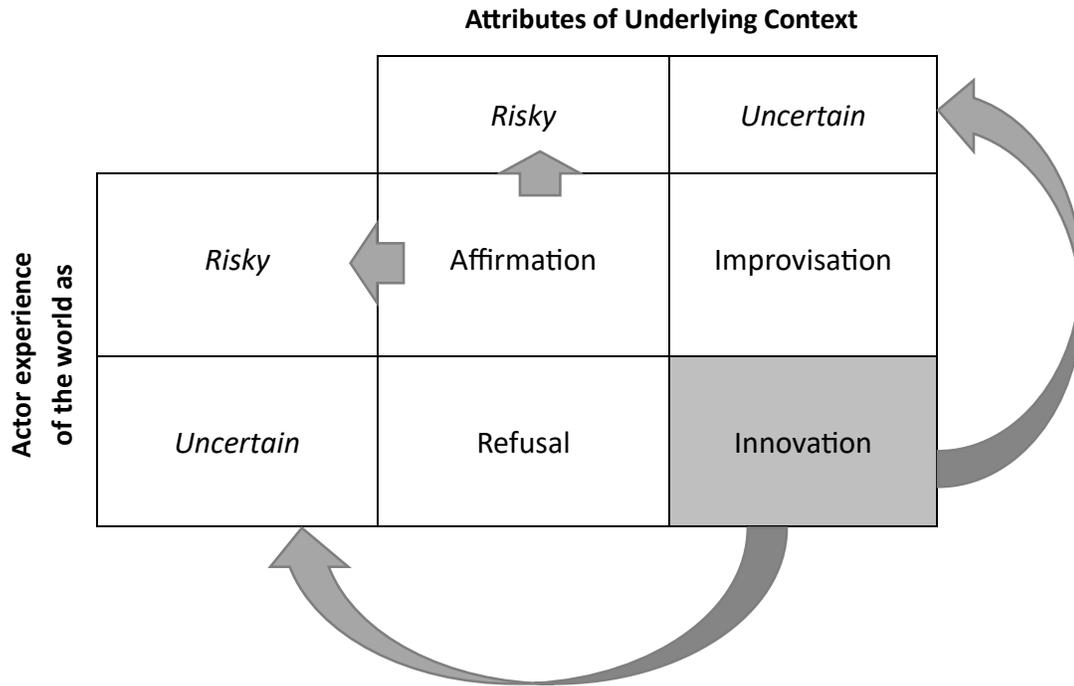
Figure 3.1 Context, Experience, and Power

The top left cell contains an affirmation, the epitome of control power. Affirmation acknowledges the potential for actors to exercise power, often resulting in compliance with predictable risks. This enhances the utility of probability calculations and reinforces the risk-based nature of the world.[211] On the other hand, there is innovation at the opposite end of the bottom right cell. In an uncertain world, innovation is the result of experience of uncertainty. It produces protean power, intensifying the already uncertain circumstances from which it originated. Because of this, it is impossible to associate protean power with particular qualities or abilities; instead, the emphasis is on its agile nature.[212]

Moreover, two additional worlds exist between the extremes where risk and uncertainty mix: improvisation and refusal. Improvisation, presented on the top right cell, occurs when an actor experiences risk in an uncertain context. It occurs because actors realise that uncertainty prevents them from calculating probabilities. This lack of knowledge, which resulted from the inability to calculate in

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[210] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 13

[211] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 13-14; and Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", pp. 33-40

[212] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 14-15; and Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", pp. 33-40

a certain environment, created confusion during emergencies. As such, when circumstances change around actors, they must improvise because well-tried strategies do not work in an environment of uncertainty.[213]

Meanwhile, refusal in the bottom left cell reflects the actor's experience of uncertainty in a risky context. Refusal encapsulates the idea that actors' lack of control allows for unexpected solutions while success turns protean power into control power. Actors' presumptions about widespread uncertainty may hold on even after risk takes over uncertainty. Without any intention of exerting direct control over others, they continue to make decisions that solely impact their immediate surroundings, rejecting attempts at risk-based decision-making.[214]

Therefore, according to Seybert and Katzenstein, risk and uncertainty are intertwined. Although known risks and calculable probabilities can characterise some aspects of global politics, others involve high levels of unpredictability. The authors suggest that actors can employ risk management strategies in uncertain environments, acknowledging that they may not eliminate uncertainty but can mitigate risks and vulnerabilities. This may involve adaptive responses, contingency planning, and strategic hedging to navigate uncertainties effectively. Seybert and Katzenstein also propose that actors with protean power may better navigate complexities and seize strategic advantages when risks are known. However, outcomes are uncertain, so leveraging flexibility, adaptability, and innovation can help exploit opportunities or mitigate potential threats.[215]

Consequently, this thesis claims that to comprehend the patterns of power that VNSAs exercise, it is essential to consider the world as an open-complex system in which risk and uncertainty interact and overlap.[216] That is the importance of viewing the world through an open system in which various concepts of power exist and influence each other. Hence, navigating VNSAs' actions through the elements of protean and control power is vital in understanding their patterns of power.

3.1.1. Elements of Protean Power in VNSAs' Actions

This section aims to examine the concept of protean power by analysing its elements and identifying their presence in the actions of VNSAs. Protean power, as defined by its authors, is "the effect of improvisational and innovative responses to uncertainty that arise from actors' creativity and agility in response to uncertainty."[217] Building on this definition, the thesis argues that VNSAs' patterns of power are visible through protean elements such as uncertainty, agility, creativity, innovation, and improvisation.

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[213] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 14; and Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", pp. 33-37

[214] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 14; and Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", pp. 33-37

[215] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power"

[216] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 17

[217] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 4

Uncertainty

Uncertainty is a crucial component of protean power, as it is the driving force behind agile actors constantly improvising and innovating.[218] Katzenstein and Seybert argue that uncertainty is rooted in the limited understanding of the world.[219] Unexpected events arise from four factors: the indeterminate conditions that humans create, the dynamic and ever-changing nature of intersubjectivity, innovative ideas that gain political legitimacy, and the deontic power[220] that constructs social reality.[221] Thus, uncertainty is central to protean power since actions' unintended consequences often have the most significant impact.

While an actor may not possess the necessary strength to exert control over the human or non-human world, they may still possess enough empowerment to have the ability to actualise potentialities and navigate the world successfully. Hence, one way to demonstrate protean power is by observing the unintended effects of human actions which result from uncertainty. Protean power typically arises in contexts of uncertainty related to actors' agility. By building on elements such as identity and other apparatuses to face uncertainty, these actors come to reinterpret the meaning of rules and play without them. In this way, protean power produces political dynamics that alert us to situations where "endogenous uncertainty" exists rather than only responding to uncertainty as "exogenous."[222] Therefore, uncertainty creates protean power and is amplified by it.

Operational and Radical Uncertainty

In their analysis of how policymakers manage economic and security challenges, Katzenstein and Seybert identified two types of uncertainties: operational and radical. These concepts characterise different types of uncertainty and their impact on decision-making and policy formulation. However, operational and radical uncertainty are tied to the concept of known unknowns and unknown unknowns.

The "known unknowns" are the "knowledge about what we do not know" that we can obtain through information.[223] Certain pieces of information exist that we know we lack knowledge or understanding of, which we refer to as known unknowns. One example is the intentions and future actions of adversarial states or non-state actors. Despite having access to information on a rival nation's military capabilities, intelligence agencies may still have limited insight into their specific strategic objectives or upcoming decisions in a conflict scenario.[224]

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[218] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 17

[219] Emanuel Adler, "Control Power as a Special Case of Protean Power: Thoughts on Peter Katzenstein and Lucia Seybert's Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics", *International Theory,* vol.12, no.3 (August 2020), 422-434, p. 429

[220] Deontic power is the right accorded to people or entities to carry out particular deeds or make particular choices following moral standards, legal requirements, or social conventions.

[221] Emanuel Adler, "Control Power", p. 429

[222] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 25

[223] Christopher Daase & Oliver Kessler, "Knowns and Unknowns in the `War on Terror': Uncertainty and the Political Construction of Danger", *Security Dialogue*, vol. 38, no.4 (December 2007), 411-434, p. 412

[224] Roger Z. George and James B. Bruce, *Analyzing Intelligence: Origins, Obstacles, and Innovations* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2008)

The "unknown unknowns" are the "non-knowledge about what we do not know and cannot know," meaning they can disrupt even the most careful planning.[225] Certain unknown variables may manifest as unanticipated events or factors beyond our comprehension. A prime illustration of this is the Arab Uprising of 2010-2011, which caught many governments and analysts off guard. The extensive protests and revolutions throughout the MENA were unexpected and not part of the typical international relations narrative. The intricate web of socio-economic factors, political grievances, and social media's impact culminated in unforeseeable events that fundamentally transformed the regional dynamics.[226]

"Known unknowns" mark operational uncertainty where decision-makers can gauge and measure risks, uncertainties, and possible outcomes within a specific range of probabilities.[227] Though some unpredictability may exist, decision-makers can utilise established methodologies, models, and expertise to navigate uncertainties efficiently. In managing operational uncertainty, decision-makers may use risk management tactics, such as scenario planning, sensitivity analysis, or hedging, to evaluate and lessen risks while pursuing their goals. They may also depend on institutional mechanisms, bureaucratic routines, and expert input to inform their decision-making processes and improve their capacity to manage uncertainty.[228] Asymmetric conflicts, such as counterinsurgency campaigns, exemplify operational uncertainty during military operations. The complex socio-political landscape, insurgent tactics, and civilian sympathies are unpredictable variables that challenge the effectiveness of traditional military approaches. For instance, during the U.S.-led intervention in Afghanistan after 9/11, coalition forces faced operational uncertainty while identifying and neutralising Taliban insurgents, navigating tribal dynamics, and balancing military objectives with broader political and humanitarian considerations.[229] To manage operational uncertainty, adaptability, intelligence gathering, and engagement with local communities were crucial for achieving strategic goals amidst evolving circumstances. Although operational uncertainty is frequent, it often coincides with radical uncertainty.[230]

Radical uncertainty occurs when decision-makers lack sufficient information, data, or conceptual frameworks to assess risks, uncertainties, or potential outcomes confidently. The future is inherently uncertain and unpredictable, and potential discontinuities, surprises, and paradigm shifts may challenge existing assumptions and expectations. To cope with radical uncertainty, decision-makers may adopt flexible, adaptive, and experimental approaches to decision-making, recognising the limitations of traditional risk management strategies in addressing fundamentally unpredictable uncertainties.[231] They may embrace uncertainty as a source of creativity, innovation, and learning, fostering resilience and agility in the face of unknown unknowns.[232] Moreover, emotions play a significant role in radical

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[225] Daase & Kessler, "Knowns and Unknowns", p. 412

[226] Peter Jones, "The Arab Spring: Opportunities and implications", *International Journal*, vol. 67, no. 2, A New Agenda for Peace (Spring 2012), 447-463

[227] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 30

[228] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 41

[229] Chris Jenks, "Agency of Risk: The Competing Balance Between Protecting Military Forces and the Civilian Population During Counterinsurgency Operations in Afghanistan", in William Banks (ed.) *Counterinsurgency Law: New Directions in Asymmetric Warfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013)

[230] Christian Reus-Smit, "Protean Power and Revolutions in Rights", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 57-144, p. 64

[231] Reus-Smit, "Protean Power and Revolutions in Rights", p. 64

[232] Barak Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power: How Terrorists Navigate Uncertainty", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 188–208, p. 190

uncertainty, leading to overconfidence and misguided assurance.[233] For instance, the Arab Spring revolutions in the MENA region significantly impacted policymakers and analysts. Although the uprisings were known events, the region's long-term consequences and political trajectory were highly uncertain. This raised questions about the stability of new regimes, the emergence of violent extremism, the role of external actors, and the impact on regional security dynamics. Policymakers faced significant challenges in devising effective strategies to address the rapidly evolving situation due to radical uncertainty resulting from the actors' agility.[234]

Agility and Protean Power

Katzenstein and Seybert assert that actors with protean power possess agility, vital in navigating uncertainty. The authors posit that the agility of such actors results in protean power effects. This effect is characterised by their ability to adapt and remain effective in dynamic environments, enhancing their overall power projection capabilities. Additionally, their innovation and adaptability enable them to exert influence in new and unique ways, shaping the course of events to their advantage. They make quick decisions, allowing them to achieve strategic objectives more efficiently. They are also resilient and adaptable, enabling them to maintain their power and influence over the long term, even in the face of unforeseen challenges or disruptions. Finally, their networked collaboration enhances their capacity for influence, allowing them to extend their reach across diverse domains and geographies.[235]

Moreover, Katzenstein and Seybert explain that protean power is derived from the ability of agile actors to improvise to solve issues that may have *ex-ante* unknown consequences for other actors and the system as a whole.[236] Therefore, agility and creativity are intertwined since "all agents are 'agile', even those who appear rigid or slow, are creative."[237] Creativity is essential in social action and agency, as it allows for problem-solving. Although creativity may increase instability, Katzenstein and Seybert view it as a practice that reduces uncertainty. Furthermore, according to Adler, creativity fosters the emergence of novel social norms that lessen disorder.[238] This perspective is based on the work of Livro Hans Joas, who contended that creativity is the most fundamental action for humans. Nevertheless, Joas points out that the foundation of creativity is that objectives arise from the ever-changing "situational contexts that improvising practitioners" encounter and from introspection, ambition, and character.[239] In essence, circumstances give rise to erratic tendencies that serve as the foundation for creative action where actors can innovate and improvise.

Innovation and Improvisation

Katzenstein and Seybert claim that actors experience uncertainty within two spheres. One is related to how they experience the world, and the second is related to the context that they operate within. When experienced differently in the world by the actors, the context of uncertainty produces two types of

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[233] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 30
[234] Jason Brownlee, Tarek Masoud, and Andrew Reynolds, *The Arab Spring: Pathways of Repression and Reform* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015)
[235] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 4,6,12
[236] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 10
[237] Adler, "Control Power", p. 427
[238] Adler, "Control Power", p. 427
[239] Adler, "Control Power", pp. 428-429

political practices: innovation and improvisation, which actors use to deal with uncertainty. Although innovation and improvisation occur primarily outside the purview of relations of control and foster creativity and the flow of unpredictable power, they differ.[240]

Innovation occurs when the actor experiences the world as uncertain in a context of uncertainty. It results from using uncertainty to set new roots in constantly shifting terrain. In the realm of risk, innovation is a viable reaction that brings unexpected benefits or startling setbacks. Moreover, innovative practices come in five different forms: improvised communication, surprise, the constant making of mistakes and fixing them, switching between individual and group activities, and repeating reactions to understandings that are shared by a minimum of two actors.[241]

In contrast, improvisation results from the actor's experience of the world as risky in a context of uncertainty. This mismatch of experience and context thrusts an actor into improvisation. This kind of crisis results in an emergency, mainly when the actor's uncertainty appears as a lack of information about the possible outcomes of the previously developed strategies. It can lead to various interactions between the control and protean power. Improvisation emphasises the ability of an actor to adapt to unforeseen events and dynamic situations. It consists of three essential aspects: emergent behaviour, resourcefulness, and learning and adaptation. Improvisation enables actors to adapt to challenges, seize opportunities, and pursue their interests in a rapidly changing world.[242]

The protean power elements discussed above will help us understand VNSAs' asserting power strategies. Operating in an unpredictable environment allows VNSAs to leverage their agility to create, innovate, improvise, and adapt. VNSAs seek to undermine the host state and intimidate opposing states by harnessing operational and radical uncertainty while solidifying their control.

3.1.2. Elements of Control Power in VNSAs' Actions

This section explores the concept of control power by analysing its elements and identifying their presence in the actions of VNSAs. Katzenstein and Seybert argue that control power "is exercised through coercion, institutions and structures of domination."[243] Those in positions of power can affect their interactions with others, direct institutional goals, and leverage their structural roles to obtain both direct and indirect advantages. They can also manipulate external factors that impact the power dynamics between parties. Thus, the elements of control power are coercion, manipulation of institutions, and strategic adjustments to structural positions to dominate, and through them, VNSAs exercise control power.[244]

One of the main elements of control power is coercion. It is associated with violence exercised by the actors, the ability to intimidate others and subject them to their own will. This is the strength point of VNSAs who apply violence to reach their aim. From Al Qaeda and Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to Hamas, violence is the language of these actors. Through their use of terror, they try to trap the hosting state and coerce other states into submitting to their demands. Such coercion and usage of violence not

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[240] Katzenstein and Seybert, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", pp. 33-38
[241] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 33-37
[242] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 33-37
[243] Katzenstein and Seybert, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 28
[244] Katzenstein and Seybert, "Uncertainty, Risk", p. 28

only in their actions but also in their ideology and speeches allow VNSAs to have leverage over the host state through a "control framework of ideology and institutions."[245]

Hence, the second element of VNSAs' control power is manipulating institutions. Their ability to "steer institutional agenda" manifests their influential capabilities and indicates a sign of enhancing an overgrowing power.[246] The importance of capturing institutions through coercion is translated into institutions' vital role as managers of social uncertainty.[247] However, institutions, on the other hand, hold political possibilities that limit and expand the domain of uncertainty.[248] VNSAs profit from this element primarily because institutional complexes produce an environment that agile actors can utilise. VNSAs exploit the ambiguous interpretations of laws and norms to move through the cracks and crevices of purposefully constructed institutions, feeding off and escalating uncertainty.[249] Which in turn helps them to achieve control power in the long run.

Eventually, coercion and manipulation of institutions affect the third element of control power, structural dominance. Structures are crucial since they produce social power that gives some values precedence over others, resulting in dominance patterns.[250] By capitalising on their usage of violence by capturing the host state institutions and exploiting the cracks within the international institutions, VNSAs come to dominate the structure that defines the state's relations and the power over society. For instance, when Hamas captured institutions in Gaza, it not only took over the political dynamics but exerted influence on society structure, shifting the strip's identity and social order and dynamics. By Islamising the society by force and turning it into a jihadi one, Hamas was making sure that it was producing patterns of domination through which it could exercise its power and exploits the institutions.

Therefore, these groups started shifting from protean to control power by building on these three elements: coercion, manipulation of institutions, and strategic adjustments to structural positions to dominate, which VNSAs captured through their agility and creativity. However, when VNSAs start exercising control power, they either affirm or refuse, depending on their perception of the world within the context of risk.

Affirmation and Refusal

Actors are considered to exercise control power when operating in a context of risk. Following Katzenstein and Seybert's claim in Figure 3.1, actors exercising control power have two political practices: affirmation and refusal. The distinction between these two types is not based on the context of the situation but on the actor's experience of the world within that context.[251]

In brief, actors will exercise the political practice of affirmation when they experience the world as risky in a risky context. This response is associated with politicians and decision-makers who prefer to work within the context of risk away from uncertainty. In this context, they can predict events based on probable calculations of particular patterns and build up scenarios in response. This practice enables the

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[245] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 21
[246] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 28
[247] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 28
[248] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 40
[249] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 54
[250] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", p. 28
[251] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", p. 13

circulation of control power and usually functions directly. Jennifer Erickson's analysis of the Cold War-era arms control discourse highlights the strategic balance states had to strike amidst an atmosphere of risk in a risky context. For instance, by pursuing arms control agreements, nations sought to manage the risks of a volatile global climate. Hence, Erickson's analysis underlines the value of diplomatic engagement, negotiation, and collaboration in addressing security threats in a world fraught with risk.[252]

On the other hand, if the actor experiences the world as uncertain in a risky context, they will practice refusal. Refusals are the practices that emerge from disregarding novel factors that occur outside of the parameters of confirmed probability calculations and have the potential to impact future power possibilities. Refusal does not reject fundamental probabilities as much as challenge them because it is closer to risk than uncertainty.[253] A staunch example of how an actor can shift from affirmation to refusal is Poland after joining the European Union (EU). In his analysis, Ayoub sheds light on Poland's refusal to adopt international and transnational Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) standards. This serves as a reminder that even EU membership does not guarantee an absence of pushback against these norms. The country's stance on LGBT issues is indicative of a larger trend of nationalist and conservative opposition to universalising values and beliefs.[254]

Applying political practices rooted in control power makes it evident that VNSAs affirm and refuse. Affirmation occurs as VNSAs make strategic decisions and plan their actions based on calculated risk assessments, allowing them to navigate risky environments while reinforcing their identity and mission. Due to factors such as hostility from states, internal conflict, and external interference, VNSAs often perceive the world as risky. The theory of self-affirmation suggests that individuals and groups strengthen their core identities and values in response to threats, offering insight into how VNSAs practice affirmation in such circumstances. This affirmation practice enables VNSAs to maintain cohesion and morale among their members in the face of external pressures. VNSAs demonstrate affirmation by utilising cultural, ideological, and social resources to bolster their identity, purpose, and resilience amid perceived risks and challenges. These affirmations fortify their morale, unity, and determination to pursue their objectives. Examples of VNSAs affirming their beliefs can be seen in Kurdish armed groups operating in the Middle East, such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey, as it taps into cultural, ideological, and social resources to reinforce their identity, purpose, and resilience. For instance, the PKK participates in symbolic acts such as public statements and commemorative events to support its ongoing struggle and validate its historical narrative. Its identity is cemented, and these actions increase its appeal to potential supporters and existing members.[255]

On the other hand, VNSAs often resort to refusal as a response to experiencing the world as uncertain in a risky context. Refusal in this context involves rejecting or defying external pressures, norms, or authorities that are seen as adding to or worsening the risks they encounter. VNSAs employ refusal as a strategic tactic to manage uncertainty, and it can manifest in various ways, such as rejecting state-imposed narratives, declining unfavourable peace negotiations, or refusing to align with what they view as corrupt or illegitimate state structures. For example, Al-Shabaab in Somalia actively targets the Somali

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[252] Jennifer Erickson, "Changing History? Innovation and Continuity in Contemporary Arms Control", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 229-245

[253] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Uncertainty, Risk, Power", pp. 33-36

[254] Phillip M. Ayoub, "Protean Power in Movement: Navigating Uncertainty in the LGBT Rights Revolution", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 79-99

[255] Ali Kemal Özcan, *Turkey's Kurds: A Theoretical Analysis of the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan* (Routledge, 2006)

government and refuses to acknowledge its legitimacy. Instead, they establish alternative governing systems in the areas under their control and use Sharia-based courts to provide services and administer justice. By refusing to engage with state institutions, VNSAs like Al-Shabaab demonstrate how they strategically navigate the uncertainty of their operational environments.[256] However, as VNSAs acquire more control power, they become vulnerable to predictability and accountability.

Predictability and Accountability

Generally, control power is associated with states' power and dominance. According to Barak Mendelsohn, the state's capacity to exhibit accountability, predictability, and control is critical to its legitimacy.[257] States are known to value control power, as it helps them observe the world through a lens of calculated risk. This fact leaves them vulnerable to VNSAs who can predict the states' moves and reactions, primarily since states operate on a risk-based model that leaves little room for manoeuvring. One instance of a non-state armed group exploiting the predictability of government forces is the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) during the Colombian conflict. Throughout the lengthy conflict, FARC utilised tactics that capitalised on the predictability of government movements and routines. By carefully observing and adapting to these patterns, FARC guerrillas could skillfully target government forces, disrupt state control, and sustain their insurgency for an extended period.[258]

However, when VNSAs gain significant power through coercion, manipulation of institutions, and structural dominance, they aspire to exercise control power. By exercising control power, VNSAs may demonstrate predictability and accountability, often considered against VNSAs' nature and behaviour. As VNSAs start exercising more control power, they risk losing their element of surprise and unpredictability, which is their main strength. Moreover, by capturing the state's institutions and building their own, they become subject to accountability from the host state population.[259]

In brief, VNSAs might aspire to achieve control power through exercising protean power; however, such accomplishment has drawbacks and can weaken them in the long run. This is what has happened to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who were a militant group in Sri Lanka seeking an independent Tamil state. As the LTTE expanded its control over territory and resources, its activities and behaviour became more predictable. Despite holding significant territory, the group's predictable activities and centralised leadership made it easier for the Sri Lankan government and international actors to anticipate its actions. The government escalated its military campaign against the LTTE, ultimately defeating them in 2009. The LTTE's case demonstrates how VNSAs can become predictable and prone to legal accountability within the state's jurisdiction.[260]

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[256] Paa Kwesi Wolseley Prah, "From Somalia with Love: Unveiling Al-Shabaab's Recruitment Strategies, Power Projection, and the Somali Government's Countermeasures", in Mohd Mizan Aslam and Rohan Gunaratna (eds), *Global War on Terrorism – Revisited* (London: IntechOpen, 2023)

[257] Barak Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power: How Terrorists Navigate Uncertainty", in Peter J. Katzenstein and Lucia A. Seybert (eds), *Protean Power: Exploring the Uncertain and Unexpected in World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), 188-208, p. 207

[258] Lee E. Taylor II, "Case Analysis: The FARC in Colombia", *Small Wars Journal*, (March 2020) https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/case-analysis-farc-colombia

[259] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 207

[260] Mansoor Mohamed Fazil and Mohamed A. M. Fowsar, "The End of Sri Lanka's Civil War and the Fall of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE): A Critical Analysis of the Contributed Factors to the Defeat of the LTTE", *Journal of Politics and Law*, vol.13, no.4, (2020), 147-155

Consequently, it is clear that as VNSAs get closer to capturing the state institutions, they tend to exercise more control power, such as coercion, manipulation of institutions and exploitation of structure, all for domination. Even before they capture the state, VNSAs tend to use the practice of affirmation, a feature of control power, to make decisions and calculate and predict the state's actions. In due course, as VNSAs gain more control, they become less able to escape being predictable and to be held accountable for their actions.

3.2. VNSAs' Patterns of Power between Control and Protean Power

The concept of power itself is challenging to define, let alone to create a theory on it. To introduce a new concept, it is crucial to compare it to existing theories of power. Katzenstein and Seybert accomplished this by contrasting protean power with control power. Therefore, comprehending control power is a necessary step in understanding protean power. As this dissertation seeks to reveal the VNSAs' patterns of power, examining control and protean power components is essential. Doing so can determine which type of power these actors use and the resulting patterns. According to Katzenstein and Seybert's ideas, protean power does not aim to negate control power. Instead, it seeks to complement and build upon it.[261] As a result, some actors may choose to use both patterns. Traditional actors like the state tend to favour control power because demonstrating control, predictability, and accountability is crucial for maintaining legitimacy.

Meanwhile, emerging, agile actors on the political stage, such as VNSAs, embody the essence of protean power through their unpredictable actions since they possess incredible agility, adaptability, and resilience. They showcase unparalleled versatility through asymmetric warfare, propaganda, and governance strategies. Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda serves as a testament to this, having evolved from a centralised terrorist organisation to a decentralised network with global reach. These examples showcase how different VNSAs display protean power, utilising their agility, adaptability, and innovation to pursue their goals and question established authorities and power hierarchies. Despite their non-state status, these organisations remain potent players in the worldwide security arena, showcasing the development of conflict and power in contemporary society.[262]

However, this classification does not suggest that crossing over is impossible. In some instances, the ability of nations to overcome unconventional challenges and thrive may hinge on their openness to integrating protean power into their approach and tactics. A fit illustration would be the United States' campaign against terrorism. Through creative improvisation and innovation, they were able to achieve positive outcomes. This was evident in their counterterrorism measures, which leveraged cutting-edge technology, artificial intelligence, and cyber capabilities. By harnessing these technological advancements, they gathered vast amounts of information, while computing power helped to process and interpret this intelligence.[263]

Conversely, unconventional actors like VNSAs may exercise control power when they gain control over land and begin acting like a state. For instance, When ISIS captured parts of Syria and Iraq, it exercised control power through coercion, governance structures, and propaganda, establishing itself as a *de facto* governing authority in the territories it captured. This was evident by enforcing Sharia rules and regulations governing behaviour, dress, and social interactions. Also, it exercised control power by

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[261] Seybert and Katzenstein, "Protean Power and Control Power", pp. 4-5
[262] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 189
[263] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 207

establishing its judicial system, consisting of Islamic courts that adjudicated legal disputes and criminal cases based on its interpretation of Sharia law. These courts were known for their swift and harsh judgments, often carrying out executions and punishments in public squares. On the other hand, ISIS provided some essential social services in its controlled areas, including education, healthcare, and utilities. Also, it maintained economic control by seizing essential economic resources in the territories it occupied, including oil fields, agricultural land, and strategic infrastructure. It profited from illicit activities such as oil smuggling, extortion, and taxation, using these revenues to fund its operations and governance activities. Additionally, ISIS employed sophisticated propaganda techniques to maintain control over the population and recruit new followers.[264] Ultimately, it is not a matter of choosing one power over the other; instead, it is a combination of both or fluctuating between them as necessary.

Therefore, the dissertation will be built upon two distinct yet complementary concepts of power: control and protean. Despite their apparent contradictions, VNSAs utilise both forms of power to achieve their objectives. Protean power is a central factor in the dynamics of VNSAs and a means to respond to external incidents. By capitalising on uncertainty, VNSAs aim to undermine the state's legitimacy. They do this by exploiting the complexities of state institutions through innovative actions. Additionally, they seek to expose the state's weaknesses in exercising control power by harnessing operational uncertainty. [265] However, as VNSAs extend their reach and gain control over territories and institutions, they realise that protean power can only reach a certain height. Moreover, they become aware that being a valid and contributing member of the global community necessitates a greater sense of risk-taking and increased vulnerability to the intimidating power of other states.[266] They must now operate within the confines of legitimate membership in the international community, increasing their susceptibility to the coercive power of other states. Thus, while VNSAs' reactions and movements may be based on protean power, their calculations concerning states are based on control power.

The interplay between protean and control power is particularly evident in VNSAs' approach to uncertainty. While VNSAs leverage uncertainty to gain power and perform at their best, they also strive to minimise their uncertainty. Unlike states, which tend to reduce uncertainty by transforming it into risk, VNSAs often turn to religion to address their uncertainty. To overcome what they perceive as a threat to their ontological security, such as external military pressure, counterterrorism measures, and loss of territory and popular support, VNSAs may respond with "exaggerated certainty."[267] Maintaining ontological security is essential for VNSAs' survival and resilience, enabling them to preserve their identity, cohesion, and sense of purpose amid uncertainty and conflict. Hence, VNSA turns into religion as it plays a central role in this endeavour, providing the certainty that VNSAs crave, such as the promise of victory or an explanation for setbacks. This is particularly evident in the way Islamic VNSAs use religion as both an ideology and a means of motivating their followers. The role of religion highlights the complex interplay between risk and uncertainty, as terrorist leaders strategically leverage religion to enhance their control power. By using religion to mobilise followers and create a central point for their actions, VNSAs can better control their members.[268] This duality of exploiting uncertainty while limiting its drawbacks demonstrates the agility of VNSAs, who implement both protean and control power depending on their situation and working environment.

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[264] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 207
[265] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 207
[266] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 194
[267] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 195
[268] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 196

This thesis demonstrates that VNSAs employ protean power to achieve control power. Their agility enables them to navigate uncertainty, yet their ultimate objective is establishing control. However, as they progress towards this goal, VNSAs compromise their flexibility and ingenuity in manipulating uncertainty to their advantage. As a result, the more they succeed in acquiring territories and taking over the state, the more control they attain. Consequently, they lose their protean power and become more predictable, making them more susceptible to being held accountable within the state's jurisdiction.[269]

Eventually, VNSAs have demonstrated resilience and adaptability in response to crises. They have been able to innovate and improvise under contexts of uncertainty, enabling them to survive and thrive. However, VNSAs also exercise control power through their constant use of violence and their desire to be central players. They calculate risks and manage situations through coercion and force. However, while exercising protean and aiming for control, these actors also apply different types of powers as tools, such as soft and hard. Moreover, between the exercise of protean and control and the application of hard and soft powers, there is a continuum degree of power that VNSAs practice to achieve their ultimate aim of capturing the institutions or the state. The following section will highlight the patterns of power and present the dissertation's framework.

3.3. VNSAs' Patterns of Power: A Mix of Hard and Soft with Control and Protean Powers

To understand VNSAs' patterns of power, it is crucial to consider not only Katzenstein and Seybert's concepts of control and protean power but also Nye's notions of hard and soft power. This dissertation showcases the intersection and mutual reinforcement of Nye and Katzenstein's power frameworks. While it may be tempting to think of soft power as a necessary component of protean power and hard power as synonymous with control power, actors can effectively wield both hard and soft power while exercising protean power, just as they can utilise control power while applying soft and hard power. This suggests that the different forms of power are not entirely distinct and can be combined to achieve desired outcomes.

The significance of this section lies in its substantial theoretical contribution, which will establish a comprehensive framework to enhance our understanding of control, protean, coercion, and creativity. This framework will illustrate that coercion does not always entail exerting hard power through violence; instead, it can manifest in a softer form through communication and ideology. Simultaneously, it will demonstrate that being agile and creative does not solely imply exercising soft power.[270]

On the contrary, agile actors can wield hard power while utilising protean power, and ISIS is proof. It demonstrated remarkable agility and adaptability in its military campaigns and governance strategies, combining traditional hard power tactics with elements of protean power to achieve its objectives. For instance, during its military campaigns, ISIS employed conventional military tactics to capture and hold territory in Iraq and Syria. Its use of conventional hard power allowed it to seize control of key cities, infrastructure, and resources, establishing a self-declared caliphate in the region. On the other hand, ISIS leveraged protean power through propaganda and recruitment efforts, attracting followers from diverse backgrounds. It established a system of governance based on Sharia law, providing social services and administering justice. Overall, ISIS exemplifies an agile actor that wields hard power while utilising protean power to achieve its objectives.[271]

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[269] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", p. 189
[270] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", pp. 188-195
[271] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power", pp. 195-204

Therefore, this section will be subdivided into three distinct parts. The first subsection will outline Nye's soft and hard power theory. The second subsection will establish the correlation between control and protean power and their relationship with hard and soft power. It will highlight how they intersect in an actor's behaviour when employing either. Lastly, the final subsection will conclude the dissertation's framework.

An Overview of Nye's Hard and Soft Power

Joseph Nye argues that practitioners measure power according to the *ex-ante* (or before-the-action) outcomes. Their desire to have *ex-ante* projections as a tool for action guidance prevents them from applying behavioural approaches based on the *ex-post* (or after-the-action) outcomes. According to Nye, such an approach views power in terms of resources. Despite their significance, the power relies on converting such resources, which depends on behavioural actions. Therefore, context-specific behaviour determines whether or not a particular set of resources yields desired results. Besides being conscious of the imperfect relationship between the two, clarifying whether the addressed power is based on behaviour or resources is critical.[272]

Building on behavioural definition, Nye identified three power categories: hard, soft, and smart. Both states and VNSAs apply hard power, which depends on force and physical force, such as weapons. Nye contends that soft power is more effective in today's world of globalisation and increased competition from NSAs and multinational corporations. Instead of using force, soft power is centred on influencing others to share one's objectives. Instead of using violent methods, this power depends on media and cultural influence. Furthermore, Nye presented the idea of smart power, which blends soft and hard power.[273]

Moreover, Nye asserted that specific resources typically linked with hard power can also generate soft power in certain situations, such as when the US Navy fleets provided aid during natural disasters, as was the case in 2004 during the tsunami that hit Indonesia. He argued that attraction, a soft power pillar, is not exclusive to the West or the liberals. The anti-liberals, even terrorists, can also exercise it. Thus, while anti-liberal actors arouse revulsion in some audiences, they can also generate soft power in others. For example, the pilots who brought down the World Trade Center towers were drawn to Osama bin Laden by an extreme version of Islam, not by force or money. Nye pointed out that structural manipulation, which follows a specific agenda, is a form of hard power. However, he claimed that this behaviour falls more comfortably under the umbrella of soft power if the targets accept and even value the agent's agenda-setting.[274]

Therefore, all sorts of actors from various spectrums of political lives can use hard and soft power. This suggests that the actors' behaviour is critical in determining the type of power they are exercising and their tactics. Also, regarding resources and actions, there is no clear-cut distinction between hard and soft. Hence, what distinguishes hard from soft power is the behavioural outcome. Such a conclusion will help build the theoretical framework, especially when matching control and protean power with hard and soft power.

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[272] Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power: The Evolution of a Concept", *Journal of Political Power*, vol.14, no.1 (February 2021), 196-208, pp. 2-4
[273] Joseph S. Nye, "Soft Power", *Foreign Policy*, no. 80 (Autumn 1990), 153–171, p. 166
[274] Nye, "Soft Power", pp. 6-7

VNSAs' Patterns of Power: Power Exercised and Power Applied

After establishing the main pillars of soft and hard power, it will become easier to identify the interconnection between them and control and protean power. Therefore, the patterns of power that an actor practices are a combination of power exercised—control and protean—based on the actor's experience and the environment it operates in—with the type of power applied—soft or hard—to help achieve the actor's aim. This equation can be summed up in the following formula:

Power Exercised + Power Applied = Patterns of Power.

However, since an actor can exercise two different forms of power and apply two various types of power, there will be four different kinds of patterns of power. This two-by-two formula with its four results is shown in Figure 3.2, which illustrates the connection between the power exercised and power applied by showing two dimensions: Nye's type of power and Katzenstein's and Seybert's form of power.

Nye's Type of Power

	Hard	Soft
Control	Predomination	Exhortation
Protean	Intimidation	Adulation

Katzenstein and Seybert's Form of Power
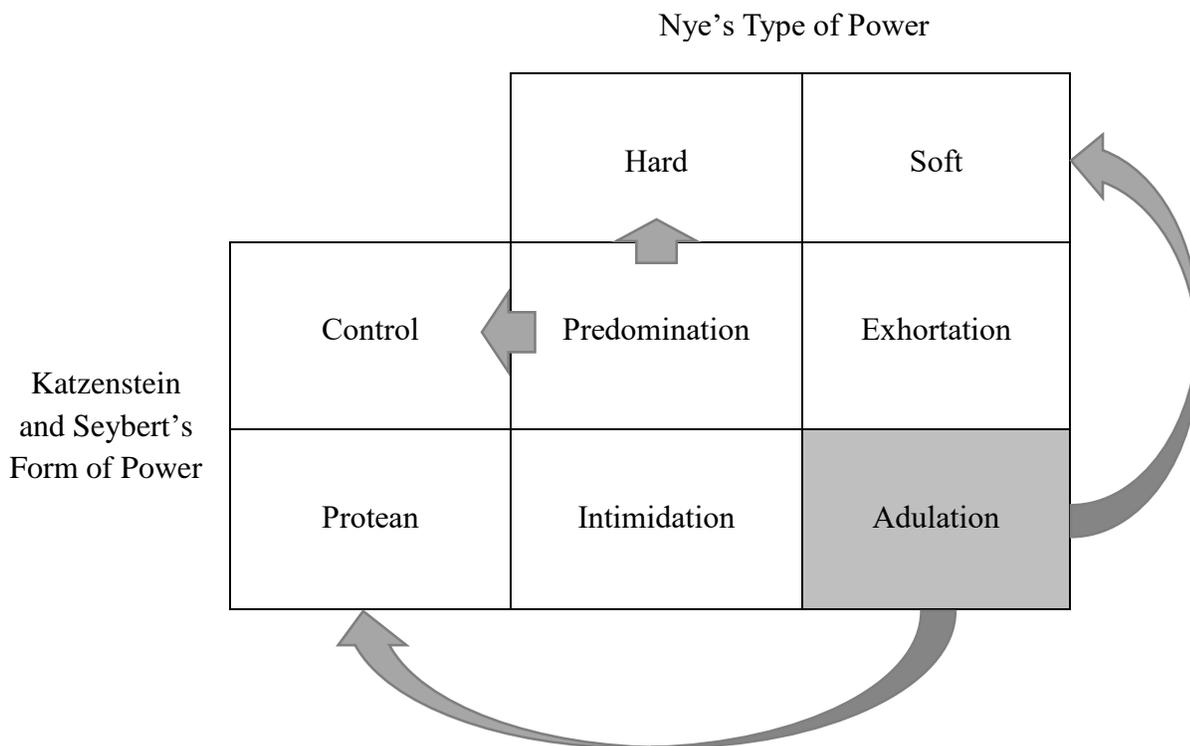
Figure 3.2 Patterns of Power based on Nye and Katzenstein & Seybert

The figure above shows that actors exercising control and protean power apply soft and hard power. The four cells are the product of the interaction between Nye's soft and hard power and Katzenstein & Seybert's control and protean power, representing the actors' patterns of power. Therefore, these patterns of powers capture the extent to which actors manipulate uncertainty and try to achieve certainty and the extent to which they are ready to intimidate or attract to achieve their aims.

However, given that power has various dimensions rather than one, a spectrum cannot be used to present the different degrees of power. In contrast, a continuum can show each one. This is because different types of power present recurrent sequences where the extremes are clearly defined, in which the adjacent power elements bring them together. Every power activity represented in the four cells creates power relations that reinforce the soft or hard, protean or control shown in the two dimensions. The arrows in Figure 3.2 reflect the end of the continuum of power, where Nye's and Katzenstein & Seybert's forms of power meet at their extreme, presenting the polar power practice.

Predomination as a Pattern of Power

In the upper left cell, *predomination* is seen from the viewpoint of individuals subject to such power as coercion or obedience exercised by actors facing known threats. As the short arrows demonstrate, *predomination* makes using violence, manipulation of structure and payment easier in an environment of certainty where the actors view the world as risk-based because they rely on pre-existing power templates. Ultimately, *predomination* is a pattern of power that occurs when an actor establishes and maintains dominance over key institutions, resources, and populations within a given territory or domain. Powerful actors can exercise influence and authority over a region's political, economic, and social dynamics by controlling governance structures, economic assets, and social networks.

The US invasion of Iraq exemplifies *predomination* power in four significant ways. First, the US military superiority was a testament to US power, where it employed its overwhelming military capabilities to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime and dismantle the Iraqi military infrastructure. Second, its unilateral action demonstrates the US's willingness to pursue its strategic objectives even without international consensus. Third, the regime change that the US brought, with the US seeking to install a new government aligned with its interests, despite objections from the international community and concerns about the legality and legitimacy of such actions. Additionally, the invasion was primarily motivated by the desire to gain control of Iraq's enormous oil reserves. By acquiring these resources, the US aimed to guarantee consistent oil supplies, stabilise the world oil market and lessen the economic might of nations hostile to American interests. Eventually, this control strengthened US economic dominance globally by giving it leverage over global energy markets.[275]

Another example of *predomination* is Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, which was a large-scale mobilisation of Russian military forces that resulted in the annexation of Crimea and incursions into eastern Ukraine. The Russian government justified the invasion as a response to threats to Russian-speaking populations and national security interests. However, geopolitical objectives such as maintaining control over strategic territories, asserting regional influence, and challenging Western dominance and expansion were the driving factors. Through military aggression, coercive tactics, and violations of international law, Russia exemplifies the use of *predomination* power. These actions disregarded Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and undermined its government, ultimately asserting Russian influence over its affairs.[276]

The above examples illustrate the consequences of applying hard power while exercising control power. They depict classic scenarios in which dominant actors are willing to engage in wars and leverage hard

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[275] Farzana Noshab, "Control of Oil: The Real Objective of Us Invasion of Iraq?", *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, vol. 23, no. 2, SPECIAL ISSUE (Summer 2003), 85-101

[276] Ingrid (Wuerth) Brunk and Monica Hakimi, "Russia, Ukraine, and the Future World Order", *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 116, no.4 (October 2022), 687 - 697

power despite opposition from the international community and the population. This is an example of rigidity in a closed system where calculations are done in a risky environment.

Adulation as a Pattern of Power

On the other hand, at the bottom right cell, the other end of the continuum is *adulation*. It is the product of the combination of protean power and soft power. *Adulation* demonstrates the willingness of actors facing uncertainty to navigate complexity and shape perceptions to protect themselves and reach their aim. It involves using flattery, goodwill, and gestures of respect to influence or win over adversaries, rivals, or broader audiences. This combination allows for a dynamic and persuasive approach that can effectively navigate complex political landscapes and exploit opportunities for influence and persuasion. Through strategic communication, the adaptability and innovation of *adulation* power, and mutual respect and recognition, actors can effectively leverage their influence and persuasion capabilities to achieve their objectives and advance their interests in various political contexts. Such a practice produces more protean power, especially regarding agility and creativity. Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel and subsequent signing of the Camp David Accords are examples of *adulation* power, albeit in a complex political context.

Sadat's actions fit *adulation* power characteristics in several ways. First, his visit to Israel was an act of flattery and extending goodwill. Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem in November 1977 was an unprecedented and bold gesture of peace towards Israel. By addressing the Israeli Knesset (parliament), Sadat was willing to engage directly with his country's long-standing adversary, signalling a desire for reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Second, Sadat's visit and negotiations with Israeli leaders, including Prime Minister Menachem Begin and US President Jimmy Carter, symbolised recognition and respect. These were crucial in fostering a sense of mutual respect and recognition of Israel's legitimacy as a sovereign state. Despite decades of conflict and hostility between Egypt and Israel, Sadat's actions highlighted the importance of these values in political negotiations. Thirdly, the Camp David Accords, signed in September 1978 following intensive negotiations mediated by the United States, is a testament to the importance of strategic communication. The accords included provisions for the normalisation of relations between Egypt and Israel, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Sinai Peninsula, and the establishment of autonomy for the Palestinian territories.[277]

Overall, Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel and the signing of the Camp David Accords can be seen as a strategic practice of *adulation* power, as he employed bold gestures of peace, symbolic acts of recognition, and diplomatic negotiations to influence and win over his adversaries, advance Egypt's national interests, and promote regional stability and cooperation. The enduring impact of his actions, which paved the way for a historic breakthrough in Arab-Israeli relations and laid the groundwork for future peace efforts in the Middle East, is a testament to the lasting influence of *adulation* power in diplomatic efforts.[278]

The prevailing opinion that *predomination* and *adulation* are the only settings in which power is played is an error, as the two remaining cells will present two additional patterns of power: *intimidation* and *exhortation*.

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[277] Shahin Berenji, "Sadat and the Road to Jerusalem: Bold Gestures and Risk Acceptance in the Search for Peace", *International Security,* vol.45, no.1 (Summer 2020), 127–163.

[278] Galia Golan, "Sadat and Begin: Successful Diplomacy to Peace", in Robert Hutchings and Jeremi Suri (eds), *Foreign Policy Breakthroughs: Cases in Successful Diplomacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121–147

Intimidation as a Pattern of Power

In times of crisis, actors often resort to *intimidation*, using their agility and creativity to exert control over uncertain situations. This pattern of power emerges when actors exercise protean power while applying hard power. *Intimidation* involves various strategic elements, including tactical flexibility, strategic ambiguity, coercive diplomacy, and adaptive responses to resistance. Actors can maintain pressure on their opponents by creating a sense of threat and vulnerability, reinforcing perceptions of strength and determination. The ability to intimidate relies on adaptability, allowing actors to swiftly adjust their approach to overcome obstacles and maintain balance in the face of adversity. This ability to maintain pressure on opponents reinforces perceptions of strength and resolve, further contributing to *intimidation power*.

A clear example of *intimidation* can be observed through Iran's actions in the MENA region. Through a blend of military proxies, asymmetric warfare tactics, and diplomatic outreach, Iran wields protean power in the Middle East to enlarge its influence and thwart adversaries. The IRGC, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, backs proxy militias and armed groups throughout the region, such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Shia militias in Iraq and Syria, as well as participating in cyber warfare and propaganda campaigns. The Iranian regime has shown remarkable adaptability in response to regional dynamics, utilising strategic changes to exploit vulnerabilities and further its geopolitical agenda.[279]

A notable instance of *intimidation* can be observed in Turkey, led by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The country has demonstrated remarkable flexibility in its foreign policy, military interventions, and diplomatic engagements throughout the MENA region. Turkey has actively pursued regional ambitions, including military interventions in Syria and Libya, while also leveraging diplomatic initiatives and economic partnerships to widen its sphere of influence. The adaptability of Erdoğan's regime is evident in its ability to adjust strategies based on changing alliances and geopolitical circumstances, allowing it to capitalise on emerging opportunities and tackle challenges head-on.[280]

These examples illustrate how political actors can exercise protean power while applying hard power tactics to achieve their strategic objectives. By demonstrating agility, adaptability, and innovation in their responses to complex geopolitical challenges, these actors navigate uncertainty, exploit opportunities, and assert influence on the global stage.

Exhortation as a Pattern of Power

Lastly, there is the fourth practice of power, *exhortation*, which combines control with soft power. Actors function in the upper right cell during an emergent crisis in a risky environment, yet despite the certainty of the context, it requires soft power tactics. *Exhortation* power, which combines control and soft power, can create a powerful influence to guide behaviour rather than coerce or persuade. It uses control mechanisms to establish parameters and conditions within which soft power operates, promoting desirable norms through positive reinforcement. Additionally, *exhortation* is a form of influence where actors are guided or encouraged to adopt specific behaviours or policies that align with the preferences

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[279] Robin Wright, *The Iran Primer: Power, Politics, and U.S. Policy* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2010)

[280] Meliha Benli Altunışık, "The New Turn in Turkey's Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Regional and Domestic Insecurities", *Istituto Affari Internazionali*, IAI PAPERS, (July 2020)

of those in control. In summary, *exhortation* power guides and encourages actors to behave within established norms and boundaries.

The EU applies soft power by offering membership as an attractive prospect to countries in its neighbourhood or regions aspiring to join the union. Membership promises benefits such as economic integration, access to the single market, and enhanced political stability and security, which incentivise countries to undertake reforms and align with EU standards and norms. At the same time, the EU exercises control power by setting conditions and criteria that aspiring members must meet before being granted membership. These conditions typically include adherence to democratic principles, the rule of law, human rights standards, and the adoption of EU laws and regulations. By establishing these conditions, the EU asserts influence over aspiring members' domestic policies and governance structures, shaping their behaviour and decision-making processes. Despite the conditionality aspect, the EU's approach also reinforces its soft power by promoting stability, prosperity, and cooperation in its neighbourhood through the enlargement process. By offering a pathway to membership and promoting political and economic integration, the EU presents itself as a symbol of democracy, prosperity, and peace, enhancing its attractiveness and influence in the region.[281]

In summary, the EU's conditional participation approach regarding accepting new members can be seen as a combination of control and soft power. While offering membership prospects as an attractive incentive, the EU also exercises control by setting conditions and criteria for membership, leveraging its influence to shape domestic reforms and promote alignment with EU standards and values. This dual approach allows the EU to encourage stability and expand its sphere of influence while reinforcing its soft power image as a promoter of democracy, prosperity, and cooperation.

While Figure 3.2 presents the essential interaction between the powers and the result of their combination, Figure 3.3 delves deeper to show that the cut between the patterns of power is not rigid; instead, an actor can merge two or more different patterns of power.
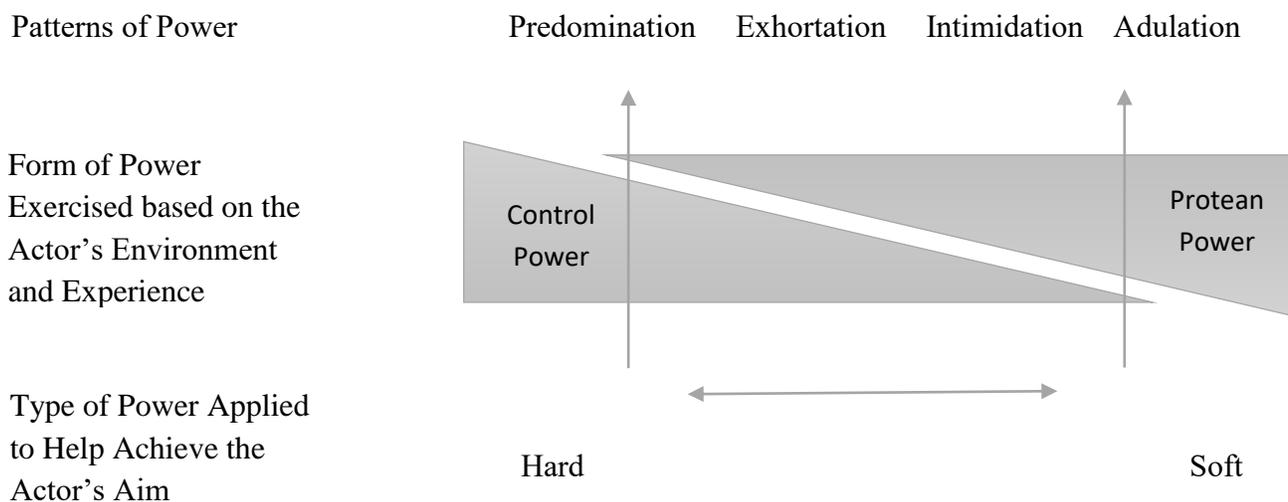

Figure 3.3 Patterns of Power: Power Exercised and Power Applied

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[281] Hans Agné, "European Union Conditionality: Coercion or Voluntary Adaptation?", *Turkish Journal of International Relations*, vol.8, no.1 (Spring 2009)

To analyse Figure 3.3, starting from the top to the bottom is best, as this will help link the patterns of power to the form of power exercised based on context, experience, and the type of power applied. Protean power starts with actors applying soft power but then moves towards controlling power while applying hard power. However, in between these continua are other patterns of power, merging both ends of the scale.

Exploring the degrees of the patterns of power is vital. This is because while the various forms of power offer everlasting series with distinct extremes, their use in adjacent power elements tends to unite them. For instance, *exhortation* and *intimidation* fall under actors practising both soft control and protean hard. It is as if there is a different world where actors move between the form of power they exercise and the type of power they apply, merging them. Hence, in the same period, an actor can exercise control or protean power depending on the context it is facing, and the type of power applied, soft or hard, can also range.

Therefore, each degree of power presents a distinct pattern in the actor's practice of power. This is a testament to the actors' agility and creativity in reaching their aim and protecting their interests. Towards this end, actors can shift between exercising control and protean while applying soft and hard depending on the situation and who they are dealing with. For instance, an actor might practice *exhortation* with the population and *intimidation* with the government within the exact time frame. An example of how an actor might wield different patterns of power over a population and its government is Russia's actions towards neighbouring countries once part of the Soviet Union.

In this case, Russia's pattern of power towards the people is *exhortation*, utilising soft power such as funding for Russian language programs and cultural exchanges and disseminating positive portrayals of Russia through media content. This is mixed with control power, where Russia leverages economic investments, trade agreements, and energy exports to create dependencies and influence the local population.[282] At the same time, Russia exerts *intimidation* over its neighbouring governments through the use of hard power such as military interventions, covert operations, and support for sympathetic political factions. Additionally, protean power is exercised through overt and covert actions, diplomatic manoeuvring, economic coercion, and propaganda campaigns aimed at undermining the sovereignty of these countries and ensuring they align with Russian interests. Therefore, Russia's intricate strategy in its neighbouring countries demonstrates the intriguing interplay of practising *exhortation* power over the people and the assertive deployment of *intimidation* power over the government. This multifaceted approach is specifically crafted to attain Russia's strategic objectives in international relations.[283]

Moreover, following the actors' movement from one continuum to the other, going through various degrees of patterns of power reflects the gradual transition they are taking towards achieving their aim. For instance, VNSAs like Al-Qaeda and ISIS, through their practice of *intimidation*, aim to achieve *predomination* where they can exercise control power while applying hard power. However, governments facing agile actors, like the VNSAs, seek to move from *predomination* to *intimidation*, where they can benefit from becoming agile and creative, all while applying hard power in the face of their violent opponents.[284]

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[282] Agnia Grigas, "How Soft Power Works: Russian Passportization and Compatriot Policies Paved Way for Crimean Annexation and War in Donbas", *Atlantic Council*, (February 22, 2016)

[283] Katherine Graney, *Russia, the Former Soviet Republics, and Europe Since 1989: Transformation and Tragedy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019)

[284] Mendelsohn, "Terrorism and Protean Power"

Eventually, understanding the patterns of power is not straightforward since it is an intricate endeavour by the actors to achieve their aim in an open-complex system where they can manoeuvre between different forms of power exercised and types of power applied. However, this analysis framework attempts to comprehend the actors' actions and behaviour in their quest to achieve the degree of power they aspire for through integrating various forms and types of power.

Summary

This dissertation examines a proposed case study to answer one central question: What are the VNSAs' patterns of power in the MENA region? To respond to this enquiry, a set of relatively supportive questions should be discussed, such as whether VNSAs exercise control or protean power or both and whether they combine them with soft and hard power approaches. Besides, do VNSAs regard protean power as a tactical move while the overall goal is to increase control power? Additionally, the study will investigate whether VNSAs can sustain their protean power while exercising control power.

The answers to these questions will be deduced using the above-discussed theoretical framework. The dissertation will uncover VNSAs' patterns of power and show that they use protean power as a tactic while control power is their strategic objective. It follows then that VNSAs' ultimate aim remains to achieve control power by capturing state institutions, which is done through the exercise of protean power. This indicates a hierarchy in how they pursue this.

Moreover, the dissertation will prove that an actor can simultaneously use control and protean power, depending on its environment and how it experiences the world. Additionally, it can combine the exercise of protean and control power by applying hard and soft power approaches. When actors harness all these forms and types of powers, they produce a set of peculiar patterns of power. Therefore, the dissertation's main theoretical contribution combines Nye's soft and hard power and Katzenstein & Seybert's control and protean power, producing four degrees of patterns of power.

Having established the theoretical framework and its connection with the research question, the upcoming section will discuss the case study method, the decision to choose Hezbollah as the VNSA to be examined, and the method followed in gathering and analysing the data.

3.4. The Method of Case Study

A case study is considered a fundamental component of qualitative methods. It allows the research to have an "intensive study of a single case where the purpose of the study is at least partly to shed light on a larger class of cases."[285] The case study entails selecting one or more instances of a phenomenon to generate reliable and contextualised data. It involves "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context."[286] On this basis, Donatella della Porta confirms that much research is case-oriented, particularly in political science.[287] Such a study aims to provide significant insights into a few examples of a particular phenomenon by focusing on relatively

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[285] John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge University Press, 2006) p. 20
[286] Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (California: SAGE Publication, 2009), p. 16
[287] Donatella della Porta, "Comparative Analysis: Case-Oriented Versus Variable-Oriented Research", in Donatella della Porta and Michael Keating (eds), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective* (Cambridge University Press,2008), 198–222

small-scale cases. These cases are examined with meticulous attention, treating each one as an explainable entity and considering their extensive characteristics in conjunction with their interactions within long-standing processes.[288]

This notion of the case study method aligns with the perspectives of Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, who explained it as structured and focused. The method's structure enables researchers to formulate broad questions that guide data collection in line with specific criteria based on research objectives. Additionally, the method is targeted in its approach, only dealing with defined characteristics within the observed case. These two fundamental principles of the case study method are critical, as they facilitate a systemic comparison and synthesis of findings across multiple cases, all centred around the same topic.[289]

However, this dissertation will be based on a single case study method to examine one case in depth. Choosing a single VNSA, Hezbollah, to examine in a single region, MENA, is a testament to their originality, applicability, and capacity for providing profound insights into VNSAs' patterns of power and, as such, their relevance to the research question. Throughout the following lines, this section will discuss what a single case study method entails, why it was chosen, the plan for using it, its effects, and its limits.

A single case study method entails gathering vast data using various techniques, including observations, documents, interviews, and archival records. However, this dissertation will rely heavily on secondary resources such as pre-conducted interviews, documents, speeches, and media coverage. The objective is to thoroughly understand the case from various angles and consider different factors. Hence, a comprehensive analysis considering several aspects of Hezbollah's actions and behaviour will aid in developing a sophisticated understanding and provide multiple perspectives on its patterns of power. As such, it is essential to consider the region in which Hezbollah is situated and the environment in which it acts. This implies that covering the larger setting, connections, and outside factors affecting Hezbollah's power practice is vital.

The single case study method is crucial in this dissertation for several reasons. The complexity of the phenomenon being studied, the research questions, and the objectives all highlight this approach's need. Specifically, as the focus is on uncovering VNSAs' patterns of power in the MENA region, selecting a case study is vital to deduce and test the four patterns of power presented in the theoretical framework. Given the complexity of VNSAs' control and protean power, which includes both hard and soft power, a single case study allows for a focused examination of one actor across various contexts to verify the patterns of power used. The theoretical nature of this dissertation's research question also necessitates a single case study to apply and test the theoretical framework empirically.

Therefore, the single case study approach is selected due to its ability to explore and describe. Its longitudinal nature allows for analysing changes, trends, and the lasting impacts of diverse factors. By employing this method to investigate Hezbollah in the MENA region for 30 years across different scenarios and contexts, it becomes possible to track the VNSA's exertion of power through its actions and draw conclusions by comparing its behaviour over time.

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[288] Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (California: University of California Press, 1987)

[289] Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2005), p. 67

Moreover, a single case study is a powerful tool for gaining insights and providing a detailed account of a subject. This process is beneficial for generating new theories or hypotheses, which is the case in this dissertation, where four patterns of power practised by VNSAs were developed. By focusing on a single case, the research can thoroughly explore the intricacies and nuances of the data, leading to a more sophisticated understanding of the study's dynamics. Besides, choosing Hezbollah as a case study can serve as a comprehensive example that informs the development and refinement of the theoretical framework, contributing to theory-building. Additionally, the lessons learned from this single case can inform broader conceptualisations. Moreover, Hezbollah was chosen as a single case study to investigate VNSAs' patterns of power as this will help generate valuable insights that inform decision-making and guide further research. Thus, this approach will allow the researcher to explore the complexities of VNSAs' power dynamics by understanding the background and influential factors that shaped the formation of these patterns of power and dictated their actions in specific environments.

Furthermore, meticulously planning every sage in the case study can ensure that the findings are as valid and reliable as possible and that the study significantly contributes to understanding the research question and the selected case. However, the outcomes of the case study method may differ depending on the objectives, setting, and manner in which the study is conducted. The following are a few possible outcomes of applying the case study approach throughout this research.

The examination of a VNSA in the MENA region proved to be a valuable source of insight in structuring this research. The results of this particular case study were utilised to test a theoretical framework that aims to understand patterns of power. Given the theoretical nature of this dissertation, the flexibility of the case study method was beneficial in allowing for modifications to the research strategy to align with the specifics of the three levels of analysis. This approach made studying the dynamic and complex phenomena of VNSA's exercise of control and protean power easier while applying both soft and hard power. By choosing the case study method over other research methods, this study provided empirical insights into established concepts of power, paving the way for future researchers to test the theoretical framework of different case studies.

Although the case study method has its advantages, it also has drawbacks. For instance, since this dissertation has only one case study, in terms of studying VNSA's patterns of power in a specific region, the MENA, the conclusions reached might be difficult to extrapolate to other VNSAs or regions. Another major issue with applying the single case study method was the inability to use the theoretical framework to compare different cases and their findings, ensuring equivalence and applicability at all levels, which comparative research could have provided. However, despite the absence of two or more case studies where the possibility for comparison would have been possible, the dissertation turned into three different levels of analysis to compare the findings. Hence, it dealt with Hezbollah in the MENA region as the primary case study and its relation with Lebanon, the Arab world and Israel as subcase studies.

Another major drawback of having a single case study method is linked to the researcher, who might unintentionally introduce hindsight bias when conducting a retrospective case analysis. This bias arises when the interpretation of the events leading up to the outcome is influenced by knowledge. Growing up in Lebanon, as someone from the MENA region, can result in certain prejudices and perspectives when it comes to VNSA's actions within the region, mainly the subject of the case study Hezbollah. It is vital to approach this topic with academic humility and recognise that despite the valuable expertise and information a researcher from the region can bring, there may still be areas that have not been fully explored or positions that were misjudged due to the researcher's affiliation with the region. This is something that a researcher from outside the region may not face. Moreover, a biased understanding of

the phenomenon being studied can result from researchers selecting cases that support their preconceived notions or ideas, and this partially influenced the selection of this dissertation's case study, especially the researcher's deep understanding of the VNSA under examination and the region as a whole.

Overall, this case study will focus on VNSAs' patterns of power to determine whether they can wield protean and control power effectively. By examining VNSAs' actions, the dissertation aspires to uncover how these two types of power interact or compete. By doing so, it will reveal the patterns of power that VNSAs follow. The case study method was chosen because it allows the research to explore VNSAs' patterns of power within a contextual setting. Certain elements from the protean and control power theories were deducted to achieve the dissertation's theoretical and policy objectives. The aim is not to test these theories' validity but to apply them to the case study and observe how well they fit. Ultimately, the dissertation aims to gain a new understanding of power and its patterns through a mix of various power concepts which complement each other despite their opposite nature.

Hezbollah as a Case Study

Given that the focal point of this thesis is VNSAs in the MENA region, the research will first explain why this particular region has been chosen and why Hezbollah is the subject of the study. The MENA region is a prime location for this research due to the numerous VNSAs influencing transactions there. While previous studies have explored various aspects of VNSAs in the region, none has analysed their patterns of power. On the other hand, choosing Hezbollah as a case study among numerous other VNSAs operating in the region is justified by its impressive military and political might, strong social standing, well-established organisational structure, religious ideology, and notable domestic and regional influence. These factors have collectively bestowed upon it a distinct status, "a state within a state."[290] Hezbollah's relationship with Lebanon, the Arab countries and Israel are areas where its patterns of power can be uncovered, observed and analysed. By examining the use of protean and control power in violence, politics, and religion, the researcher hopes to gain a deeper understanding of Hezbollah's adaptable nature and its aim to control.

The use of violence is a crucial aspect of VNSAs, and Hezbollah has established itself as a dominant force in this arena. Whether engaged in conflict with Israel, collaborating with certain factions in Arab nations against others, or employing violence within Lebanese borders, analysing Hezbollah's patterns of power requires an understanding of its use of violence. Hezbollah's approach to violence is intertwined with its relationship to Lebanon, the host state. Through its possession and utilisation of weapons, Hezbollah has exchanged violence for domestic stability and influential positions in government, affording the group a distinct advantage in shaping policy. Despite its unwavering power in the Lebanese political system, Hezbollah has not disarmed or dissolved its military wing. Instead, the group has leveraged its political might to bolster its military faction, ensuring the necessary resources and capabilities to safeguard it. As such, the interplay between violence, Hezbollah's approach to power, and the emerging patterns warrant further scrutiny. As such, much is to be examined concerning the role of the inter-relationship between violence, the type of power Hezbollah is following, and the pattern emerging from it.

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[290] Michael T. Kindt, "Hezbollah: A State Within a State" in Michael T. Kindt, Jerrold M. Post, and Barry R. Schneider (eds), *The World's Most Threatening Terrorist Networks and Criminal Gangs* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 123-144

When investigating Hezbollah's patterns of power, it is essential to consider the role of politics. The party's political positions and practices offer valuable insights into its patterns of power. This is especially true when examining its relationship with Lebanon, which has undergone three distinct phases. Initially, in 1982, Hezbollah was a military faction embroiled in the Lebanese civil war and actively opposed Lebanon's very existence. In the second phase, which began in 1992, the party acknowledged Lebanon as a legitimate country with established institutions but remained a fierce opponent of the government and system. In the third and final stage after 2005, Hezbollah became part of the government and benefitted from the Lebanese system. In short, Hezbollah transformed from being a sworn enemy of Lebanon's foundation to a participant in the system, adept at manipulating it to achieve its goals and safeguard its interests. Hezbollah's political flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances have enabled it to survive and thrive. This shift in narration extended even to the Arab countries and Israel, where Hezbollah's position on them evolved, further demonstrating its agility, innovation and improvisation.

When analysing Hezbollah's patterns of power, examining their adherence to a religious and ideological doctrine is essential. Religion has an influential role in calming Hezbollah's uncertainties. Moreover, the VNSA uses religion as a rhetoric to further its agendas and shift the narrative to suit its interests, proving its agility and creativity in the face of adversity. This is evident in their actions towards the Arab world and Israel, where their interest as a group sometimes supersedes their religious morality. Although Hezbollah claims to fight with the oppressed against the oppressor based on its religious ethics, its actions in some Arab countries speak the opposite. However, even though such actions might point to Hezbollah's defection from its religious and ideological doctrine, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that Hezbollah is working towards its long-term goals while still adhering to its ideology. Therefore, by studying the effect of religious doctrine on VNSAs' self-narratives, we can better understand how they wield their power.

Ultimately, this case study will permit a universal deduction of VNSAs' patterns of power by examining their activities via their conduct of violence, political provision and religious ideology. Above all, this case study will widen the understanding of the type of power such VNSAs play. It will prove that VNSAs are not confined to one form of power. Instead, VNSAs see themselves as carriers of more than one power whose elements they harness to reach their aim. By examining Hezbollah's actions, mainly its usage of violence, politics and religion, the thesis aspires to pinpoint aspects of protean and control power to discover the type of power Hezbollah is following and uncover its patterns. To reach its aim, the thesis will examine Hezbollah from its initiation in 1990 until 2020 while presenting the pre-1990 period as a historical background.

There are multiple reasons for selecting this specific time frame. The year 1990 marked the conclusion of the Lebanese Civil War and the establishment of the second Lebanese Republic, leading to significant changes in the Lebanese system and the rise of Hezbollah as a major player in the country. Hezbollah's official presence in Lebanon, particularly in the southern region, had a profound impact on the Arab world and Israel, ushering in a new era where both Arab countries and Israel had to contend with a VNSA that was stronger than its host state and operated with significant influence in the region.

Conversely, there are several compelling reasons for selecting 2020 as the endpoint for this dissertation. 2020 marked the culmination of Hezbollah's dominance in Lebanon, coinciding with the collapse of the country's economy, political turmoil, and the devastating Beirut Port explosion. Furthermore, on the regional front, 2020 witnessed a new effort to facilitate a peace agreement between Arab nations and Israel, leading to the signing of the Abraham Accord and the initiation of discussions between Saudi

Arabia and Israel. These developments have set the stage for a new trajectory in the MENA region, with ongoing events such as the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. As a result, the post-2020 period represents a distinct and transformative phase for the region that is still unfolding and requires a particular analysis.

Sampling

When it comes to sampling, the research followed what is known as purposeful sampling in collecting the data regarding Hezbollah, mainly its speeches that Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah delivered. Qualitative research generally applies purposeful sampling to identify and select information-rich cases. Criterion sampling is extensively used among the various intentional sampling techniques. It entails detecting and picking individuals or groups who are particularly well-informed about the phenomenon of interest.

A speech is considered a single sampling unit when content analysis is applied to speeches.[291] Taking a speech as the sampling unit implies that a clear-cut formal means (syntax) was performed since a time limit restricts a speech, the occasion on which it was delivered and the topics tackled. Hence, speeches can also be seen as units of meaning (semantics). Therefore, a criterion sampling of all the speeches of Hezbollah's secretary generals, mainly the Ashura [the tenth day of the Islamic month of Muharram] and the Quds Day [Jerusalem Day] speeches from 1990 to 2020, occurred. Before proceeding, it is worth noting that Hassan Nasrallah took office in 1992 after the assassination of Abbas al-Musawi. As a result, speeches were chosen from 1991 to cover that period, which belongs to Abbas al-Musawi. Also, al-Musawi took office after Subhi al-Tufayli, Hezbollah's secretary general from 1989 to 1991, whose speeches will also be considered. The rest of the speeches from 1992 to 2020 belonged to Hassan Nasrallah. As for the period before 1990, the thesis will heavily rely on the 1985 Manifesto as it encompasses the central vision and arguments that Hezbollah was manifesting during that period. Through this intake, it will be possible to monitor Hezbollah's patterns of power and see how it applied its protean power through its agility, creativity and unpredictability.

The research relied heavily on Hassan Nasrallah's speeches on Ashura and Jerusalem Day occasions. These two occasions were specifically chosen because they are an annual fixture in Hezbollah's political rallying calendar, where its take and stand on domestic, regional and international issues are presented. However, the research also sampled other speeches outside these two occasions. Those selected speeches are vital since they responded to critical situations that Hezbollah, Lebanon or the MENA region was passing through. Examining these speeches will show how Hezbollah utilises protean and control power and how applying and mixing both powers sometimes developed slowly yet steadily throughout the various phases. The materials, which consist of 230 texts, were divided into three main categories, and examined thoroughly and cited heavily throughout the thesis. Some of these texts were interviews conducted by several Lebanese, Arabic, and international media outlets. However, the bulk were speeches by Hezbollah's leaders, mainly its secretary generals such as Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, Sayyed Abbas al-Musawi and Shiekh Subhi al-Tufayli. Also, some texts were taken from newspapers, primarily the Lebanese daily An-Nahar, in the form of reporting news.

In the collection of these materials, I relied on three primary sources. One is the An-Nahar Newspaper sources I obtained from the American University of Beirut (AUB) archives, where I focused my search

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291 Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (London: SAGE Publications, 2018)

on the years between 1990 and 1999. I collected 159 texts through speeches presented in the newspaper, interviews and news reporting. On the other hand, to obtain various full speeches and interviews with different media outlets, I relied on the book titled *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*, edited by Nicholas Noe, which presented a collection of 32 translated texts, to be precise 16 speeches and 16 interviews, covering the period between 1986 and 2006. Moreover, I obtained most of the entire content speeches from Hezbollah's Media Relations website, 41 in total—four speeches by al-Musawi and the rest by Nasrallah. The Ashura speeches that Nasrallah delivered between 2002 and 2020 added up to 13, while the Jerusalem Day speeches mounted up to 17. Also, seven speeches from other important occasions were collected from the same website. Apart from the interviews and speeches obtained from the book mentioned above, I translated the texts, speeches, and interviews from the An-Nahar Newspaper and Hezbollah's Media Relations website. Throughout the translation process, I aspired to remain faithful to the text.

The materials, which constituted 230 texts, were divided into five periods which reflect Hezbollah's transitional phase and the development of its patterns of power. From 1982 till 1990, Hezbollah presented itself as an Islamic military jihadi group that did not recognise any of the current MENA region borders and, therefore, countries. It aimed to fight for the oppressed against the oppressor under the standards delineated by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. However, that position saw a gradual shift in the '90s. Throughout the last decade of the 20th century, Hezbollah's main focus, identity and image was presented as an Islamic resistance fighting Israel to liberate Southern Lebanon. Then, following the liberation in 2000 up till 2004, Hezbollah manoeuvred its role as a resistant symbol in Lebanon and the Arab world while repositioning itself in the realm of protean power. The period between 2005 and 2010 saw Hezbollah's public entrance into the Lebanese political realm and its immersion in politics and violence, which indicated the first public exercise of its protean and control power. The last phase is from 2011 up to 2020, reflecting the position of Hezbollah's mixed forms of power, which are exercised domestically and regionally.

In brief, this case study and its sampling aspire to prove that Hezbollah, through its internal and external actions, is fluctuating between protean and control power. At its initiation stage, the VNSA exercised protean power as an agile actor innovating and improvising in an environment of uncertainty, taking advantage of the states' control power weaknesses and exploiting them. However, Hezbollah aimed to exercise control power by translating uncertainty into risk and creating a sense of certainty through its religion. Furthermore, as it reached its goal, Hezbollah came to exercise control power through coercion, institutions and structure of domination.

Having established the theoretical framework and methodological approach, the upcoming chapters will examine Hezbollah's actions and behaviours to ascertain its patterns of power. These chapters are grounded in empirical evidence, offering a distinct case study of Hezbollah's power dynamics in Lebanon, the Arab world, and Israel. The objective is to test the framework's efficacy via empirical evidence and to gain insight into Hezbollah's power dynamics.

These three levels of analysis were chosen based on Hezbollah's sphere of operation. Hezbollah's actions are not restricted to the country it exists within, Lebanon, but rather, they extend to the Arab world and Israel. While Hezbollah's actions in Lebanon are of a political and military nature, and its actions influence the social and economic life of the Lebanese, the nature of its actions and their influence are different in the Arab world and Israel. The nature of Hezbollah's actions and influence on Israel is of military type since. In contrast, it had a broader impact on the Arab world, mainly in terms of security,

as its political and military actions, as well as its ability to connect with the Arab population, recruiting and rallying them around its cause, impacts the stability of the Arab world and its fragile status quo.

Comprehending Hezbollah's conduct and motives, along with their power dynamics, can prove to be a challenging task. To gain a better understanding, one must examine their actions in Lebanon, the Arab world, and Israel. Despite the differing nature of Hezbollah's operations in each sphere, they are undoubtedly interconnected. The degree of power they hold in Lebanon has a direct impact on their behaviour towards the Arab world and Israel, and vice versa. Therefore, analysing its patterns of power across these three levels is crucial to determine how its actions in one sphere influence the others, particularly when facing progress or setbacks.

Hence, the forthcoming three empirical chapters will examine Hezbollah's power dynamics within the framework discussed earlier. This analysis aims to elucidate how Hezbollah shifted between different patterns of power, whether it exhibited a leading pattern, and if it utilised protean power to achieve control power.

Chapter 4: Hezbollah in Lebanon: The Journey to Predomination

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of Hezbollah's conduct and activities in Lebanon to discern its patterns of power. It examines how Hezbollah engages with the Lebanese government, political factions, and the population. In its early stage, Hezbollah demonstrated protean power by swiftly adapting to an uncertain environment, capitalising on the state's vulnerabilities while employing hard power. Consequently, its pattern of power was one of *intimidation*. However, during the latter phase of the Lebanese civil war, *predomination* became Hezbollah's pattern of power. Following the war and the restoration of the state, the armed political party evolved to employ *adulation*, *exhortation*, and *intimidation*. As Hezbollah grew in influence within Lebanese politics, seizing control of the state and its institutions, *predomination* became its prevailing pattern of power. Therefore, this chapter aims to illustrate that Hezbollah wields both protean and control power, employing a blend of Nye's hard and soft powers to achieve its primary objective of *predomination*.

The analysis commences with a historical overview of Hezbollah's emergence in Lebanon and its interactions with other factions. The subsequent section outlines Hezbollah's political, economic, social, and military positions, emphasising key events that offer valuable perspectives on its influence. These events will shed light on the pattern of power employed by Hezbollah. Finally, the third section will provide a summary of the primary findings.

4.1. Historical Overview of Hezbollah's Position within the Lebanese Status quo

This section rummages the historical context of Hezbollah's emergence, including its ideological beliefs and political stances. By exploring the circumstances surrounding its founding and its attitudes towards the Lebanese system and opposition, a clearer understanding of Hezbollah's subsequent rise to power can be gained. Through this examination, we can contextualise its early years and gain insight into the group's evolution over the following decades, which will help unveil its patterns of power.

Understanding Lebanon and its political system is crucial to comprehending the rise of Hezbollah. Fundamentally, Lebanon operates under a sectarian structure, where power is divided amongst religious groups. This system is rooted in the unwritten "gentlemen's agreement" of the 1943 National Pact.[292] As per this agreement, the President must be Maronite, the Prime Minister must be Sunni, and the Speaker of the Parliament must be Shia. However, the constitution of that era created an uneven distribution of parliamentary seats and quotas in the cabinet and public administration, which favoured Christians over Muslims. This favourable position reflected the concentration of power in the hands of the Christians, who were the majority of the population and controlled the economic and political life at that time.[293] This display of power led to rampant corruption, which disproportionately affected the Shia population. This was caused by the uneven distribution of resources among the various sectarian groups and the incompetency of the Shia leaders in defending the rights of their people. Thus, the Shia community faced chronic political discrimination, economic deprivation, and social marginalisation, which were further intensified by the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. Consequently, the Shia community took up arms in self-defence.

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[292] Interview with Patricia Karam, On the Issues: Lebanon, (United State Institute for Peace, March 1, 2007), Online. Available: www.usip.org
[293] Kamal Salibi, *A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005)

Lebanon experienced a civil war that lasted from 1975 to 1990. The war began as a conflict between the Left and the Right under a heavily armed Palestinian presence. As the conflict escalated, it turned into a struggle between the Christians and the Muslims. As a result, Syria entered Lebanon in 1976 as an ally to the Christians, only later to change sides due to the developments in the MENA region, precisely the Egypt-Israel peace treaty that was signed in 1979 following the 1978 Camp David Accord.[294] Then, in 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon, reaching the capital Beirut. On August 23, 1982, Israel installed its Christian ally Bashir Gemayel, the son of the Phalange Party leader, a Lebanese political party branded as fascist, known for its hardcore Christian Right ideology, as the President. The newly elected President was assassinated on September 14 before his planned inauguration on September 23. This led to more fighting between religious and political groups, often among militias supposed to be on the same side. The international community attempted to control the situation by sending the US Marines and French troops as part of NATO and Multinational Forces. However, Muslims and nationalist groups saw them as their oppressors and protectors of the Christians. Amid this chaos, Hezbollah was established.[295]

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact date of Hezbollah's foundation since the armed political party refused to give its birth date and stayed vague about it. However, it is widely asserted that the gathering of Shia scholars in Baalbek, northeast Lebanon, by Abbas al-Musawi in 1978 after he arrived from Najaf, Iraq, marked the first foundation of what would later become Hezbollah's nucleus.[296] In 1982, Hezbollah's nine founders internally produced what was known as "The Treatise of the Nine."[297] This treatise outlined the organisation's activities and goals while highlighting its identity as a resistance Islamic jihadi movement. Moreover, the group, in the same year, carried out its first suicide attack on the Israeli headquarters in Tyre, southern Lebanon, killing around 76 and wounding 20 others. In honour of this first suicide bomber, Hezbollah every year celebrates "Martyrdom Day" on the eleventh day of the eleventh month.[298] However, Hezbollah continued to operate clandestinely and covertly until 1984, when it gradually started coming to light by forming its politburo and using its name on political declarations.[299] Finally, Hezbollah officially presented itself on February 16, 1985, when it published the *Open Letter*, its first public manifesto.[300]

Hezbollah's 1985 manifesto contained two crucial declarations. The first was directly linked to the ongoing Lebanese civil war, declaring that under the given circumstances, there was nothing left except resisting the Zionists' and Phalangists' cooperation.[301] Hence, Hezbollah stated that its sworn enemies are the Israelis, Americans, French and the Phalangists.[302] Therefore, Hezbollah's objective, according to its manifesto, was to drive the Western forces and their local allies out of the region.[303] The second declaration in the 1985 Manifesto was more significant as it established Hezbollah above party politics and larger than Lebanon as a country. Hezbollah showed its detachment from Lebanon by declaring that

[294]Department of States, United States of America, "Camp David Accords and the Arab-Israeli Peace Process," *Office of the Historian,* https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/camp-david#:~:text=The%20Camp%20David%20Accords%2C%20signed,and%20Egypt%20in%20March%201979.

[295] Joseph Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), pp. 151–184

[296] Joseph Alagha, *The Shifts in Hizbullah's Ideology: Religious Ideology, Political Ideology, and Political Program* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), p. 33

[297] Alagha, *Shifts in Hezbollah's Ideology*, p. 35

[298] Alagha, *Shifts in Hezbollah's Ideology*, p. 35

[299] Alagha, *The Shifts in Hizbullah's Ideology*, p. 35

[300] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 154

[301]Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 42-43

[302]Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 42-43

[303]Alagha, Hizbullah's Documents, pp. 42-43

its members are part of the *umma* (Islamic nation) and they only adhere to the Khomeini's orders.[304] Additionally, the armed political party presented itself above the Lebanese system by stating that Hezbollah is neither a tightly knit political cadre nor one of the organised closed Lebanese parties.[305] This detachment from Lebanese national issues and connection to the larger Muslim nation, particularly Iran, will significantly strain Lebanon's stability, security, and reconciliation while providing Hezbollah with a margin to manoeuvre where it can develop and exercise its power.

Hezbollah, who rejected the idea of Lebanon as a separate country, instead viewing the Islamic world as its homeland, marked its early political career with a desire to separate from the Lebanese system and government. The armed political party was not hesitant to criticise and attack the system, openly declaring their commitment to Islam as the only way to ensure "justice and dignity to everyone."[306] Hezbollah's ultimate objective was to install a just government that upholds Islamic law. As a result, it regarded the Lebanese regime as illegitimate, and therefore, it actively worked on weakening it.[307] While Hezbollah claimed not to impose its beliefs on others, the armed political party was entirely dedicated to Islam as a philosophy, a way of life, a political structure, and an intellectual framework.[308] Therefore, Hezbollah, during its initiation period, saw itself as a separate entity from the Lebanese system and had no desire to enter it. The armed political party positioned itself as an alternative to the Lebanese system, seeking to take over the country through revolutionary means.

However, Hezbollah's opposition to the Lebanese regime went beyond claiming that its origins are Western and that it has an anti-Islamic stance. The armed political party also opposed the regime's reluctance to change and adapt. Hezbollah, which encouraged the Lebanese people to unite against the regime, maintained that any valid opposition must align with its guidelines and vision. Moreover, Hezbollah asserted that it is indifferent to calls for political reform premised on preserving the privileges of the corrupt sectarian system. Henceforth, Hezbollah considered that any opposition based on the current Lebanese constitution is just a "scarecrow opposition" seeking power rather than radical change.[309] As a result, Hezbollah was not interested in forming a government or participating in the current "oppressive [and] unjust" system.[310] This stance reveals three vital aspects of early Hezbollah: its low tolerance level, rejection of the Lebanese system, and determination to adhere to its religious and ideological vision.

Consequently, during its inception, Hezbollah utilised its military capabilities to exert hard power while simultaneously adapting to a constantly changing environment through protean power. The creation of Hezbollah was a product of innovation in response to the uncertain circumstances faced by the Shia population in Lebanon. Thus, its establishment aimed to create a foundation for stability amidst the ever-shifting landscape.

Additionally, Hezbollah sought to develop a sense of certainty by aligning with Shia religious doctrine as its guiding ideology. This allowed Hezbollah to garner support from the Shia population and direct them towards its objectives, even if it was not in their best interest. Hence, as the subsequent analysis

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[304] Alagha, Hizbullah's Documents

[305] Alagha, Hizbullah's Documents

[306] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 43-44

[307] Eitan Azani, *Hezbollah the Story of the Party of God: From Revolution to Institutionalization* (New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2011), p. 143

[308] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 43-44

[309] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 45

[310] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 45

will demonstrate, Hezbollah exercised both protean and control power while applying hard and soft power to achieve its goals and safeguard its interests. The following section will explain the various patterns of power Hezbollah practised within the Lebanese context, from *intimidation* in its early years to *exhortation* and *adulation* in the following years, culminating with *predomination* power.

4.2. Hezbollah's Patterns of Power in Lebanon

This section examines Hezbollah's patterns of power through a chronological narration of its actions and behaviour regarding various Lebanese issues from 1990 until 2020. The aim is to highlight the multiple powers wielded by Hezbollah and provide evidence from the events that took place at the time. As a result, this section will be divided chronologically into four subsections, each reflecting a different phase of Hezbollah's position and narrative while utilising various powers. The grouping of the years into these four phases was done to reflect the transition and changes in Hezbollah's stance. The following paragraphs will provide an overview of each phase and its period, serving as a background for the analysis and discussion in the upcoming subsections.

The timeline of the Lebanese Second Republic and Hezbollah can be separated into distinct phases. The first phase, which lasted approximately a decade during the 1990s, saw Hezbollah establish itself as a resistance movement with a primary goal of liberating southern Lebanon from Israeli occupation while also protecting the socio-economic interests of its community. Hezbollah participated in the Lebanese system to achieve these objectives, albeit as an opposition. This shift in Hezbollah's initial stance happened after the civil war ended, which was marked by the signing of the Taif Accord. Although Taif changed some aspects of the system, mainly providing an equal distribution of power among the sectarian groups, Hezbollah initially rejected it because it maintained the sectarian system instead of abolishing it. However, Hezbollah realised that the only way to safeguard its existence and interests in the post-civil war era was to enter the Lebanese political system and gradually bring about change. As a result, it secured representation in the legislative body after the 1992 parliamentary elections, although it chose to remain outside the executive branch. It also participated in the 1998 municipal elections, the first held after the war.[311] In doing so, Hezbollah positioned itself as a defender of its constituents' rights and counterbalance to the government. At times, Hezbollah found itself at odds with those in power. Ultimately, Hezbollah was an outsider in the Lebanese political scene during this period.

Hezbollah maintained its opposition stance from 2000 to 2004 during its second phase by being part of the parliament but not the government. However, shifts in the Lebanese landscape compelled it to adapt its position on addressing internal matters. Although Hezbollah abstained from involvement in the government, its engagement in discussions about the Syrian presence in Lebanon intensified as it deemed this critical for its operations and survival. Furthermore, Hezbollah sought to revamp its image among the Lebanese by portraying itself as a reasonable entity and safeguard for all citizens, regardless of their affiliations.

However, this inclination of being in the parliament yet not in the cabinet and playing the balancer ended with the assassination of the Saudi-backed Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri in 2005. Hariri's severe opponent throughout the past fifteen years, Hezbollah, was in a very critical situation. The assassination triggered a huge aggressive wave against Syria's military and intelligence presence in Lebanon, which

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[311] An-Nahar Newspaper, "The Mountain Witnessed the Largest Turnout in The First Municipal Elections in 35 Years; The Victors in The Referendum: Chamoun, Hezbollah, Jumblatt, Lahoud, Mukheiber… Mur and Boueiz", (May 25, 1998), p. 1, American University of Beirut (AUB) Archives (Translated from Arabic)

ended in the expulsion of the Syrian army, ending an era of solo Syrian hegemony in Lebanon that lasted for a decade and a half. With this shift in power and transition in Lebanon from one period to the other, Hezbollah found itself in an ultra-critical position, facing a very unsympathetic majority of the Lebanese population, accusing the party of being anti-Lebanese and destroying the country on many levels. With such an environment and atmosphere, Hezbollah found itself besieged. The party saw its salvation, and the way to preserve its interest was by becoming a cabinet member. This decision, when implemented, gave Hezbollah a decisive say in the country's internal and external politics. Hezbollah got veto power inside the cabinet due to its intelligent political alliance and manoeuvring.[312]

As time passed, Hezbollah became increasingly involved in Lebanese politics, particularly after the civil war in Syria began in 2011. By 2016, with the election of Michel Aoun, Hezbollah's primary ally, as President, the armed political party had gained a firm grip on the entire country. This was further solidified in 2018 when they obtained a parliamentary majority, allowing them to form governments without opposition. While this demonstrated Hezbollah's power, it highlighted its negative impact on the country. Though not the only corrupt party, Hezbollah's actions contributed significantly to Lebanon's economic downfall and social instability. Their wars with Israel, as well as their alliance with Iran and Syria, led to Lebanon becoming isolated and experiencing one of its worst financial crises in a century. As the most powerful party in the country, with a majority in parliament and an upper hand in the government, if Hezbollah entered the cabinet without a solid economic plan and vision, it would be a scandalous calamity. And if Hezbollah had a plan but failed to deliver it, the armed political party should bear responsibility.

Over time, Hezbollah has transformed from an opposition force to a dominant political player and guardian of the vulnerable Lebanese system. This shift was facilitated by Hezbollah's diverse types of power, including control and protean. Examining Hezbollah's stance and behaviour in the following subsection, according to the four stages outlined earlier, shows how its patterns of power fluctuate between *adulation*, *intimidation*, *exhortation* and *predomination*, which are the result of exercising protean or control power while applying hard or soft power.

However, before proceeding, it is vital to briefly discuss the dynamic between Syria and Hezbollah, which has significantly impacted the latter's actions in Lebanon and the MENA region, making it an essential aspect to consider. In its early days, the relationship was tense, with Syria viewing Hezbollah as a threat to its control over the Lebanese Shia population, mainly through its ally, Amal. This tension led to a war between Hezbollah and Amal from 1988 to 1990, which ended with a verbal agreement giving Hezbollah the upper hand in Southern Lebanon while it refrained from meddling in Lebanon's internal politics, where Syria held sway. Since the 2000s, the relationship between Syria and Hezbollah has evolved into one of understanding and collaboration, with a strategic alliance formed after the Israeli withdrawal and Hariri's assassination, which threatened the dominance of both Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon. This alliance was cemented by Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian Civil War, where it supported the Assad regime and fought for it.[313]

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[312] Chicago Tribune, *Hezbollah Gets Veto Power in Cabinet*, (July 12, 2008),
https://www.chicagotribune.com/2008/07/12/hezbollah-gets-veto-power-in-cabinet/
[313] Mohanad Hage Ali, "Power Points Defining the Syria-Hezbollah Relationship", Series on Political Islam, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, (March 2019), https://carnegie-mec.org/research/2019/05/power-points-defining-the-syria-hezbollah-relationship?lang=en&center=middle-east

4.2.1 Hezbollah's Politics During the '90s.

During its early stages in the 1980s, Hezbollah rejected the Lebanese government, its fundamental principles, system, and social contracts. For this armed political party, Islam, mainly the *vilayet al-faqih* [guardianship of the Islamic jurist] in Iran, structured according to the Shia doctrine, is the only acceptable political model and system which should be fully applied in Lebanon. However, after the conclusion of the Lebanese Civil War in 1990, Hezbollah underwent a transformation that shifted its stance from being a radical opponent of the Lebanese entity to becoming a parliamentary opposition within the system but still distancing itself from decision-making and internal political policies. This transformation had an impact on the type of power Hezbollah wielded. While the party continued to rely on hard power through coercion and military confrontations, it also began to explore the use of soft power. Throughout this period, Hezbollah exercised both control and protean power. To gain insight into Hezbollah's patterns of power, it is crucial to trace its journey through various incidents and stances taken over time.

Henceforth, this section will explore Hezbollah's patterns of power in Lebanon during the '90s. This period can be divided into four major themes based on Hezbollah's role and position within the Lebanese structure. The first theme examines Hezbollah's conflict with the Amal Movement, while the second theme explores Hezbollah's rejection of the Lebanese system and its attack on political Maronism. The third theme focuses on its relationship with the state and its transformation into a resistance group, while the fourth theme analyses its opposition to the government. By analysing these incidents and stances, the fluctuation in the type of power utilised by Hezbollah becomes clear. The first two themes were dominated by hard and control power, while the third was a mix of soft and hard, control and protean. The final theme showcases Hezbollah's exercise of soft and protean power with a long-term goal of achieving control power. However, it is essential to note that this fluctuation in power and position was due to the delay in restoring order in Lebanon after the signing of the Taif Accord in 1989. Skirmishes between different Lebanese factions continued as not all agreed on the accord's content. Within this context, the first two themes can be understood and analysed. The last two themes emerged after the reinstatement of the state and its efforts to regain sovereignty over its territories and rebuild the state administration.

Amal Movement and Hezbollah's Fights

The first theme that shows Hezbollah practising control power is its war with Amal. However, before entering into an analysis of how Hezbollah implemented hard and control power, a brief historical background about the two Shia groups is necessary. Amal Movement predates Hezbollah as the first political party and militant group to represent the Shia community in Lebanon and safeguard their interests since it was established in 1974. However, as the Lebanese Civil War progressed, internal disagreements and competing agendas arose within Amal, leading to the departure of many members who later formed Hezbollah under Khomeini's patronage. Amal and Hezbollah became rivals, with tensions over the appropriate representation of the Shia population and differing political visions. From April 1988 to November 1990, the War of Brothers erupted, pitting Hezbollah against Amal in southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs. Thus, their relationship was hostile before becoming today's well-known inseparable Shia duo. The dynamics of this complex relationship and the transformation of Hezbollah's policies from foe to ally are significant in understanding the shift in Hezbollah's patterns of power. When it comes to examining Hezbollah's war with Amal, the focus will be on the events occurring in the year 1990, as it marked the end of the internal Shia conflict and the Lebanese Civil War.

Hezbollah's pattern of power during its war with Amal was *predomination*. This is so since Hezbollah was applying hard power through its military confrontation and usage of weapons while exercising control power. This was evident in Hezbollah's attempt to coerce Amal into submitting to its dominance in southern Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs, affirming that they are the only true representative of the Shia community in Lebanon.

Therefore, Hezbollah exercised control power while clashing with Amal since it was operating under risky settings. This risky environment was evident when Amal accused Hezbollah of "prioritising internal conflict over resisting Israel."[314] Such an allegation diminished Hezbollah to the status of a militia rather than a resistance, paving the way to disarming it under the Taif Accord like any other Lebanese armed political party.[315] Moreover, Hezbollah's environment became riskier when Amal claimed that Hezbollah intended to seize power over southern Lebanon and take its residents as hostages for the sake of Iran, which can use the south and its people as a card for negotiation with major regional and international powers.[316] Hence, Hezbollah realised that it was in a risky environment, surrounded by hostile actors trying to cut its wings and erase its presence. It was experiencing this situation as risky since it faced a threat to its existence.

As a result, the armed political party exercised one of the control power elements of affirmation. Thus, Hezbollah, based on sectarian, militant and political calculations, found that to preserve its presence, a clash with Amal was inevitable, so it planned its attacks accordingly. As a result, Hezbollah planned Amal's downfall through a smear campaign, affecting the movement's reputation among its base and preparing the ground for diminishing its presence. For instance, Subhi al-Tufayli, the group's former secretary general, contrasted Hezbollah's stand on Israel with that of Amal by stating that "Amal supported United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 425, which recognised Israel and protected its borders, while Hezbollah refused to recognise Israel and wanted to take its rights by force."[317] Therefore, by accusing Amal of helping Israel[318] and conspiring to destroy Islam,[319] Hezbollah was legitimising its military attacks on the movement. This paved the way for Hezbollah to argue that the conflict between itself and Amal could only be resolved if the armed political party was protected, as this was necessary to defend Islam and the nation.[320]

Hezbollah's Refusal of the Lebanese System and its Attack on Political Maronism

Before the establishment of security and stability in Lebanon after the civil war, Hezbollah's opposition to the Lebanese system and attacks on political Maronism was a significant theme. Hezbollah's position can be contextualised by the Taif Accord, which maintained the provisions of the National Pact regarding

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[314] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Amal: The Count Down Began and Hezbollah Wants a Strife" (January 6, 1990), p. 4, *American University of Beirut (AUB) Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[315] An-Nahar Newspaper, "One Dead and Two Wounded in Iqlim al-Tuffah. Amal: Iran Must Change its Policy in Lebanon. Hezbollah: We Want Understanding, and They Refuse" (August 27, 1990), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[316] An-Nahar Newspaper, "One Dead and Two Wounded", p. 3,

[317] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Seeing the Solution in Implementing the Damascus Agreement, al-Tufayli: The Palestinians Made a Mistake by Deploying, and They Must Withdraw to Correct What They Are Doing" (January 10, 1990), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[318] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Inviting [Amal] to Dialogue Before it is Too Late, Hezbollah Accuses Amal of Escalating and Coordinating with Israel" (July 11, 1990), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[319] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: The Resistance Will Stay Like Islam, and We Don't Differentiate between Israel and Amal" (March 6, 1990), p. 3, *AUB Achieves* (Translated from Arabic)

[320] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Seeing the Solution", p. 4

the distribution of top positions based on sectarian lines while amending the allocation of parliamentary and cabinet seats among sects. As a result, the seats increased and were divided equally between the Christians and the Muslims. However, despite these changes, Hezbollah opposed the National Pact of 1943. It rejected the Taif Accord, continuing its struggle against the Lebanese system and establishment, particularly the Maronites and their allies.

Another illustration of Hezbollah's *predomination* power during that era can be observed through its rejection of the Lebanese system and its assault on political Maronism to establish structural supremacy. The discontent with the Lebanese system and the targeting of Maronite privileges persisted throughout the first half of the 1990s, as Hezbollah opposed the newly formed government and the incoming Lebanese Maronite President. Hezbollah's coercion towards the Lebanese system and the Maronite political privilege was evident in its Secretary General Subhi al-Tufayli's speech during a commemorative celebration of the Iranian Revolution in which he urged Hezbollah's allies to take joint political and military action to confront the isolationists [far-right Christians] and the political Maronism who perpetuate killing and displacement.[321] Hence, Hezbollah continued its attacks on the Maronites, where it took the shape of hard power, i.e. the kidnapping of a Maronite priest. When the Catholic Media Centre in Lebanon accused Hezbollah of kidnapping the priest, Hezbollah decided to control the narration by shifting the focus from the kidnapped priest to the Muslim people who were kidnapped by the Christian militias. As a result, Hezbollah accused the Catholic Media Centre of being biased since it was demanding the return of one priest and not demanding the release of thousands of abducted people thrown into Christian prisons.[322]

Hezbollah's conflict with the Lebanese system and its political establishment was transferred into the Lebanese state after it was reinstated. This signalled the second stage of the 1990s, during which Hezbollah's last two behaviour themes were observed amid the state's attempts to regain its sovereignty. Despite the significant tension between the two sides and the political conflicts that ensued, Hezbollah resolved not to engage in military confrontation with the government. However, it retained its weapons and military activities in the South vis-à-vis Israel. Throughout this period, when it came to domestic affairs, Hezbollah placed its use of hard power on the shelf. Instead, it focused on utilising soft power while exercising control and protean power and attempting to rebrand itself as a resistance movement. Implementing such powers was a very calculated move by Hezbollah, whose main aim post-civil war was to protect its military wing and retain its arms. Subsequently, Hezbollah started harnessing its protean power, assuming the role of opposition while incrementally gaining entry into the system, all to safeguard its military branch, referred to as the resistance. The armed political party proposed that the Lebanese army and the resistance should complement each other's functions rather than clash.[323] Hezbollah asserted that the resistance would remain intact and everyone who opposed it would vanish.[324] In the meantime, Hezbollah positioned itself as a prominent critic of the government and the new presidential era, presenting itself as a champion of freedom of speech and beliefs by opposing the new law regulating

[321] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Celebrated the Anniversary of the Iranian Revolution, al-Tufayli: For a Political and Military Action That Confronts Israel and The Political Maronisim (February 12, 1990), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[322] An-Nahar Newspaper," In Response to The Catholic Media Center, Fadlallah's Office Was Surprised at The Offense, And Hezbollah Regrets Stopping at the Kidnapping of One Person" (January 26, 1990), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[323] An-Nahar Newspaper, "The Islamic Resistance Responded to al-Mur: Liberation [Happens] by Complementing the Army with The Resistance" (February 15, 1991), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[324] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: The Resistance Will Remain and All Those Who Stand in Its Path Will Vanish" (February 18, 1991), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

the media.[325] Henceforth, the third theme, Hezbollah's relationship with the state and the mission to protect its military wing, and the fourth theme, Hezbollah's opposition to the government, will provide evidence for the patterns of power Hezbollah follows.

Hezbollah, The State and The Resistance

In the 1990s, Hezbollah faced tumultuous pressure to dissolve its armed wing and force it to surrender to the reinstated Lebanese state. As a result, Hezbollah was facing an uncertain environment and experienced the world as uncertain. Hence, the armed political party turned to exercise protean power, innovating to secure its existence and preserve its interests. To do so, it was resolved to apply both hard and soft power. All these calculated steps aimed to achieve control power by starting the process of capturing the state and its institutions. Therefore, Hezbollah's actions in response to the government's decision on April 13, 1990, to deploy the Lebanese army to the South, as well as its decision to enter parliament in 1992 and conflicts with Israel in 1993, 1994, and 1996, serve as evidence of its diverse patterns of power, which will be further examined below.

At the start of 1991, the Lebanese state aimed to regain control of the entire Lebanese territory. As part of this objective, it demanded that all armed political parties surrender their firearms and integrate into the system. Hezbollah refused to comply with this demand, claiming that they were a resistance movement dedicated to liberating the South from Israel and that their weapons were not for domestic use but instead for defence against Israel. They argued they were not a typical armed political party with a militia. Hence, their weapons are sacred and should be retained.

However, in line with the Taif accord and the new formation of the state, the late Lebanese President Elias Hrawi rejected the presence of any armed forces in southern Lebanon apart from the national army. He emphasised that no one group had exclusive authority over South Lebanon; instead, the nation was accountable for maintaining the South's security and stability.[326] This induced Hezbollah to remodel itself as a resistant movement opened to various collaborations with other Lebanese factions.[327] To preserve its existence and secure its presence in the south, Hezbollah called for the establishment of a "war society to face Israel."[328] Moreover, Hezbollah's aim at that phase was to establish a peaceful political opposition to abolish political sectarianism and build a jihadi society.[329]

Thus, despite its initial opposition to the Lebanese system and the Taif Accord, Hezbollah participated in the 1992 parliamentary elections and later in the 1998 municipality elections. This decision was a soft power move with a control power effect. In other words, Hezbollah's decision to participate in the elections could be perceived as a display of *adulation* power, as it demonstrated a willingness to engage

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[325] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah on the Media Organisation Project: An Attempt to Go Backwards" (September 14, 1991), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[326] An-Nahar Newspaper, "On the Eve of April 13th Anniversary, He Proclaimed the First Year of Peace, Hrawi: Militias Have No Future and No Weapon in The South Other Than the Legal Weapon. After The Implementation of Taif, We Say to Syria That We Can Seize Control of the Entire Country" (April 13, 1991), p. 2, *AUB Archives.* (Translated from Arabic)

[327] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Identified 7 Basic Duties for Governance Towards the People and Their Issues", (January 4, 1991), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[328] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Met with The Leaders of Hezbollah and The Islamic Resistance, al-Musawi: For A War Society That Faces Israel" (April 5, 1991), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[329] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Celebrations in the Regions on Jerusalem Day, al-Tufayli: We Call for A Peaceful Political Opposition Based on The Abolition of Sectarianism and The Building of a Jihadi Society" (April 13, 1991), p. 8, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

in civil politics and be a part of the broader Lebanese political landscape where dialogue and negotiations are crucial. However, it was a strategic move to achieve *predomination* power. By entering parliament, Hezbollah could slowly establish itself within the Lebanese political system and exert influence over its institutions - an essential aspect of control power. Such an act shows the complexity of Hezbollah's policies and the depth of their decision-making and actions.

Therefore, despite criticising the electoral system, claiming that it favoured specific individuals and parties over others, Hezbollah went ahead and fought the electoral battle.[330] Moreover, it allied with other Islamic Sunni movements and secular national parties during the election campaign.[331] Eventually, Hezbollah won 12 of the 128 seats (8 of whom are Hezbollah's members and 4 are its allies in the parliamentary bloc). In contrast, its Shia rival Amal won 17 seats (5 of whom are Amal's members and 12 are its allies in the parliamentary bloc).[332] Thus, Hezbollah's decision to enter the parliament was a calculated move to protect its military wing by exploiting the state institutions. This aim was evident when the party emphasised that entering parliament was not a trade-off for its resistance but rather a way to defend it.[333] Therefore, Hezbollah primarily focused on building and protecting its identity as a resistance and maintaining its weapons. The armed political party did not hesitate to practice *adulation* to achieve *predomination* power in the long run. For instance, Hezbollah called for a national Islamic project to combat the enemy's greed and support the resistance.[334] Such a project was supposed to bring various Islamic groups together in a soft move yet will give Hezbollah the ability to control through institutional power.

Hezbollah's practice of soft power, along with its agility and its vision regarding the importance of exploiting the institutions and gaining protection within the system, came to be tested in the years 1993 and 1996 when Israel launched two large-scale attacks on southern Lebanon and also, in 1994 when Israel attacked a military training camp for Hezbollah. According to Israel, these attacks came as a response to assaults taken by Hezbollah on Israel. Claims that the armed political party refuses, asserting that the Israeli attacks are part of a very well-crafted conspiracy and a plan based on an American-Zionist program for the region, Lebanon and the civilians.[335]

However, away from the accusation exchange, the reality remains that Hezbollah regarded these incidents as an opportunity to strengthen its position and emphasise its ideology. For instance, the armed political party maintained that Lebanon should withdraw from the peace talks since Israel would use these attacks to enhance its place in the negotiations. Also, Hezbollah insisted that there would never be a deal regarding stopping the Katyusha rockets. By maintaining such rhetoric, Hezbollah aimed to solidify the idea that the resistance approach is the only way forward and that no limits should be placed

[330] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Nasrallah: The Electoral Law Was Cut According to Individual Measurements" (June 23, 1992), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[331] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Berjawi, Hezbollah's Deputy for Beirut: We Will Ally with The Nationalists and The Islamists" (September 4, 1992), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[332] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *Lebanon, Parliamentary Chamber: Majlis Al-Nuwwab, Elections Held In 1992*, http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2179_92.htm

[333] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: There Is No Trade-Off Between the Resistance and Our Entry into Parliament" (September 15, 1992), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[334] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: For A National Islamic Project That Confronts the Enemy's Ambitions and Supports the Resistance" (April 15, 1992), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[335] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Visiting Hrawi, Samaha and the Intelligence, the [Israeli] Aggression Was Not the Result of Launching Katyushas, We Do Not Negotiate with Israel, and We Do Not Accept the Conditions" (July 31, 1993), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

on resistance actions and manoeuvres since this will eventually destroy it.[336] Hezbollah, with every Israeli attack, tried its best to turn it to its advantage. This is clear through Hezbollah's exploitation of its *intimidation* power with Israel to gain a *predomination* power in Lebanon. In other words, whenever Hezbollah instigated conflict with Israel, the latter would respond with an attack on Hezbollah, resulting in a negative impact on Lebanon. In response to these attacks, Hezbollah would engage in combat with Israel, positioning itself as a resistance movement defending southern Lebanon. Following these battles, where Hezbollah showcased its immense power, the armed political party would leverage the events to solidify its control over the south and shape the political path of the Lebanese government. A prime example of that is Hezbollah's Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah's statement after the 1994 Israeli attack on its training camp. He declared Hezbollah would not abandon the *jihad* even if left alone in the field. However, Nasrallah stated that Hezbollah hopes the resistance will grow and become a national, governmental, and popular endeavour.[337] Through such actions and declarations, Hezbollah made the issue of discussing or debating the acquisition of its weapons or the future of its military wing an act of offence and treachery.

Hezbollah's aim to exercise control power is vivid through its attempt to exploit the state institutions and the Lebanese system for its gain. This aim resulted from Hezbollah's realisation of having a national domestic cover for its military wing and sustaining its presence, role and interests. To achieve its purpose, Hezbollah relied heavily on soft power by appealing to ask for help and alliance with the Lebanese people and their political factions rather than constantly threatening them. This position became clear when Hezbollah praised the fantastic show of support for the resistance that the Lebanese people, government, and political forces showed in the face of the Israeli attacks.[338] This conduct of behaviour and pattern of power, which is *adulation*, was once more evident during the Israeli Operation Grapes of Wrath against southern Lebanon in 1996. This operation proved brutal for the Lebanese people, who rallied around Hezbollah and the government, showing one unique solidarity that is hardly obtainable in Lebanon. In the aftermath, Hezbollah capitalised on this situation to ensure the importance of the state and people's protection of the resistance and to establish itself at the heart of the Lebanese political scene.[339] Hence, once more, Hezbollah, through practising *intimidation* power with Israel and *adulation* power with the Lebanese population, was aiming to obtain *predomination* power.

Opposition to the Government

Despite this show of solidarity during the Israeli attacks, the fact remains that the quarrel between Hezbollah and the Lebanese state during the 1990s was constant. Even though the two might have an understanding, they never trusted each other. The government waited for any opportunity to attack Hezbollah and, if possible, cut its powers. Hezbollah was always looking for the chance to weaken the state further and eventually take over. Arguably, Hezbollah and Rafic Hariri's relationship was tense,

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[336] An-Nahar Newspaper, "He Called for Withdrawal from the Peace Negotiations, Nasrallah: There Is No Agreement Regarding the Katyusha, and The Path of Resistance Will Continue Until Liberation" (August 2, 1993), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[337] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Lebanon Carried Out National Mourning and General Closures in Condemnation of the Israeli Attack, Hezbollah Mourned the Victims, and Nasrallah Confirmed That the Resistance Would Respond" (June 4, 1994), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[338] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Praises the Government's and The People's Rallying Around the Resistance" (June 8, 1994), p. 3, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[339] An-Nahar Newspaper, "'The Armistice is an Israeli Trap, and the Agreement Requires Time', Nasrallah: We Are Not a Substitute for The State, and We Will Not Sign a Written Agreement with the Enemy" (April 24, 1996), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

where they quarrelled over economic and foreign policies for the better of the '90s decade. The main reason behind this uneasy relationship was Hezbollah's growing power, mainly its harness of control power through exploiting the state institutions and its attempt to have structural dominance. The state felt threatened by Hezbollah's attempt to practice *predomination* power over Lebanon. This was evident through Hariri's stand, where he stated that the government would not tolerate the political project, behaviour, performance, and defiance of Hezbollah. According to Hariri, Hezbollah should not monopolise the resistance and use it for its political ends.[340] However, Hezbollah responded by affirming that it regarded itself as a fundamental state component and was not interested in controlling all aspects of resistance.[341] Such a response highlights Hezbollah's confidence that it is gradually gaining control over the state's institutions and influencing policymaking.

Through its tension with the government, Hezbollah continued to harness *adulation* to achieve *predomination.* For instance, when the government ordered the army to take control of the grounds, creating a state of emergency, Hezbollah called on the Lebanese Parliament to convene to protect citizens' right to freedom of expression.[342] Thus, Hezbollah declared that liberties should not be sacrificed in the name of maintaining civil harmony.[343] Through this stand, the armed political party aimed to protect its soft power tools, such as its right to freedom of expression, which it was exploiting to achieve *predomination*. Hezbollah supported the Labour Union strike for the same reason, urging them to continue protesting despite the government injunction. It asserted that stifling dissent and outlawing protests would only increase national instability and insecurity.[344] Hezbollah pointed out that the country's crises resulted from the economic policy crisis, which was built on borrowing from abroad without assessing the people's ability to handle the burden of these loans. Hence, Hezbollah established itself as the people's defender and protector of their rights. Such a tactic helped Hezbollah strengthen its *predomination* power by winning seats in the elections, infiltrating the institutions, and cultivating structural dominance in the process.

Eventually, throughout this decade, it became clear that Hezbollah fluctuated between hard, soft, control and protean power. Its practice of *predomination* power was evident in the first year of the decade through confrontations with Amal and attacks on the Lebanese system and the Maronite establishment. However, as the decade proceeded, it became clear that Hezbollah was harnessing protean power with the Lebanese public through its pattern of power *adulation* and *intimidation* power through its attacks on Israel to achieve *predomination* power. Hezbollah's implementation of *adulation* and *intimidation* was vivid in the way it improvised and innovated to protect its military wing during several Israeli attacks, in addition to its agility, which was evident in its alliance with Lebanese fractions that are on the other end of the spectrum. In brief, throughout the 1990s, Hezbollah repositioned itself in Lebanon and navigated the new role it wanted to play in the Lebanese Second Republic by cultivating patterns of power, such as *adulation*

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[340] An-Nahar Newspaper, "The Shia Revived Ashura with Condolence Councils and Mass Rallies, Nasrallah: The Prime Minister Must Correct His Understanding of the Resistance and His Literature on It" (May 29, 1996), p. 7, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[341] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah in The Context of Its Dispute with Hariri: He Has to Act as [someone] Responsible for The Lebanese" (May 30, 1996), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[342] An-Nahar Newspaper, "al-Wafaa li al-Muqawama Calls the Parliament to Convene to Protect the Citizens' Right of Expression" (February 29, 1996), p. 7, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[343] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: Confiscating Freedoms Does Not Serve Civil Peace" (March 26, 1994), p. 6, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[344] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Commemorated Jerusalem Day with [Military] Shows, and it Escalated the Political Rhetoric; Nasrallah: The Labour Union Must Proceed with its Steps, and We Advise the Authorities Not to Threaten with September 13th Incident" (February 17, 1996), p. 5, *AUB Archives*

and *intimidation*, to achieve *predomination*. Such practices of several patterns of power will be repeated throughout the coming decades.

4.2.2. Hezbollah's Manoeuvring between 2000 and 2004.

In the post-1990s era, 2000 marked a turning point for Hezbollah. While the armed political party had previously exerted hard power in Lebanese affairs, it began to embrace soft power. Despite this shift, Hezbollah continued to harness both powers, control and protean. When Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon in 2005, Hezbollah capitalised on what it deemed a victory and further entrenched itself in Lebanese politics. Hezbollah's actions made it clear that it was fighting militarily and politically to safeguard its existence, power and future. Key events that demonstrate Hezbollah's approach to power include its treatment of the Lebanese population after the Israeli withdrawal, its opposition to the Hariri government, its support of Syrian presence in Lebanon, and its resistance to UNSC resolution 1559.

Hezbollah's Power in the Aftermath of the Israeli Withdrawal

The decade commenced with the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon on May 25, 2000. Although Hezbollah celebrated this event as a victory, the reality remains that it posed a challenge to the armed political party that needed to navigate the muddy Lebanese waters. Hence, Hezbollah captured the moment to solidify its position as a guardian of the people's rights and prosperity through the pattern of power *adulation*. For instance, in the immediate aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal, Hezbollah took measures to prevent any bloodshed or clashes in southern Lebanon between residents and Lebanese Israeli agents. This improvisation was necessary for Hezbollah to protect itself and also cultivate its image as a civilised, armed political party united with all Lebanese people, regardless of their political affiliations or religious sects. Being agile and open to other Lebanese fractions was important because any civil unrest in southern Lebanon after the Israeli withdrawal would have undermined Hezbollah's hegemony and presence in the region. This concern was apparent in Nasrallah's speech, where he emphasised the importance of protecting and strengthening this achievement, which would demand more significant work, sacrifice from everyone, and humility.[345]

Moreover, rather than objecting to the state's presence and role in the region like in the previous decades, Nasrallah welcomed the state, declaring that Hezbollah has no plans to oust it. He clarified that Hezbollah has no desire to be an authority figure or security force. Instead, the state is in charge and has control over the region, with the power to make decisions.[346] Hezbollah's aim from such a stand was to be seen as part of the Lebanese system and not a threat to its existence. This position would protect the party and its interests by securing acceptance and protection from the Lebanese government. Furthermore, by ensuring the presence of the Lebanese state in newly liberated lands, Hezbollah held the government accountable for reconstruction and development in the south.[347] In doing so, Hezbollah relieved itself from direct responsibility for people's welfare while still retaining its position as a government checker and a party that cares about people's needs. This action illustrated Hezbollah's *adulation* power towards its relationship with the government by exercising protean power while applying soft power.

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[345] Nicholas Noe, "Victory, May 26, 2000", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 232-243, p. 237
[346] Nicholas Noe, "Victory", p. 238
[347] Nicholas Noe, "Victory", p. 238

Moreover, in the aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal, Nasrallah stressed that victory was only possible due to the "harmony between the resistance, the people, and the state."[348] This triple equation of *the army, the people, and the resistance* will dominate Hezbollah's narrative in the coming years, justifying its unique position and the need for its weapons. Above all, this triple equation will transfer from a slogan into decision-making when, in the coming years, it will be encrypted into government statements. Such a triumph illustrates Hezbollah's long-term strategy regarding its exercise of power, which might be protean at times. Still, its ultimate aim is to capture the institutions and exercise control power. Hence, once more, Hezbollah, through *adulation*, was aiming to achieve *predomination*.

Hezbollah's Opposition to the Government

Hezbollah never ceased to condemn the sectarian system and to attack the consecutive Lebanese governments, mainly those headed by Rafic Hariri. Hezbollah harnessed protean power through its battle against the establishment during this phase. Despite the widespread agreement after the Taif Accord that sectarianism must be addressed, some Christians fear that its complete abolition would benefit the Muslim majority. However, according to Hezbollah, the sectarian system is the primary cause of unrest in the country.[349] Nasrallah has voiced support for replacing the outdated and tribal political sectarianism with a modern system that promotes national unity.[350] However, this created uneasiness among the Christians. To ease their concerns, Nasrallah proposed "the formation of a Higher National Council, as provided for in the Constitution, with the mission of abolishing sectarianism."[351] He stressed that they are not advocating for the outright elimination of political sectarianism; this may occur later and require another 30 years.[352]

Additionally, Hezbollah continued its hostility against Hariri's economic policies, which were regarded as the reason behind the country's corruption. Nasrallah claimed that financial and administrative corruption must be addressed realistically and fundamentally to solve this crucial and unsolvable economic issue. However, Hezbollah was not immune to being tarnished by shades of corruption due to its protection of its people who were defying the government by evading taxes. Nonetheless, Hezbollah asserted that people would pay taxes if the government addressed corruption, but the government must recover the stolen money.[353] Therefore, Hezbollah's *adulation* power was on full display while tackling Lebanese domestic issues such as the sectarian system and the government's performance.

Hezbollah's Position on the Syrian Presence in Lebanon and UNSC Resolution 1559

Initially, Syria intervened in Lebanon in 1976 on behalf of the Christians against the Left and the Muslims. However, Sadat's visit to Israel in 1977 left significant political repercussions on the MENA region, resulting in Syria shifting sides. When Hezbollah emerged in the 1980s, its relationship with

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[348] Nicholas Noe, "Victory", p. 241

[349] Nicholas Noe, "The Second Intifada", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 244-262, pp. 252-253

[350] Nicholas Noe, "A Peaceful Resolution is a Victory for the Resistance, February 16, 2000", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 213-231, p. 228

[351] Noe, "A Peaceful Resolution", p. 228

[352] Noe, "A Peaceful Resolution", p. 228

[353] Nicholas Noe, "How Can You Afford That, February 16, 2002", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 263-277, pp. 263-264

Syria was cooperative and tense. Syria's role in the civil war and its relationship with Iran facilitated the emergence of Hezbollah, yet this came at the expense of Syria's Shia ally, Amal. On the other hand, when the civil war ended, Hezbollah accepted Syria's hegemony in Lebanon in return for political and diplomatic protection and facilitation of weapon transfer from Iran. In brief, pragmatism ruled the relationship between Hezbollah and Syria. They both realise that the weakness of one of them will result in both losing power; as such, they constantly defend each other.[354] However, the Taif Accord, which brought the long Lebanese Civil War to an end, stipulated that the Syrian military and intelligence presence in Lebanon would come to an end once Israel withdrew from the south. Thus, when Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 2000, a significant portion of the Lebanese population called for the removal of Syrian troops and an end to their influence over Lebanese politics. As a result, a new era began, marked by four years of conflict over the Syrian presence in Lebanon. Hezbollah was at the centre of this conflict due to its strategic alliance with Syria. The discourse that will proceed over this matter between Hezbollah, Syria, and other Lebanese factions illustrates Hezbollah's patterns of power, mainly its harnessing of control and protean during this dispute in the form of *exhortation* and *intimidation* to achieve *predomination*.

The Maronite Catholic Church in Lebanon was particularly vocal in its opposition to the Syrian presence. Hence, when Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon, the Church took this as an opportunity to call for Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. However, Syria is Hezbollah's strong ally, and its presence secured Hezbollah's existence and freedom to manoeuvre. Thus, naturally, Hezbollah stood against the voices calling for Syria's withdrawal. Therefore, Hezbollah resorted to *intimidation* where it applied the language of coercion, showing rigidity rather than adaptability, when Nasrallah argued that "Syria is the only guarantor of civil calm."[355] This prompted a reaction from the Maronite Patriarch, who saw Nasrallah's statement as "a veiled threat that either the Syrians stay, or chaos would reign."[356]

Amid the increasing anti-Syrian voices in Lebanon, Syria found it in its interest to work on extending the Lebanese President Émile Lahoud's mandate, who was a Syrian ally, rather than risking the election of an anti-Syrian President. This issue eventually reached a boiling point on September 2, 2004, when the UNSC passed Resolution 1559, sponsored by the US and France. The resolution aimed to ensure fair and free presidential elections in Lebanon and oversee the Lebanese government's establishing its sovereignty over its land. The 1559 resolution also called for withdrawing foreign forces from Lebanon, including Syria. It demanded the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, such as Hezbollah and the Palestinian Organisations.[357]

However, this tension between Hezbollah and other Lebanese factions regarding Syria's presence and hegemony over Lebanon escalated further when the parliament voted by 96 to 29 on September 3, 2004, to extend Lahoud's term for three more years. This act was an open defiance of the international community and its allies in Lebanon, who stood behind Resolution 1559 and supported it.[358]

Despite Syria's success in extending Lahoud's term with the help of its Lebanese allies, among whom was Hezbollah, the opposition to the Syrian presence in Lebanon intensified. Moreover, the contentious issue of Hezbollah's weapons further divided public opinion, with the armed political party vehemently

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[354] Hage Ali, "Power Points"

[355] Noe, "The Second Intifada", p. 251

[356] Noe, "The Second Intifada", p. 252

[357] United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1559*, (September 2, 2004), http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1559

[358] Kim Ghattas, "Mandate of Lebanon's President Extended", *Financial Times*, (September 3, 2004), https://www.ft.com/content/dc68894e-fde7-11d8-9dca-00000e2511c8

rejecting the 1559 resolution as a tool aimed at targeting it. The course of debates and actions over this sensitive issue will demonstrate the outcome of Hezbollah's patterns of power.

Since Hezbollah had the upper hand on the country's security, many of its opponents were hesitant to label it a militia and instead referred to it as a resistance group.[359] Such an act by the opposition is a testament to Hezbollah's *intimidation* power, as its opponents know that Hezbollah will not hesitate to use its agility and armed force to attempt a surprise military coup against the Lebanese establishment. As a result, the opposition believed that the issue of Hezbollah's weapons should be resolved domestically without international intervention by integrating Hezbollah into the Lebanese Army and transferring its guns to the government.[360] However, Hezbollah, which derived its power from its arms and formidable presence, refused to surrender its weapons and insisted on maintaining free mobility. Nasrallah reaffirmed this stance, stating that "the resistance remains committed to confronting dangers and challenges, benefiting from the available Lebanese margin between the state and the resistance."[361] The margin that Nasrallah referred to is the space that Hezbollah was able to create through the level of power it reached to manoeuvre without any restrictions from the state and without being held accountable. Thus, Nasrallah sought to safeguard Hezbollah's ability to operate without government interference by insisting on maintaining this margin.[362] Hence, Hezbollah was using *intimidation* power to achieve *predomination*.

Over time, Hezbollah's unwavering stance has indicated its increased influence, acquired through its military endeavours and leveraged in Lebanon's political sphere by adapting to the changing alliances among factions. This has become the hallmark of Hezbollah's strength, as the armed political party will come to accomplish its objectives through harnessing *adulation* and *intimidation*, respectively, depending on the characterisation of the environment it was working in and how it was experiencing the world at that time to achieve *predomination*.

4.2.3. Hezbollah's Significant Readjustment between 2005 and 2010.

Between 2005 and 2010, Hezbollah faced four crucial events that would shape its future and reflect its patterns of power. First, there was the assassination of Rafic Hariri in 2005, which declared the end of an era in Lebanese politics and the beginning of another. Second, there was the Israel-Hezbollah war, which took place in July 2006. Third, there was the 2008 incident where Hezbollah attempted a coup d'état in Lebanon, which saw the armed political party invading Beirut. Lastly, a soft tone dominated Hezbollah's *New Manifesto* in 2009. In between these significant major events, there were several others which also reflected Hezbollah's power dynamics, such as entering the cabinet for the first time in 2005, signing a political deal with the most substantial Christian leader and the debate over the future of Hezbollah's arms and the establishment of a national defence plan. All these events will be analysed in the following lines to highlight Hezbollah's patterns of power.

[359] Ya Libnan, *Lebanon's Siniora Won't Yield to Hezbollah*, (January 16, 2006), Archived May 25, 2006, at the Wayback Machine,
https://web.archive.org/web/20060525185937/http://yalibnan.com/site/archives/2006/01/lebanons_sinior_2.php
[360] Majdoline Hatoum, "EU demands Lebanon Implement Resolution 1559", *Lebanese Lobby*,(January 17, 2006), Archived August 25, 2006, at the Wayback Machine,
https://web.archive.org/web/20060825004359/http://www.lebaneselobby.org/News__index/news%202006/01%2017%2005%20EU%20demands%20Lebanon%20implement%20Resolution%201559.html
[361] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah, On the Occasion of International Jerusalem Day* (November 12, 2004), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=2804 (Translated from Arabic)
[362]Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah, On the Occasion of International Jerusalem Day (*November 12, 2004), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=2804 (Translated from Arabic)

The year 2005 was a pivotal moment in Lebanese politics, as it altered the course of the country's post-civil war trajectory. The year began with controversy, as President Lahoud's term was extended under Syrian pressure, leading to calls for implementing UNSC Resolution 1559. Meanwhile, mounting opposition to Syrian presence in the country reached a fever pitch with the formation of a pro-Syrian government. In this atmosphere, the assassination of Hariri, a long-time political rival of Hezbollah, marked a turning point in Lebanese history. In the aftermath, the people united against Syria, demanding its withdrawal.

Hezbollah, a long-time ally of Syria, felt threatened, isolated and vulnerable in the face of the opposition demands. Hence, Hezbollah again found itself in an uncertain environment facing a risky situation, so it leaned on protean power, mainly improvisation. This was translated in Nasrallah's statement on the day following the assassination, which declared that the Lebanese had the man who represented a scarce chance to replicate a national consciousness or an internal agreement to escape the dire situation Lebanon found itself in.[363] Moreover, Hezbollah sought to approach the problem by applying soft power. As such, Nasrallah asked for a dialogue between the government and the opposition bloc to solve the controversial issues. Thus, in the direct aftermath of Hariri's assassination, Hezbollah turned to *adulation* power to protect itself and try to influence the post-assassination narration. However, this pattern faded in the following weeks, making way for *intimidation*.

Under the mounting pressure from the opposition's demands and popularity, the armed political party called for a rally on March 8, 2005, to thank Syria and support Hezbollah's position as a resistance, thus its right to retain its arms. In his speech to the people rallying, Nasrallah stated, "No one can expel Syria from Lebanon (…) we are here to reject Resolution 1559 and defend the resistance, the option of resistance and the duty and weapons of the resistance."[364] With these words, Nasrallah made it clear to the Lebanese who oppose Hezbollah's policies that red lines cannot be crossed. Thus, according to Hezbollah, some factors, mainly retaining its weapons and preserving its military wing, are above negotiations, even in a national dialogue. Therefore, the price of confronting Hezbollah will be instability and chaos. Furthermore, in mentioning that one of the aims of rallying was to "safeguard [Hezbollah's] state-building project, the establishment of civil calm and to prevent chaos," Hezbollah was making it clear that its aim is structural dominance, which is one of control power main elements.[365] Hence, once more, Hezbollah was trying to achieve *predomination* power by practising *intimidation* power.

In response to Nasrallah's words on March 8, which were perceived as a threat, the opposition gathered on March 14, 2005, at Martyrs Square in downtown Beirut. It demanded Syria's immediate withdrawal and emphasised the importance of preserving Lebanon's freedom, sovereignty, and independence.[366] Despite this pressure, Hezbollah refused to back down. Hence, Nasrallah declared that "we will consider

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[363]Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, in Which He Spoke About the Crime of the Assassination of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri* (February 15, 2005), https://mediarelations-lb.org/ (Translated from Arabic)

[364] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, in Riad El Solh Square in Beirut* (March 8, 2005), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=3064 (Translated from Arabic)

[365] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, in Riad El Solh Square in Beirut*, (March 8, 2005), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=3064 (Translated from Arabic)

[366] The New York Times, *Hundreds of Thousands Jam Beirut in Rally Against Syria*, (March 14, 2005), https://www.nytimes.com/2005/03/14/international/middleeast/hundreds-of-thousands-jam-beirut-in-rally-against.html

any hand that tries to seize our weapons as an Israeli hand, and we will cut it off."[367] With this phrase, he was making sure to show Hezbollah's control power and its persistent use of hard power, as well as setting the borderlines of any future policy decision regarding the future of Hezbollah's military wing. Therefore, the tense month following Hariri's assassination demonstrated Hezbollah's agility and its ability to swiftly move from one power to another as deemed fit for its survival and interest. Hence, Hezbollah's patterns of power might seem to fluctuate between *adulation* and *intimidation*. Still, it demonstrates Hezbollah's pragmatism and consistency in establishing its state-building goal and gaining *predomination* power.

Hezbollah Entering the Government

The tension between the opposing March 8 and 14 groups ultimately resulted in the March 14 block caving in. Their submission to Hezbollah came over the concern regarding civil calm and stability in the country. Hezbollah has a mighty hard power, which it does not hesitate to employ to achieve its aims. Thus, in fear for the country's security and unity, Hezbollah's opposition was afraid of facing or pressuring it. As a result, an alliance between Hezbollah and some of the March 14 parties was established as part of the May 2005 parliamentary elections. The late Prime Minister Hariri's party, led by his son Saad, was among those parties, all in the hope of preventing the use of Hezbollah's weapons internally. Hezbollah secured 14 seats in the Parliament and 35 seats out of 128 through its joint list of March 8 members.[368]

After the elections, Hezbollah decided to enter the government.[369] The decision was based on Hezbollah's fear that if it stayed out of the cabinet, it would not be able to maintain its arms and its freedom to manoeuvre and attack Israel without government intervention and obstruction. This was due to Hezbollah's distrust of the upcoming government, which was considered pro-Western.[370] As a result, Hezbollah entered the government to ensure its interests would be protected. This marked the first time that the armed political party had a presence in the cabinet, with one minister being a member of Hezbollah and two others considered to be close to it. Although entering the cabinet reflected Hezbollah's practice of protean power, such a movement was vital in achieving control power, as seen in the coming years. Hezbollah was enhancing its presence in the state's institutions, opening the way to exploit them further. Thus, the armed political party deepened its structural dominance and secured its weapons, presence, and project.

Consequently, Hezbollah's actions marked a significant shift towards further integration within Lebanese politics. Previously, the armed political party opposed the Taif Accord and the Lebanese system, but now it was directly involved in the Lebanese internal affairs. This transformation was driven by its desire to protect its weapons, the source of its power and existence. The fact that opposition parties in Lebanon allied with Hezbollah in parliamentary elections and even included it in the cabinet speaks volumes about the armed political party's influence. Despite pressure in 2005 to disarm, Hezbollah stood its ground and prevailed thanks to its *intimidation* power.

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[367]Nicholas Noe, "We Will Consider Any Hand That Tries to Seize our Weapons as an Israeli Hand May 25, 2005", in Nicholas Noe (ed.), *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 335-351, p. 349
[368] Noe, "We Will Consider", p. 335
[369] ABC News, *Hezbollah joins Lebanon Cabinet for First Time*, (July 20, 2005), https://www.abc.net.au/news/2005-07-20/hezbollah-joins-lebanon-cabinet-for-first-time/2062306
[370] Noe, "We Will Consider", pp. 335-336

This year saw Hezbollah exercising control, protean, hard and soft power. It witnessed the armed political party making bold moves politically and militarily to protect its existence, mainly its military wing, and to further advance its agenda and achieve its goals. Its *adulation power*, which results from applying soft power while exercising protean power, was evident in three moves. Its agreement with Micheal Aoun, a Christian leader and its participation in the round table for national dialogue. On the other hand, its *intimidation power* was evident in the war that it launched against Israel, which reflected Hezbollah's protean and hard power. However, the aim of this war and the aftermath actions and behaviour will come to strengthen Hezbollah's control power. This shows once more that Hezbollah's patterns of power, such as *adulation* and *intimidation*, are practised by Hezbollah and are tactical moves, while the overall goal is to achieve *predomination*.

Hezbollah's bold political move was a strategic agreement with the renowned Maronite leader Michel Aoun, whose political party held most Christian seats in Parliament.[371] Aoun was known for his staunch opposition to Syria and Hezbollah itself. Thus, this alignment demonstrated Hezbollah's immense power to the extent that their oldest adversary realised that the only way for him to reach the top Maronite post, the Lebanese Presidency, was through Hezbollah's support and consent. This understanding granted Hezbollah much-needed internal legitimacy and coverage. This agreement allowed the armed political party to increase its Parliamentary allies to counter the majority of pro-Western politicians, including other Christian parties, the Sunnis and the Druze. This political movement showcased Hezbollah's cunning ability to capitalise on its military force to protect its arms and presence. Thus, Hezbollah practised *adulation* with Aoun as a gradual tactic to achieve *predomination* over the Lebanese system.

Another instance in 2006 when Hezbollah's action could be interpreted as a pattern of *adulation* power was its agreement to participate in the round-table national dialogue. Yet, the fact remains that Hezbollah was suspicious of such a dialogue and its outcome, primarily since the round table aimed to discuss the points of UNSC Resolution 1559 with the foremost political Lebanese leaders, most of whom were against Hezbollah retaining its weapons.[372] As a result, the armed political party found itself in an uncertain environment. Feeling the risk of the situation, Hezbollah improvised by turning to struggle with Israel, primarily since its military actions against Israel act as a legitimisation of its actions and existence. Hence, while the dialogue was ongoing, Hezbollah conducted a rally to support the Lebanese, Palestinians and Arab prisoners held by Israel, where Nasrallah promised that Hezbollah would work on liberating them.[373]

Hezbollah delivered its promise three months later when it kidnapped two Israeli soldiers and killed three others in an ambush against Israeli army border patrol. As a result, Israel launched the Second Lebanon War on July 12, 2006.[374] The war was a controversy from the beginning till the end. Hezbollah launched its attacks without the knowledge of the Lebanese government. The Israeli government blamed Lebanon,

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[371] *Memorandum of Understanding between Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement*, (February 6, 2006), https://www.peaceagreements.org/viewmasterdocument/1262

[372] David Schenker, "Lebanese National Dialogue: Avoiding the Hard Questions?", *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, (March 24, 2006), https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/lebanese-national-dialogue-avoiding-hard-questions

[373] Nicholas Noe, "I Assure You Once Again that Your Hopes Are Sound and in the Right Place April 24, 2006", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 370-377, p. 370

[374] Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, *34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah, and the War in Lebanon* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

declaring war on it. The Lebanese government denied its knowledge of the raid, claiming it does not condone it. The fighting between Israel and Hezbollah lasted for 34 days, ending on August 14, 2006.[375] As a result, thousands plus people were killed in Lebanon, and the country's infrastructure and economy were severely damaged. Yet, Hezbollah declared victory.[376] Through a well-designed propaganda campaign, Hezbollah turned "the stench of defeat into the smell of victory."[377] However, Israel's aim in this war was to cut Hezbollah's military strength and dislodge it from its positions. Despite the joint efforts of Israel and the USA and the political support from pro-Western politicians, the war did not break Hezbollah.[378] Since this goal did not come to materialise, the war was seen as a defeat for Israel, the West and their allies in Lebanon. Hezbollah made sure to spread this narration and capitalise on it politically.

Therefore, the decision to kidnap the Israeli soldiers was an *intimidation power* since it came as a combination of exercising protean power and applying hard power. However, through *intimidation* power, Hezbollah achieved *predomination* power, mainly by gaining structural dominance over the Lebanese political landscape. This was obvious in Nasrallah's speech on the day to celebrate Hezbollah's victory over Israel. Nasrallah tackled the sharp division among the Lebanese regarding the war's outcome, whether a win or a loss. He declared that whoever believes that his project, plan, vision, or choice has triumphed experiences victory and talks about it; conversely, whoever believes that his project was defeated speaks of defeat.[379] From Hezbollah's measures and perspectives, the war accomplished its primary goal of protecting its arms and presence significantly since Hezbollah will leverage this victory internally. This was clear in an interview Nasrallah gave after the war, where he warned Lebanese leaders against calling for Hezbollah's disarmament, stating that the armed political party could have taken control of the country through a military coup but chose not to.[380] Nasrallah emphasised that the weapon belonged to Lebanon, not just the Shia community. However, whether Hezbollah will uphold its words of not using its arms inside would be tested in 2008.

After the failure of the July war to dismantle Hezbollah, the armed political party was determined to achieve *predomination* power, mainly through capturing the state institutions and maintaining its structural dominance in an attempt to ensure that its adversaries could not clip its wings or eliminate it. This decision required practising *intimidation* power to surprise the opponents and paralyse them. Hence, a mere three months after the war ended, Amal and Hezbollah's five ministers, accompanied by an ally Christian minister, resigned from their posts, citing disagreement over the special Hariri Tribunal to investigate the assassination of the late Prime Minister. However, in reality, the underlying issues involved the distribution of political power. Amal and Hezbollah's resignation was due to the government's refusal to expand the number of cabinet members, which Hezbollah was pushing for. Hezbollah hoped to obtain a third of the government from a cabinet enlargement granting it veto power.[381] Despite the government's rejection of their resignations, Hezbollah and its supporters initiated

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[375] Özlem Tür, "*The Lebanese War of 2006: Reasons and Consequences*", *PERCEPTIONS: Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 12, no. 1 (April 2007), 109-122

[376] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, at the Divine Victory Festival*, (September 22, 2006), https://mediarelations-lb.org/section.php?id=114 (Translated from Arabic)

[377] Micheal Young, "Hoodwinked by Hezbollah", *Reason*, (August 24, 2006), https://reason.com/2006/08/24/hoodwinked-by-hezbollah/

[378] Benedetta Berti, "The Ongoing Battle for Beirut: Old Dynamics and New Trends", *Institute for National Security Studies*, Memorandum No. 111 (December 2011), p. 67

[379] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, at the Divine Victory Festival*, (September 22, 2006), https://mediarelations-lb.org/section.php?id=114 (Translated from Arabic)

[380] Nicholas Noe, "Interview with New TV August 27, 2006", Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 378-410, p. 379

[381] Noe, "Interview with New TV", p. 379

a sit-in protest in downtown Beirut, resulting in complete economic paralysis.[382] Eventually, Hezbollah's requests were not addressed, prompting the VNSA to resort to exercising violence internally.

Hezbollah's Coup Attempt in May 2008 and the Doha Agreement

Hezbollah's first full display of its *predomination power*, which combines the exercise of control power with the application of hard power, came on May 7, 2008. This is when the armed political party resorted to a measure it had promised not to take, turning its weapons inward.[383] The pretext was the pro-western government's decision to dismantle Hezbollah's telecommunication system and remove the head of security at Beirut Airport, who was seen as Hezbollah's ally.[384] Nasrallah perceived these moves as a declaration of war on his party. Thus, Hezbollah, which felt the risky situation, invaded West Beirut, taking control over the city, and engaged in confrontations with pro-government forces in north and Mount Lebanon.[385] The week-long conflict, reminiscent of the civil war, ended when the government rescinded the decisions that had provoked Hezbollah.[386]

Following the May 2008 conflict, Qatar facilitated peace talks among the Lebanese factions in Doha to find common ground and achieve consensus. Two crucial provisions emerged from the Doha Agreement. First, it assured that Hezbollah would gain third plus one of the government seats, allowing it to have veto power in any cabinet. The second is establishing the "army, people, resistance" formula, which Hezbollah will repeatedly cite to validate its political and violent actions.[387] This formula offered Hezbollah "legitimacy within the state without the accountability it would be subject to were it to become a state institution. It also allows the group to broaden the remit of its legal actions under the pretext of protecting Lebanon from 'any aggression' as per the ministerial statements."[388] Conversely, the formula mentioned differentiated between the army and the resistance. Thus, the prospect of enforced reforms in the security sector, such as Hezbollah's disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration, was excluded. As a result, Hezbollah emerged as the clear victor, and Lebanon's security architecture became a permanent hybrid of Hezbollah's security and that of the government.[389] Despite the attempt by Qatar to present the Doha Agreement as a "no victor, no vanquished" deal between Hezbollah and the government forces, the reality was that Hezbollah succeeded in achieving its interests at the expense of the Lebanese state sovereignty.[390] Therefore, Hezbollah secured control over Lebanon and achieved *predomination* power with this agreement.

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[382] BBC News, *Protests Blow to Beirut Economy*, (December 8, 2006),
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6162941.stm
[383] Joseph Alagha, *Hizbullah's Identity Construction* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), pp. 141-154
[384] Nicholas Blanford, "Hezbollah Phone Network Spat Sparks Beirut Street War", *Christian Science Monitor*, (May 9, 2008),
https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2008/0509/p05s01-wome.html
[385] Robert F. Worth and Nada Bakri, "Hezbollah Seizes Swath of Beirut from U.S.-Backed Lebanon Government", *The New York Times*, (May 10, 2008), https://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/10/world/middleeast/10lebanon.html
[386] International Crisis Group, *Lebanon: Hizbollah's Weapons Turn Inward*, (May 15, 2008),
https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/eastern-mediterranean/lebanon/lebanon-hizbollah-s-weapons-turn-inward
[387] Lina Khatib, "How Hezbollah Holds Sway Over the Lebanese State", Research Paper, *Middle East and North Africa Programme*, (London: Chatham House, June 30, 2021) https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/06/how-hezbollah-holds-sway-over-lebanese-state/02-influence-through-state-institutions
[388] Khatib, "How Hezbollah Holds Sway"
[389] Khatib, "How Hezbollah Holds Sway."
[390] Aljazeera, *Reactions to Doha Agreement*, (May 21, 2008), https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2008/5/21/reactions-to-doha-agreement

The events in May proved that Hezbollah is the dominant force in Lebanese politics. The armed political party have demonstrated that it is willing to resort to violence to achieve its goals and protect its interests. Despite its military might, the aftermath of these incidents has damaged its reputation and legitimacy. Many Lebanese now view Hezbollah as a sectarian militia focused solely on its interests.[391] To regain its standing and secure its political objectives, Hezbollah must demonstrate its adaptability and wield its power wisely. The armed political party will do this by presenting its *New Manifesto*.

Hezbollah's 2009: New Manifesto and Elections

In 2009, Hezbollah unveiled a new political program that showcased its expanding and adaptive power. Critics noted the stark contrast between this manifesto and its 1985 predecessor, highlighting Hezbollah's shift towards pragmatism. However, it was a testament to Hezbollah's increased control power, steadily capturing the state institutions and gaining structural dominance. The program marked Hezbollah's full participation in Lebanon's domestic political sphere and reflected its growing influence. The 2009 manifesto centred around three vital internal points: recognising Lebanon as a homeland for all its people, accepting the political system with minor reservations regarding the sectarian system, and ending the questioning of the Lebanese National Army's loyalty to the nation and its citizens.

Hezbollah, which had previously rejected Lebanon's sovereignty, has now stated in its *New Manifesto* that it desired "Lebanon to be the homeland to all Lebanese, equally."[392] Furthermore, Hezbollah made it clear that it was adamantly against division and federation. Hezbollah declared they want Lebanon to be free, sovereign, independent, inexplicably strong, and capable. It also wanted the country to be a significant player in determining the region's present and future. Nonetheless, Hezbollah's vision of Lebanon is conditioned on a robust, competent, and unbiased state in which the political structure represents the people's will and ambitions for freedom, justice, security, stability, well-being, and dignity. According to Hezbollah, realising this condition necessitates strong resistance, which entails its military wing, power, and ability to use force. In other words, Hezbollah is not against the Lebanese system once the armed political party have total hegemony over it and shapes it through its control power.

Hezbollah's aim to manipulate the state institutions and gain structural dominance was evident in its approach to the Lebanese National Army. Hezbollah believed that Lebanon's defence should be a joint effort between itself and the Lebanese army, with each group focusing on a different area. Hezbollah will defend against Israel while the Lebanese army ensures internal stability. This statement shows that Hezbollah acknowledged the importance of the Lebanese army as a national force. However, it did not mean that Hezbollah would disband its military wing and transfer its weapons to the Lebanese army. On the contrary, Hezbollah enhanced its control power by being agile and creative. As a result, Hezbollah underscored the necessity of the continuation of its resistance wing in its endeavour to augment its capacities, particularly considering the triumphant confrontational expertise it had exhibited against the adversary and the disruption of all schemes to eliminate it or disarm it entirely.[393]

Another aspect of the 2009 *New Manifesto* was Hezbollah's adoption of a more moderate tone while still advocating for the elimination of the sectarian system. However, it acknowledged that until this is achieved, consensual democracy remains crucial for effective governance.[394] This shift meant Hezbollah

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[391] Are Knudsen and Michael Kerr (ed.) *Lebanon: After the Cedar Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 7–8
[392] Alagha, "Hizbullah's Documents", p. 122-123
[393] Alagha, "*Hizbullah's Documents*", p. 123
[394] Alagha, "*Hizbullah's Documents*", p. 126

accepted and championed this form of governance, ensuring its presence in all legislative and executive bodies. Therefore, while it may appear that Hezbollah was consenting to the Lebanese establishment, it was utilising it to serve its interests and maintain its political influence. Therefore, as the points tackled in Hezbollah's *New Manifesto* show, the armed political party practised *exhortation* power to secure its *predomination* power.

The 2009 parliamentary elections saw Hezbollah further enhancing its control power. Hezbollah's political success and protection of interests were not affected by its surge or lack of popularity among the Lebanese but rather by the fear of its military force.[395] Hence, even when the anti-Syrian pro-Western alliance led by Saad Hariri, the son of the late Rafic Hariri, won the June 2009 legislative elections, resulting in his appointment as Prime Minister, the country could not move forward without Hezbollah's consent. After months of stalemate with the Hezbollah-led camp, Hariri could only form a government in November, with Hezbollah as the blocking third.[396] This gave the armed political party the power to veto any decision that did not align with its interests. Despite having the government under its mercy, Hezbollah forced its collapse in January 2011.[397] In June, a new government dominated by Hezbollah was formed, ushering in a new era.[398]

From 2005 to 2010, this phase was marked by an extensive display of hard, soft, control and protean power within the Lebanese arena, indicating Hezbollah's willingness to employ diverse patterns of power, such as *adulation*, *intimidation* and *exhortation*, to safeguard its interests and existence, hence its *predomination* power. While the group's control power was evident in its gradual capture of the state and structural dominance, its protean power was demonstrated through its improvisation, political engagement and ingenuity, gradually enabling Hezbollah to assume control of the government and state. These developments ultimately facilitated the group's ascension to power, a story that will be recounted in the subsequent subsection.

4.2.4. Hezbollah's Enhanced Position from 2011 till 2020

The final subsection will prove that Hezbollah has reached a staggering level of harnessing control power, one of its very aims. This analysis will examine the impressive level of power that Hezbollah has attained and the extent to which it has become entangled in Lebanese politics. During this phase, Hezbollah was able to reap the rewards of harnessing its four patterns of power *adulation*, *exhortation*, *intimidation* and *predomination* from the previous stages, leading to a prevalent presence in Lebanese politics. However, as the following account will show, this period ultimately ended poorly for Hezbollah and the country. To provide a more in-depth understanding of this stage, four key events will be examined: the election

[395] Inter-Parliamentary Union, *LEBANON Majlis Al-Nuwwab (National Assembly) Elections in 2009*, http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/reports/arc/2179_09.htm

[396] US Senate, Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South and Central Asian Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations, Washington, DC, *Assessing The Strength Of Hezbollah*, (June 8, 2010), https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-111shrg62141/html/CHRG-111shrg62141.htm#:~:text=Shortly%20thereafter%2C%20Hezbollah%20won%20a,Hezbollah%20to%20keep%20its%20weapons.

[397] BBC News, Hezbollah And Allies Topple Lebanese Unity Government, (January 12, 2011), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12170608

[398] Paul Salem, "Lebanon's New Government: Outlines and Challenges", *Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center*, (June 15, 2011), https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2011/06/lebanons-new-government-outlines-and-challenges?lang=en

of Aoun as president, the performance of Hezbollah's ministers, its influence in parliament, and its role in the financial crisis and the tragic explosion at Beirut port.

In October 2016, Hezbollah achieved a significant milestone by successfully navigating the political landscape. With the backing of Hezbollah, former general Michel Aoun was elected president, ending a 29-month political stalemate that had resulted from deep divisions within the parliament.[399] This triumph marked the start of a new era for Hezbollah, firmly establishing its dominance over Lebanese politics. Even the reappointment of Saad Hariri as Prime Minister was seen as a win for Hezbollah, as the Saudi-supported Sunni leader provided vital protection and connections during the tumultuous Syrian war, in which Hezbollah was heavily involved.[400] The ultimate political victory came in May 2018, when Hezbollah and its allies claimed a landslide victory in the parliamentary elections, effectively ending the era of pro-Western governments and politics in Lebanon.[401] This enhanced its *predomination* power further by deepening its structural dominance and capturing the state institutions.

Hezbollah's increased *predomination* power was translated institutionally by dominating the cabinet and gaining control over crucial ministerial positions, which furthered its political agenda. However, this move also led to their direct involvement in corruption, resulting in a loss of public support and harm to Lebanon's economy and society. Hezbollah's domination extended to significant agriculture, administrative reform, health, and finance ministries. They not only indulged in typical Lebanese corruption practices - such as directing the ministries' resources towards its population and areas under its dominance and loyal to it while neglecting the rest of the country's people and areas - but also engaged in illegal international activities. Hezbollah utilised the Ministry of Agriculture to import ammonium nitrate legally. Additionally, the Ministry allowed the efficient operation of Hezbollah's illicit drug trade, Captagon, by falsifying transport paperwork and providing official papers that validated the drugs as agricultural seeds. On the other hand, Hezbollah's "involvement in the pharmaceutical trade, both licit and illicit," exemplifies the group's exploitation of state institutions for revenue.[402] Hezbollah embezzled money from projects funded by the Lebanese state, the EU, and other external donors through the Ministry of State for Administrative Reforms. Hezbollah's actions within the Ministry of Finance were no different, with the group abusing its ministerial position to launder money and evade state inspection of funds received from the Shia diaspora.[403]

Hezbollah's detrimental involvement in Lebanese domestic affairs extended beyond its ministerial positions to include its influence in the legislative body. By partnering with the Amal movement and its leader Nabih Berri, who also served as Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament, Hezbollah ensured that no legislation would be enacted that could harm the armed political party or deter its activities. Consequently, due to years of corruption, the termination of foreign investments, and the flight of Arab and foreign capital from Lebanon and its banks due to Hezbollah's actions, the country experienced its worst economic crisis in centuries in late 2019. Hezbollah, a primary driver of this crisis, worked through its ally Berri to prevent the parliament from passing legislation requiring a forensic audit of *Banque du Liban*, the central bank of Lebanon. This interference was intended to ensure that Hezbollah's connection

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[399] BBC News, *Lebanon: Michel Aoun Elected President, Ending Two-Year Stalemate*, (October 31, 2016), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37821597

[400] BBC News, *Saad Hariri Named Lebanon's New Prime Minister* (November 31, 2016), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37860414

[401] Peter Nassif, "The Lebanese Parliamentary Elections of 2018: Much Ado about Nothing?", *Austria Institut für Europa und Sicherheitspolitik (AIES)*, FOKUS | 4/2018, https://www.aies.at/download/2018/AIES-Fokus_2018-04.pdf

[402] Khatib, "How Hezbollah Holds Sway"

[403] Khatib, "How Hezbollah Holds Sway"

to the banking sector and its involvement in questionable transactions within its system remained unclear, particularly concerning the cash flow from the Shia diaspora.[404]

Subsequently, Hezbollah's era in Lebanon was not covered with gold. It was a tragedy for Lebanon and a challenge for the armed political party. Hezbollah failed to rise to such a challenge. The country entered into an economic crisis, the worst in centuries. Corruption reached its highs, and nepotism ruled. In a few words, the government entered into the era of kleptocracy. Hezbollah, who came to benefit from the systematic corruption and exploited it, did not seem to have any economic plan to present to save the last brick of this system. Lebanon looked on the brink of explosion when the capital exploded for real in August 2020.[405] The Beirut port explosion affected Hezbollah deeply since the rumours circulated that the ammonium nitrate which caused the blast belonged to it. Indeed, Hezbollah's handling of the case and using its violent force to entice the judges, prosecutors and journalists into silence says a lot.[406] However, the armed political party denied any connection to the ammonium nitrate's existence, which makes it accountable for the explosion. It even went so far as to file a defamation lawsuit against those who said it was in charge of the port explosion.[407]

Over time, Hezbollah has undergone a remarkable transformation. Once that vehemently opposed the Lebanese system and the very existence of Lebanon, it has now evolved into an armed political party that plays a critical role in Lebanese politics. As it became the dominant player on the Lebanese stage, its actions aim to protect the Lebanese system, which it exploits for its benefit. While Hezbollah's violent wing remains a significant source of its power, its political manoeuvring and creativity have also contributed to its success. Hezbollah has repeatedly demonstrated its agility and flexibility in the Lebanese political arena, using its protean power to consolidate its position, capitalise on its military achievements, and safeguard its interests. In short, it harnessed protean power to achieve control power. However, once it gained control power, it struggled to manage it effectively.

4.3. Hezbollah's Road to Predomination

This subsection will summarise the analysis and discussion presented throughout the chapter to outline Hezbollah's patterns of power. The above examination suggests that Hezbollah employs a variety of patterns of power, such as *adulation*, *intimidation*, *exhortation* and *predomination*, to achieve its objectives and safeguard its interests. These include exercising control and protean power while applying soft and hard power, depending on the situation. Hence, Hezbollah practices various patterns of power over different periods and under diverse circumstances. Moreover, it becomes clear that Hezbollah harnesses protean power in its two forms, *intimidation* and *adulation*, to achieve control power, mainly *predomination*. This fluctuation will be discussed and examined in the following paragraphs using figures and tables to help summarise Hezbollah's patterns of power over time.

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[404] Khatib, "How Hezbollah Holds Sway"

[405] Ghazi Balkiz, Tamara Qiblawi and Ben Wedeman, "Lebanon Explosion: Thousands Injured Across Capital Beirut", *CNN*, (August 5, 2020), https://edition.cnn.com/2020/08/04/middleeast/beirut-explosion-port-intl/index.html

[406] Martin Chulov, "Six Dead as Beirut Gripped by Worst Street Violence in 13 Years", *The Guardian*, (October 14, 2021) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/14/gunfire-beirut-protest-judge-leading-port-blast-inquiry

[407] Tobias Siegal, "Hezbollah Suing Entities Who Accused It of Being Behind Beirut Explosion", *The Jerusalem Post*, (December 5, 2020), https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/hezbollah-suing-entities-who-accused-it-of-being-behind-beirut-explosion-651228

The figures and tables presented in this chapter are not mere illustrations but essential tools to encapsulate the essence of the analyses and conclude the discussions. They are designed to vividly depict the diverse patterns of power that Hezbollah wielded across the four designated periods and how these patterns ebbed and flowed. Furthermore, these figures and tables are crucial for understanding Hezbollah's power dynamics and serve to highlight the correlation between these patterns of power and the strategic use of *exhortation*, *intimidation*, and *adulation* in the Lebanese context, all aimed at achieving Hezbollah's ultimate power objective, *predomination*.
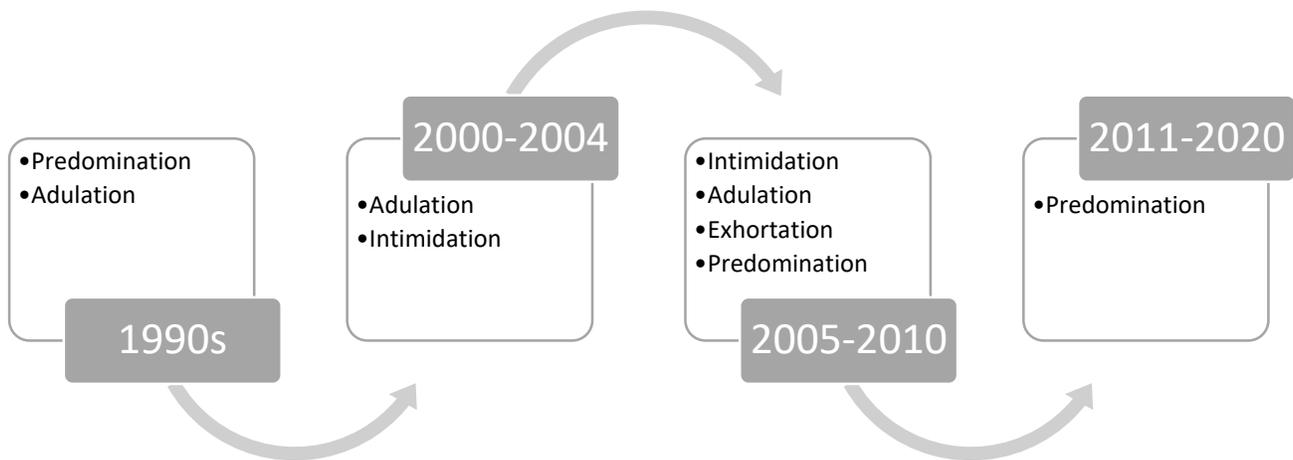
Figure 4.1 Patterns of Power Practiced Throughout Different Periods

Figure 4.1 shows the different patterns of power practised by Hezbollah throughout the various periods. Not all the patterns of power were presented, and some prevailed. This fluctuation between the patterns results from the different environments Hezbollah found itself in and how it experienced the world in terms of risk and uncertainty, hence affecting its choice of exercising protean and control power and its application of soft and hard power. Moreover, this figure shows that *adulation* dominated Hezbollah's practice before reaching its goal of *predomination*, as presented in the first three periods. This is a testimony to Hezbollah's agility and innovation in applying diplomatic tactics and pragmatism to achieve its aim.

However, the patterns of power were not consistently applied in the same period. For instance, while *adulation* dominated the 1990s, *exhortation* was not practised. Moreover, even when all the patterns of power appeared in a period, they were not all frequently practised to the same degree. For instance, *exhortation* was the least practised pattern in 2005-2010, while *intimidation* and *adulation* prevailed in the first three periods.

The complexity of the patterns of power becomes more evident when examining the Tables from 4.1 to 4.4, which outline Hezbollah's changing patterns of power and strategies toward Lebanon. These tables succinctly summarise Hezbollah's activities, demonstrating how it adheres to specific patterns of power over different periods. The presented tables enable the observation of the frequency and targets of these actions, linking patterns with particular periods. Simple points will provide examples of the practice of a pattern, while shaded patterns reflect its absence during that time.

By examining Table 4.1, it will become evident that the 1990s witnessed episodes of *predomination* and *adulation*. The reason for this severe fluctuation has to do with the fact that despite the Taif Accords being signed in 1989, officially marking the end of the Lebanese civil war, skirmishes continued as it took time to reinstate the Lebanese state, which only took place at the end of 1990 and the beginning of 1991. Thus, before the state was restored, Hezbollah was still immersed in the civil war tensions, especially in its war with Amal and its opposition to the Lebanese system, particularly Maronism. In this light, *predomination* in Hezbollah's conduct during the '90s could be understood. However, after the restoration of the state, Hezbollah made a 180-degree turn, where it started practising *adulation*, which was translated into its decision to participate in the parliamentary and municipality elections, as well as standing next to the people in their struggle against the successive governments' decisions and policies. From that period on, Hezbollah will start harnessing its protean power to achieve control power and move gradually from *adulation* to *predomination*, as seen in the following periods.

Table 4.1 The Patterns of Power Practiced in the 1990s with Examples.

	1990-1999
Predomination	These events, hence *predomination*, occurred pre-Lebanese State restoration: -Hezbollah's conflict with Amal in 1990 -Attack on the Lebanese System in 1990
Exhortation	
Intimidation	
Adulation	These events, hence *adulation*, occurred post-Lebanese State reinstatement: -Hezbollah's Participation in the 1992 and 1996 Parliamentary and 1998 Municipality elections and its alliance with Lebanese fractions that are on the other end of the spectrum -Appealing to the Lebanese population and praising their unity during 1993, 1994, and1996 Israel's attacks on Lebanon -Standing next to the people in their fight against the government over economic and freedom matters.

Despite the continuous presence of *adulation* in the second phase, as seen in Table 4.2, *predomination* was absent. Moreover, Hezbollah took its practice of protean power further by combining it with hard power, resulting in *intimidation*. Hezbollah practised these two patterns of power during that period. The armed political party started the period in 2000 by practising *adulation* with the Lebanese people, especially in the immediate aftermath of the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. However, as the voices raised against Syria's presence in Lebanon, the armed political party resorted to *intimidation*, ending the period by practising it, especially in the wake of the UNSC resolution 1559, which threatened to disarm Hezbollah. This demonstrates the armed political party's agility and ability to manoeuvre and change shapes to protect itself.

Table 4.2 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2000 and 2004 with Examples.

	2000-2004
Predomination	
Exhortation	
Intimidation	-Hezbollah's resistance to UNSC Resolution 1559, refusal to surrender its weapons, and insistence on maintaining free mobility. -Hezbollah's support of the Syrian presence in Lebanon and its stand against the voices calling for Syria's withdrawal.
Adulation	-Hezbollah measures to prevent any bloodshed in southern Lebanon between residents and Lebanese Israeli agents after the Israeli withdrawal in 2000 -Agreeing on the presence of the Lebanese state in southern Lebanon in 2000 -Standing with the people against the corrupted government

From 2005 to 2010, Hezbollah faced significant challenges, with its existence at stake. However, through its adaptability and the strategic use of hard and soft power, the armed political party survived and managed to assert control. It eventually employed a combination of *adulation, exhortation* and *intimidation* to dominate the political landscape. What is particularly intriguing is that Hezbollah simultaneously wielded different patterns of power over various Lebanese factions. In 2006, for example, the group withdrew from the government and launched a campaign against its Sunni leader, demonstrating its *intimidation* power. At the same time, it allied with a former Christian opponent, showcasing its *adulation* power. Despite these tactics, Hezbollah's ultimate goal remained *predomination*, which it achieved by exerting its control through hard power in its bid for self-preservation and influence. *Predomination* was evident when Hezbollah, based on risk assessment and its bid to gain structural dominance, attempted a coup in May 2008, placing the country on the verge of a new civil war. As a result of the clashes that occurred, a new agreement between the Lebanese was necessary. As such, the Doha agreement saw the light, and it was a success for Hezbollah as it gave the armed political party the upper hand in Lebanese politics, paving the way for enhancing its *predomination* power, which it will come to practice thoroughly in the coming period.

Table 4.3 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2005 and 2010 with Examples

	2005-2010
Predomination	-Hezbollah's Coup Attempt in May 2008 and the Doha Agreement
Exhortation	-Hezbollah's 2009: *New Manifesto* and Elections
Intimidation	-Hezbollah considers retaining its weapons and preserving its military wing as an issue above negotiations, threatening to cut the hand that dares to touch its weapons. -Hezbollah's kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers and the killing of three others, which led to the Second Lebanon War in 2006 -Amal and Hezbollah's five ministers, accompanied by an ally Christian minister, resigned from their governmental posts in 2006.
Adulation	-Hezbollah's participation in the government for the first time in 2005 -Its agreement with Micheal Aoun, a Christian leader, in 2006 -Its participation in the round table for national dialogue in 2006

During the last period under review, spanning from 2011 to 2020, Hezbollah demonstrated its success in achieving *predomination*. By securing the election of a president aligned with its agenda and attaining a parliamentary majority through a broad political coalition, Hezbollah could form the desired government and extend its influence over the country. In summary, Hezbollah's activities and outcomes throughout this last period point to its *predomination* power, enabling it to assert control over the state.

Table 4.4 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2011 and 2020 with Examples

	2011-2020
Predomination	-Election of Hezbollah's ally Aoun as president in 2016 -Gaining the majority of the parliamentary seats through its allies in 2018 -Forming a cabinet that is dominated by Hezbollah and its allies in 2018
Exhortation	
Intimidation	
Adulation	

Accordingly, Hezbollah's main aim is to reach *predomination* where it can achieve structural dominance, conduct risk assessments for its decision-making, preserve its armed wing, and secure its free manoeuvring. As has been seen in the above discussion, to reach its aim, Hezbollah employed three different patterns of power: *adulation*, *exhortation* and *intimidation*. Hence, these three patterns of power, which Hezbollah applied in various degrees through different periods, enabled the armed political party to reach *predomination*. Therefore, as Figure 4.2 illustrates, these three powers could be seen as tactics employed by Hezbollah to achieve its primary aim, *predomination* and feed it.
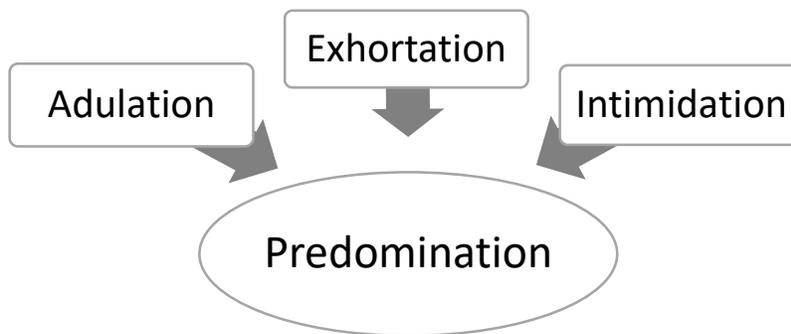

Figure 4.2 The Pattern of Power Achieved

Consequently, Hezbollah is an example of an agile actor that practices protean power through its ability to rebrand and reposition itself. For instance, comparing its 1985 *Open Letter* and its 2009 *New Manifesto* highlights this adaptability and agility. Hezbollah softened its conduct with the Lebanese by practising

exhortation through its *New Manifesto*. Initially, Hezbollah chose to avoid politics to protect its military presence and maintain its violent actions. However, it later entered the political realm for the same reason: safeguarding its military wing and safely keeping its weapons. This shows that Hezbollah's agility is a primary characteristic of its survival. However, despite its agility in tactics, Hezbollah is rigid in its beliefs and does not compromise on its goals. Hence, Hezbollah insists there is no trade-off between preserving the resistance and entering parliament; instead, it is a way to defend the resistance.

Nonetheless, the image that Hezbollah has carefully created for itself is agile. Hezbollah presents itself as a political party armed not as a militia but as a resistance.[408] It is engaged in military fights against the enemy and political battles against corruption. It presents itself as a political party above the petty politics of everyday life. It is disinterested in the quotas and the division of the cheese in public administration posts, usually done at the cost of the government's budget and work efficiency. Yet, it paralyses the country by acting as an obstacle to government formation and presidential elections unless it gets the veto power in the cabinet and gains the ministerial positions it asks for. This is an ultimate illustration of Hezbollah's *intimidation* and *exhortation*.

Therefore, Hezbollah has shown its protean power through multiple rebranding and repositioning by adapting and surviving in the face of uncertainty. Its pragmatism is evident in its ability to pivot and change its narrative. Shifting between *adulation* and *intimidation* showcases Hezbollah's agility as an actor who can innovate and improvise in uncertain situations, mainly operational and radical uncertainty. Hence, through its agility and creativity, the armed political party cultivated an environment of uncertainty in which it operates. It manoeuvred, innovated, and improvised to survive, strengthen its hold on the Lebanese system, and capture the state.

Eventually, Hezbollah worked tirelessly to establish itself as a resistance movement that championed the interests of Lebanese citizens. It has sought to demonstrate that it is both a political party and a military force with a mission to help the Lebanese people regain their land and fight against corruption. Hezbollah has harnessed protean and control power while combining them with hard and soft powers to accomplish these goals. It has developed resources and institutions to safeguard its interests and ensure survival. Hezbollah has demonstrated protean power in uncertain conditions, adapting with agility and innovation. Its religious beliefs aim to create a sense of certainty while recognising the inherent risks in any uncertain situation. However, as Hezbollah moved towards its objectives, it became increasingly focused on control power, using coercion, institutions, and structural domination to assert its power. These findings summarise Hezbollah's journey with power on the Lebanese stage and encapsulate its patterns.

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[408] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: There Is No Trade-Off Between the Resistance and Our Entry into Parliament", (September 15, 1992), p. 5, *AUB Archives*

Chapter 5: Hezbollah in the Arab World, From Intimidation and Adulation to Predomination and Exhortation

After examining Hezbollah's influence in Lebanon, it is crucial to expand the analysis to the Arab World to validate the findings and identify consistent patterns. This chapter will explore Hezbollah's positions and activities with Arab countries. The objective is to determine whether the patterns of power observed in Lebanon apply to Hezbollah's role in the Arab world. The relationship between Hezbollah and the Arab world has been complex. From its inception, Hezbollah has employed two distinct patterns of power: *adulation* with the people and *intimidation* with the Arab regimes, with Syria being the exception, showcasing its protean power, which it combines simultaneously with hard and soft power. However, over time, Hezbollah's patterns of power have shifted towards *exhortation* and *predomination*, reflecting changes in its environment and its growing experience, enabling it to assert control while utilising hard and soft power.

To understand such fluctuations, the chapter will address various events and milestones. It will be divided into three sections. The first section will provide a historical background, shedding light on Hezbollah's relationship with the Arab world during its foundation, emphasising its initial position and patterns of power. The second section will be structured chronologically, examining Hezbollah's stance on different countries and the Arab population to illustrate the patterns of power applied throughout different phases. This will be achieved through the narration of significant incidents and events. The final section will summarise the chapter, stating the main findings from the narrative analysis.

5.1. Historical Overview of Hezbollah's Position within the Arab Status Quo

Throughout its history, Hezbollah has navigated a complex relationship with the Arab World. While portraying itself as a champion of Arab and Muslim interests in the MENA region, the group has also been vocal in condemning Arab regimes as traitorous and defeatist. Additionally, Hezbollah's Islamic identity has been both a source of strength and controversy, given its affiliation with *vilayet al-faqih* and adherence to Shia religious doctrine. However, from the time of its public initiation in 1985 till the end of that decade, Hezbollah did not get involved in any violent attacks on the Arab countries. Instead, it chose to focus on appealing to the broad Islamic populace while verbally attacking the Arab regimes, considering them as defeatists and traitors. This historical overview aims to shed light on Hezbollah's ideology and its stand on the Arab countries and the Arab people. This will be done by examining Hezbollah's 1985 Manifesto. Through a careful analysis of this document, Hezbollah's patterns of power during that era will become clear. However, the main aim is to establish a background from which Hezbollah's conduct can be measured and understood from the '90s until 2020.

Hezbollah, in its 1985 manifesto, appeared to the broader Islamic population, urging them to fight Israel by joining Hezbollah directly or supporting them in different ways since it is a religious obligation for every Muslim to defend the oppressed.[409] Moreover, Hezbollah called for Muslim unity, mainly among the Sunnis and the Shia, warning that any division would only serve the enemy's interests. Hezbollah went on to remind the Muslim population that colonialists were only capable of achieving their aims in exploiting the region after succeeding in enflaming the Sunni-Shia sectarian conflict. Furthermore, Hezbollah warned that among the government elites, religious scholars and leaders in the Muslim world

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[409] Joseph Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), 39–62, p. 49

are those who are agents of the West and who work on spreading sedition and discord among the various Muslim factions. Hence, Hezbollah called on the Muslims not to permit division and control tactics to be used among them. Additionally, Hezbollah addressed the Muslim scholars, asking them to be aware of their significant position and how it can be used for good or evil, mainly due to the influence it yields over the people. According to Hezbollah, the colonial and neo-colonial powers understood the critical role of Muslim scholars. For that, they tried to execute the incorruptible and install scholars who did not mind selling their souls to the devil. Therefore, Hezbollah exhorted Muslim scholars to openly advocate for what is right and resist the tyrants and despots; it pressed them to be the light and the excellent example. Additionally, it urged them to set an example of chastity, a desire to enter paradise, and martyrdom in God's service.[410] Thus, at that period, Hezbollah was cautious about slipping into the Sunni-Shia conflict rhetoric and maintained a narration that urged unity, chastity, and resistance.

On the other hand, while calling for Islamic unity and urging the Muslim population to come together and fight, Hezbollah did not shy away from criticising the various "defeatist Arab regimes."[411] Hezbollah, in its first manifesto, considered these regimes as despondent since they were willing to establish peace with Israel and find a common background with it. Hezbollah declared that these countries are treacherous because they are the product of the colonial powers; as such, they are Western puppets. Hence, they do not hesitate to turn their countries into American and British military bases. Moreover, Hezbollah considered that there is a "policy of yielding", leading and limiting the movement of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, as well as Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), considering these regimes as reactionary.[412] According to Hezbollah, this defeatist strategy encourages reactionary governments to suppress any Islamic mobilisation in these nations that is hostile to the United States (US) and its allies, brainwash the population, and cause their Islamic identity to fade. Furthermore, Hezbollah blamed the totalitarian governance of these countries on this defeatist policy, asserting that it makes those reactionary regimes fearful of their population. Thus, they prevent them from meddling in political matters because it poses a severe threat to the survival of these corrupted regimes. Ultimately, Hezbollah professed that the oppressed in the Arab world are more aware than before of their rights and the corruption of their leaders, so they started complaining. Thus, those reactionary Arab regimes would collapse under the weight of their people's will. Eventually, Hezbollah concluded its address to the Arab regimes by warning their leaders not to stand in the face of the current wave of resistance and the Islamic revolution, threatening them with execution if they did so.[413]

Consequently, from its establishment, Hezbollah championed itself as the defender of the oppressed and the fighter of the oppressor. It vowed to fight the corrupted reactionary Arab regimes that sought normalisation with Israel while calling on the Arab population to unite, revolt, and resist. However, the main feature of this first manifesto is Hezbollah's stand on Islamic unity and refusal of any conflict between the Sunni and the Shia.[414] This position Hezbollah will try to hold for as long as possible, only to be later driven into a sectarian war as it will be seen last in the coming decades.

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[410] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 53-55

[411] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 50

[412] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 51

[413] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 51-52

[414] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 39–62

5.2. Hezbollah's Patterns of Power in the Arab World

This section studies Hezbollah's patterns of power through its actions and behaviour regarding the Arab world through a chronological narration covering the period from 1990 until 2020. The aim is to reveal Hezbollah's patterns of power by providing evidence from the events that took place at the time. Thus, this section will be divided into four subsections, each reflecting a different phase of Hezbollah's relationship with the Arab countries and the Arab population. Additionally, those phases will show Hezbollah's various powers through narration, highlighting Hezbollah's stand regarding different events. The four stages represented in the subsections were designed to mirror Hezbollah's patterns of power concerning the Arab world and its population throughout various periods. In the following paragraphs, each phase will be briefly summarised to set the stage for the analysis and discussion in the subsequent subsections.

The '90s decade is the first phase that this dissertation will examine. Throughout the Arab world, this period was dominated by the intense peace negotiations between Israel and several Arab countries under the US patronage. Hezbollah stood firm against any form of talks with Israel. Hence, this position further damaged Hezbollah's relations with various Arab regimes, which was not good from the start, especially after Hezbollah verbally attacked several Arab countries. On the other hand, its popularity soared among the Arab population, especially after its various combats with Israel. Moreover, this period saw Hezbollah present its stand on Islam as a religion and method of behaviour, which is vital since it is the basis of Hezbollah's ideology, strength, and inspiration.

Between 2000 and 2004, the relationship between Hezbollah and the Arab countries was intricate and crucial. During this period, Hezbollah's sophisticated political tactics became prominent, showcasing their unique approach and occasional inconsistencies, particularly in their support for the Syrian peace talks with Israel in January 2000 while criticising the talks between Israelis and Palestinians in July of the same year. Additionally, this era garnered extensive support for Hezbollah from the Arab population following Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. However, this phase also saw Hezbollah vacillating between opposing the Arab regimes and verbally attacking them during the second intifada, as well as advocating for Arab and Islamic unity and avoiding sectarian divisions and conflicts during the US invasion of Iraq.

The period between 2005 and 2010 was an ordeal for Hezbollah, which found itself politically battling some Arab regimes for the sake of its existence. This came in light of the US campaign to establish *The New Middle East*, where Hezbollah was designed as part of the *axis of evil*, and hence, its demise was a priority.[415] Thus, the rift between the Arab regimes intensified, especially during the Hezbollah-Israel war in 2006 and the Gaza War that happened between December 2008 and January 2009. While these two events saw Hezbollah clashing bitterly with the Arab governments, its popularity with the Arab population peaked. However, this period ended with two contradictory actions. On the one hand, Hezbollah planned a plot against Egypt. At the same time, it produced a *New Manifesto* in which it announced its intention to refrain from attacking any Arab regimes and focused on calling the Arab population for unity and urging them to resist the oppressors.

The last phase in Hezbollah's relationship with the Arab regimes and people is the most important by far. Between 2011 and 2020, the Arab world witnessed massive protests asking for liberty, transparency

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[415] Richard N. Haass, "The New Middle East", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 6 (Nov. - Dec. 2006), pp. 2-11. And in Shaul Shay, *The Axis of Evil: Iran, Hizballah, and the Palestinian Terror* (London: Routledge, 2005)

and equity. In the beginning, Hezbollah took its natural position by championing the people's cause against their oppressors. However, when the wave of rebellion reached Syria, Hezbollah's position saw a significant shift where it stood with the regime against the oppressed Syrian people. From that point on, Hezbollah started losing its popularity among the population in the Arab world. The peak of this decline came when Hezbollah got involved in the civil wars that were raging in Syria and Yemen, especially since they had a sectarian aspect to them. Hence, this period saw Hezbollah decline from being an Arab Muslim resistant movement whose aim is to defend the oppressed into a sectarian Shia militia aiming to secure its existence and interests.[416]

Consequently, Hezbollah's relationship with the Arab world is crucial since it reflects the armed political party's stand on various issues and highlights its ambition and pragmatism. Hezbollah presented itself to the Arab world as an Islamic resistance movement whose main aim is to defend the oppressed against the oppressor, hence its aim to fight Israel. However, this stand meant that Hezbollah would come to clash with more moderate Arab countries over the issue of negating Israel's right to exist while gaining popularity among the population. Nevertheless, the primary source of Hezbollah's popularity among the wider Muslim and Arab population was its unsectarian narration and a call for unity among all the Muslim factions. However, in the light of the civil wars, Hezbollah will come to back down on this narration, hence losing its popularity among the broader Sunni Muslim Arab population.[417] Within this context, the following subsections of narration and analysis can be comprehended, as they will show how Hezbollah combined and fluctuated between control and protean, hard and soft, in its various patterns of power concerning its deals with the Arab world.

5.2.1 Hezbollah and the Arab World During the '90s

The '90s was a decade marked by intensive peace process negotiations between Israel and its neighbouring Arab countries, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians. The talks saw two American Presidents, George Bush Sr. and Bill Clinton, attempting to broker peace in the Middle East through conferences in Madrid, Oslo, Shepherdstown, and Camp David.[418] However, not all efforts were successful, and during these talks, not everyone in the Arab and Islamic world was thrilled about it, mainly Hezbollah. The armed political party saw a direct threat to its existence in these negotiations. Henceforth, during this period, Hezbollah was experiencing the world in an uncertain environment; as a result, it innovated to protect itself through acts of hard power, especially by confronting Israel militarily. As a result, Hezbollah's relations with the Arab countries fluctuated between attacks and support depending on the countries and the period. To examine Hezbollah's patterns of power during that era, it is essential to look at two main features that dominated that period—the peace talks between some Arab countries and Israel and Hezbollah's statement of purpose, which concluded the decade and prepared for a new one.

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[416] Matthew Levitt, *Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of Lebanon's Party of God* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2013)

[417] Joshua L. Gleis and Benedetta Berti, *Hezbollah and Hamas: A Comparative Study* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012)

[418] Bruce Riedel, "25 Years On, Remembering The Path to Peace for Jordan and Israel", *Brookings*, (October 2019) https://www.brookings.edu/articles/25-years-on-remembering-the-path-to-peace-for-jordan-and-israel/

Hezbollah's relationship with Syria demonstrates its agility. The armed political party started the decade fighting Amal, Syria's ally in Lebanon.[419] This war between the two Shia parties took place due to Iran's and Syria's attempts to control the Lebanese card. The aim was to affect the security of northern Israel by making sure to have the upper hand in southern Lebanon. However, when the war ended, Hezbollah got to hold on to the south, signalling the beginning of a long alliance and collaboration with Syria.[420] Moving from foes to friends shows Hezbollah's agility and ability to operate under operational uncertainty. Moreover, its deal with Syria testifies to Hezbollah's hard power's efficiency and ability to capitalise on it. As a result of this new alliance, Hezbollah was able to impact the agenda in the Levant and influence the debate regarding the relationship with Israel and the war-peace narration. During the peace talks period, Hezbollah stood firmly against any form of agreement with Israel and praised Syria for its "distinguished and conscious positions regarding the dangers of Arab defeat."[421] Hence, Hezbollah, who labelled the majority of Arab countries as defeatist, had a very different relationship with them than that with Syria.

Hezbollah's relationship with the vast majority of the Arab countries is dominated by *intimidation*, a combo of hard and protean power, as the armed political party regards the Arab world as an uncertain environment. The reason behind this tense environment stems from the fact that Arab countries were normalising relations with Israel, Hezbollah's sworn enemy, or were involved in peace talks with it. Hezbollah was in an uncertain environment due to the inaccessible knowledge concerning the peace talks, which put the armed political party at risk. This is clear in the way Hezbollah regarded the situation as "a bitter reality because of the almost complete Arab precipitation and desolation in front of the Zionist scheme in the region."[422]As a result, it improvised to retain its ground, verbally attacking the Arab leaders in the hope of swaying public opinion in its favour and convincing the people to oppose their governments.

Therefore, Hezbollah considered the Arab leaders despicable since they were caving to Israel. Even Hezbollah's Secretary General back then, Subhi al-Tufayli, went further to assert that the nation's inability to free Palestine was due to the Arab rulers, not the might of the enemy.[423] Moreover, the attack on the Arab leaders did not stay in the broad frame. Hezbollah went further to name leaders like the late Saudi Arabia King Fahd and the late Moroccan King Hassan II, asserting that they are "symbols of betrayal and subordination to Americans."[424] This illustrates the armed political party's eagerness to trash the monarchs' reputations and legitimacy to build its popularity and legitimacy among the Arab population. On the other hand, Hezbollah not only attacked the Arab countries and their leaders verbally but also through military attacks. For instance, the Bahraini authority accused Hezbollah of responsibility

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[419] Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007)

[420] Mohanad Hage Ali, "Power Points Defining the Syria-Hezbollah Relationship", Series on Political Islam, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, (March 2019) https://carnegie-mec.org/research/2019/05/power-points-defining-the-syria-hezbollah-relationship?lang=en&center=middle-east

[421] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Celebrations and Marches on Jerusalem Day, Hezbollah: The Solutions of the Tripartite Committee Are Sectarian, Dangerous to The Resistance, and Strengthening Maronism" (April 21, 1990), p. 3, *American University of Beirut (AUB) Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[422] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Celebrations and Marches"

[423] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hrawi on April 13: The Hour of Peace Has Struck" (April 13, 1991), p. 8, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[424] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Celebrations and Marches"

for the bomb attacks that targeted two hotels in the capital, Manama.[425] Moreover, Hezbollah urged the Arab population to stand against their regimes and to fight the West and Israel. Also, Nasrallah urged the Arab population to put pressure on their governments to stop any peace or relations from being established, as well as any normalisation of relations with the enemy.[426] Above all, Nasrallah was keen on rallying the broader Arab and Muslim youth who wanted to fight the oppressed and the enemy, asking them "to consider this struggle their legitimate religious responsibility."[427] Therefore, Hezbollah employed *intimidation* power, a mix of protean and hard power, when dealing with Arab nations and their leaders. It used its protean power in an uncertain environment and leveraged its agility in wielding hard power, particularly in its assaults on Bahrain and use of coercive language towards leaders.

On the other hand, Hezbollah placed the Palestinian issue at the heart of its struggle with Israel and built its legitimacy upon it. Hence, it is no surprise that the armed political party extended its attacks against the PLO amid the peace talks that marked the beginning of the 1990s. According to Hezbollah, "the Palestinian cause is the cause of the entire nation and is not owned by the PLO and its president, to sell it to the Jewish state."[428] Hezbollah condemned the PLO and its leader, Yasser Arafat, for going "too far in torturing and persecuting the mujahideen."[429] Hence, by attacking the PLO and doubting its legitimacy, Hezbollah was paving the way for its allies to take over. Therefore, Nasrallah urged the Palestinians to get rid of Arafat, especially after the dead end of the Oslo Accords. He claimed that Arafat became more Jewish than Netanyahu. Hence, the Palestinians should revolt against Arafat and go back to resisting and fighting Israel.[430] It follows then that Hezbollah's pattern of power that it practices in the face of the PLO is that of *intimidation* as the armed political party applied hard power by supporting the Palestinian Islamic fractions to topple Arafat while exercising protean power in an uncertain environment through its agility.

Nevertheless, while Hezbollah stood against the PLO, it supported the Palestinian people and was popular among them, especially the Islamic military organisations. Similarly, those organisations never left Hezbollah alone in its hard times. For instance, in the aftermath of the Israeli raid on Hezbollah's training camp, the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine attacked the Israelis in the occupied territory to avenge Hezbollah. This gesture did not go unnoticed by the armed political party, which thanked the movement for its actions, declaring that "this is how the resistance in Lebanon and the uprising in Palestine has always been one body, one spirit, one project and one mind."[431] Such interactions with the Arab population and their Islamic fractions are a testament to Hezbollah's *adulation* power since, while

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[425] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Manama Announces the Confession of Detainees to Receive Training with Hezbollah" (February 20, 1996), p. 1, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[426] An-Nahar Newspaper, "In al-Musawi's Forty in Nabi Chit, Hezbollah: For a Non-Sectarian System that Protects Muslims and Christians and Achieves Dignity" (April 13, 1992), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[427] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Lebanon Carried Out National Mourning and General Closures in Condemnation of the Israeli Attack; Hezbollah Mourned the Victims, and Nasrallah Confirmed That the Resistance Would Respond" (June 4, 1994), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[428] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Criticizes Clinton's Position: Jerusalem is not His Ownership to Give it to the Jews" (March 26, 1994), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[429] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Celebrated Jerusalem Day with Military-Scout Displays in Dahieh, Baalbek and Tyre, Nasrallah Called on the Authority to Stop Confiscating Political Life, and He Urged the Palestinian People to Get Rid of Arafat's Leadership" (February 8, 1997), p. 7, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[430] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Celebrated Jerusalem Day with Mass Performances and Marches...Competed by al-Tufayli, Nasrallah: We Are Ready to Fight Israel for a Thousand Years" (January 24, 1998), p. 7, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[431] Nicholas Noe, "Letter to the Arab and Islamic Ummas, July 30, 2004", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah*, (London: Verso, 2007), 314-316, p. 314

exercising protean power in an uncertain environment, it applied soft power in its dealings with the Arab population, especially by motivating them psychologically and urging them to resist.

Therefore, while Hezbollah stands against the Arab regimes, considering them traitors and conspirators, it takes pride in presenting itself as a defender and protector of the Arab people, asserting that it can communicate with them directly and rely on their understanding and patriotism. This form of addressing the Arab population and capitalising on their reactions is a narration that Hezbollah will refer to now and then, echoing its 1985 Manifesto declaration of defending the oppressed and fighting the oppressor.

Hezbollah's Statement of Purpose

Hezbollah's protean power, mainly its agility and creativity, enabled it to rebrand itself, especially when the armed political party decided to exercise soft power. Hence, Hezbollah changed the tone of its speeches, softened parts of its conduct, and carefully picked its words, phrases and topics. As the '90s progressed, Hezbollah focused less on criticising the Arab countries while presenting its policy statements. Instead, it focused more on Islam, mainly the soft diplomatic face of Islam. This was evident in Hezbollah's Statement of Purpose, released by its Press Office on March 20, 1998.

In this statement, Hezbollah emphasised the kind of Islam the VNSA wants. Hezbollah wanted an Islam that disavows "humiliation, slavery, subjugation, colonialism and blackmail."[432] The Islam to which Hezbollah adheres is the faith that opposes accepting authority or delegation from outsiders who restrict individual liberties and national interests. Islam, for Hezbollah, is the religion that discourages polarising conflicts and encourages communication between civilisations. Hezbollah fights for an Islam that supports cross-cultural harmony and opposes embargoes and barriers, believing that diplomatic channels should be used to remove them. Islam, as Hezbollah understands it, seeks to establish rights, security, and justice for all people, regardless of their nationality, race, or religion. Hezbollah concluded by claiming that instead of utilising force or violence, they aim to apply Islam through nonviolent political means that allow the majority of a society to choose whether or not to accept it. Hezbollah continued by asserting that they would implement Islam if it became the majority's choice. Otherwise, they would continue interacting and conversing with others until a mutually acceptable position is founded on true beliefs.[433]

Therefore, amidst the uncertain environment that it was facing, especially the peace talks between some Arab regimes and Israel and the frequent Israeli attacks, the ever-agile actor turned to protean power to protect itself through innovation. This led to the development of a new identity rooted in the softer aspects of Islam, aligning with universally recognised features of the religion. Hence, through this *Statement of Purpose,* Hezbollah aimed to present itself in a favourable light, emphasising its commitment to Islam as a central ideology guiding its actions. This practice of *adulation* was intended to resonate with Muslim audiences, bolstering Hezbollah's popularity and positioning it as a resilient force free from sectarian tensions. Ultimately, Hezbollah's embrace of *adulation* was a means to solidify its influence over time and achieve *predomination*. However, as subsequent decades would reveal, the armed political party did not always remain true to its professed interpretation of Islam.

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[432] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 59
[433] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 60

5.2.2. Hezbollah as the Defender of the Oppressed between 2000 and 2004

The period between 2000 and 2004 was a complex and significant time in the relationship between Hezbollah and the Arab countries. During this time, Hezbollah's intricate political strategies took centre stage with their nuanced approach and occasional double standards, especially regarding supporting the Syrian peace talks with Israel in January 2000 while criticising the one that took place between the Israelis and the Palestinians in July of the same year. Moreover, this period brought Hezbollah massive support from the Arab population following Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000. However, this phase witnessed Hezbollah's fluctuation between opposing the Arab regimes and attacking them verbally during the second intifada, as well as asking for Arab and Muslim unity and evading sectarian division and rifts during the US invasion of Iraq. The following lines will elaborate further while pointing out the patterns of power, *adulation*, and *intimidation* practised by Hezbollah during this period.

Peace Talks

At the turn of the millennium, peace talks between Israel and the Arab nations dominated headlines in the Middle East. These negotiations, which occurred in the US during the Clinton administration, involved Syria and Israel in January 2000 and the Palestinians and Israel in July 2000.[434] Unfortunately, these talks failed, leading to the second intifada in September 2000.[435] Hezbollah faced uncertainty in an uncertain context, so the armed political party exercised protean power to deal with the unknown. To secure its future, Hezbollah chose to innovate. On the one hand, it has applied soft power by facilitating Syria's negotiations with Israel. On the other hand, it has employed hard power by verbally confronting Arab leaders involved in the peace talks. Thus, the armed political party practised *adulation* with Syria to secure its future amid the negotiations. Simultaneously, it practised *intimidation* to attack the Arab leaders involved in the peace talks. This approach demonstrates Hezbollah's commitment to securing its future by both aligning with Syria and opposing Israel, the West, and their Arab allies. This dual strategy will be further examined in the following analysis.

During the US-brokered peace negotiations between Syria and Israel from January to March 2000, Hezbollah did not oppose Syria's efforts towards peace. Hezbollah's leader Nasrallah acknowledged the group's coordination with Syria in an interview with the Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahram, emphasising that Hezbollah operates independently regarding the resistance and its operations.[436] This statement was meant to demonstrate Hezbollah's autonomy while still supporting Syria by carrying out military actions that could be used as leverage in the negotiations without causing direct consequences.

While Hezbollah was facilitating Syria's peace talks, it was not even concerned with the peace talks that were being prepared between the Palestinians and Israelis in Egypt in the presence of US President Bill Clinton, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordanian King Abdullah II. Hezbollah even went further to execute its agenda of hard power by kidnapping three Israeli soldiers in the disputed Shebaa

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[434] Marwa Daoudy, "A Missed Chance for Peace: Israel and Syria's Negotiations Over the Golan Heights", *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 61, no. 2 (Spring/Summer 2008), 215-234

[435] Shlomo Ben-Ami, *Prophets without Honor: The Untold Story of the 2000 Camp David Summit and the Making of Today's Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022)

[436] Nicholas Noe, "A Peaceful Resolution is a Victory for the Resistance, February 16, 2000", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 213-231, p. 228

Farms and a retired Israeli Colonel, Elhanan Tannenbaum, in Dubai.[437] The second abduction was of more significant weight due to its high profile, given that the kidnapping happened in an Arab country without its knowledge.

Through these two different stands, it becomes clear that, in its essence, Hezbollah is a protean power actor who does not hesitate to apply both hard and soft power to protect itself and achieve its goals. Hence, it practices *intimidation* and *adulation* power. This pattern of fluctuating between powers and combining between them will continue throughout the decade and beyond.

The Israeli Withdrawal in 2000

The 2000 brought a new high for Hezbollah, marked by the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon on May 25. During this decade, Hezbollah witnessed a surge in popularity among the Arab population, mainly after Israel withdrew from south Lebanon.[438] It appeared to the Arab people that Hezbollah was victorious and capable of doing what the Arab regimes failed to achieve. Hezbollah, through its agility and creativity, tried to gain structural dominance, mainly by capitalising on its popularity with the Arab population, significantly when Hezbollah contrasted its military victory with that of the Arab countries primarily because it did not involve direct negotiations with Israel, unlike other Arab states. The Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon gave Hezbollah a boost of self-esteem regarding its stand and image in the Arab world.

Hezbollah realised that accumulating and strategically deploying its capabilities was vital to wielding power. Through this power, it started achieving dominance in the Arab world, especially among the population. Due to the Israeli withdrawal, which Hezbollah perceived as a victory, it felt confident, and therefore, it experienced the world as risky and found itself operating in a risky environment; hence, it turned to exercise control power through affirmation. This was evident in believing that its strategies and actions through the '90s, which led to this withdrawal, could act as an established power template which could be used for probability calculations concerning future outcomes. Additionally, Hezbollah was aiming to achieve structural dominance in the Arab world by presenting its model of resistance as the method that the Arab people should follow to liberate their land. All of this was evident by urging the Palestinians to follow its lead to achieve victory. However, the type of power Hezbollah chose to deploy while addressing the Arab and Muslim population was that of soft power. This was evident in its motivational speeches, which have psychological effects, especially by emphasising that the age of humiliation is over.[439] Hence, Hezbollah was practising *exhortation* towards the Arab and Muslim populations after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

Therefore, Hezbollah came to capitalise on the Israeli withdrawal by turning its attention to the Palestinian people and their VNSAs, such as the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas. The armed political party saw it as its duty and part of its power to show the way for the Palestinians and lead them to some victories such as the one Hezbollah achieved. This position became clear in Hezbollah's secretary general victory speech after the Israeli withdrawal from the South in 2000. Nasrallah addressed the Palestinians, asserting that they can control their destiny and have the free will to reclaim their land

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[437] Nicholas Noe, "The Second Intifada", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 244-255, p. 244

[438] Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005)

[439] Nicholas Noe, "Victory, May 26, 2000", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 232-243, pp. 241-242

without the negotiations that will only provide them with some territories while depriving them of the rest of the land. Hence, Nasrallah concluded his address to the Palestinians by claiming that through resistance, they can help their families regain their homes with dignity and pride without appealing and pleading with anyone.[440]

On the other hand, Nasrallah also addressed the Arab and Muslim population by declaring that "humiliation, defeat, and shame are things of the past."[441] He continued asserting that Israel's withdrawal is a triumph that ushers in a new historical era. He urged the Arab and Muslim people to set aside their weaknesses, arm themselves with vigour and strength, set aside their hopelessness, and equip themselves with optimism. As for the Arab governments, Nasrallah made it clear in the victory speech that Hezbollah is against the normalisation attempts that the various Arab countries have been aiming for with Israel. According to Nasrallah, the minimum thing the Arab governments can do is to break off their relations with Israel and stop the process of normalisation.[442]

Therefore, when addressing the Arab and Muslim populations, Hezbollah's pattern of power was *exhortation*. In contrast, when addressing the Arab leaders, Hezbollah practices *intimidation* power against them, especially since Hezbollah's language becomes one of coercion. This new approach to the power exercised and applied will continue with the second major event in that period, the second intifada.

The Second Intifada

The second intifada occurred amid two different events. One was the peace talks between Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat in Egypt, and the other was the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. As for Hezbollah, its integrity, reputation and legitimacy in the Arab and Islamic world are linked to its struggle with Israel and its pledge to defend the Palestinian cause. Hence, the second intifada provided Hezbollah with a golden chance to continue its attack on the Arab leaders while appealing to the broader Arab population. Such an act demonstrated Hezbollah's patterns of power, mainly *exhortation* regarding its relationship with the Arab people and *intimidation* when it comes to the leaders.

Hence, Hezbollah finds it in its interest to address the Palestinians, urging them to fight and resist militarily rather than submitting to the enemy in negotiations.[443] Nasrallah presented Hezbollah's victory in Lebanon as a model for a successful resistance that the Palestinians should follow, asserting that it has offered Palestinians confidence that their resistance will eventually succeed in driving the Zionists out of the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.[444] In this atmosphere and just after the Second Intifada started, while Nasrallah was motivating the Palestinian people, he attacked the Arab leaders, considering them weak and traitors.[445]

However, while Hezbollah was attacking the Arab leaders and their peace process talks with Israel, it did not lose hope in the will and beliefs of the Arab people. Hence, Nasrallah turned to the Arab population in 2004, when reports in Israel were circulating that the "Jewish extremists were planning on demolishing

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[440] Noe, "Victory", pp. 241-242
[441] Noe, "Victory", p. 242
[442] Noe, "Victory", p. 242
[443] Noe, "The Second Intifada", p. 246
[444] Noe, "The Second Intifada", p. 246
[445] Noe, "The Second Intifada", p. 249

the sacred al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site, in Jerusalem."[446] Nasrallah penned a letter to the Arab and Muslim nations, which was published in several regional newspapers. In it, Nasrallah called upon the Arab and Muslim nations to consider the threat to the al-Aqsa Mosque with great gravity and take a historical stand that warns the adversary against contemplating such an action. Nasrallah stressed that the Arab and Muslim nations should make Israel, its government, and political parties realise that they are all accountable for any threat to the al-Aqsa Mosque. Nasrallah urged the nation to stop arguing about the method of resisting and which is the best way to protect Palestine and the holy sites. He admitted that everybody has their own language and style of doing things, and regardless of the difference in tactics, they should all defend their holy places. However, throughout the speech, it was noticed that the phrase "At the very least" kept emerging, which signalled a level of desperation.[447] This is because Nasrallah was not sure that the nation could rally and overcome its sectarian wounds and conflicting political interests to "at the very least" make the enemy "expect an intifada throughout the entire Arab and Muslim nation."[448]

Through these words and stands, it is evident that Hezbollah plans and calculates its pleas to the Arab and Muslim populations and that the type of power it applies is soft through a narration based on religious morality. Hezbollah practices *exhortation* on the Arab population because it is exercising control power while applying soft power. Hezbollah's control power during the second intifada resulted from what it saw as a victory in 2000. Therefore, Hezbollah felt that it had a tested strategy and a predictable template that the Arab population could apply to achieve victory, hence reflecting its dominant structure. On the other hand, the type of power Hezbollah applied to motivate the Arabs and urge them to follow its lead was based on soft power, mainly by exploiting religious rhetoric. Such a position will not change when the third significant event of this period happened, the US invasion of Iraq.

War on Iraq in 2003

Hezbollah's complex relationship with Iraq mirrors that of other Arab countries. While standing against the Ba'athist regime and its President Saddam Hussein, the armed political party stood next to the Iraqi people, mainly the Shia population, in their struggle against their oppressors. However, there was a main difference between the approaches of the Shia in Iraq and that of Hezbollah up till the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. Up to this point and after it, for a time, the Shia in Iraq did not mind allying with the US and seeking its protection. For instance, after the Gulf War of 1990-1991, when establishing a Shia protectorate in the South of Iraq was presented, Nasrallah made it clear that Hezbollah believed such an act by the American administration "is a form of sedition."[449]

With the US invasion of Iraq, Hezbollah restated its conviction that the US cannot be trusted and is an aggressive force occupying the land. Moreover, Hezbollah believed that the Muslims and Arabs would face a mighty power which, under democracy and liberty banners, would try to divide them among the Shia-Sunni fraction and that the Muslims in Iraq and around the region should not succumb to such

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[446] Nicholas Noe, "Letter to the Arab and Islamic Ummas, July 30, 2004", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 314-316, p. 314
[447] Noe, "Letter to the Arab", p. 315
[448] Noe, "Letter to the Arab", p. 315
[449] Nicholas Noe, "Hezbollah is not an Iranian Community in Lebanon, September 11, 1992", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 84-99, p. 98

attempts.[450] However, the aftermath of the US invasion and the following events showed that Hezbollah's hopes and confidence that the Shia and Sunnis would not fight each other did not materialise.

Due to Hezbollah's stand against Israel and its support for the Palestinian cause, it gained significant popularity among both the Sunnis and the Shias, especially after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. This victory allowed Hezbollah to experience the world as risky since it boosted the armed political party's control power, especially regarding its capabilities. However, on the eve of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, Hezbollah's environment was that of uncertainty since it lacked the knowledge of what was going to happen and how the events would unfold as uncertainty rendered probability calculation impossible. As a result of the emergent crisis, Hezbollah opted to improvise to save the unity between the Sunnis and the Shias, which, if shattered, would affect its popularity among the Sunnis. Its improvisation came in the form of urging unity among the two fractions in the hope of staying afloat in an increasingly unstable context. This was seen in a speech Nasrallah gave on Ashura day, two weeks after the fall of Baghdad, where he emphasised that all Muslims and Arabs "are now facing real occupation and real hegemony."[451] As a result, Nasrallah urged unity among Iraqis of all ethnicities and sects, emphasising that the media's incitement of Sunni and Shia sedition is a false narrative and a complete fabrication.[452]

However, Nasrallah's hopes and calls for Islamic unity would halt in the phase of the war that erupted between the Sunnis and the Shias in Iraq. Nasrallah addressed this destruction and killing, especially after the bombing attacks on Baghdad and Karbala on Ashura Day 2004. He claimed that although the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Mossad may have orchestrated the violence, it is also possible that an extremist "fanatic group that lives in the Middle Ages and has no brain, no heart, no religion, no morality, and yet claims to be Muslim" is to blame for these incidents.[453] Nasrallah's remarks were aimed at the radical Sunni military groups. Hence, Iraq's two factions entered a long period of bloodshed, opening the ongoing fight between the Sunnis and Shias.

Therefore, Hezbollah took the side of the Shia in Iraq, mainly through its support to the Mahdi army. Despite Hezbollah's denial of interference in Iraq and alleged instructions to its fighters not to interfere and back up any Iraqi faction, its influence is felt there. Muqtada al Sader, a Shia cleric and founder of the Mahdi Army, declared that he is considering establishing subdivisions of Hezbollah in Iraq.[454] A senior member of the Mahdi Army claimed that they were selecting 15,000 fighters to be trained by Hezbollah in Lebanon.[455] This fluctuation in Hezbollah's position regarding the situation in Iraq will provide insight into what will come in the years after the Arab Uprising. During the '90s, Hezbollah was seen as a defender of the oppressed in Iraq, standing against the regime and with the Iraqis. With the US invasion, the armed political party kept a hold on its position as a Muslim resistance for the entire Muslim and Arab nation, hence standing against the oppressor, in this case, the US and warning the Iraqis about the danger of slipping into a sectarian fight. However, when the sectarian bloodshed between the Sunnis

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[450] Nicholas Noe, "After Occupation, April 22, 2003", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 294-298

[451] Noe, "After Occupation", p. 294

[452] Noe, "After Occupation", p. 298

[453] Nicholas Noe, "They are a Group That 'Lives in the Middle Ages', March 2, 2004", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasralla*h (London: Verso, 2007), 310-313, p. 310

[454] Jeffery Gettleman, "The Struggle for Iraq: Unrest; A Young Radical's anti-U.S. Wrath Is Unleashed", *The New York Times* (April 5, 2004) https://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/05/world/the-struggle-for-iraq-unrest-a-young-radical-s-anti-us-wrath-is-unleashed.html

[455] Sharon Behn, "Iraqi Shi'ite Militia Ready to Join Fight", *The Washington Times* (July 24, 2006), https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2006/jul/24/20060724-122256-7766r/

and Shias surfaced, Hezbollah took sides with the Shia over the Sunnis, losing its reputation and position as a Muslim defender and protagonist.

Consequently, between 2000 and 2004, Hezbollah's patterns of power fluctuated between *exhortation*, *intimidation and adulation*. Initially, the group practised *intimidation* power towards Arab states (excluding Syria) during peace talks between Israel and the PLO and the second intifada. They employed coercive language to attack Arab leaders verbally and encouraged their populations, particularly the Palestinians, to rebel against the PLO. Conversely, Hezbollah practised *exhortation* towards the public, using psychological and religious rhetoric to rally support for its cause and encourage unity between Sunnis and Shias. However, this period ended with Hezbollah resorting to *intimidation* power towards those who opposed their stance and vision. When the Sunni-Shia conflict erupted in Iraq, Hezbollah backed the Shia militias without hesitation, setting a precedent for the following decade.

5.2.3. Hezbollah as a Pragmatic Actor between 2005 and 2010

The period between 2005 and 2010 was by no means a walk in the garden for Hezbollah. The armed political party faced severe attacks on its military wing and feared the survival of its existence, especially in the light of the UNSC resolution 1559 and the assassination of Rafic Hariri. All of this left Hezbollah in an environment of uncertainty, which the armed political party needed to navigate. Its relationship with the Arab countries and the Arab population will only act to assist or deter Hezbollah's power. Yet, the armed political party manoeuvred to secure its presence and continuity, all while elevating its popularity. Through four significant events in which Hezbollah was involved in that decade, the July War with Israel in 2006 and the Gaza War in 2008-2009, and its plot in Egypt besides the publication of its *New Manifesto* in 2009, Hezbollah's patterns of power will be deduced.

July War 2006

The July War, also known as the Second Lebanon War, began when Hezbollah abducted two Israeli soldiers in the disputed Shebaa Farms on July 12, 2006, which led to a 34-day conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.[456] This war had several aspects. Firstly, there were rumours that Israel, with American and Saudi support, was planning to attack Hezbollah even before the abduction.[457] Secondly, the Arab countries were divided in their support for Hezbollah, with the population generally in favour while the countries themselves stood against it. Finally, much debate was over which side emerged victorious, with no consensus among the Arab countries or their people.[458] These factors highlight the uncertain environment in which Hezbollah was operating. Thus, Hezbollah displayed its protean power by catching Israel, the Arab world, and Lebanon off guard when it ambushed an Israeli military convoy and took IDF soldiers hostage. This demonstrated Hezbollah's agility and capability to navigate through uncertain environments. However, the type of power it applied to exercise its protean power was that of hard power, as evidenced by the military nature of the attack and the subsequent war that ensued. In this conflict, Hezbollah engaged Israel in military combat and politically challenged pro-Western Arab countries and

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[456] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents,* pp. 168-169

[457] Seymour Hersh, "Watching Lebanon", *The New Yorker*, (August 21, 2006), https://web.archive.org/web/20140718025823/http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/08/21/060821fa_fact

[458] Benedetta Berti, "The Ongoing Battle for Beirut: Old Dynamics and New Trends", *Institute for National Security Studies*, Memorandum No. 111 (December 2011), p. 67

the Lebanese government loyal to the West. As a result, the pattern of power practised during this stage was *intimidation*.

To understand the political dynamics unfolding during the war, it is essential to comprehend the geopolitical context within which it took place and under which political background. The period in which this war took place was one of high tension in the region, especially since it was at the height of the implementation of the Bush administration's vision of the *New Middle East*.[459] Thus, the region was boiling between two blocks before the war commenced. One, known as the *axis of evil*, comprised Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas, and the other was the *Arab Moderate Regimes*, which encompassed Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan.[460] This division embodied within it a deep political and religious hostility with a geopolitical effect, mainly the domination over the Middle East. While the US was trying to strengthen the moderate Arab regime's positions and, through it, protect Israel's security, Iran was pushing its hegemonic agenda forward in an attempt to dominate the region or at least create instability and uncertainty in it. Hence, before the war started, the tension in the region was high, and the sectarian narration was the dominant factor. For instance, the Jordanian King Abdullah coined the alliance between Iran, Syria and Hezbollah as "the Shiite crescent."[461] Thus, it was inevitable that the July War fell within this narration.

While fighting a war with Israel, Hezbollah was engaging in a fearful verbal fight with the *Arab Moderate Regimes*, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, who accused Hezbollah of being reckless and adventurous, whose irrational actions would drive the region into chaos and destruction. During the emergency Arab League summit meeting held in Cairo to discuss the ongoing war, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and other Gulf states criticised Hezbollah for its "unexpected, inappropriate and irresponsible acts."[462] Hence, Hezbollah's kidnapping of the soldiers was seen as an adventurous risk taken on behalf of Iran to undermine the region and advance its interests. Such narration was endorsed by Saudi Arabia and spread through its media outlets.[463] Moreover, Saudi Arabia tried to capitalise on the war by supporting its allies in Lebanon in the face of Hezbollah on the domestic level. Hence, Saudi Arabia uttered a firm condemnation of Hezbollah's activities, stating that "a distinction must be made between legitimate resistance and uncalculated adventures undertaken by elements inside [Lebanon] and those behind them without recourse to the legal authorities."[464] Through this act, Saudi Arabia was trying to detach Lebanon from Hezbollah's activities and blame it all on the armed political actor. This was evident when it announced that since the Lebanese government cannot enforce its sovereignty on Hezbollah, the latter could work for the interest of Iran and against the interest of Lebanon. However, the most significant movement that Saudi Arabia took against Hezbollah was its attempt to establish an ad hoc Arab force, supported by NATO and the US, to take Hezbollah down.[465] It was even later claimed that Saudi Arabia wrote to Tel Aviv pleading with it to unleash full force on Hezbollah.[466] This led Nasrallah

[459] Haass, "The New Middle East", pp. 2-11

[460] Berti, "The Ongoing", p. 67

[461] May Darwich, *Threats and Alliances in the Middle East: Saudi and Syrian Policies in a Turbulent Region* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 94.

[462] Hassan M. Fattah, Militia Rebuked by Some Arab Countries, *New York Times*, (July 17, 2006), https://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/17/world/middleeast/17arab.html

[463] Darwich, *Threats and Alliances*, p. 94.

[464] Al-Jazeera News, *Saudi Sideswipe at Hezbollah*, (July 14, 2006), https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2006/7/14/saudi-sideswipe-at-hezbollah

[465] Berti, "The Ongoing Battle", p. 67

[466] Middle East Monitor, *Saudi Supported Israel Against Hezbollah During 2006 War*, (February 16, 2019), https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190216-saudi-supported-israel-against-hezbollah-during-2006-war/

to declare years later that Saudi Arabia was the one who killed us in the July 2006 war, and it is the one responsible for all the killings in the region.[467]

At the time, the Arab regimes mentioned above were attacking Hezbollah, claiming that the Arab people were sick of being held hostages in the name of fighting Israel.[468] The reality of the Arab public opinion could not be further from that rhetoric. The Arab countries witnessed vast demonstrations of people protesting against Israel's attack and in support of Hezbollah. In Iraq, as well as in Yemen and even Egypt, people took to the streets to express their solidarity with Hezbollah and its leader, Hassan Nasrallah. Demonstrators in Cairo were chanting, "Tell Nasrallah we are all Hezbollah."[469] The armed political party's actions brought the people's support. Hezbollah's audacity in confronting Israel's military, the strongest in the region, revived the Arab street, which was shut out of the decision-making process in the region.[470] This wave of support resulted from Hezbollah's military operations and Nasrallah's persona and public behaviour, placing him at a considerable advantage over other Arab leaders.[471]

Eventually, the war ended with the passage of UNSC Resolution 1701, which the US and Saudi Arabia backed. The resolution aimed for the Lebanese government to take control over southern Lebanon, limit Hezbollah's activities there, and push it away from the blue line. However, the motion to undermine the armed political party's legitimacy in Lebanon and that of its supporters, Syria and Iran, never developed. However, Hezbollah was not affected by the resolution as it did not adhere to it. Also, the war failed to weaken the armed political party, who emerged with a victorious narration and claims, determined to take control of the Lebanese government and cut the wings of Saudi Arabia's influence in the country. Hence, Hezbollah started an offensive attack on the Saudi-backed Siniora government, where five ministers who belonged to Hezbollah and Amal resigned from the cabinet. Additionally, Hezbollah and its allies started a sit-in camp outside Prime Minister Fouad Siniora's office in central Beirut in an open-ended campaign to topple the government.[472] Ultimately, Hezbollah's actions plunged the country into eighteen months of political paralysis. This was a blow that Hezbollah gave to Saudi Arabia and its allies in their attempt to counter Iran and control the region.[473]

Therefore, within this context, Hezbollah's claim of a "divine victory" can be understood despite the massive causalities and destructions.[474] Moreover, Hezbollah's ground for such a claim comes from the fact that the war could not destroy Hezbollah or weaken it. On the contrary, Hezbollah emerged unscathed, especially regarding its image and reputation in the Arab world. As Mathew Levitt puts it,

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[467] Wafiq Kansou, "Nasrallah Attacks Saudi Arabia: It is the one who killed us in July 2006 War", *Lebanese Forces Website*, (October 7, 2015), https://www.lebanese-forces.com/2015/10/07/nasrallah-21/#google_vignette

[468] Berti, "The Ongoing Battle", p. 67

[469] Al-Jazeera News, *Arab Street Rallies Behind Hezbollah*, (August 1, 2006) https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2006/8/1/arab-street-rallies-behind-hezbollah

[470] Al-Jazeera News, *Arab Street*

[471] Neil MacFarquhar, "Tide of Arab Opinion Turns to Support for Hezbollah", *New York Times*, (July 28, 2006), https://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/28/world/middleeast/28arabs.html

[472] Moqawama Website, *Nasrallah`s Speech On The Invitation To Participate In An Open Sit-In in Beirut*, Archived September 28, 2007, at the Wayback Machine https://web.archive.org/web/20070928202330/http://www.moqawama.org/english/_amen222.php?filename=20061130180624026

[473] Berti, "The Ongoing Battle, pp. 67-68

[474] Wilson Center, *Hezbollah's Record on War & Politics*, (October 25, 2023), https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/hezbollahs-record-war-politics

"People were impressed that [Hezbollah] stuck a finger in Israel's eye and lived to tell the tale."[475] Eventually, the war was a testament to Hezbollah's *intimidation* power that it practised on Israel and, behind it, the moderate Arab regimes.

The actions and stands taken by the Arab regimes, their people and Hezbollah during the July War in 2006 will be played again a couple of years later when Israel will come to launch a war on Gaza in 2008. Hezbollah will practice a slightly different form of power during the Gaza War.

The Gaza War 2008-2009

Israel launched Operation Cast Lead on Gaza between December 2008 and January 2009 to cut Hamas's wings and stop it from launching rockets into Israel. While the military war raged between the Israelis and Hamas, a war of words and accusations of irrationality and betrayal was raging among various Arab countries and factions. Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Palestinian Authority criticised Hamas's actions and held them responsible for the conflict, whereas Syria and Hezbollah supported the group. On the other hand, the Arab population was exposed to propaganda from both sides. Moreover, during the conflict, Hezbollah's support for Hamas became apparent, and its hostile relationship with countries like Egypt was exposed. While Hezbollah provided unconditional support to Hamas, it attacked the Egyptian government vehemently in a demonstration of its agility and the practice of its *intimidation* and *exhortation* powers.[476]

Although Hezbollah did not intervene militarily during the Gaza War in 2008/2009, it stood firm next to Hamas. Throughout the war, Hezbollah maintained unceasing communication with Hamas. On the other hand, Hamas benefited from Hezbollah's training in tactics to launch rockets and attack Merkava tanks.[477] Additionally, Hezbollah helped Hamas by launching a media campaign to support Hamas and mobilise the Arab world. The propaganda that Hezbollah perpetrated aimed to reframe the narration of what was happening in Gaza, especially regarding the outcome of the war. In this context, Nasrallah claimed that the war that Israel is launching on Gaza is aimed at the Palestinian people and not at Hamas and that this is another phase of Israel's racist attacks on the Palestinians. Additionally, in its attempt to boost Hamas's position and help it achieve its goal, Hezbollah justified the division among the various Palestinian factions within Gaza as not due to Hamas's ideological, religious and intellectual background; instead, it has to do with the choice of resistance. In other words, Nasrallah was claiming that any group that opposes Hamas is, in essence, opposing the resistance of the enemy and siding with it against the oppressed Palestinian people.[478]

Thus, it was natural that Hezbollah would enter into a conflict with moderate Arab countries over their stand on the situation in Gaza, defying them openly and chastising their "suspicious silence."[479] However, Nasrallah launched the most significant verbal attack on Egypt. Nasrallah urged the Egyptian authorities to open the Rafah Crossing. He even went as far as to address the Egyptians, asking them to exert pressure on their government, a movement which Mubarak's administration saw as a call for a rebellion, accusing

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[475] Wilson Center, *Hezbollah's Record*

[476] Benedetta Berti "Assessing the Role of Hezbollah in the Gaza War and Its Regional Impact", *Terrorism Monitor* vol. 7, no. 4, reposted by The Jamestown Foundation Global Research and Analysis, (March 2009), https://jamestown.org/program/assessing-the-role-of-hezbollah-in-the-gaza-war-and-its-regional-impact/

[477] Berti "Assessing the Role"

[478] Berti "Assessing the Role"

[479] Berti "Assessing the Role"

Hezbollah of being an Iranian proxy aiming at changing regimes and modelling the republics on Iran's image and lines.[480] Hezbollah, in its turn, denounced the Egyptian accusation, declaring that the armed political party only supports the oppressed over the oppressor and that the Palestinian cause is the title of such a fight. Moreover, Hezbollah did not spare Saudi Arabia, whom it attacked by issuing statements in which the armed political party questioned the Saudi's involvement and its peace initiative.[481]

Even though it did not participate militarily, Hezbollah made a significant political investment in the Gaza War by launching a massive media campaign in support of Hamas, which changed the entire narrative of the conflict and increased political tensions within the Arab world by undermining the influence of important moderate Arab regimes like Egypt. Hezbollah's position on Egypt can be understood in the context of Iran's continuous efforts to tip the scales in the region, thereby seeking to degrade Egypt's standing in the region and the legitimacy of the Egyptian government. This is evidence of Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* against the Arab world. However, Hezbollah effectively practised *exhortation* power to mobilise and encourage the Arab population to rebel against their regimes and fight against Israel. This strategy was accomplished by combining control power with soft power. Having previously achieved victory against Israel during the July 2006 war, Hezbollah believed that the Arab population could also achieve victory by applying their tested strategy of fighting. To communicate this message, they employed soft power through religious rhetoric, which had a powerful psychological impact on the population. It is important to note, however, that while Hezbollah practised *exhortation* on the Arab population, its pattern of power remained *intimidation*, which they directed towards Arab regimes, as evidenced by their actions against Egypt, which will be discussed in the following subsection.

The 2009 Hezbollah's Plot in Egypt

The July War in 2006 and the Gaza 2008/2009 war left the region in deep turmoil. These two events and the Arab Summit that followed in March 2009 at Doha, Qatar, reflected the atmosphere of the Cold War that was raging among the Arabs. On the one hand, there were the moderate pro-Western states, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, battling against Iranian allies such as Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas. The conflict was between two rival regional visions: one preaching development and coexistence, while the other was championing the choice of resistance. Their Cold War battle was carried out on the Lebanese, Palestinian and Iraqi lands.[482] Within this context, Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* power can be seen especially in its activities in Egypt, aiming at both the Egyptian government and the Israelis.

It all came to light when the authorities in Egypt declared on April 8 that they had apprehended several Hezbollah operatives in the Sinai last November. As per Egyptian sources, the captured 49-person Hezbollah cell, comprising 2 Syrians and 13 Lebanese nationals, was planning to launch an assault on Israeli tourists at beach resorts in Sinai.[483] Moreover, the prosecution charged the operatives with establishing a surveillance network to monitor shipping movements in the Suez Canal.[484] As a result, the tension between Egypt and Hezbollah reached a boiling point. The President back then, Hosni Mubarak,

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[480] Berti "Assessing the Role"

[481] Berti "Assessing the Role"

[482] David Schenker, "The Pharaoh Strikes Back: Egypt vs. Hezbollah", *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, (May 11, 2009), https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/pharaoh-strikes-back-egypt-vs-hezbollah

[483] David Schenker, "The Pharaoh"

[484] Wajdi Bou Khaled, "Egyptian Media Says Hizbullah Cell Planned Bombings in Taba", *The Daily Star*, Archived from the original on (March 9, 2011) https://web.archive.org/web/20110309145543/http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&categ_id=2&article_id=101337#axzz1G79x3bRX

accused Hezbollah and Iran of aiming to "impose their influence on [the] Arab world."[485] He went on to warn Hezbollah and Iran of "Egypt's wrath."[486] Furthermore, the Egyptian daily Al-Ahram asserted that Qatar, Syria, and Iran were collaborating to topple the Egyptian government.[487] Egypt even summoned the Iranian envoy to protest Hezbollah's actions and to warn Iran from meddling in Arab affairs.[488]

However, Hezbollah did not shy away from admitting that this cell belongs to it. On the contrary, Nasrallah capitalised on the situation, claiming that in contrast to what Egypt claimed, the cell was not planning to attack Egyptian territory but rather was smuggling weapons and explosives to Hamas in Gaza. Hezbollah once more sheltered in the Palestinian cause, with Nasrallah declaring that "if aiding the Palestinians is a crime, then I am proud of it."[489] Nasrallah went further to assert that the Egyptian claims that Hezbollah was carrying a terrorist plot were made in retaliation for remarks made by Hezbollah during the Gaza War. According to Hezbollah, Egypt is out to "damage Hezbollah's reputation" through its fabrications.[490]

Hezbollah's actions and the resulting tension with Egypt display its impressive adaptability where it exercised protean power and applied hard. Its ability to operate in uncertain environments and expand beyond its typical sphere in Lebanon to operate in Egypt was a clear demonstration of its protean power. Additionally, the surprise it brought to its adversary further highlights its agility and strategic prowess. Thus, Hezbollah was practising *intimidation* power to gain structural dominance over the region, hence being able to conduct control power and operate in an environment of certainty it creates. However, to do so, Hezbollah needed its protean power, sometimes accompanied by hard and soft power, as will be seen in the last Hezbollah action of this period.

New Manifesto 2009

In light of Hezbollah's domestic and regional challenges since 2005, it produced a *New Manifesto* in 2009 highlighting its central political and ideological stands. This *New Manifesto* testified to Hezbollah's pragmatism and ability to adjust. In it, the armed political party refrained from attacking the Arab regimes directly. Instead, it aimed to stress two significant issues that face the Arab world—the Shia-Sunni struggle, the issue of Palestine, and the negotiations with Israel in a straightforward practice of *adulation* power.

In the *New Manifesto*, Hezbollah emphasised the pressing need to resolve conflicts among Arab nations. They particularly highlighted the growing sectarian tensions between Sunnis and Shias, which posed a threat to social unity in Arab societies. To address this issue, Hezbollah urged Arab governments to avoid enacting policies that target specific groups or participating in external initiatives that could fuel sectarianism and division. According to Hezbollah, such actions only serve to further American and

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[485] Haaretz, *Mubarak to Hezbollah: Beware of Egypt's Wrath*, (April 23, 2009) https://www.haaretz.com/2009-04-23/ty-article/mubarak-to-hezbollah-beware-of-egypts-wrath/0000017f-db57-d3ff-a7ff-fbf793090000

[486] Haaretz, *Mubarak to Hezbollah*

[487] Yoav Stern, "Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah Tried to Overthrow Egypt's Mubarak", *Haaretz*, (19 April 2009) https://www.haaretz.com/2009-04-18/ty-article/egypt-state-daily-iran-hamas-hezbollah-tried-to-overthrow-mubarak/0000017f-e759-dc7e-adff-f7fd47f30000

[488] AFP, *Egypt Summons Iran Envoy Over Hezbollah Spat*, Archived from the original on (April 28, 2009), http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hUErcuTPwqqAVNnXhoqJ_upyxgHA

[489] David Schenker, "The Pharaoh Strikes Back: Egypt vs Hezbollah", *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, (May 11, 2009), https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/pharaoh-strikes-back-egypt-vs-hezbollah

[490] BBC News, *Hezbollah Alleges Egypt Vendetta*, (April 15, 2009) http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/8000427.stm

Zionist interests and drain the nation's resources. Instead, they advocated for a political strategy focused on containing conflicts and preventing discord from escalating into open conflict.[491]

Moreover, Hezbollah, in the *New Manifesto*, did not neglect the issue of Palestine and the struggle with Israel. The armed political party once more declared its stance against any form of negotiations with Israel. As a result, it urged the Arab leaders to reevaluate the negotiation option and pledge themselves to their people's choices. Hezbollah demanded that the Arab regimes who signed peace treaties or entered into a form of agreement or deal with Israel should examine the results of these agreements and entirely give up on the illusion of peace with Israel.[492]

On the other hand, after publishing the *New Manifesto*, Nasrallah held a press conference on November 30, 2009, in which he talked about the situation in Yemen back then and the conflict between the then President Ali Abdallah Saleh and the Houthis. Nasrallah refused the allegations that Hezbollah is arming, training and fighting with the Houthis. He said that Hezbollah is ready to act as a mediator in case it was asked to, urging Saudi Arabia, the Yemeni government and the Houthis to work together to halt this bleeding, which is in no one's interest, and not to escalate the situation further.[493] This position aligns with Hezbollah's attempt to bridge the sectarian rift and present itself in a new light far from military combats.

Eventually, between 2005 and 2010, Hezbollah faced unprecedented challenges in an environment of uncertainty. Whether it was the diplomatic attempts to disarm it and cut its wings through UNSC Resolutions 1559 and 1701 or through launching a war, Hezbollah stood the test and did not weaken. This is a testament to Hezbollah's protean power, mainly its agility and ability to innovate and improvise, which was evident in initiating the attack on Israel in July 2006 and taking the world by surprise or through its tension with Egypt, where the armed political party did not hesitate to use the Egyptian land for its gains. Even Hezbollah's *New Manifesto* is a testament to its agility and ability to adapt by changing its rhetoric and language to fit the context of its work. Additionally, Hezbollah resolved to apply both types of power, hard and soft, in its actions. This meant that the armed political party was practising *intimidation* with its enemies and *adulation* with the Arab population.

Nonetheless, Hezbollah also exercised control power in this period, especially during the Gaza war, where its actions and stands reflected a carefully calculable risk. Along with its usage of soft power, Hezbollah exercised control power mainly in its interaction with the Arab population. This combination resulted in Hezbollah's pattern of power *exhortation*. Control power was seen in Hezbollah's careful calculation of the risk of opening a full-scale war with Israel. As a result, they restricted their show of solidarity with Hamas by launching some rockets into Israel. Moreover, the sense of victory the armed political party felt after the July 2006 war enabled it to operate in a context of risk where it could manoeuvre based on risk assessments. This allowed Hezbollah to trust that it had a strategy to defeat Israel and, as such, a predictable template which the Arab population could follow. Hence, Hezbollah felt a sense of structural dominance and decided to mobilise the people. To do so, it opted for *exhortation*, a combo of control and soft power. Hezbollah applied soft power by employing religious rhetoric that resonated deeply with the Arab people and had a significant psychological influence to mobilise the population.

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[491] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 129
[492] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 136
[493] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 146

In brief, Hezbollah's position and reputation in the Arab world amplified mainly among the people after the July War and the 2008-2009 Gaza War. This popularity surged by the beginning of the 2010s when the armed political party stood next to the protestors during the Arab Uprising, defending them and attacking their oppressors. However, this popularity will not last once the wave of change touches the Syrian shore, prompting Hezbollah to take drastic measures that place its integrity, reputation, popularity, interest and even existence at stake, as seen in the final period.

5.2.4. Hezbollah Repositioning between 2011 and 2020

The 2000s saw Hezbollah's popularity among the Arab people increase, and its 2009 manifesto promised a new era with the Arab countries.[494] However, the last decade has proven to undo all that proceeded.[495] The decade, which is best known as the Arab Uprising decade, saw Hezbollah being involved in civil wars and sectarian conflicts, prompting a decrease in its popularity among the Arab population. This period is essential not only for examining Hezbollah's patterns of power but also for examining its pragmatism. This will be clear by exploring two main phases in that decade: The Arab Uprising and the civil wars which sprouted in several countries.

The Arab world entered a new era in 2011, which sounded promising initially, so it was named Arab Spring. However, the hope that this popular movement would bring peace, democracy and prosperity faded after several revolutions turned into civil wars. Hence, the more appropriate name, Arab Uprising, came to be. The uprisings brought the most significant transformation in the MENA since decolonisation. It started in Tunisia in December 2010 and expanded to many Arab countries. By the end of February 2012, the Tunisian, Egyptian, Libyan and Yemeni long-time dictators had been thrown out of office. Bahrain witnessed massive civil uprisings that were about to thrust the country into civil war and endanger the monarchy if it was not for Saudi interference. Syria entered a period of civil unrest, which later grew into a long civil war. Furthermore, Morocco, Algeria, Sudan, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait and Oman witnessed noteworthy protests. Even Saudi Arabia was not immune when minor protests arose.[496]

This period, with repercussions still visible today and dominating the political dynamics in the MENA, found Hezbollah amid its discourse, not as a peripheral player but as a major dealbreaker. Nevertheless, this uprising will cast Hezbollah in a new light, thrusting this armed political party into the wilderness of regional politics and military involvement. The Arab Uprising will bring Hezbollah to highs and lows on a scale that this VNSA has never experienced. Above all, it transforms Hezbollah in the eyes of the Arab people from viewing the armed political party as a defender of the oppressed to a protector of the oppressor.[497] Furthermore, it will strip the armed political party of what was left of Muslim unity around it, leaving it as a Shia militia rather than an Islamic resistance. By the decade's end, reputation-wise, Hezbollah would end where it started, as a Shia militia protecting itself and its interests. However, on the ground, Hezbollah emerged more prominent and more robust than before, significantly after it interfered in the Syrian Civil War, which enabled it to gain further structural dominance in the Levant, a step which Hezbollah always aspired for in its attempt to reach control power.

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[494] Simon Haddad, "The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, vol.29, no.1 (2006), 21-34

[495] Eric Lob, "Is Hezbollah Confronting a Crisis of Popular Legitimacy?" *Middle East Brief*, no. 78 (March 2014), 1-8

[496] Mark L. Haas and David W. Lesch, *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings* (Routledge, 2016)

[497] Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face*

At the beginning of the uprisings, Hezbollah, as the defender of the oppressed, took its natural position with the protestors against the dictators and their regimes.[498] However, the armed political party did not show its support immediately after the protests; instead, it waited until the protestors took hold of the ground. Nasrallah, who was speaking at a rally in Beirut in support of the Egyptian Revolution, justified such actions by asserting that the regime would have claimed that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, Hezbollah, or Hamas cells were the ones driving the revolution if Hezbollah had declared its support for the revolution sooner. Thus, this authentic, pioneering, and nationalistic movement would be charged with furthering an international agenda.[499]

However, Hezbollah did not fail to capitalise on the demonstrations engulfing the Arab World. The armed political party saw in these uprisings a genuine representation of the will of the Arab and Muslim masses, who reject corrupt and illegitimate autocracies that they believe are controlled by Israel and the US and instead pursue social, political, and economic justice.[500] The VNSA tried to wave its narration into what it considered another episode in the resistance struggle against Israel and the US. Nasrallah made that clear while addressing the Egyptian opposition by declaring that what they do is extremely important. It represents one of the significant turning points in Egypt and the region's history. Nasrallah added that the Egyptian protestors' actions and success will completely transform the region to serve the needs of its people, particularly those of Palestine.[501] Significantly, the collapse of the Mubarak regime, a long-standing adversary of Hezbollah, was viewed as a triumph for the principles and goals this VNSA represents and fights for. Nasrallah stressed this in his speech at a rally commemorating Hezbollah's deceased leader. He pointed out a historical coincidence: the day Mubarak stepped down coincided with the anniversary of the Iranian Revolution victory in 1979, a symbolic alignment of events.[502] The mention of such a coincidence highlighted Hezbollah's hope that the Islamists would gain the upper hand in Egypt post-Mubarak and move away from the Western orbit.

Nasrallah, who supported the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions in his way, which fits Hezbollah's narrations and interest, did not shy away from expressing his support and enthusiasm for the events unfolding in Libya, Bahrain and Yemen. In a televised speech, Nasrallah voiced solidarity with the Arab people and their heroic uprisings and sacrifices, claiming that this solidarity has moral, political, and ethical worth. Nasrallah claimed that Egypt and Tunisia had achieved a great victory. On the other hand, Hezbollah blamed the regimes in Bahrain and Yemen for driving their people to the verge of civil war. Moreover, Nasrallah asserted at the time that due to the Libyan regime's acts, the country already descended into civil war.[503]

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[498] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Celebration of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples* (March 19, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6684 (Translated from Arabic)

[499] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Sint-in in Solidarity with Egypt* (February 7, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6744 (Translated from Arabic)

[500] Chris Zambelis, "Solidarity in Resistance: Middle East Revolutions Strengthen Hezbollah", *Terrorism Monitor*, vol. IX, no. 13, (April 1, 2011), reposted by The Jamestown Foundation, https://jamestown.org/program/solidarity-in-resistance-middle-east-revolutions-strengthen-hezbollah/

[501] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Sint-in in Solidarity with Egypt*, (February 7, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6744 (Translated from Arabic)

[502] Zambelis, "Solidarity in Resistance"

[503] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Celebration of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples*, (March 19, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6684 (Translated from Arabic)

Furthermore, there were multiple reasons and issues that Hezbollah cared about and struggled for in Bahrain.[504] The Sunni monarchy, led by King Hamad ibn Issa al-Khalifa and backed by the US and Saudi Arabia, ruled over a Shia majority of Bahraini citizens. Additionally, Iran has historically been in dispute with the Arabs over ownership of the small island. As a result, when the deprived and discriminated Shia Bahraini people took to the streets to demand social, economic, and political rights, Hezbollah and Iran perceived an opening to overthrow the regime and potentially gain an edge in their ongoing rivalry with the US and its ally, Saudi Arabia by backing the demonstrators.[505] Through this background, Nasrallah's position could be understood, especially when he defended the protests in Bahrain, claiming that despite the non-violent nature of the protests and the fact that they were not endangering the Bahraini regime, the latter chose to deploy its army against the demonstrators. Nasrallah even went further to compare the Bahraini army's act with that of the IDF, especially after demolishing the houses of the opposition leaders after their arrest.[506] Moreover, Nasrallah did not shy away from addressing the sectarian narration that dominated the media campaign against the protests in Bahrain and influenced the Arab public opinion. As a result, he asked several rhetorical questions to the Arab and Muslim world who stood silent in front of the injustice that the Bahrainis were facing: "Why stay silent about these peaceful protests or condemn their movements? Is it because they are Shia? If someone in a country belonged to a certain sect, should he be relieved of his human rights?"[507] The argument that Nasrallah used, which claimed that the Arab and Muslim worlds were being selective, choosing to support one revolution and not the other, was directed towards him a few months later when the uprisings in Syria started.

Furthermore, Hezbollah had another front to defend: Yemen, which, like Bahrain, carried enormous geopolitical and geostrategic importance for Iran. Nevertheless, since the uprising to topple Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh was still in its early stages, Nasrallah shied from full support and commitment. Instead, he declared that "in Yemen, there are many complications, but no doubt that we cannot be silent about the murder and crimes occurring. We salute the resistance of the Yemeni people and their commitment to the peacefulness of their movement."[508] It is worth mentioning that Hezbollah's position in Yemen will intensify, and the VNSA will immerse itself in the yet-to-start Yemeni Civil War.

Therefore, when the Arab Uprising started, it was thought that Hezbollah, who backed the protesters, would move from accomplishments to success and victory to hegemony. However, this prediction would be proved wrong after the Syrian Uprising. When the wave of discontent and rebellion reached Syria, Hezbollah showed its pragmatic face. Rather than siding with the oppressed, the armed political party chose to stand with the oppressor regime, its long-time faithful ally. Suddenly, the Arab Uprising, seen as a positive force for Hezbollah, became a challenge and danger. According to its narration, the armed political party tried to stir the demonstrations, hoping the demonstrators would rally around its vision, but the Syrian Uprising struck. Hence, rather than planning for a new era in the Middle East where Hezbollah and Iran would dominate, the VNSA faced an existential threat which could only be fought with considerable expense.

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[504]Mitchell Belfer and Khalid Alshaikh, "Iran's Clandestine War on the Kingdom of Bahrain: Saraya al Ashtar and the Military Wing of Hezbollah Bahrain", *Dirasat*, no.41, (Riyadh: King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, 2019)

[505] Ala'a Shehabi and Marc Owen Jones, *Bahrain's Uprising: Resistance and Repression in the Gulf* (London: Zed Books, 2015)

[506] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Celebration of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples*, (March 19, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6684 (Translated from Arabic)

[507] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Celebration of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples*, (March 19, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6684 (Translated from Arabic)

[508] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *Speech of Sayyed Nasrallah at the Celebration of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples*, (March 19, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6684 (Translated from Arabic)

When the Syrian Uprising started, it forced Hezbollah to reconsider its position on supporting the popular movements. The Syrian protests brought Hezbollah into direct conflict with its well-preserved, well-managed and well-invented image of defending the oppressed, fighting injustice and being the symbol of Arab and Muslim unity with the Palestinian cause at its heart. Hezbollah was unable to adopt and utilise the Syrian uprising to further its narrative. On the contrary, its narration and the only element left for Hezbollah, the Palestinian cause, will serve to defend the oppressor. As will be seen from the beginning, Hezbollah stood with the Assad regime, supporting its President Bashar. This position will only escalate in the coming months and years to witness Hezbollah's open fight in Syria to keep the Assad regime and preserve Hezbollah's existence.

Hezbollah's fluctuating position on the Arab uprising can be traced through the VNSA Television channel, Al-Manar. While Hezbollah's TV station broadcasted images and news that supported the protestors in Egypt and Tunisia, it attacked the protestors in Syria while defending the Assad regime by claiming that the protestors in Syria were without genuine complaints and that they were agents linked to outside countries.[509] These ostensible double standards were evident in the reporter's selective interviews, footage editing, and emphasis on certain facts over others.[510] For example, when Manar TV reporters visited Syria, they spoke with people who supported the regime, saying things like "this is normal life," "there's nothing wrong," and "there are a few troublemakers—Israeli and American agents trying to stir trouble here and there—but, thank God, Assad had restored stability to the country."[511] Additionally, Al-Manar was decisive in its support of the regime. It spread stories about how foreign countries were supporting the protestors. To enhance its claims, the TV showed images of what it claimed to be confiscated weapons smuggled from the neighbouring countries. Also, it exhibited pictures of the dead Syrian soldiers defending their land, according to Al-Manar, while presenting the protestors as destructive forces who do not have genuine complaints.[512]

Hezbollah's inconsistency regarding backing the protestors is linked to the armed political party's political affiliations and relations. It is not a secret that Hezbollah had one of the worst relationships with the Mubarak regime in Egypt. Hezbollah saw the regime as a Western puppet protecting the US and Israeli interests. The Mubarak administration viewed Hezbollah as an Islamic extremist group with a suspicious agenda and connections aiming at destroying the moderate regimes in the Arab World. Thus, it is unsurprising that Hezbollah stood against the regime and supported the protests.[513] The Egyptian case applies to all the other Arab countries except Syria. The Assad regime was Hezbollah's backbone, shelter and defender. Hence, it is only natural that Hezbollah will rally its forces to defend Syria. By supporting the Assad regime, Hezbollah was defending its very existence, and by protecting the regime, Hezbollah was protecting its interests. However, Hezbollah's handling of the Syrian uprisings, which contrasted widely with its position on the rest of the Arab uprisings, is an ominous sign of what will come for the armed political party.[514] While Hezbollah stood with the regime in Syria, it kept supporting the uprisings against the pro-Western regimes elsewhere in the Arab world, mainly Yemen and Bahrain.[515]

[509] Margaret Besheer, "Hezbollah Supportive of Egyptian, Tunisian Uprisings but Not Syria's", *VOANEWS*, (May 19, 2011), https://www.voanews.com/a/hezbollah-supportive-of-egyptian-tunisian-uprisings-but-not-syrias-122348949/172965.html

[510] Besheer, "Hezbollah Supportive"

[511] Besheer, "Hezbollah Supportive"

[512] Besheer, "Hezbollah Supportive"

[513] Benedetta Berti, "Hizb Allah's Position on the Arab Spring", *CTC Sentinel*, vol.4, no.6 (June 2011),

[514] Adham Saouli, "Hizbullah, Hamas, and the Arab Uprisings: Structures, Threats, and Opportunities", *Orient*, vol.54, no.2, (2013), 37-43

[515] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, During the March on the Tenth Day of Muharram, (October 24, 2015), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=14184 (Translated from Arabic)

The outcomes of the Arab uprising were not what Hezbollah wished for. After the Muslim Brotherhood captured power in Egypt, a military coup occurred. Egypt again fell under the West's orbit and its Gulf allies, mainly the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. The protests in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, primarily led by their respective Shia population, were defeated by the regimes' forces. The protests in Morocco, Algeria, Jordan and Palestine did not translate into significant changes. Libya, Yemen and Syria entered a long period of civil war, which is still raging. Hezbollah's attention, efforts, tactics, and actions focused primarily on Syria, but Yemen will become increasingly important in the coming years. Through Hezbollah's stand in the Yemeni war, it clashed with Saudi Arabia and the UAE openly. With its involvement in Syria, it clashed with several Arabic, Islamic and regional forces. As the decade proceeded, Hezbollah became more politically and militarily tangled in the particularities of the Arab countries. This involvement will be a double-edged sword for the armed political party, which will risk its reputation in the Arab and Islamic World to preserve its interests.

Therefore, during the Arab Uprising, Hezbollah strategically approached the protests, focusing on risk calculation. Initially hesitant to support the protests in Tunisia and Egypt, Hezbollah eventually sought to capitalise on the movements for its interests. By framing the protests as demonstrations against pro-Western regimes rather than solely corrupt authoritarian regimes, Hezbollah attempted to control the narrative and steer the protests in its direction. This shift in approach demonstrated Hezbollah's increasing exercise of control power, particularly in its attempt to dominate the region. Hence, through its secretary general speeches and media coverage, Hezbollah was practising *exhortation* towards the Arab population to persuade them to adopt the armed political party's line and follow its narration. As the uprising reached Syria and threatened the Assad regime, Hezbollah abandoned its soft power in favour of hard power, signalling a shift towards *predomination* power.

The Civil Wars After the Arab Uprising

Hezbollah's stand on Yemen and its support to the Houthis, a Zaidi-Shia group, amplified after Yemen entered a civil war in 2014. It is worth noting that Yemen got a new President, Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, elected in 2012 after the Yemeni Uprising, which threw former President Ali Abdallah Saleh out of office. However, two years later, tensions between the Houthis and Hadi escalated, ushering in a period of civil war and external interventions. Yemen's geostrategic importance meant a proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia was on the way. This materialised in 2015 when Saudi Arabia led a military coalition of nine countries from West Asia and North Africa to intervene in the Yemeni civil war in support of President Hadi against the Iran-backed Houthis.[516] From then on, rumours circulated about Hezbollah's military involvement in Yemen in the shape of training the Houthis. The official spokesman of the Arab Coalition claimed that there is strong evidence that Hezbollah is training the Houthis to prepare and launch missiles and drone planes at Saudi Arabia and Yemeni government targets.[517] While the Saudi officials verbally attacked Hezbollah, the armed political party did not shy away from verbally attacking the Saudis and Emirates over the Yemeni war. In a speech on Ashura Day in 2015, Nasrallah declared that Hezbollah denounced the slaughter carried out in Yemen and opposed the Saudi American assault on the impoverished Yemenis.[518] Moreover, Nasrallah raised the bar of his condemnation of Saudi

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[516] Roland Popp, "War in Yemen: Revolution and Saudi Intervention", *CSS Analyses in Security Policy ETH Zurich*, no. 175 (June 2015)

[517] Mashari Althaydi, "The Enemy in Yemen is Hezbollah and its Big Brother", *Al-Arabiya News* (December 27, 2021), https://english.alarabiya.net/in-translation/2021/12/27/The-enemy-in-Yemen-is-Hezbollah-and-its-big-brother-

[518] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, During the March on the Tenth Day of Muharram*, (October 24, 2015), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=14184 (Translated from Arabic)

Arabia over the Yemeni war in 2016 when he asserted that Saudis always saw Yemen as a part of Saudi Arabia. Its people ought to obey the Saudi wishes and submit as a result. Thus, it is incomprehensible for Saudi Arabia to accept the Yemeni people's demands for independence and sovereignty.[519]

Nasrallah continued by claiming that "this war that the Saudis lead against Yemen is not political; instead, it is sectarian and destructive."[520] Nasrallah will return to this rhetoric in 2018 by comparing the execution of the Yemeni people at the hands of the Saudis with Imam Hussein's suffering and death in Karbala at the hands of the ruling Sunni dynasty back in the day.[521] It was the first time Hezbollah referred to sectarian narration in two decades. Such a bold movement contrasted with Hezbollah's detailed image for the past decades, that of pan-Islamism, which transcends ethnicities and rises above sectarian division. In an attempt to protect its allies and Iran, Hezbollah threw its reputation as an Islamic resistance and defender of the oppressed, regardless of ethnicity, nationality and religion, against the oppressor and the imperial forces. This implies that Hezbollah has entered the deep waters of sectarianism, which will cost Hezbollah its legitimacy, reputation and popularity. With this, Hezbollah would have come full circle. It started as an underground Shia militia, tuned into an Islamic resistance, shining hope on the Arab and Islamic World, only to sink back to its sectarian roots.

Hezbollah responded to accusations of supporting the Assad regime in Syria despite its oppression towards the Syrian people. In Hezbollah's defence, Nasrallah said that Syria is a victimised country overall. Since it is targeted on multiple fronts, including the army, the people, and its existence as a whole. While acknowledging the rightfulness of the protestors' demands, Nasrallah aimed to defend the Assad regime by claiming that those in positions of authority were meeting these demands. He concluded by referring to the oppressed, venturing that the end of the fighting and killing is what will serve the oppressed people in Syria. As well as maintaining Syria's unity and returning the nation to its proper role.[522] On the other hand, the armed political party justified its involvement in Syria by proclaiming that the purpose of Hezbollah's intervention in Syria is to uphold Palestine, Lebanon, and the Palestinian cause. Nasrallah asserted that it is of moral, religious and strategic importance to protect the Assad regime, the mainstay of the resistance movement and its ally, against all foreign and local meddling in its domestic affairs.[523] Hezbollah saw the Syrian regime's continuity as essential for securing the VNSAs' interest. However, Hezbollah kept using the Palestinian cause to validate its intervention in Syria, arguing that "the road to Jerusalem passes through Syria because if Syria is lost, then Palestine is lost."[524] Through such aver, Hezbollah was hoping to keep its reputation and image as a resistance, aiming to distance itself from the allegations of being a sectarian Shia group fighting the Sunni rebels while defending the Alawi regime.

The armed political party increasingly paid a considerable price for lives and reputation as the decade unfolded. However, it also witnessed a remarkable victory. On the Syrian front, Hezbollah viewed its

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[519] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, During the March on the Tenth Day of Muharram*, (October 12, 2016), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=14416 (Translated from Arabic)

[520] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, During the March on the Tenth Day of Muharram*, (October 12, 2016), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=14416 (Translated from Arabic)

[521]Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, During the March on the Tenth Day of Muharram*, (September 20, 2018), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=14960 (Translated from Arabic)

[522] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, In Memory of Ashura Day March*, (November 25, 2012), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=9014 (Translated from Arabic)

[523] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, during the Ashura Day March*, (November 14, 2013), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=9194 (Translated from Arabic)

[524] Hezbollah's Media Relations Website, *The Speech of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, In Memory of Ashura Day March*, (September 20, 2018), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=14960

survival as part of the Assad regime's survival. Hezbollah achieved what it aimed for, mainly the Assad regime's survival, the security of its existence, and the safety of its interests. Through its military presence and activities in Syria, Hezbollah provided itself and Iran with significant foot, giving it the freedom of bargaining and manoeuvre as a vital player in the MENA, which could never be neglected. Hence, Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian Civil War signalled its practice of *predomination* as a pattern of power.

5.3. Hezbollah's Path from Intimidation and Adulation to Predomination and Exhortation

Hezbollah's relationship with the Arab world regimes and people is a fitting example of its patterns of power, which fluctuate between different practices of power. To comprehend the power practised by Hezbollah, it is essential to remember that it combines the form of power it exercised with the type of power it applied. For instance, in the Arab world, Hezbollah exercised both protean and control power depending on the environment in which it acted and how it was experiencing the world. However, the type of power it selected to apply its tactics and achieve its aim was both soft and hard. Hence, as this chapter showed us, although control-hard and protean-soft usually go hand in hand, an actor can still exercise protean power while applying hard power, and it is possible to exercise control power through soft power tactics. Hezbollah shifted between these practices throughout the four chronological phases following the changes that were taking place in the environment in which the armed political party was operating. Moreover, there was a significant difference in the power practised by Hezbollah towards the Arab regime and the Arab people. Such fluctuation will be presented and analysed in the following paragraphs by providing figures and tables that will help encapsulate Hezbollah's patterns of power throughout various periods.

Therefore, the following figures and tables are not merely visual aids; they are crucial tools to briefly summarise the main points of the analyses and conclude the discussions. Their primary function is to accurately depict Hezbollah's diverse patterns of power during the four assigned periods and the fluctuations within them. Importantly, these figures and tables highlight the absence of *predomination* in Hezbollah's power dynamics, a key aspect that only emerged in the last period and under specific contexts. This absence suggests that while Hezbollah aimed to reach *predomination*, it still lacks a conducive environment to achieve its objective, underscoring the complexity of its power struggle.
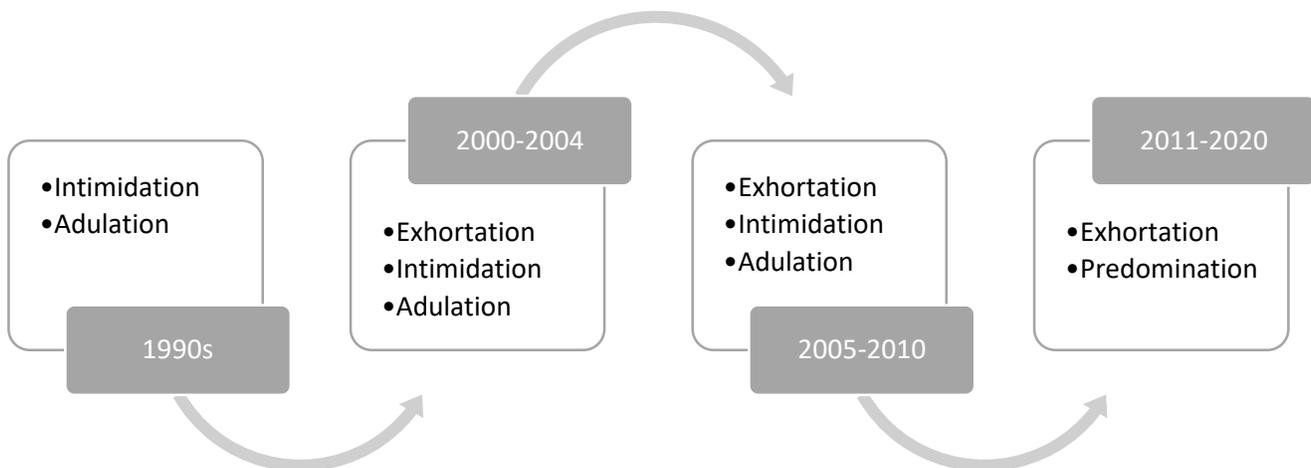

Figure 5.1 Patterns of Power Practiced Throughout Different Periods

Interestingly, Hezbollah did not uniformly employ all the patterns of power across the periods. Figure 5.1 illustrates that certain patterns were absent in specific periods, such as *predomination*, which only emerged in the last period due to Hezbollah's involvement in Syria. Similarly, *exhortation*, absent in the first period, was present in the second, third and fourth periods. On the other hand, *adulation* and *intimidation*, which were consistent in the first three periods, seemed to fade in the last period. This fluctuation resulted from Hezbollah's strategic adaptation to the diverse environments it encountered. The presence of various patterns in one period reflects Hezbollah's contrasting approach to the Arab regimes and the people, adding to the intrigue of its power.

The subsequent Tables, from 5.1 to 5.4, delineate Hezbollah's evolving patterns of power and its varying approaches towards Arab regimes and the population. These visuals concisely summarise Hezbollah's actions, demonstrating its adherence to specific patterns during distinct timeframes. Presenting these actions in the following tables allows for associating patterns with periods while observing their frequency and targets. When a pattern is applied, it will be represented by simple points, while a shaded pattern indicates its non-application during that period.

During the first phase, Hezbollah's relationship with the Arab regime was dominated by *intimidation* since the armed political party was operating in a context of uncertainty, and the type of power it chose to deal with the Arab regimes was hard. The practice of *intimidation* power was evident in the violent attacks that Hezbollah launched against Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, as seen in Table 5.1. Also, *intimidation* power was apparent in the verbal attacks, which carried the tone of threat and coercion that Hezbollah flung on the Arab regimes who were involved in peace negotiations with Israel. However, that was not the only pattern of power that Hezbollah was involved in during that period. *Adulation* was another power which Hezbollah practised when addressing the Arab population since it applied soft power while exercising control power. For instance, that was evident in the *Statement of Purpose* that Hezbollah produced detailing its intake of Islam, which was a soft power tactic amid an environment of uncertainty.

Table 5.1 The Patterns of Power Practiced in the 1990s with Examples

	1990-1999
Predomination	
Exhortation	
Intimidation	-Hezbollah's verbal attacks on the Arab leaders due to their peace talks with Israel in 1990 -Hezbollah bomb attacks that targeted two hotels in Manama, Bahrain, in 1996 -Supporting the Palestinian Islamic fractions to topple Arafat in 1998
Adulation	-Hezbollah's support for the Palestinian people, especially the Islamic military organisations, in 1998 - Hezbollah's *Statement of Purpose* in 1998 where it presented the soft conduct of Islam, which it claimed to aspire for.

Although the second phase witnessed the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, boosting Hezbollah's popularity among the Arab population, the armed political party did not feel reassured. Hence, it was still experiencing uncertainty due to the uncertain environment that followed the withdrawal. The official domestic and regional positions surrounding Hezbollah at that period were

hostile, especially with the call to disarm Hezbollah on the increase. Additionally, it was during this period that the 9/11 attacks took place, followed by the war on terror and the invasion of Iraq. All of these events made Hezbollah's environment uncertain. Hence, the armed political party resolved to exercise protean power to protect itself and attack its enemy. However, the type of power it chose to apply towards the Arab regimes was hard; this was seen through its language and actions of compulsion. Thus, as demonstrated in Table 5.2, Hezbollah was practising *intimidation* against the Arab regimes. Syria was the only exception where Hezbollah practised *adulation* since it supported the Assad regime during the 2000 peace talks by carrying out military actions that could be used as leverage in the negotiations without causing direct consequences.

Nonetheless, when it came to dealing with the Arab population, Hezbollah resolved to *exhortation*. While Hezbollah was experiencing an environment of uncertainty, the Arab population provided Hezbollah with a sense of certainty. This fact allowed Hezbollah to exercise control power because it could plan its actions regarding the Arab population according to the calculable risk and eventually exercise structural dominance. However, the type of power Hezbollah applied to execute its plans was based on soft power. Hence, through its fiery speeches, which are based on religion, Hezbollah was able to practice the power of *exhortation* when addressing the Arab population. It is worth mentioning that Hezbollah came to practice *intimidation* towards some of the Arab population when they showed resistance to Hezbollah's school of thought and actions.

Table 5.2 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2000 and 2004 with Examples

	2000-2004
Predomination	
Exhortation	-Urging the Palestinians, after the Israeli withdrawal in 2000, to follow Hezbollah's example to achieve victory. -Urging the unity between the Sunnis and the Shias after the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 - Nasrallah's letter, which he penned to the Arab and Muslim nations urging them to protect the Al-Aqsa Mosque in 2004
Intimidation	-Attacking the Arab regimes who were involved in the 2000 peace talks. -Attacking the Sunni Radical groups and getting involved in the Sunni-Shia struggle after Iraq slipped into civil war in 2004
Adulation	-Supporting Syria in its 2000 peace talks by carrying out military actions that could be used as leverage in the negotiations without causing direct consequences

Nevertheless, between 2005 and 2010, it can be argued that Hezbollah exercised control and protean power while applying hard power. As a result, it practised both *intimidation* and *exhortation,* as seen in Table 5.3. Hezbollah, who was experiencing the world as risky in an uncertain environment in 2006, decided to improvise and, hence, through its agility and creativity, ambushed an Israeli patrol on the borders and kidnapped two soldiers. This practice of *intimidation* power caused Israel to open a war against Hezbollah. Throughout the war, Hezbollah also practised *intimidation* power against the Arab countries that are pro-Western through a series of verbal attacks and accusations of betrayal, especially against Saudi Arabia.

However, in light of Hezbollah's position and action during the Gaza war in that period, it could be argued that Hezbollah applied control power. Hezbollah's decision not to interfere in the military and to

launch a calculated media campaign was based on a calculation since Hezbollah was acting in a risky environment where it could direct and diffuse. Hence, Hezbollah applied soft power methods to achieve its aim through a vast media campaign targeting the Arab population to mobilise them; this was a practice of *exhortation*. Moreover, Hezbollah also practised *intimidation*, especially regarding the Arab regimes, mainly Egypt, where Hezbollah plotted a series of violent attacks and planted an intelligence cell. Eventually, throughout this period, as Table 5.3 shows, Hezbollah shifted between various patterns of power depending on its operating context and the method it chose to apply to reach its aim.

Table 5.3 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2005 and 2010 with Examples

	2005-2010
Predomination	
Exhortation	- Hezbollah's support for Hamas during the 2008-2009 Gaza War by launching a massive media campaign urging the Arab and Muslim population to support Hamas.
Intimidation	-Hezbollah's verbal attacks on the *Arab moderate regimes*, especially Saudi Arabia, during the July 2006 War and paralysing the Saudi ally government in Lebanon - Hezbollah's verbal attack on the *Arab moderate regimes* during the Gaza War, especially Egypt, where it urged the Egyptians to exert pressure on their government. - The 2009 Hezbollah Plot in Egypt to attack Israeli tourists and establish a surveillance network to monitor shipping movements in the Suez Canal
Adulation	Hezbollah's 2009 *New Manifesto* refrained from attacking the Arab regimes; instead, it called for unity between the Governments and their people and between the Sunnis and the Shia in an attempt to present itself in a new light.

The last examination period in this chapter saw Hezbollah moving from exercising protean power to dabbling with control power. The period started with the Arab Uprising, which Hezbollah saw in a favourable light, and ended with the civil wars that emerged in several countries. Hezbollah's practice of power during this period shifted according to the countries in which these demonstrations were taking place. However, the type of power Hezbollah chose to apply during the uprisings was that of soft power, especially regarding the Arab population. Thus, Hezbollah practised *exhortation* power, as demonstrated in Table 5.4. However, when the uprisings turned into civil wars, especially in Syria and Yemen, Hezbollah did not hesitate to apply hard power. Thus, it can be asserted that throughout the Syrian Civil War, where Hezbollah was directly involved, the armed political party practised *predomination*.

Table 5.4 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2011 and 2020 with Examples

	2011-2020
Predomination	Hezbollah's interference in the Syrian Civil War
Exhortation	Hezbollah's attempt to control the narration of the Arab Uprising and stir it in its direction and according to its interest.
Intimidation	
Adulation	

Consequently, the preceding analysis revealed that Hezbollah's pattern of power fluctuated from *intimidation* and *adulation* to *exhortation* and *predomination*. This shift was influenced by the nature of the entities Hezbollah interacted with, such as the Arab regimes or the Arab population, as well as the operating environment, whether certain or uncertain and how Hezbollah perceived it.

A combination of *intimidation* and *adulation* marked the initial phases of Hezbollah's engagement with the Arab world. This indicates that the armed political party perceived the Arab world as uncertain and exercised protean power. While it applied hard power towards the Arab governments, it sought to win over the people by applying soft power. Additionally, the practice of *exhortation* became more pronounced in the second and third periods, alongside *intimidation* and *adulation*, demonstrating Hezbollah's early exercise of control power, albeit through soft power. However, as Hezbollah's environment evolved, so did its patterns. The armed political party transitioned from *adulation* to *exhortation* and from *intimidation* to *predomination*, particularly following the Arab Uprising in 2011, showing that Hezbollah did not hesitate to apply hard and soft power while exercising control power.

Eventually, the illustration in Figure 5.2 concisely depicts this pattern, highlighting *intimidation* and *adulation* as the primary forms of power consistently employed by Hezbollah in the initial three phases. It also acknowledges the potential for the simultaneous use of other power patterns at different ends of the spectrum during the same period, such as *exhortation*, which is evident in the second and third phases. Furthermore, the figure demonstrates that Hezbollah ultimately gained control power in the last phase, as seen in its exercise of *exhortation* and *predomination*.
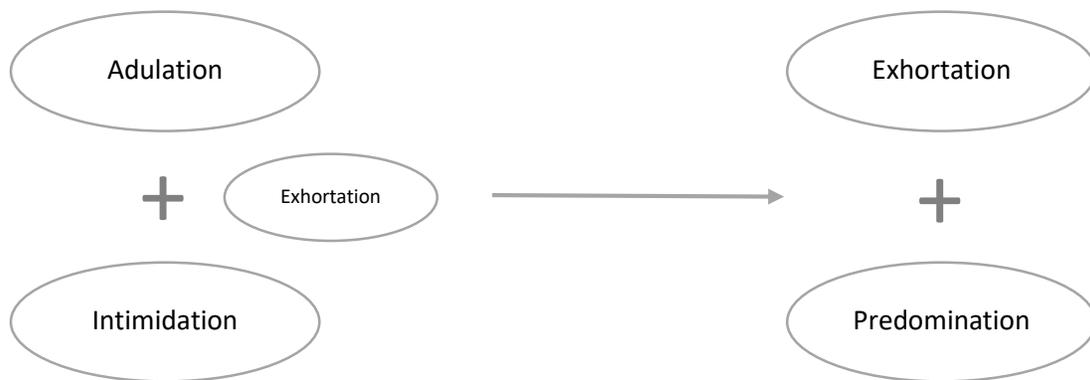
Figure 5.2 The Patterns of Power Strategic Shift

Therefore, Hezbollah's main goal has been to create a stable environment where risks can be carefully assessed, minimised, and strategically controlled. However, the geopolitical context of the Arab world in which Hezbollah operates is inherently unpredictable and unstable. This uncertainty has required Hezbollah to adopt a flexible and adaptable approach, resulting in the exercise of protean power characterised by adaptability, innovation, and improvisation in response to evolving conditions. Moreover, the shift in Hezbollah's type of power applied between soft and hard reflected its policy and behaviour towards the Arab regimes and population, each fulfilling a distinct role.

A significant outcome of this versatile strategy was Hezbollah's ability to exert control power, shaping and guiding the actions of others. This practice of control power empowered Hezbollah to influence its immediate surroundings and broader regional dynamics, extending its reach to diverse aspects of political life, including decision-making processes.

Ultimately, Hezbollah's strategic flexibility has enabled it to attain domination and predictability in a region known for its volatility. By solidifying its position as a dominant force, Hezbollah has become more adept at managing risks and navigating the complexities of its environment. This strategic evolution, characterised by shifting among various patterns of power, showcases Hezbollah's sophisticated grasp of power dynamics and its ability to thrive in a challenging geopolitical environment by strategically transitioning between different patterns of power to achieve its goals. This is a testament to its ability to harness protean power in the Arab world to achieve control power.

Chapter 6: Hezbollah's Intimidation Power with Israel

Examining Hezbollah's actions vis-à-vis Israel is essential to gain a complete image of its patterns of power. Thus, it is vital to analyse Hezbollah's actions and behaviour towards Israel throughout all the various phases. From the time of its foundation, Hezbollah has exercised protean power, all while applying hard power in its combat with Israel. However, as the struggle evolved, it might be argued that Hezbollah started exercising aspects of control power, which made its actions more predictable. Thus, this chapter examines Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* power, which resulted from its combination of protean and hard power in its struggle with Israel. Also, it will show the slight flirtation with *predomination* power that Hezbollah exercised in the last two periods under examination, especially when it came to its control risk decision not to get involved in a full-scale war with Israel.

The chapter commences with a historical background that will lay the foundation for understanding the long-standing fight between Hezbollah and Israel. The second section is divided into four subsections, chronologically narrating the relationship between Israel and Hezbollah while analysing and highlighting Hezbollah's *intimidation* power. Eventually, the last section will summarise the chapter, where the main finding will be recapped.

6.1. Historical Overview of Hezbollah's Stand Against Israel

Presenting a historical overview of the relationship between Israel and Hezbollah helps comprehend the depth of their conflict. It sheds light on Hezbollah's ideology, which dictates its stand on Israel and the West, mainly the United States (US). This section will present significant events that shaped the creation of Hezbollah, its development, and its course of action with Israel. These events, such as the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution 425, Hezbollah's attacks on the Marines and Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) in 1983 and lastly, the 1985 manifesto, are essential in understanding Hezbollah's course of actions and help identify its patterns of power. However, before proceeding, it is worth mentioning that although this dissertation focuses on Hezbollah's patterns of power in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, for the sake of attaining a more comprehensive image and understanding the dynamics, the relationship of Hezbollah with the West, mainly the US, will be included in the discussion of Hezbollah's relationship with Israel. Hence, this section explores the historical context of Hezbollah's emergence within the milieu of fighting Israel. The aim is to show Hezbollah's ideological stand against the Jewish state and its military attacks on it.

In 1978, Israel launched Operation Litani, in which it "invaded Lebanon and eventually occupied 500 square kilometres 'Security Zone', which included 61 cities and villages."[525] Most of the population living in that zone were Shia, which would later provide Hezbollah with a legitimate reason to defend those lands and a solid background to protect its operations. In response to the Israeli operation, the UNSC "issued resolution 425 calling for the unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanon, a resolution that fell on deaf ears."[526] Hezbollah will come later to use this resolution as evidence of the international community's inability to enforce its resolution due to its biased altitude. This is an argument that Hezbollah will use to justify its relentless use of violence in fighting Israel. However, the main event that helped in the formation of Hezbollah was the Lebanese civil war, particularly the Israeli invasion of

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[525] Joseph Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2011), p. 151

[526] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 151

Lebanon in 1982, where Beirut fell into the hands of the IDF from July till August 1982, the only Arab capital to witness such a fate.[527] Extrapolating from this, examining the relationship between Israel and Hezbollah's series of hostility and wars is imperative.

Hezbollah operated clandestinely before presenting its first manifesto in 1985, signalling its public presence. Within this historical context, Hezbollah's attacks on Israeli and Western personnel and interests pre-1985 can be examined. Under the banner of the Islamic Jihad Organization, which later became part of Hezbollah upon its official foundation, the 1983 attacks happened.[528] Three primary attacks were launched—the first on April 18, when the U.S. Embassy in Beirut was bombed.[529] The second attack was a double one taking place within minutes on the same day. On October 23, where two truck bombs struck two buildings in Beirut, known as quarters for the American and French service members of the Multinational Forces in Lebanon (MNF), claiming 299 lives. They were acting as a military peacekeeping operation during the Lebanese Civil War. This led to the MNF's hastened withdrawal from Lebanon in February 1984.[530] As for Israel, Hezbollah is responsible for scores of attacks on the IDF in southern Lebanon and on civilians in northern Israel. Hezbollah will come to chronicle these attacks in its 1985 Manifesto, where it declared that Hezbollah's supporters chose to resist betrayal and stood firm against the unfaithful nations of America, France, and Israel—claiming that Hezbollah's people chastised those nations on April 18, 1983, and October 29, 1983.[531]

Thus, Hezbollah's *Open Letter* publication on February 16, 1985, dubbed its first manifesto, represented the armed political party's first public declaration.[532] In its first manifesto, Hezbollah openly stated its hostility toward the West, mainly the US and Israel. Hezbollah declared that until Israel is destroyed, their fight with it will continue. The manifesto included an insistence by Hezbollah that it does not acknowledge any ceasefire, treaty or peace agreement with Israel.[533] Hezbollah went on to assert that in the Islamic world, Israel represents the US, and it is necessary to fight this hated enemy.[534] Through this link, it becomes clear that Hezbollah sees its struggle with Israel as part of its greater struggle with the US, echoing the Iranian revolutionary leader, Ruhollah Khomeini, who labelled the US as the "Great Satan" and Israel as the "Small Satan", linking them together in one project of Western hegemony and exploitation in the region.[535] Thus, according to Hezbollah's first manifesto, the US and Israel are "the world oppressors."[536] As a result, the armed political party is committed to fighting America because it is the colonial power with the most significant influence in the world, along with Israel, which is the result of global Zionism. Moreover, Hezbollah mentioned that its primary focus will be on combating the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces, who have aided America in its efforts to subjugate the local population in the MENA region.[537]

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[527] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 151

[528] Central Intelligence Agency, *Never Forgotten: The Deadliest Day in CIA History*, (April 18, 2023) https://www.cia.gov/stories/story/beirut-embassy-attack-40th-anniversary/

[529] US Embassy in Lebanon, *40th Anniversary Of The April 18, 1983 Embassy Bombing*, (April 18, 2023) https://lb.usembassy.gov/40th-anniversary-of-the-april-18-1983-embassy-bombing/

[530] Britannica, *1983 Beirut Barracks Bombings Terrorist Attacks*, Lebanon, https://www.britannica.com/event/1983-Beirut-barracks-bombings

[531] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 43

[532] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 154

[533] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*,

[534] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*,

[535] John Hagee, *In Defense of Israel: The Bible's Mandate for Supporting the Jewish State* (Chicago: Frontline, 2011), p. 70

[536] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 47

[537] Alagha*, Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 47-48

Hezbollah made it clear in its manifesto that the war it wages against Israel stems from a doctrinal-historical understanding which maintains that this Zionist entity was founded violently and has an aggressive constituency since it was built on a stolen land at the cost of Muslim rights. Hence, Hezbollah's conflict with Israel will not terminate until it is completely eradicated. According to this viewpoint, Hezbollah refuses the involvement of the Arabs in any form of negotiations, treaties, agreements, truce or even cease-fire with Israel, whether individually or collectively. Hezbollah alleged that any form of negotiation with Israel would provide the Zionist State and its occupation of Palestine with legitimisation. As a result, Hezbollah regarded any Arab country or organisation mediating with Israel as an accomplice in its aggression over the Palestinians. Within this context, Hezbollah condemned in its manifesto "all the wayward countries and organisations that are running after recapitulative solutions with the enemy, and that agree to the principle of 'land for peace'."[538]

From the early stages of its establishment, Hezbollah made it clear that its stand against Israel and the West is based on a moral, religious foundation which legitimises its actions in defending the oppressed against the oppressor. Hence, Hezbollah condemned the Arab nations who have relations with Israel or are open to peace talks and collaboration with it. Therefore, the armed political party maintained that the way to liberate Palestine and other Arab lands was through the act of military resistance. Thus, it relied on hard power in its early years. Furthermore, since it was operating in an uncertain environment, where it was experiencing uncertainty, Hezbollah used protean power, where it benefited from its agility and creativity in facing Israel, primarily through innovation. This combination of hard and protean power will form Hezbollah's *intimidation power*, which will practice in its struggle with Israel in the coming decades.

6.2. Hezbollah's Pattern of Power Regarding Israel

This section explores Hezbollah's patterns of power through its actions and behaviour concerning Israel in a chronological narration covering the period from 1990 until 2020. The aim is to uncover Hezbollah's practice of power by providing evidence from the events that took place at the time. Therefore, this section will be divided into four subsections highlighting a different phase in Hezbollah's Israeli combat, which reflects the latter's various types of powers visible through its narration and stand. The suggested four stages were arranged in a way that demonstrated both Hezbollah's shift and consistency in its opposition to Israel. To set the stage for the analysis and discussion that will take place in the following subsections, the following paragraphs will give a synopsis of each phase and the period in which it occurred.

The first phase this dissertation will explore regarding Hezbollah's power practice vis-à-vis Israel is the '90s decade. Throughout this decade, Hezbollah maintained its position against any form of peace talks with Israel. The armed political party insisted that military combat is the only language of communication that should be offered to Israel. As a result, Hezbollah manoeuvred to present itself as a resistance movement aiming at liberating southern Lebanon and defending its people. Such a position against Israel was a calculable move as it placed Hezbollah on the regional map, legitimised its acquisition of weapons and its existence in southern Lebanon and boosted its image as a resistance movement with higher goals among the wider Arab and Muslim world. Therefore, Hezbollah established itself as a resistance movement and set the ground for its popularity during this period.

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[538] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents,* p. 48

The period between 2000 and 2004 has brought Hezbollah to new heights, especially concerning its struggle with Israel. The armed political party recorded its first victory in its long fight with Israel, especially after the latter withdrew from southern Lebanon in 2000. Hence, Hezbollah maintained the importance of being recognised as a resistance and the importance of its military actions and presence. However, it was during this period that Hezbollah intensified its *intimidation* power, the combo of protean and hard power practices, by kidnapping Israeli soldiers and getting engaged in indirect negotiations to achieve prisoner exchange. All while maintaining its position as a vehement opposer for any peace talks with Israel in all its forms.[539]

Hezbollah's combat with Israel took a new leap between 2005 and 2010. During this period, Hezbollah and Israel faced each other militarily, directly and indirectly. While Hezbollah launched an unexpected attack on two armoured Humvees patrolling the borders, kidnapping two of its soldiers, Israel replied with a full-scale war in an attempt to cut Hezbollah's power. However, the battle did not end there; Hezbollah was again involved in battling Israel, albeit differently this time, during the Gaza War between 2008 and 2009, through supporting Hamas and backing it politically and militarily. The last act of Hezbollah regarding Israel during this period was more ideological, as it came in the form of reassuring Hezbollah's stand against Israel, though with a more moderate tone in the 2009 *New Manifesto*, where Hezbollah insisted on its continuing fight with Israel till its demise.

Although Hezbollah's direct fight with Israel seemed to take a back seat in the post-Arab Uprising period between 2011 and 2020, Hezbollah kept its rhetoric running against the Jewish state. The skirmishes between Hezbollah and Israel during that period took place on two different borders, the Israeli-Lebanese border and the Syrian-Israeli border. Additionally, this period saw an increase in Hezbollah's attacks on Israeli targets outside Israel.

Therefore, Hezbollah's conflict with Israel is essential since it is the foundation on which the party built itself. Israel's invasion of Beirut in 1982 and the raging civil war gave a good reason for Hezbollah's emergence. Even after the end of the civil war and Israel's withdrawal from Beirut to what is known as the security belt in southern Lebanon, Hezbollah capitalised on this situation to retain its arms and remodel itself as a resistance aiming at liberating the south from Israel. However, with Israel's withdrawal in 2000, Hezbollah did not surrender its weapons despite the Lebanese voices that urged the armed political party to do so. The reason, according to Hezbollah, is that the struggle with Israel is eternal, and it will only end with the demise of the Zionist state. This implies that Hezbollah's fight with Israel is not limited to the Lebanese territory but is an existential struggle rooted deeply in the party's religious ideology, which maintains that the Arab Muslim land, especially the Holy Land, should be liberated and returned to the Muslims. Thus, the constant hostility with Israel justifies Hezbollah's holding to weapons and usage of violence. This conflict, which Hezbollah designates as the fight of the oppressed against the oppressor, is the source of inspiration and fuel for its ideology, popularity and military wing. Within this context, the following subsections of narration and analysis can be comprehended, as they will show how Hezbollah's combination of protean and hard power resulted in its practice of *intimidation* power against Israel. The analysis will also demonstrate that in the last two periods, Hezbollah did flirt with control power despite consistently practising *intimidation*, especially in its risk assessment, which prevented it from taking actions that could lead to a full-scale war with Israel.

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[539] Augustus Richard Norton, *Hezbollah: A Short History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007)

6.2.1 Hezbollah's Struggle with Israel During the '90s

Hezbollah and Israel spent the '90s battling each other militarily and politically. This decade saw Hezbollah practising *intimidation* as it combined protean and hard power. Hezbollah's decision to resort to protean power is due to its operating environment and how it was experiencing it. The '90s was a decade of uncertainty for Hezbollah for two main reasons. First, the civil war, which provided Hezbollah with fertile ground to emerge and flourish, ended, and the Lebanese state began its attempt to spread its authority over the land. Thus, Hezbollah found itself battling for its survival as an armed political party with the right to continue fighting Israel and its homogenous existence in southern Lebanon. The second detail that made the environment within which Hezbollah operates uncertain is the peace talks that were happening between Israel and some Arab countries, including Lebanon and Syria, although indirectly.

Amidst this climate of uncertainty, Hezbollah faced an unknown future, with little insight into the agendas being presented and discussed. In such circumstances, Hezbollah's only recourse was relying on its weapons for defence. Nevertheless, Hezbollah adopted a protean power approach, exercising its hard power while remaining flexible. This adaptability was crucial for their innovation, centring around practising *intimidation* against their adversaries. Examining six critical events during the decade is vital to comprehensively understanding Hezbollah's actions and behaviour. The first event is between the end of the civil war and the re-establishment of the Lebanese state's authority over its territory. The second event is the assassination of Abbas al-Musawi, Hezbollah's secretary general. The third, fourth, and fifth events are related to military conflicts between Israel and Hezbollah, mainly the Israeli attacks in 1993, 1994 and 1996.[540] Finally, the last event involves the intensification of Hezbollah's religious rhetoric against Israel and the discussions surrounding Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon. The stand that Hezbollah took throughout these main events shows its practice of *intimidation*, mainly on topics such as maintaining the resistance presence and role, negotiation and peace talks, as well as the implementation of UNSC resolution 425 and Hezbollah's constant attacks on Israel and its religious rhetoric.

Hezbollah's Stand on Israel at The Beginning of The Decade

During this period, Hezbollah faced a world of uncertainty brought on by the end of the civil war and peace talks with Israel. Hence, Hezbollah's only option was to exercise protean power where it innovated. Moreover, Hezbollah was applying hard power since it was fighting militarily. Hence, the armed political party was practising *intimidation* by combining protean and hard power. This can be seen in Hezbollah's stand against the UNSC resolution 425 and its opposition to the peace talks, as well as accusing Israel of trying to get rid of the resistance by creating an internal Lebanese discord.

Therefore, with the start of the decade and the Lebanese civil war closing its very last chapter, a talk of peace with Israel as part of a broader Arab states' peace deal started circulating. Under this atmosphere, a strong demand to implement UN Resolution 425 increased. Despite fluctuating positions in the Lebanese and Israeli governments between backing and opposing the resolution or some of its terms, Hezbollah made it evident from the beginning that it was against the UN resolution. This position was explained by Hezbollah's former Secretary General, Subhi al-Tufayli, who stated that Hezbollah opposes the resolution because it calls for Israel's recognition or, at the bare minimum, the protection of its

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[540] Nicholas Blanford, *Warriors of God: Inside Hezbollah's Thirty-Year Struggle Against Israel* (New York: Random House, 2011)

borders. However, Hezbollah refuses to recognise Israel and wants to impose its will through force.[541] Hezbollah clarified that it refuses in any way to acknowledge the Zionist state or reconcile with it. Also, the armed political party rejected any deal concerning the right to the land and waters.[542] Hezbollah emphasised that resistance is the only acceptable method for freeing the land and protecting the people as it is a religiously sanctioned mission.[543] Therefore, Hezbollah sees itself as the main threat to Israel's ambition of establishing the Greater State of Israel.

In its turn, Israel did not shy away from attacking Hezbollah's military and verbally. Israel used the card of Lebanese domestic stability to exert pressure. An illustration of this comes from Uri Lubrani, the then-coordinator of the activities of Israeli forces in Lebanon, who asserted that the purpose of Hezbollah's weapons is not to resist Israel but rather to fortify Hezbollah and turn it into a Shia militia that dominates over all the other militias.[544] Hezbollah refuted such assertions by declaring that Israel is trying to freeze and limit the resistance to protect its interests. According to Hezbollah, Israel knows that the only way to curb the resistance movement is through internal discord between the Lebanese factions, and that is why Israel is constantly working through its agents to keep the strife in Lebanon awake and mobile.[545] Such an argument will be a constant in Hezbollah's dictionary. Hezbollah will come to use this rhetoric as a weapon to threaten its political opponents by branding them as Israeli agents every time it feels squared internally. Also, Hezbollah will capitalise on such a narration to rally its people around, keeping them in a state of preparedness and mobilisation.

Hence, it is evident that Hezbollah uses its war with Israel to legitimise its existence and as a fierce weapon to protect itself and attack its Lebanese and Arab opponents. However, as the decade proceeds, Hezbollah will focus more on battling Israel and less on attacking the Lebanese and Arab positions, as it will need them in combating Israel on the diplomatic stage.

Assassination of Abbas al-Musawi

The assassination of its Secretary General Abbas al-Musawi, along with his wife and son, in an Israeli airstrike attack on his motorcade in southern Lebanon in 1992 threw Hezbollah deeper into the realm of uncertainty both in terms of environment and experience. On the other hand, Hezbollah's language was one of hard power. Hence, the armed political party was practising *intimidation* against Israel, especially when it insisted on fighting Israel and the US till the end and demanding that resistance was the only choice and way forward. Such a position was evident in al-Musawi's last speech hours before his death, announcing that experience has shown that talks with the Israeli enemy are futile.[546]

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[541] An-Nahar Newspaper, "He Saw the Solution in Implementing the Damascus Agreement, al-Tufayli: The Palestinians Made a Mistake by Deploying, and They Must Withdraw to Correct What They Are Doing" (January 10, 1990), p. 4, *American University of Beirut (AUB) Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[542] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Accused the Government of Negligence Towards the Southerners, Hezbollah Refuses to Negotiate and Recognize", (August 2, 1991), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[543] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Accused the Government"

[544] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Lubrani: Hezbollah's Arsenals are in Dahieh and Baalbek, not in the South", (June 5, 1992), p. 8, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[545] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: The Resistance Against Israel Is Not the Responsibility of One Sect Without the [other] Sects", (January 7, 1991), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[546] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Israel Assassinated Abbas al-Musawi from the Air by Cutting His Convoy in Zahrani, the Wife of the Secretary-General of Hezbollah, Their Son, And Two Companions Fell, and 13 were Wounded. Berri, The Sidonian and the Communist [Party], and the Scholars Council Called for a General Strike Today" (February 17, 1992), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

Moreover, Hezbollah took al-Musawi's funeral as an opportunity to assert its stand against Israel by declaring through the words of its Deputy Secretary General Naim Qassem the following essential points. First, Hezbollah is in an open conflict with Israel till it achieves the total liberation of Muslim lands. Second, Hezbollah refuses any forms of peace talks and negotiations with Israel, hence refusing to implement any of the provisions that might result from it. Moreover, Qassem addressed the issue of power imbalance between Hezbollah and Israel through religious rhetoric. He asserted that although Israel has the unconditional support of the US politically and militarily, Hezbollah is equally strong because its support comes from God.[547]

On the other hand, the newly elected Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah, who succeeded al-Musawi in 1992, continued his attack on Israel and the US, insisting on fighting and stressing that resistance is Hezbollah's only choice. He declared that al-Musawi's assassination acts as a reminder of Israel's savagery. Furthermore, Nasrallah asserted that the US is responsible for Israel's atrocities, including massacres, destruction, displacement and killings. This is so because the US protects Israel, and without its assistance, the latter would not be able to survive in the region. According to Hezbollah, America will always be the Islamic nation's greatest enemy because it is the "Great Satan", and Israel is a "cancerous gland" that needs to be removed along with its "artificial entity."[548] Therefore, Hezbollah attributes all the folding incidents in the region to the US and Israel since, according to Nasrallah, the US and its fabricated state, Israel, are the leaders of global international terrorism. Thus, the only way to deal with Israel and the US is through military resistance until victory since Israel is not a threat only to southern Lebanon but to the entirety of Lebanon as well as the Arab and Islamic world.[549] Hence, within this context, the attacks on Israel in the following years can be comprehended.

Operation Accountability in 1993

Hezbollah's pattern of power *intimidation* was apparent during Operation Accountability, which was launched by Israel on July 23, 1993, and lasted for seven days. It came as a direct response to Hezbollah's killing of 7 IDF soldiers. The operation resulted in the killing of 130 Lebanese and displacing around 300,000. Israel's main objective was to attack Hezbollah, prevent it from using southern Lebanon as a base to attack Israel and displace the Lebanese people in the hope that this would pressure the government, which in turn might exert pressure on Hezbollah. This Operation resulted in an "unwritten agreement" between Hezbollah and Israel to sideline the civilians on both sides.[550] This time, the armed political party was under Israeli fire, hence its experience of uncertainty. *Intimidation* was evident in Hezbollah's insistence on inflicting losses on its enemy, maintaining that the resistance was the choice and refusing any form of negotiations.

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[547] An-Nahar Newspaper, "A Strike Denouncing the Assassination of al-Musawi in Beirut, the Suburbs, the Chouf, the South, the Beqaa Valley and the North, Hezbollah: We Do Not Say We Will Take Revenge... Our Conflict with Israel Is Open Until Its Removal" (February 18, 1992), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[548] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Sfeir Denounced the Assassination, hoping that the Cycle of Violence Would Stop to Pursue the Peace Process; Representatives of Assad, Husseini, Karami, and Crowds Participated in al-Musawi's Funeral; Fadlallah: The Environment Allows the Resistance to be Struck; Nasrallah: We Will Continue the Battle Even If the World Surrenders" (February 19, 1992), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[549] An-Nahar Newspaper, "al-Musawi's Memory Turned into an Embrace of The Resistance, a Condemnation of The United States, and a Rejection of Negotiations, Fadlallah: We Refuse to Bow, and our Movement is The Movement of Freedom, Jihad and Mobilization, Nasrallah: Reconciliation Will Remain Fragile as Long as There are Bets on Israel" (February 24, 1992), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[550] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 158

For a better political understanding of Operation Accountability, it should be read within the context of the negotiations that took place back then between the Israelis and the Arabs with US mediation. While there was hope for a settlement, negotiations dithered. As a result, Israel attacked Lebanon, claiming that it aimed to stop the firing of Katyusha missiles from southern Lebanon. However, the comments of Former US Foreign Secretary Warren Christopher, who was responsible for the ongoing negotiations, linked the attacks to the negotiations, declaring that through this war, the target was not only Lebanon but also Syria and the Arab nations. Hezbollah took Christopher's statement as evidence for the US-biased position, regarding it as a direct and grave threat to the Arab parties. In other words, Hezbollah considered Christopher's words to imply that the "Israeli monster" hand would be released once more to persecute the region and its citizens if the talks did not progress and the Arabs did not demonstrate the necessary flexibility.[551] Hence, once more, Hezbollah was attacking the unlimited support that the US provides to Israel and claiming that the Jewish state is part of the US hegemony in the region. As a result, according to Hezbollah, the US does not have the right and is inadequate to spearhead efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East.[552]

Hezbollah considered that the firing of the Katyusha rockets did not cause the Zionist aggression against Lebanon; instead, the attack was the product of a planned plot and an American Zionist initiative for Lebanon and the region. According to Hezbollah, Israel's aim from the attack was evident in the declaration of its Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that Israel would strip Hezbollah of its weapons if the Lebanese government could not do that. However, Hezbollah insisted that the people whose land was taken have the right to resist. As such, Hezbollah was defending its right to confront Israel, considering it as an obligation.[553]

In brief, Hezbollah considered Israel's animosity toward peace was made evident by this aggression. Moreover, Nasrallah claimed that this military confrontation exposed Israel's weaknesses, particularly concerning its military prowess and inability to tolerate the possibility of human casualties. According to Hezbollah, this suggests that to defeat Israel, resistance should continue, and its experience and accomplishments are crucial when it comes to taking down Israeli personnel and spreading confusion.

Hence, it is evident that Hezbollah considers military confrontations with Israel as the only acceptable solution for the Arab-Israeli issue, especially after Nasrallah claimed that the resistance, which, according to him, is a worrying foe to the Zionists, has grown more substantial and more devoted to its rights, obligations, and roles.[554] This practice of *intimidation* will be further enhanced in the coming year when Hezbollah and Israel will clash again.

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[551] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah: Christopher's Statements Constitute a Threat to The Arab Parties" (August 4, 1993), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[552] An-Nahar Newspaper, "He Called for the Withdrawal from the Peace Negotiations, Nasrallah: There is no Agreement Regarding the Katyusha, and the Path of Resistance Will Continue Until Liberation" (August 2, 1993), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[553] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Visits Hrawi, Samaha and the Intelligence, The Aggression Was Not the Result of 'The Katyusha' Launch, We Do Not Negotiate with Israel, and We Do Not Accept any Conditions" (July 31, 1993), p. 4, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[554] An-Nahar Newspaper, "He Called for Withdrawal"

Israel Attacks on Hezbollah's Military Training Camp in 1994

The escalated tensions between Hezbollah and Israel in 1993, which led to violent confrontation and Israel launching Operation Accountability, did not cool down in 1994. Once more, under the pressure of the peace talks with various Arab states under the US umbrella and the stagnation of the negotiations, Israel and Hezbollah clashed.[555] During the 1994 attacks, Hezbollah once more resorted to hard power while exercising protean power, hence its practice of *intimidation*. This was evident in standing against negotiations and using a religious tone to coerce the enemy and simultaneously create a much-needed sense of certainty among its people. The following lines will give an account of the event, showcasing Hezbollah's patterns of power.

With the failure of negotiations, Israel accused Syria of supporting Hezbollah's violent actions, stating that Syria should bear the responsibility.[556] Concurrently, Syria accused Israel of killing the opportunity for peace. These mutual accusations came after Israel attacked Hezbollah's military training camp on the Syrian border in Lebanon. Hezbollah, as a result, promised to retaliate and strike Israel.[557] However, this attack came as an indirect response to Lebanon and Syria's rejection of repeated American requests to curb Hezbollah and end the activity of the resistance in the south.

Lebanon and Syria did not agree to this request because it involved an Israeli-American attempt to drop the resistance card from their hand in the peace negotiations, thus weakening their negotiating position and forcing them to make concessions.[558] At that time, Lebanon and Syria adhered to the absolute right of resistance. For them, the way to address the situation in the south was through Israel's withdrawal and the implementation of UNSC Resolution 425. Then, the Lebanese army could control security in the south in cooperation with international forces.[559]

However, as far as Hezbollah is concerned, the entire negotiations and peace talks were rejected. For the armed political party, it is essential to continue the fighting till the death of Israel. Nasrallah made that clear in his speech on Jerusalem Day, where he stated that Hezbollah is moving forward in all spheres of influence and resistance, driven by the divine assurance found in the Quran that Israel's destruction is inevitable. He went as far as to consider that the leaders negotiating for peace are defeated, helpless, spineless, and unconfident in their country's abilities and God's promise. However, according to Nasrallah, the people of the Arab world are with the resistance and the choice of resistance. Eventually, he asserted that the Arab nation would prevail and endure, while Israel—with whom the Arab leaders are rushing to reconcile—would perish. [560]

Nasrallah's position and choices of words clearly show that Hezbollah gives a religious dimension to its struggle with Israel. For Hezbollah, the struggle with Israel is religious, and there is no backing down. This was highlighted in Nasrallah's words on Ashura Day, where he considered that "the resistance in

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[555] An-Nahar Newspaper, "An American Move of 'Restraint' May Bring Christopher Back to The Region; Israel Mobilizes and Threatens… And Holds Syria Responsible for The Resistance; Damascus Accuses It of 'Working to Kill the Opportunity for Peace'; 'Hezbollah' Mourned Its Victims and Vowed to Respond with 'Martyrdom Operations'" (June 4, 1994), p. 1, AUB Archives (Translated from Arabic)

[556] An-Nahar Newspaper, "An American Move"

[557] An-Nahar Newspaper, "An American Move"

[558] An-Nahar Newspaper, "An American Move"

[559] An-Nahar Newspaper, "An American Move"

[560] An-Nahar Newspaper, "A Festival on 'Jerusalem Day' and a Military Parade in Baalbek, Hezbollah: We are Facing the Return of the Israeli Project, and we Call on Everyone to Preserve Civil Peace" (March 12, 1994), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

the south is the resistance of Imam Hussein," drawing parallels between the struggle of Hussein in Karbala on behalf of the oppressed with Hezbollah's resistance against Israel.[561] The secretary general concluded his speech by declaring that Hezbollah would not stop fighting the Jews.[562] Hence, Nasrallah never hesitated to employ the religious rhetoric to attack Israel. The usage of religious rhetoric was also evident in Hezbollah's attack on the US, especially regarding its constant support of Israel. For instance, on another occasion of Ashura Day, Nasrallah declared that Hezbollah swore by Imam Hussein that it would not bow down or submit to the will of the US and that the armed political party would keep on resisting till the ties are served with the US in Lebanon, the region, and the entire Arab and Muslim world.[563]

Therefore, Hezbollah's *intimidation* was not only manifested in its military attacks but also in its speech, where the use of religious rhetoric prevails. Hezbollah's religious tone aimed to rally its supporters and assure them that victory is theirs in the long run despite the troubles and unequal battles. Such narration and power will be played again two years later.

Operation Grapes of Wrath, 1996

The last major confrontation between Israel and Hezbollah in the '90s came in 1996 after Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath. When faced with the bloodiest attack from Israel since the end of the Lebanese civil war, Hezbollah was confronted with a highly uncertain environment and responded with a reliance on hard power. Hence, it was natural that Hezbollah practised *intimidation* against Israel. This was clear in refusing any equation or negotiation and insisting on its identity as a resistance. The following narration illustrates Hezbollah's patterns of power that were exercised during that time.

Israel launched the seventeen-day attack on Hezbollah to end the armed political party's rocket attacks on its north. The confrontation turned out to be the bloodiest since the end of the civil war. During its course, both Israel and Hezbollah put their best performance militarily and politically. Nasrallah said they would respond to any Israeli attack on southern Lebanon by striking northern Israel. If Israel bombed the southern suburbs of Beirut, Hezbollah would retaliate in the north of Israel and elsewhere.[564] As a result, Nasrallah called for mobilisation and asked Hezbollah's fighters, whom he called martyrs, to join their centres.[565] The confrontation ended with an Israeli-Lebanese Ceasefire Understanding under American diplomatic auspices and French participation. Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres considered

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[561] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Condolence Councils and Marches in Beirut, Dahieh, Nabatiyeh and Baalbek on the Anniversary of Ashura. Shams El-Din: By Exaltation, We Build the State of Law. Fadlallah: The Resistance Is Not Restricted to Anyone. Nasrallah Called on The State to Expel the American Ambassador Because His Stay Is an 'Assault on Sovereignty'" (June 21, 1994), p. 6, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[562] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Condolence Councils"

[563] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Condolence Councils and Marches Interspersed with Beheadings on the Tenth Anniversary of Muharram; Shams El-Din: The Islamic-Christian Dialogue Has Come a Long Way; Fadlallah: Karbala is Not Affiliated with Any Islamic Group" (June 10, 1995), p. 6, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[564] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Rafts Raided Haret Hreik and Bir Al-Abed in the Suburb, causing a Casualty, Four Injured, and Damages, and They Were Confronted by Army Fire" (April 12, 1996), p. 7, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[565] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Nasrallah Declares General Mobilization and Calls on 'Martyrs' to Join their Centers" (April 14, 1996), p. 5, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

the understanding "a first-class deal and exceeded our expectations."[566] Hezbollah, in its turn, saw the understanding as a "victory for the resistance."[567]

If this entire operation showed something, it conveyed that Hezbollah is settling into its role as resistance against Israel. Despite the Lebanese domestic arguments against Hezbollah's weapons and war decisions, the VNSA can rely on the support of the Lebanese in case of war, at least in terms of taking in the Shia population and protecting it. This implies the Lebanese are unkeen on clashing with Hezbollah and entering a new civil war. Concerning Israel, the operation showed that Hezbollah presents a new and different form of an enemy which plays according to different rules and has less to lose, prompting Israel to reconsider its approach and tactics. Hence, Hezbollah proved it is a protean power player who exercises hard power to achieve its aim.

Israel and Hezbollah between 1997 and 1999

Those years show Hezbollah enhancing its sense of certainty through its religious tone to deal with the uncertainty that it operates within. However, *intimidation* remained its practice of power, as it never ceased to use hard power. This is evident in its creative intake of being recognised as a terrorist group; Hezbollah took this accusation on Israel.

Hezbollah aimed to defend itself from the claim that it is a terrorist group while inflicting that label on Israel. Thus, in a broadcast on Manar TV on June 20, 1997, Hezbollah insisted that it disapproves of terrorism and aggression in all their forms. According to Hezbollah, the embodiment of terrorism and aggression is the Zionist Jewish occupation since it was established on invasion and killing. Hezbollah aimed from this stand to argue that counterviolence is a normal human response to occupation, violence and terrorism. Hence, it is wrong to view resistance movements as terrorists while defending the Zionist-Jewish occupation.[568]

Hezbollah-Israeli struggle can be summed up in Nasrallah's words on Jerusalem Day, where he declared that Hezbollah is prepared to fight for a thousand years or even thousands of years. This statement came in response to the Israeli army chief of staff, who stated that Israel is prepared to stay in Lebanon for a thousand years.[569] Meanwhile, Hezbollah's leaders kept using religious figures and occasions to condemn Israel. Nasrallah took the event of Ashura Day, in which the Shia commemorate the killing of Imam Hussein in Karbala, which happened in 680 AD, to point out the relationship between the resistance and Imam Hussein, linking it to sacrifice, martyrdom, resistance and fighting the oppressed. On that occasion, he declared that "the dreams of the Children of Israel have ended."[570] Despite these mutual antagonisms, the decade saw the last Israeli presence in southern Lebanon as Israel came to withdraw from Lebanon in 2000.

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[566] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Peres Considers the Understanding an 'Agreement of the First Order', Velayati Expects a Stronger Political Role for Hezbollah" (April 28, 1996), p. 1, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[567] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Deputy Secretary General of Hezbollah spoke to An-Nahar, Qassem: Syria and Lebanon Refused to Link the Understanding to Negotiations, there Is No Fear of Shiite Strife, and we felt the Generosity of the Christian Street" (April 28, 1996), p. 6, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[568] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents,* pp. 56-57

[569] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Hezbollah Celebrated Jerusalem Day with Mass Performances and Marches…Competed by al-Tufayli, Nasrallah: We Are Ready to Fight Israel for a Thousand Years" (January 24, 1998), p. 7, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

[570] An-Nahar Newspaper, "Ashura Celebrations: Condolences, Mass Marches, and Political Positions; Shams El Din: I Call on All Lebanese to Take into Account the Balance" (May 9, 1998), p. 6, *AUB Archives* (Translated from Arabic)

In brief, this decade witnessed the establishment of Hezbollah's strong position and the early stages of building its identity as a resistance while practising *intimidation*. Eventually, this paved the way for a new phase of the Hezbollah-Israel confrontation, which will see both actors in new lights, tactics and positions.

6.2.2. Hezbollah and Israel Entered a New Era between 2000 and 2004

Between 2000 and 2004, two significant events occurred. First, the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000, following the breakdown of peace talks between Syria and Israel. Second, the prisoner exchange in 2004. Despite initial hopes for the implementation of soft and diplomatic power during this time, the abductions of Israeli personnel by Hezbollah demonstrated that *intimidation* remained the prevailing pattern of power in their relationship.

Peace Talks between Syria and Israel in 2000

The decade commenced with a new wave of peace talks, especially with Syria. The Clinton Administration was hoping to reach a deal between Israel and Syria. As a result, a conference was held in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, between January 3 and 11, 2000, to encourage peace negotiations. The Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa represented Syria, while Israel was represented by its Prime Minister at the time, Ehud Barak. The future border between the two nations was the main topic of discussion.[571] The Israelis insisted on maintaining the 1923 international border, which was the product of the Paulet–Newcombe Agreement between the United Kingdom (UK) and France, where it drew the borders between what was then the British Mandate of Palestine and the French Mandate of Syria.[572] By insisting on the 1923 border, Israel was preventing the Syrians from having direct access to the Sea of Galilee, while the Syrians demanded a commitment to a complete Israeli withdrawal from the 1949 armistice lines.[573] However, the meeting came to an end without a consensus.

Therefore, the Geneva summit followed in March 2000, between US President Bill Clinton and Syrian President Hafez al-Assad. It was the last attempt by Clinton to bring peace between Syria and Israel. However, just like the American conference, it failed due to Syria's insistence on restoring the Golan Heights' lands. At the same time, Israel wanted to retain a few hundred meters. However, the former US envoy to the Middle East, Dennis Ross, asserted that there are more "psychological" than "objective" distinctions between Israel and Syria.[574] Regardless, the decade started with a failed attempt to reach a deal and obtain peace. This will impact Hezbollah's activities against Israel and its stand, as will be seen in the coming few years.

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[571] Economic Cooperation Foundation, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: An Interactive Database*, "Shepherdstown Conference (2000)", https://ecf.org.il/issues/issue/211

[572] "Exchange of Notes Constituting An Agreement Between The British And French Governments Re Specting The Boundary Line Between Syria And Palestine From The Mediterranean To El Hammé Paris March 7, 1923", *Société des Nations — Recueil des Traités*, No.565, (1924), 364-372
https://web.archive.org/web/20080909201308/http://untreaty.un.org/unts/60001_120000/20/29/00039450.pdf

[573] Economic Cooperation Foundation, *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: An Interactive Database*, "Shepherdstown Conference (2000)", https://ecf.org.il/issues/issue/211

[574] Gary C. Gambill, "Implications of the Geneva Summit", *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, vol.2, no.4 (April 2000), https://www.meforum.org/meib/articles/0004_me1.htm

Eventually, Hezbollah encountered a climate of uncertainty during the time preceding the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. The unsuccessful peace talks between Syria and Israel contributed to this uncertainty, leaving Hezbollah unsure of Israel's next steps. Hezbollah was compelled to adjust and innovate in response to a potential Israeli escalation. Nonetheless, their reliance on hard power to accomplish their objectives meant that they heavily relied on force. This combination of protean and hard power resulted in the practice of *intimidation* power, which Hezbollah considered to be the most efficient approach to achieving its objectives, as will be seen in the subsequent narration.

Israeli Withdrawal in May 2000

Following the breakdown of negotiations between Israel and Syria in Geneva in March 2000, Barak endeavoured to accomplish a systematic evacuation from south Lebanon, ultimately adhering to UNSC resolution 425. In a testimony before the Winograd Committee, Barak stated that the Israeli government realised in March 2000 that leaving Lebanon would be an unconditional withdrawal without reaching a deal with Lebanon or Syria.[575] Meanwhile, Hezbollah persisted in launching attacks inside the security zone, which served the dual purpose of expediting the collapse of the South Lebanese Army (SLA) and increasing pressure on the IDF to evacuate as soon as feasible.[576] It is worth mentioning that the SLA was established by Saad Haddad, a Lebanese military officer, in 1977, when the Lebanese Civil War entered its second year. Christian members mainly dominated it, and its purpose was to fight the Palestinians and their Lebanese allies. The Israeli 1982 invasion strengthened SLA further, and it gradually came to operate under Israeli auspices.[577]

However, the event that brought the Israeli presence to a hasty end and demonstrated Hezbollah's *intimidation* power was the march of thousands of Lebanese civilians, motivated by Hezbollah, southward on May 22, some of them searching for relatives who had been detained in joint SLA-Israeli prisons for a long time. The IDF, which was not prepared for such an overflow of crowd, opened fire, killing several Lebanese, after encountering an emotionally charged crowd close to the small southern village of Meiss al Jabal. This led Barak, who realised that carnage might be on the horizon, to inform Washington that Israel would leave Lebanon within a day. Therefore, Israel had been driven from an Arab nation unconditionally and supposedly by the power of arms.[578]

Meanwhile, the US Middle East envoy, Dennis Ross, saw the unfolding events as a disaster. He asserted that the unconditional Israeli withdrawal, which Hezbollah paraded as a victory, would have a catastrophic impact on both the Palestinian-Israeli peace process and the overall state of affairs in the region.[579] Ross's assertions were on point since this precedence presented "a new model for dealing with Israel: the Hezbollah model. Don't make concessions. Don't negotiate. Use violence. And the Israelis will grow weary."[580] Hezbollah's refusal to consider the Israeli withdrawal as a token of peace from

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[575] Eitan Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story of the Party of God: From Revolution to Institutionalization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 225

[576] Nicholas Noe, "Victory, May 26, 2000", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 232-243, p. 232

[577] Orit Gazit, "From a Militia to a Diasporic Community: The Changing Identity of the South Lebanese Army", in Dan Miodownik and Oren Barak (eds), *Nonstate Actors in Intrastate Conflicts* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 140-165

[578] Noe, "Victory", p. 232

[579] Noe, "Victory", p. 232

[580] Dennis Ross, *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005) p. 262

Israel, in addition to its insistence on liberating the disputed Shebaa Farms, which Israel did not withdraw from considering it a Syrian land, as well as Hezbollah's promise to free all the Lebanese, Arab and Islamic prisoner in Israeli jails is an omen of what the first decade of the 2000s would be like.[581]

When Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon, it aimed to implement a policy of deterrence. This was translated into Barak's statement, in which he declared that securing peace in south Lebanon was the responsibility of the Lebanese and Syrian governments. He asserted that Israel would retaliate militarily against them in case Hezbollah launched an offensive attack on northern Israel.[582] However, such a declaration did not prevent Hezbollah from continuing its attack on Israel, especially on the borders. The first sign that Hezbollah had no intentions of stopping its military attacks on Israel after the latter's withdrawal was in October 2000, when Hezbollah kidnapped two IDF soldiers at Mount Dov. Moreover, the situation escalated after the election of Ariel Sharon as Israel's prime minister in March 2001. As part of his new plan to face Hezbollah and pressure Syria to restrict Hezbollah's movements, Sharon gave the order to attack a Syrian radar destination located in the Lebanese Beqaa valley. However, this did not deter Hezbollah. On the contrary, it opened fire at IDF outposts at Mount Dov and released a statement claiming that its actions had destroyed an Israeli radar.[583]

Moreover, along the Israeli border, Hezbollah began conducting routine operations against the IDF. Hezbollah operated in an initiative-based fashion, especially in the Mount Dov sector and the Shebaa Farms area, where most activities took place. Throughout this period, Hezbollah detonated numerous explosives and conducted multiple firing operations close to IDF patrols and posts, as well as along the border. Also, Hezbollah conducted several operations to abduct IDF soldiers. However, the outstanding abduction was that of retired Israeli Colonel Elhanan Tannenbaum in October 2000 after luring him to Dubai over a lucrative business deal.[584] This kidnapping was of significance because first, it happened after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in May 2000. Secondly, the kidnapping did not take place on the border after an attack. Instead, it was an operation done on a foreign soil, an Arab Gulf country. Hezbollah was showing through this act that its struggle and issues with Israel are an ongoing reality and not something from the past. Also, it shows that Hezbollah is not afraid to strike wherever it seems needed, despite geopolitical concerns.

Furthermore, Hezbollah turned its attention towards strengthening itself militarily and strategically. Thus, the movement began restructuring its operations in Lebanon with the assistance of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The result was the establishment of military zones in Lebanon, which included logistical sites, fortified sites, control headquarters, and intelligence positions. Within this framework, sites that housed different kinds of rocket and missile launchers were built and disguised. Moreover, to gather intelligence and project power, fortified positions were constructed alongside the Israeli border. Hence, it was decided to build a defence system against an Israeli invasion, which included scouting potential penetration points, acquiring upgraded antitank missiles, and creating a deterrent against Israel.[585]

Additionally, Hezbollah amassed a formidable arsenal of strategic military weapons, including land-sea missiles and crewless aerial vehicles (UAVs) fitted with explosives and mid-range missiles that could

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[581] Noe, "Victory", p. 240

[582] Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story*, p. 234

[583] Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story*, p. 234

[584] Nicholas Noe, "The Second Intifada", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 244-255, p. 244

[585] Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story*, p. 234

reach most of Israel's territory. It also maintained its autonomy over southern Lebanon and south Beirut suburbs, turning them into a military field where most military arrays were built. Besides, Hezbollah made use of the Beqaa Valley as a training and logistical hub. Furthermore, Hezbollah was able to establish the movement's deterrence against Israel thanks to the military array's construction, which was carried out without any real disruption from Israel or the Lebanese government. With this arsenal, Hezbollah was able to project an image of itself as the guardian of the south against any potential Israeli assault.[586]

Subsequently, Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* was evident in the immediate days that proceeded and followed the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. For instance, in the days before the Israeli withdrawal, Hezbollah escalated its military attacks on the IDF. Also, Hezbollah encouraged the people to march on the south, which resulted in confusion among the IDF and helped in its rushed withdrawal. Additionally, following the withdrawal, Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* was evident in its continuous attack on the IDF, the kidnapping of Israeli personnel and the strengthening of its strategic military capabilities.

2004 Prisoner Exchange

Hezbollah's aim in attacking the IDF on the Israeli-Lebanese borders and elsewhere was to abduct its soldiers and later exchange them with Hezbollah's members as well as Lebanese, Palestinian and other Arab nationalities. Hezbollah's *intimidation* can be understood in this light, especially after reaching a deal in 2004.

However, the negotiation for the prisoner exchange, which culminated in 2004, had started years ago, mainly after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. In an interview conducted by the Kuwaiti daily newspaper Al-Rai Al-Aam in November 2001, Nasrallah talked about the negotiations with Israel regarding the exchange of prisoners. He mentioned that Hezbollah explained to the mediators that there are two ways to carry out a prisoner exchange. They can either provide the Israelis with information about the condition of the Israeli soldiers in exchange for a human price, meaning that Hezbollah's prisoners will be released and then they can negotiate an exchange under the previously agreed-upon terms, or they can negotiate a comprehensive deal, meaning that all of the prisoners will be exchanged without any information being released beforehand. Nasrallah went on to accuse Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, who was then serving as Israeli defense minister, of deceiving the three Israeli soldiers' families, whom Hezbollah is detaining, by claiming that he made an offer for Hezbollah to exchange live prisoners for information about the three soldiers. According to Nasrallah, Israel never made such an offer.[587]

Nonetheless, On January 24, 2004, Hezbollah and the Israeli cabinet announced, through a German mediator, that an agreement had been reached on a mutual prisoner exchange. While the announcement was hailed mainly as a public relations triumph for Hezbollah by the regional and international media, the Israelis were less happy about the deal, regarding it as a massive capitulation. The bodies of the three IDF members who were taken prisoner by Hezbollah in October 2000, along with Tannenbaum, were exchanged for 400 Palestinian prisoners, five Syrians, three Moroccans, three Sudanese, one Libyan and one German in addition to eleven members of Hezbollah. For some Israelis, this was an outrageous deal,

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[586] Eitan Azani, *Hezbollah: The Story,* p. 234

[587] Nicholas Noe, "The Americans Have Sent us a Political Bomb, November 16, 2001", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 256-262, pp. 261-262

a risky lesson that would only encourage Hezbollah to carry out more kidnapping operations later on.[588] Nasrallah considered in the speech that he delivered on the occasion that by not releasing three other prisoners whose names were mentioned in the deal and the maps of Israeli-planted landmines in Lebanon, Israel kept a legitimate reason in the hand of Hezbollah to strike again. On the other hand, it has been asserted that Sharon abruptly withheld the three prisoners and the landmine maps to preserve future bargaining leverage.[589] These two stands were an omen of what was to come.

It is important to note that during the Israel-Hezbollah negotiations for a prisoner exchange, a confrontation occurred. Hezbollah destroyed an Israeli military bulldozer after it crossed the UN borderline, resulting in the death of one soldier and the injury of another. "This exemplifies Hezbollah's two-track policy: military confrontation and negotiations."[590] Interestingly, this policy seems to be working for Hezbollah, as ten days later, they successfully brought about the prisoner exchange. Through this operation, Hezbollah was able to maintain its image as an Islamic and Arab resistance group that is committed to liberating the land and protecting all Arabs, regardless of their affiliations, religions, or backgrounds. Additionally, this was the first time that Israel had given in to Hezbollah's demands and freed the Palestinians, which set a precedent and gave Hezbollah a unique role in the Intifada, ultimately regionalising the conflict. Through the nature of this prisoner exchange, "Israel granted Hezbollah a de facto recognition as a legitimate resistance movement."[591] This testifies to the success of Hezbollah's *intimidation* power.

Another illustration of Hezbollah's *intimidation* power was the paper it produced in August 2004 titled "Hizbullah: Identity and Goals", where its unwavering position on Israel was once more presented.[592] Hezbollah alluded to its religious and ideological beliefs as the primary source of rejecting and fighting Israel. The armed political party declared that its ideological principles deny legitimacy to Israel, so it was no accident that Hezbollah evolved into a resistance movement against this Zionist entity. Hence, for Hezbollah, "the conflict became one of legitimacy based on religious ideals."[593] The 2004 paper went on to celebrate Hezbollah as an Islamic resistance that forced the Zionist enemy to retreat gradually due to a series of devastating blows. Hezbollah also pointed out the significance of its suicide attacks, asserting that Israel suffered significant losses from these attacks on all conceivable fronts, including military, psychological, and mental.[594]

Therefore, between 2000 and 2004, Hezbollah had a tumultuous period, merged with a sense of victory and uncertainty. Yet, in its struggle with Israel during this period, Hezbollah seemed victorious or at least it represented itself as such, primarily through two critical events that took place during that period. The Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 and the prisoner exchange in 2004. These events allowed Hezbollah to emerge more vigorously, with the enhanced practice of *intimidation* power, resulting from the armed political party's protean and hard power.

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[588] Jewish Virtual Library, *IDF Soldiers Missing-in-Action: Israel-Hezbollah Prisoner Exchange* (January 29, 2004) https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/israel-hezbollah-prisoner-exchange-january-2004
[589] Nicholas Noe, "Prisoner Exchange, January 29, 2004", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 299-309, pp. 299-300
[590] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 163
[591] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 163
[592] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 61
[593] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 61
[594] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 61

6.2.3. Hezbollah and Israel's Confrontations between 2005 and 2010

The period between 2005 and 2010, as mentioned in Chapter 4, was very critical for Hezbollah as it was facing mounting pressure on the Lebanese stage, mainly in the light of UNSC Resolution 1559, which aimed at disarming it and in the aftermath of Hariri's assassination which led to Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon and forced Hezbollah to participate in the government. Despite these mounting pressures, Hezbollah continued to confront Israel and include it in its political agenda. Ultimately, Hezbollah's struggle with Israel proved to be a powerful tool and a means of salvation, as evidenced by the war that erupted between the two in July 2006. One of the reasons Hezbollah turned to the South and kidnapped the Israeli soldiers was to escape the Lebanese National Dialogue round table, which was discussing at the time the defence plan of the country, the issue of Hezbollah's weapons and the way to address it. Additionally, Hezbollah provided support to Hamas during the 2008-2009 Gaza War and articulated its conflict with Israel in the 2009 Manifesto. By examining these critical events, we can gain insight into Hezbollah's patterns of power.

Hezbollah fluctuated between protean and control power throughout this period while exercising hard and soft power. This phase was the first to witness Hezbollah aiming to achieve control power and exercising it. While Hezbollah's war against Israel was more in line with its protean hard approach, hence, its practice of *intimidation*, the Gaza war saw the armed political party moving into the realm of control power. Not only did Hezbollah's actions during the Gaza war result from calculable risk, but they also boosted structural dominance, hence its brief flattery with *predomination*. On the other hand, Hezbollah's *New Manifesto* revealed its *intimidation* power once more.

The 2006 July War

The background of the July War in 2006 can be traced back to the issue of the prisoners. When the prisoner exchange in 2004 took place, Israel excluded three important Lebanese prisoners, Samir Quntar, Yehya Skaf and Nasim Niser, from the deal. However, Nasrallah hinted back then that Hezbollah would keep fighting till Israel releases them and others.[595] Hence, despite the domestic pressure that Hezbollah found itself under during the year 2005 after the Hariri assassination, Nasrallah did not shy away from focusing on Hezbollah's struggle with Israel. He declared on Jerusalem Day in October 2005 that Hezbollah is resolved to honour its pledge to the prisoners held by Israel and free every one of them and every grain of the occupied land.[596] As such, Hezbollah attempted one of its most audacious operations to capture Israeli soldiers in the disputed Shebaa Farms, which resulted in the killing of four Hezbollah fighters by an Israeli sniper. Despite the failure of this attempt, five months later, Nasrallah delivered a speech at a demonstration in Beirut, where he spoke out in favour of Arab, Palestinian, and Lebanese detainees held by Israel. This was an unmistakable sign that Hezbollah planned to conduct additional capture operations to pressure Israel into releasing the three prisoners mentioned above and others whom the party would name.[597] Thus, in this charged atmosphere, Hezbollah delivered on its promise and achieved its goal to kidnap two Israeli soldiers, First Sergeant Ehud Goldwasser and Sergeant First Class Eldad Rege, during a cross-border raid on July 12, 2006. The clashes that day resulted in the deaths of

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[595] Nicholas Noe, "Prisoner Exchange, January 29, 2004", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 299-309,

[596] Nicholas Noe, "Al Quds Day, October 28, 2005", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 352-369, p. 368

[597] Nicholas Noe, "I Assure You Once Again [Samir], That Your Hopes Are Sound and in the Right Place, April 24, 2006", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 370-377, p. 370

eight Israeli soldiers.[598] Hence, the Second Lebanon War or July War, started when Israel launched a 34-day attack while imposing a sea and air blockade on Lebanon.[599]

The war was played in the air, on the sea and on the ground. First, Israel made a point to bomb the bridges and roads in an attempt to avoid the transport of Israeli soldiers outside the country. Additionally, it attacked the runways and fuel depots of Rafic Hariri International Airport in Beirut. Also, it targeted Hezbollah's offices, its leaders' houses and its media organisations, mainly Al-Manar TV and Radio Al-Nur. However, despite the attacks, both media companies kept on broadcasting. Also, Israel attacked Hezbollah's rocket station.[600] On the other hand, Hezbollah did not stop its rocket attacks on Israel, as around 4,228 rockets were fired by the Hezbollah rocket force during the conflict, at a rate exceeding 100 rockets every day.[601] Moreover, when Israel started its ground invasion, Hezbollah waged guerrilla warfare, using small, well-armed units to launch attacks from strongly fortified positions, frequently in urban areas. Hezbollah fighters were "nothing like Hamas or the Palestinians," according to an Israeli soldier who fought in the conflict, "they are trained and highly qualified. All of us were surprised."[602] Moreover, Hezbollah used advanced anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) manufactured in Iran to counter IDF armour. It is worth noting that in Hezbollah's view, Israel's strategic vulnerability was its inability to take consistent losses, so during combat, the group focused on causing losses to the IDF. However, when Israel declared a unilateral halt to its airstrikes against Lebanon following the high number of civilian casualties among Lebanese citizens in the Qana strike, Hezbollah stopped attacking Israel with rockets. Hezbollah relaunched rocket attacks at Israeli targets as soon as Israel started bombing Lebanon from the air.[603] Hezbollah rocket attacks successfully struck Israel's military targets.[604]

However, the two warring parties were stubborn in their demands regarding the terms of a ceasefire. Hence, the ceasefire terms had been drawn and amended multiple times during the fighting. Hezbollah remained committed to seeking an all-out ceasefire.[605] At the same time, Israel demanded the return of the two captured soldiers as well as a conditional ceasefire.[606] On the other hand, Lebanon repeatedly implored the UN Security Council to demand an unconditional and immediate cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah. However, the US ambassador to the UN, John Bolton, affirmed that the US and the UK, backed by multiple Arab leaders, postponed the ceasefire negotiations. It was not until it became evident Hezbollah would be difficult to overcome that outside attempts to thwart a ceasefire

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[598] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents,* p. 168

[599] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents,* pp. 168-169

[600] The Daily Star, *Timeline of the July War 2006*, (September 28, 2006), Archived from the original https://web.archive.org/web/20060928081123/http://www.dailystar.com.lb/July_War06.asp

[601] Uzi Rubin, "Hizballah's Rocket Campaign Against Northern Israel: A Preliminary Report", *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs* (August 31, 2006), https://www.jcpa.org/brief/brief006-10.htm

[602] Steven Erlanger and Richard A. Jr. Oppel, "A Disciplined Hezbollah Surprises Israel With Its Training, Tactics and Weapons", *The New York Times*, (August 7, 2006), https://www.nytimes.com/2006/08/07/world/middleeast/07hezbollah.html

[603] Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, *34 Days: Israel, Hezbollah, and the War in Lebanon* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 170

[604] Sima Vaknin-Gil, "Censorship Policy Regarding Fighting in the North", *Independent Media Review Analysis*, (July 16, 2006), https://www.imra.org.il/story.php?id=30102

[605] CTV News, *Hezbollah Wants an Unconditional Ceasefire*, (July 17, 2006), https://web.archive.org/web/20110604123339/http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/CTVNewsAt11/20060716/mideast_template_060717/

[606] The Jerusalem Post, *Israel Sends Instructions to Lebanon Through Italy*, (July 16, 2006), https://www.jpost.com/International/Israel-sends-instructions-to-Lebanon-through-Italy

were abandoned.[607] The UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1701 on August 11, 2006, to halt hostilities. On August 12, Hezbollah and the Lebanese government accepted it; on August 13, the Israeli government did the same. On August 14, the truce went into force.[608] However, as the coming months and years will show, the provisions of resolution 1701 will not be respected as Hezbollah refused to disarm south of the Litani River; hence, skirmishes between Hezbollah and Israel continued till the coming decade. As for the bodies of the two Israeli soldiers whose capture was the main reason for the war, Hezbollah will exchange them with Lebanese and Arab prisoners in 2008.[609]

Even though Lebanon witnessed massive destruction with many deaths and injuries, Hezbollah claimed victory. The basis for Hezbollah's victory could be traced to political reasons. The war came after UNSC Resolution 1559 aimed to cut Hezbollah's military wing. Hezbollah saw the war as a means to destroy the armed political party, confiscate its arms and isolate Iran and Syria. Since the war failed to achieve these goals, where Hezbollah's forces emerged intact and its allies firmer, the VNSA called it a victory.[610] Hezbollah did not waste time capitalising on its success, presenting itself as the sole defender of the Arab cause against Israel and its allies.

Eventually, Hezbollah's agility and exercise of protean power, mainly improvisation, was evident in the Second Lebanon War. First, Hezbollah was experiencing the world as risky in a context of uncertainty. The risk came from the pressure exerted on it from domestic, regional and international elements to disarm itself and adhere to Lebanese sovereignty, especially in the wake of the UNSC resolution 1559 and the assassination of Rafic Hariri. Hezbollah experienced further risk when its disarmament was to be discussed at the national dialogue round table. Also, Hezbollah was facing a deliberate attempt to destroy its military wing. According to an article written by Seymour Hersh in *The New Yorker*, in August 2006, the Israeli government was authorised by the White House to launch an attack on Hezbollah in Lebanon. It has been claimed that discussions concerning this were held as early as two months before Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight more before the conflict broke out in July 2006.[611] Such allegations were repeated by Conal Urquhart of *The Guardian*, who claims that testimony from the then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was leaked by the Winograd Committee, indicating that Olmert "had been preparing for such a war at least four months before the official casus belli: the capture by Hezbollah of two Israeli soldiers from a border post on July 12, 2006."[612]

Thus, Hezbollah faced an existential danger during that period. The way it chose to deal with the situation was by improvising a pre-emptive attack on Israel by kidnapping the two soldiers before Israel was ready to start its war, hence sending it into shock. By doing so, Hezbollah turned the environment of uncertainty to its favour and planned, through improvisation, according to the events it was experiencing as risky. However, regarding the type of power Hezbollah chose to face its enemy, it applied hard power. Hence, once more, Hezbollah was practising *intimidation*. The success of Hezbollah's *intimidation* power was

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[607] BBC News, *Bolton Admits Lebanon Truce Block*, (March 22, 2007) http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/6479377.stm

[608] Chris Lawrence and Jim Clancy, "Lebanon Truce Holds Despite Clashes", *CNN*, (August 14, 2006), https://edition.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/meast/08/14/mideast.main/index.html

[609] Ethan Bronner, "Israel Agrees to Exchange Prisoners for Dead Soldiers", *The New York Times*, June 30, 2008, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/30/world/middleeast/30mideast.html

[610] The Islamic Resistance Official Website, *Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah's Speech at the Victory Festival in the July War (Victory from God)*, https://video.moqawama.org.lb/details.php?cid=1&linkid=1950 (Translated from Arabic)

[611] Seymour Hersh, "Watching Lebanon", *The New Yorker*, (August 21, 2006), https://web.archive.org/web/20140718025823/http://www.newyorker.com/archive/2006/08/21/060821fa_fact

[612] Conal Urquhart, "Israel Planned For Lebanon War Months In Advance, PM Says", *The Guardian*, (March 10, 2007), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/mar/09/syria.israelandthepalestinians

on display on July 16, 2008, when it exchanged the remains of two Israeli soldiers with the oldest serving Arab prisoner along with nine other prisoners and the remains of around 200 Lebanese and Palestinian militants.[613] Hezbollah will come to capitalise on its success and repeat that Israel is "weaker than a spider's web" to uplift the spirits of its fighters or those of the Palestinians, as it will be seen in the Gaza War 2008-2009.[614]

The Gaza War 2008-2009

The tension between Hamas and Israel escalated on November 4, 2008, which marked the end of a six-month-long cease-fire.[615] On that day, the IDF attacked Deir al-Balah, central Gaza, to destroy a tunnel for Hamas. The latter responded by firing rockets into Israel.[616] As a result, Israel launched Operation Cast Lead on Gaza on December 27, 2008, declaring its aim was to stop rocket fire by Hamas.[617] The war between Israel and Hamas lasted for three weeks, ending on January 18, 2009.[618] However, all eyes were on Hezbollah while the battle raged in the strip—questions about whether Hezbollah would get involved militarily and the shape of its intervention prevailed. However, as the events proved, Hezbollah chose not to intervene militarily and directly in the war. Instead, the armed political party chose the soft power approach by orchestrating a media campaign against Israel. Despite Hezbollah's decision not to interfere militarily, it provided Hamas with military and moral support throughout the war.[619]

However, the question remained as to why Hezbollah refrained from opening a front with Israel. Various political and military factors probably impacted Hezbollah's decision. A few of the most important ones are that Lebanon was about to hold elections at that time and that the public was generally opposed to starting a war against Israel when the country was still attempting to rebuild the massive damage done to its infrastructure in the 2006 war.[620] Yet, Hezbollah allowed the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command (PFLP-GC) to launch rockets from southern Lebanon onto northern Israel in an attempt to send two messages. One for the Israelis is that their northern border is not immune from attacks and that a new front can be opened at any moment. The second message is to the Palestinians, mainly Hamas in Gaza, that it is not alone and that Hezbollah is ready to open a new front to release the pressure on Gaza. This message is also meant to preserve Hezbollah's image in the Arab world as the defender of the oppressed, mainly the Palestinians. [621]

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[613] Basma Ayat and Avida Landau, "Hezbollah Delivers Remains of Two Israeli Soldiers", *Reuters*, (July 16, 2008), https://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSL141960220080716

[614] Nicholas Noe, "Victory, May 26, 2000", in Nicholas Noe (ed.) *Voice of Hezbollah: The Statements of Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah* (London: Verso, 2007), 232-243, p. 233

[615] Jim Zanotti, Carol Migdalovitz, Jeremy M. Sharp, Casey L. Addis, Christopher M. Blanchard, Rhoda Margesson, "Israel and Hamas: Conflict in Gaza (2008-2009)", *Congressional Research Service*, (February 19, 2009), pp. 6–7 https://sgp.fas.org/crs/mideast/R40101.pdf

[616] Rory McCarthy, "Gaza Truce Broken as Israeli Raid Kills Six Hamas Gunmen", *The Guardian*, (November 5, 2008), https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/nov/05/israelandthepalestinians

[617]BBC Q&A: Gaza Conflict, (January 18, 2009) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/nov/05/israelandthepalestinians

[618] Arthur Bright, "Israel Set to Launch 'Limited Operation' in Gaza", *The Christian Science Monitor*, (December 26, 2008) https://www.csmonitor.com/World/terrorism-security/2008/1226/p99s01-duts.html

[619] Benedetta Berti "Assessing the Role of Hezbollah in the Gaza War and Its Regional Impact", *Terrorism Monitor* vol. 7, no. 4, reposted by The Jamestown Foundation Global Research and Analysis, (March 2009), https://jamestown.org/program/assessing-the-role-of-hezbollah-in-the-gaza-war-and-its-regional-impact/

[620] Berti "Assessing the Role"

[621] Berti "Assessing the Role"

Although Hezbollah did not interfere directly, its influence on the Gaza War was evident, especially since Hezbollah was in constant communication and coordination with Hamas. For instance, on December 15, 2009, just one day after Hamas' political leader in Damascus, Khalid Mashal, formally declared the group's refusal to renew the ceasefire. Several days before the truce between Hamas and Israel expired, Hezbollah's Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah, launched a pan-Arab campaign to end the embargo on Gaza. The circumstances under which these two announcements were made and how they were delivered show a minimum amount of inter-organizational coordination and an open line of communication between the two groups.[622]

Additionally, Hezbollah's military support for Hamas was evident in the tactics employed by the latter during the Gaza war. This was evident in Hamas's increasing use of rockets in its fight with Israel rather than simply relying on suicide operations. This shift in Hamas tactics is attributed to the observation and application of Hezbollah's strategies as well as its acquisition of Iranian-made, longer-range Katyusha and Grad rockets (18.6 to 21.7 miles). Furthermore, Hezbollah allegedly taught Hamas military strategies for attacking Merkava tanks—the primary battle tank used by the IDF.[623]

Hezbollah's support for Hamas was not limited to coordination and military support. It went beyond that to the domain of propaganda and psychological actions. Hezbollah's tangible contribution to the war on Gaza was through the media campaign it launched to energise and organise the Arab populace to stand next to Gaza and defend it in any possible way. From the outset of the war, Nasrallah contrasted the attack and what was happening in Gaza to what took place in Lebanon back in 2006, declaring that this fight was a continuation of the battle that started in Lebanon, which had signalled the Israeli military decline.[624]

Nasrallah went on to state that the Israelis claimed to have learned lessons from the second war in Lebanon, but it appears that the resistance in Gaza gained more insight from these lessons than the Israelis. He went on to assert that the war in Gaza is similar to that of July 2006 in Lebanon, meaning that Israel is once more exposed for who it is: feeble and unconfident. Moreover, like in 2006, when Hezbollah declared victory despite the outcomes and causalities, it applied the same tactics when the war in Gaza ended. Hezbollah congratulated Hamas on the triumph that it accomplished. However, it went on to execute a carefully thought-out PR campaign highlighting the flaws in the Israeli deterrence model.[625]

Consequently, it can be asserted that the war in Gaza offered Hezbollah a new venue to venture into practising *predomination*. This is because Hezbollah's actions resulted from calculable risk by deciding to stick to border skirmishes to prevent the opening of the Lebanese front. Hence, Hezbollah exercised control power, particularly in its calculable risk decision. However, the type of power Hezbollah chose to face its enemy was hard power; thus, combining these two powers produced the practice of *predomination*. Therefore, by practising the power of *predomination*, Hezbollah was meddling with control power and venturing beyond its well-tested *intimidation* power. However, the period will close on Hezbollah retaining its *intimidation* rhetoric against Israel.

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[622] Berti "Assessing the Role"
[623] Berti "Assessing the Role"
[624] Berti "Assessing the Role"
[625] Berti "Assessing the Role"

Although Hezbollah meant for its 2009 *New Manifesto* to present the armed political party in a new light, more open and less aggressive, its stand on Israel remained the same, for Hezbollah repeated its ideological and religious position on Israel and its protégé, the US. According to Hezbollah, Israel is a Western project, and without the full support it received from the old colonialist powers and the new ones, this Zionist entity would have neither come to exist nor it would have survived that long. Also, Hezbollah once more made it clear that it stands against all forms of peace negotiations, settlements or treaties with Israel.

According to Hezbollah, the West committed a crime against humanity when it introduced Israel into the Arab and Muslim world and fostered it into a hostile infiltration that served as a front for Western schemes of dominance and a foundation for control over the region. Moreover, Hezbollah stated that the US provides the Zionist entity with all means of stability, serving as both the forward base and the central hub for invading the region and coordinating its fall. It was necessary to give Zionism all the power and sustainability dynamics it could have, as well as to weave a web of protection to ensure its survival, for it is the malignant gland that should drain the Arab world of its potential, split the region, and scatter its hopes and dreams. Hence, the Zionist movement gave rise to a state entity that has prospered through occupation, aggression, massacres, and terrorism, all with the help and protection of colonialist powers, especially the US, with which the Zionist state has a strategic alliance.[626]

As a result, Hezbollah stands firm against any form of negotiations and deals with Israel. Hezbollah declared that the Zionist entity has consistently shown that it neither seeks nor asks for peace. Instead, it uses negotiations to impose its terms, fortify its position, advance its goals, and shatter the psychological barriers and blades of hostility the region's people hold against it. Hezbollah asserts that through the peace talks, the Zionist entity hopes to establish a free, official, and popular normalisation wave that guarantees its existence and organic integration into the regional system. The Zionist state aspires to become an accepted, acknowledged, and lawful entity in the region, enjoying the cessation of its blatant violation of Palestinian territory. However, according to Hezbollah, this Zionist entity lives in an existential dilemma that haunts its leaders and supporters because this usurper, artificial entity is an abnormal creation that is not viable for continuity and is prone to demise.[627]

Thus, according to Hezbollah, the war that it wages against the Zionist-colonialist plan for Palestine is an obligation of self-defence against Israeli occupation, aggression, and hegemonic oppression—a threat to the region's future and very existence.[628] With these words, Hezbollah would have become a practitioner of *intimidation* power. However, it was never far from embracing control power whenever it got to work in an environment of certainty or created a sense of certainty through its religious beliefs and structural dominance. Yet, as the coming period will show, protean power remains Hezbollah's go-to strategy for survival and a tool for achieving its aim.

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[626] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 121-133
[627] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, p. 134
[628] Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, pp. 133-136

6.2.4. Hezbollah Restructures Its Struggle with Israel between 2011 and 2020

After the Arab Uprising, Hezbollah shifted its focus away from direct military confrontation with Israel to engage in wars in Arab countries, particularly in Syria. Although this period did not witness wars between Hezbollah and Israel, skirmishes on the Israeli-Lebanese border continued. Additionally, Hezbollah's conflict with Israel evolved to include targeting Israelis outside of Israel and fighting on Syrian territory. These three forms of confrontation demonstrated Hezbollah's ability to adapt and combine protean power with hard power. In other words, *intimidation* remained the main pattern of power in Hezbollah's approach to its fight with Israel. The following narration of attacks and skirmishes that took place between 2011 and 2020 on the Lebanese border, on Syrian land and in various countries will illustrate Hezbollah's use of *intimidation* as a pattern of power.

The border between Lebanon and Israel remained a stage for Israel and Hezbollah to intimidate each other and show their strength and performance, even if not on a large scale. The beginning of 2011 saw such an interaction when Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak, who was touring the Israeli northern border, warned that Hezbollah needed reminding about "the heavy beating they suffered from us in 2006" by threatening to have the IDF return to Lebanon.[629] Meantime, in response to Barak's menace, Hezbollah had its line of threats to deliver to Israel through its Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah, who, on the occasion of commemorating the "Anniversary of the Resistance Leaders", warned that Hezbollah is ready to invade the Galilee and liberate it.[630]

However, the skirmishes did not stay in the realm of words; they transcended into actions when Hezbollah escalated its conflict with Israel by utilising its protean power, demonstrating its agility and adaptability by targeting Israelis abroad. On February 13, 2012, two attacks against Israeli embassies in India and Georgia occurred one day after the fourth anniversary of the assassination of Hezbollah's military commander Imad Mughniyeh. The bomb that was planted under the car of a worker at the Israeli embassy in Tbilisi was discovered before he reached the embassy, and as such, it was dismantled. However, the bomb under the car of the wife of the Israeli embassy's chief security in New Delhi exploded, injuring her and three others.[631] While Israel blamed Hezbollah for the attacks, Nasrallah denied the armed political party's involvement in the attacks, asserting that it is insulting for Hezbollah to attack a few minor citizens in revenge for its leader.[632]

Nonetheless, the attacks on Israelis abroad were far from over. In July 2012, Cyprus police detained a Lebanese man suspected of preparing to launch assaults on visitors from Israel in violation of anti-terrorism laws. The man was planning Hezbollah attacks in Cyprus, and he admitted it when questioned, according to security officials. An urgent communication from Israeli intelligence prompted the police to become aware of the man. The Lebanese man intended to blow up a plane or tour bus. He also had photos of Israeli targets and information about Israeli airlines that fly from Cyprus.[633]

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[629] The Telegraph, *Israel 'May Have To Re-Enter Lebanon'*, (February 16, 2011), https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/8328396/Israel-may-have-to-re-enter-Lebanon.html

[630] Hezbollah Media Relations Website, *Sayyed Nasrallah's Speech on The Anniversary of The Leaders of The Resistance* (February 16, 2011), https://mediarelations-lb.org/post.php?id=6774 (Translated from Arabic)

[631] Yaakov Katz, "Attacks target Israeli Embassies in Georgia, India", *The Jerusalem Post*, (February 13, 2012) https://www.jpost.com/Defense/Attacks-target-Israeli-embassies-in-Georgia-India

[632] CNN, *Hezbollah Denies It Had Role in Recent Bombings of Israeli Targets*, (February 16, 2012), https://edition.cnn.com/2012/02/16/world/asia/thailand-bombings-israel-iran/index.html

[633] Barak Ravid, "Man Detained in Cyprus Was Planning Attack on Israeli Targets for Hezbollah", *Haaretz*, (July 14, 2012), https://www.haaretz.com/2012-07-14/ty-article/cyprus-foils-attack-on-israelis/0000017f-e8c5-dc7e-adff-f8edd3a80000

Also, on July 18, 2012, a suicide bomber attacked a bus in Burgas Airport, Bulgaria. The bus was carrying 42 Israeli tourists from the airport to their hotels. As a result of the attack, 6 Israelis were killed and 32 injured.[634] After investigations, the Bulgarian and Israeli authorities blamed the attack on Hezbollah. They declared that the two suspects belonged to Hezbollah, and they had entered the country through Canadian and Australian passports. According to Netanyahu, Hezbollah and Iran have prepared and executed numerous attacks, including those in Thailand, Kenya, Turkey, India, Azerbaijan, Cyprus, and Georgia. The attack in Bulgaria is just one of them.[635]

On the other hand, the war of words and threats kept going between Israel and Hezbollah, especially over the latter acquiring chemical weapons. In light of such a possibility, Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman declared that any "transfer of non-conventional weapons to Hezbollah would be 'clear casus belli' for Israel."[636] However, Nasrallah denied that Hezbollah had acquired any chemical weapons. Still, he asserted that the armed political party could inflict severe casualties on Israel in future wars, leading to the same effect.[637]

Conversely, Hezbollah took its struggle with Israel to a new level when it launched a drone from the Mediterranean over Israel, which was manufactured in Iran and assembled in Lebanon. Nasrallah claimed that the drone flew above "sensitive sites" in Israel before the Israelis shot it down above the Negev desert.[638]

On the other hand, Israel took its struggle with Hezbollah from the Israeli-Lebanese borders to Syria, especially following Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian Civil War. The first Israeli airstrike on Hezbollah in Syria occurred on January 30, 2013, aiming to avert the handover of "game-changing" weapons to the armed political party from Iran.[639] In another episode of the drone war, the IDF shot down another drone over Haifa's coast. Israel pointed to Hezbollah, but the armed political party denied its involvement.[640] However, the scuffles between Hezbollah and Israel continued on the borders when Hezbollah launched an improvised explosive device (IED) attack on the IDF near the Israeli-Lebanese border, injuring four soldiers.[641]

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[634] BBC, *Burgas Attack: Bulgaria Names Anti-Israeli Bomber*, (July 18, 2014), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28370527

[635] Tsvetelia Tsolova, "Bulgaria Blames Hezbollah in Bomb Attack on Israeli Tourists", *Reuters*, (February 5, 2013), https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bulgaria-bombing-idUSBRE9140TZ20130205/

[636] Raphael Ahren, "Liberman: Transfer of non-conventional weapons to Hezbollah would be 'clear casus belli' for Israel", *The Times of Israel*, (July 24, 2012), https://www.timesofisrael.com/fm-transfer-of-non-conventional-weapons-to-hezbollah-would-be-clear-casus-belli-for-israel/

[637] The Associated Press, "Hezbollah Leader Says Group Has No Chemical Weapons But Can Cause Damage In Israel", *CTV News*, (September 3, 2012), https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/hezbollah-leader-says-group-has-no-chemical-weapons-but-can-cause-damage-in-israel-1.940771

[638] BBC, *Hezbollah Admits Launching Drone Over Israel*, (October 11, 2012), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-19914441

[639] The Jerusalem Post, *Israel Strikes Syrian Weapons En Route To Hezbollah*, (January 30, 2013), https://www.jpost.com/defense/israel-strikes-syrian-weapons-en-route-to-hezbollah

[640] Yaakov Lappin, "IAF Shoots Down Drone from Lebanon off Haifa", *The Jerusalem Post*, (April 25, 2013), https://www.jpost.com/Defense/IAF-shoots-down-drone-which-flew-south-from-Lebanon-311098

[641] Yaakov Lappin, "4 IDF Soldiers Injured in Explosion During Operation On Lebanese Border", *The Jerusalem Post*, (August 7, 2013), https://www.jpost.com/Defense/4-IDF-soldiers-injured-in-explosion-during-operation-on-northern-border-322321

In its turn, Hezbollah also utilised the Syrian territory in its struggle with Israel when two of its members attempted to place a bomb on the barrier separating the Syrian side of the Golan Heights from that of Israel, leading the IDF troops to fire on them.[642] However, utilising the Syrian-Israeli borders did not mean abandoning the struggle on the Lebanese-Israeli borders. On the contrary, just a few months later, two Israeli soldiers were injured when Hezbollah planted a bomb near the Israeli-Lebanese border. As a result, the IDF retaliated with shelling across the border.[643]

Furthermore, the fight on two border fronts continued when Israel struck a Hezbollah convoy in the Golan Heights in Syria, resulting in the deaths of six people. One was Jihad Mughniyeh, the son of the late Hezbollah leader Imad Mughniyeh.[644] As a result of this Israeli attack, Hezbollah retaliated by killing two Israeli soldiers on the Lebanese-Israeli borders, prompting Israel to fire artilleries, which inadvertently killed a Spanish peacekeeper working for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The situation was tense, and there was fear that a war similar to that in July 2006 would start. However, the situation wind down when Hezbollah sent a message to Israel via intermediaries that the armed political party did not wish to escalate and that it regarded the matter as closed.[645]

While the border situation calmed down, confrontation was boiling elsewhere. Cyprus was the stage on which accusations against Hezbollah for preparing an attack on Israeli citizens in Europe came to light. Hussein Bassam Abdallah, who Hezbollah assigned to organise strikes against Israeli targets in Europe, was apprehended by Cyprus police on May 29, 2015.[646] A month later, Abdallah was sentenced to six years in prison by a Cypriot court.[647]

Later that year, on December 19, Israel launched an air strike on Hezbollah's targets in Syria, killing the notorious Samir Quntar and nine others.[648] On January 4, less than a month after the Israeli airstrike, Hezbollah retaliated by attacking a military vehicle on the Israeli-Lebanese border, prompting Israel to reply by firing artillery shells.[649]

On the other hand, Israel never escaped Hezbollah's rhetoric. So, during a speech that Nasrallah delivered on Jerusalem Day on June 23, 2017, he asserted that in case of any potential future conflict, Hezbollah would be joined by "thousands and hundreds of thousands" of fighters from the Arab and Muslim world

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[642] Al Arabiya News, *Israel Shoots at Hezbollah Fighters on Syrian Golan*, (March 5, 2014), https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2014/03/05/Israel-shoots-2-Hezbollah-fighters-in-Syrian-Golan
[643] Reuters, *Hezbollah Bomb Wounds Two Israeli Soldiers, Israel Shells South Lebanon*, (October 7, 2014), https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-lebanon-violence-idUSKCN0HW10G20141007/
[644] BBC, *Three Killed as Israel and Hezbollah Clash on The Lebanese Border*, (January 28, 2015), https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-31015862
[645] Jodi Rudoren and Anne Barnard, "Hezbollah Kills 2 Israeli Soldiers Near Lebanon", *The New York Times*, (Jan. 28, 2015), https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/29/world/middleeast/israel-lebanon-hezbollah-missile-attack.html
[646] Haaretz, *Cyprus Police Foil Planned Hezbollah Attacks Against Israeli Targets in Europe*, (May 29, 2015), https://www.haaretz.com/2015-05-29/ty-article/planned-hezbollah-attacks-against-israeli-targets-in-europe-foiled/0000017f-eb33-d639-af7f-ebf71f0f0000
[647] The Times of Israel, *Cyprus Sentences Hezbollah Man To Six Years For Anti-Israel Bomb Plot*, (June 29, 2015), https://www.timesofisrael.com/cyprus-sentences-hezbollah-operative-to-six-years-on-bomb-charges/
[648] David Daoud, "Israeli Air Force kills notorious Hezbollah commander in Syria", *Long War Journal*, (December 22, 2015), https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/12/israeli-air-force-kills-notorious-hezbollah-commander-in-syria.php
[649] Anne Barnard, "Hezbollah Attacks Israeli Military Vehicles", *The New York Times*, (Jan. 4, 2016), https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/05/world/middleeast/hezbollah-attacks-israeli-military-vehicles.html

to fight Israel.[650] Moreover, in the wake of US President Donald Trump's decision to declare Jerusalem the capital of Israel, Hezbollah conducted a rally in Beirut in which it attacked the US and Israel, calling for a third Intifada and promising to put more emphasis on Palestine and its issue on Hezbollah's agenda.[651] Furthermore, the discovery of Gas in the Mediterranean fuelled the tension between Israel and Lebanon. After Lieberman asserted that the Gas Block 9 belongs to Israel, Hezbollah produced a statement rejecting Israel's claim and reaffirming its firm stand against any Israeli attack on Lebanon's oil rights, institutions and wealth.[652]

Eventually, between 2019 and 2020, Hezbollah and Israel continued to carry attacks against each other in Lebanon and Syria. For instance, in August 2019, Hezbollah claimed that two explosives-rigged Israeli drones smashed over southern Beirut, Hezbollah's stronghold. According to the armed political party, Israel sent these drones to execute a kamikaze-style attack on Hezbollah. These drone attacks came a day after Israel carried out airstrikes on IRGC in Syria, claiming that they were preparing to launch explosive-laden drones in the style of a kamikaze into northern Israel.[653] Hezbollah, in its turn, promised to retaliate on Israeli territory with a "calculated strike."[654] A week later, Hezbollah retaliated by attacking an IDF convoy close to Moshav Avivim in northern Israel using an ATGM, claiming that it killed all the personnel present in the vehicle.[655]

The period closed in 2020, which witnessed increased skirmishes between Hezbollah in Syria and Lebanon. For instance, On March 2, IDF fired at a vehicle in Quneitra after snipers in the area targeted areas of the Golan Heights that are under Israeli control.[656] Three days later, Israel launched an airstrike on Hezbollah and the Syrian Arab Army airbase in Homs.[657] Then, in May, in an uncommon daytime attack, Israel launched an attack on a Hezbollah weapons depot in central Syria. The attack was the fifth

[650] Hezbollah Media Relations Website, *Speech by His Eminence The Secretary-General Of Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, At The International Jerusalem Day Celebration In The Southern Suburb* (June 23, 2017), https://mediarelations-lb.org/section.php?id=114

[651] Al Jazeera, *Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah Vows to Focus on Palestine*, (December 11, 2017), https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/12/11/hezbollahs-hassan-nasrallah-vows-to-focus-on-palestine

[652] Nour Radio Website, *We Reaffirm Our Firm And Frank Position In Resolutely Confronting Any Attack On Our Oil Rights And Defending Lebanon's Institutions And Wealth* (January 31, 2018), http://www.alnour.com.lb/news/politics/244238/%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87--%D9%86%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%AF-%D8%AA%D8%A3%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%AF%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D9%85%D9%88%D9%82%D9%81%D9%86%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AB%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AA-%D9%88-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AD-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%AF%D9%8A

[653] Ben Hubbard, "Hezbollah Says Drones That Crashed in Beirut Suburbs Came From Israel", *The New York Times*, (August 25, 2019), https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/25/world/middleeast/israel-drones-beirut-hezbollah.html

[654] Ellen Francis and Ari Rabinovitch, "Hezbollah Says Commanders Ready, Israel Orders More Forces To Border Region", *Reuters*, (August 31, 2019), https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-security-hezbollah/hezbollah-says-commanders-ready-israel-orders-more-forces-to-border-region-idUSKCN1VL0PA/

[655] Al Manar TV, *Islamic Resistance Targets Israeli Military Vehicle, All Forces on Board Killed, Injured*, (September 1, 2019), https://english.almanar.com.lb/817874

[656] Haaretz, Noa Shpigel and Jack Khoury, Israeli Army Strikes Vehicle in Syria After Sniper Fire, *Haaretz*, (March 2, 2010), https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2020-03-02/ty-article/.premium/israeli-army-strikes-vehicle-in-syria-after-sniper-fire/0000017f-f613-d460-afff-ff775d2d0000

[657] The Times of Israel, *Damascus Says Israeli Airstrikes Target Bases Near Homs, Southern Syria*, (March 5, 2020), https://www.timesofisrael.com/damascus-says-israeli-airstrikes-target-bases-near-homs-southern-syria/

one by Israel in the last two weeks on Iranian and Iranian-affiliated targets in Syria, and it occurred 12 hours after an earlier Israeli attack on forces backed by Iran in the Syrian Golan Heights.[658]

Eventually, the above chronological narration showed that as Hezbollah extended its presence and activities into Syria, conflicts with Israel also expanded. Following Hezbollah's involvement in the Syrian Civil War, both the armed political party and Israel utilised Syrian territory to engage in attacks against each other. Despite Hezbollah's deepening involvement in internal conflicts and civil wars across the Arab world, it continued to prioritise its confrontations with Israel, launching attacks through the Lebanese and Syrian borders and targeting Israeli citizens in foreign countries. This accentuates Hezbollah's adeptness at navigating and capitalising on the uncertain environment in the region while maintaining its application of hard power towards Israel. Such conduct serves as a testament to Hezbollah's *intimidation* power.

6.3. Intimidation: Hezbollah's Pattern of Power vis-à-vis Israel

This section summarises the chapter's evidence and discussions by presenting a concluding analysis. As seen throughout the above subsections, Hezbollah's patterns of power result from the form of power it exercises and the type of power it applies. In other words, Hezbollah's behaviour reflects the environment and experience the armed political party is passing through. This section will show that Hezbollah's dominant pattern of power regarding Israel is *intimidation*. However, although Hezbollah rarely gets to exercise control power with Israel, where uncertainty prevails, the armed political party did have some encounters with *predomination*, especially regarding risk calculation. Such an encounter reflects Hezbollah's ability to harness protean power and, through its hard power, transform uncertainties into risks and deal with them as such. The following paragraphs will analyse these patterns by presenting relevant data in several figures and tables to encapsulate Hezbollah's patterns of power over different periods.

The figures and tables provided in this chapter are crucial for concisely summarising the key findings of the analyses and wrapping up the discussions. Their principal aim is to faithfully portray the various patterns of power and their oscillations that Hezbollah employed throughout the four designated periods. These figures and tables further highlight the relationship between Hezbollah and Israel by pointing out the dominant pattern of power Hezbollah practices vis-à-vis Israel.

By examining Figure 6.1, it becomes clear that *intimidation* is the pattern of power that Hezbollah constantly practices in its interaction with Israel. This indicates that Hezbollah regards the environment in which it operates concerning Israel as uncertain and experiences it as such. Also, it shows that the type of power Hezbollah applies towards Israel is that of hard power. However, the presence of *predomination* in the last two periods is a reference to the slight encounter that Hezbollah had with calculable risk, where it calculated its hard power actions to prevent a full-scale war with Israel.

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[658] Judah Ari Gross, "Israel Said To Destroy Arms Cache In Central Syria In Rare Daytime Attack", *The Times of Israel*, (May 1, 2020), https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-said-to-destroy-arms-cache-in-central-syria-in-rare-daytime-attack/
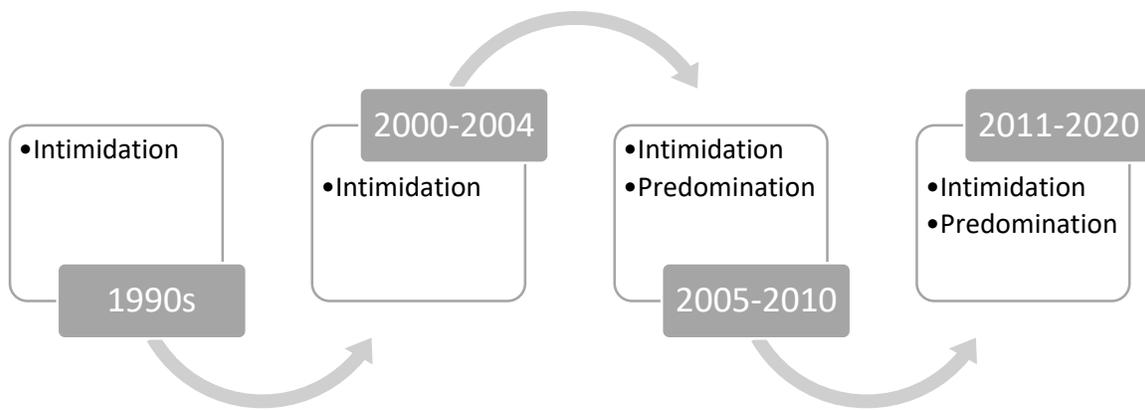
Figure 6.1 Patterns of Power Practiced Throughout Different Periods

The following Tables, from 6.1 to 6.4, illustrate how Hezbollah's pattern of power regarding Israel remained constant in its practice of *intimidation* with a slight practice of *predomination* towards the last two periods. These tables concisely encapsulate Hezbollah's activities, showcasing its observance of particular patterns over various periods. These actions are presented in the following tables to link the practice of a certain pattern to a specific period, aiming to note the patterns' fluctuation and the frequencies of their occurrence. When a pattern is applied during a certain period, examples in simple notes will be provided, and if a pattern is not applied, it will be shaded.

As depicted in Table 6.1, Hezbollah's prevalent pattern of power during the 1990s was *intimidation*. Hence, the armed political party utilised hard power to pursue its objectives in an uncertain environment while wielding protean power, adapting to the unpredictable world by embracing innovation. The table sheds light on Hezbollah's key actions and behaviours, highlighting its *intimidation* power, such as its rejection of UNSC resolution 425, the various attacks that it carried against Israel and the use of religious rhetoric to condemn Israel.

Table 6.1 The Patterns of Power Practiced in the 1990s with Examples

	1990-1999
Predomination	
Exhortation	
Intimidation	-Hezbollah's rejection of the UNSC Resolution 425. -Hezbollah's rocket attacks against Israel led to Israeli attacks in 1993, 1994 and 1996 and Hezbollah's fights during these Israeli operations. -Hezbollah's rejection of the peace talks with Israel and its insistence on fighting till the death of Israel. -Hezbollah's usage of religious figures and occasions to condemn Israel.
Adulation	

The second phase, between 2000 and 2004, was another testament to Hezbollah's *intimidation* power, where the armed political party combined its protean power tactics, especially innovation and improvisation, with a hard power approach to events and actions. It is recurring attacks on Israeli personnel on the eve of their withdrawal from Lebanon, as well as its kidnapping of Israeli soldiers on the borders and abroad, is a testimony of Hezbollah's agility and use of violence to achieve its aims. Therefore, Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* power, as presented in Table 6.2, resulted in Israel's hasty withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the release of Lebanese and Arab prisoners from Israeli jails.

Table 6.2 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2000 and 2004 with Examples

	2000-2004
Predomination	
Exhortation	
Intimidation	-Hezbollah's continuous attack on the IDF, the kidnapping of Israeli personnel and the strengthening of its strategic military capabilities. -Hezbollah's citation of religious and ideological beliefs as the primary source of rejecting and fighting Israel in its 2004 paper *Hizbullah: Identity and Goals*.
Adulation	

The third phase was critical for Hezbollah since it faced an increasingly hostile environment due to the *New Middle East* project, which the US was trying to implement in the region.[659] Hence, Hezbollah's actions and behaviour during and after the July 2006 war must be understood in this context. It can be argued that the hard power applied by Hezbollah in the form of the kidnapping of the two Israeli soldiers on the disputed borders was an exercise of protean power as it took the enemy by surprise and showed Hezbollah's agility and ability to operate in an uncertain environment. Thus, Hezbollah's act can be seen as a practice of *intimidation* power only if Hezbollah was utterly blind to the fact that Israel, with the US blessing, was already planning an attack on Hezbollah. However, suppose Hezbollah was aware of the Israeli plans, as Nasrallah claimed later. In that case, Hezbollah has launched a pre-emptive attack, an exercise of control power based on calculable risk. As such, according to this scenario, Hezbollah would have practised *predomination* power. Nonetheless, throughout the war, Hezbollah practised *intimidation* power against Israel through its exercise of protean power and applying hard power in combat.

However, the type of power Hezbollah exercised in the following year, during the Gaza War 2008-2009, is much more apparent, as seen in Table 6.3. Hezbollah's decision not to be involved directly in the war, especially militarily by opening a second front, was an exercise of control power as it resulted from a calculable risk. However, its decision to engage in skirmishes and rocket launching on the border meant that Hezbollah was applying hard power towards Israel. Hence, Hezbollah practised *predomination* power against Israel during the 2008-2009 Gaza War.

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[659] Richard N. Haass, "The New Middle East", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 6 (Nov. - Dec. 2006), pp. 2-11

Table 6.3 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2005 and 2010 with Examples

	2005-2010
Predomination	Hezbollah's risk-calculated decision not to open the Lebanese front against Israel during the 2008-2009 Gaza War yet to engage with skirmishes and rocket launching on the border.
Exhortation	
Intimidation	-Hezbollah's capture of the Israeli soldiers led to the July 2006 War and Hezbollah's fight in it. -Hezbollah's *New Manifesto* in 2009
Adulation	

In the fourth and last phase, as presented in Table 6.4, Hezbollah retained its practice of *intimidation* power, primarily through its exercise of protean power, while applying hard power tactics, as was evident in the continuous skirmishes on two different borders, the Israeli-Syrian border and the Lebanese-Israeli border, also through its attack on Israeli citizens outside Israel. However, it can be argued that throughout this period, Hezbollah was cautious in avoiding a full-scale war with Israel. Hence, its military attacks were risk-calculated and carefully designed; as such, its practice of *predomination* power in decision-making.

Table 6.4 The Patterns of Power Practiced between 2011 and 2020 with Examples

	2011-2020
Predomination	Hezbollah is cautious about its movements and deliberate in its attacks to avoid provoking a war with Israel.
Exhortation	
Intimidation	-Hezbollah attacks on Israeli citizens in foreign countries in 2012 -Hezbollah's continuous attacks on the Israeli-Lebanese and Syrian-Israeli borders
Adulation	

Eventually, by analysing Hezbollah's main stand against Israel, showcasing its rhetoric within the context of the main incidents that took place between 1990 and 2020, and providing evidence, the chapter concluded that Hezbollah is a protean power actor who does not hesitate to exercise control power once possible while applying hard power in its dealings with Israel. In other words, Hezbollah's dominant pattern of power in its struggle with Israel is *intimidation*, characterised by a potent blend of protean and hard power. However, through its constant harnessing of protean power, Hezbollah has achieved some aspects of control power, mainly regarding calculable risk in decision-making. Since hard power remained Hezbollah's constant type of power that it applied, even when exercising control power, *predomination* as a pattern of power practised by Hezbollah emerged in the last two periods. Hence, as Figure 6.2 vividly illustrates, *intimidation* is the dominant and constant pattern that characterises Hezbollah's interaction with Israel. However, under certain contexts, *predomination* occurs slightly on the margin while Hezbollah's practice of *intimidation* continues simultaneously.
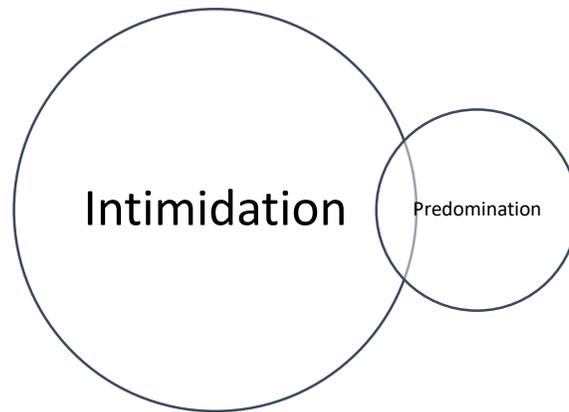
Figure 6.2 The Dominant Pattern of Power

Consequently, *intimidation* is the consistent pattern of power that dominates Hezbollah's relationship with Israel. This approach reflects the armed political party's reliance on hard power —military strength and coercion— and its exercise of protean power. Hezbollah's strategic use of *intimidation* indicates its recognition of the uncertain environment that governs its conflict with Israel; as such, it innovates and improvises to surprise its enemy and has leverage over it.

However, as Hezbollah extended its influence and consolidated control in Lebanon and other areas of the Arab world, its strategic considerations transformed. The armed political party's expanding political and territorial advancements heightened its recognition of the potential risks associated with its confrontational approach towards Israel. With greater stakes at play, Hezbollah adopted a more cautious approach, acknowledging that impulsive actions could endanger its hard-earned accomplishments and standing.

The heightened awareness of potential losses led Hezbollah to adopt a more cautious approach in its interactions with Israel. The emphasis shifted to conducting thorough risk assessments, balancing aggressive *intimidation* with carefully evaluating potential outcomes. This change in strategy signalled a shift towards *predomination* in Hezbollah's actions—a phase characterised by strategic caution and a combination of *intimidation* and calculated manoeuvres.

Predomination demonstrates Hezbollah's efforts to minimise risks while maintaining pressure on Israel. This strategy involves meticulously evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of different courses of action, aiming to uphold a strategic advantage without inciting unwarranted retaliation or escalation. Subsequently, Hezbollah's conduct towards Israel has become more foreseeable, guided by a distinct assessment of risk and benefit.

Eventually, the future trajectory of Hezbollah's patterns of power is a matter of great interest and speculation. The armed political party's dedication to risk assessment suggests the potential for more stable and predictable behaviour patterns. However, the inherently volatile nature of the regional conflict and Hezbollah's necessity to adapt to changing circumstances imply that its patterns of power could continue to evolve. Observing how Hezbollah navigates this complex landscape and how its risk assessment influences its future decisions in the coming years will be intriguing.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

As the prevalence and influence of VNSAs continue to grow worldwide, particularly in the MENA region, scholars have recognised the need to examine VNSAs' behaviours and their impact on policy-making and state formation. VNSAs' actions often have far-reaching consequences beyond their borders, spreading regionally and internationally. Consequently, researchers studied their military capabilities, ideological stances, and affiliations to understand their effects better and determine ways to mitigate their influence.

Despite being a critical aspect of their strategies, how VNSAs exert power and seek control over the state has been largely overlooked in scholarly discussions and analyses. This is due to the common assumption that VNSAs only rely on coercion and hard power, given their violent nature. However, this dissertation aims to shed light on the patterns of power utilised by VNSAs through a case study approach, examining their practices and performance in detail.

The dissertation commenced by introducing the concepts of VNSAs and power, explaining both notions and exploring their impact and role in shaping politics. It went on to investigate VNSAs' patterns of power, explaining them and concluding by presenting a theoretical framework to examine them further. This was done by taking Hezbollah's role in Lebanon and the MENA region as a case study. Hence, the dissertation used Katzenstein &Seybert's and Nye's forms of power to observe Hezbollah's practices and conclude its patterns of power.

In the following lines, a summary of the dissertation will be presented, where the significant findings and their theoretical relevance will be exhibited. The chapter will conclude by discussing the dissertation's limitations and recommendations for future research.

7.1. Major Findings

This research has investigated VNSAs' patterns of power by taking Hezbollah in the MENA region as a case study. As a result, it embarked on a theoretical and empirical journey to uncover Hezbollah's patterns of power and conclude whether the armed political party has a dominant pattern that it practices and whether it aspires to achieve a particular pattern while utilising the rest. Therefore, this section aims to present the main findings of each chapter in the dissertation, from the literature review to the theoretical and methodological, ending with the three empirical chapters.

The central argument of this dissertation is that VNSAs seek to attain control power by leveraging protean power. However, to achieve their objective, VNSAs blend protean and control power with hard and soft power, resulting in four patterns of power: *predomination*, *exhortation*, *intimidation*, and *adulation*, which they practice simultaneously depending on their operating environment. The case study of Hezbollah in this dissertation revealed that while *predomination* is the ultimate goal of this VNSA, it is not the dominant pattern of power throughout various periods. Instead, Hezbollah practices *intimidation*, *exhortation*, and even *adulation* in its effort to seize control of the state institutions in Lebanon and gain structural dominance in the MENA region. As a result, a specific pattern of power prevailed in certain periods or cases across the three spheres of analysis, as seen in the empirical chapters.

Since the dissertation's main aim is to uncover and explain VNSAs' patterns of power, Chapter 2 presented an overall review of the literature that discusses the concept of VNSAs with that of power.

After a thorough examination of the definition, types, and relationship between power and VNSAs, the dissertation presented its argument that there is a gap in the literature concerning the patterns of power that VNSAs apply since the literature mainly focused on the reason behind VNSAs' emergence and the way to deter them. Little has been mentioned about the form of power they exercise, the type of power they apply, and whether or not there is a pattern of power they follow in specific periods under certain conditions. Hence, the dissertation argues that presenting a new framework for studying the patterns of power will fill that gap in the literature and show whether there is a hierarchical procedure in which practising one pattern of power leads to achieving another.

Therefore, a theoretical framework for analysing VNSAs' patterns of power was developed in Chapter 3. The dissertation argued that by merging Katzenstein & Seybert's control and protean power with Nye's hard and soft power, a new set of powers would emerge that reflects the patterns of power VNSAs practice. Three significant findings emerged when this theoretical framework was applied to a case study. First, actors can effectively blend control-soft and protean-hard power in their practice, contrary to the belief that control power exclusively utilises hard power and that protean power is synonymous with soft power. Second, this blending produces four patterns of power, encompassing applied and exercised power. Third, the patterns of power that the actor practices depend on the context of their operation and how they perceive the world around them. As such, these findings contribute to understanding power dynamics by emphasising the importance of considering multiple aspects of a theory or approach to capture its complexities.

Consequently, in an attempt to answer the main question regarding VNSAs' pattern of power in the MENA region, the dissertation presented three analytical chapters. They point to the overall direction of this research on Hezbollah's patterns of power in Lebanon, the Arab world and Israel. Throughout these chapters, the dissertation tried to answer five questions: (1) What type of power do VNSAs exercise and apply? (2) Do they exercise control or protean power, or is it a mix? (3) Do VNSAs merge control and protean power with soft and hard power? (4) Do VNSAs combine protean-hard and control-soft in their practice of power? (5) Is protean power a tactic that VNSAs use to reach control power and capture the state? These questions will be answered in the empirical chapters.

The purpose of Chapter 4, the first empirical chapter, was to analyse Hezbollah's patterns of power through its actions and behaviour in the Lebanese environment. The chapter argues that when faced with uncertainty, Hezbollah harnesses protean power, mixing it with both soft and hard, hence its practice of *adulation* and *intimidation*. However, as it solidifies its control and influence, the armed political party relies on *exhortation* to achieve *predomination*, its central goal. Throughout the '90s, Hezbollah fluctuated between applying soft and hard power, all while exercising protean power, resulting in the practice of *adulation*, which was evident in its decision to enter the parliament and *intimidation*, which was seen through its fights with Israel, which were translated into political gains internally and its constant verbal attacks on the government creating an atmosphere of coercion. Such a fluctuation between the two practices continued throughout the following period between 2000 and 2004. However, the period between 2005 and 2008 saw Hezbollah taking its first steps towards exercising control power, all while applying soft and hard powers, resulting in its practice of *predomination* in addition to *intimidation*. This pattern continued to the last period when Hezbollah came to enhance its *predomination* by capturing the state. In general, therefore, the results show that Hezbollah's pattern of power within the Lebanese context is that of gradual descent from protean to control, all while applying both and mixing them with soft and hard depending on the situation and the context within which Hezbollah is operating and the actor that it is facing.

In addition to proving that VNSAs operate regionally outside the jurisdiction of the host state and interfere in the affairs of various countries in the region, the aim of Chapter 5 was to test the above chapter's findings to validate or annul them by presenting a subcase study where Hezbollah's actions and behaviour were examined against the backdrop of the Arab world. The findings of this chapter confirmed that Hezbollah's pattern of power is that of gradual hierarchy, where it exercises protean power as a tactic to achieve structural dominance in the region so that it can exercise complete control power. Similar to its pattern in Lebanon, albeit slightly different, Hezbollah exercised control and protean while applying soft and hard.

However, there is a difference in Hezbollah's patterns of power, which it practises towards the Arab governments and that which it practices towards the Arab population. This difference dominated the first period during the '90s and extended to the early 2000s when Hezbollah practised *adulation* towards the Arab population and *intimidation* towards the Arab regimes. Nonetheless, this pattern altered after the Arab uprising started in 2011. Although Hezbollah supported the people in their revolutions, its position shifted completely after the wave of change struck Damascus. Hence, the armed political party went from conflicting with most Arab states and being the champion of the Arab people to becoming the Arab people's adversary in the wake of the Sunni-Shia struggle. However, despite the transition in the pattern of power towards the Arab population, Hezbollah remained faithful to its interests and ideology, which were the reason behind the alteration in its tactics and policies. This is a testament to Hezbollah's pattern of power and its persistence towards achieving structural dominance and control power.

Despite the fluctuation in the patterns of power practised by Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Arab world through different periods and under various circumstances, it appears that Hezbollah's pattern of power that it practices against Israel is *intimidation*. Hezbollah's relationship with Israel is vital for its existence, continuity and power. The hostile relationship between them goes back to the time of Hezbollah's initiation when it defined Israel as its enemy. Hezbollah built its structure, strength, narration, and reputation on this position. Hezbollah's relational dynamics with Israel reformed as time progressed. Still, the core of its pattern of power remained the same: a mix of protean and hard power resulting in the practice of *intimidation* power. However, as Hezbollah's capture of power in Lebanon and its structural dominance in some Arab countries increased, its tactics towards Israel changed, especially in the form of exercising control power, making Hezbollah more predictable in its actions. Thus, Chapter 6 confirmed the previous chapters' findings and contributed to understanding the limits of the actor's agility and creativity when practising control power after capturing the institutions and gaining structural dominance.

Eventually, Hezbollah's actions and behaviour demonstrated that VNSAs do capture power internally through critical strategies such as presenting themselves as the efficient substitute of the state, trying to take over either by force or gradually by engulfing it and building a strong bond with their constituency based on loyalty and gratitude. Through these main points, VNSAs tend to perform and manoeuvre domestically to gain power and rule. However, on the regional level, they tend to play a role through the card of violence, propaganda and religion. As such, they can present themselves as equal to the states regarding policy-making, implementation, and negotiations.

Thus, these chapters conclusively revealed that VNSAs' patterns of power are shaped by a blend of their environmental and experiential influences and the specific strategies they employ to attain their objectives. Additionally, they emphasised that VNSAs often utilise protean power to gain control power.

7.2. Theoretical and Policy Implications

This study aims to contribute to the existing scientific literature by creating a theoretical model that integrates Nye's soft and hard power concepts with Katzenstein & Seybert's control and protean power. Additionally, the study intended to gain insight into the political landscape and policies by applying this new concept to an empirical case. Specifically, the dissertation focused on analysing Hezbollah's power dynamics in Lebanon, the Arab world, and Israel to influence policy formation and enhance understanding of VNSAs in the MENA region. The upcoming lines will showcase the theoretical and policy implications of the dissertation.

The dissertation's theoretical implications are seen through its contribution to the understanding of power dynamics by highlighting the emergence of four new patterns of power, which are determined by the combination of exercised power (control and protean) and applied power (soft and hard). These four patterns of power: *predomination*, *exhortation*, *intimidation* and *adulation* show that actors can simultaneously use control and protean power, depending on their environment and experience of the world. Ultimately, this research demonstrates that VNSAs utilise these patterns of power to navigate and respond to different situations. Eventually, four notable findings with theoretical implications emerged: the combination of control-soft and protean-hard, the development of a theoretical framework that produced four novel patterns of power, the importance of taking into consideration the actor's objective system and its subjective experience and finally, the recognition of a hierarchical strategy between different patterns of power.

The first theoretical finding illustrated that actors in positions of power can integrate both control-soft and protean-hard elements in their practice. This challenges the conventional knowledge that those wielding control power rely on coercive tactics or military strength to achieve their objectives. Traditionally, control power is perceived as rigid and authoritarian. In contrast, protean power is associated with softer strategies such as attraction, persuasion, and the ability to influence through appeal and cultural influence. However, this theoretical finding suggests that the boundaries between these two forms of power are more fluid than previously assumed.

As a result, the first theoretical discovery challenges the conventional association of control-hard and protean-soft and paves the way for new practical applications. It suggests that actors can effectively wield authoritative power—using convincing, understated, and non-confrontational approaches to maintain control and influence. This insight can inspire and motivate actors to explore new, more subtle ways of exerting control, such as diplomatic talks, cultural diplomacy, or economic incentives, without overt coercion. This research provides a roadmap for a more nuanced and effective exercise of power in real-world scenarios.

Similarly, protean power, often associated with soft power, can also take on more forceful characteristics. Actors may utilise adaptable and flexible strategies with determination and assertiveness that align with hard power tactics. For instance, an actor could effectively use its technological advantage and free mobility in a strategic and adaptable manner while still maintaining a coercive and forceful approach.

Therefore, the dissertation's first theoretical finding questions traditional viewpoints and presents a more comprehensive understanding of power dynamics. It indicates that power is not a simple either/or concept but rather a complex spectrum where various types of power can coexist and reinforce each other. This acknowledgement that control and protean powers can intersect and be employed in tandem offers a more

intricate and adaptable framework for examining power dynamics. This complexity and the potential for further exploration stimulate and encourage future research.

As such, this theoretical finding has profound practical implications. It opens the door to innovative frameworks and approaches among multiple concepts of power. It encourages policymakers, strategists, and theorists to rethink traditional power paradigms and consider hybrid strategies that combine the strengths of both hard and soft power. This hybrid approach can lead to more sophisticated and effective tactics in international relations.

Eventually, recognising the changing and interactive nature of different forms and types of power stimulates a reassessment of how power is understood and used. It proposes that effective use of power involves adapting different patterns of power to specific situations and goals. This shift in thinking has the potential to change strategic planning and improve the use of power in various situations, marking the beginning of a new era in power dynamics.

The second finding with a theoretical implication is the dissertation's innovative theoretical framework, where four distinct patterns of power emerge from the interplay between applied powers (hard and soft) and exercised powers (control and protean). Such a novel framework paves the way for further analysis regarding the combination of power. Additionally, the results from such a combination further assist in understanding complex empirical phenomena. As a result, this theoretical framework provides an avenue for future research in security and international relations to explore, implement, and validate this aspect of power.

This theoretical advancement is especially significant as it fills a void in current literature, where the connection between applied and exercised power has frequently been oversimplified or disregarded. The framework's capacity to dissect and classify these interactions enables a more thorough analysis of power dynamics, revealing how power is employed, sustained, and contested in various contexts.

Therefore, this theoretical framework provides a rich ground for future research and debate. Scholars can use it as a springboard to explore specific case studies, validate its applicability in different scenarios, and refine its components. These efforts will test the framework's robustness and enhance its utility in explaining and predicting power-related phenomena. Ultimately, this theoretical framework invites ongoing research and debate, encouraging scholars to further investigate the intricate web of power.

Hence, the dissertation's theoretical framework offers a fertile foundation for future research and discourse. Scholars can use it as a starting point to explore particular case studies, confirm its relevance in various contexts, and improve its elements. These endeavours will assess the framework's strength and improve its effectiveness in elucidating and anticipating power-related occurrences. Ultimately, this theoretical framework fosters continual research and dialogue, encouraging scholars to explore the complex dynamics of power further.

Additionally, it has practical implications in the real world of security and international relations. By applying this framework, scholars and practitioners can gain profound insights into the power dynamics that underpin international conflicts, alliances, and negotiations. This understanding is crucial for devising effective strategies to navigate power dynamics in diplomatic negotiations, conflict resolution, and the formulation of international policies.

The third theoretical finding highlights the actor's important role in shaping power dynamics, mainly through its decision to practice a specific pattern of power. Such a decision is contingent upon the actor's perception of the world and the context in which it functions, which underlines the actor's effect on the course of actions. This highlights the active participation of actors in shaping events, similar to how systems influence outcomes. This implies that external factors do not solely determine the actor's actions and behaviours but are also shaped by their internal perceptions and interpretations of their environment. Consequently, actors are not merely passive entities reacting to systemic pressures but are active participants whose decisions and behaviours can alter the course of events.

This theoretical finding emphasises the critical necessity of developing a comprehensive theory that integrates both the objective system in which the actor operates and its subjective experience. Therefore, it is necessary not only to recognise the essential role of the actor's context, encompassing social, economic, political, and cultural factors, in shaping its conduct but also to acknowledge the significance of an actor's worldview, including its beliefs, values, and interpretations, in understanding its decisions and behaviours.

This approach advocates for a deeper understanding of power dynamics by considering the interaction between the actor's internal perceptions and the external context. It suggests that to comprehend the patterns of power practised by actors fully, one must analyse how these patterns are influenced by both the actors' subjective experiences and the objective conditions they face. This dual focus can lead to more effective strategies for influencing behaviour and outcomes, as it addresses the complexity of human decision-making and the complex nature of power.

Thus, this finding necessitates a shift in theoretical frameworks, urging scholars to move beyond simplistic, one-dimensional behaviour models. Instead, it encourages the development of theories that reflect the complex realities of how an actor can navigate and shape their environment, considering the interconnected relationship between their personal experiences and the broader systematic influence at play.

The fourth and final theoretical finding reveals a hierarchical interplay between different types of power. It argues that actors strategically exercise protean power as a tactical manoeuvre to gain control power. With its adaptive, flexible, and unpredictable nature, protean power becomes a powerful tool for navigating complex and uncertain environments. This adaptability allows actors to adjust to changing circumstances, capitalise on opportunities, and effectively manage risks.

The strategic deployment of protean power serves as a dynamic means to an end: the acquisition of control power, which is more structured, stable, and geared towards upholding order and predictability. Control power relies on established rules, hierarchies, and enforcement mechanisms to exert influence and ensure compliance. This finding suggests that actors do not rely solely on one type of power but instead employ protean power as a dynamic and responsive strategy. This approach can foster favourable conditions for establishing or reinforcing control power, hinting at the potential for change and transformation in power dynamics.

The hierarchical approach presents new opportunities for studying control and protean power interaction. It encourages further theoretical investigation into the ways these two forms of power intersect, complement each other, and potentially bring about transformation. Understanding the connection between control and protean power could provide deeper insights into power dynamics in various contexts, including organisational behaviour, political strategy, and social influence. This exploration

may reveal additional theoretical connections and contribute a more comprehensive understanding of how actors navigate and manipulate complex power structures to achieve their goals.

In addition to the theoretical implications mentioned above, this dissertation has policy implications, which can be observed within the decision-making and policy-making frame. The policy implications have two dimensions: one related to VNSAs in general and the other to Hezbollah in particular.

As the dissertation's theoretical framework was developed to test VNSAs in general, its patterns of power can be applied to various VNSAs not only in the MENA region but elsewhere. By considering such patterns of power, policymakers can have a broader understanding of the VNSAs' actions and behaviour. Hence, they can develop policies that consider the form of power these actors exercise and the type of power they apply. Such an understanding will enable the policymakers to address these actors' actions and try to anticipate their movements.

Moreover, the study has significant policy implications, given that Hezbollah and its patterns of power in the MENA region are the dissertation's case study. By showing how Hezbollah gradually practised different patterns of power in Lebanon, which led the armed political party to achieve its desirable pattern of power *predomination*, Lebanon's situation, unstable presence, and uncertain future can be ascertained. Such an understanding can help policymakers understand Hezbollah's tactics and manoeuvres. Hence, decision-makers can develop policies to deal with Hezbollah's presence and its consequences on Lebanon.

Additionally, by showing the change in Hezbollah's patterns of power regarding the Arab population, which shifted from *adulation* to *exhortation*, analysts and decision-makers can conclude that Hezbollah is a pragmatic actor with a solid ideology it believes in. It does not hesitate to adapt to new circumstances and apply hard power to stay afloat and achieve its aim. Such an understanding will help decision-makers draw policies that will consider Hezbollah's agility regarding its actions and behaviour on the one hand and its rigidity regarding its theological and ideological commitment on the other.

Furthermore, Hezbollah's constant struggle with Israel, which is always dominated by *intimidation,* provides policymakers with an understanding of the general conduct of Hezbollah regarding its actions vis-à-vis Israel. By carefully analysing the combination of protean and hard power which Hezbollah applied in its struggle with Israel, it becomes apparent that there is a pattern of action which always occurs whether in its wars and skirmishes with Israel, the kidnapping of the IDF soldiers or the terrorist attacks targeting Israelis on foreign lands or in the exchange of prisoners. Understanding such a pattern will make it easier for policymakers and analysts to calculate Hezbollah's actions despite its agility and adaptability.

Besides, policy-makers can contrast Hezbollah's patterns of power and conduct with those of other VNSAs operating in the MENA region, such as Hamas, given the striking similarities between the two organisations. By applying Hezbollah's patterns of power to Hamas, the latter's actions and conduct can become apparent, and its future movements can be anticipated to a certain degree despite its agility.

Eventually, this dissertation is a small contribution to the literature, as it hopes that its theoretical contribution will pave the way towards further understanding and research on VNSAs' power on the one hand and the combination of powers that appear to be contradictory on the other. Also, it is a shy attempt to highlight Hezbollah's patterns of power in the hope of gaining a better understanding of the dynamics in the MENA region by applying this framework to other VNSAs.

7.3. Possible Future Research Avenues

By presenting a unique framework for examining the patterns of powers and linking them to VNSAs, this dissertation opened a new channel for security researchers, paving the way for future investigations on VNSAs' patterns of power. This empirically grounded research is an exclusive attempt to produce patterns of power that VNSAs practice by linking Katzenstein & Seybert's form of power with Nye's type of power and applying it to a case study by taking the most illustrious VNSA, Hezbollah, which operates in the most turbulent region, the Middle East as a subject to analyse. Hence, future scholars will find a promising research opportunity by investigating further the concept of VNSAs' patterns of power and applying the framework to various players and regions. By examining Hezbollah's patterns of power through the lens of protean-control and hard-soft powers, the dissertation strongly encourages scholars to adopt the same approaches in their future research and apply them to other VNSAs operating in different contexts, regions, and periods. The following lines will put forward the research questions that arise while conducting the dissertation. Also, it will show how the dissertation's framework can be theoretically enriched and the perspectives that could emerge from this work.

Several questions emerged theoretically and empirically while researching, developing the theoretical framework, and writing this dissertation. For instance, the most important theoretical question was whether this theoretical framework could be applied to other VNSAs. This question was raised because Hezbollah's trajectory might have influenced this framework for examining VNSA patterns of power. Hence, the question that comes to mind is which other VNSAs could the theoretical framework be applied to? Also, what can a comparative case study of different VNSAs reveal about the commonalities and differences in their patterns of power? Additionally, since MENA was the region this dissertation examined, questions regarding how regional variations influence VNSAs' patterns of power arise.

Empirically, the emerging questions are linked to or influenced by Hezbollah in the MENA. For instance, is Hezbollah a unique VNSA with exclusive patterns of power, or do its characteristics and patterns apply to other VNSAs in the region? Moreover, is Hezbollah's success linked to the structural weakness and confessional system of the Lebanese state? In other words, would Hezbollah have reached its level of influence and control had it operated in different states? Besides, weak states are the reason behind the emergence of VNSAs. Hence, would strengthening the state reduce VNSAs' power, or is their power already a source to weaken the state further and ensure it never resurrects? Perhaps the most critical question is stimulated by Hezbollah's presence and influence in Lebanon: when a VNSA is integrally linked to the social fabric of the nation, how can its power wane?

The proposed framework of the dissertation can explore these questions in further depth. By integrating Katzenstein and Seybert's control and protean power with Nye's concepts of soft and hard power, the framework scrutinises VNSAs. However, it could benefit from theoretical enrichment by incorporating other theoretical concepts, such as practice theory. The significance of practice theory in developing this framework lies in its ability to offer a comprehensive approach to analysing VNSAs and their power dynamics. This is achieved by focusing on the behaviour and actions of the agents rather than solely relying on structural interpretations. Essentially, practice theory enables researchers to highlight the everyday practices and routines of VNSAs, particularly concerning their operations, influence, and interactions.[660]

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[660] Bueger Christian and Gadinger Frank, *International Practice Theory* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018)

By incorporating practice theory into the framework, we can comprehensively understand VNSAs' patterns of power. This approach enables a thorough analysis of VNSAs' operational, organisational, and symbolic practices and their individual and collective capabilities and material resources. It also offers insights into the historical and social contexts in which VNSAs operate, including their support networks, alliances, and rivalries. By considering these various layers, we can develop a more enriched and comprehensive understanding of VNSAs' patterns of power.

Furthermore, practice theory offers a robust methodology to expand the framework, mainly when ethnographic methods are applied to a case study. This approach will pave the way for field research to observe, analyse, and document VNSAs' everyday practices. Additionally, it will enable interviews with VNSA leaders and members and allow for an in-depth analysis of VNSAs' ideology and propaganda.

Therefore, the ethnographic method will facilitate a comprehensive analysis of VNSAs' patterns of power, especially regarding their operational effectiveness within and beyond the host country. This will examine how their gains or losses have impacted their power and operational patterns. By studying VNSAs practice, it will be possible to understand their influence on host countries and communities, providing insight into how this influence shapes their patterns of power and legitimacy. Furthermore, examining VNSAs' practices will allow for an observation of how both the host state and other international actors have responded to these groups and how these interactions have impacted the VNSAs' patterns of power.

Hence, by utilising practice theory to examine VNSAs' patterns of power, a researcher can gain a more complex understanding of how power is created, preserved, and used through routine activities. Concentrating on the specific behaviours and practices of VNSAs enables scholars to uncover the intricate mechanisms that underpin their organisational resilience, socio-political influence, and operational effectiveness. This approach offers a well-grounded and comprehensive perspective that enriches traditional power analyses and provides valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers involved in conflict resolution and counterterrorism efforts.

On the other hand, this doctoral dissertation may yield numerous theoretical, methodological, practical, and broader socio-political perspectives. Theoretically, the dissertation has demonstrated the potential and significance of integrating power frameworks to gain a comprehensive understanding and thorough analysis of VNSAs' patterns of power, given their intricate nature and varied practices. As a result, the dissertation has established a comprehensive framework encompassing all of VNSAs' patterns of power, providing a thorough illustration of how VNSAs integrate various power concepts and practices to achieve their objectives.

In addition, the dissertation offered insight into the significance of context and situational analysis in examining the patterns of power. This was demonstrated by examining a case study that illustrated how a VNSA can shift between various types and manifestations of power based on the specific context in which it operates. This highlights the adaptability and strategic decision-making of VNSAs in wielding power.

The dissertation highlights a significant theoretical perspective on the complex practice of power by VNSAs and its impact. It contrasts how VNSAs employ protean power to innovate and adapt in uncertain environments with how they use control power to exert influence in a controlled and certain environment. This reveals that actors are not confined to a specific form of power. Instead, they can shift and adapt to

achieve their goals, regardless of their inherent nature. Therefore, this nuanced perspective challenges current IR theories that maintain power is static and suggests the need for expansion and revision.

Moreover, the dissertation presents various methodological perspectives, particularly utilising a case study. It is crucial to further develop the dissertation framework by incorporating a multi-layered analysis, such as a mixed-method approach involving case studies, interviews, ethnographic research, and network analysis, to explore how VNSAs employ different forms and types of power to achieve their objectives. This approach will facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the strategies used by VNSAs. Additionally, it underscores the significance of conducting long-term research to observe how the power dynamics of VNSAs evolve. This methodology can provide valuable insights into how these actors adapt their exercise of power in response to changing circumstances and external influences.

Furthermore, this dissertation offers a practical perspective on the importance of understanding the patterns of power of VNSAs, particularly concerning decision-making and policy formulation for states engaging with VNSAs. This includes counter-insurgency strategies and engagement and rehabilitation policies, focusing on developing policies that consider the diverse patterns of power exercised by VNSAs. Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of VNSAs' patterns of power can have practical implications for security and diplomacy policies. By considering all the patterns of power that VNSAs employ, it becomes possible to design flexible and responsive security protocols and enhance efforts in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Additionally, taking into account the impact of VNSAs' patterns of power on the communities in which they operate, including the social resilience they create through community support and the cultural and ideological narratives they use to influence and recruit, can lead to a better understanding of their influence on local and political landscapes.

Consequently, the dissertation's empirical findings could be tested, augmented and solidified by forthcoming studies on other VNSAs in the MENA and other regions. The conclusions reached in the empirical chapters were based solely on examining Hezbollah's practice conducted in the MENA region and its initiation in Lebanon, a weak, if not an absent state, where Hezbollah has its main base and exercises its main power. Hence, further research can be conducted on other VNSAs from different environments, backgrounds, and periods. This will allow future researchers to test the theoretical framework applied to investigate VNSAs' patterns of power and observe its applicability to other states and regions under different circumstances and environments. Besides, cross-regional comparisons through comparative case studies will help comprehend the influence of the local context in dictating the patterns of power practised.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the research did not involve interviews with Hezbollah or other relevant internal and external players regarding Hezbollah's power practice and its patterns. Therefore, future studies could explore this dissertation's argument and findings to verify whether Hezbollah is a protean power actor and analyse its stance on leveraging protean power to gain control and capture the state. Such further research would offer valuable theoretical and practical insights, providing a fresh perspective on the subject matter. By examining VNSAs' attitudes towards protean and control power and hard and soft power, such research could stimulate further discussion and generate new possibilities.

Eventually, this dissertation represents a modest exploration of a VNSA in a turbulent region. It represents a minor addition to the vast body of scholarship and analysis on the MENA and its various players. These theoretical insights and discoveries remain ripe for additional research, which can corroborate or challenge them.

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Biography

Boushra Jaber, born in Lebanon on November 8, 1989, earned her MA in International Relations (European Studies) with merits from Durham University, United Kingdom, in 2012. She also holds a BA in Political Science from Haigazian University, Lebanon, graduating with Honours in 2011.

Her academic interests span a broad spectrum, including foreign policy, security studies, diplomacy, and identity. This diverse range of interests reflects her comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics in international relations and conflict resolution.

Boushra's relentless pursuit of academic excellence is palpable in her diverse educational experiences. She actively sought opportunities to broaden her knowledge and skills, attending the Summer School on Migration and Human Rights, organised by the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) at John Cabot University in Rome, Italy, in July 2017. She also engaged in the Winter School on the EU and the Middle East Political Transformation and Challenges for Future Cooperation at the Middle East Institute, Sakarya University, Sakarya, Turkey, in January 2015. Her dedication to practical learning is further demonstrated by her participation in a Summer School on Comparative Conflict Studies at the Faculty of Media and Communications, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia, in July 2014.

In March 2020, she participated in conflict analysis training organised by the World Youth Academy, where she acquired advanced conflict analysis and resolution skills. Before that, from December 2010 to June 2011, she completed a highly selective training program with the UNDP focusing on conflict resolution skills and establishing and managing university peace-building clubs, where she learned effective negotiation techniques and strategies for managing conflicts in diverse settings. Additionally, she participated in conflict resolution training conducted by Soliya from March 2010 to June 2010, where she developed a deep understanding of intercultural communication and conflict resolution.

In 2010, she interned at the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, assisting in drafting diplomatic correspondence, researching foreign policy issues, and participating in diplomatic meetings.

She played a pivotal role as a cultural mediator for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) on the Serbian borders from June 2015 to June 2016 during the refugee crisis. Her work was instrumental in facilitating communication between refugees and local authorities, distributing humanitarian aid, and raising awareness regarding cultural sensitivity. Additionally, she collaborated with various NGOs, such as the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE), where she observed the parliamentary and municipal elections in 2009 and 2010 and contributed to developing a comprehensive election observation report.

She has taught Arabic as a foreign language at the Arabic Cultural Centre in Belgrade since 2019.

Boushra's linguistic versatility is a testament to her global outlook and adaptability. She has enhanced her skills in four languages to various degrees: Arabic, English, French, and Serbian, enabling her to communicate effectively and connect with diverse cultures and communities.

Изјава о ауторству

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Број индекса: 212/2014

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Наслов рада: Patterns of Violent Non-State Actors' Power in The Middle East and North Africa Region: The Case of Hezbollah in Lebanon

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