The Journey of a Social Movement: A Glimpse into Hizb 'Allah and Its Integration into the Lebanese Landscape

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THE JOURNEY OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: A GLIMPSE INTO
HIZB’ALLAH AND ITS INTEGRATION INTO THE
LEBANESE LANDSCAPE

by

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THE JOURNEY OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: A GLIMPSE INTO HIZB’ALLAH AND ITS INTEGRATION INTO THE LEBANESE LANDSCAPE

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Western Michigan University, 2005

Historically, research in Social Movement Theories has been limited to only certain aspects of a social movement, whether it was the impetus of the movement, explaining the reasons for its mobilization, how they recruit members and money, how social movements are able to function as an organization, or why groups suffer demise after flourishing for a period of time. This research attempts to build a framework of a particular social movement, Hizb’allah, a Shi’a Islamic movement based in Lebanon. This framework is built by extracting various elements from several social movement theories to explain and illustrate this movement’s life course including its origin, history, success, and its current organizational structure. This method of borrowing various aspects from these models like pieces of a puzzle allows us to design a pattern that can potentially build a model to generalize to various other social movements. We can also see the patterns emerge as to why a social movement may begin, how they develop and what, if any, determinants contribute to the demise of a social movement. This method of building bridges between these theories also helps to establish a general holistic theoretical explanation to the life course of a social movement, which is something that this researcher has yet to find any current theories do.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

Throughout world history individuals have mobilized into groups to rise up against greater powers to achieve economic and religious freedom, as well as political power. Some of these groups have evolved into social movements, making strides in achieving their goals and rewriting history, while some have disappeared as quickly as they originated. Some eventually surpassed the expectations of their critics, as well as their own expectations. What are the factors that determine success or failure of these groups? Can these factors predict a movement’s success? By taking an in depth look into one social movement, is it possible to predict the future success or failure of other movements? Finally, how does a movement transform itself from being the renegade to part of the status quo?

A Theoretical Glimpse

In general, what characteristics historically have been present, and absent, in the development of a social movement? Is there a ‘blueprint’ for organizing a successful movement? What circumstances have enabled these movements to rise above others and enjoy longevity and legitimacy? Chapter 2 discusses these questions through a literature review of fundamental characteristics drawn from leading sociological theorists. Chapter 2 will also introduce Hizb’allah as the primary case study for this thesis, applying the theoretical ideas through example.

A historical survey of Lebanon and Hizb’allah are the subjects for Chapters 3 and 4. To understand Hizb’allah and its role in Lebanon, these chapters will provide
a basic overview of both these subjects. Also critical is the description of this history and environment in which Hizb’allah emerged. This provides the reader with a general knowledge base of the Middle East and conditions in post World War I colonized Lebanon through the onset of the Lebanese Civil War.

Chapter 5 applies the theoretical criteria from Chapter 2 to Hizb’allah by analyzing concrete examples of its development. By applying these theoretical models to Hizb’allah, a clear picture will emerge as to how Hizb’allah was able, either intentionally or unintentionally, to develop their movement into a greater institution.

Chapter 6 continues to examine the transformation of Hizb’allah into a social movement organization. Chapter 6 examines how Hizb’allah emerged using guerilla warfare and evolved into a highly structured organization that has achieved immense political success. Chapter 6 will also help to answer the question of why Hizb’allah succeeded when so many other groups either remained at their same power position or evaporated into the post-war environment. Hizb’allah’s transformation has certainly been one of the most infamous and dramatic in Lebanese history. Is this type of transformation unique to Hizb’allah, or is it possible to follow a theoretical recipe to gain success for future collective action groups? Could this type of group, for instance, ever gain the level of legitimacy in the United States that it has in Lebanon? Or did we have these types of movements in our own history? Were the American revolutionaries in the fight for freedom from Britain in the 18th century similar to those who fight with Hizb’allah and other movements throughout the world?
Relevance

There are several reasons why this topic is relevant. First, the contemporary issues of the day, the ‘war on terrorism’, the war in Iraq, the fighting in Israel and the overall unrest in the Middle East certainly make this particular topic an important subject to understand. However, any of the above issues cannot be studied by only looking at the ‘Arab’ side of these events. The roles played [and still played] by the United States, England and France since the colonization of the region, the reactions of these civilizations to being colonized, and the problems plaguing this region today all are important issues that need to be critically deconstructed, not covered up by simply calling the opposition ‘terrorists’. Hizb’allah’s label as a ‘terrorist group’ certainly did not originate without merit, or support. Their anti-western mentality at the genesis of their movement was not an isolated ideal, but a sentiment felt in large communities throughout the region, and still felt today. A look into the rationale of such a movement may possibly shed light on current issues surrounding disparities between groups and the western world in this region today.

Another reason to study this topic is to understand how Hizb’allah recruits members, how they maintain their momentum, and how they have developed into structured institutions. By understanding their methods in recruitment and organizational structure, perhaps we will be able to predict the success of future movements’ capacities to recruit and maintain members.

Finally, in a more abstract sense, this theoretical ‘recipe’ could illustrate how groups convey their ideology, which at first appears radical, and channel their ideas
into mainstream thought, gaining membership and allegiance. Why do people join cults, bomb abortion clinics, or even sacrifice their own lives for the cause of their movement? What draws people into these groups, and why do these groups appear to be within the acceptable norms of society? How easy is it for a social movement to create social conformity among its members?

**Methodology**

The primary sources for this thesis have been secondary data. Books, journal articles, newspaper articles, government documents [both Lebanese and American], and websites all contribute to this glimpse into Hizb’allah and social movement theory. Also useful were various news reports on Future TV, LBC [Lebanese Broadcasting Company], and Al-Jezeera Television.

**Limitations of Study**

There are several limitations to this study that must be made known to the reader. First, a language barrier exists for this researcher who does not speak fluent Arabic, and cannot read Arabic at all. Time constraints did not allow for possible documentation to be translated for this thesis; however, in future research on this topic, this researcher plans on pursuing this secondary data.

Another limitation was the inability to interview top leaders within Hizb’allah. Hizb’allah is a very secretive group, so it is difficult for an outsider, especially a non-Arab outsider, to reach into the internal leadership of a movement such as Hizb’allah and interview members unprejudicedly. Proper proposals for interviews to key
members in Parliament who are Hizb’allah party members might allow for future interviews to take place.

Finally, this is a case study of one group in one country. This case study was a snapshot into one group at one period of time in one country. To be able to make predictions regarding future movements or the creation of a movement, research should be done on a more quantitative basis, looking at several movements and depicting many different elements that are reflected consistently within these movements.

This research is qualitative, a descriptive analysis and comparative look into Hizb’allah and how it can be analyzed with the theoretical framework set out in the theoretical model in Chapter 2. This research is a case study, but it is also intended to take abstract sociological ideas on social movements and apply them to a real movement, in hopes of creating a blueprint to help analyze other movements.
Chapter 2
Theoretical Models of Social Movements

Introduction

Social discontent is as old as history itself, and is the driving force behind people pulling together for social change. The nature of society and impetus behind social change has always been the elite vs. the oppressed and dissatisfaction with society on some level or another, whether politically, economically, communally, racially, or all of the above. How and why people choose to invoke change as a collective body is as interesting a topic as the events themselves.

There are many ways in which social change is directed, and many instruments used to precipitate social change. People look for ways of demonstrating their dissatisfaction with the status quo in society, and in their discontent find other people who very often feel the same way. When this dissatisfaction is felt, people join together in various degrees of commitment and intensity.

Collective Action

Collective action takes on many forms from simple, unplanned crowd demonstrations to intricate, multi-dimensional institutions. Social movements fall into the latter category, but to what degree they become ‘institutionalized’, taking on an organizational structure with a hierarchy of leadership and established roles defined within these hierarchies, depends on many factors that will be discussed in this chapter. According to Tilley’s [1978] theory of collective action, there are
critical elements that must be present for collective action to exist. The first element is a common interest. There is an issue that these group members all agree needs to be addressed. The second is that a group, in order to be useful, needs to have some sort of organization. The more organized the group, the more likely the group will succeed in its task. The third is resource mobilization, which is in itself a social movement theory that will be discussed later in this chapter. A group must attract people, money, equipment, and various assets to its cause. The fourth is opportunity. A group must have the opportunity to act; otherwise they will not be able to invoke any social change.

These four factors are important in any collective action, no matter how intricate it becomes, and are essential for a social movement to even originate, let alone flourish. But there are differences between collective action and social movements. Tilley [1978] points out some differences between basic collective behavior versus a social movement, which will be discussed in the next section.

**Social Movements Defined**

Though there are several definitions of social movements in the literature, only a few will be discussed in this chapter. The first definition describes social movements as a form of collective action; however, their ability to become institutionalized and organized is what sets them apart from other types of collective action [Traugott, 1978]. Traugott also describes social movements as being organized, acting deliberately and making persistent efforts to change some aspect of society. Whereas Traugott depicts social movements as an entity that is apart from
other forms of collective actions, Foss' [1986] definition clearly illustrates his belief that a social movement is a *continuation or growth* that arises from collective behavior. Foss [1986] says that a social movement is “the developing collective action of a significant portion of the members of a major social category” [Foss, 1986:2]. Foss sees a social movement not as something different from a collective action, but something that is born out of a collective action.

Whether or not a social movement is different from other collective actions or a continuation of one, there are very definite differences. Zald and McCarthy [1987] cite four important differences between collective actions and social movements. First, collective behavior is transitory. Collective actions tend to be less stable and somewhat more spontaneous, whereas social movements are long lasting. Second, collective action is unplanned. They do not have a set of ideologies or plans that are in place, whereas social movements are generally purposeful and goal oriented with organized plans of action. Third, collective action is more free form, whereas social movements are more structured. Social movements have an organization or institutional structure of leaders and hierarchy, divisions of labor within the movement, and a more focused agenda. Finally, collective action generally involves small numbers of people, whereas social movements generally have a much larger membership.

In reading these various definitions and differences, there are many aspects of all these definitions that clearly have significant merit; however, for the purpose of this paper another working definition will be submitted:
A social movement is a developed collective action, organized with hierarchy of leadership and significant membership that develops their agenda, sets ideology and proposes methods for change in a plan of action.

Types of Social Movements

Now that a working definition for social movements has been established, there are five basic types of social movements that shall be introduced in this chapter. They are Reactionary, Reform, Expressive, Resistant and Revolutionary movements. Vago [1989] provides a good description of these movements.

Reactionary movements 'react' to certain changes within the social structure. They work to re-establish the structure as it was previous to these societal changes. Reform movements are basically satisfied with the way things are; however, they seek changes that will strengthen the existing social structure. Expressive movements concentrate on people or attitudes within the movement. These movements work to help change the attitudes of the members in order to better cope with the outside world, frequently offering some good rewards that will be received in the future. Resistant movements are more aggressive in their approaches than the preceding types of movements. Resistant movements not only seek to change the current social structure, but also work to block change or eliminate instituted changes. Finally, Revolutionary movements, certainly the most notorious historically of the five types, are the most determined to change the status quo. This movement type advocates replacement of the current social structure and works towards changing the structure to fit their ideology. These group members are by far the most dissatisfied, the most oppressed, and have the least to lose compared to the members of other movements or
of the general public, which leads to the diligent and fearless nature of these groups [Vago, 1989]. Within this type of movement exists the ‘terrorist’ groups, which are comprised mostly of teenagers or young adults who experience strong deprivation, powerlessness and helplessness that festers into rage [Reich, 1990]. Terrorism has been defined as the “use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or to coerce a government, a formal organization or a civilian population in furtherance of a political, religious or social objective” [Hughes, 1999, 459]. With this definition, it could be argued that most likely every hegemon in the history of the world has engaged to one degree or another in a form of terrorism. Certainly in recent history the impact of events that are carried out by these ‘terrorist’ groups are extremely tragic for countless people who are victimized by these acts, and it is certainly not the intention of this author to diminish the seriousness of these tragic circumstances. However, for the purpose of this analysis of Hizb’allah, which has been characterized by several authors and news media outlets as a ‘terrorist group’, this term will not be used to describe this or any other movement. The term terrorist is very subjective and carries many faces, and depends entirely on which ‘side’ you are on.

It is clear, however, from these types of social movements that it is not how big, or how organized the social movement is, or what type of cause they are fighting for, but how they go about invoking change and how it relates to the current social structure that determines their ‘type’. There are basic elements that determine the tactics used by a social movement and how they will proceed with their objectives; Vago [1989] lists three.
The first is how the group relates to their 'target', including their position against the target group and what type of opposition they may incur. Second, the social movement's beliefs and value structure determines in large part how they will go about invoking change. If they are an anti-war movement, for example, most likely their approach [in theory, anyway] will not involve guerrilla tactics, but rather peaceful demonstrations. The third factor is how the social movement is seen by the general public. They may not be looking for approval from every member of society, but if they intend to become a mainstream element in the landscape of that society, they need to take care with the type of tactics used towards their target. Hizb‘allah, for example, has been able to achieve and maintain some level of legitimacy in Lebanon for two reasons. First, the guerilla tactics they used during the Civil War and afterwards were used against a common Lebanese enemy [Israel and the West] and not within the Lebanese population, and, second, they reached out with social programs to help the impoverished people in the communities.

If a movement is using violence as part of their tactics, Vago [1989] suggests some steps that a social movement must pass through to obtain approval for using violence against their target. The first step is to increase the perception of relative deprivation. Let the group members know how much better off other people are, and how little the members of the group have and therefore have little to lose. The group de-emphasizes the rewards and benefits to be gained by their current position, instead focusing on the plight that they face. The group also emphasizes the discrepancy between what the members have versus what the 'others' have, which with the increase in this discrepancy also increases the feelings of frustration and rage.
The second step is to intensify the anger of the group. This is done simply by emphasizing the deprivation of the group, preaching to the group that their goals are desirable and deserved, and that their current status is horrific and needs a drastic measure to change for the better. This second level introduces the idea of taking action to achieve their goals.

The third is for the group to emphasize the social variables that transform anger into violence. This is done by giving examples of other violent groups and their achievements, emphasizing the group’s social ties to each other, and emphasizing their shared deprivation which only intensifies the feeling of complete hopelessness when shown as a group. In the case of Hizb’allah, it was rather easy to justify violence within this group, since the environment in Lebanon during the Civil War was nothing but groups committing violent acts against other groups, and, in the larger structure of the Arab world, Islamic groups fundamentally viewed violence as a means to an end, and someone who died carrying out these violent acts for their cause was seen as a martyr.

If the environment is ripe with violence and the leaders of the group can successfully cultivate the collective feeling of hopelessness and deprivation, then violence becomes an acceptable tactic in achieving their goals.

**Theoretical Models of Social Movements**

There are countless theories that deal with the phenomenon of social movements; however, there were five theories that kept coming to the forefront of the literature: Deprivation or Relative Deprivation Theory, Mass Society Theory,
Structural Strain Theory, Political Process Theory and Resource Mobilization Theory. When reviewing these theories, something very interesting emerged. The first four theories all dealt with basically the same question: ‘why do social movements emerge?’ However, the Resource Mobilization Theory had less to do with ‘why’ social movements emerged, but rather ‘how’ they were able to maintain their movement.

**Relative Deprivation Theory**

Relative deprivation is looking at others and realizing they have much more than you do, whether it is political power, economic freedom, religious freedom or social status. The deprived then begin to resent the others and want what those other people have. There are certain fundamental values people aspire to have, according to Foss [1986]. The first is welfare values, or to have economic and psychological well being. The second is power, or the ability to participate in decisions affecting one’s life and security. The third is interpersonal values, which is how we are perceived by others in the community, our status and respectability, and our family structure. When people see others enjoying these values and are not able to enjoy them for themselves, there develops a sense of injustice and resentment.

When people of the same background begin to realize that as a group they are left out of these values, group mobilization begins. This certainly was the case with Hizb’allah in Lebanon. Historically the Shi’a Muslims in Lebanon were politically weak and had the highest rate of impoverishment, and organizing allowed this very
weak communal group to gain strength and power that they had never been able to attain.

Foss [1986] also discusses three types of relative deprivation. The first occurs when the value capabilities of a group decline but the expectations remain constant. This occurs when a group experiences downward mobility. The second, aspirational deprivation occurs when people are exposed to societies that have higher standards of living that are not open to them. This can be seen both internationally and domestically in the U.S. or any other wealthy country in the world. The third is progressive deprivation, which is mood that is tied to a downturn in the economy.

With all of these explanations for social discord, this theory lacks the ability to explain collective action. It does not identify or explain the spark that ignites people into action. Throughout the course of history there have been countless groups that were better off than others, but many members of the oppressed group continued throughout their lives very passively, without organizing, without protesting, without revolution. What makes deprivation a reason for collective behavior or the establishment of a social movement? If this theory would be an adequate explanation, the United States with its staggering inequality would experience a constant stream of revolutionary movements and distress.

**Mass Society Theory**

This theory posits that, when there is a breakdown in society, the environment is ripe for social movements to begin. William Kornhauser [1959], the initial theorist of Mass Society Theory, states that, when people feel isolated from their communities
and from each other, they will tend to group together to form social groups. When there is a feeling of alienation and marginality felt by a large section of society, people will join movements to escape the feeling of alienation. According to Kornhauser [1959], Mass Society Theory stresses that the lack of social ties is what drives people to social movements, not social inequality itself. The question remains, however, about what happens when the dysfunction is in society, not the individual. Mass Society Theory fails to explain what brings people to feel this alienation, the societal downturns that occur that enable this feeling of isolation. It also fails to prove that alienation is a determining factor in collective behavior. Many people who feel isolated and marginalized may never engage in collective behavior. Instead, they may live out their lives quietly trying to survive.

**Structural Strain Theory**

When a society or a social structure is performing in a way that is counter to how people expect it to work, structural strain occurs. Structural strain disrupts an individual’s psychological state, can be caused by changes in the social structure, and can lead to attempts to change the societal structure. Strain may be a result of events such as industrialization, urbanization, or a declining economy, including high rates of unemployment or changes in status [Smelser, 1963].

Structural Strain theory also deals with alienation, but focuses more on the society rather than just the individual. According to Smelser [1963], when strain exists, people shift their attention to a higher order to help them with their strain,
which can lead to joining social movements. Smelser identifies six factors that encourage the development of social movements.

The first factor is structural conduciveness. When people begin to see problems in their current social structure, their perceptions become focused on what they believe to be serious problems that need to be addressed and on changes that need to be made. Structural strain is the next factor of Smelser’s preconditions for organizing a social movement. People experience relative incongruence between what society is giving them and what they expect. The third factor is the growth and spread of an explanation for the problems that are facing society. It is basically the beginning of the ideological development of the movement, including what the group believes, a clear statement of what the problem is, what caused these problems, and the solutions for the problem.

Any social discontent can linger in a society for an infinite amount of time, but what usually turns discontent into organized action is some sort of triggering event. Perhaps a new law that the group feels is unjust is passed or an unfavorable leader is elected or simply takes over, or, in the case of Hizb’allah, the Israeli Army invades the South of Lebanon. All these things can take what is basic discontent, no matter how serious the issue, and turn that discontent into action.

The fifth precondition that must be met is the mobilization of people. This is somewhat different than Resource Mobilization Theory in that Smelser discusses the mobilization of people without discussing how people and resources are maintained. Until people begin organizing around their issues, creating their venues for promoting
their cause, and mobilizing money and people, the group stands little chance to grow into an organized movement that can enable change.

The final condition is the amount of social control that is brought to bear on the group. If a group is able to develop, organize and function without the government’s intervention to destroy the movement, it stands a better chance of success. If a government is in disarray and there is little social control over anything, there is little chance that the movement will be stunted. Again, in Lebanon during the Civil War, many movements were able to develop and flourish since the government had little control over the country, let alone the many para-military organizations that were establishing themselves.

This theory also lends itself to the idea of Merton’s Anomie and alienation; without sufficient social ties, people tend to look elsewhere to find social acceptance because they are unsure of what is expected in the larger social structure. When a social structure is in disarray, people will look to whatever type of authority may be able to help them cope with the disparity between what is available and what is perceived as what they should have [Merton, 1968].

The basic criticism offered has been that Structural Strain Theory is incomplete. Like the Mass Society Theory, it offers answers as to ‘why’ people may mobilize when the environment that is ripe for mobilization and discontent, but it overlooks the importance of resource recruitment [Oberschall, 1973], which will be addressed in Resource Mobilization Theory.
**Political Process Model**

The Political Process Model emphasizes the political reasons behind mobilization, as opposed to the psychological reasons that have been described in the other theories [McAdam, 1982]. This theory identifies another rationale behind mobilization, that perhaps it is not necessarily that the social structure is strained or dysfunctional, but rather that people are searching for a way to be heard and have some political power over their lives. Of course, if you look at many revolutionary movements, they most certainly turn their sights on political power and persuasion, not just selected issues within a society. According to McAdam [1982], there are three determinants of a social movement within this framework: political opportunities, organization and cognitive liberation.

Political opportunities are a crucial issue that must be addressed. Opportunity can basically be described as an environment that will accept into it adversarial movements or ideologies challenging the status quo. Events such as wars, industrialization, political change, and a changing economy can leave an environment vulnerable, and create opportunities for social movements to take hold. If the environment is highly secure, it is much harder for the groups to mobilize and bring about change. If there are cracks in the governmental structures that confine these types of challenges, the environment is vulnerable for political change.

The strength of the organization is also an important aspect of this theory. People must be organized in order to be successful in their attainment of change. Finally, people must believe that things can actually change, which is cognitive
liberation. If they believe that what they are fighting for is hopeless and will never succeed, they are less likely to mobilize and attempt to make changes [1982].

The basic criticism of this theory is that people do not always mobilize for political gain. There are various groups that seek change on one issue alone, not for political power. It also undervalues the importance of resources in maintaining a social movement [Hall, 1982]. This issue of resources is at the core of the next and last theory being addressed in this thesis.

**Resource Mobilization Theory**

Whereas the other four theories focused on environmental and personal dysfunctions or weaknesses that bring people together for change, Resource Mobilization Theory tends to focus on the ways in which a social movement draws resources to itself. Without people, money, equipment, etc., social movements would be unable to perform their tasks. Anthony Oberschall [1973] believes that the success or failure of a social movement relies on the movement’s ability to utilize, mobilize and recruit resources, including people.

How do social movements draw people into the fold? Zald and McCarthy [1979] argue that people act upon their interests or their deprivation. If it is in their best interest to join together with other people, they will be more likely to do this. This idea also lends itself to the idea that people make rational choices in becoming a part of a social movement. They are not joining irrationally, but have reasons and believe that the rewards of their involvement outweigh the consequences of not joining. Resourceful and charismatic leaders are essential in this task, as the leaders
of the group convince people that joining together will bring about change.

Movements are more successful when they are able to recruit more people, and individuals are more likely to join groups in which the members are similar to themselves. Solidarity becomes a vital aspect for leaders to create and maintain within the group.

According to Zald and McCarthy [1979] there are five factors that constitute how social movements are able to achieve solidarity within the group. The first is by having friends and relatives in the group. If individuals are surrounded by people from their personal life that they trust, they are more likely to become part of a collective action. Level of participation within the group is also important. If a person feels they have invested time or money into an organization, they are more likely to stay and work within that group. If the group offers the individual improvements in their daily lives, they are more likely to join. Again, collective behavior involves giving up some of those individual choices and acting on behalf of the group, but if the group enhances and improves those daily life issues, the individual will be more willing to join. Again, rational cost and benefit analysis takes place within the person's thought process. The fourth factor involves how an individual is measured in terms of status both within the group and outside the group. Subordinate and superordinate roles are established, which creates cohesiveness to the group. The last factor involves being readily identified with the group, so that leaving the group would be difficult, on many levels. If belonging to the group has aided the person in achieving their social stature, leaving the group would alienate them from that particular status role. All of these factors illustrate how a person
becomes attracted to a group, and how they remain members of that group after enrollment.

The other aspect of Resource Mobilization Theory is the attainment of support for the movement. Money, as well as other types of material items such as weaponry and equipment, is all essential to the success of a social movement. How does a movement, especially if it is drawn from a pool of deprived individuals, obtain such wealth and material? Extremely deprived groups are more dependent upon external supports for their mobilization. In order to secure this type of funding, a movement must present itself as very well organized, it must present an ideology that is attractive to the investors in the movement, and it must offer more to the investors than what the investors are putting into the movement. There is in rational thought an idea that someone will not put more into something than what they expect to get out of it. This is also applicable to investors in social movements. For instance, Iran heavily funded Hizb’allah with money, weaponry, religious leaders and soldiers for training, all because Iran felt that Hizb’allah was delivering what Iran wanted: the removal of Israel and the creation of an Islamic state in Lebanon. When Hizb’allah put aside the platform of the Islamic state, funding from Iran began to diminish. No longer was Iran going to fund Hizb’allah if Iran was not going to benefit.

There are two criticisms regarding Resource Mobilization Theory. One is that, if the idea is that the more deprived individuals are, the more likely they are to engage in collective behavior, how would they be able to gain the powerful people to support their movement? Many social movements are well executed by relatively powerless people in the community. The second criticism of Resource Mobilization
Theory is that it overstates the ability of these movements to gain support from powerful people who are not likely to move away from the status quo. After all, the powerful elite already have what they want.

**Summary of Theories**

One thing that has become evident from examining Social Movement Theory is that no one theory is complete. They either explain why a social movement would be established, who would be likely to engage in collective behavior, the steps they would take to establish a social movement, or how they are able to attract members and money. These are very important questions to be answered, but what seems to be missing is a theoretical model that handles all these questions or a holistic explanation for the creation and continued success of a social movement. Perhaps it does not work that way, and you need to find several theories to answer different parts of the same question.

In an attempt to provide an encompassing theoretical explanation for Social Movements, there are key points in each of these theories that contribute to the overall picture of why Social Movements emerge, how they function, and how they continue to exist. By taking a chronological view of social movements, there are three stages that will be highlighted here: the Precondition Stage, or the atmosphere and environment before the birth of a movement, the creation of a Social Movement, and the continuation of the Social Movement, or its ability to maintain itself after creation.
Mass Society Theory, Structural Strain Theory and the Political Process Model all identify factors that are vital in the Pre-Social Movement environment, or what preconditions are most common for a Social Movement to originate. Mass Society Theory places the emphasis on society, explaining that there is a breakdown in society, making people feel alienated and marginalized. Structural Strain also identifies societal elements that are present; however, the difference between the two is that Structural Strain makes a point to state that the people are aware of the decline of the societal structure. Mass Society does not mention that the people are aware of the problems, just that they feel the anxiety because society is not functioning properly. Structural Strain emphasizes the awareness within the affected population. Political Process Model takes less of the societal structure into consideration, but focuses instead on the targeted population’s feeling of being politically weak and powerless.

To integrate these factors chronologically, we can say that the environment of being politically weak is already present when there is a breakdown in the social structure affects people’s psychological states, making them feel isolated and marginalized. All of these factors highlight a breakdown in societal structures that cause people to feel alienated and helpless. There certainly is a causal relationship between what is happening in society, especially when things are seriously disorganized, and how people begin to feel. Smelser [1963] makes this causal pattern clear when he states that, when the societal structure is strained, this affects people’s psychological states. If this were true, it would also be true that people’s psychological states are affected when societal structure is good.
Although these are critical ideas in the birth of a Social Movement, these elements have been present in many places throughout the world and throughout history, yet no Social Movement was created. These aspects may describe the environmental atmosphere that is conducive to the creation of Social Movements; however, they do not explain why the Social Movement is created, when so many other times a Social Movement was not. In the end, even though these conditions are present when a Social Movement is created, these conditions can also be present without Social Movements as well.

Why a social movement materializes is a different subject altogether. Mass Society Theory, Relative Deprivation Theory, Structural Strain and Resource Mobilization Theory all provide important explanations about why a movement originates. With Mass Society Theory, lack of social ties causes people to seek out others who share the same ideas. According to Kornhauser [1959] people tend form social groups if they are feeling alienated and will search for others who may be sharing the same isolation. Relative Deprivation Theory offers the idea that, once a group is getting together, they begin to realize that they do not have as much as others. Structural Strain also stresses that, once a small group comes together, they begin to explain their problems away by blaming others. Resource Mobilization Theory offers the idea that charismatic leadership is needed to organize an effective group. Then when a triggering event happens, the small group that has originated is able to procure more legitimacy because this event has caused people to feel more despair and actively look to this new organized group to help ease the problems before them. So in the origination process people’s feelings of isolation drive them
towards forging alliances with social groups, and these groups perpetuate feelings of legitimacy for their suffering, blame others for their problems [sometimes true, sometimes scapegoating], the small group realizes that they are deprived of something important to them, and strong leadership makes sure all these concepts are strongly emphasized to the group. Then when a triggering event happens, it legitimizes all that the group has come to believe, and their resolve for change is stronger than ever. A Social Movement is born.

The final aspect of Social Movement Theory deals with the success of a Social Movement. That is, how is a Social Movement, once established, is able to continue? It is simple to say ‘X is a Social Movement’; but how does X keep itself together? Political Process and Resource Mobilization Theories both offer ideas on how Social Movements are able to survive. Political opportunities, good organization and a strong ideology are essential to the existence of a Social Movement according to the Political Process Model. A group may be large in number, but if they are not well organized, are unaware of the opportunities that unfold in front of them, and do not have a sense of their purpose, they will not survive, or will not develop at all. Resource Mobilization Theory explains the essential need for people and money. Without recruiting members and having money to maintain the movement, it will not survive very long.

Each theory in itself is incomplete; it only answers [or tries to explain] only one aspect of Social Movements. Crudely, however, by chronologically placing the life of a social movement in these three stages, it becomes apparent that no one theory
can explain every stage; however, the ideas presented in these theories are important pieces of the overall picture of a Social Movement's existence.

The point to this particular section is to illustrate that, throughout the chronological history of a social movement, each of these theories provides bits and pieces that contribute to an explanation of a social movement's creation and success. It is rather simple to take these particular factors and apply them historically to a social movement; however, each of these theories individually scrutinized would not be able to predict the emergence of a social movement. Is it possible to link all these factors, to somehow create a 'recipe' for an atmosphere that is receptive to the creation and establishment of a social movement, and be able to predict an emergence of a movement? This is a far more interesting sociological question.

One way of looking at these theoretical ideas is by looking at the life course of Social Movements to see what kind of pattern emerges. With this chronology we may be able to apply these theories and see how they impact the flow of these movements.

**Life Course of Social Movements**

Vago [1989] describes five stages in the life of a social movement: Incipiency, Coalescence, Institutionalization, Fragmentation and Demise. During each of these stages, a social movement changes in many ways.

The first stage, incipiency, is the early stages of a movement. Some social unrest or condition is festering that threatens some group in society. A few people begin advocating for change and begin developing their ideology. Within this
ideology they establish their method of operation, and the leaders test the members’
level of commitment. Charismatic leaders must find a way of attracting new
members to this group. They do this by stressing the social problems that they are
facing and offering a way in which to invoke change. They must provide realistic
solutions for this change to invoke interest and commitment as well. If the goals are
unrealistic, they will not ensure a strong commitment among members of the group.

In the coalescence stage, small groups begin to form around the core leaders
and they begin to develop a pattern of organization. They may fragment themselves
into various parts of the movement, and a definitive pattern of hierarchy is
established. During this period resources become mobilized.

Institutionalization is perhaps the most intricate stage in Social Movements.
This is also clearly the turning point for legitimization. This is the stage where the
social movement becomes stronger, more stable and accepted as part of the society.
The organizational structure of a social movement is very fragmented, composed of
many cells or subsections that carry out certain duties. All the various segments are
brought together under the same umbrella of the social movement and its ideology.

One of the clear disadvantages of institutionalization, however, is the lack of
central control that was once possessed by a small number of people. Now that there
are many ‘departments’ or groups, fragmentation can weaken the organization.
Bureaucratization is not always successful, and certainly institutionalization, when it
happens, will be the biggest test for the long-term life and success of a social
movement. The last stage is demise. After an organization begins breaking down
from having the power decentralized, they can lose whatever power they may have had in the past.

So how does a social movement maintain its success and avoid moving to the demise stage quickly? Is institutionalization a sure sign that the movement will fail? Gladys and Kurt Lang [1961] outline structural problems that need to be addressed in an organization to protect its longevity. The first step that must be taken is establishing roles and role functions, including knowing who the leaders and the followers are, their roles, and their functions. The second is coordinating the relationship among the various groups within the movement, including setting boundaries, outlining duties and leadership responsibilities, and establishing a good sense of communication between these groups. Another factor is to establish criteria for membership in the core group and the obligations for membership. The final structural problem that must be resolved is coordinating the activities of the movement and its dealings with the outside world. To be separate within the group is one thing, but a social movement that seeks to remain intact must present a unified front to the outside world.

All of these problems are usually dealt with based on the group’s ideology. Ideology is perhaps the single most important and definitive part of a social movement. Ideology establishes the group’s values and norms, and acts as its official doctrine. [Gladys and Kurt Lang, 1961].

Ideology is a collection of many things. It is a statement of purpose for the social movement to exist, it outlines the problems that the movement has with the established order, it provides a blueprint for its method of operation, and, finally, it
offers the members a new set of values and norms that are representative of the
movement. Ideologies are one defining element of each type of social movement.
For instance, Political Movements are social movements; however, what
distinguishes them as Political Movement is their ideology. That is, political goals
and their belief system about what should be changed within a political structure is
what sets them apart from other social movements. All political movements are
social movements; however, not all social movements end up being political
movements. Ideology is only part of what makes up a social movement, however.
There are many characteristics of a social movement that come into play in
determining its potential success or its demise.

**Characteristics of a Social Movement**

There are six basic characteristics of social movements. They are
organization and opposition, recruitment, charismatic leadership, tactics used for
change, and seeking public approval.

One thing a social movement has, like any other collective action, is an issue
to address. There must be some issue that that is the focus of the group’s discontent.
They make their target very clear, and take steps to establish themselves as an
adversary of the status quo and of the opposing group. A strong social movement
makes their agenda very clear. What they are opposed to, how things should be, and
how they go about changing these things really are all part of the group’s ideology.

Recruitment is vital to any social movement. Social movements cannot exist
without members. In order to provide a movement with members, and resources, a
social movement must be able to recruit people. How they recruit people can be as complex as the movement itself; however, Hall [1988] suggests a few ideas. First, the group must let the potential members know how they may benefit by being part of the group. If the social structure is in strain of some sort, the movement may offer to the individual something they are not able to attain on their own. Second, leaders must get members and potential members to believe in their cause and be committed to it. The more the leaders stress the problems that afflict the group and establish a way to make things better, the easier it will be to get people to join with the movement. Third, if the potential members are of the same background as the rest of the group, they are more likely to join. For instance, the same ethnic or religious affiliation would be similarities that would draw individuals to a social movement. They may already have the issues of discontent in common, but the more ‘alike’ the individuals of the group are, the more cohesive the group becomes. Finally, a spiritual hierarchy is also on Hall’s list, with those being in roles of authority having a higher moral status than other members. This last issue of Halls’ takes into account the next characteristic, which is that a social movement must have charismatic leaders. Leaders need to have the power to make the oppression a real issue that needs to be addressed. They need to be believed and respected. The leaders need to be almost bigger than life, as they epitomize the greatness that this movement will achieve.

Tactics are also part of the ideology of the movement. It is not necessarily the goal of the movement that matters, but the way in which the group works towards its goals. The means are just as important as the end result.
Finally, in order to obtain legitimacy in the society and to be able to fulfill its goals, a movement must at some level gain public approval. This is not to say that they need to be accepted by everyone, but an acceptance in mainstream society of their existence is necessary. For instance, not everyone approves of Hizb‘allah, but the population of Lebanon accepts its existence in the country.

**Literature Review**

In reviewing other researchers in the field of social movement case study research, a few different are worth mentioning here. In Ziad Munson’s [2001] analysis of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, he combines various theoretical elements of social movement theories such as relative deprivation and anomie, arguing that these factors explain why the Muslim Brotherhood mobilized. Munson also explains the movements’ rapid growth using literature on political Islam and political opportunity, though he does not exclusively characterize this movement as a political or religious movement. Pasuk Phongpaichit [1999] distinguishes between two camps of theories, one American and one European, and reads conclusions similar to those of Munson [2001]. Cathy Schneider [2000] discusses social movements in South America by doing a comparative study of three different case studies in Chile, Argentina and Columbia. One focus she maintained throughout her analysis was the political nature of these movements. By providing a somewhat journalistic history to these movements, she illustrates the differences in how these movements were created. For instance, in Argentina the grass roots movement was created from the bottom of the social structure and worked upwards. In Chile, the
leaders in their Churches and communities directed movements. One conclusion that Schneider draws is very important to understanding the nature of any social movement: the critical roles that the environment and space in which the movement originates. These external factors certainly do shape the agenda and ideology of the movement, as well as the mindset of the resistors [Schneider, 2001].

**Conclusion**

If there is one conclusion for this chapter, it is that there is no one explanation for anything. If a journalistic approach to this question of social movements is taken, the theories separately do not really answer the ‘who, what, when, where, why and how’ of social movements. But, if combined, these theories have some common threads that address how social movements work and why they are successful.

For the theoretical aspect, the type of environment and psychological state of people who partake in movements have been made clear. The dysfunction of the societal structure, the dissatisfaction of people, and their social positions all play an integral part for the creation of social movements. Triggering events that and the recruitment and procurement of resources enable a movement to establish itself and maintain activity.

To begin to understand social movements, a review of what other people have said about them is crucial. To look at these theories, what they stand for, and what they are criticized for is essential to begin building new ideas. Though many ideas have been brought to this chapter, if there is one word that could characterize the main artery, or that common thread, through these social movement models, it is
vulnerability. Though vulnerability sounds rather negative, not all social movements are negative. In order for a social movement to emerge, recruit members, and eventually succeed, individuals and society alike must be vulnerable to their emergence.
Chapter 3
History of a Nation

Introduction

This chapter is to briefly introduce the reader to the country of Lebanon. The history of this region goes back thousands of years, through many hegemonic powers controlling this prime coastal land in the Middle East, a brief period of independence, and finally through the contemporary struggles Lebanon is facing today for complete sovereignty. Even though by decree Lebanon became an independent state in 1943, this chapter will illustrate this small country's current struggle to free itself from yet another controlling power.

Lebanon's history has been characterized by periods of great economic growth and success, only to be followed by severe problems. This chapter will illustrate patterns of weakness and vulnerability through historical analysis of the processes that have left Lebanon vulnerable to the devastating periods of unrest and economic turmoil that the Lebanese people have been socialized to endure and accept as status quo.

Phoenicia East

As far back as 500 BC [and before] there was struggle for world domination, and the land that came to be known as Lebanon was not free of this struggle. At the time of the Phoenicians, a people whose common history was that of seafarers throughout ports in the Mediterranean, they were one of the dominant people in the
known world. The Phoenicians were premiere seamen, establishing small civilizations throughout the Mediterranean shores and as far south as the African coast. The Phoenicians were also skilled tradesmen. They had developed ideas that they brought back from many lands, learned from other ports, and applied their knowledge to their homeland. Over the course of several hundred years, the Phoenicians became incredibly powerful, becoming a prime target for many other groups. In the end, the Greeks, led by Alexander the Great, won the land of the Phoenicians [Edey, 1974].

Why was a greater, more powerful group able to conquer what was one of the most diversified and progressive cultures of their time? One reason is space. Phoenicia was not one concentrated, populated area that they could defend; Phoenicia comprised small ports throughout the Mediterranean. Even in the land that became Lebanon, Phoenicia East was not one group, but several small ones. The only factor that held the Phoenicians together and that made them one people was their sea travels from port to port. Otherwise the Phoenician cities were quite separate from each other. Eastern Phoenician cities remained politically independent of each other, each looking after their own interest [Harden, 1962]. The Sidonians, the Tyrians, etc. had their own governments, their own kingdoms, and their own wealth [Baramki, 1961]. There was never a Phoenician nation; if there had been more political unity between the separate kingdoms, perhaps their ability to ward off invaders would have been greater. They became vulnerable to large armies simply because of their size, and in the end Alexander the Great's army was able to control all of Phoenicia East with little resistance. Even at this time, we begin to understand the weaknesses and
consequences of division, something that has never been understood by the Lebanese in general.

**The Christian and Druze Migration**

Throughout the next several hundred years, many leading groups sought to control this piece of land. During this period [during the mid 7th Century], Islam was born, which led to incredible changes throughout this region of the world, and subsequently led to changes in what was to be known as Lebanon. In what later was called Mount Lebanon, there were different groups that found their way from other lands and came to call the mountain their home.

**The Druze**

The Druze, a very small community who were originally Shi’a Muslim, developed their own identity in the 11th century and originated in Egypt [Harik, 1968]. When this religion, whose conception revolved around the teachings of a Shi’a caliph al-Hakim [Gordon, 1983] did not meet with much success in Egypt, the Druze began migrating to Syria and the south of Lebanon [Harik, 1968]. Though by the 16th Century the Druze were well established in many places throughout Lebanon, for the period between the inception of the religion during the 11th Century and the 16th Century, the number of people who migrated and the process of migration are not documented and remain a mystery [Harik, 1968].

The Druze are a very secretive, tight knit group. One can only be born into the group, and they reject anyone who attempts to convert [Gordon, 1983]. The Druze established themselves primarily in the region of Wadial Tayn, Jabal al Shuf
and al Gharb in Mount Lebanon [Harik, 1968]. Although their religion was based in Islamic beliefs, they developed an amicable relationship with the Christian migrants who also were coming to the region, although they maintained their independent community.

**The Maronites**

The first Christian group to migrate to Mount Lebanon were the Maronites. Maronites, who took their name from the 4th century monk Marin [Gordon, 1983], originated in central Syria and migrated to Mount Lebanon during two waves in the 7th and then the 9th centuries [Picard, 2002]. The Maronites had troubles with the Byzantine government and the Jacobites in western Syria, so they began migrating westward [Gordon, 1983]. During the crusades in Europe the Maronites began identifying more with their western Christian counterparts and began resenting the Islamic political authority that was imposed on them [Picard, 2002]. During the next few hundred years the Maronite community expanded their living area throughout Mt. Lebanon, and by the 17th and 18th Centuries they began migrating south, displacing many Shi’a from their land [Gordon, 1983].

**The Druze and Maronite Co-existence**

With both of these group's migration, however, came isolation. Each group lived amongst themselves and had little business outside of their own villages [Gordon, 1983]. Though they kept to themselves, the Druze and Christians were able to live relatively close but maintain their own sovereignty with little trouble from the other groups. Instead of trying to build a stronger unity within the area, both decided
it was best to live independently of each other. With the exception of a few disputes, sometimes erupting into violence, both groups lived peacefully, though separately. Certainly there were others who had originally been a part of this region, mostly people who were descendants of the Phoenicians. Little is written about these descendants during this period of Lebanese history. As time passed, more Muslims began migrating to the area, and eventually Mt. Lebanon was taken over by the Ottoman Empire, which ruled for over 400 years.

The Ottoman Empire

The Ottomans, whose origin was geographically in what is now Turkey, were a large group who had converted to Sunni Muslim and had taken over the area that is now known as the Middle East. The Ottomans first took over the area in the typical military fashion; however during the course of the 16th Century, after their rule had been established, the Ottomans took on a more bureaucratic type of control [Hourani, 1991]. Under the Ottomans there began a significant migration of Muslims to Lebanon over the course of the Empire's reign. There were clashes between various groups from time to time with some very deadly outbreaks of violence, but eventually each group would return to their own area. The tradition of self-segregation was firmly in place at this time.

The Ottomans established their rule in a very systematic process. As new lands were acquired, governors were appointed to cities and taxes were collected that were income for the Ottomans [Hourani, 1991]. There were three 'regular' types of taxes that were collected. The first were taxes on produce of the countryside: crops,
fisheries and livestock. The second were taxes on the urban consumer trade. Produce sold in markets, shops, bathhouses, industry, exports and imports were all taxed. Also tolls on roads were collected, and the Ottomans established the first direct route between Beirut and Damascus. The third tax was a personal tax that was paid by Christians and Jews [Hourani, 1991]. The Ottomans were Islamic, and in their way tolerated different religious groups, but did not allow them to become landowners. The Ottomans did allow other groups very limited sovereignty over their own areas, with the Ottoman municipality type government in place [Gordon, 1983]. The Druze and Muslim groups did not have to pay personal taxes and were allowed more autonomy in their own municipalities [Hourani, 1991]. The Druze also were able to establish a level of control over the Christians, with the permission and approval of the Ottomans [Gordon, 1983].

There were several significant events that changed the environment in Lebanon during the 19th Century. The first was the invasion and short-lived rule of Lebanon by Egypt, which lasted nine years [1831-1840]. Egyptian rule was more tolerant of the communal groups, particularly the Christians. One major contribution Egypt gave to the Christians was the ability to become landowners. Egypt also was impressed by the West and followed their lead by encouraging education and commerce [Gordon, 1983]. The Ottomans regained power over Egypt in 1840, but changes Egypt encouraged created many more problems for the Ottomans. Once the Egyptians left, the Christians and Druze clashed violently when the Druze tried to re-establish their control over the Christians. The Christians had been able to enjoy the fruits of freedom, and they were not going to give them up without a fight. With
these violent outbreaks, Europe intervened with a compromise. Called the ‘Double Quaimaqamiate’, this compromise left the north under Maronite control, and the south under Druze control [Gordon, 1983]. This appeared, at least on paper, to be a solution to the ever-growing animosity between the groups. However, populations of both groups overlapped in these areas, which left many Maronite peasants working for Druze landowners. In 1859 Maronites rebelled in the Peasant Revolt. The Druze, encouraged by the Ottomans and the British, massacred the Maronites, and in a four-week period, over 11,000 Maronites perished [Gordon, 1983]. However tragic this event was, it sparked changes that were designed to establish equal rights for all communal groups in Lebanon. Between 1861-1864 a constitutional arrangement was made that abolished feudalism as a system of tax gathering and was to provide Christians with political power that had up to that point been non-existent [Gordon, 1983]. This was all part of a greater reform movement, the Tanzimat, that lasted until the end of the 19th century [Gordon, 1983]. By the turn of the century, the Ottomans had established in Lebanon a legacy of bureaucracy, tax collection, and a varied amount of political equality, depending on the communal group. This idea of providing political power based on religious identity [although the amount of power would change between the groups] would become one of the defining issues that would plague Lebanon throughout the next century.

The Ottoman Empire disintegrated at the end of World War I. When Germany lost the war, so did their allies, and the Ottoman Empire was over. Now England and France primarily divided up these provinces into nations, allocating power to groups friendly to the west, and created nation states within this area for the
first time in this region's history. Lebanon became the property of the French
[Nevakivi, 1969].

A French Colony

After WWI the Middle East was now the property of Britain and its allies. The
Middle East was divided between the Allied powers, not unlike candy is divided up
between children at Halloween. Lebanon and Syria became the property of the
French [Nevakivi, 1969]. The people of this region had never been identified as part
of a ‘country’, and this created a large amount of resentment and opposition
[Nevakivi, 1969].

The first task of the French was to establish national boundaries. When
greater Lebanon was established in 1920, the Christians believed that this would
provide Lebanon with greater security and prosperity; however, the boundaries that
were drawn populated Lebanon with many more Muslims whose allegiance was to
Syria and the Arab Nationalist movement that was beginning to emerge, not to
Lebanon [Gordon, 1983]. To the Muslim population the French, and the Christians,
were unwanted elements in an Arab nation. France further aggravated the Muslims
by establishing French as the national language and ordering that it be the primary
language in education and government, which gave the Maronites [who had
established good relations with the French] an advantage in government [Gordon,
1983].

The governmental system under the French was a parallel system; one
Lebanese and republican and one French and imperial. France allowed the Lebanese
government to exist so long as it did not create problems for the French interests [Browne, 1976]. During this period the French encouraged the Lebanese annex of the government to establish land registries, which gave actual property rights to individual families [Gordon, 1983].

Lebanon was only a colony of France for approximately 25 years, but during that time France was able to create an indelible mark on the culture and way of life in Lebanon. To this day, Arabic and French are the national languages.

**Lebanon as a Self-Governing Nation**

In 1945 Lebanon became an independent state, or did it? There were still countries vying for power in this small coastal country. The economy in Lebanon, based mostly on private industries and with little government control, began to flourish. However, there were foreign countries that would drive internal strife to an all time high.

Never before in history had all these areas been divided into different countries, setting boundaries between lands that had never before known boundaries, and, further, not even by their own accord but by the decision of others [England and France]. Once this 'nationalization' occurred, the west expected the people to simply accept themselves as a citizen of a country, whether it was Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, or Lebanon. Centuries of identity were expected to vanish by drawing lines on a map, and the people of these lands were supposed to assimilate themselves into new national identities. In these countries, identity to one group or another is far more
important than national identity, and communal identity in this region is paramount to any other [Haddad, 1985].

In Lebanon, where the cultural norm had always been to isolate oneself from outside groups, the idea of consolidating all the Christians, Druze and Muslims into one category of 'Lebanese' turned out to be impossible. This inability to have a unified national identity is consistent with the culture set forth for centuries in this area, and when Lebanon became a country with national boundaries, there was still a sense of isolation between people. With the increase in population at the turn of the century in Beirut, these isolated people already had to adapt to cohabitation in concentrated areas, although still separated into neighborhoods that are predominately segregated even today. Their diversity made things strained and made establishing a national identity and unity much more difficult [Gordon, 1983]. There were many conflicts throughout the Middle East in attempting to reconcile themselves to their new situation, but in a region like Lebanon, coming together as one had never been accepted, and would in later years perpetuate conflict and disaster.

Lebanon had always been organized by communal groups [Picard, 2002]. They were torn apart by ideologies, which perpetuated distrust between the groups with which they were now expected to assimilate; instead, each group attempted to work separately [Haddad, 1985].

Some say that diversity creates strength, but diversity cannot create strength if the people refuse to embrace and accept the differences in others and work together. Working together is what makes diversity strong, and that is something the Lebanese have never done. In fact, diversity drove them farther apart and made the result of
these differences more extreme and violent than ever before, erupting in a 15-year war that killed hundreds of thousands of Lebanese on all sides.

**Arab Nationalism and U.S. Intervention**

From the time the Middle East was divided by the western powers, there was a political movement to create an Arab nationalist ideology. This ideology was strongly embraced in the countries that were predominately Muslim; however, Lebanon’s population was more than half non-Muslim. When the idea of Arab nationalism began appearing, this created an even bigger fragmentation in the country. The Muslims wanted the Arab nationalist movement while the Christians wanted western influence, as well as the money that came along with it. So independence was immediately marred by conflict.

Egypt was one of the dominating countries at the time that was pushing for Arab nationalism and was constantly at odds with Lebanon, doing whatever it could to manipulate aid from western countries to Lebanon and to bring about rifts in the political climate. In 1958 Egypt joined with Syria in the Arab nationalist movement and was able to gain the support of the Lebanese Muslims, which brought about a more fragmented society in Lebanon [Gordon, 1983]. The Christian groups in Lebanon, particularly President Camille Chamoun, asked the west to intervene, as this Arab nationalist movement was causing huge conflicts between groups, and finally the Lebanese political leaders signed an agreement offered by the United States that would give $20 million to the Lebanese government. By signing this agreement, Chamoun created more division in the Lebanese state [Gordon, 1983]. Of course, the United States and Britain were less concerned about a civil war in Lebanon than they
were about thwarting the success of the Arab nationalists. When the United States agreed to use military power in Lebanon and Jordan, Britain was relieved [Ovendale, 1996]. They, too, wanted to protect their interests in the region, but they were less interested in taking such an active military role than they had been immediately after the World War II. They wanted America to take over that 'big brother' role. The Untied States took over as the 'watcher' of the region, which is exactly what Britain wanted [Ovendale, 1996].

With western influence, Lebanon actually flourished. Over the next 25 years Lebanon, primarily in the capital city of Beirut, became the banking center for the Middle East [Picard, 2002]. Without the rich natural resources of the gulf countries, or the size and strength of countries like Egypt and Syria, Lebanon needed to find its niche where it could be successful. They achieved this in banking. Beirut also became the cultural center of the region. With their rich history, their western influence, and their diverse population, they became the bridge from the west to the east. However, what is on the surface is not always how things really are. During this period there were also internal struggles within the country, struggles that were intensified by the pressure put forth by Syria. With the increase in migration of various Muslim groups, particularly the Shi’a, there became an ever-increasing fight for political and economic power. Another circumstance that arose in this migration was that the Christian population was no longer the majority; the majority of the population was now Muslim, and they wanted their share of political and economic power.
The Civil War

It is very interesting why this period of unrest and violence has been called a 'Civil War'. In reality, foreign influences shaped this conflict more than any group within Lebanon. If anything, the Lebanese became more like chess pieces on a board that the outside, more powerful nations played against each other. From 1975 through 1989 Lebanon fought a civil war that left the country devastated in many ways. To go into detail on the Civil War would be another thesis altogether; however, there are several points that lend themselves to the ideas that are relevant for this paper.

During the 1950's and 1960's fighting and territorial disputes between various groups within Lebanon were becoming more frequent, and more bloody. But the worst was to come. The precursors of the Civil War of 1975 could arguably go back centuries; however, certain events over the course of less than a decade lent themselves to situations that kept perpetuating more violent acts. In 1967 Israel waged a war with the Arabs that lasted only 6 days, and changed the demographic landscape of Lebanon forever. Tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees were forced out of Israel and migrated north to Lebanon and east to Jordan. The Palestinians quickly gained the support and sympathy of the Muslim communities in their fight to return to their homeland. Syria also agreed that the Palestinians had a right to fight Israel, and supported attacks on Israel from the south of Lebanon for over eight years. What was left was a small portion of the Christian population that did not want to go to war with Israel, and eventually this small country, already fragmented by religious and group ties, fell apart [Haddad, 1985]. For the next 15 years, Israel controlled many of the Christian groups and Syria and Iran controlled the Muslims. What
inevitably took place was a war between Israel and Syria, with financial and military support from Iran, the United States, France and Italy, fought on Lebanese soil, using the Lebanese people to fight, and having Lebanese casualties.

The war completely destroyed the Lebanese economy. Banks were closed, their financial center was destroyed, and all of Beirut was quartered off and turned into para-military controlled blocks. With Lebanon transformed into a war zone, the interests of the west were being placed in jeopardy. The United States, France, and Italy all sent 'peace keeping' military forces to Beirut. The Syrians, Iranians, and Lebanese Muslims saw these forces as Israeli pawns, and in October of 1983, the message to get out of town was made perfectly clear. A truck carrying 1500 pounds of explosives drove into the marine barracks in Beirut, killing 241 American and over 50 French soldiers [Friedman, 1989]. The west left, leaving the Christians and the Israelis to fight the Syrians, Iranians and the Lebanese Muslims. This is the first time in the history of Lebanon that a hegemonic power, the United States, left Lebanon and their interests there.

At the end of the war there were no epiphanies or resolutions; everyone was tired of losing so many members, living with the fear of being killed everyday, of suffering the economic turmoil and deprivation that the war had brought to their country, and of living day to day in this surrealistic nightmare. Eventually, after 15 years of fighting, the Lebanese ended the war with the Taif Accord, but the two stronger powers, Syria and Israel, continued to fight each other on Lebanese soil, even though one of the conditions brought forth in Taif Accord was that foreign powers were to evacuate Lebanon [Rubin, 2003]. Syria again used para military
groups such as Hizb‘allah to drive Israeli forces out of the south of Lebanon, and finally, after eight years of guerilla warfare, Israel left [Rainstorp, 1997]. Currently Syria still has military forces throughout Lebanon, they control and are supported by many Parliament members, which leave many Lebanese feeling that Syria is holding the Lebanese economic freedom hostage by their controls [Haddad, 1985].

In February of 2005 former Prime Minister Rafik Harriri was assassinated in downtown Beirut. Waves of protests followed, accusing Syrian Intelligence and Military of perpetuating this act. There were International calls for Syrian withdrawal, and President Bashir Assad of Syria complied. By April 26th, 2005, Syrian troops and Intelligence Officers left Lebanon. With the Syrian troops leaving Lebanon, will Lebanon be strong enough to free themselves from Syrian government control? And if Lebanon is successful, who will be the next hegemon to come along and control Lebanon in the future?

**The Israeli and Syrian Post-War Occupation**

The presence of Israeli troops in Lebanon was the one event throughout history that forced a national unity among the Lebanese. Everyone wanted Israel to leave; the question was, with the country in post-war turmoil, who was strong enough to remove the Israeli forces and send them back south of the boarder? At this time, Hizb'allah was still receiving money from Iran, and was the only group strong enough to conduct consistent guerilla attacks against the Israeli army. Hizb'allah was able to use their para-military forces to change the ratio of Israeli lives/Lebanese lives lost from 1/100 to nearly 1/1 [Rainstorp, 1997]. Finally, in the summer of 2000 when
Israel left all but a few farms in the south of Lebanon, the whole country applauded, and Hizb'allah took its place as hero of the Lebanese people, the one strong force who fought the 'evil infiltrators'. On the coat tails of this notoriety, Hizb'allah was able to secure even more political prestige and seats in the Parliament [Rainstorp, 1997]. Christians as well as Muslims voted for Hizb'allah because of their role in removing Israel. In fact, Hizb'allah used this new position to begin bringing Christians and Shi'a Muslims together against the Sunnis. Syria still controlled the Sunnis, and now that Israel was gone, the Lebanese wanted the rest of the occupiers gone as well. The problem with Syria was that the Sunni Muslims, and many other Parliament members, still wanted Syrian influence inside Lebanon, whereas EVERYONE wanted Israel gone. Even after a war that left all sides suffering from significant losses, foreign occupation and takeover and economic struggles, Lebanon still has not learned the obvious: to come together as a nation.

There are fundamental parts to the Lebanese story of missed opportunity. One certainly is the bigger, stronger nations coming in and taking over, but the other has to be the people of Lebanon and their historical inability to forge one nation. In fact, in the end, the Lebanese problem, and its solution, lies completely in the hands of the Lebanese people.
Chapter 4
Hizb'allah: Understanding the Party of God

Qur'anic verse V, 56
And whoever takes Allah and His apostle
and those who believe for a guardian,
then surely the party of Allah are they
that shall be triumphant.

Introduction

For the last 300 years the western world has separated religion and politics as a common practice; however, this is not the case in Islam. In Muslim regions, religion and politics are interwoven. Political institutions are designed to defend and promote Islam, not the state, which inevitably clashes with the west and their style of modernization and secularization [Husain, 1995].

What the Muslim world sees when modernization happens is a departure from religious doctrine in government, as well as a severe injustice in economic distribution, which is what fuels Islamic social movements [Husain, 1995]. The basic premise is to remarry religious beliefs with the way in which people are governed with religious beliefs determined and interpreted by religious leaders, of course.

For more than 20 years Hizb'allah, translated as the Party of God, has played a significant role in the history of Lebanon’s Civil War, as well as their post war reconstruction efforts. An Islamic movement whose seeds were first planted during the chaos of a small country torn apart by Civil War has been able to adapt itself and thrive within the changing climate of the region. Hizb'allah reached its height of
power in the late 1980's when it gained political and military control over most of West Beirut and large areas of South Lebanon [Rubin, 2003]. What is interesting about Hizb’allah is its ability to thrive when other similar militant groups coming out of the same time dissipated. During the forming of the Ta’if Agreement that finally ended the Civil War, Hizb’allah was the only para-military group that was not disbanded [Zisser, 1997]. Hizb’allah managed not only to establish themselves as a well organized and diverse social movement during the Civil War, but managed to reinvent themselves and establish themselves as a viable and legitimate force in Lebanon’s political structure.

This chapter will discuss three different subjects regarding Hizb’allah. First, Hizb’allah’s history and how this Islamic movement established itself in the Lebanese structure will be outlined. Second, I will discuss Hizb’allah’s fundamental beliefs, both spiritual and political, including the spiritual guidance of their charismatic leader Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah. Finally, this chapter looks at how Hizb’allah plays an active role in the Lebanese political structure today. It is at the core of this transition from para-military social movement to Lebanese political party that is of great interest, in order to understand how Hizb'allah went from bombing 'western' installations and kidnappings to services provider and political machine.

**Historical Ties to Iraq**

The genesis of Hizb’allah goes back before its official entrance into the Lebanese theater in June 1982. Hizb’allah’s leaders originated in the religious academies of the southern city of Najaf, Iraq, in the 1960’s and 1970’s. [Rainstorp,
Many of the Shi’a religious leaders in Lebanon, including Fadlallah, had been educated in the holy cities of Najaf and Kabala, Iraq. The Ba’ath regime in Iraq, a Sunni Muslim group, worked towards removing many of the Shi’a leaders in these cities, inevitably resulting in many of them migrating to Lebanon. Some of these religious leaders fled Iraq and formed the Lebanese al Dawa party. This party empowered young Shi’a students to pursue political and economic growth for their people. This party, under the spiritual guidance of Fadlallah, would later become a key component of the establishment of Hizb’allah. In some ways, if it were not for the problems in Iraq and the spiritual leaders’ subsequent exodus to Lebanon, there would not have been a Hizb’allah.

These clerics established educational institutions in Lebanon that based their religious leadership on the Najaf model. The Najaf model was simple; follow in the path of the Shi’a clerics to establish a stronger political and economic structure for the Shi’a Muslims, the model that was followed in Tehran during the Iranian Revolution. This new generation of Lebanese students was learning radical Islamic theory and was soon given the challenge of bringing the Shi’a religion new political power and prestige, not always through peaceful means. With the Iranian Revolution in 1979, many Shi’a religious leaders saw the potential for Lebanon to be the next country to enjoy a Shi’a Muslim republic. With the inspiration of Iran, the Ayatollah Khoemeni’s rise to power, and the Shi’a population being the fastest growing communal group in Lebanon, the Shi’a would soon be establishing themselves as a force wanting more political power. The Shi’a were certainly gaining strength in numbers, and began organizing themselves and their communities into political
activism. Whereas the Iranian revolution achieved its goals primarily by non-violent means [Gelles, 1999], not all of the Shi’a groups in Lebanon, including Hizb’allah, would follow that pattern.

**War-Time Movements**

Traditionally, the Shi’a community in Lebanon was the communal group that was passive, economically impoverished and politically weak. During the war several small groups of Shi’a emerged whose main objective was to organize the people in order to gain political strength and to spread the idea of Arab nationalism and strong opposition to a secular government in Lebanon. Lebanese nationalism as an identity and loyalty to Lebanon as an independent nation were being replaced by a resurgence of strong ties to religion [Hunter, 1988]. These groups wanted an Islamic republic based on Islamic laws. Some of these groups were the Lebanese al-Dawa [Fadlallah’s group], Association of Muslim Ulama in Lebanon, Islamic Amal, Husain Suicide Squad and the Association of Muslim Students, all of which eventually contributed members into Hizb’allah [Hunter, 1988 and Rainstorp, 1997]. Another group, the Amal movement, headed by Imam Musa al-Sadr, became pivotal in Hizb’allah’s eventual creation and success. In concert with these movements there were three major events that propelled the Lebanese Shi’a from the traditionally submissive role into one that sought an active, even radical, place in Lebanese politics.

The first event was the disappearance of Imam Musa al-Sadr in Libya in 1978. There was speculation that Libya's President Qadhdafi had a hand in his presumed
assassination [Norton, 1987]. The second was the invasion of southern Lebanon by the Israeli’s in 1978 [and again in 1982], and the third was the establishment of a Shi’a Islamic republic in Iran. These last two events not only gave the Shi’a community a common enemy to fight, but gave them the political model they needed to realize that being assertive politically was the way to achieve great things.

Throughout this time there were several movements that attempted to organize a strong activism spirit within the Shi’a community, but there was something lacking. It was difficult to organize fully; making themselves known to the community was difficult as most of these groups were very secretive in nature. There were also problems with the ability of these movements to provide services among the Shi’a population that would help them gain support and membership, which was vital to the success of the movements.

Hizb’allah’s main ‘competition’ for political clout was the Amal movement, which was led by Nabih Berri after the disappearance of al-Sadr, and was more moderate than the other Shi’a groups. Berri still leads this organization and is the Shi’a top political leader in Lebanon’s Parliament, the equivalent of our Speaker of the House. The more radical Shi’a leaders, both in Lebanon and Iran, felt that there should be a more ‘revolutionary’ spirit within the Shi’a community, so they made a plan for many al-Dawa members [the group that Fadlallah established earlier] to join the Amal movement, creating a separation within the group. As more al-Dawa members joined and gained influence within Amal there was a great split, as had been predicted, between the more moderate group led by Nabih Berri and the more radical side. This split became increasingly clear when Israel invaded the south of Lebanon
in 1982. The moderates did not want to fight with Israel. As a matter of fact Berri, representing Amal, signed a deal with the Christian government to deal with Israel peacefully as part of the nation [Rainstorp, 1997]. This did not set well with the more radical side of Amal. The invasion of South Lebanon prompted more desperation and demand for action among the Shi’a community, primarily because they were the communities that were being affected most by the loss of homes, businesses and life [Hunter, 1988]. Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, with the support of Iran, felt it was time to leave Amal and create a group determined to end the Israel’s occupation.

**The Formation of Hizb’allah**

When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, Iran convinced Syria to allow a small special group of Iranian guards and religious leaders, or Pasdaran, to enter Lebanon and help to create a stronger political movement among the Shi’a community. Prior requests had been made by Iran, and all had subsequently been denied, since Syria did not want any more problems added to what was already a huge mess in this small country. But with the invasion of Israel, and this time a much more intense occupation occurring than before, Syria decided it was time to allow the Iranian Pasdaran into the country to help defeat their common enemy. The Pasdaran consisted of both military trainers sent to train the Lebanese to fight the Israeli’s and the West and religious leaders to indoctrinate the Lebanese clerics on creating an Islamic Republic.

With the importation of the Iranian contingent came the importation of Iranian money, something that was desperately scarce in war torn Lebanon, especially among
the Shi'a community in the south. With this money Hizb’allah was able to provide many needed services to the communities such as medical help, education, food, and cash subsidies for the poor. Not only did they supply the region with immediate care, they offered many young men jobs to join the movement and fight. Hizb’allah was able to pay their warriors more than the Lebanese Army and certainly more than the other movements, and their families were given free religious education, food and medical care. Hizb’allah established several health care centers, primarily under the title of Islamic Health Care Society, which eventually included 46 centers throughout the country including several hospitals [Fecci, 1999]. The role of the Iranian bankroll cannot be over stated. All of this did not come without a price, however.

**The Branches of Hizb’allah are Established**

The establishment of Hizb’allah happened simultaneously in three different areas of Lebanon; the Biq’a Valley, Beirut, and the south of Lebanon. In the Biq’a there were two leaders who became vitally important to the formation of Hizb’allah. Sayyid Abas al Musawi was originally one of the al-Dawa members who left al-Dawa [Fadlallah’s original group] to join the Amal movement to make the movement more radically driven. When that failed and there was a split, al Musawi left and organized his own Amal Islamya party, one that was approved by Iran. When Hizb’allah began to emerge, Iran turned to al-Musawi to help lead in the cause. The other Biq’a leader, Sheikh Subbi al-Tufayli, was another cleric leader who was trained in Najaf. These two clerics not only established Hizb’allah in the Biq’a, but also imposed, with the aid of the Iranian Pasdaran, Islamic fundamentalism on the people of the area through
enforcement of Islamic dress and the banishment of ‘western behavior’. If they did not comply with the laws imposed by Hizb’allah, the movement would use coercion through harassment or even kidnapping [Rainstorp, 1997].

In Beirut, Fadlallah was the leader of Hizb’allah. Fadlallah arrived in Beirut in 1966, establishing himself in the suburbs of Beirut as a spiritual leader and writer, creating a large following of young Shi’a. He had through the years been associated with several of the movements listed above, but it was not until he became the spiritual leader of Hizb’allah that really anyone in the West knew his name. His reputation and popularity among the young energetic Shi’a community had as much to do with his charitable work with the poor as it did with his writings advocating political activism and force as a means to preserve and defend Islam. The Beirut branch of Hizb’allah became a much more infamous group after the bombings in 1983 of the US Marine barracks and the US Embassy [Rainstorp, 1997].

**The Event that Shocked the World**

To this day no one exactly knows the exact identity of the suicide bombers who drove into the marine barracks, but the speculation, innuendo and Hizb’allah’s public support of these events made Hizb’allah the prime suspect and the most likely group to have committed these acts. They certainly had the money for the amount of firepower needed to blast these installations. The blast of the military barracks in October 1983 was the strongest non-nuclear explosion in history [Friedman, 1989]. Their public support of this attack also made Hizb’allah a model for the fight against
foreign occupation, a cause that has been the main focus for Hizb’allah for the last 20 years.

The para-military section of Hizb’allah, the Islamic Resistance, was key to the fight against Israel, and took a little longer to establish. The delay was due in part to the fact that the Israeli soldiers’ presence made it more difficult to rally the communities, but also this is where Amal had been strongest influence. As the Israeli occupation continued people began to look for a remedy to remove Israel, and Amal was not doing the job. Sheikh Rageb Harb, along with a small number of other more radical clergy, set out to rid the southern landscape of Israelis. In 1984 Harb was assassinated, most speculate by the Israelis, which only strengthened the membership and mission of Hizb’allah in the south.

Throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s up through 2000 when Israel finally left all but the Shebba Farms in the hills on the south Lebanese border, Lebanon was very committed to the removal of Israeli forces, and committed to helping Hizb’allah achieve that goal. When the war ended in 1989, all para-military groups were to be disbanded except for Hizb’allah, primarily because of the fight with Israel [Zisser, 1999].

Hizb’allah’s rapid growth and popularity did not come accidentally. Though no official membership list has ever existed [Hunter, 1988], the group grew larger and stronger. Throughout the 1980’s Hizb’allah was actively working towards building its reputation and membership. Hizb’allah provided assistance for all the basic needs of citizens, providing a stable infrastructure with the financial support of Iran. With the financial backing of Iran, Hizb’allah was able to work on their public personae
and spread their message to a broader audience. They also gained legitimacy within the Lebanese communities they were assisting. They established their own television station [al-Manar], their own radio station [Voice of the Opppressed] and their own newspaper [al-Ahd]. Their message was quite simple: the expulsion of the enemy of Islam from Lebanon [that meant Israel and the United States] and the creation of an Islamic republic in Lebanon. With the eventual success of expelling the Israeli troops into a thin strip of land along the boarder, Hizb’allah gained respect and notoriety. Israel finally did leave Lebanon in the May of 2000 after nearly 20 years of enduring guerilla attacks and mortar bombs by Hizb’allah, and Hizb’allah was right here to take the credit for Israel’s ‘retreat’.

A country torn by crisis and chaos certainly is vulnerable for movements such as Hizb’allah. There were all sorts of social movements happening throughout Lebanon during the war, and they were moderately successful because of the desperation and alienation felt by the Lebanese people. Three separate factors gave Hizb’allah its strength and longevity. The first is resources, meaning Iranian support, both in the form of money and in Pasdaran. The social programs and the guerilla warfare could not have been achieved without some serious cash backing them. Secondly, Hizb’allah's social welfare programs generated public support. The Lebanese government, torn apart by Civil War, was unable to provide the basic necessities to their population, and that is where Hizb’allah really was able to win the support of the people. They built hospitals, pharmacies, and schools and provided the desperately impoverished Shi’a community with food and essential needs. Third, their tenacious attitude towards eliminating Israel as an occupying force in Lebanon,
being somewhat successful early on in the invasion and the continuous assaults, gave Hizb’allah legitimacy amongst its following. Even though the occupation lasted another 18 years, this became the platform by which Hizb’allah was able to maintain its popularity.

**Hizb’allah’s War-Time Reputation**

The United States originally saw Hizb’allah as more of an extension of Iran than anything Lebanese. At first, neither the United States nor Israel took this movement too seriously, considering the traditional role that the Shi’a had played in Lebanon. However, this underestimation would soon be changed.

Hizb’allah burst onto the Lebanese landscape with the idea of creating an Islamic state, and with a series of violent acts. [Zisser, 1997] Numerous attacks by the militant group towards the interests of the West and Israel left hundreds dead, and put the name Hizb’allah on the United States’ list of terrorist groups. By many speculations, Hizb’allah has been linked to the bombings of the United States Embassy in Beirut in April 1983 and again in September 1984, the TWA flight 847 hijacking at the Beirut Airport which left a US Navy pilot dead and thrown out of the plane onto the Beirut Airport tarmac, the car bombing of the US Marine barracks and MNF headquarters killing 241 American military and 57 others, the kidnappings of Terry Anderson and Colonial William Higgins [Davidson, 1998] and several deadly attacks towards Israel.

It should be stressed, however, that during the Civil War, many militant groups on ‘every’ side of the turmoil were responsible for many lives being lost. The
Civil War broke out on April 13, 1975 when gunmen, thought to be PLO members, killed four Phalangists in an attempt to assassinate President Jumayyil. Later that day, the Phalangist opened fire on a busload of Palestinian passengers, killing 26. [The Phalangist Party, a Christian militia group, was responsible for two Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut full of woman and children being massacred] [Friedman, 1989]. The Civil War had many groups fighting against each other; there were not just two sides. What made Hizb’allah unique were a couple of things. First, their movement focused on foreign targets, primarily the United States and Israel, instead of fighting within the domestic parameters; second they transformed themselves after the war into a more legitimately recognized political party, at least within Lebanon.

**Hizb’allah’s Post-War Role**

As stated above, Hizb’allah’s war role really had little to do with internal strife in Lebanon [apart from their social programs], but rather with the external forces of Israel and the West, primarily the US. The US intervention triggered more hostility towards the west because of the United States’ support of Israel [Hunter, 1988].

The end of the war in 1989 left Hizb‘allah with the reputation for providing all these wonderful social services to people when the government could not provide them, which allowed their popularity to grow, bringing them to the forefront of the political stage. When the first elections occurred after the war, Hizb’allah was able to place key members into parliamentary elections, and they were successful. In 1992 Hizb’allah managed to earn 12 seats out of 128 parliament members. Throughout the
1990’s they maintained at least 8 seats in every election; however, no Hizb’allah member has ever held the highest Shi’a position in Parliament. That position has been given to Nabih Berri, the Amal leader. Today there are 10 members in Parliament who are Hizb’allah members, working to establish themselves as moderates but being on the left regarding social issues. [Rainstorp, 1997].

Aside from the political arena, Hizb’allah also had unfinished business: removing Israel from the landscape. The end of the war did not bring the end to Israeli occupation, and their goal was still very clear: remove foreign occupation forces by any means necessary. Throughout the 1990’s the para-military branch of Hizb’allah carried out several guerilla attacks against Israeli troops in the south of Lebanon, to the point that they became a serious threat to the lives of the Israeli military stationed there. In May 2000 when Israel left the south of Lebanon, much to the credit for the ‘retreat’ given to Hizb’allah.

Hizb’allah still carries fundamental ideologies that are clearly and uniquely Hizb’allah, characterized by the ties with Iran. Hizb’allah’s pan-Islamic premise is one of those characteristics. The pan-Islamic belief has always been a way to liberate Jerusalem, and one way to achieve that is by military aggression towards Israel. The establishment of an Islamic republic in Lebanon has been another key goal for Hizb’allah, although throughout the years of political maneuvering it has become clear that this is no longer the highest priority, much to the dismay of Iran. As a matter of fact, Iran has withdrawn its funding of Hizb’allah based on this goal being dropped from Hizb’allah’s agenda.
In order to play in the political arena in Lebanon, Hizb’allah has learned how to work with their political adversaries to achieve their goals and gain more legitimacy in the mainstream Lebanese society. In recent years they have welcomed the cooperation between the Christians and the Shi’a, basically letting the country know that they value the participation of the Christians, even the Maronite Presidents, especially the current President Lahhoud with whom Fadlallah has worked closely throughout the post war era.

Today Hizb’allah is considered in Lebanon a viable force in the political arena. They still do, however, have their militant groups who continue working towards the removal of Israel from the Shebba Farms along the boarder of Israel and Syria. Throughout Hizb’allah’s existence they have taken a large share of their guidance and ideology from very charismatic leaders, primarily their spiritual leader, Sheikh Fadlallah.

**Fadlallah’s Role**

Sheikh Fadlallah has been the spiritual leader of Hizb’allah since its inception in 1982. Sheikh Fadlallah, an Iraqi born cleric and proclaimed descendant of the Prophet Mohammad, received a classical Islamic education in the seminaries of Najaf, Iraq, then moved to Lebanon in 1966 and earned his place as one of the most influential leaders in recent Lebanese history [Rainstorp, 1997].

Fadlallah’s speeches have changed over the course of Hizb’allah’s existence, whether due to the climate of the day, or to the reader. He has denounced violence, yet he refers to suicide bombers as martyrs. He has stated that one of his goals has
been to create an Islamic republic, yet he believes that now it would be counterproductive to pursue the creation of an Islamic state in Lebanon. He believes that the Lebanese have a freedom of religion that other Arab countries do not enjoy, and they should use that instead of pursuing an Islamic republic through any type of revolutionary method. “The heavens won’t fall if the Lebanon choose to change it [their political system]. But for the moment, believers should concentrate on using Lebanon’s freedoms of speech and political action to promote Islam, for Islam can best be conveyed to the West and to the region through Lebanon” [Miller 1994].

It is rather difficult to find any definitive stand he takes on any issue, since most of what he has stated can be refuted in other places. Fadlallah himself is a very good political machine, catering to the needs of the moment, but also having the ability to be a charismatic leader whose success or failure is not limited to what he says, but how he is able to inspire other people. This flexibility of motivations and goals has aided Hizb’allah in its survival and success in the Lebanese political landscape.

**Conclusion**

Hizb’allah continues to be a strong political force in Lebanon as well as a complex institution. Its ability to adapt to the political, economic and global climate has made its longevity possible. This is not all done by one entity or for that matter by one person. The condition of Lebanon at the time of Hizb’allah’s entrance into the landscape provided this movement with opportunity unparalleled to any other. With the financial backing of Iran, Hizb’allah was able to pursue more challenging
objectives, and achieve them, or at least all but one. Lebanon is still a democracy, yet structured on communal representation, and Hizb’allah realizes that it is not changing anytime soon. This realization has brought them to a more mainstream approach of cooperation within the government rather than combativeness.

Now that Israeli troops are out of the south of Lebanon and there is talk about a Palestinian state, the future of Hizb’allah is rather undetermined. If liberating Jerusalem is no longer an issue, the Israelis are gone from the south, and they have conceded to a religiously diverse government, what fights will the Party of God take on in the future? It will be interesting to follow. For now, however, Hizb'allah has secured its place in the Lebanese landscape for years to come.
Chapter 5  
Analyzing Hizb’allah as a Social Movement

Hizb’allah has been called many things since its inception in 1982, ranging from terrorist group to the saviors of the south of Lebanon. But does Hizb’allah fit the theoretical criteria for a Social Movement? This chapter will explore this question taking a step-by-step approach to applying the theoretical concept from Chapter 2 to the history of Hizb’allah.

In doing this analysis, we will be taking a chronological or historical view of the conditions that were present prior to the creation of Hizb’allah, the birth of this movement, and how it managed to continue after its creation. This will allow a holistic picture will appear. There is no definitive blueprint for Social Movements; each one is unique. However, by applying these critical features that seem to be prevalent both in theory and practice, perhaps some generalities will emerge that will at least provide an understanding of the environment that is open for Social Movements to emerge.

Although this chapter labels Hizb’allah as a Social Movement, the more interesting question will be addressed in the final chapter: why is it important to understand all this?

Type of Social Movement

In first looking at Hizb’allah as a Social Movement, let us establish into which category of Social Movement Hizb’allah falls? In Vago [1989] and Chapter 2, we
identified five different types of Social Movements; Reactionary, Reform, Expressive, Resistant and Revolutionary. By Vago’s definitions, Hizb’allah could actually be classified as two of these types. First, as a Resistant Movement Hizb’allah did not just seek to change the way in which the West and Israel were able to establish themselves as leading groups within Lebanon. Hizb’allah also worked diligently to fight the current social structure that included the West and Israel and remove them as entities in Lebanon. Second, Hizb’allah certainly falls into the Revolutionary Movement category that Vago [1989] describes. Hizb’allah not only committed themselves to removing the current social structure in Lebanon, but replacing it by turning Lebanon into an Islamic State patterned after Iran [Rainstorp, 1997].

**Theoretical Elements vs. Hizb’allah**

In the chronological approach taken in Chapter Two, Social Movements were defined in three simple stages: the preconditions that led to Social Movements, the creation of a Social Movement, and the continuation of a Social Movement, or what is needed to ensure its survival. All of these stages have certain conditions that are present when looking historically at a Social Movement, and in the course of this analysis these theoretical conditions will blossom into concrete historical applications.

What types of conditions are present, both in society and in individuals, prior to the creation of a Social Movement? Even though these conditions are present, are they essential in producing a cause/effect in the creation of a Social Movement, or do
these conditions simply produce a likely environment that is conducive to collective action and organization of people? This question is certainly basic; however, what must be understood is that these conditions have been present throughout history and in many societies, and Social Movements did not always appear.

**Breakdown in Society**

In an attempt to understand the nature of the environment in which Social Movements develop, first we look to the condition of the societal structure. Kornhauser [1959] and Smelser [1963] both focus on how the conditions of the society play a pivotal role in setting the stage for Social Movements to emerge. Kornhauser [1959] and Smelser [1963] discuss the breakdown in society and how this affects the way in which people feel.

In the case of the emergence of Hizb‘allah, the society from which Hizb‘allah emerged was in extreme disarray. A Civil War had ripped apart a nation in which decades of fragility plagued every societal structure. Since Lebanon’s independence in 1943 there had been several outbreaks of violence between various groups, and in 1958 Lebanon had even entered into what could be called a prelude to the 1975 War [Haddad, 1985]. The violence in 1975 broke apart any structure that was established in the Lebanese government.

Lebanon has had para-military groups and social movements since its independence; the Civil War only encouraged and legitimized these movements and the creation of new ones. These groups were established primarily along communal, or religious, lines, and the Shi‘a groups were no different.
From the onset of the war in 1975 to the establishment of Hizb'allah in 1982, the Lebanese social, political and economic structure was completely destroyed. The Lebanese Army broke apart, with many leaving the military to join various militias that represented their own communal ties. National security was non-existent, and cities were quartered off and patrolled by self-appointed gunmen. The Lebanese people became more alienated everyday from their national identity and replaced that identity with their own communal or ethnic groups. The economy had collapsed and people were desperate to sustain their families; no help was coming from the Lebanese government agencies.

Hizb'allah was created from this society of war and disorganization. As small groups began developing, they polarized people away from their national identity and the ties to their communal groups only grew stronger. These grassroots movements quickly grew to political movements, and the most successful of these movements were the ones that appealed to confessional identity [Norton, 1987]. Identification by communal roots is historical in Lebanon, and the war only intensified this identity [Gordon, 1983]. Religious affiliation was the single most important identity among the Lebanese [Haddad, 1985] and the Shi’a were not exempt from this.

Although Kornhauser [1959] and Smelser [1963] establish the condition of society as a factor in the establishment of a social movement, their theories fail to explain how, especially under societal breakdown, people are able to organize a functional movement, or why people tend to follow the lead of others. If there is disorganization in society, how do people distinguish between groups of activists? They also do not explain how, when there is a complete breakdown in society, people
are able to mobilize with money and materials. Finally, it does not explain how, when societal structures disappear, social movements do not always appear. It is not a guarantee that when there is a breakdown in society people will mobilize and form movements.

**Politically Weak and Powerless**

The Shi’a in Lebanon, historically, have been the poorest of the communal/ethnic groups, but also the fastest growing group since Lebanon’s independence [Norton, 1987]. Shi’a have the highest rates of illiteracy, poverty and have the least amount of political clout in Lebanese politics [Gordon, 1983]. When the war erupted in 1975, and throughout the progression of violence, the Shi’a, as a group, were the most affected by the lack of social programs that provided food and services to the poor. For the Shi’a regions in the south the loss of homes and property as a result of the south being used as a battlefield between the Palestinians and Israeli Army was paramount to their desperate struggle for survival.

Though the population of the Shi’a grew, their political power did not. This created great dissatisfaction among the Shi’a, so when these movements began emerging, this was a way in which the voice of the Shi’a could be heard. When Hizb’allah emerged in 1982, the plight of the Shi’a had worsened; Hizb’allah offered assistance to the poor, as well as more aggressive methods to gain political strength [Rainstorp, 1997].

The weakness in this theory is that simply because a group tends to feel politically weak and powerless, this does not ensure that organizing a movement will
bring about this power and political strength that the members seek. For instance, Hizb’allah, though this movement has made some progress with attaining political power in Lebanon, has not gained the political power and strength that the Shi’a hoped to achieve given that they are the majority group within Lebanon. The Shi’a are still the poorest and have the highest illiteracy rate in Lebanon today [Norton, 1987].

**Lack of Social Ties**

Mass Society Theory posits that the lack of social ties causes people to seek out others [Kornhauser, 1959]. This aspect is significant to the creation of all of the Lebanese Social Movements that were established during the war years; however, the Lebanese did not suffer from complete alienation, but primarily alienation from their government. The social ties that are relevant are the ties the Lebanese people had with their government and with other Lebanese, however weak they may have been. Citizens of Lebanon were alienated from their government, since the government was in complete disarray caused by Civil War. People who attempted to connect with their government, whether for social services, or for security of their home and persons, were left on their own to solve their problem. Alienation felt by individuals seeking relief from the government became stronger as the government became more and more fragmented as the war raged on, and eventually the government became no more tangible than the clouds in the air. People suffering from bombed out houses or lack of food or medical supplies became more desperate for help, and felt as though their government did not care about their plight. Cohesion to national identity had
always been superceded by religious affiliation in Lebanese culture [Haddad, 1985], so people’s ties to their individual groups only became stronger once the ties to the nation were severed by war.

By the time Hizb’allah was established in 1982, the ties that bonded these members together had been cultivated within the Shi’a community for years. Hizb’allah was not organized from a traditional origin, but rather was a conglomeration of smaller, already established movements [Hunter, 1988]. Hizb’allah’s very creation was possible because of the strong membership in these smaller groups.

Again Kornhauser’s [1959] argument stipulates that people who lack social ties seek out others to establish movements. Though possibly feeling alienated from their government, the Lebanese people have stronger ties to their families, communities and communal ties that not only stayed intact, but grew stronger throughout the war years. This argument also does not explain why social movements did not evolve in other areas and periods of history where alienation and lack of social ties were far greater than in Lebanon in the late 20th Century.

**Relatively Deprived**

For several years prior to the birth of Hizb’allah, Shi’a leaders had focused their message to their followers on the plight of the Shi’a communities. The Shi’a were, no doubt, very hard hit by the affects of the war; they did not need their religious leaders to tell them this. The leaders also focused their attention on the
economic and political struggles that the Shi’a were experiencing, which were comparatively much worse than the other Lebanese groups.

Though relative deprivation is important in understanding people’s resentment, it does not give a rationale for the targets of these movements. For example, Hizb’allah was a Shi’a based movement. The Shi’a could look around within Lebanon at the Christians, Druze and the Sunni Muslims to see that the Shi’a population was by far suffering the most, but none of the Shi’a groups targeted the other Lebanese groups. Instead, they focused their target on the West and Israel. Their ideology did not include comparisons between what the West or Israel had, or their quality of life, but rather the fact that these targets had infiltrated Lebanon. Hizb’allah was not established because the Shi’a were comparing themselves to others and realized what they were lacking; they were established for very distinct purposes of driving out foreign occupiers and establishing an Islamic state [Rainstorp, 1997].

*Who is to Blame for the Shi’a Plight?*

It would have been very difficult for the Shi’a leaders to convince the communities that the Shi’a were the only ones who suffered in the war, since all the Lebanese people were affected. Hizb’allah used the plight and suffering of the Shi’a people to promote their agenda of animosity towards Israel and the West, primarily the United States. This target of blame was not unbelievable to the Shi’a, especially those living in the South were Israeli bombs were hitting their villages in retaliation for Palestinian bombings into Israel. Between the bombing that destroyed villages
and loss of innocent lives, the Shia’s became more radicalized and created the images that were used to convince the Shi’a about who was truly to blame for their troubles [Hunter, 1988].

The United States became a target of blame by Hizb’allah primarily because of its support of Israel. Using Israel and the United States as the source of Shi’a problems benefited Hizb’allah, and that blame escalated simultaneously with their creation. The hatred of the west and Israel became so important to the platform of Hizb’allah that Hizb’allah’s manifesto clearly established their beliefs and intentions towards their self-declared enemy:

“We have opted for religion, freedom and dignity over humiliation and constant submission to America and its allies and Zionism...we have risen to liberate our country, to drive the imperialists and invaders out of it [Lebanon] and to take fate into our own hands.” [Davidson, 1998].

**Charismatic Leadership**

The leadership among the Shi’a was very strong and determined to mobilize people for activism. During the Civil War the common place was to organize or belong to a social movement, and since the basic identity the Lebanese citizen became membership in these groups was their communal affiliation, these groups began emerging from the Churches and the Mosques throughout Lebanon, including Hizb’allah. Hizb’allah’s origins began inside the Mosques in the suburbs of Beirut, the Biq’a Valley, and in the South of Lebanon [Rainstorp, 1997].

Fadlallah found his following in the slums of Beirut [Rainstorp, 1997]. Fadlallah began his religious education in Najaf, Iraq and moved to Beirut in the mid
1960’s where he began working with underprivileged Shi’a youth through social programs. Over the years he gained a large following through his writings and his religious sermons [Rainstorp, 1997].

When the war began Fadlallah organized the Family of Brotherhood in the suburbs of Beirut [Zisser, 1997]. Once Fadlallah’s group joined with the other movements to form Hizb’allah, Fadlallah became the movement’s spiritual leader [Rainstorp, 1997].

Though the title ‘spiritual leader’ may seem rather ambiguous, with both duties and responsibilities to the movement or the movement’s behavior, Fadlallah as spiritual leader guided Hizb’allah’s ideology and mission. He has inspired many young Shi’a to join Hizb’allah through his teachings and writings, and through the years refined the movement’s goals to best suit Hizb’allah’s longevity and political success [Zisser, 1997; Miller, 1994].

Although charismatic leadership is important, it cannot explain how movements are able to continue and prosper after the departure of such leadership. If organizations that continue for as many years, like Hizb’allah, there are many leaders who enter and leave throughout the movement’s lifetime. Chances are that Hizb’allah will continue long after the departure of Nasrallah or Fadlallah. Granted, to help establish these movements you need strong leadership to establish them, but most long lasting movements are not about the work of one individual who is the epitome of this movement, but rather a conglomeration of many.
**Political Opportunity**

The Civil War fragmented the Lebanese government, which in many ways opened the gates of opportunity for grass roots movements to vie for political positions and power. There was no governmental control limiting these movements, so they were able to mobilize political agendas freely without governmental intervention, and Hizb’allah was not any different.

Lebanese people also became more aware of the politics in Lebanon, and took more of an active interest in what was happening within the Parliament walls. There were a wide variety of political organizations that competed for membership, and the movements that had the most success appealed to their confessional identity [Norton, 1987].

Hizb’allah offered the Shi’a a social movement that was an alternative to the more mainstream Amal Movement, which is still a strong political party today. Amal’s major difference from Hizb’allah was that Hizb’allah took an aggressive militant stand against Israel and the West, and Amal did not. Hizb’allah’s aggression towards Israel seemed to be free from governmental control. In fact, after the 1989 Taif Accord, all the militias in Lebanon were ordered to surrender their weaponry except for Hizb’allah’s guerilla fighters in the south, who were to fight the Israelis until their retreat from southern Lebanon [Rainstorp, 1997].

**Organized Movement?**

Hizb’allah’s creation, as discussed earlier, came from absorbing other, already established movements: Al’dawa, Islamic Amal, Husain Suicide Squad, and the
Family of Brotherhood [Davidson, 1998]. These movements already had a level of organization and hierarchical structure, so when Hizb’allah was born in June 1982, these structures were already established. Once Hizb’allah began to operate, it created different cells within the organization to handle different aspects of the movement. There was a cell that provided social services [food, medicine, medical help, etc.], a military branch that operated guerilla warfare and was responsible for many devastating events that took place through the 1980’s, and a political group that worked towards gaining Parliamentary seats [Rainstorp, 1997].

According to Davidson [1998], Hizb’allah has never become truly centralized like other movements. There are different chapters within Hizb’allah that work independently of each other to sustain the entire movement. However, Hizb’allah is overseen by a small group of Shi’a clerics who provide counseling to the various chapters and maintain the strong ideology that it has established [Rainstorp, 1997].

**Ideology**

Hizb’allah’s ideology from the very beginning left no question whatsoever as to what they believed, what they intended to do, and to what degree they would act in order to achieve their goals. There was no question as to the tactics Hizb’allah was willing to use as well. Their agenda included the waging of Jihad, or holy war, against the enemies of Islam. According to Hizb’allah, these enemies included Israel, France, the United States, and their allies. They also included Lebanese Christian and Sunni groups; however, Hizb’allah focused their actions against Israel and the West [Davidson, 1998].
The level of commitment Hizb’allah had to achieve for this holy war was also made clear in their agenda, which included the acceptance of Martyrdom and self-sacrifice [Davidson, 1998]. Martyrdom and self-sacrifice are key factors when trying to understand the ideology of Hizb’allah, or any other group that has established this same level of commitment. Sacrificing their life for what is believed to be a holy mission is greatly respected within these groups. In the south of Lebanon and the Islamic sections of Tripoli, Beirut, and the Biq’a Valley, there are pictures posted on power line poles and store front windows of men who were considered martyrs and sacrificed their lives to help further their cause.

**Recruitment of Members and Resources**

Within this element not only is it important to have charismatic leadership to inspire the members, but these leaders also must have the ability to recruit new members into the organization. Hizb’allah had success with this recruitment for several reasons. First, Hizb’allah’s communal identity, like other social movements in Lebanon during this period, was vital in attracting members into the organization. Second, Hizb’allah had plenty of money to provide services and opportunities to communities that otherwise would have had nothing. However, communal ties, social aid and Hizb’allah’s ideology were not the only reasons that the Shi’a were joining Hizb’allah.

Iran was the country that supported Hizb’allah, not only with money [which surpassed tens of millions of dollars through the years] but also with religious and military leaders, weaponry, and supplies. With this patronage Hizb’allah was able to recruit members for their militias and pay them a higher wage than any of the other
movements, and offer education, housing, medical assistance and food for the militiamen's families [Zisser, 1997; Rainstorp, 1997].

**Conclusion**

It seemed a rather easy task to set aside these particular elements offered within the theories and then retrospectively ask if Hizb’allah possessed these characteristics. This analysis only proves that these factors are present to some degree in the history of Hizb’allah. Each one of these factors, again, only explains one aspect of the development of a movement; it does not holistically explain its existence. There could be the same conditions and the same or similar events, but there may never have been a social movement that was developed. In order to fully establish a 'recipe' for these factors, and the degree to which they contribute to the development and longevity of a social movement, more comparative studies are necessary. Which ingredient of these is the critical element that gives birth to a movement like Hizb’allah? Is it the environment from which it emerged, the financial backing it received from Iran, or the culture within Lebanon to identify with communal groups rather than by national identity? There are many reasons for Hizb’allah’s emergence and for their longevity. Would they still be holding any kind of political power if they would not have fought with Israel until Israel’s withdrawal in 2000? Hizb’allah took every opportunity to claim Israel’s withdrawal as their own victory, and that credit they proclaimed has won them many votes within the country. The reasons for Hizb’allah’s transformation and continued success will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.
It would also be an easy solution to simply label Hizb’allah as an ‘Islamic movement’, which in one sense would be correct, but then we would be missing the bigger picture. There were also Christian movements that emerged throughout the Civil War, and before the war. So if we were to only analyze Hizb’allah as an Islamic movement, we would only be looking at their ideology, not at why they were created in the first place. All social movements, whether they are Islamic, political, racial or ethnic, or sexual identity in nature, emerge for basically the same reasons.
In Chapter 2 the life-course of a Social Movement is outlined according to Vago [1989] in five steps: Incipiency, Coalescence, Institutionalization, Fragmentation and Demise. In Chapter 5 there is no question that Hizb’allah can be characterized as a Social Movement, and if we take Vago [1989] into consideration, Hizb’allah has certainly reached the Institutional level. Chapter 5 worked through the first three stages as they related to Hizb’allah, but there are two more levels of consideration according to Vago [1989]. The question is not whether Hizb’allah can be characterized as a social movement, but rather, will Hizb’allah follow the path to eventual decline according to Vago? It is certain that Hizb’allah has successfully maintained their Institutionalization level for over 20 years. How has Hizb’allah been able to not only avoid the next chapter of the life course, but been able to establish itself within the mainstream Lebanese political landscape? Today Hizb’allah holds roughly 10% of the Lebanese Parliamentary seats, and that percentage has been held, plus or minus a point or two, for the last 15 years. An argument could be made that, once a Social Movement has reached the level of Institutionalization, the Movement could somehow maintain itself and not fall victim to Fragmentation and Demise. What factors are needed for a Social Movement to maintain its longevity?
According to Zald and Ash [1959], once a social movement becomes institutionalized, it becomes a Social Movement Organization. Once this organizational structure emerges, there are three factors that help a social movement survive: goal transformation, organizational maintenance, and oligarchization [Zald & Ash, 1959].

Goal transformation becomes necessary if a social movement is going to not only survive but grow. The original goals of a movement could have been accomplished, or over time the Social Movement realizes that this goal is no longer realistic. It is not necessarily that the goal cannot be achieved; it could mean that continued labor towards accomplishing this goal is no longer in the Social Movement’s best interest. In the case of Hizb’allah, the movement did transform its goals. Their original goals were to drive out Israel and the West, aid the Palestinians in their freedom from occupation, and transform Lebanon into an Islamic State modeled after their benefactor Iran [Zisser, 1997]. After eight years of guerilla warfare, whether influenced by the actions of Hizb’allah or through their own accord, Israel did leave the south of Lebanon in May of 2000, and the US military presence had ended several years prior to that. In the eyes of Hizb’allah, goal one had been realized, and Hizb’allah wasted no time taking credit for Israel’s ‘retreat’. This claim of victory was made well known to all the Lebanese citizens, and many Lebanese began accepting Hizb’allah as a viable and respectable political force. The second goal, the establishment of Lebanon as an Islamic state, became a goal that Hizb’allah had determined would not be a goal that, if pursued, would be in the best interest of
the longevity of the movement. Hizb’allah was receiving credit for Israel’s withdrawal from Lebanon, whether credit was deserved or not, and they were receiving widespread legitimacy as a political entity. If they had pursued the Islamic statehood, they would have lost much of their support. Hizb’allah’s desire to be accepted as a political group was more important to the group than establishing an Islamic state, and this was the rationale for the change in their ideology. When goals change, according to Zald and Ash [1959], they change towards the conservative side, and that is certainly what Hizb’allah decided to do.

The second factor is organizational maintenance. Hizb’allah, throughout its existence, has made extensive attempts to provide resources to their members, either to ensure commitment or to recruit new members. Hizb’allah has provided many social services to their members and their local communities, which has been key to establishing political loyalty, while at the same time gaining the respect of other Lebanese by providing humanitarian services to those in need. The maintenance of members is secure.

Finally, oligarchization, or concentration of power, is the third factor. Hizb’allah has survived, according to many observers, because of their ability to not concentrate central power. There are many cells within Hizb’allah; however, all of these chapters, though independent of one another, still observe the ideology set by a small group of Islamic clerics, led by Fadlallah. Hizb’allah has groups that are independent of one another, and that is one significant feature that has enabled Hizb’allah to avoid decline. Hizb’allah has groups that are para-military, including security groups that monitor various checkpoints throughout Lebanon, primarily in
the South and Biq'a. Hizb’allah also has a huge organization dealing primarily with social services to the poor. Medical treatment is offered through many of Hizb’allah’s hospital facilities throughout Lebanon, catering primarily to the poor Shi’a groups. Another section of Hizb’allah is the political party, focusing their attention on maintaining parliamentary seats in Beirut. Another group, more notorious to Westerners and Israeli’s, is the small contingent of guerilla fighters who on occasion attack the borders of Israel. Hizb’allah’s ability to diversify their various groups has aided in their ability to maintain themselves as a functioning social organization.

Hughes [1999] also identifies factors that contribute to the Social Movement’s longevity. The first is a common ethnic background and/or language spoken by the group’s members. Hizb’allah members do possess this trait, since Hizb’allah was founded and sustained by Lebanese Shi’a, with Iranian influence. The second factor proposes that a spiritual hierarchy is essential and those in authoritative positions are held to a higher moral status than other members. Hizb’allah’s central thread has been choreographed by Shi’a clerics who have laid the foundations for Hizb’allah’s ideological identity. Obligatory confessions of transgressions provide a movement with social control over its members, and are the third factor offered by Hughes [1999]. This factor is also one that Hizb’allah certainly possesses. During the early years of establishment Hizb’allah enforced strict laws over those who resided in Hizb’allah controlled communities [Rainstorp, 1997]. Not only were members of Hizb’allah held to these standards, but any citizens who resided in these regions, regardless of their communal ties were held to these same standards [Rainstorp,
Finally Hughes [1999] posits that a social movement that sports uniforms or special clothing strengthens the cohesion of the movement. Apart from strict Islamic dress imposed on the women, some of the separate chapters of Hizb’allah do wear uniforms, particularly the militia groups. Hizb’allah also has strong symbols that have become recognizable as Hizb’allah. Their flags and banners are boldly shown in their controlled regions. Certainly Hizb’allah has established these techniques that strengthen the organizational level of their social movement. Perhaps that is why they have been able to maintain their longevity.

**Hizb’allah Today**

By American and Israeli standards, Hizb’allah is still a terrorist organization because of its use of violent tactics, its guerilla warfare against Israel in the south, and its continued support of the Palestinian organizations that are in constant battle with the Israeli government. Though Hizb’allah may not be an organization that every Lebanese supports, certainly they do not see Hizb’allah as the threat that the West and Israel sees.

Today this social movement is not only a viable political party, holding more than 10% of the Lebanese Parliamentary seats; they also support charities, hospitals and schools. Hizb’allah established Emdad Committee for Islamic Charity in 1987, though Hizb’allah’s social programs had been in place for years prior to Emdad’s inception. Emdad operates many programs, including health care, education, employment training, social welfare, orphan and emergency relief [Emdad website]. Their 9 branches throughout Lebanon and 5 schools all support the underprivileged Lebanese citizens, primarily the Shi’a population in the south of Lebanon.
Apart from their social welfare and political branches, Hizb’allah continues to maintain a small militia force, now primarily utilized as peacekeepers in villages throughout the Biq’a and south of Lebanon.

**Why Hizb’allah?**

Hizb’allah certainly is not a unique entity. Several Social Movements emerged throughout Lebanon, not to mention throughout the world, and have sustained themselves for long periods of time. What made Hizb’allah an interesting case study was not the fact that Hizb’allah has not disintegrated, but how they have transformed over the course of time and managed to emerge in legitimate Lebanese society. From an era of bombings, guerrilla warfare, assassinations and political kidnappings, Hizb’allah has taken this history and transformed their appearance into mainstream Lebanese culture. Where once Hizb’allah sought the dawning of an Islamic state modeled after their benefactor Iran, they now accept and actually embrace other communal groups, stating in fact that the Christians are an important factor in the success of Lebanon today [Zisser, 1997].

**Personal Interest in Lebanon**

My personal interest in Lebanon actually goes back to 1983 and the bombing of the MNF barracks in October 1983. I was a freshman at Hope College, sheltered from the fears and anxieties felt on the other side of the world. When the bombing happened, the news coverage would show excerpts from Lebanon, primarily Beirut, showing the destruction, reporting on the horrors that surrounded these journalists. When I watched these news reports as a 17-year-old girl, all I saw was the beauty of
this land. It made me wonder how in such an incredibly beautiful landscape there could be so much fighting and chaos. Having been born and raised in Michigan, I never was particularly pleased with my environment, always dreaming of some far away land, walking along a warm coast of palm trees and translucent blue water. My first paper I ever wrote regarding Lebanon was my reaction to the bombing and my interpretation of the message the bombers were sending. This paper was written in spring 1984 for an English class I was taking.

Over the course of the next few years I kept a passive interest in Lebanon. I was always impressed by the charm and rich culture of this region that went back thousands of years. By the time I was in graduate school in 1999 I had a good Lebanese friend who shared some very gruesome experiences his family endured living in Hamra [a suburb in West Beirut]. He truly inspired me to take on a subject dealing with Lebanon for my graduate studies. When this paper began taking shape, I realized this is where my interest, and my heart, truly lies. Now I have spent time in the place I have studied and dreamed about for so many years, and with every fiber of myself I can tell you the experience of Lebanon has surpassed all my expectations and anticipations. I have walked along the sea in my dreams that is lined with palm trees, seen historical places that I had only read about, stood on ground that only a decade earlier had been under siege, and have seen the spirit of resilience in people that make me grateful for everything I have ever had in my life. It is a very humbling experience to touch buildings that have bullet holes in them, knowing that they were in a path of a war. To think of how people took their children to school everyday through military check points and gunfights is something that goes beyond most
Americans’ ability to understand. Sometimes it is necessary to see what pain others have endured to appreciate your own life.

What is truly the most amazing part of Lebanon, though, is not the landscape and beauty; it is by far the people that I know. The Lebanese people are truly survivors, strong in spirit and gracious in a way that make you realize their concerns and purpose in life go much deeper than surface ideals. They truly have a strong and willful love of life, devoted to what they believe. When I would hear what these families have gone through just trying to live their daily lives like we do here, it amazes me they still can laugh, can love, and can have hope for a brighter future.

**Future Research Topics**

There are several scenarios for future study and research. Certainly this thesis has raised enough questions and illustrated many gaps within social movement research to keep this researcher busy for years to come.

**Future Comparative Hizb’allah Study**

Many different approaches to the study of Hizb’allah are also left to future research. Comparative studies or Hizb’allah and other social movements are ultimately endless in topic material. Considering the similarities and differences between other social movements and Hizb’allah, both externally and internally, may perhaps answer more definitively the question of the longevity of Hizb’allah compared to other movements.

One comparative approach that would be very beneficial would be to look at other Islamic Movements. This study would be a far more in depth analysis of the
ideologies and cultures of the groups. This study of Islamic groups would have been a very informative and instrumental study for this thesis; however, for considerations of time and length, this should be one avenue of study that yields its own research.

Another comparative study should be done looking at the other Lebanese political groups that originated during the same time period. What did Hizb’allah do differently, or similarly, to these other movements? Looking at the ideologies and actions of Hizb’allah in comparison to the other Lebanese groups may provide some answers concerning the success of Hizb’allah.

One more comparative study would be to look at how Hizb’allah political practices/ideology are similar to and different from other Lebanese politics. How does Hizb’allah cooperate with other political groups, and who are their allies/opposition in Parliament?

**The Legacy of Hizb’allah**

One interesting topic to research would be to study the effects of Hizb’allah and their social programs that benefited the Lebanese people, especially during the war. How did Hizb’allah improve living conditions for the Lebanese, and what effects is Hizb’allah still having on the quality of life for the Lebanese people?

Can we look at Hizb’allah as a catalyst or leader in the arena of aggressive Revolutionary Movements? If Hizb’allah was able to establish legitimacy within their country, can other social movements that are currently defined by their own nation as ‘terrorists’ become legitimate movements? Does Hizb’allah and their legitimacy have anything to do with the public personae they present regarding their
ideas concerning the condition of Lebanon? Has their goal to transform Lebanon into an Islamic state really been cast aside, or do they hold this agenda privately?

**Islamic Movements**

This thesis did not discuss the role of Islam in Hizb’allah, nor did it discuss other Islamic movements. This is an important aspect to Hizb’allah, as it is with other movements, primarily because the ideologies of these movements are derived from the foundation of their religious beliefs. It is important to understand how culture and religion work hand in hand in creating these movements. This was not touched on in this thesis, but would be an interesting topic for further research.

This look into Islamic movements could segue into another research topic, looking at present day Afghanistan and Iraq, including how Islamic groups are forming in these regions after their occupations and resulting disarray. How is the Islamic cleric Musa Al Sadr mobilizing his group in Najaf, Iraq in a militant stand against the Coalition troops? All of these movements are being created now on the threshold of uncertainty in these regions, somewhat like the uncertainty that prevailed in Lebanon in the late 1970’s and 1980’s.

Another related topic, though it spans beyond the Islamic Movements, would be to critically define ‘terrorist’. As stated in chapter two, this was not a term that was dealt with in depth here. An interesting project would be to deconstruct and define ‘terrorist’ then apply that definition to many different groups throughout history to determine who truly could be categorized as a terrorist or terrorist organization.
Lebanon

There are many research avenues this writer would like to travel when it comes to Lebanon. After writing this thesis, there are more questions unanswered and infinite possibilities for future writing.

One very interesting topic to this writer is the role of Syria in Lebanese politics, and the inability of Lebanon’s government to liberate itself from Syrian control. The United Nations recently passed Resolution 1559 which outlines the need for Syria to remove themselves from Lebanon. Taking a look at this Resolution over time to see if it is actually enforced would be another interesting research topic. Throughout history Lebanon has been victim to one hegemonic control or another; what could this small country do to achieve complete independence from foreign control? Since originally submitting this thesis, a tragic event took place in Beirut. The assassination of Rafik Harriri on February 14, 2005 will certainly play a very large role in the future of Syrian involvement in Lebanon. Since his death, there have been demonstrations opposing the Syrian presence in Lebanon, and speculations have been made Syria the primary suspect in the car bomb that took Mr. Harriri’s life. Whether or not Syria is to blame for this terrible tragedy, it certainly has made the voice of the people in Lebanon much louder to the world. Their message was clear; they wanted Syria to leave, on April 26th, 2005 Syria did leave. Now with Syrian military and intelligence out of Lebanon, the elections the end of May will certainly be an historical and integral event in the future of Lebanon. This is most likely where my next level of research will begin, and finding out the impact of these events on the Lebanese people.
Another topic for future study is to look at post Civil War economic growth, and what obstacles have been placed in the way of developing the thriving economy that Lebanon once enjoyed. What players have been manipulating Lebanon’s economic future, and how can this country take its place again as the jewel of the Middle East?

**Conclusion**

What future is in store for Lebanon? This small Mediterranean country sits at the crossroads of its future, and Hizb’allah is certainly playing a role in its journey. This researcher would like to say that all the years of war and turmoil have enlightened the Lebanese population and they will live happily ever after, but there are still many issues that plague this incredible country.

Religious and ethnic tolerance is something new to the people of Lebanon, and it is certainly present in various degrees. Cities such as Beirut have a cosmopolitan feel, though people generally segregate themselves in schools and neighborhoods. Their individual prejudices no longer include trips to other villages to gun people down, but there is a more silent prejudice, which is subdued in order to function within this very small country. The question still remains about whether the Lebanese will see this self imposed segregation and work together to make things better, or continue as they have been for centuries. The war certainly educated innocent people in the consequences of isolationism, and some things have improved because of the losses endured during the war, but there are still many things that go unresolved.
The Lebanese-Palestinian relationship has not improved through all of this turmoil. According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, there are still 370,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, nearly 12% of Lebanon’s population [Picard, 2002]. In 2000 more than half of the refugees still live in camps that are surrounded by Lebanese forces, leaving the Palestinians as virtual prisoners [US State Department Report on Human Rights, 2003]. This is not the way Lebanese treat all refugees. In 1915 several thousand Armenians arrived after the Turks massacred many Armenians. Lebanon accepted the Armenians, granting them Lebanese citizenship and voting rights. Armenians today make up nearly 5% of the Lebanese population [Gordon, 1983]. In the case of the Palestinians, they are not granted citizenship, and are not allowed to vote. Their only chance for work is inside the refugee camps [Haddad, 1985].

With all of the turmoil, death, destruction and fear that has plagued the people of Lebanon, there is still hope within their hearts. One thing can be certain; Lebanon’s role and future should be constructed by the Lebanese people.
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