

## 8 Hezbollah

### A Jihadist Adaptation of the Chinese Model

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We exhort all the oppressed in the world to the necessity of forming an international front comprised of all their liberation movements in order to fully coordinate their efforts so that an efficient action will transpire, thus concentrating on the weaknesses of the enemies. Hezbollah's 1985 *Open Letter* (Alagha 2011, 52)

This chapter examines the governance system of Hezbollah<sup>1</sup> from 1982 to 2000.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate a key dimension of my theory: that the diffusion of the Chinese model, to include intensive and extensive governance, is not restricted to rebel groups with communist or even leftist ideologies. Rather than test rival explanations as other chapters have done, this chapter highlights the process of a non-leftist, but still revolutionary organization drawing upon the strategy of the Chinese model of governance, then adapting this model to fit a distinct local context and jihadist ideology.

What I find largely supports my theoretical claims. Hezbollah emerged out of the Israeli occupation and Lebanese Civil War in the mid-1980s. Hezbollah's leaders produced a program articulating its goals as revolutionary – seeking social and political change – and contextualizing Hezbollah within a broader revolutionary tradition. In pursuit of these more transformative goals, Hezbollah's leaders then searched for templates to imitate. Although these leaders were familiar with other organizational forms and strategies, including more ideologically proximate

<sup>1</sup> The word “Hezbollah” is a transliteration of the Arabic words meaning “Party of God” and thus has no precise English spelling. Authors in the texts studied refer to the organization as: Hezbollah, Hizbullah, Hizbu'allah, and Hizballah. To stay faithful to the texts I am quoting, I use the precise spelling of the original authors. When referring to the organization myself, I use the term “Hezbollah.” All spelling variants, however, refer to the same entity.

<sup>2</sup> I limit the case study to this time period as it covers Hezbollah's founding until the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. After 2000, it is difficult to classify Hezbollah as anything other than a political party with an armed wing as it engaged in virtually no military campaign on Lebanese soil. Because this nearly twenty-year period is most directly comparable to the other cases, I limit this case temporally.

models, Hezbollah decided to imitate the behaviors and strategies of left-wing rebels with more transformative goals, including their intensive and extensive governance.

As a consequence of its imitation of the Chinese model, Hezbollah implemented almost the same set of governance institutions that the CCP did during its own civil war. Although the institutions that Hezbollah crafted are highly similar in form (courts, schools, health care, economic interventions to benefit the poor), the content of these institutions were largely shaped by another revolutionary force: Iran. The mutual alignment of ideology and goals between Iran and Hezbollah meant that the two collaborated to shape the CCP's institutional portfolio to a jihadist context. Furthermore, Hezbollah used its governance to legitimate itself to certain audiences globally, highlighting its military and governance achievements. In particular, Hezbollah is keen to please its foreign patron, Iran. The group is also concerned with the success of jihadist movements throughout the Middle East and encourages other jihadist rebel groups with more transformative goals to take up its mantle (Qassim 2017). Thus, although Hezbollah is not an ideal case for testing the proposed mechanisms, this chapter ultimately demonstrates that rebels with more transformative goals today learn from and mimic similar organizations with similar goals, despite major ideological differences.

### **Historical Overview of Hezbollah**

The precise moment of Hezbollah's formation remains unclear. What is clear is that between 1982 and 1985, Hezbollah emerged from a coalition of Shi'ite militias that mobilized in response to several overlapping domestic and international conditions. Domestically, the Lebanese Shi'ite population faced decades of political disenfranchisement, causing systematic economic and social oppression within the Shi'ite community. Throughout the 1960s, Shi'ite religious leaders such as Imam Musa al-Sadr began to raise the political consciousness of the Shi'ite community, sowing seeds for later revolutionary action (Ranstorp 1997, 28–9). Internationally, the demonstration effects of the Islamic Revolution rippled across Lebanese borders and resonated among the persecuted Shi'ite community who latched on to the goals and messages of Ayatollah Khomeini (Hamzeh 2004, 18–19). By the 1980s, some members of the Lebanese Shi'ite community were primed for violent revolution.

The immediate catalyst for Hezbollah's ultimate mobilization, however, was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, just three years after the Iranian Revolution (Norton 2007, 32–3). The Palestinian Liberation Organization had formed bases in Palestinian refugee camps throughout

southern Lebanon from which cadres launched attacks against Israel. Israel responded to these attacks by invading Lebanon, and soundly defeating the Lebanese Armed Forces. At the same time, Nabih Berri, the leader of the most prominent Shi'ite political organization at the time (the Amal movement), responded to the Palestinians' actions by joining Lebanese Maronite militias to form an anti-Palestinian coalition (Salloukh and Mikaelian 2013, 518). Amal's alliance with the Christian militias ruptured the movement, and a small nucleus of approximately 180 deeply religious members of Amal joined other Shi'ite militias to form a rival Shi'ite organization: Hezbollah.

Intent on achieving social and political transformation, Hezbollah was a jihadist counterpoint to the more secular and comparably more moderate Amal. In 1985, Hezbollah published its first Open Letter articulating its long-term goals (Alagha 2011, 39). For Hezbollah, success not only meant the eradication of foreign forces within Lebanon (specifically Israel) (Alagha 2011, 43), but also supporting a fundamental transformation of Lebanese social and political institutions to comport with their Islamist ideology (Alagha 2011, 44–5). In the Open Letter and elsewhere, not only did Hezbollah explicate its deep commitment to its jihadist ideology, but Hezbollah also expressed solidarity with or compared itself to other historical and global leftist national liberation movements (Alagha 2011, 51–2; Qassim 2017).

Aspiring to more transformative goals in an environment of domestic instability and civil war, Hezbollah's intellectual and political leaders researched organizational models and strategies for the pursuit of these transformative ambitions (AbuKhalil 1991, 392, 397; Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 5–7). Hezbollah's founders, members, and influencers were either active participants in or knew about the Iraqi ad-Daw'ah party – a Shi'ite Islamist political party – advocating against the secular Iraqi regime. Despite this clear ideological affinity, Hezbollah rejected the Iraqi ad-Daw'ah party as too “timid” (AbuKhalil 1991, 392).

After rejecting the ad-Daw'ah model, Hezbollah members adopted the Chinese model, specifically studying three leftist, rebel groups with more or moderately transformative goals: the CCP's experience during the Chinese Civil War, the Vietnamese Viet Minh, and the FLN (Kahveci 1998; Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 5–7; Daana 2013; Qassim 2017). In so doing, not only did Hezbollah study the Chinese model, but it also studied two imitations of the same model.<sup>3</sup> Like the Vietnamese and Algerians to some extent, Hezbollah adopted a modified Chinese model

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 5 for a more in-depth discussion of FLN's governance activities.

to its own historical context in southern Lebanon. This adaptation, however, was deeply influenced by the Iranian Revolution (Love 2010, 12).

As the first successful Islamist revolution, particularly one led by Shi'ites, the Iranian Revolution and subsequent Islamic Republic created in Iran served as a guide for Hezbollah's leaders for how to *reinterpret* and modify the nature and content of the Chinese model's portfolio of governance institutions to better match the environment in which Hezbollah operated. At the same time as Hezbollah waged war against enemies domestic and foreign, Hezbollah waged an intensive and extensive governance campaign throughout the primarily Shi'ite areas in Lebanon most affected by Israeli occupation: the southern suburbs of Beirut, the Ba'albeck region from which Hezbollah emerged, and throughout southern Lebanon. These intensive governing efforts were total and all-encompassing, including everything from health care institutions to women's associations and artesian well building. Described as "holistic" in the sense that these institutions touched upon and regulated all aspects of the daily life of civilians, Hezbollah's extensive portfolio of governance institutions suggests "that entire families could be treated in Hizballah-affiliated hospitals, educate their children in Hizballah-affiliated schools, receive financial support from Hizballah-affiliated banks, and have employment in Hizballah-affiliated businesses" (Abboud and Muller 2016, 51). The holistic portfolio of institutions that Hezbollah created during civil war were the same or largely similar to the institutional forms of which the Chinese model of governance are composed. Hezbollah then populated these institutional shells with a content consistent with Islamist ideology, learned from revolutionary Iran.

Hezbollah's dual military and political successes fostered the rapid growth and rise of the organization throughout the 1980s. Despite such success, however, the Lebanese political landscape began changing in ways that threatened Hezbollah's existence, at least as the organization was conceived at the time. After over a decade of violent domestic upheaval, the Lebanese Civil War was slowly drawing to a close, and the major combatant parties convened in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, in 1989 to achieve a final peace agreement.

The Ta'if Agreement secured political reforms and redistributed political power more evenly across Christian, Shi'ite, and Sunni sects, rather than concentrating most of the power in the hands of one sect (Christians) as had previously been done (Alagha 2006, 40). The Ta'if Agreement also made Syria the guarantor of the peace agreement, and legitimated Syria's presence within Lebanon, a presence that would persist until the Cedar Revolution of 2005. Finally, the Ta'if Agreement called for the disarmament of all armed militias associated

with each of the sects, even though the Israeli military maintained a presence in South Lebanon (Alagha 2006, 285).

Support for disarmament, and the disarmament of Hezbollah specifically, varied across several important actors. Syria sought to carve out for itself an increasingly larger role regionally, particularly guaranteeing the stability of Lebanon, and thus had an active interest in ending Hezbollah's attempts to overthrow the state (Hamzeh 2004, 108–9). Hezbollah was reluctant to abandon its military campaign: not only did Israel continue to occupy parts of Lebanon, especially Hezbollah's predominantly Shi'ite areas, but Hezbollah had not achieved its goals of fundamentally altering the Lebanese state and replacing it with an Iranian-style Islamic political order. These countervailing pressures left Hezbollah with a choice: (1) accept the Ta'if Agreement – thereby either postponing or abandoning its goal of implementing an Islamic state in Lebanon through violence – but remain armed and continue its resistance against Israel with domestic and international support or (2) refuse, in turn accepting political marginalization and potential military retribution from Israel as well as other countries. As a result, “one could say that Hizbullah accepted the Ta'if Agreement out of necessity, rather than conviction” (Alagha 2006, 41).

In accepting the Ta'if Agreement, Hezbollah abandoned or postponed its pursuit of great transformation through *violence* against the Lebanese state.<sup>4</sup> But Hezbollah did not necessarily abandon the pursuit of its more transformative goals through *governance*. Instead, a few years after signing the Ta'if Agreement, in the summer of 1992, Hezbollah announced it would participate in national elections (Norton 2007, 101). Sheikh Naim Qassem reflects upon his experience in Hezbollah and writes:

The decision to participate in elections created a set of new responsibilities and relationships. Plans and general policies were drawn, individuals were charged with seeing to the achievement of objectives, and focused guidance of all brothers was aimed at fostering stronger ties with the populace, understanding civilians' needs and pains and cooperating with the inhabitants of various towns and villages to resolve their concerns. (Qassem 2010, 158)

Hezbollah's participation in national elections also coincided with an “effort to be perceived more as a national Lebanese organization rather than purely representing Shi'a Muslims” (Wiegand 2010, 117). In an interview, Hezbollah representative Sheikh Atallah Ibrahim claimed that

<sup>4</sup> And of course, Hezbollah did not abandon violence against Israel.

“the liberation of the south is a victory is for all Lebanese. The south is not just for Muslims, but for all Lebanese” (Wiegand 2010, 117). Since 1991, Hezbollah’s continued success among the Lebanese population derives from the party’s actions to be understood as a national resistance and liberation movement that aims “to welcome and protect” non-Shi‘ite residents of communities in the southern suburbs of Beirut (Cammett 2014, 156–7).

Although Hezbollah does not violently contest the Lebanese state, it remains unclear whether Hezbollah’s leadership has completely abandoned its initial long-term, transformative goals, including moving Lebanon from its current institutional form of a consociational republic to an Iranian-style system. Instead, “Hizballah’s participation in the Lebanese political system has not caused it to abandon resistance in favor of what some call ‘Lebanonisation,’ or complete integration within the Lebanese political system. Rather, resistance to occupation was considered as an important aspect of bringing about non-violent, radical social transformation of the status quo in Lebanon” (Abboud and Muller 2016, 43). Likewise,

[i]n order to keep its Islamic identity intact while functioning within the domain of Lebanese state sovereignty, Hizbullah conferred a de facto recognition of [the] Lebanese state, but not a de jure one. In other words, Hizbullah’s adherence to democratic principles and politics is not based on political-ideological grounds since its political ideology anathematised the Lebanese political system, rather on advancing *al-masalih* (interests) and warding off *al-mafasid* (vices). (Alagha 2006, 204)

Hezbollah leaders note that Hezbollah’s “participation in the parliament does not imply a de facto recognition of the system. Rather, participation and representation gives the deputy a big margin to manoeuvre and to express his opinion and defend it without being hostage to the current political system” (Alagha 2006, 153). Stated otherwise, although Hezbollah’s more transformative goals may have remained the same, the local contexts in Lebanon after 1989 incentivized Hezbollah to shed violent contestation against the Lebanese state (but not Israel) for electoral contestation in pursuit of domestic political change. Hezbollah did not, however, eschew governance in pursuit of its long-term goals.

Since its participation in the Lebanese political system after the signing of the Ta‘if Accords, Hezbollah continues to be a major political, military, and social force within Lebanon and the Middle East. In 2000, Hezbollah succeeded in pushing the Israeli military out of Lebanon. Hezbollah remains armed as a southern defense against potential Israeli attacks. At the height of the Islamic State’s strength in 2014 and 2015,

Hezbollah also protected Lebanon from Islamic State incursion in eastern Lebanon, before mobilizing in Qalamoun, Syria, where the group continued to fight alongside the Assad regime. Beyond Hezbollah's own military actions, the organization has also helped train, instruct, or inspire other jihadist organizations including Hamas in Palestine and the Houthis in Yemen (Halliday 2006; Variyar 2015). These externally facing behaviors have resulted in Hezbollah's rise as an important regional force, in addition to being an important domestic player within Lebanon.

### **Hezbollah's Goals of Jihadist Revolution**

Born in the Beqa'a, Hezbollah represented a revolutionary religious, Shi'ite alternative to the secular, Shi'ite Amal movement. Unlike Amal, Hezbollah was intent on freeing Lebanon from Israeli and Western occupation, while also bringing Islamist social and political transformation within Lebanon (Hajjar et al. 2002, 5–8). In 1985, Hezbollah first announced these objectives officially in an Open Letter, which was translated into English (Alagha 2011), the text of which I cite here.<sup>5</sup> Thus, to make the claims below I primarily rely on a translated version of a primary document. In the letter, Hezbollah presents itself “as the party of the oppressed serving the interests of the entire world oppressed and their perpetual revolution for achieving social, economic, and political justice. Hizbullah considered Third World Countries, which included all Muslim countries, as the world oppressed” (Alagha 2006, 116). According to the nascent Hezbollah, “the only salvation to the Muslim populace is the founding of socio-political movements (such as Hizbullah), which exercise the ideology of resistance and revolution, in an attempt to rid the Muslims from imperialist domination” (Alagha 2006, 135).

Hezbollah dedicated their 1985 Open Letter “to the oppressed of the world” and to “the Shaykh of the martyrs, Raghīb Harb (may God's blessings be upon him), consolidating between its lines the Islamic revolutionary-political path” such that his path “will become a leading example [to emulate] and a clear guide to all the freedom fighters (mujahidin) in Lebanon” (Alagha 2011, 40). In it, Hezbollah specifically lists its “objectives in Lebanon” as the following:

<sup>5</sup> These articulated objectives remained their stated and official goals for nearly thirty years until Hezbollah issued a second Open Letter in 2009.

1 To expel Israel (IDF) for good from Lebanon, as a prelude to its total annihilation, and the liberation of Jerusalem and its holy cities from the occupation; 2 To expel the Americans, the French, and their allies from Lebanon for good, thus rooting out any influence of any colonial power on Lebanon; ...

4 To allow our populace the right of self-determination; to freely choose the political system that they aspire to. We do not hide our commitment to (the rule of) Islam, and we invite everybody to choose the Islamic system (of government/governance), which alone is capable of guaranteeing justice and dignity to everyone, thus preventing any colonial attempt to invade our country again. (Alagha 2011, 43–4)

Like earlier rebel groups with more transformative, revolutionary goals, Hezbollah's stated goals reflect a shared commitment to self-determination and the elimination of foreign occupying forces.

Beyond "self-determination" from Israel and other "colonial" powers, Hezbollah also articulated a vision for a fundamentally altered Lebanese political system: a substantive and major revolutionary change. Hezbollah's fighters understood their mission as not only to push back foreign military forces, but also

to liberate Lebanon from the shackles of political Maronism and the Lebanese sectarian-confessional political system that is based upon positive (man-made) laws and legislations (*al-qawanin al-wad'iyya*) such as state constitutions, and establish instead the *shari'a* (Islamic law and legislation) ... through a pure and uncompromising Islamic order, system, or mode of government, be it an Islamic government, state, or republic. (Alagha 2006, 203)

Not only did Hezbollah articulate goals of ridding Lebanon of an occupying force, but the organization espoused a desire for transformative political and social change over the status quo.

Furthermore, one of Hezbollah's intellectual leaders, Sayyid Mohammad Husayn Fadlallah, explains in an interview that "Hizballah's actions" are intended to "liberate their country" and that it is one of the "liberation movements" operating in the Middle East (Fadlallah and Soueid 1995, 64). These objectives closely mirror the language used by the two rebel groups that pursued more transformative goals discussed earlier, the EPLF and FRETILIN. The EPLF and FRETILIN viewed Ethiopia and Indonesia, respectively, as a foreign state occupying an independent nation-state and referred to themselves as revolutionary and/or a national liberation movement. Furthermore, both organizations sought widespread and encompassing political and social change. Thus, like the other two rebel organizations with more transformative goals discussed in previous chapters, Hezbollah also endeavored to achieve great change for the Shi'ites of Lebanon and adopted more transformative goals.



Hezbollah also recognized itself as part of a broader global-historical, revolutionary tradition. In their 1985 Open Letter, Hezbollah writes that they have “huge hope” that oppressed Muslim countries are “able to benefit from experiences of the world’s revolutions, especially the victorious Islamic Revolution ... The day will come when these barely standing [Arab] regimes will fall under the fist of the oppressed, like the throne of despotism [the Shah’s monarchy] had collapsed in Iran” (Alagha 2011, 52). To that end, Hezbollah even boasted that its military and political experiences compared favorably to those of famous revolutionaries, specifically Ho Chi Minh, Vo Nguyen Giap, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, Fidel Castro, Ahmed Ben Bella, Djamilia Bouhired,<sup>6</sup> and Josip Broz Tito (Qassim 2017).

### The Origins of Hezbollah's Strategies

As a movement with more transformative goals, Hezbollah, like other revolutionary organizations before them, turned to two key sources of information in crafting their strategies for pursuing revolution. First, influential Hezbollah leaders within Lebanon turned to former, successful rebel groups with more transformative goals. Specifically, Hezbollah looked to the military, political, and organizational strategies of Mao and the Chinese model, as well as some of the early adapters of the Chinese model, the FLN, and the Vietnamese Viet Minh under Ho Chi Minh (Kahveci 1998; Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 5–7; Daana 2013; Qassim 2017). Furthermore, a guiding intellectual cleric who would go on to inspire and influence Hezbollah’s leadership, Sayyid Mohammad Husayn Fadlallah, forged his Islamist revolutionary framework in the heat of competition between communist organizations for the hearts and minds of Shi‘ite communities within and outside Lebanon. To beat these leftist challengers, Shi‘ite clerical intellectuals frequently adopted leftist solutions for change, adapting them to a particular Islamist framework (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 100–2). The second source of inspiration for Hezbollah’s governance was the successful Iranian Revolution (Love 2010, 12). The Iranian Revolution offered a guide for how to shape institutions to a particular understanding of an Islamist ideal and demonstrated that an Islamist state was viable.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> An Algerian *woman* fighter.

<sup>7</sup> Importantly, leading Iranian revolutionary intellectuals were also inspired by and learned from the members and experiences of the FLN and Cuban Revolutions (Abrahamian 1982).

Hezbollah represents the concatenation of these two forces – an organizational template for pursuing more transformative goals through governance and warfare (Chinese model) and a guide for what revolutionary Islamist governance might look like (Iran). Although Hezbollah has predominantly focused on military action outside Lebanon and attacked non-Lebanese targets – as opposed to military action to overthrow the Lebanese state – Hezbollah’s origins as a rebel group with more transformative goals that decided to imitate the Chinese model of governance remain clear. The selection of a strategy of intensive and extensive governance and violence during war thus reflects the broader revolutionary rebel group tradition in which Hezbollah was consciously embedded. As a result, Hezbollah perpetuates the adoption and adaptation of the Chinese model of intensive and extensive governance, even among rebel organizations that do not share a leftist ideology.

### *The Influence of Leftist Revolutionaries on Hezbollah*

Cognizant of its more transformative goals and embedding itself within a broader revolutionary history, Hezbollah and its leaders were influenced by other successful revolutionaries, especially leftist rebel groups with more transformative goals. The influence of leftist revolutions came from two sources. The first source was the teachings and intellectual origins of the leading Shi’ite cleric and intellectual, Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Hussain Fadlallah, who, though never a leader of Hezbollah specifically, profoundly influenced the group’s members and leaders. Fadlallah’s own education and experiences not only exposed him to Marxist thought, but to compete against the popular Communist Party of Iraq, Fadlallah adopted many of the social reformist demands advocated by communist organizations.

Fadlallah was raised by Lebanese parents in Najaf, Iraq. By the age of fifteen or sixteen, Fadlallah had already begun to consume Marxist texts (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 197). Around this time in Iraq, communism and its social and economic programs were highly attractive to Shi’ites living across the Middle East (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 85), and the Iraqi Communist Party largely consisted of Shi’ites (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 76). By the mid-twentieth century in Iraq, even in Shi’ite clerical schools, “Marxism became a secularized form of Shi’ite messianism – that is, the fulfillment of justice on earth, marked by material ease and spiritual realization” (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 85).

This communist influence, despite its local appeal, also faced increasing hostility for its commitment to atheism, denunciation of private property, and the confinement of religion to private life (Abisaab and

Abisaab 2014, 100–2). The appeal of communism's socioeconomic reforms, while at the same time preserving local cultures and religion, would become a driving force among the early Islamist clerical movement, who set about competing with communists for the hearts and minds of the Shi'ite community. These scholars within the clerical movement perceived "the combating of communism a precondition to attracting the youth to a modernist and revolutionary faith promised under Islam" (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 93).

One of the clerics leading the charge against Marxism was Fadlallah's mentor, Mohammad Baqir al-Sadr (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 198). To compete with communism, Baqir al-Sadr "adapted leftist discourse about revolutionary change and Third Worldist approaches to European imperialism" (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 102), while also adopting but modifying communists' solutions for social justice and economic reform, such as providing for private property (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 98). In Iraq and then in Lebanon, Fadlallah would continue Baqir al-Sadr's tradition.

Like Baqir al-Sadr, as Fadlallah pursued his studies as religious cleric and thinker, he "adapted Marxist ideas of historical change and the Iraqi Communists' methods of argumentation even as he developed his Islamist critique of communism" (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 206). The concurrent Palestinian struggle and Israeli occupation of Lebanon further accelerated Fadlallah's radicalism and belief in an Islamist framework for a "physical and cultural struggle" (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 207). Within Lebanon, Fadlallah lectured about "revolutionary" Shi'ism, while also attracting the support of lower-class Shi'ites through the establishment of public service institutions such as orphanages, schools, hospitals, religious centers, and vocational schools (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 199). Through these avenues, Fadlallah's discourse and revolutionary aspirations met with material institutions, which in turn inspired, mobilized, and undergirded Hezbollah's leaders and members.

Fadlallah eventually came to diagnose the problems and solutions facing Shi'ites in Marxist and revolutionary terms (Abu-Rabi 1996, 227–9). For instance, Fadlallah composed a treatise on the importance of revolution and resistance to foreign military powers, especially Israel. According to a translation by Abu-Rabi (1996, 228), Fadlallah writes that: "Revolution cannot be limited to a particular region. Revolution is the expression of a dynamic thought that reflects the deep pain, oppression, and exploitation of man. In this regard, revolution is a universal human phenomenon." Abu-Rabi (1996, 247) interprets Fadlallah as ultimately identifying the importance of a revolutionary movement spearheaded by religious scholars (*ulama*) in achieving the liberation of

oppressed people – just like a Marxist vanguard party – and that Hezbollah in particular would serve as the “military and moral force that would lead to” the reconstruction of Muslim societies in ways that addressed the issues that plagued Lebanese Shi‘ites (Abu-Rabi 1996, 245).

The fusion of Marxist thought with Shi‘ite teaching and practice resulted in Hezbollah articulating objectives that paralleled previous rebel groups with more transformative goals but leftist ideologies. Like Marxists, Hezbollah’s goals included “radical changes” but the group “derives its language from religion” as opposed to economic class-based oppression (AbuKhalil 1991, 396). Similarly, Hezbollah also reinterprets the Leninist understanding of the causes of conflict and suffering, but uses Islamist terminology to understand these concepts:

The ideology of Hizballah also contains features of class analysis. In Leninist thought, conflicts are viewed as the products of struggle between exploited and exploiting classes. This view is shared by Hizballah although the Leninist terms are Islamized. Thus, the exploited classes are referred to as *al-mustad‘afun* (a Quranic term which means the downtrodden, or more precisely those who are rendered weak), and the exploiting classes are referred to as *al-mustakbirun* (another Quranic word that means the arrogant ones, the exact opposite of *mustad‘afun*) ... Like Leninist thought, Hizballah believes that justice and equality can be achieved through human efforts, through a revolutionary process. Hizballah represents a revolutionary version of Shiite Islam. (AbuKhalil 1991, 395)

Furthermore, in the same way that Mao (Seybolt 1971, 641) understood revolutionary change as something that occurs not only institutionally, but personally as well (i.e., raising the consciousness of individuals), Fadlallah understood revolutionary change to occur “at the level of ideas” (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 197) and actively sought to convert others to political Islam (Abisaab and Abisaab 2014, 197). Thus, like other, previous revolutionaries, Hezbollah’s leaders searched for and learned from previous revolutionary models, then modified them to fit a particular context: the Shi‘ites of southern Lebanon. Hezbollah’s goals and its strategy for pursuing them – intensive governance alongside warfare – can be understood as the jihadist complement to Marxist rebels within a broader revolutionary tradition.

The second source of information about the strategies for how to achieve its more transformative goals was previous rebel movements with more transformative ambitions, all of which had imitated (if not created) the Chinese model, as well as contemporary Islamist parties. This search brought them to the Chinese model of pursuing more transformative, revolutionary goals. Hezbollah leadership “closely examined the successful experiences of national liberation movements, namely Mao Tse Tung’s triumphant socialist revolution, the Viet Minh’s (Vietnamese

revolutionary forces) victory in the battle of Dien Bien Phu, the National Liberation Front's (FLN) achievement of Algeria's independence" (Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 5–6). Each of these three rebel groups created or relied on the Chinese model. Hezbollah then used these left-leaning "National Wars of Liberation" as "conceptual markers" in its organization and formation, learning from their successes and failures, both military and political (Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 5).

The reason why Hezbollah adopted the Chinese model, and learned from these groups, was that it represented a successful strategy of "Revolutionary Warfare" and Hezbollah was pursuing more transformative goals (Kahveci 1998). Though the structure of Hezbollah could have taken many forms and Hezbollah could have adopted a theoretically infinite number of strategies, Hezbollah's leadership studied the historical experiences of rebel groups with similar goals and decided to imitate these actors despite ideological differences precisely because their behaviors were a model for pursuing revolution.

Organizationally, this meant that Hezbollah's structure closely resembles that of leftist revolutionaries: "the organizational structure of Hizballah does not reflect Islamic principles, as the Party claims, because there are no Islamic teachings on modern forms of political organization and mobilization" but instead "emulate[s] the Leninist structure of party organization" (AbuKhalil 1991, 397). For instance, Hezbollah's leadership body, the Shura Council, has been described as an "imitation of the Leninist Politburo which centralizes decision-making in the hands of a few. Decisions within the body are reached by consensus, or by a majority vote when a consensus is not reached" (AbuKhalil 1991, 397). Importantly for the function of Hezbollah's governance, "[r]esponsibilities within [Hezbollah's] leadership are divided according to typical [leftist] party functions: there are seven committees for thought, finance, political affairs, information, military affairs, judicial and social affairs" (AbuKhalil 1991, 397). Ultimately, what emerged is "an organization that seeks to emulate a revolutionary movement by searching for confrontation against Israel and the West" (Gleis and Berti 2012, 53).

Beyond adopting the organizational framework shared by these leftist revolutionary conceptual models, Hezbollah also adopted its military and political strategies (meaning intensive and extensive governance during war), explicitly recognizing the Chinese model as a model of "Revolutionary Warfare" that consists of both components (Kahveci 1998). In terms of its military behaviors, "Hezbollah's military strategists had been studying the organizational and guerrilla warfare tactics of Mao Tse-Tung, Ho Chi Minh and the Algerian National Liberation Front very thoroughly since 1982 and thus were aware of the advantages

guerrilla groups have when confronting conventional militaries” (Schwerna 2010, 97). Moreover, according to Timur Goskel, the senior political adviser to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNFIL) until 2003, Hezbollah are “scholars of guerrilla warfare from the American Revolution to Mao and the Vietcong,” well versed in the history and strategies of revolutionary leaders of the past (Erlanger and Opiel 2006). Even today, Hezbollah’s own news website explicitly compared Hezbollah’s 2006 military victory against Israel to General Vo Nguyen Giap of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front’s victory over the French Army at Dien Bien Phu (Daana 2013).

In terms of its governance behaviors, Hezbollah also specifically studied the *political* components of rebel groups with more transformative, revolutionary goals, to mean undertaking intensive and extensive governance (Kahveci 1998). For instance, Hezbollah’s leaders “admired Mao’s ability to create a formidable political entity and overcome the indignities of the Opium Wars (1839–42 and 1856–60) and the Boxer rebellion of 1900 when six European nations, the United States, and Japan sent troops to defeat the Chinese rebels. Hizbullah learned from Mao’s experience the importance of preparing revolutionary vanguards to lead the struggle and rally the masses behind their movement” (Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 6). That the dual political and military components were parallel components undertaken simultaneously in pursuit of realizing more transformative, revolutionary goals was not lost on Hezbollah (Kahveci 1998).

Critically, Hezbollah’s leaders did not adopt the Chinese model of governance because it was unaware of other strategies, and in fact, leaders were familiar with another potential template: Islamist political parties (not rebel groups) that already existed in the Middle East. One important historical example was the ad-Da’wah party in Iraq. Composed primarily of the politically engaged Iraqi Shi’a community, the ad-Da’wah Party waged a campaign against the secular, Sunni Ba’athist regime in Iraq. Throughout the 1970s, the ad-Da’wah Party was met with brutal repression, and ad-Da’wah went underground (AbuKhalil 1991, 392). Hezbollah’s leadership either observed or personally experienced as members “the demise of ad-Da’wah party as a model for Islamic mobilization and organization ... Ad-Da’wah became too ‘timid’, in the words of former member Ali al-Kurani, in its fight against ‘the infidel regime’. Ad-Da’wah’s form of political organization, with its underground structure and emphasis on secrecy, became too isolated from the masses in the eyes of the pro-Khumayni ulama” (AbuKhalil 1991, 392). Because of these deficiencies, Hezbollah’s leaders “consciously refrained from repeating the mistakes” (Khashan and Mousawi 2007, 6) and instead decided to imitate the leftist rebel

groups with more transformative goals in pursuit of Hezbollah's similarly transformative ambitions (AbuKhalil 1991, 392).

Thus, Hezbollah was intellectually and strategically influenced by communist and leftist organizations, and consciously decided to imitate the Chinese model despite knowledge of ideologically proximate alternative templates. Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, Hezbollah's intellectual inspiration, adopted certain socioeconomic solutions for change associated with Marxist thought, but applied this framework of social, political, and economic redistribution to the downtrodden Shi'ite community. Strategically, Hezbollah's leaders searched for templates of rebel groups pursuing more transformative, revolutionary goals to emulate and discarded ideologically proximate models in favor of the rebel groups that pursued sociopolitical transformation during civil war. Recognizing the Chinese model as a model for "Revolutionary Warfare," Hezbollah implemented the wartime, intensive, and extensive governance aspect of this template (Kahveci 1998).

*Hezbollah's Iranian-Inspired Reinterpretation of the Chinese Model*

Besides the Maoist tradition, Hezbollah also turned to Iran for inspiration in shaping its governance activities. The Iranian Revolution had successfully been completed just three years prior to the founding of Hezbollah.<sup>8</sup> After their revolutionary success, Iranian leaders saw civil war in Lebanon as an opportunity to export the Iranian Revolution, with the ultimate goal of proliferating Islamist political orders (Love 2010, 3). In so doing, Iran not only proffered financial and military support to Hezbollah, but also guided Hezbollah in the content of its political and governance institutions.

<sup>8</sup> While Iran represented the first modern successful Islamist revolution (see historical cases in Lovejoy 2016), Iran's revolution, just as Hezbollah's own revolutionary experiences, must be contextualized within a broader revolutionary history connected across space and time. Though Hezbollah sought inspiration from previously revolutionary movements, the Iranian Revolution is also not without historical context. One of the leading intellectuals of the Iranian Revolution, Ali Shari'ati, was deeply influenced by Marxist thinkers such as Che Guevara, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Roger Garaudy, even translating Guevara's *Guerrilla Warfare* and beginning a translation of Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth* (Abrahamian 1982, 25). Shari'ati's exposure to the Fanon's work led him to take up a correspondence with the one-time FLN fighter, intellectual, and psychologist (Abrahamian 1982, 25). Through his correspondence, Shari'ati began to accept certain Marxist tenants, particularly those related to exploitation and subjugation (Abrahamian 1982, 26-7). Shari'ati's Marxist-influenced works would go on to be crucial in the articulation and fomentation of Iranian revolutionary ideals, and there remains little debate about "Shari'ati's role in transforming and refining the ideological perspective of millions of the literate Iranian youth" (Bayat 1990, 19).

Whereas leftist rebel groups with more transformative, revolutionary goals offered a template of the types of political institutions to build during an armed struggle, the Iranian Revolution provided a guideline for structuring institutions to comport with an Islamist ideology. Frequently, Iranian officials would specifically instruct Hezbollah's organizational leadership on how to bend their institutional forms to an Islamist path (such as helping Hezbollah build the curriculum of their schools) (Love 2010, 25). As an example, where the communists called for a court system (in the Chinese model, a traditional court and a counter-revolutionary, mass court), Hezbollah too implemented a court system, but premised its legal framework on Shari'ah law, as well as a dispute resolution mechanism to mediate local and familial disputes (Hamzeh 2004, 103–4). Stated otherwise, whereas the Chinese model provided the template for which institutions to build, the Iranian Revolution demonstrated how such institutions could be adopted in pursuit of Islamist revolution.

### Hezbollah's Governance for Revolution

After adopting but modifying the strategy of the Chinese model of governance in the early 1980s, Hezbollah began introducing its governance institutions quickly, frequently building from scratch the institutions to shape and undergird their ideal society. The set of institutions Hezbollah built throughout the Ba'albek region and southern Lebanon closely resembles the portfolio of governance institutions and organizations contained within the Chinese model. Yet, to modify these institutions to fit the Lebanese context, Hezbollah learned from the Iranian Revolution and modified the *content* of these institutions. What resulted is Hezbollah's imitation of the strategy of the Chinese model of governance, building almost exactly the same set of institutions, but the nature of these institutions comported more closely to the ideals of the Iranian Revolution.

One of the most important governance innovations of the Chinese model was economic reform to benefit the poorer, peasant classes. In China, these governance institutions took the form of land redistribution and market regulations. Though more moderate in their approach to private property, Hezbollah similarly introduced governing institutions to facilitate economic reform. Hezbollah established a banking institution called "The Good Loan" which (Harb and Leenders 2005, 187), consistent with Islamic law (Dhumale and Sapcanin 1998, 2), offers hundreds of micro-credit and loans at deeply discounted rates that benefit the recipient (Harb and Leenders 2005, 187). Another chief institutional mechanism Hezbollah created to actualize social and



economic reform to the benefit of the rural poor is the Jihad al-Bina'a (or the Jihad al-Binaa Development Group, JBDG). Jihad al-Bina'a, which means "Building Jihad" in English, focuses on improving land use and agricultural development by providing "technical assistance to farmers in land reclamation and cultivation, opening agricultural roads and installing irrigation networks" (Hamzeh 2004, 51). Between 1988 and 2002, Jihad al-Bina'a opened seven farming cooperatives in Lebanon (Hamzeh 2004, 51) and offered farmers credit facilities (Hamzeh 2004, 51–2). Although the decision to implement economic reforms to benefit rural farmers mirrors the priorities of the CCP, guidance about the nature of the JBDG was "exported" from Iran to Lebanon in the early 1980s (Love 2010, 23).

Beyond agricultural services, Jihad al-Bina'a was also charged with building over 400 reservoirs of potable water for about 800,000 residents in Beirut suburbs that satisfies nearly 45 percent of the southern suburbs of Beirut's water needs (Hamzeh 2004, 51). The JBDG also dug fifty-eight artesian wells throughout Lebanon (Hamzeh 2004, 51). In addition to clean water, Hezbollah not only helped to ensure electricity in the areas under its control, but also installed more than twenty big power generators throughout Lebanon while providing maintenance for the Lebanese government's power network (Hamzeh 2004, 51). Beyond clean water and consistent electrical services, Jihad al-Bina'a has reconstructed homes, businesses, and other edifices that were destroyed in violent campaigns against Israel, rehabilitating over 10,000 homes, shops, schools, hospitals, and cultural centers in about a decade and half (Hamzeh 2004, 50–1). Hezbollah's technical and public works capacities, executed through Jihad al-Bina'a, closely mirror the Chinese model, put forth by the CCP in China. In the same way that the CCP planned to restore and maintain necessary utilities, like electricity and water, upon capturing territory, so too does Jihad al-Bin'a either supplement for a lack of utilities from the Lebanese state, or repair those damaged by Israeli military actions. Thus, Hezbollah's portfolio of institutions reflects almost the same portfolio of institutions contained within the Chinese model, but the nature of these institutions mimics the Iranian revolutionary experience.

In the same way that the Chinese model of governance also included a court system, Hezbollah also established its own judicial and mediation system in the areas it controlled. Unlike the Chinese model's own courts – built upon the principles of mass-based participation and rooting out counter-revolutionary forces – Hezbollah built its courts and mediation systems premised on Shar'iah law (Hamzeh 2004, 103–8). In the same way as the Chinese model's court systems took on a regional

nature, with courts operating at different levels, Hezbollah's court system includes municipal and regional courts with a single high court (Hamzeh 2004, 103–8). The adjudicators are typically party members, religious leaders, or judges (Hamzeh 2004, 103), and when they hear the facts of the case they apply “the verdict of Allah by virtue of their knowledge of the Shar‘iah” (Hamzeh 2004, 105). In Hezbollah's courts, litigants need not obtain a lawyer to argue a case, and all adjudication services are provided free of charge (Hamzeh 2004, 105). The jurisdiction of the courts are wide ranging, from criminal activity to civil disputes (Hamzeh 2004, 103–8). But in the same way that special courts tried “counter-revolutionaries” in revolutionary China, Hezbollah's High Court adjudicates cases of espionage and treason, even enforcing its justice through imprisonment and execution (Hamzeh 2004, 104).

Beyond economic and legal change, in the same way that the Chinese model included building institutions to improve health and hygiene, so too did Hezbollah, but Hezbollah imbued these institutions with Islamist undertones to better fit the Lebanese and Shi‘a context in which it operated (Love 2010, 24). Hezbollah's primary health care institution is the Islamic Health Organization, which is responsible for providing health and medical services, including clinics, medications, evacuation of casualties, and food distribution throughout the south of Lebanon and the Beka‘a (Love 2010, 24). Nearly half a million people have availed themselves to Hezbollah's health services (Hamzeh 2004, 54), and Hezbollah has built six hospitals, twenty-one dispensaries, twelve mobile dispensaries, and ten dental clinics (Hamzeh 2004, 54). Consistent with Islamic law, Hezbollah's women's health clinic has a policy consistent with a religious law mandating women be treated by non-male gynecologists unless the life of the women or her child is in danger (Jaber 1997, 159–60). For low-income recipients (even beyond Shi‘ite communities), Hezbollah's services are free or low cost (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009, 125), and the organization has become involved in several initiatives that include “offering free health insurance and prescription-drug coverage through a network of local pharmacies” (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009, 125). Hezbollah's health care is so effective that “it was asked to assume the operation of several government hospitals in Southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley” (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009, 125).

Hezbollah also began providing education services in the areas it controlled like the CCP did during the Chinese Civil War. Yet, while the Chinese model called for the building of educational institutions in pursuit of *communist* or *socialist* revolution, to fit the contextual environment in which Hezbollah operates, the educational curriculum of

Hezbollah's schools was developed with the help and guidance of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (Love 2010, 25). Hezbollah constructed and administered its own school system composed of at least ten different schools throughout southern Lebanon and the Bekaa (Hamzeh 2004, 57). Hezbollah also offered scholarships and financial aid to 23,000 students in just a two-year period (Hamzeh 2004, 56). Although Hezbollah's members and children have priority in Hezbollah's schools, not all students and beneficiaries are associated with the party. According to a father who works for UNIFIL and backs Hezbollah's arch-rivals, Amal, he sends his son to a Hezbollah school because "[m]any of us are not Hezbollah, nor are we in the least affiliated with their ideologies or political views, but we cannot deny their achievements and we realise that their schools are currently better than anything else in the area" (Jaber 1997, 164).

In the same way that the Chinese model and its adopters and modifiers sought to foster gender equality, Hezbollah also put forth a program to improve the lives and livelihoods of women, within the ideological frameworks established by the Shi'ite community of Lebanon. Although women are technically eligible for "martyrdom" (e.g., armed warfare against Israel), very few women are involved in direct military combat, and most play secondary roles in the organization (Firmo-Fontan 2004, 175). Since the 1980s, Hezbollah's leadership have encouraged more assertive women's participation in the group to take the form of education and motherhood (Firmo-Fontan 2004, 175). Although Hezbollah does not encourage women's recruitment as fighters within the organization, Hezbollah's Politburo nevertheless formed and directed a women's organization, called the Hezbollah Women's Association (HWA), which emphasizes "complementarity with men," meaning that women's "empowerment is strongly encouraged as long as it does not hinder their family lives" (Firmo-Fontan 2004, 175). The HWA provides women members with religious education and literacy classes, as well as basic health and hygiene training (Firmo-Fontan 2004, 175–6). The HWA offers "summer camps, physical activities and supplementary education programs ranging from history to reproductive science for teenagers" (Firmo-Fontan 2004, 176). The HWA was also instrumental in fostering social change regarding the norms surrounding the treatment of widows (Love 2010, 24). Prior to the creation of the organization, widows, especially the women of deceased Hezbollah fighters, were chaperoned and controlled by their fathers-in-law, which often led to the mistreatment of women (Love 2010, 24). Through the HWA and with financial support from a second Hezbollah service organization – the Martyrs Foundation – the wives of Hezbollah fighters killed in action

receive a stipend ensuring their financial and social independence and “enjoy a special status within the community” (Love 2010, 24).

In China and among later adopters of the Chinese model in places like Guinea, East Timor, and Eritrea, local change to the political institutions was the culmination of months or even years of the incremental introduction of new or reformed institutions and organizations that ultimately aimed to overhaul the social order (Chabal 1981, 98; Mampilly and Stewart ND; Selden 2016, 105, 109). The Chinese model called for altered political institutions, which took the form of elections. These elections were not competitive forms of political contestation, but rather a mechanism to solidify local buy-in of the social and political changes that rebels with more transformative, revolutionary goals had already implemented. In the Chinese model, the ultimate arbiter of state power remained the Communist Party, but elections served as a stamp of approval on the system already in place.

Hezbollah’s strategy for changing political institutions as the culmination of years of politicization and socialization followed the same logic of the Chinese model, yet the nature of the political institutions that Hezbollah aimed to create was a decidedly Iranian-inspired, non-Western creation: the *wilayat al-faqih*. The implementation of an Islamist political order, *wilayat al-faqih*, in Lebanon is the final realization of Hezbollah’s political and social goals. Inspired by Ayatollah Khomeini and Ayatollah Mohammad Baqir al-Sadr, *wilayat al-faqih* is a system of governance whereby Islamic intellectuals and elites interpret God’s will as it relates to the political and social aspects of the life of the people (Hamzeh 2004, 30–1). Though distinct from the electoral process the Chinese model created, in both cases the Communist Party elite or the Islamic clerical elite remained the ultimate power holders. Furthermore, in the same way that the Chinese model called for a change in political institutions after years or months of socialization and politicization within a new governance framework imposed by the rebel group, Hezbollah too does not “insist that this [*wilayat al-faqih*] should be imposed by force. On the contrary, the question of implementing the Islamic order has carefully been tied to the concept of the majority” (Hamzeh 2004, 29). Therefore, the political change to the *wilayat al-faqih* would only occur “if Islam become the choice of the majority ... If not it will continue to coexist with others on the basis of mutual understanding” (Hamzeh 2004, 29). This means that when the absolute majority of people in Lebanon accept Islamic law, then it would be implemented by Hezbollah, while other religions would coexist “fairly” within an Islamic system (Hamzeh 2004, 30).

Because Hezbollah does not yet have this majority support, the implementation of these Islamic political institutions has yet to occur. Yet, the strategic logic undergirding the decision to implement a fundamentally new political system mirrors the same logic contained within the Chinese model. Thus, in the same way that the change in political institutions served to reinforce the Communist Party's power, Hezbollah's strategy for change in political institutions would only emerge after a sufficient degree of support had been secured.

Hezbollah's governance also extends beyond salient identity lines (Cammett 2014, 155) and is not restricted to members of the political party or armed wing, demonstrating the extensiveness of its governance. In 2012, Hezbollah's size was estimated to be at 6,000 fighters (National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) 2015), which according to Hamzeh (2004, 54), is equal to just 1.5 percent of the total amount of people served through Hezbollah's health care system alone. And while Hezbollah's primary political base and source of support remains the Lebanese Shi'ite community, "Hiszbollah's social and humanitarian services are not confined to Shi'as or Muslims only; rather a lot of Christians of various denominations benefit from these services" (Alagha 2006, 166). Hezbollah offers its governance and services "to the populace regardless of religion or political affiliation" (Love 2010, 23). In the same way that previous rebel groups with more transformative, revolutionary goals implemented broad-based governance to secure broad-based social change, Hezbollah's extensive governance is open to broad swaths of the population, even those who are not active members and whose membership is not solicited or even desired.

Although Hezbollah's governance institutions are not restricted to party members or the Shi'ite community, this does not mean that Hezbollah fails to prioritize members and their families. In the same way that the Chinese model of governance contained some multi-tiered institutions – whereby party members had access to higher-quality services like schools and medical care, but the masses had access to more rudimentary health and educational options – Hezbollah also has particular, high-quality institutions reserved for its committed members and their families. For example, priority membership in the HWA "is given to the daughters of those who lost their lives as a result of the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon" (Firmo-Fontan 2004, 176). Hezbollah also created the Martyrs Foundation, a financial and social safety net that specifically serves the families of wounded, detained, or killed fighters (Love 2010, 24). Similarly, Hezbollah's Foundation for the Wounded is a special program that primarily helps combatants wounded in their fight

against Israel, but also aids injured civilians. What emerges is a set of “concentric circles of support” that “maps onto different levels of social protection” (Cammett 2014, 155), with those who have made a sacrifice being most eligible for the most generous benefits (Cammett 2014, 155). Ultimately then, in the same way that the Chinese model provided governance broadly, but nevertheless prioritized membership, “staff members at Hezbollah institutions do not deny services to out-group members but provide treatment on more favorable terms to established supporters who tend to be in-group members” (Cammett 2014, 155).

Importantly, the expansive changes the Chinese model put forward were not always popular and were sometimes militarily problematic. Likewise, many of the governing policies Hezbollah implemented served to undermine the organization and reduce its popularity, even among the communities from which Hezbollah sought support. For instance, in some of the areas Hezbollah controls, the organization “forcefully imposed” Islamic law (Hamzeh 2004, 102). Behavioral codes were introduced that banned the sale of alcohol, pork, and “illicit pleasures” (Hamzeh 2004, 102). Hezbollah prohibited “parties, dancing and loud music. They also closed down coffee shops” (Jaber 1997, 29). These “restrictions only served to isolate the area and further undermine the already battered economy” (Jaber 1997, 30). Initially, many people in the Shi‘ite community “were angered at having to bear the brunt of Israel’s reprisals against Lebanon ... they were also outraged by the extreme transformation which was taking place in the South as it came under the influence of Hezbollah’s religious militancy” (Jaber 1997, 29).

To summarize, Hezbollah established an extensive and intensive portfolio of governance institutions throughout Lebanon that mimics of the Chinese model but is reinterpreted through an Iranian lens. The result is a resounding echo of the Chinese model of governance, spoken with a clear jihadist voice (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 *Hezbollah’s interpretation of the Chinese model*

	CCP	Hezbollah
Market regulations	Yes	Yes
Judicial institutions	Yes	Yes
Health care	Yes	Yes
Public works	Yes	Yes
Education	Yes	Yes
Change gender roles	Yes	Yes
Change political institutions	Yes	Planned
Land reform and redistribution	Yes	Some agrarian programs but no redistribution

### **Hezbollah's Motivations for Governance**

In the early 1980s, Hezbollah emerged from a loose coalition of Shi'a militias intent on revolution. Today it has grown to become one of the most powerful and influential actors in Lebanon and the Middle East. During the period under review (Hezbollah's formation until Israel withdrew from Lebanon in 2000), Hezbollah established its governance system. In this section, I review the evidence for rival explanations and my primary explanation: that the long-term goals of social and political transformation incentivized Hezbollah's imitation of the Chinese model. By contrast, three rival explanations are that governance primarily serves a military function, is a function of competition, or is driven by the support of a foreign state. The overwhelming bulk of the case evidence suggests that Hezbollah provides governance because of its more transformative goals, and that more transformative goals led Hezbollah to imitate the Chinese model and the same institutional governance portfolio therein, but to modify the nature of these institutions to comport with an Iranian ideological framework. That being said, this case was intended to demonstrate the cross-ideological adoption of the Chinese model, and alone cannot fully eliminate alternative explanations that Hezbollah may have provided governance to recruit, or that Hezbollah provided governance at the command of Iran.

#### *Governance because of Long-Term Goals*

Hezbollah's governance is intimately linked with its political goals (Hamzeh 2004, 42, 53–4; Cambanis 2010, 14, 16; Cammett 2014, 152). Hezbollah's leaders studied various models and strategies for achieving its socially, economically, and politically transformative ambitions. Although Hezbollah's leaders were familiar with multiple organizational models and strategies for pursuing their objectives, they decided to imitate the Chinese model of intensive and extensive governance. Hezbollah frequently cites as inspiration other rebel groups with more and moderately transformative goals, especially the CCP, the Viet Minh, and the FLN (al Hassan 2012; Daana 2013; Al Sayegh 2014). Hezbollah also claims that its behaviors and experiences mirror these same actors, highlighting the importance of imitating and comporting with previously successful groups with shared ambitions (Qassim 2017). Hezbollah not only rhetorically compares itself to its revolutionary compatriots but implemented almost the same set of governance institutions that the CCP did. Finally, Hezbollah also explicitly recognizes that intensive and extensive governance is a central component of a strategy for rebels

pursuing more transformative goals, and that this strategy was largely founded by Mao Tse-Tung (Kahveci 1998).

In the same way that rebel groups with more transformative goals came to justify the decision to imitate the Chinese model's intensive and extensive governance portfolio as necessary and appropriate, Hezbollah justifies its governance in the same way. Hezbollah operatives who administer governance institutions "perceive their tasks as complementary and intrinsic to the resistance movement lead by Hizballah" (Fawaz 2005, 235). Although the armed wing of the organization executes the military strategy, those who work in their governance institutions "claim to be building a 'resistance society'" and that it is their "task to build a society that will refuse oppression and fight for its rights" (Fawaz 2005, 235). Naim Qassem, a member of Hezbollah who published a memoir about his time within the organization, writes that:

Westerners have suspected that Hizbullah's social work was essentially aimed at recruitment, even where this was a natural consequence of the Party's social activities. They have also suspected that people gathered around Hizbullah mainly in order to benefit from these services. While such services do have a considerable effect on the populace, the essence of participation ultimately resides in belief in the overall path ... and joins forces to remain strong and tenacious in its political and resistance roles. (Qassem 2010, 165)

Hezbollah understands governance as inherently linked to the pursuit of social and political transformation, and its military actions cannot be considered without also understanding its governance. Furthermore, as Hezbollah has increasingly moved toward electoral competition as a mechanism to achieve their political ambitions, governance continues to play an expansive role in realizing both social transformation and electoral success. Cammett (2014) writes that: "the provision of accessible and sufficiently high-quality social benefits can build or boost a reputation of competence and reliability within and beyond the areas where they operate. This is particularly valuable for political organizations that aim to win national support" (Cammett 2014, 91).

Although domestic concerns are the primary impetus behind Hezbollah's governance institutions, Hezbollah also seeks "external," international legitimacy (Gleis and Berti 2012, 53) among certain key audiences. For Hezbollah "to succeed in reaching certain aims, they have to calculate each and every step. They have to bear in mind all the local, regional and international limitations," (Stewart 2015a) and the group needed to legitimate itself to these audiences. Ultimately, Hezbollah "aims to be recognised as a legitimate political actor on the global level, and its political trajectory thus far suggests its political survival is highly probable" (Khatib et al. 2014, 37).



One of the primary international audiences is Iran, Hezbollah's benefactor and primary sponsor. Iran is deeply invested in the success of Hezbollah as both a strategic ally and as a legacy of the Iranian Revolution. As a legacy of the Iranian Revolution, Hezbollah has become a standard-bearer of some revolutionary jihadist groups, especially those fighting Israel and the West. As a standard-bearer, Hezbollah must achieve its more transformative goals in the proper way, which includes both violence and governance. For Iran, Hezbollah's governance is important and serves to legitimate continued and persistent Iranian support: Iran not only helped to shape these institutions but also helps finance them by supplementing their funding, particularly those relating to health care and the care of wounded or killed soldiers (Love 2010, 24). In other words, Hezbollah's governance demonstrated to Iran its commitment to sociopolitical transformation in the Islamist way, thereby legitimating the organization and justifying Iran's support. Had Hezbollah redirected such financial incentives or failed to provide governance in the manner that Iran would find appropriate and legitimate (such as supporting Western traditions and behaviors), Iranian support may have diminished or disappeared entirely.

Furthermore, as a Shi'ite organization in a primarily Sunni region, Hezbollah's intensive and extensive portfolio of governing institutions served as a model of "responsible service and governance by Islamist parties. Hezbollah carries the mantle of pure revolution and simultaneously has to govern" (Cambanis 2010, 277–8). Indeed, Hezbollah's behaviors are a "carefully crafted move to gain popular legitimation in the predominantly Sunni Arab world. The party has attempted to obtain this legitimation by presenting itself as a distinctly Arab movement, as evinced by its self-designation as an Islamic, Lebanese and 'pan-Arabist' Resistance, which fights for 'the cause of all Arabs and Muslims' rather than that of the Shi'ites alone" (Saad-Ghorayeb 2002, 78).

Hezbollah's behaviors – in particular its governance institutions – have become the model for other jihadist rebel groups pursuing more transformative, revolutionary goals and represent a showcase for an Islamist adaptation of the Chinese model (Abuza 2009). The Islamist revolutionary model, spearheaded by Hezbollah, also serves as a template and inspiration for organizations like Hamas and the Jama'a Islamiya (Abuza 2009), both of which Hezbollah has directly aided (Halliday 2006). For Hamas especially, Hezbollah acts "in some ways as a mentor or role model" (Sharp et al. 2006, CRS-6). In 2015, Houthi rebels in Yemen were also accused of mimicking Hezbollah (Variyar 2015).

In fact, Hezbollah is so careful about its external image that when leaders of Fatah in Palestine explained that the organization would not

imitate Hezbollah's model, Hezbollah was quick to point out that it was the only Arab movement that had achieved success against Israel, and noted that the "writers, thinkers, media and literature of the United Nations" view Hezbollah as the "supreme example of eloquence, courage, organization, discipline, belonging, commitment and moral and educational progress" (Qassim 2017). Hezbollah then reaffirmed its experience as equivalent to successful and paragon revolutionary movements of the past, citing specifically the CCP, the Cuban Revolution, and the FLN (Qassim 2017).

Finally, in Western countries in particular, Hezbollah's governance system has often served to either totally or partially reinforce its claims of being a legitimate national resistance group and political party. Indeed, the European Union labels Hezbollah's military apparatus only, and not its social wing, as a terrorist group, though it has considered categorizing the entire organization as a terrorist organization (Pawlak and Croft 2013). In the early to mid-2000s, Hezbollah's political and social success "led to increased international recognition" and Hezbollah "had for some time been meeting European diplomats based in Beirut, and the European Union was trying to persuade the US to do the same" (Halliday 2006). Though the legitimacy Hezbollah's governance derives from the West may be an unintended consequence of its behaviors, these processes are still consistent with theoretical expectations and expectations of rebel leaders that conforming to certain governance behaviors has legitimating effects beyond domestic audiences.

### *Governance for Military Purposes*

The first alternative explanation is that Hezbollah provides governance broadly as a means to gain military capacity, primarily through recruiting members and to harvest resources from the population. Some of the evidence suggests that during the Lebanese Civil War, governance for recruitment purposes may have been particularly important (Ranstorp 1997, 36; Cammett 2014, 158–9). Hezbollah's governance not only detracted from Amal's base, but research also suggests that it simultaneously became a critical tool for luring new members seeking the benefits associated with the movement (Domont and Charara 2004, 161).

Yet after the war, Hezbollah continued to provide governance at a high level, and its beneficiaries far outnumber its fighters. In fact, Hezbollah provides governance to those outside its Shi'a sect. These same non-Shi'ite beneficiaries would never be part of the main fighting core of Hezbollah. Indeed, to become one of Hezbollah's core members, recruits must undergo a two-year training program in total (Hamzeh 2004, 75)

and must be highly dedicated, committed, and believe in the cause (Stewart 2015b). What this means is that it is essentially impossible for members of different sects who benefited from Hezbollah's governance to join Hezbollah's ranks. Therefore, while recruitment may have been initially influenced by Hezbollah's decision to provide governance during the Lebanese Civil War, and may have continued to be important over time, it alone cannot explain why Hezbollah determined to provide governance.

### *Governance for Competition*

The second alternative explanation is that Hezbollah provided services to compete with rival groups both on and off the battlefield. There is some evidence to support this idea. Hezbollah emerged already facing a key competitor for the hearts of the disenfranchised Shi'a population: the Amal movement that had long worked within the Lebanese political system to service the community. To eliminate this rival organization and consolidate political and social hegemony over the Lebanese Shi'ites, Hezbollah used both carrots and sticks. Throughout Beirut and the south of Lebanon where many Shi'ites live, Amal and Hezbollah engaged in brutal street battles for control, while simultaneously engaging in competitive governance. In fact, "[o]ne of the most fundamental struggles between Amal and Hezbollah was waged in the social field" (Azani 2008, 71).

But the data are not totally supportive of the competition hypothesis because Hezbollah would have provided extensive governance during the Lebanese Civil War only and would have no need to provide expansive governance afterward. As a result of the Ta'if Agreement, Hezbollah was the sole militia group allowed to remain armed. After the war, Hezbollah thus had no competition. According to the logic of this argument, Hezbollah should have deactivated its governance in the aftermath of the Ta'if Agreement. Yet, Hezbollah continued to provide governance after the Ta'if Agreement, investing in more governing institutions across the country, open to people beyond the Lebanese Shi'ites. The data simply do not support the contention that competition drove Hezbollah's decision to provide extensive and intensive governing institutions as Hezbollah should have abandoned its governance activities after it defeated Amal, and after its successful electoral showings.

### *Governance under Foreign Guidance*

The final hypothesis is that rebel governance is a result of foreign influence; that governance is mandated by states and that rebels execute these

commands. Without the influence and aid of foreign governments, rebels would not execute governance. Certainly, Iran influenced Hezbollah's governance and Hezbollah and Iran share a strong affinity. However, Hezbollah nevertheless exercises a significant degree of agency, and its leaders, like Sheikh Naim Qassem, stress that Hezbollah does not "wish to imitate the Iranian Islamic model in Lebanon too closely. Hizbollah itself accepted that Lebanon was a multi-confessional society and that what was appropriate for Iran was not suitable for Lebanon" (Halliday 2006). Despite this foreign support, the group "was also keen to present itself as indigenous to Lebanon and thus with a legitimate stake in the Lebanese political and social system" (Khatib et al. 2014, 40–1) and it is therefore "inaccurate to maintain that Hizballah is an Iranian creation" (AbuKhalil 1991, 391). Instead, Hezbollah is supported and mentored by Iran, and legitimates itself to Iran by providing governance (among other behaviors) in a certain way, but Hezbollah's governance is nevertheless structured to fit the Lebanese situation.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that even despite contradictory ideological commitments, a shared desire to achieve more transformative goals incentivizes rebels to imitate the Chinese model of governance during civil war. Rather than utilize this chapter to evaluate rival explanations, I highlight how one rebel group, Hezbollah, ideologically opposed to communism, nevertheless turned to previously revolutionary leftist rebel movements, and came to adopt the Chinese model of governance. In pursuit of its more transformative ambitions, Hezbollah's leaders searched for organizational templates and decided to imitate the Chinese model, learning through the study of previous rebel groups that either imitated or created the Chinese model template. In practice, Hezbollah constructed almost the same portfolio of governance institutions that the CCP erected during its own civil war, but imbued these institutional forms with an Islamist ideology learned from the Iranian Revolutionary experience.

Both Hezbollah's governance and its motivations therein are consistent with the EPLF's and FRETILIN, both groups that sought social and political transformation, like Hezbollah. Furthermore, while I cannot eliminate the rival hypothesis that Hezbollah provides governance because of Iranian influence or that initial recruitment success because of governance spurred Hezbollah's governance decisions, other chapters (both EPLF and FRETILIN) demonstrate that intensive and extensive governance occurs in the complete absence of state sponsorship, and in

the case of the SPLM/A, governance was hindered because of an absence of more transformative goals and the presence of state sponsorship. Furthermore, the SPLM/A and ELF cases together demonstrate that even when recruitment is paramount for rebels, such importance is not a sufficient motivation for rebels to provide intensive and extensive governance.

As a whole, this chapter highlights the diffusion and imitation of the Chinese model of governance across time, space, and ideology. Hezbollah further emphasizes these connections explicitly by comparing both Mao and Ho Chi Minh to Hezbollah's leaders or by comparing Hezbollah to the rebel organizations Mao and Ho Chi Minh led. (Kahveci 1998; Daana 2013; Al Sayegh 2014; al Hassan 2014; Qassim 2017).