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Socialization and Leadership in Islamic Extremist Organizations: The Cases of Hezbollah and al-Qaeda

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1. Introduction

Since the last century, a new threat has started taking ground inside our societies with unthinkable speed. This plague has claimed several victims, who have been killed and, in some cases even tortured, by using the most terrible tools. It is terrorism, and, generally, the *Cambridge English Dictionary* defines it as “(Threats of) violent action for political purposes”. However, the definition of this term has found many obstacles on its way, at the point that, even in modern times, a universal compromise does not exist yet.

In fact, every States and Organizations describes it with different words and characteristics, also making difficult the condemning of these inhumane acts. At the question: “Has the United Nations agreed yet on a single definition of what terrorism is?”, the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate replies that, even if it is extremely needed, today a single definition does not exist, because it would remove the distinction between freedom fighters and terrorists that most States use to observe and respect (2005, 1).

In the Council Common Position 2001/931/CFSP of 27 December 2001, on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism, the European Council defines as “terrorist acts” those “intentional acts that may seriously damage a country or an international organization by intimidating a population, exerting undue compulsion of various types or by establishing or destroying its fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures” (Lex Access to European Union Law, 2013).

However, even if they are different, every National Government or Intergovernmental organization drafts its list of designated terrorist groups including those organizations that engage in terrorist offenses.

Following these lists, al-Qaeda is regarded as a terrorist organization almost at the global level. In fact, quoting the most important, the United Nations Security Council, the European Union, NATO, or States like the US, Italy, Russia, UK, Germany¹, have classified it as a terrorist organization since its founding and its first attacks. The situation is different when we take into consideration the case of Hezbollah.

Even if is universally accepted, that in its early period the latter used to accomplish terrorist plots, then it changed its appearance on the international arena. In fact, after the 1992 decision to join the Parliamentary election, it has officially become a political party.

Today the States that continue framing it as a terrorist group are not numerous².

How it should be defined has been the object of a long debate on the global arena.

For example, as the recent Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/1426 of 4 August 2017 declares, the European Union does not list Hezbollah as a terrorist group in its totality (Lex Access to European Union Law, 2017).

Only its military wings, and the Jihad Council that controls them fall into the aforementioned list.

¹ The complete list is: Australia, Ireland, Sweden, Azerbaijan, Israel, Switzerland, Belarus, Japan, Tajikistan, Brazil, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Canada, Kyrgyzstan, China, United Arab Emirates, Netherlands, France, New Zealand, India, Philippines, Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Iran, South Korea, Vietnam.

² They are: Canada, Egypt, Israel, Japan, the USA, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia.

I have introduced these two Islamic Extremist Organizations because, even if very different between them, they are going to be the focus of my thesis.

As the meaning of organization suggests us, it is an entity composed of numerous people.

Whatever they may be, followers or recruits, they have to ideologically appreciate the organization to which they want to belong. This is the case especially when they are ready to lose their life while combating on the behalf of their group, and most of all of their religion. Ergo, it is important to analyze the tactics and strategies used by the leaders of these groups in order to attract a large number of individuals.

In the first chapter I am going to consider the historical background of both Hezbollah and al-Qaeda, underlining how, departing from a similar basis, nowadays, nowadays these two organizations are very different from each other. On the one hand, Hezbollah is not generally considered as a terrorist organization, but rather as a political party very concerned with the Lebanese State.

In fact, also the conflicts that it fights are very local and The Zionist Israel performs the role of its central enemy. On the other side, in modern days, al-Qaeda, as a pure terrorist organization, is not located in a precise place. In fact, it possesses decentralized terrorist cells worldwide.

Every individual represents a possible enemy, unless it is a Muslim believing in a certain idea of the Jihad and fighting in defense of Islam and its lands.

However, there is a factor that associates these two organizations, Religion.

Throughout the second chapter, I am going to focus on Islam and the ideological essentials backing it. Moreover, I am going to analyze how Religion is exploited by these leaders in order to attract new followers. In fact, many individuals decide to join these groups convinced that this would render them better individuals, closer to Allah. Religion is not always sufficient in the process of recruitment and gaining of new followers. As we will see in the third chapter, the organization's leaders have always been charismatic actors capable of attracting a mass support. Thanks to a deep analysis of their documents, speeches, and statements, I have tried to uncover some oratorical strategies and tactics adopted by these leaders, and the arguments and themes used by themselves. For what concerns Hezbollah, due to the fact that nowadays the political party and the military wing are divided, I'm going to consider both the political strategy practiced by Hassan Nasrallah and the military process of recruitment.

Consequently, the third section of this final chapter will be centered on the figure of Bin Laden, and most of all on his 1998 statement. However, al-Qaeda has undergone a profound change after the 9/11 attack, provoking some shifts on the strategical tactics exploited by the same. The consequent decentralization of its cells has led to the growth of the homegrown terrorism phenomenon, most of all in Europe.

The latter provides for a precise process of recruitment that is divided into four stages.

The aim of my research is to understand the process that occurs in the mind of the people that decide to approach Islamic Extremist groups, and that sometimes also decide to perform martyrdom operations.

In fact, in my opinion, trying to understand the counterpart's mentality, is the first step to combat terrorism

2. Historical Background

I. Introduction

At first, in order to analyze and scrutinize the social relations inside two really different Islamist Extremist organizations, it is necessary to delineate the historical background and the consecutive development that has characterized them. Starting from Hezbollah, as the first born between the two, I am going to consider the different phases of expansion that have delineated its shift from being a pure terrorist organization to an actual political party. Later on, while analyzing al-Qaeda and its increasing power, I am going to take into account not only the Arab arena but also the Global one.

II. Hezbollah: The development from Terrorist Organization to the “Political Party of God”

Hezbollah entered the scene during the Lebanon Civil War (1975-1990)³.

Nevertheless, the Shiite community used to have strong basis and roots since the 1960s (Azani, 2009, p. 50) with Imam Musa al-Sadr⁴. Before that, the Lebanese Shiite Community used to be divided into three different communities, that could be differentiated accordingly to their social strata: the political-economic elite, the *Zuama*; the religious elite, the *Ulema*; and the last one that included all the peasants, laborers and small merchants. The *Zuama* stabilized themselves in Southern Lebanon, but over the time they have ended up being weakened by external events (Azani, 2009, p.49).

In the meanwhile, also the religious class was changing with the arrival of new clerics: Imam Musa al-Sadr, Ayatollah Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah and Ayatollah Mohammad Mahdi al-Din, they were the ones that laid the foundations of the Hezbollah movement (Avon, A. et al., 2012, p. 15).

As a consequence of their commitment, the number of clerics increased in a staggering way.

The traditional elite, the *Zuama*, and the *Ulema*, were becoming weaker and weaker. Some subgroups of the population started following al-Sadr. In order to get a wider historical background, we have to go back to 1948, when the State of Israel was proclaimed by David Ben Gurion⁵ and triggered an ongoing war.

At that time, Lebanon was welcoming a huge number of Palestinians.

The Lebanese legal order was characterized by the absence of particular religious prescriptions.

³ It started in 1975 and lasted for fifteen years. One of the main triggering causes was that the Muslim majority claimed a greater representation within the Lebanese Government, that at the time was led by Christians.

⁴ Lebanese Shiite cleric, who in 1975 formed Amal, that is a Shiite social reform movement.

⁵ The First Prime Minister (1948-1953; 1955-1963) and Defense Minister (1948-1953; 1955-1963) of Israel, who, on May 14, 1948 declared the independence of Israel.

However, during the 1970s two opposites sides emerged: the majoritarian Christian nationalist Right, that did not support the Palestinian requests, and the majority-Muslim Arabist Left.

Anyway, the Shiite militants, who followed the teachings of the three aforementioned clerics, were determined to fight Israel and started to train under different groups: Fatah headed by Yasser Arafat and linked to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (“PLO”); Amal, that was indirectly connected to the former; *al-Dawa* Party, a “School for cadres” supported by Mohammad Bar al-Sadr (Avon et al., 2012, p. 17). In 1971, after the Black September conflict fought in 1970⁶, the PLO, a terrorist organization founded in 1964 with the aim to unite the various Arab groups and create a liberated Palestine in Israel through armed struggles, was forced to relocate from Jordan to South Lebanon (History.Com Editors, 2018).

After its arrival in Lebanon, it was supported by the Lebanese Left, headed, at the time, by Kamal Jumblatt. Their aims were twofold: to destroy Israel and to expel Lebanese Christians (Maronites) from State Institutions. They were opposed by Gemayel’s Lebanese Phalanges (Christians), that supported the idea of an independent Arab state, open to foreign countries. Within these two groups, obviously, there were some divergences that in certain cases also led to bloody conflicts, such as the dispute within the Amal movement between the followers of Musa al-Sadr, and those who believed that, due to the recent events, an action against Israel was necessary. What happened in this scenario was that Assad, the President of Syria, in 1976 decided to support the Christian groups against the PLO. However, this allegiance did not last for a long time. When Assad noticed that the counterpart was gaining strength, he decided to shift his position.

In the meanwhile, Israel was sided with the Lebanese forces.

The war erupted, and in 1977 the first peace was signed. Unfortunately in 1978, after Fatah’s attack near Tel Aviv, Operation Litani was launched by and it called for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

This operation caused the destruction of many villages and several acts of violence inside Lebanon, that later have been denounced by UN Security Council. At the time that Israeli troops withdrew from Lebanon, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)⁷ was established.

After the Battle of Zahleh⁸ of December 1980 and the Palestinians’ attempt of assassination of the Israeli ambassador to London, a new plan called “Operation Peace for Galilee” was launched in 1982.

Like to the previous one, it provided for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

⁶ Name for a conflict that spurred out in Jordan the 6th of September 1970 and ended the 17th of July 1971. It was fought between the Jordanian Armed Forces, headed by King Hussein, and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, under the leadership of Yasser Arafat.

⁷ Established by UN Security Council Resolution 425, it is a peacekeeping mission that has the aim to ensure peace and security within the Lebanese territory.

⁸ During the Lebanese Civil War, it ended with the strategic victory of the Lebanese forces over the Syrian Armed Forces and the PLO.

In order to expel Israeli forces, the Shiite Groups united themselves in the Islamic Committees and, with the *Ulema* of the Beeka, they signed the “Manifesto of the Nine” (Avon et al, 2012, p.22).

From that moment on, they started to be trained by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, but they were lacking an actual high command of their own.

Hezbollah arrived on the scene in 1982, when a centralized authority for these combatants was highly needed. However, the Israeli invasion of Southern Lebanon was not the only cause triggering the establishment of Hezbollah. In fact, also the 1979 Iranian Revolution has played a pivotal role.

It was Imam Musa al-Sadr himself, that opened the door for the relationship between Lebanon and Iran. (Alagha, 2006, p.26-27). In fact, it was after the meeting in 1969 with his cousin, Sayyid Muhammad Bar al-Sadr, that he started spreading the Shiite fundamentals throughout Lebanon.

His mission ended in 1978 with his death. However, a very capable personality succeeded him in his plan. He was Imam Khomeini, the one that later also led the Iranian Revolution (Alagha, 2006, p.31).

Iranian influences brought the emergence of a new Islamic-Shiite movement in Beeka Region, that today is recognized as the original core of Hezbollah. At the basis of this event, there is the creation of internal divisions in the Amal Movement, caused by the leader’s decision⁹ to collaborate with the Lebanese Government. Following this, the more radicalized members, those following Khomeini’s teachings, opposed the leaders’ decision. The Shiite elite appeared to be divided, and this was only an additional factor that favored the establishment of Hezbollah. This organization founded its ideology on Pan-Islamism and its aim was the establishment of an Islamic regime in Lebanon thanks to the Iranian funding and support.

Moreover, its main goals were the expulsion of all the invaders from Lebanon and the liberation of Jerusalem, something contrasting with the Amal Movement’s aspirations, that used to play only on the Lebanese arena. In 1982, as also the “Treatise of the Nine” demonstrated, this movement was characterized by a resistance identity, similarly to other Islamic Jihadi Movement.

In November 1982, the first Hezbollah suicide bombers took place in the Israeli quarters of Southern Lebanon, and in commemoration of this event, the organization every year celebrates the “Martyrdom Day”¹⁰ (Alagha, 2006, p.35). Other two martyrdoms were conducted in the following year.

In 1984 something changed. While Hezbollah’s institutions started emerging, it also broaden its social and popular bases working at three different levels: at the ideological-religious level (religious activism), at the social level (abolishment of ethnic discrimination and improvement of living conditions of the Shiite population), and at the military level (expulsion of foreigners from Lebanon).

However, this caused a hardening of the relationship between Hezbollah and the Amal Movement.

⁹ Nabih Berri at the time.

¹⁰ Annual recurrence in order to celebrate the martyrdom of those people who offered their lives defending they Nation and religion.

Violent acts and conflicts were on the daily agenda, and, in the end, several of Amal's followers decided to join the counterpart. The only thing left to do to with Hezbollah was to accept its presence in Southern Lebanon, at the pact that it would respect the general politics lines.

This organization played a major part in counter-attacking the Israel Defense Forces ("IDF") while trying to expel Israeli presence from Southern Lebanon. In doing so, it called for the implementation of defensive Jihad as the individual duty to join Jihadi activity.

The years from 1985-1987 are referred as the "Expansion Stage" of Hezbollah. In this period one of his founders, Abbas al-Musawi, established the organizational entity called the "Islamic Resistance" (Azani, 2009, p.67). Its central task was to perform operations, such as terror attacks, against Israel, and more precisely, against the South Lebanon Army and the IDF posts in the South. Hezbollah complemented this Jihadi activity with a social one backed by the desire of securing families' support inside the population.

At first, it gave economic assistance to families of the movement's casualties, then it founded medical infrastructures and gave medical assistance to the individuals, lastly it invested in the Islamic education also in the educational sphere.

When in 1988 Colonel Higgins¹¹ was kidnapped in Southern Lebanon by Hezbollah activists, the struggle with Amal escalated into a war to triumph over the community that lasted until 1991.

This period represents the transition from the "Expansion State" to the "Institution Stage", and it was then that the Ta'if Accord entered into force announcing the end of the Civil War (Azani, 2009, p.76).

The latter provided for some changes to the Constitution, such as the dissolving of the militias and their integration in the Lebanese Civil Army. In the initial phase, Hezbollah completely rejected the Accord; then, even if it continued to criticize the political changes, it accepted parts of the military reforms.

In doing so it made a distinction between the militia and the Islamic Resistance, that was then considered legitimate by the Lebanese state (p.40-41, EBSCO). At that point, Hezbollah started engaging in another war, the one in order to dominate the public opinion inside the Shiite Community.

Anyway, at that time the victory was not easily reachable.

At first, a change in the tone of dialogue was necessary, towards a more pluralistic and inclusive orientation. In addition to that, Hezbollah made another important step: the election of new leadership.

This was done during a conference in May 1991, in which al-Musawi was appointed Secretary-General.

He framed his leadership in an atmosphere of change and integration of the movement.

The peak arrived in January 1992, when he declared that Hezbollah was ready to play the Lebanese political game, and so, to join the upcoming elections (Azani, 2009, p.91). It decreed the beginning of Hezbollah's

¹¹ William Richard Higgins was a colonel in the United States Marine Corps, who was captured during a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Lebanon.

*Infitah*¹² politics. Unfortunately, in February 1992, al-Musawi was killed, and he was succeeded by Hassan Nasrallah, who continued to perform the “Policy of Openness” and the plan to enter the Lebanese political arena (Azani, 2009, p.94). The new elected Deputy Secretary-General was Shaykh Na'im Qasim.

At the beginning of his mandate, Nasrallah, with the support of the Committee, decided to join the Parliamentary Elections scheduled for August 1992. This step characterized Hezbollah with a new image, totally opposed to the 1980s revolutionary status of the movement. Moreover, the elections would provide Hezbollah with new legitimacy and with a broader platform through which spread the Islamic and the “Resistance” message. The political program that Hezbollah presented was founded on different pillars: the expulsion of Israeli forces from Lebanon, the demolition of political sectarianism, the amendment of the electoral law in order to enhance the representation of the population, the freedom of the media, the return of displaced people, the development of the social sector (Alagha, 2006, p.43).

Surprisingly, Hezbollah's candidates obtained a large success and won 12 seats in the Parliament.

Exploiting this event, Nasrallah started using the Parliament as the stage for publicizing Hezbollah's goals and messages. Under this leader, the movement was willing to achieve two contrasting goals: firstly, it wanted to arise social solidarity and public support towards the Resistance and its actions; secondly, it desired to demolish the conviction that the Resistance was a machine that harmed the lives of the inhabitants of the South. In the meantime, the economy had been weakened and the citizens of the villages were suffering a condition of extreme poverty, also due to the recently IDF's missions, such as Operations Accountability in 1993¹³. Despite Nasrallah's efforts to counterattack the enemy, the population did not favor these violent responses, viewing them only as another occasion to bring more suffering inside the territory. Only at the end of the “Grapes of Wrath” operation¹⁴, he succeeded in convincing people that the movement was really concerned with their safety and that the actual enemy was Israel (Alagha, 2006, p.46).

This was possible not only thanks to an effective media campaign, but also because of a process of reconstruction of the war's damages. These years signed a period of changes for Hezbollah, that thanks to different political activities that served to enlarge its support within the Shiite community, transformed itself into a legitimate movement. This was one of the causes for the high expectations of Hezbollah's leaders towards the Parliamentary elections of 1996. From their point of view, now the movement was more prepared and organized. The 1996 parliamentary election program called for resisting the Israeli occupation,

¹² Literally meaning “Opening up”.

¹³ Launched on the 25th of July, 1993 after Hezbollah's attacks on the security zone between Israel and Lebanon, it called for Israeli attacks on military targets, but also for massive Israeli shelling in Southern Lebanon. After having inflicted a lot of damages on the Lebanese side, Israel decided to restore the situation thanks to an unwritten understanding.

¹⁴ An Israeli sixteen-day Operation against Lebanon, that took place in 1996 with the aim to end rocket attacks on Israel by Hezbollah.

achieving equality and establishing the just state, favoring economics policies to boost a balanced development, implementing reforms in different sectors, safeguarding public freedoms and assuring a major concern regarding the Lebanese foreign policy. However, the awaited results remained only a dream.

In fact, only six representatives in the Parliament out of eight were re-elected (Alagha, 2006, p.50).

In 1998, the Lebanese municipal elections were reopened under Hezbollah's pressures.

Obviously, the latter was one of the running parties, and won a large victory in the majority of Shiite electoral districts, demonstrating that it was the central political force.

In May 2000, Israel, after almost 22 years of occupation, withdrew from Southern Lebanon, launching a period of stability between the two countries.

The same year, the Parliamentary elections were held, and Hezbollah won twelve seats. On the one hand, Hezbollah continued expressing its hard position against Israel, that was viewed as the "Small Satan" (Alagha, 2006, p.52). On the other hand, due to its policy of openness, some signals of aperture were launched towards the West, except for the United States regarded as the "Big Satan" (Azani, 2009, p.212). The 2000 Al-Aqsa Intifada¹⁵ created a huge opportunity to Hezbollah to act against Israel, so that Hezbollah performed several acts of violence and helped the Palestinians by funding the Palestinian National Authority. Moreover, it collaborated with other terrorist organizations, such as Hamas, and even exported and imported weapons thanks to the Iranian and Syrian's assistance. These two States were the major founders of Hezbollah, that supported its military growth in order to fight and defeat Israel (Worth, 2011).

In 2004 the first prisoner exchange with Israel took place. In that occasion, the counterpart satisfied Hezbollah's demands by releasing a large number of Palestinians. This event granted to Hezbollah full recognition as a legitimate resistance movement (Alagha, 2006, p.54).

In the 2004 municipal elections, Hezbollah delivered a bipartite message. At first, it wanted to work on the side of the population, so to defend it against all kinds of oppression and injustices; secondly, it was willing to raise the standards of living of the oppressed by offering them aids to change their status.

This program met a wide success within the population, and weakened, once more, the Amal Movement. Two other remarkable events took place the same year. The UN Security Council emanated Resolution 1559, that avoided any Syrian intervention in Lebanese affairs and required the elimination of all the Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias, included Hezbollah's ones. This resolution unleashed massive protests and demonstrations, most of which were from Hezbollah rankings. Some months after, in December, Hezbollah appointed for the first time a woman, Rima Fakhry, as a member of its Political Council.

¹⁵ Also known as the Second Intifada, it started in September 2000 and signed the beginning of a period characterized by huge acts of violence between Israel and Palestinians.

In 2005, a car bombing killed the ex-Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, and people, blaming Syrian troops, reacted with street demonstrations against them. Lebanon became a divided country: one side was that of Hezbollah, supported by Syria and Iran; the other one was led by Hariri's son, Saad Hariri, allied with Saudi Arabia and the West (Worth, 2011). Hezbollah decided to react and organized another demonstration in favor of Syrians. However, it was not successful in preventing the outbreak of the "Cedar Revolution"¹⁶ of March 14, 2005, that granted to the Opposition some victorious results, such as the resignation of the Karami cabinet, the withdrawal of Syrian forces, the investigation about Hariri's death, and the resignation of the Lebanese security forces' heads. One of the most important outcomes was the formation of a new Government.

In fact, one month after the demonstration, Omar Karami's government resigned, and Nagib Miqati's Cabinet was confirmed. In 2005 parliamentary elections, Hezbollah and Amal became allies, but it was not enough to stop the escalation of Saad Hariri's followers. Its side won 72 seats out of the 128.

Hezbollah, always headed by Nasrallah, was increasingly willing to reach the full integration in the Lebanese public sphere. It was planning to participate in all the Lebanese governmental institutions, especially the Cabinet. In the national unity 24-seats cabinet on July 19, Hezbollah was directly represented for the first time by Muhammad Fnaysh (Energy Ministry).

The United States' response was not long waited: it was not possible to deal with "terrorists", referring to the Hezbollah minister. Regardless of this, the Parliament confirmed the proposed cabinet, and, in addition, it approved Hezbollah's rights to have arms and to defend Lebanon (Alagha, 2006, p.66).

In 2009, Hezbollah's political manifesto started including some democratic fundamentals.

Its shift from totally Islamic fundamentalist roots towards a more contemporary Islamist nationalist approach, was deemed necessary in order to keep up to date (Masters & Laub, 2004).

It was in that scenario, that the March 8 Alliance¹⁷ agreed to form a unity agreement with Saad Hariri and the March 14 Alliance¹⁸. What remained unchanged was The Party of God's¹⁹ position against Israel, in fact, in 2009 Nasrallah reconfirmed that the recognition of Israel is something impossible to realize.

While the investigations around Hariri's death went on, in mid-2010 the UN international tribunal indicted senior Hezbollah officials. Obviously, Nasrallah rejected this verdict, as he deemed it inconsistent and lacking the necessary pieces of evidence. For this reason, he decided to pressure the demolition of the unity government by withdrawing from the Cabinet (Worth, 2011).

¹⁶ Also called the Independence Intifada, it followed the assassination of the ex-Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, and it involved numerous demonstrations in Lebanon. It ended with the victory of the anti-Syrian alliance and with the complete withdrawal of the Syrian troops from Lebanon, on the 27th of April, 2005.

¹⁷ Formed in 2005, it is a coalition of political parties and independents that are pro-Syrians. It has been the ruling coalition in Lebanon from 2011 to 2013, under the Najib Mikati's Government.

¹⁸ Formed in 2005, it is a coalition of political parties and independents that are anti-Syrians. It is led by Saad Hariri.

¹⁹ Literal meaning of "Hezbollah".

In recent years, Hezbollah's presence within the Lebanese political scenario has been fundamental.

In 2011, after having brought down Hariri's government, it lined up with Najib Mikati, who, then, became the Prime Minister in January (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018).

The March 14 Alliance strictly opposed this new government, that was outspokenly aligned with Iran and Syria. In the same year with the outbreak of the Arab Spring, Hezbollah had to face hard times.

The creation of rebel Syrian groups carried on some troubles in the relationship between the two States. However, they succeeded in remaining in touch, at the point that, when the civil war spread out, Hezbollah fighters moved to Syria in order to help President Bashar al-Assad's army against the Sunni rebels (Nakhoul, 2013). Later on, in 2016, Hezbollah and Hariri reached a deal: Michel Aoun²⁰, Hezbollah ally, would become the President, in exchange for Hariri's premiership (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018).

Unexpectedly, while he was in Saudi Arabia, the latter decided to resign.

The general belief of the time was that Saudi Arabia's Government pressed Hariri to leave the mandate in order to weaken Hezbollah. However, contrarily to any expectations, when he went back to Lebanon, he decided to take on his office again. In the 2018 Lebanese legislative election, the March 8 bloc won the majority of seats, determining the effective Hezbollah's political dominance.

Given this scenario, Hariri maintained his position, while for the first time a member of the March 8 Bloc was charged with the deputy speaker post (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018).

III. Al-Qaeda and the Global Jihad

The first section of this chapter was focused on Hezbollah, that was born as a terrorist local organization.

As such, this organization used to carry on armed campaigns against local adversaries, which were limited in their aims and in spatial scope. However, over time global jihadist movements were developing, which were, and still are, characterized by different and broader features compared to the former.

First of all, the United States is their main target and it is viewed as the "Far Enemy".

Moreover, these groups have several allies around the globe that help them in the pursuit of broader geopolitical aims (Rabasa, 2006, p.42). Al-Qaeda, and the several jihadist groups linked to it or inspired by it, can be defined as Globalist Jihadist Movement. Unlike Hezbollah, that was almost totally concentrated upon the Lebanese arena and its political and social platform, al-Qaeda is a wholly ideological and terrorist group, that wages in anti-Western agenda.

The founders of this movement, Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, owe to Sayyid Qutb a great deal.

²⁰ A Lebanese politician who founded the Free Patriotic Movement. Since 2016 he has been the President of Lebanon.

The latter was the leader of a paramilitary group called “The Secret Apparatus”, and he used to be against those Muslim tyrants that did not applicate Sharia Law inside their States (Gerges, 20014, p.29).

In fact, he prioritized the war against the near enemy, and so against all those pro-Western Muslim leaders. Behind this way of acting, there was the willingness of defending Dar Al-Islam against the possible invasions and intrusions of the West. Even if al-Qaeda’s leaders drew inspiration from Qutb’s ideology, they eventually changed and adapted to the new organization’s needs.

One of the main examples of what I am stating resides on the fact that al-Qaeda’s primary jihadist target has always been the United States (transnational Jihad). In fact, the organization was essentially a militarized union that waged a transnational war against the West, while trying to gain the support of all the Muslims over the World (Gerges, 20014, p.33).

Focusing on the historical roots of this organization, everything started in Afghanistan.

During the Afghan War²¹ against the Soviets, thousands of Muslims from all over the World reunited there to combat. This also gave al-Zawahiri and Bin Laden the opportunity to meet and establish the organizational basis of al-Qaeda. Due to this encounter, al-Zawahiri started having some second thoughts on ideological priorities. In fact, he started prioritizing the fight against the Far Enemy rather than that against the Near Enemy; this move implied the loss of many followers and fighters.

The ideological shift was complete when in 2000 he abandoned the struggle against the Egyptian regime and authored an autobiographical manifesto justifying his conversion.

For what concerns Bin Laden, his main mentor was Shaykh Abdullah Azzam²², who, like Qutb, called for the intervention of a vanguard organization that would be capable to build an Islamic society based on Quran. What differentiated Bin Laden from his “mentor”, Azzam, was the fact that the former considered the possibility of taking arms against other Muslims. However, this was not the only dissonance between the two: on the one hand, Azzam’s aim was not the internationalization of Jihad.

His idea was called al-Qaeda al-sulba (“the solid base”) and it was regarded more as a tactic, than the mere creation of an organization. On the other hand, departing from this solid base, Bin Laden conceived and founded in 1988, as an extension, al-Qaeda al-Askaryia²³.

In the last years of the Afghan War, in 1989, the United States was not seen as the main jihadi target by Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri yet, because the war was still mainly against Communist Russia.

The first anti-US positions started taking ground during the 1990-1991 Gulf War²⁴.

²¹ From 1978 to 1992 between anticommunist Islamic guerrillas and the Afghan communist government. It ended with the overthrow of the government.

²² Also known with the appellative of “Father of Global Jihad”, he was a Palestinian Sunni Islamic scholar.

²³ Literally meaning “The Base”, it was a militant Sunni Islamist multi-national organization.

²⁴ After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, a coalition forces from thirty-five states leded by the US intervned. The latter succeeded in expelling Saddam Hussein’s forces and in restoring the monarchy in Kuwait.

In that occasion, America's intervention was interpreted by Bin Laden as an attempt to dominate Muslim lands by getting the control of oil sources. After this war, al-Qaeda's leader came to Sudan for four years. There he built a complex network combining practices of ideological indoctrination and recruitment, in order to finally transform al-Qaeda into an operational organization.

At that time, Sudan was the perfect place where this process could have been put into practice.

In fact, it offered a home and aid to those Islamic fighters that were traveling.

However, the big turnout happened in 1994, when the King Fahd of Saudi Arabia accepted the stationing of American troops in his reign. From this moment on, the hostilities between Bin Laden and America grew up. Indeed, the former could not tolerate that the US invaded the land of the *Umma* violating the Muslim honor. Nevertheless, being a recently born vanguard movement, Bin Laden's followers were not able to directly challenge a great power such as the United States. For this reason, their leader decided to engage in asymmetric war by mean of transnational Jihad. This decision was decreed in the two following fatwas that authorized attacks on American troops and the murder of innocents (Gerges, 2014, p.55).

In 1996, after several terrorist attacks and the attempt of assassination against Hosni Mubarak²⁵, Bin Laden, Zawahiri, and their associates were forced to leave Sudan. Hence, they went to Afghanistan, and there they transformed al-Qaeda into an umbrella organization, that would have comprised several different jihadist factions. At that time, al-Qaeda headquarters in Afghanistan were under the patronage of the Taliban militia. This faction emerged as an ultraconservative political and religious faction in 1994 after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and in 1996 it seized the Capital, Kabul.

This step represented the free pass to Bin Laden to enter Afghanistan, and to establish the headquarters of Islamic militants from all over the world (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019).

In the period between his arrival in Afghanistan and 1998, Bin Laden put all his efforts into the recruitment of more and more young fighters, who where then trained in the recently set up camps.

Several camps for Muslim militants were established. Fighters were instructed to increase their paramilitary skills and to carry out terrorist actions. This new phase reached its peak in 1998 with the establishment of the "World Islamic Front"²⁶, that represented the formal launch of al-Qaeda. Then, in the August of the same year, Al-Qaeda accomplished two attacks bombing the American Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam (Tanzania). These attacks signed the official beginning of the war.

The next move would have been a more focused attack, directly on the American soil: the September 11. This tragedy was primarily planned by Khalid Sheikh Mohammed²⁷, and then Bin Laden approved and

²⁵ The President of Egypt from October 1981 until February 2011.

²⁶ Bin Laden's Fatwa of 19 May 1998 "World Islamic Front' Statement Urges Jihad on US, Israel" (FBIS, 2004, p.67).

²⁷ A Pakistan Islamist Militant, who was an al-Qaeda's member and led the organizations's propaganda from 1999 until 2001.

financed it (Gerges, 20014, p.84). The former made an initial proposal to the leader in 1996, that was accepted only in 1999. When the plan of attack was launched, Bin Laden personally selected thirteen men, trained them, sent them to Saudi Arabia to obtain Visas and Passports, and then they finally traveled via Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates to land in the United States in summer 2001.

The attack took place on the 11th of September 2001, and America responded by attacking Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in Afghanistan. Despite the fact that 9/11, operationally speaking, was a success, it did not bring to Bin Laden and al-Qaeda the desired notoriety and fame. In fact, it created a lot of confusion within the Muslim world, given that many Islamist leaders condemned that action.

This demonstrates that Bin Laden's plan to unite all the Muslims under the *Umma*, exploiting an external enemy such as the US, was a failure. (Gerges, 20014, p.95).

Everyone started criticizing the leadership of Bin Laden as too authoritarian, and, in addition, he was held as the advocate of the war between Jihad and America, a war that the Islamist world was not yet ready to fight (Gerges, 20014, p.96). Afghanistan was invaded in 2001²⁸, and the organizational situation for Taliban and al-Qaeda's militants worsened. Many of them were arrested or extradited, while the War on Terror was taking place. However, these events caused the structural evolution of al-Qaeda.

Upon becoming more and more decentralized, this organization started spreading its terrorist cells all across the world. The result of such an organizational upgrade has been the growing number of attacks in the Western World. Virtual tools have become relevant. The USA had been almost ineffective in defeating this arising plague. Bush in 2003, against any expectations, decided to invade and occupy Iraq²⁹.

This decision enhanced the rising of hostilities from the Muslim World. Hundreds of thousands of young Muslims traveled to Iraq to become fighters and gave al-Qaeda the opportunity to get new recruits and a new platform of visibility. In the meanwhile, another threat started growing: a band of Arab fighters headed by Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi³⁰ transformed itself into a new organization called Jama'at al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad. The latter, in between 2004 and 2006, became more powerful than al-Qaeda, and its central aim was to kill the largest possible number of Shiite Iraqis. In 2004, Zarqawi denominated his group as "al-Qaeda in the Land of the Two Rivers" declaring allegiance to Bin Laden. In turn, the latter declared that Zarqawi was the emir of al-Qaeda in Iraq. However, these two leaders had very different traits.

This is the reason behind the initial reluctance of Bin Laden towards a possible cooperation.

²⁸ The 7th October of 2001, the US invaded Afghanistan with the support of many other countries in order to demolish al-Qaeda and to remove Taliban from power. This war is not ended yet.

²⁹ This step launched the Iraq War that lasted until 2011. It ended with the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's government.

³⁰ A Jordanian Jihadist who joined the training camp in Afghanistan. He was very active in the Iraq War carrying out several bombings and attacks.

Zarqawi was too concentrated on the dispute between Shiite and Sunnis, instead of being focused on the far enemy (Gerges, 2014, p.108). By the way, the fusion did no more than increase the isolation of Bin Laden. Zarqawi's followers, against the advice given by Bin Laden, kept on carrying out attacks in Iraq against Shiites, also involving women and children. This way of acting was not only condemned by al-Qaeda's leader, but also by Zarqawi's spiritual mentor, Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi³¹, who spread the message that violence against civilians was wrong being it against the final aim of *Umma* and the general image of Islam. On the same wavelength, there was Zawahiri, who saw Zarqawi's attacks as counterproductive for the goal of expelling the American from Iraq. Finally, in June 2006, this emerging leader was killed by US forces. However, at that time, al-Qaeda was already feeling the consequences of this collaboration: severely weakened, it had lost the large support of the Muslim public. Bin Laden could only but apologize for the outrageous acts accomplished by Zarqawi, but it was not enough, the decline had already begun.

A large number of Sunnis started to collaborate with US troops, and it was evident that the opportunity for al-Qaeda to be fully integrated in Iraq was lost. From that moment on, al-Qaeda's recruits have been less and less skilled leading to problems of instability and insecurity inside the organization.

Its reputation across the Muslim world has worsened and a general dissatisfaction towards Islam world was growing. Almost everyone started condemning al-Qaeda's atrocities and terrorist attacks against noncombatants. This marked an effective decline of al-Qaeda. Even the countries that once were willing to offer it a shelter, today are almost non-existent. At this point, the decentralization of al-Qaeda's cells reaches its peak, but contrarily to any expectations, it has conceded to the organization a growing strength.

In fact, at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century al-Qaeda reached its greatest power.

The major reason behind this is al-Qaeda's ability to form alliances and to make them durable along the time. Some examples of what I am stating, have been al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb in 2006 and al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in 2009, that formed branches in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Moreover, in 2010 al-Qaeda started collaborating with al-Shabaab in Somalia.

Regarding the latter, Bin Laden did not require this movement to change its name or to publicly manifest its affiliation with al-Qaeda, in order not to raise counter-terrorism efforts and not to lose financial aids from the Arabian Peninsula. This strategic move demonstrates Bin Laden's willingness to maintain al-Qaeda with a low profile (Bacon, 2019). However, in 2011, precisely the 2nd of May, the terrorist organization's road to success underwent a temporary halt: US military forces, with the help of US Intelligence, located and killed Osama Bin Laden, who was hiding in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

After almost a month, al-Qaeda announced that Ayman al-Zawahiri would have replaced the recently dead organizational leader. He was far less skilled than the previous leader. For this reason, it did not succeed in

³¹ An Islamist Jordanian-Palestinian writer.

facing the new threat posed by the emerging Islamic State in Iraq (“ISI”)³², that ended into the alliance rupture between al-Qaeda and its affiliate in Iraq.

This has been reported as the central reason for the decline of al-Qaeda.

The new self-proclaimed caliph of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi³³, had started to attract many followers from different militant groups both in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The ISIL also was in control of vast territories in Syria and Iraq, that gave it financial resources.

Nowadays, potential jihadists prefer to join ISIL rather than al-Qaeda, because, it looks more powerful and more effective in the international scenario. If that was not enough, shortly after, al-Qaeda’s ally in Syria, al-Nusra, changed its name distancing itself from al-Qaeda.

In 2014, a new branch has been formed in South Asia, al-Qaeda in the Indian subcontinent.

From 2015 to 2017, according to the Global Terrorism Index, the majority of deaths provoked by al-Qaeda took place in Sub-Saharan Africa, while in the past they used to operate in the Middle East.

For what concerns the West, al-Qaeda’s groups have been less active there, leaving room to ISIL.

However, as for example Zelin and Stenersen claim, this is only a strategic move (Stenersen, 2017, p.11; Zelin, 2017, pp. 12-15). Perhaps al-Qaeda is still waiting to rebuild itself and renew its capabilities in order to attack at the right moment provoking huge and massive effects. Today, US Intelligence suspects that Osama Bin Laden’s son, Hamza Bin Laden, would become the next leader of the group, and America is offering a big reward in exchange of some information about him (Hjelmgaardkim, 2019).

³² A militant Salafist jihadist group that wanted to establish an Islamic State primarily in Iraq and then in Syria.

³³ Leader of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (“ISIL”), on 29 June 2014, he announced the establishment of the New Caliphate proclaiming himself the Caliph.

3. Ideology and Religious Background

I. Introduction

Islamic organizations have defined ideologies that, albeit varied, are all linked to the same religious basis, called Islam.

Religion is the necessary platform of their strategies, because it largely determines and shapes the behaviors of both the different leaders and those who listen to them.

Much of the recruitment processes, and subsequent socialization processes, can be traced back to religious reasons and the sense of duty that several Muslims feel towards God.

In current times, Islamist leaders speak out their religious mission, and, even if there is not a real spirituality behind these leading figures, many Muslim believers decide to approach to these organizations in order to boost up their devoutness.

II. Islam, the division between Sunnis and Shiites, and the different Extremist ideologies behind Hezbollah and al-Qaeda

Islam is more than a religion. It also contains in itself every component that a State needs in order to exist.

It conceives sovereignty as the one in the hands of the caliphate, that maintains the legal order following Sharia Law, in a territory defined by the concept of *Umma* (Turner, 2014, p.50).

Religion is the core concept, and due to this, sovereignty relies on God, who rules over the political sphere too. However, since the time of the Prophet³⁴, God has left this authority to the Caliphate, as the organizing principle of political power. According to the Sunnis' vision, it was in the hands of Abu Bakr, Umar ibn al-Kittab, Uthman ibn Affan and Ali ibn Abi Talib. These are known as the "Rightly Guided Caliphs", and this period is seen as the "Golden Age" in which the True Islam emerged.

Considering the general scenario, Ali's³⁵ assassination has revealed the importance of the caliphate issue, a controversial topic that has been debated until nowadays, and that has divided Islam into two contrasting parts: on the one hand, the Shiites, who believe that Ali should detain the leadership; on the other hand, the Sunnis, who were in favor of Abu Bakr, because the majority chose him.

Given this division, the caliphate has suffered a hard life. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, it has been totally dismantled. Today the caliphate is left only with spiritual importance.

³⁴ In all the branches of Islam, the last Prophet of God is said to be Muhammad.

³⁵ Cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, he ruled as the fourth Caliph (the final of the Rightly Guided Caliphs). Shia Muslims consider him as the proper direct successor to Muhammad.

In fact, it does not detain any authority over the territories and the Muslims.

This is an important milestone in the history of Islam, because, in practice, it put an end to Islamic Imperialism, and created the preconditions of a rising conflict between the West and Jihadism.

With regard to the legal order and the Sharia Law, the caliphate finds its foundations in the Quran and in the Sunnah, and this precise law is viewed as the plan of God for humanity.

Sharia law helps people in adhering to a life model which is appropriate at both the individual and the community levels, leaving little room for whatever other rules or teachings falling outside the Quran or Sunnah. Over the years, Classical Sharia has been geographically and temporally adapted, leading to the formation of different schools of Sharia, that change also depending on the State of application.

This is also due to the fact that the majority of Muslims have started to take into consideration *Hadiths*³⁶, personally choosing in between them, those that they repute most truthful in respect to the Holy Books (Turner, 2014, p.56). The Quran and the Sunnah perform a role of central importance, also for the fact that they delineate the reference example of the first Islamic State instituted by the constitution of Medina in 622 CE, at the time of Muhammad. The latter gave birth to the desire of establishing a larger State, *Umma*'s aim, something that, even today, the Islamic Communities have not fulfilled yet. (Azani, 2009, p.42).

The concept of *Umma* is the most important link between these still decentralized communities, and this repents a sense of brotherhood from which spurs out the ambition of creating the ultimate Islamic Community, composed of all the Muslims across the World. In the future society, neither ethnic identity nor linguistic differences and political or geographical boundaries would be taken into account.

This would allow peaceful coexistence of all Muslims. Strictly linked to this, there is *Assabiya*, that is the sentiment of kinship felt by Muslims, handled to keep them tied together. Jointly, they represent an image of order and common identity that oversteps any existing differences between States and Governments in the Islamic World (Turner, 2014, p.65). These two components generate a distinction between believers and non-believers, and then go more in depth, insofar they divide the World, in which we are living, in two areas: one called *Dar al-Islam* ("House of Islam"), which comprises those places in which the Sharia Law is in power, and the other called *Dar al-Harb* ("House of War"), where Islam has to fight to reach power and establish itself (Azani, 2009, p.23). In the first scenario, where Islam detains control, *Dawa*³⁷ is the approach to use, because it encompasses all the non-violent measures that are useful to spread and propagate the Islamic religion. As far as *Dar al-Harb* is concerned, Jihad³⁸ must be put in practice.

³⁶ Literally it means "News" or "Story", they are the record of the stories and recordings of Muhammad. In total they are 2,200, without repetitions.

³⁷ Literally it means "Issuing a summons" or "making an invitation".

³⁸ In Arabic it literally means "striving" or "struggling".

Unlike what is expected in *Dawa*, it represents the holy war that is necessary to rectify non-believers and heretics. However, the word “Jihad” is derived from the verb “jahada”, which means “to make an effort, to endeavour and to strive for a noble cause”, so it covers a wide range of activities that are not necessarily violent (Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, 2017). We can mention the Jihad of the soul, the *Jihad Fi-Lisan* (“Jihad by the Tongue”), the *Jihad Bilmal* (“Jihad with money”) and the Electronic Jihad.

The Quran itself portrays a distinction between two types of Jihad: Greater and Lesser Jihad.

The Prophet conceived the former as a struggle within the self, in order to get rid of all unnecessary things and lift up the soul to heaven. Lesser Jihad, in turn, can be divided into offensive and defensive Jihad. Offensive Jihad pursues the elimination of the infidels and the spreading of Islam message through armed struggle. Defensive Jihad branches into military Jihad, that is used by Muslims to defend Islam and the aim of *Umma*, and persuasive non-military Jihad, the already mentioned Jihad by the tongue and heart (Alagha, 2006, p.83). When Jihad is said to be Offensive, it is perceived as a general commandment, that relies on all Muslims; while, for what concerns Defensive Jihad, its application is narrowed down, standing as a personal and interior duty for the individual (Azani, 2009, p.24).

Focusing again on the division between *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb*, these two scenarios coexist and, over the time, have led to the rise of different, even opposites, approaches around the best way to face the international arena. The first developed is the Classical Approach, and, from Turner’s point of view, it can be compared to the persistent human struggle that used to characterize the Hobbesian state of nature³⁹ (Turner, 2014, p.68). The advancement of this approach was strictly linked to the time in which it was developed.

In fact, it was considered as a period of scattered tensions, in which humans needed God’s help to alleviate their strains; otherwise, war would always have succeeded over peace.

We can easily understand that, in this situation, every place is identified as *Dar al-Harb*, and, from this perspective, the only mean capable of bringing order is Jihad.

Jihad here is intended as the Holy War used to spread Islam Religion and the annexed political order.

The sustainers of the Classical approach are seen as religious fundamentalists, and they believe in the centrality of Islam as the complete guide to life through the teachings of Quran and Sunnah.

No exceptions are admitted, *Umma* is an indivisible concept, even more, when the cause of internal divisions is non-muslims’ sovereignty. The spread of Islam is unstoppable, it is a divine imperative (Turner, 2014, pp. 69-70).

Moving to the second school of thought, that matured in the late 19th century, we encounter the Reformists. These latecomers were influenced by Salafism, a branch of Sunni Islam that claims to look at the early

³⁹ In the “Leviathan”, Thomas Hobbes defines the State of Nature as “the natural condition of war” characterized by “a war of all men against all men.” (Hobbes, 2002, p.535).

period of Islam in order to put in practice his teachings in the modern world, and to bring Islam to its original prominent role (Wagemakers, 2017). While before, Turner referred to the Hobbesian State of Nature, in this case, he introduces the reflective Lockean perspective⁴⁰ around human nature (Turner, 2014, p.70). As a consequence, minimal co-existence and cooperation between *Dar al-Islam* and *Dar al-Harb* are regarded as possible, also due to the changes in international relations with respect to the previous era.

Dar al-Harb is not seen any longer as the place to be conquered through armed struggle, rather, as the place with whom coexist without the continuous feeling of compulsory hegemony.

At this point, even the dichotomy between the two spheres seems to be thinner, and this permitted the formation of a new term: *Dar al-Ahd*, that means the “Realm of Treaties” (Turner, 2014, p.71).

Obviously, this new way of thinking, that avoided the use of Jihad, still required from non-Muslim individuals and their leaders complete respect towards Islam and its social and religious norms.

Instead of violence and cruelties, there is the desire to unify the *Umma* through an evolving process.

Another difference between the two approaches relies on the application of *ijtihad*, and so on the possibility to make deductions in matters of law when no rule is in place. Looking at the Classical approach, *ijtihad* is something unquestionable, because it regards what Islamic law has sufficiently specified and detailed in its original form. On the counterpart, Reformists think that *ijtihad* should be reopened under the supervision of the *Ulema* (Religious Scholar) because in modern times new interpretations are needed.

Reformist positions are held by the so-called Neo-Islamists, that started rising in 1970 in Egypt.

They, while preserving the traditional culture of Islam, are not totally isolated from the rest of the world, and may accept some changes (Turner, 2014, p.72). All of this does not mean that Neo-Islamists are pro-West, in fact, they are totally counterposed to Western Neo-Imperialist aspirations, especially American ones.

Rather, they consider the need to rely on a more modern approach, to avoid being marginalized in this new set of things.

Iran has been an example of this tendency. Muhammad Khatami, during his presidency, exhibited his reformist propensity through several reforms, that also succeeded in changing the mind of the more observant persons. Unfortunately, the persistency of religious ideas was demonstrated by the election of Ahmadinejad in 2005, who dismantled the progress done until then. In current times, the moderate government of the President Hassan Rouhani allow us to see a glimmer of enlightenment in the Iranian Islamic Republic (Hunter, 2013).

Through the years, radical approaches have become stronger and stronger, taking extensively ground.

They are more similar to the first Classical approach than to the Reformist one.

⁴⁰ in the “Second Treatise of Government”, John Locke states that the “State of Nature has a law of Nature to govern it”, and that in this scenario all men are free “to order their actions, and dispose of there possessions and persons, as they think fit, with the bounds of the law of nature” (Locke, 2004, pp.3-4).

On the side of the Shiite Radical ideology, the actual place of formation was Iran in 1960s thanks to Khomeini, who is regarded as the father of Shiite Radicalism. Backed by his extreme hate against the West, its culture, and the modernity that characterizes it, and considering the Islamic society to have reached a point of no return, he opted for a radical act to restore the situation.

Both the revolution and the future scenario should have been centered on a religious and divine basis.

In fact, from his point of view, politics should go hand-in-hand with religion, and the state leadership should belong to a religious authority who would rule according to Islamic law.

Another fundamental concept pertaining to Khomeini's ideology was the sacrifice.

This was the most welcomed notion later adopted by Hezbollah, and its justification resides directly inside the Quran. Khomeini ensured to the Islamic Iranian Revolution a role of primary importance, becoming the leading example for all the Muslim Community. In addition, it helped the flourishing of other radical movements around the world (Azani, 2009, p.40).

At the time, one of the radical movements that followed at most Khomeini's example and ideology was Hezbollah in Lebanon, also due to their territorial proximity.

Equally, the latter regarded the religious authority as the best figure at the head of the State, in fact, it was the only actor able to acknowledge the Truth of Islam. In addition, Hezbollah considered Imam Khomeini as the Prophet and the twelve Imams' successor, and for this reason, it delayed to him alleging and loyalty.

A demonstration of it are the declarations by Hezbollah and Iranian officials, dated back to the first period: "Iran and Lebanon are one people in one country... We do not say that we are part of Iran, we are Iran in Lebanon and Lebanon in Iran"; "We are going to support Lebanon politically and militarily as we buttress one of our own Iranian districts"; "We declare to the whole world that the Islamic Republic of Iran is our mother and our veins". (Alagha, 2006, p.99).

The pivotal Hezbollah's religious scholar is Sayyid Sadiq al-Musawi, he supported the idea of the establishment of the Islamic Republic in Lebanon with the Quran as its constitution.

Inside this new order, whoever would contrast God's divine law and the religious authority would be destroyed. He believed that the creation of an Islamic Republic is nothing more than the living extension of what the prophets and Imams used to declare in their messages.

One of the pillars of Hezbollah's ideology is Jihad, and this organization, following Khomeini's example, stresses its importance underlining that who affords the Holy War secures himself the entrance to paradise, leaving the hell to infidels. Jihad maintains the priority over any other aspects of life, and Hezbollah interprets the world Jihad in a broader way than the classical one, here it means "putting all the efforts in defending oneself against the enemy". It is conceived as a true promise from God to believers: if they fight in His name, killing people and getting killed, in the end, they would be regarded with Paradise.

Ergo, Jihad is exploited as a tool to defend Islam from the external enemies, but, being this a dangerous and disruptive mean, that can bring about deaths and blood from both sides, it is necessary to obtain the green light from a *Faqih* (“Jurisprudent”, at the time Khomeini). What the *Faqih* decides and states around general matters and Jihad, has to be respected in an absolute way. He analyzes the actual situation and, after meticulous reasonings, determines both whether it is worth using Jihad and its bloodshed, and if it is done upon a real Sharia object. Hezbollah’s ideology does not focus only on Jihad as military combating the enemy, it also takes into account the role of greater Jihad as coping with the internal enemy of the human soul. In fact, it is important that, before affording lesser Jihad, followers prepare themselves.

This is something that can be done through a long process of indoctrination and spiritual transformation of the heart and mind, during which adherents understand the importance of self-sacrifice.

Only later, fighting the enemy in the name of *Umma* enters the scene, and, at this point, it serves as an additional way to strengthen and reinvigorate spiritualism.

The ultimate victory of *Umma* is one of the two rewards of Jihad.

As the classical Shiite view and Khomeini’s ideology stress, the martyrdom is another possible outcome. Behind this, there is the duty towards God that transcends the materialistic life and compensate the martyr with a better and eternal life in heaven. In the end, martyrdom becomes like an honor for many Hezbollahis who, thanks to it, would feel closer to God. These extremist acts are justified by the organization as the effort to use any possible weapon to combat and defeat Israeli forces, that apparently seem invincible.

It is worth mentioning the strict connection between martyrdom and the personal determination supporting it. These persons put *Umma* in the first place, even over their existence, preferring the life in the hereafter to the life on earth. This emphasizes the personal involvement of each people when opting for such an ultimate act, a choice that, from Hezbollah’s perspective, is not achieved as the last resort but is driven by voluntary willingness and desire. For this reason, martyrdom is a concept detached from the one of suicide, and it is only West’s fault when the two terms end to be confused. The latter is too fascinated by the materialistic life on earth, that it is incapable to understand and accept the individual decision to die for a greater moral reason as the *Umma* (Turner, 2014, p.111).

Taking into account the other hemisphere of Muslims, Sunnis, another Revolutionary Political Theory is worth mentioning. It entered the scene with the name of Salafi Jihadism and, conveying a universalist vision of Islam. Its roots are taken from Salafism⁴¹ and Reformist thoughts, with the addition of the concept of Jihad. Going into further detail, it shares the concept of *ijtihad* with Reformists, as a way to face modernity and the West. However, Jihad is now regarded as an essential tool to build up a new Islamic State.

⁴¹ It is a branch of Sunni Islam that developed in Egypt in the late 19th century and that embodies some features of Wahhabi movement. The aim of this ideology is to look back at their ancient predecessors in contemplation of recreating a similar order in modern times.

Holy War is necessary to bring back the Global Islamic Political order and the re-establishment of the Caliphate. This new approach identifies the world as divided between Muslim and infidels, where dialogue between the two is non-existing, a perspective shared with the Classical approach.

Radical Islamists, influenced by the teachings of Sayyid Qutb⁴², believe that the creation of an Islamic State would be possible only thanks to a cruel and violent war against the pro-Western Muslim Regimes.

In this specific war, everything is allowed, and Muslims must not be scared by death; instead, they have to be ready to sacrifice themselves for the greater final aim (Azani, 2009, p.39).

The first signal of Salafi Jihadist Organizations appeared in the 1920s with Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood⁴³, that, a posteriori, has been considered insufficiently radical by other extremist organizations.

One of the most prominent examples of Salafi Jihadist Organization, that has never accepted any compromises on the race to universalism, is al-Qaeda. The primary concern of Bin Laden has always been the construction of an Islamic order comprising of all Muslims around the world (*Umma*), headed by the Caliph, with Mecca as the Capital. This idea arose in his mind after a precise analysis of the world surrounding him: Muslims are affected by a general ill, and the only way to compensate to this weakness is the establishment of the Islamic State. The new State would grant to Muslims their lost strength and prosperity (Zehr, 2017, p.53). Quran should be the ruling constitution of this new Global Muslim State, and Sharia Law should be enforced in its basic form. The obstacle against this goal is the current state of things in the World, and the greatest and most powerful enemy is embodied by America, which is seen as the power maintaining the status-quo across the different countries.

The struggle here is no more at a nationalist level, it is a Global War. While Hezbollah used to operate more on a local and territorial stage, focusing on Israeli targets within the Lebanese territory, al-Qaeda boosted its aspirations over a universal dimension. Moreover, al-Qaeda fights with force any Muslim regimes that do not respect Islam fundamentals, justifying all of this as a religious duty and obligation (Zehr, 2017, p.54). Al-Qaeda has erected Sayid Qutb's teachings at their highest level of application, and the religious mentors belonging to this organization, al-Zawahiri and Abdullah Azzam, have previously taken part to Muslim Brotherhood. Summing what I have just underlined, al-Qaeda's followers have to fix in their minds five pillars: firstly, due to the current weakness of Muslims and their leaders, it is necessary to adopt armed resistance for the realization of the Islamic State; this armed resistance is synonym of armed Jihad, that represents the religious duty of every Muslim towards God.

⁴² He was an Egyptian author and Islamic theorist, that in between 1950 and 1960s also became a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood. He has represented the inspiration for many violent groups, such as al-Qaeda.

⁴³ A Sunni Islamist organization founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna in 1928. It is characterized by a Pan-Islamic ideology and, after the Arab Spring in 2011, it has been legalized.

Jihad is conceived as a personal duty which Muslims have to take on in order to defend Islam, other believers, and Muslim Land. In addition to these three features, that generally characterize almost all Islamic organizations, al-Qaeda developed two more points, determining its uniqueness.

It does not concentrate actions on a central local level, instead, it looks for a decentralized theater of war, in which there is a no a real distinction between innocents and combatants (Zehr, 2017, p.80).

This change pertains to Bin Laden's leadership, that brought in a new vision inside the movement, different from his religious mentors, and his partner Azzam. In fact, while the latter was more focused on the "Near enemy", similarly to Hezbollah, Bin Laden, as his 1998 declaration of war demonstrates, envisages as one of the main enemies of Islam, America, which together with the European Union, was Israel's ally⁴⁴. Regarding this, he heavily criticized the Saudi Government for its closeness with the enemy and for having permitted to it the stationing of its troops over its lands. Saudi territories are not only part of the Muslim land, but most of all, they claim the presence of the two Holy Sites, Mecca and Medina.

The presence of the United States there was an outrage to Islam religion and an additional demonstration of Muslims' weakness and oppression under the West. Saudi Government was not enacting Sharia Law, and its behavior was sounding like an alarm signal for the Muslims to counteract American march.

The United States should be fought until its defeat. Obviously, in this atmosphere, good manners are not even taken into consideration, the use of force being the only solution allowed.

Muslims from all the lands have to collaborate to unify their forces in the face of the most important religious duty: the possession of the Muslim land⁴⁵. To reach this goal, any differences within Muslims has to be overcome in view of a unified and powerful enemy. Collectivity is contemplated as an essential part of the plan of action. Bin Laden thinks that Saudi people should be the first to rebel and to halt the US forces because they were actually invading their lands without any hesitations.

The enemy was destroying a Muslim country and, as all the *Ulemas* have always stated, this is a situation in which Jihad as individual duty is permitted and required. This duty acquires the first position in Muslims' lives, and, since the non-muslims have been the first in attacking, Jihad is perceived as a defensive tool, rather than an offensive one. Bin Laden, unlike his religious mentors, does not involve any limits in the

⁴⁴ From Osama Bin Laden's February 23rd 1998 Fatwa: "All these crimes and sins committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on God, his messenger, and Muslims" (FBIS, 2004, p.57).

⁴⁵ From Osama Bin Laden's February 23rd, 1998 Fatwa: "[...] We issue the following fatwa to all Muslims: The ruling to kill the Americans and their allies -- civilians and military -- is an individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque and the holy mosque [Mecca] from their grip, and in order for their armies to move out of all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim. This is in accordance with the words of Almighty God, "and fight the pagans all together as they fight you all together," and "fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in God." (FBIS, 2004, p.58).

expression of Jihad: it should not be restrained to a specific territory, for example, Saudi Arabia, instead, this is a religious duty that Muslim individuals have to carry on in whatever place the enemies' forces are settled. Another difference from the previous religious scholars, stressing again al-Qaeda's unlimited nature, concerns jihadi victims. There is no absolutely discrimination between innocents and combatants, arms are grasped to kill every enemy entering the way, being him a soldier or an exposed civilian.

4. Socialization and Leadership

I. Introduction

In order to analyze the socialization patterns and the methods for acquiring followers in both Hezbollah and Al-Qaeda, it is necessary to consider them separately, due to their remarkable differences at the organizational level. In fact, even if at the beginning Hezbollah was born as a revolutionary vanguard terrorist organization, then it passed through a hybrid stage, and eventually became a proper political party in 1992 (Azani, 2013, p.899). Clearly, this process is also mirrored on the program that Hezbollah and its leading figures used when they were aiming at gaining popularity with Lebanese population.

In order to analyze this development and the period of change, I am going to take into account the various letters, speeches and manifesto that have been promulgated from 1985 until the modern era.

This analysis would show us the strategies and tactics used by Hezbollah's leaders in order to attract people's attention and, then, to gain their fidelity. I am going to unveil the arguments and the approaches that have gripped at most the followers, underlining, in case, the possible shifts and differences from an earlier period to a later one.

Regarding al-Qaeda, the situation is slightly different: born as a pure terrorist organization, al-Qaeda has remained as such until modern days. However it has experienced some evolutions in its way of approaching the external world. It has brought Jihad at a global level, by its ability to build a decentralized structure that, a posteriori, has represented its winning move for the purpose of halting the West.

A change like this is, undoubtedly, supported by a respective progress within the organization, which, from that moment on, has required a broader basis of support across the world.

A wider platform of loyalty requires a meticulous propaganda and a charismatic leader, that exploits the most captivating arguments. However, we will see that this is not enough.

A profound development at the level of the radicalization, and more precisely, of the recruitment process, is crucial. In order to analyze all of this, I am going to take into consideration both the various leaders' letters and speeches, but most of all, I will investigate the spectrum of the various techniques of recruitment, concentrating on those revealing a particular path inside the organization's features.

II. Hezbollah and its Political Strategy with Hassan Nasrallah

In current times, according to Pick (2011, p.1), Hezbollah might be described with different connotations: as a global criminal-terrorist organization, as an Arab resistance movement, as the Shia vanguard of social justice, as an Iranian proxy army, or as the central Lebanese political party.

When firstly established, it used to call itself “The Resistance”, and over the time it succeeded in establishing itself as the hegemonic actor over Lebanon, aiming at freeing the latter and the Islamic world from the Western oppression. Behind all of this, there is a precise twofold strategy, that has granted Hezbollah long-term survival. On one side, after having persuaded Lebanese citizens that it was no longer a radical Islamic Militia, there are the political and social strategies that have been necessary in order to gain popular support. On the other hand, we can find the military strategy, that has been mainly enacted against Israeli forces inside Lebanon’s borders. (Butler, 2011, p.17).

Both of them have been backed by religion, and today the first one takes the name of “Lebonisation process”, a process of political integration, that eventually permitted Hezbollah to transform itself from a jihadi group to an effective political party (Pick, 2011, p.1).

Norton in “Hezbollah: a Short History”, states that this “double strategy” led not only to a double organizational structure, but also to the development of two different roles over the Lebanese scenario (Norton, 2018, pp.5-6). The first one, rejecting the politics of the Lebanese Parliament and influenced by the Iranian partisan group, involves all the military apparatus; while the other is focused on forming an autonomous party entrenched in the political and governmental life of Lebanon.

Moreover, Norton adds that it is thanks to the complexity of its structural apparatus, that Hezbollah has been capable to cover different political, social and religious spheres of power (Norton, 2018, p.159).

This double tactic is mirrored also on the organizational structure of Hezbollah. Being the political and the military wings divided into different councils, they are controlled by a Supreme Council, led by a unique political and religious leader. The Shura Council, composed of nine members, represents the leadership of the organization and controls both the military and socio-political spheres.

Hassan Nasrallah is its chairman and he has been the Secretary-General of Hezbollah since 1992.

He is often referred to as al-Sayyid Hassan, a denomination that denotes his lineage from the Prophet Muhammad. The second in command, the Deputy-Secretary-General, is Sheikh Naim Qassem (Ryanshu, 2015). The Shura Council is, in turn, directed by five other Councils, divided according to the spheres of power that they cover, which can be inside the Lebanese political System or outside.

Regarding the political scenario, there is the Political Council, comprehending Parliament Members and controlling the activities in the Lebanese Political arena. It is headed by Sheikh Ibrahim Amin Al-Sid.

The Political Advisor, Hajj Hussein Halil, promotes the organization's policies. Moreover, the judiciary realm is responsible for the judicial system in the Hezbollah-controlled areas, and it is headed by Sheikh Muhammad Yazbek. Therefore, the political wing controls the political involvement, maintaining the power over the Parliament, the Municipalities, the Government and, most of all, leads the coalition.

On matters outside the Lebanese Political System, there are two different spheres of power: the Social infrastructure, with the Executive Council responsible for the education system, welfare, healthcare and constructions, headed by Hashem Safi Al-Din; and the military wing.

For what concerns the military apparatus, Imad Muhammad Yazbek is the head of the Jihadi Council, the one responsible for terrorist operations in Lebanon and worldwide. The Jihadi Council maintains the power over the Resistance, that consecutively controls the Militia, the Special Apparatus that is responsible for overseas operations, and the security apparatus, dedicated to internal security (Azani, 2006).

When the religious and political realms meet each other, Islam passes from being only confined to a religious scenario to being viewed as an actual political ideology, the only one capable of bringing justice worldwide.

The social and political strategy exploited by Hezbollah's leaders, throughout this process, are the focus of my research. As I have already underlined before, from my point of view, the best tool to afford such an investigation has been the reading of the different documents, speeches, and political manifesto edited directly by Hezbollah and its leader Nasrallah. It is quite undeniable that Hezbollah was born as an Islamist group against the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon, and that, at the time, it used to fight with force Israeli army also executing suicide attacks against it and the South Lebanese Army.

As a consequence, what characterized Hezbollah's strategy of this early period was its continuous guerrilla against the Israeli army. In this period the 1985 Hezbollah Program was published as an Open Letter "to all the oppressed in Lebanon and the world" (Alagha, 2011, p.40). It is not only of central importance for the fact that it lists the ideological principles of Hezbollah, but also because it is a perfect example of its early strategy, in comparison with its later developments. The listed aims were threefold: to expel any American, French, Israeli or other invader from Lebanon; to create a legitimate power inside Lebanon, capable of subjugating the Phalanges⁴⁶, that until then had only provoked crimes and injustices; to enable Lebanese people to decide freely the best form of government, that in Hezbollah's opinion is the creation of an Islamic Republic in Lebanon. These goals have been redefined over time, as we will see later in this section, and a clear example of this is the document publicized by Manwar TV Station in Beirut in June 1997.

The first paragraph states that: "Freedom, right, justice and peace are essential for any society to rise and develop", rejecting "all forms of aggression and terrorism" (Alagha, 2011, p.56).

⁴⁶ Christian Democratic political party supported mainly by Maronite Catholics.

In the Open Letter, the audience is addressed as the “Oppressed of the world”, and it is composed by all those people that are mistreated and whose liberties are negated, without any distinction between Christians or Muslims, being the Quran a universal concept.

In the first part of the document, the religious ideology is explicitly represented, when speaking, for example, of the belief in both Shia Islam and *Wilayat al-faqih* (“Guardianship of the jurispudent”)⁴⁷.

What is stated here is almost a repetition of what I have explained in the previous chapter, it is a very detailed description of Islam and this is a sign of its centrality in the early period.

The strategy behind was to attract people from lower classes, that were suffering poor conditions, leveraging their moral and religious component. These people did not comprehend only Lebanese civilians, but also Muslims from all over the world, because *Umma* is a universal concept that tied together all Muslims (Alagha, 2011, p.40). Muslims have to rely on Hezbollah’s military apparatus in order to bring Jihad against the oppressors from the West, most of all against the US. America is seen as the “first root of vice”, the actor behind all their catastrophes, and Muslims have the duty to defend their religion and existence by the continuous attacks of this superpower and its allies (Alagha, 2011, p.41).

In order to combat the enemy and establish their right of self-determination, the only tool left is the sacrifice, given the fact that patience has proved to be inefficient. However, America is not the only threat, given that Zionists and Phalangists have coordinated themselves and have caused a lot of disasters within the Lebanese territories, a humiliation that Lebanese people could not afford any longer.

This is why Hezbollah has decided to create the Resistance movement, a movement that could free Lebanese people and keep the flag of *Umma* high all over the world. Section 9 stresses the fact that, even if Hezbollah is committed to Islam, it does not impose it through the use of force (Alagha, 2011, pp.44-45).

De facto, also Christians are called to join this movement. Their refusal would not be a problem, as long as they do not act against Muslims.

Re-connecting to what stated before, the oppressed are not only Muslims people, but all the people suffering injustices. These individuals should analyze the message of Islam and understand that its aim is to bring about peace and tranquillity. The idea is that Hezbollah does not want to coerce people under its ideology. Rather, it wants to show them the right path, leaving them free to decide the best form of government. Obviously, if they are right and smart persons, after all the demonstrations given, they will choose the Islamic government. Is this a kind of suggestion?

In principle, people are free to decide as they like. However, if they are upright people, the answer would be straightforward. They would be foolish if they decided to stick to a situation like the current one, in which the Lebanese political system appears incapable of taking reforms and attached to sectarianism.

⁴⁷ At that time Khomeini.

Moreover, the current political system is not efficient in opposing the biggest enemy, Israel, and its desire to expand over Muslims' territories. For what concerns this challenge, negotiations or pacts whatsoever, which would be an affront against Palestinian people, are not admitted. For this purpose, the support for the honorable Islamic cause from all Muslims is necessary, and Jihad is portrayed as the winning tactic, that has brought about amazing results in the past. Of course, the examples of the past successes are necessary to make people believe in the rightness of these words.

The final part of the document is an additional suggestion of the religious foundation of the movement during this early stage: Section 23 invokes the *Ulema* of Islam, appealing to his central role as the guide of Muslims, and his duty to remember people the importance of *Umma* (Alagha, 2011, pp. 53-55).

The analysis of the Hezbollah Program of 1985, that I have sketched so far, permits us to make comparisons with the later documents of the same movement, in order to understand the changes in its the founding concepts and, more in general, in its strategy.

As we all may know, in 1992 Hezbollah with its supreme leader, Hassan Nasrallah, decided to join the Parliamentary Election, driving an important transformation at the organizational level.

The election programs of 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2005 are important documents to examine, in order to investigate the possible differences in the methods of socialization and leadership of the movement.

From the beginning, the first thing to notice is that, through the years, from election program to election program, the religious concepts are decreasingly visible at first sight.

From Alagha's point of view, it is through this process of detachment that Hezbollah "Has been able to create a balance between its Islamic identity and nationalist-patriotic dimension" (2006, p.213).

The religious duty seems to have become something hidden beneath the surface, that sometimes turns out as a reminder or as a parenthetical element. "We made up our mind, relying on God, and decided to participate in electoral politics.." (Alagha, 2011, p.63).

At this point, the question is: Is the religious duty defied so widely that its repetition becomes unnecessary? Or has it really taken the second place in comparison to politics?

Nevertheless, we have to bear in mind that behind any party's maneuver, there is always a smart leader and his advisors. Hassan Nasrallah played a sophisticated political game, that Azani has defined as "Walking on the Edge Strategy": it operated both inside and outside the political system by gaining power and taking advantage of political crisis and ad-hoc arrangements (Azani, 2012, p.741).

It may be the case that he realized that a strong approach at the community level, inspired by force and Jihad, was not as much as attractive when compared to one centered on political matters.

It would be better to talk about Lebanese issues, about problems and elements to solve on the National soil, in order to appeal to broader mass support; instead of adopting a violent approach capable to fascinate just a part of the population. The community has become the central focus of all the attention.

It is a source of recruitment, of political support and it is essential for Hezbollah's survival.

Whether or not it has been a strategic move, the religious pattern was less and less visible, leaving room for a growing political inspiration. At this stage, the fundamental matters developed into freeing Lebanon from foreign occupation and eliminating political sectarianism. Justice and equality were the two values that have characterized every action of this growing party: its aims, its goals were worth reaching because they would have granted to Lebanese people a level of fairness that had never appeared on the Lebanese stage before. Hezbollah cares about the economy because this sector will donate to people new stability: domestic products have to be enhanced.

Both the educational level - with regard to schools, Kindergartens, colleges, mosques, the Imam al Mahdi Scouts, Islamic Shiite Curriculum, among others - and the cultural one must be upgraded.

On the welfare side, different organizations were founded, as for example the Martyrs Foundations and the Women's Associations. The Islamic Organization was created to boost the healthcare, and behind the construction of all the new buildings there was the Jihad al-Binaa.

Hezbollah started launching a totally new message: "We care about Lebanon, about its economy, but most of all about the people living there". This was a genuine political campaign.

A typo of the primordial years can be discovered when speaking of Lebanon's enemy, Israel.

However, also this "antique" challenge is treated in a different way: the tone seems to be more even-tempered, a behavior fitting the new role in the politics career.

From one election to another, the exhibited political programs have become increasingly detailed with specific reforms at all levels: economic, social, healthy and cultural.

It seems that the focus now is the Lebanese people and the Lebanese State, while, even if with some importance, the creation of an Islamic State at the universal level has lost his shining aura.

What Hezbollah strives for is the consensus from the population, the necessary dowel in order to become the dominant power over the territory. Only thanks to it, one day, Hezbollah would be ready to spread his power and the Islamic message all over the globe.

Focusing on Hezbollah's 2000 Parliamentary Elections Program, there is a significant aspect to observe. Here sacrifice and Jihad are discussed again, however using a particular approach.

Their importance and the religious duty behind are not the focal points any longer, what we should perceive is the need to adduce justification for their employment. Let's assume that we have practiced sacrifice and Jihad, they have been right acts because they are "The only road to deter aggression and face Zionist greed,

uphold the security and dignity of our people, the liberation of our land and a true national unity based upon a national consensus in rejecting the occupation and its collaborators, and in buttressing the resistance” (Alagha, 2011, p.76). In the same way, the topic of terrorism is faced up, and Hezbollah justifies itself saying that its attacks are just the consequences of the terrorist acts done by the US, Israel, and their allies. The table has turned: Hezbollah is no longer the terrorist organization.

Rather, as the representative of Lebanon, it has turned into the victim of terrorist acts done by external powers. Hezbollah is willing to perform a new role at both the National Level - as the political party that brings about justice, equality and security within the territory - and the International one - as the organization that has changed its parameters, and now finds itself being victimized by stronger powers.

The Party of God’s wish to get popular attention inside Lebanon is confirmed by its participation in the Municipal elections in 2004, when its program started with this sentence: “Hezbollah’s principle dictates that the populace constitutes the main pillars behind its movement” (Alagha, 2011, p.81).

Nasrallah is aware of the importance of the population for the sustenance of the movement, and in every program, speech or discourse, its support is sought through concessions and maneuvers done for its benefit. In fact, as Joseph Daher explains in the article “Reassessing Hizbullah’s Socioeconomic Policies in Lebanon”, in these years, Hezbollah used to receive large support almost entirely from people belonging to lower or middle classes (Daher, 2016, p.402). These are the individuals that were directly affected by its political strategy and the consequent changes, that the political party used to declare loudly.

In order to see all of these arguments at their highest level of expression, we must take into consideration the New Political Manifesto of the 30th of November 2009.

In the foreword, there is an immediate exaltation of the victories reached by Hezbollah, not only in the military field but also in the political, security and social spheres. All of this is compared to the defeats and complications that the US and Israel had to face in the meantime (Alagha, 2011, pp.116-117).

Resistance is acquiring a focal role, recognized both at the national and international level.

Here the exaltation of the personal capacities is outstanding, people must have faith in this emerging power because this is the only actor that has been capable to bring justice and victories to its fellow members.

In addition to that, Hezbollah has pursued its goals while upholding basic human values of righteousness, justice, and freedom; obviously, the Resistance is depicted as something beneficial to everyone that elevates people’s souls. Once again, Lebanese, and Muslims in general, but even all the oppressed around the world, are the victims of the main superpower called America. The same applies to Israel, that is depicted as the perpetrator of acts of terrorism and violence across the World, while it is inevitable that at a certain point Hezbollah or other jihadi organizations react on behalf of those who suffer from his oppression.

However, as the Manifesto explains, the counterattacks accomplished by Muslims have been exploited by the Western powers for discrediting them, portraying them as violent people accomplishing brutal and cruel acts. It is reported that Bush' Administration has taken advantage from the events of September 11, 2001, using them for boosting his support in combating the so-called "War on Terror"⁴⁸.

The same President established a correlation between "terrorism" and "national resistance", in order to justify the means used to fight Muslims and, in the meanwhile, blame the integrity and morality of the counterpart. Terrorism is said to have been transformed into "an American alibi for hegemony" (Alagha, 2011, p. 120). Here it is important to notice the great rhetoric behind the current arguments: people have to perceive that the correct and honorable thing to do is to support Hezbollah's party, whose only fault has been the one of defending its territory and faith against an unscrupulous enemy, that is even capable of overturning the events in order to condemn the counterpart.

After all, the strategy used to persuade people that Hezbollah's position is the honest one, is simple: at first, the enemy, America, is identified, this enemy is guilty of having committed cruel crimes on Muslim people; however it has always justified itself shifting the blame on Muslims, that actually have only defended their right to existence. Moreover, there another important factor worth observing: The economy becomes a reason behind the atrocities committed by America, so that, the economy enters the scene with a new predominant role. Capitalism is a plague that not only has made the advancement of the United States, but that has also caused its collapse. This type of economy has transformed globalization in a brutal phenomenon that carries further divisions, and that disrupts the single identities tied to the different cultural and traditional backgrounds (Alagha, 2011, p.119). It is always for economic reasons that America is interested in the hegemony over the Middle East. Its oil resources are so captivating, that the control over them has been practiced without any control or respect for the populations living there.

When the economy enters the scene, the already started decadence of the religious sphere encounters its peak. Religion by now is just a distant memory, its presence forms the basis of Hezbollah's ideology, but it is not portrayed as the central topic of the speeches any longer. In the third section of the Manifesto, when accusing Zionists for their massacres and attacks, it is explicitly stated that "The struggle is by no means based on religious confrontation". Moreover, in the following page the recurrent "Religious duty" is substituted by the "ethical human responsibility" (Alagha, 2011, pp.134-135).

The scenario covered in this Manifesto is no longer a purely National one.

It is rather the universal stage which takes the priority. Israel and Zionists are cited only when cooperating with the United States, and the accuses addressed to it are very similar to the ones pointed towards America.

⁴⁸ Also called "Global War on Terrorism", it is an international military campaign that departed from the American willingness to dismantle terrorism and its capabilities after 9/01.

This can be a sign for the future aspirations of Hezbollah: Departing from a pure religious willingness of establishing an Islamic order, then passed to the Lebanese political arena to gain larger support, to finally reveal its true broader ambitions. Hezbollah went from being “A State within a State” (Abdul-Hussain, 2009), to being “The State”⁴⁹; however, since the 2009 Political Manifesto until current days, the strategy and tactics used by the Party of God have not really changed or transformed.

Nowadays, as Naim Qassem states in “Hezbollah: The Story from Within”: “The Party is no longer a concept presented for discussion, a program that needs to win conviction.

It has now transformed into a reality entrenched at the core of national events”, the Party of God is a strong political actor that has gained large and secure mass support over time (2005, p.428).

III. Hezbollah and the Military Recruitment

Until now, I have concentrated my analysis on the tactics and strategies of socialization, exploited by Hezbollah and its leader, Hassan Nasrallah, inside the Lebanese political system.

However, as I have underlined at the beginning of the previous section, also the military wing, that was initially the unique source of power of the organization, has played an important role throughout the time.

While formerly, I have formerly underlined the importance of gaining large mass support, now the attention is centered on the recruitment process, that serves to Hezbollah as a tool to generate and maintain a robust mobilization in the military field.

The recruitment process is defined as “The selection and education of new members by recruiters, which consists of a diverse, social-economic population of trained Shiite agents and Shi’a clerics trained under Iranian religious influences” (Butler, 2011, p.3). The goal of this process is to train the Islamic Resistance in order to liberate the occupied territories from external controls, and the key actors are: the Restless, those Shiite youths willing to be educated by Muslim clerics; the Recruiters, the Lebanese Shiite trained by radical clerics, that in the first phase were from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (“IRGC”)⁵⁰; the Recruits, from Shiite Restless population, that enter Hezbollah in order to conduct non-suicide attacks against IDF; and finally the Radicals that, under the radical clerics’ blessing can conduct martyrdom operations (Butler, 2011, p.35).

⁴⁹ On the 24th of January 2011, the March 8 Alliance, mostly Hezbollah, with Aoun, and Jumblatt elected Mikati as the new Prime Minister. After having obtained 68 votes in favor in Parliament, Mikati became the head of the new government.

⁵⁰ A branch of Iran’s armed forces, it was founded by Khomeini after the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

In the first phase, from 1983, when Hezbollah was a pure Terrorist Organization, the recruitment process was largely influenced by Iranian clouts, not only due to ideological and financial links between the two, but also because many fighters came from the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard (Butler, 2011, p.24).

At this time, the principal aim was to evict IDF from Southern Lebanon, and the tactics used were of great violence, as for example suicide bombings. The first attacks brought several successes to the Resistance, granting to it a high level of attractiveness inside the lower strata of the population, that were suffering poor economic conditions. As the Open Letter showed earlier, the propaganda activity of this period was mostly based on social and religious motifs, that drew the attention not only of extremely religious people, but also of those that wanted to serve the community for a whole general benefit.

As time passed, the military wing went from being only composed by people from the lower classes, to being joined also by educated professionals, that, in addition to an offensive machine, granted to Hezbollah more modern and efficient techniques to attack and defend the land.

The entrance of higher skilled personnel can be seen as one of the causes of the contemporaneous political shift of the organization, that, as Senge stated, granted to it the denomination of “learning organization”, capable of expanding itself and its capabilities in order to adapt to future scenarios (Senge, 2006, p.14). Another major change from the early period concerns the way used to approach people.

When Hezbollah was established, there were special recruiters that were sent to the different villages in Lebanon to look for possible future recruits, hence, the recruitment process was a vis-a-vis practice, done on a one-to-one basis. In modern times it is instead the virtual method that is increasingly widespread.

Today, the common practice is to set up Facebook profiles with pro-Palestinian contents, that attract Hezbollah’s target audience. The individuals behind these fake profiles start chatting with interested people, promising them financial incentives and offering them to join the terror group.

If the question gets a positive answer, they go ahead giving them orders, as to carry attacks against Israel targets or to recruit additional members, creating a proper cobweb model (Lappin, 2017).

As Hezbollah evolved, also its recruitment process experienced considerable changes, however, the most important and diffused method remains the personal and traditional one, that I am going to analyze immediately afterward. De facto, the Islamic and patriotic beliefs remain the triggering cause for these people to join the Resistance. Over time, even if the Israeli occupation has ended, serving the movement and combating for it against the external enemies has become a matter of honor and pride (Blandford, 2015).

The recruitment process starts from an early age: when they are six years old, children are stimulated to be closer to Hezbollah’s teachings in order to become strong fighters in the future.

Its messages are spread in the schools, in the associations, through books, or even via cartoons, at all level of life. This was possible, also thanks to the huge social infrastructure that Hezbollah has been capable to

establish. Children are more and more desirous to emulate the Islamic Resistance Fighters, that were represented as the heroes of the modernity. As they grow up, they have to attend the Mustafa Schools⁵¹, where they study the religious fundamentals and pray for the fighters; and during summer, they have to join camps held by the Hezbollah's Imam Mahdi Scouts⁵² in order to boost their discipline.

Even though under the age of eighteen these children are not admitted inside Hezbollah, they start attending military training and managing weapons before.

Nevertheless, the military carrier is possible also for people that decide to join it when already adult, and for this purpose, Hezbollah's recruiters are sent to the different villages where they look for suitable individuals. When the future fighter is found, the first step is to build a relationship of friendship with him in order to gain his trust and fidelity, only in this way he would start appreciating the organization and its ideology.

This stage is like an observation period, that can last a lot of months, even years, and in case it ends positively, the recruiter asks to the potential recruit whether he wants or not to join Hezbollah.

Assuming that he accepts the offer, then the phase called *Tahdirat* ("preparation") begins, and during this period of time, maximum one year, the recruit is taught the ideological essentials of Hezbollah, all the religious fundamentals explained in the second chapter.

It is worth mentioning that there is no compulsion behind, in fact, the aim is to find people that are really interested and motivated in pursuing such a difficult and all-encompassing process.

The level of indoctrination to which they are exposed is incredibly elevated, just think that at the end of this step, some recruits voluntarily decide to join the Martyrdom Unit (*Istishadiyun*).

At this point, this kind of death becomes the desirable outcome at the end of the earth-life, it gives to the martyr honor and dignity because Hezbollah is everything. However, in Lebanon, the only person that can decide whether a candidate is suitable or not for this "honor" is the religious leader, currently Hassan Nasrallah. He is also the only person that can give the consensus to enact a martyrdom operation.

Following this phase, there is the *Intizam* ("the commitment"), that also lasts around one year, and during which the discipline is instilled in the candidate thanks to military training.

As we can notice, it is important that the recruit, before approaching the military realm, receives all the educational and ideological basis. Everything should be done in accordance with a specific logic, everything during an attack should be precisely minded. It is really important that the recruit follows the doctrine of *Wilayat al-faqih*, he has to give totally submission to the *Wali al-faqih*, who detains the decisional power over Hezbollah's military wing, and that in the initial phase was Khomeini.

⁵¹ Religious-based Schools chose by Hezbollah to raise children.

⁵² Born as a youth movement in 1985, in 1998 it joined the Lebanese Scouting Federation and the World Organization of the Scout Movement.

During the first years, the recruit does not receive any payments, only later the organization grants to him a kind of salary and financial support; however, we are not talking about large sums of money, because there is the fear that his aims end to be corrupted (Blandford, 2015). In any case of necessity, the recruit obtains the help of the organization, and when he has the occasion to show his bravery and fidelity towards Hezbollah, the latter concede to him generous gifts, as for example big amounts of money.

In order to obtain such an award, the individual has to demonstrate his great self-discipline and obedience, in fact, every recruit is required to obey every command and to perform a compliant behavior, otherwise, they will face harsh punishments. As if this is not enough, during the initial phase of recruitment, the new member is exposed to a security check of his background, in order to be totally certain that his aspirations are in compliance with Hezbollah, and he is not an external informer (Blandford, 2015).

Coming back to the various steps of recruitment, each recruit has to carry out a military training that initially perdures thirty-three days, where he learns the bases of the activities involved in warfare; the aim is to boost his physical abilities. For this purpose, one of the main activities that he performs are long marches with heavy backpacks on the shoulders, during which he is allowed to have only a bottle of water per day, and whatever climate conditions he is not permitted to stop.

Even during the night, he cannot sleep quietly. In fact, he has to be prepared for the one hour of guard duty, that he has to fulfill back from the physical exercises of the day. Long marches are not the only task, he also appends how to use basic weapons, how to plants roadside bombs and land mines, and finally how to camouflage himself in different situations (Blandford, 2015).

A kind of preparation like this tests the perseverance and the determination of each individual from the beginning of their path, demonstrating that joining Hezbollah is not a joke, but, on the contrary, something that not only requires individuals' physical promptness, but most of all, their mental and psychological stability in withstanding this kind of life.

During the early years of Hezbollah, these military training were held in Bekaa Valley.

However, the camps there were very rudimental and not properly covered against Israeli attacks.

The second of June 1994, Israel launched an attack against them, the Ain Dardara Raid, killing several recruits and signing the breaking point for Hezbollah's military training camps.

From this date, Hezbollah shifted locations, opting for better-covered places in which recruits were trained more intensively. Moreover, they did not stick to one fixed location, but they started changing them repeatedly (Blanford, 2015). The Bekaa Valley was neither optimal for the training of specialized units, that, instead, started taking place in Iran and Syria, being them more spacious and less easily accessed by Israeli forces (Blanford, 2015). When this stage concludes, the recruit is finally allowed to join a specific unit, and sometimes he can opt for a precise military discipline, in which he possesses outstanding capacities.

The recruits are divided into those pertaining to Hezbollah's Special Forces Unit, that are full-time combatants and have to carry out a three-month course; and those that are part-time combatants.

Obviously, the first category contains the individuals that sanded out for their physical abilities, and for their religious and cultural values, they are in fact regarded as the top fighters of the Islamic Resistance (Blanford, 2015).

IV. Al-Qaeda and its Strategic Changes through the years

In the second section of this chapter I am going to take into consideration al-Qaeda and its techniques of socialization and leadership. Being this a pure terrorist organization, contrarily to Hezbollah, in this case, what we have to scrutinize in this case is the propaganda and the process of recruitment used inside this organization.

Obviously, the techniques implied in both these processes have changed along with the passing of the time. Concerning propaganda, even if at the beginning the most widespread procedures were linked to the spreading of books, posters, pamphlets, or to the use of radio and then television, in recent times the use of electronic instruments, most of all the internet, has become the central tool. This goes hand in hand with the dissemination of al-Qaeda at the global level, and with the increase in the spreading of its ideology within the several Muslim Communities across the World, that culminated with the September 11 attack.

From this moment on, the United States waged the "War on Terror" against Al-Qaeda, that, in turn, has brought to a higher decentralization of this terrorist organization and its operations.

As in the case of Hezbollah, at the head of al-Qaeda, there has always been a strong and charismatic leader, Bin Laden, that with al-Zawahiri, used to release communications to his followers and Muslims in general. The first examples have been the Open Letter in 1995, that is important to mention because it was followed by a declaration of war against the United States, and the numerous interviews released from 1997 to 2001, in which Bin Laden asserted his firm belief in the success of the terrorist operations.

In addition, the statements of these years, as the fatwa of 1996 against the United States, reports al-Qaeda focused on hard target, that represent the centers of power for the different Nations, such as embassies or military bases (Rabasa, 2006, p.36). However, the passing of the years and the huge attack of September 2001 brought in great changes. For example, the focusing on softer targets, that would cause the more frequent killing of larger numbers of people, and the use of different propaganda activities (Rabasa, 2006, p. 15). In fact, the twenty-first century online campaign used to be more diffused than the offline one, and it has been mostly handled through the use of video clips, created in "The Clouds", that is al-Qaeda's multi-media production studio (Schweitzer & London, 2009, p.135). The majority of these videos shows distorted images

of the historical events, reporting Muslims as those that have always been miserly mistreated by the West, and releasing the message that Muslims are under the dangerous attack from these external enemies, that have also violated their holy places as Mecca, Medina⁵³. The use of video clips, reporting also clips of the training camps, is not only a way to spread al-Qaeda's message but also a new tool to instruct possible recruits.

This makes us understand that al-Qaeda is a multi-level organization, that works through different roads and means, it is a case-by-case method, that exploits the techniques able to reach the larger coverage of people. Always similar to Hezbollah, throughout the first letters, proclamations and messages, we can notice a more elevated rhetoric characterized by heaps of religious and historical themes linked to Islam.

The use of religious rhetoric, as the legitimization of extremist actions, has been a useful and efficient strategy for both organizations in their early period, because it is able to emotionally influence and shape the beliefs of individuals, without really make them conscious of it (Cannata, 2014, p.15).

As William Biddle suggests in "Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology", there is a precise technique behind these statements: first of all the audience, that has been grouped in a precise social class, in this case, the lower strata, is directly appealed; then the division between them and the counterposed enemy, for example, the United States, is strongly marked (1931, pp.283-295). The cultural and religious symbols are like links between the arguments contained in these discourses, serving as the devices seizing the attention and the morality of the individuals listening to them (Biddle, 1932, pp.183-295).

If this is not enough, as an additional demonstration of what I have just reported, I would like to analyze the text of Bin Laden's declaration of Jihad on Americans of September 2, 1996 (FBIS, 2004, pp. 13-28). However, in doing so I would take into consideration chapter five of "Intractable Conflicts: Socio-Psychological Foundations and dynamics", by Daniel Bar-Tal (2013, pp.174-212).

This scholar underlines the fact that when the members of one society, for example, the Muslim community, face the same situation, in this case of intractable conflict, start sharing similar societal shared beliefs providing them a dominant orientation and sense of similarity, serving as the basis of their social identity (Bar-Tal, 2013, p.175). The result of these shared beliefs is the forming of an ethos, here an ethos of conflict, that is supported by eight themes, that the leaders as Bin Laden and al-Zawahiri, but also the previous Hassan Nasrallah, used to exploit during their statements.

Bin Laden's statement of 1996 is the first formal declaration of war against the US, and it represents the perfect example containing all these eight themes. The leader's central preoccupation was the American

⁵³ American occupation of Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War.

presence in Saudi Arabia⁵⁴. Hence, he begs all the Muslims around the world to open their eyes and to finally realize that this great power, that is also Israel's ally, is only exploiting Arab lands for their resources.

For this reason, Muslim believers should follow God's teachings, and fight in order to liberate their lands and the holy sites from external occupation, and they should also stop making alliances with the US.

As usual, the speech is full of religious references, because, from Bin Laden's point of view, all that is stated represents God's willingness, and this is why Muslim believers should listen to it.

What emerges since the first pages, is the fact that Muslims are represented as the victims, those suffering "injustice, repression, and aggression" by the enemies, who regard Muslims' blood as "the cheapest blood" (FBIS, 2004, p.14). In fact, many massacres have been committed and the entire world has always remained in silence in front of such atrocities, even the "unfair" United Nations, that should be the guardian of peace, has covered the conspiracies of United States.

As Bar-Tal claims when people are in a situation of conflict, they start sharing a feeling of victimhood that is the result of the perceiving of the enemy as accomplishing intentional harm on them, without a real justification, except for immoral ones, as in this case, the strive for power (2013, p.187).

Muslims have suffered for a long period their injustices, they have seen their brothers and children's deaths, like the ones in Iraq, that have died for the shortages of food (FBIS, 2004, p.26).

Behind all of this there is an immoral enemy, America, whose primary aim is to acquire all the resources of Arab Lands, in order to get an exhaustible power worldwide: "The economic boycott of the US enemy's goods is an extremely effective weapon, in order to weaken and harm the enemy" (FBIS, 2004, p. 24).

The enemy and its goals are obviously delegitimized by the opponent, and what is important, as Bar-Tal states, is the fact that enemy's humanity and morality are denied: it is an evil entity and, due to this, it does not perceive any limits in afflicting the counterpart (2013, p.180). This is demonstrated by the fact that America went beyond any line of respect occupying their holy sites, a sacrilege that Muslims must not tolerate. From Bin Laden's point of view, the rebellion of a population that has a long been mistreated is something legitimate, and the means used are justified by the goals for which they are implemented.

This is the result of two themes listed by Bar-Tal, first of all it is obvious that Bin Laden represents with a positive image those Muslims that combat for defending their homelands and *Umma*.

In fact, they represent the example that all believers should follow if they want to be close to God and His willingness (Bar- Tal, 2013, p.190). Given the fact that these are right people, the motifs that guide them must be honorable too. When people are convinced that their goals and beliefs are just, then, they are ready to start the battle for which they are fighting for, this is the real point of departure (Bar-Tal, 2013, p.176).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

Now it is clear what is the explanation behind the continuous Bin Laden's exaltation of those Muslims, that are doing whatever in their hands for stopping the advancement of the enemy.

In order to convince the audience, he reinforces his arguments by counterposing these Good Muslims to infidel Muslims that are accepting and embracing external occupations, one example being the King of Saudi Arabia⁵⁵, who let crusaders enter in the Arabian Peninsula (FBIS, 2004, p.21).

It is also a matter of security. In fact, in times of intractable conflicts, the personal and collective safety is missing condition that needs to be restored (Bar- Tal, 2013, p.192). Al-Qaeda's leader repeatedly stresses that the contemporaneous living conditions of people in the Arabian Peninsula are worse than ever, "People have been greatly preoccupied with matters of their livelihood. Talk of economic decline, high prices, massive debts, and overcrowded prisons is widespread and endless in society." (FBIS, 2004, p.15).

Muslims and, above all young Muslims, "the men of the bright future of Muhammad's nation", have to unite their strength and combat in honor of their land, from this emerges the use of the societal beliefs of patriotism and unity (FBIS, 2004, p.24). The collective participation in the conflict is essential, and, in addition, patriotism, linking the members of the society, depicts those people dying in honor of their country as heroes (Bar-Tal, 2013, pp.196-197). The latter is a very important concept in Bin Laden's discourse.

In fact, in more than one occasion, he exalts the use of Jihad and every violent means against the enemy, even if it would bring the death of the same combatant. To die for the *Umma*, and more, for God, is the best way to end our existence (FBIS, 2004, p.27). In conclusion, "Societies engaged in intractable conflict need a light at the end of the tunnel" providing them a kind of hope when they are suffering (Bar-Tal, 2013, p.200). This hope, in Bin Laden's declaration of war, is represented by the Muslims' victory over the infidels, a victory that would be granted thanks to the help of God.

The central difference between al-Qaeda and Hezbollah resides on the development of their activities along the years, in the case under analysis in this section, the shift has not been towards a more political and economic ground. Instead, the terrorist character of the organization has remained immutable, and perhaps has become even stronger.

It is true that the initial path of both, Hezbollah and al-Qaeda, has been similar from some aspects: having paved the way with the religious fundamentals, that attracts the more religious part of Muslims and that demonstrates the true Islamic basis of the organizations. Later, they have moved to a more modern scenario with different connotations in the two cases. Regarding al-Qaeda, this new scenario comprehends an uninhibited usage of information technologies, as for example the Internet, that is a very suitable platform, being anonymous and devoid of censorship, and also for the fact that many sources are in English (Cannata, 2014, p.4). In addition, the latter not only serves to spread the messages, organizing attacks and creating a

⁵⁵ At the time King Fahd.

private proxy, but also to advertise Muslims of possible “open positions” inside the organization (Rabasa, 2006, pp. 17-18). This platform has been used as a proper recruitment tool, overstepping and expanding its primary use as a propaganda’s machine. It is also true that the contemporaneous use of manifestos and written documents has not been confined. In fact, different training manuals and of the Encyclopedia of the Afghan Jihad were published. All of this is accompanied by the presence of successful magazines, as “The Call of Islam” or “The Voice of Islam”. These new written forms experimented the passage to a less elevated and less prosaic form of language. It is very likely to find videos of the past successful attack in the name of the international Jihad, being them concrete proofs of their actual happening.

The innovations and modernizations of al-Qaeda’s means of propaganda are nothing more than the consequence of the structural changes underwent by the same organization across the years.

In fact, its prior structure, before 9/11, was characterized by a core composed of almost twelve individuals, surrounded by another circle of hundred members. At the top position of the first core there was Bin Laden, and immediately under him the Emir. The latter was followed in turn by the consultative committee, usually composed of veterans. Moreover, there are other four operational committees, covering different spheres as for instance the military, business, and media (Rabasa, 2006, p.29).

The counter-terrorism campaign has always concentrated on killing the individuals forming this essential core of the organization. However, until recent years, the central figures as al-Zawahiri and Bin Laden have always resisted these attacks. What this campaign really brought about was a change in the role of the leading figures, who gradually ceased from being the active center of power of the organization.

They rather assumed the role of ideological inspirers, issuing messages via indirect means, like the Internet (Rabasa, 2006, p.31). In fact, having lost all the secure basis and the several figures rotating around them, the need to rely on dispersed terrorist cells has become more and more urgent.

While at the beginning the radicalization process and the recruitment of Jihadist members were very peculiar and personal, over e time a depersonalization of this mechanism took place.

The phase of contracting with the singular individual for a specific attack is very unusual today.

More precisely, it coincided with the step during which the possible recruit had to demonstrate his commitment to Islam and his total loyalty and fidelity to al-Qaeda.

In recent times, it is rather the tactic of loose networks that became the most diffused one: diffused cells were formed worldwide, composed of some recruits. Each of them was dismantled after a specific operation (Rabasa, 2006, p.40). This strategy is efficient in rendering the identification of terrorists difficult.

Even if the members of the cell are imprisoned afterwards, the organization at the whole level is not really affected. The worldwide spreading of al-Qaeda is also demonstrated by the existence of terrorist sites in English language, something that indicates the increasing interest in recruiting Muslims from the West.

Leaving in the past on-the-ground radicalization process and face-to-face communication for purposes of recruitment and support, new recruits are increasingly attracted by online websites, social media, and other virtual tools. Nowadays, their messages do not encounter spatial boundaries nor expressional limits, being censorship and control over them hard to exercise; Muslim from all over the World are now possible future terrorist recruits. However, also the online campaign has been subject to changes, dividing its evolution into a first and second phase, the watershed is represented by the 9/11 events.

Initially, information was shared among people that already supported al-Qaeda, and they did not include any explanations of al-Qaeda future projects. Moreover, this terrorist organization did not use to take responsibility for the attacks (Cannata, 2014, pp.23-24).

September 2001 granted to al-Qaeda larger visibility, that gave it the possibility to open its personal website, *Al Neda*, also containing the instructions around the methods for waging online Jihad.

Another famous web-magazine, called *Inspire*, is a strong platform for recruitment.

In fact, while spreading violent and cruel messages on how attacking the West, it loudly invites English speaking male youngsters to join al-Qaeda and its mission. As I have already underlined, a central feature of this second stage has been the exploiting of online bases for recruiting new personnel from the international audience. This new audience is formed by young people, mostly living in western countries.

This is one of the reasons why, as 2011 and 2017 Europol's statistics demonstrate, the phenomenon of homegrown terrorism largely increased in the last years (Europol, 2016, 2017).

These individuals are called for carrying out lone-wolf operations in their countries.

They are specially required to perform suicide bombing plots (Cannata, 2014, p.26).

In the new century, many cities in Europe, America, and Canada have experienced terrorist attacks planned by local residents or citizens, that utilize al-Qaeda as their ideological inspiration.

This is what we mean for homegrown terrorism, people that have always lived in the West and that radicalize themselves becoming effective terrorists while remaining in their Western country (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p. 2). For the purpose of my research, I would like to focus my attention on the process of radicalization afforded by these people, and not only on the actual act of terrorism, that represents only the final stage of this mechanism. This is very relevant because it represents one of the latest and most cutting-edge "socialization" strategy developed by terrorists, in order to gather new al-Qaeda's recruits.

The point of departure is clearly the religious dimension. In this case it is the Jihadi-Salafi ideology, that is the founding doctrine of al-Qaeda itself. Moreover, a fundamental role is embodied by the so-called "Radicalization Incubators" (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p.20). The latter are locations serving as meeting place for those that have chosen to pursue radicalization, for instance: Mosques, prisons, cafes, but also virtual

platforms as chat-rooms. Following the model constructed by the New York City Police Department, radicalization meets four stages culminating in the implementation of the terrorist act.

However, not every individual that endorses this process succeeds in ending it, and, even though it is going to be explained like a linear progression, in reality, it is not always the case (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p.19).

The first phase is denominated “Pre-Radicalization”, and it is when the individual is almost extraneous to Jihadi-Salafi ideology, or at least, he does not follow its teachings. By the way, in this general context, many Muslims living in the West are united by the same feeling of isolation, that works as the connector between them. These individuals are usually male Muslims under the age of thirty-five, from middle-class families, that have at least obtained high-school education. It arrives a moment in which the individual, pushed by internal and external factors, gets closer to Salafi Islam (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p.30).

Frequently the watershed is represented by a changing event or by a period of crisis, after which the individual starts having doubts towards its old beliefs. This step is called “Self-Identification”, and there can be different triggering reasons behind (economic, social, political, personal) (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p.60). Political reasons, and so the frequent exposing to extremist political campaigns, that depicts the West as the cruel monster committing atrocities against Muslims, and Personal reasons (the death of a close person in related circumstances) are the most diffused causes backing the identity crisis.

The individual, lost in the middle of nowhere, looks around for answers and for people ready to give them. At this stage, it seems that religions is the only safe haven left.

“Indoctrination” is the momentum when the Jihadi-Salafi ideology is totally embraced, and the individual starts believing that the Salafi cause needs his support, also at the cost of using violence.

The aim now is creating a pure fundamentalist Muslim community worldwide, destroying and killing all the non-believers that are seen as the enemies. While the previous steps were mainly individual, now the individual joins a group of like-minded extremists that becomes his new family.

In this way, any links with external actors become unnecessary, and any possible interference with the real world is avoided. The final step, “Jihadization”, is reached when the new member endorsed the duty to participate in Jihad as the mujahideen, and starts planning the terrorist attack, something that usually is done in groups (Silber & Bhatt, 2007, p.43). The fourth phase is subdivided into other stages: after having accepted Jihad, the leaders of the cluster can decide to travel abroad to join militant training camps in Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kashmir or Somalia. In the meanwhile, members become closer and closer between them thanks to different activities, as for example camping, making the ties with the external world even more redundant. Once terrorists are fully mentally prepared, they start planning the attack.

First of all, they make researches, then they decide the way of operating. When everything is planned, they finally gather the necessary material. The radicalization process culminates with the actual realization of the terrorist attack.

5. Conclusion and Possible Future Scenarios

This is the last chapter of my research and I would like to devote it to processing all that I have found, trying to implement these results into future scenarios.

In both organizations, the religious component has been very strong. It has been the primary captivating factor for the audience, also serving as the glue holding the followers together towards a unique aim: *Umma*. However, we can notice a change in the Hezbollah's leader behavior with the passing of the years. Nasrallah's rhetoric has been less and less characterized by the pretentious religious inspirations that filled up his initial statements and declarations. From a certain moment on, Religion started to be unsatisfactory. Lebanese people did not need to hear about a possible reward in the afterlife, but rather they needed help in their life on earth. They wanted to get out from their poor conditions and the suffering characterizing their existences. However, this was a support that only a recognized organism could bring to them.

Hezbollah with Nasrallah, considering the situation as an occasion to get a large number of followers, decided to join the Parliamentary Election. For this reason, the organization has undergone a huge transformation, abandoning much of their extremist themes that use to mark terrorist organizations. Nasrallah's new statements and declarations, together with the political manifestos, spread a new image of Hezbollah. It seemed that this organization has transformed itself into a perfectly legal political party willing to bring massive renewals and benefits to Lebanon and its inhabitants.

In this process, the social sector has played an important role. In fact, Hezbollah has spent and continue spending much of its funding in this sector, as for example in the education, the healthcare, and construction spheres. Political manifestos are the demonstration of what I am stating. Having almost abandoned the prayers to Allah, therein Hezbollah declares numerous social-economic reforms to render Lebanon a better place. This change also coincided with the gaining of higher-ranking participation.

Besides the poor masses of people, at that time, also the nobles and richer individuals were attracted by this new promising party. Perhaps, this is exactly what Hassan Nasrallah was yearning for.

Having already gained extended support as a terrorist organization from the lower classes, the moment to attract further people had arrived. However, the fulfillment of this desire could only be possible thanks to a drastic change. This would have rendered possible the seducing of a different audience.

As a political party, it seriously focused on local issues, and for this reason, the biggest enemy became the near enemy, and not the Western countries any longer.

In the twenty-first century, Hezbollah has denied the responsibility of every terrorist attack for which it was accused. This probably because it is willing to maintain its role of political party unblemished.

In the meanwhile, it entered the Syrian Civil War supporting the President Bashar al-Assad's regime, and declaring in 2018 that, even after its victory, it would not leave Syria until it is "Fully liberated from terrorists"(Al Jazeera, 2018). The latter reported sentence is very crucial, in fact, it perfectly delineates the image that Hezbollah has built over time. Hezbollah is not a terrorist organization, Hezbollah is the actor that combats and defeats the terrorists. As the Lebanese Parliamentary election held in May 2018 has shown, Hezbollah' strength inside the Lebanese scenario has remained untouched. In fact, it won a total of 70 seats, out of 128, while the anti-Hezbollah movement went through a decrease in their seats (Counter Extremist Project, 2019).

For what concerns al-Qaeda, it has never been involved in the official political-electoral sphere.

In addition, contrarily to the former, religion has continued to perform some kind of roles.

Al-Qaeda's fighters must combat the enemy worldwide in the name of Islam and Allah, without making distinctions between combatants or civilians. There is no limit in this War.

Bin Laden's statements are very similar to those of Nasrallah of the first period.

They are both full of religious essentials and incitements towards Muslims, making us understand the oratorical tactics used by these leaders. In the case of Al-Qaeda, the watershed was the attack to the Twin Towers of September 2001. Even if it was organizationally perfect, it did not grant to al-Qaeda the desired popularity. Rather, the majority of Muslims across the world started denouncing it and the organization's attacks as against Islam and its precepts. For this reason, it has become increasingly difficult to al-Qaeda's recruits to find a safe place where establish and put their headquarter. The solution to this has been the forming of different terrorist cells scattered across the world, that can easily bring attacks from within the land of the enemy. In fact, contrarily to Hezbollah, al-Qaeda has always been more concentrated on the Global scenario and on the far enemy, the US.

The dispersion of al-Qaeda's fighters has caused the arising of a new threatening phenomenon, that in Europe has taken ground very fast. Its name is homegrown terrorism, and as NYPD's study claims, the process of radicalization of these new followers is generally divided into four steps.

The Europol Annual Reports of the last years have reported that the situation regarding terrorism in Europe has not improved recently. Instead, as the Report of 2017 states, the frequency of jihadist attacks have increased and their objects are mostly soft targets, state symbols, and west lifestyle symbols.

As homegrown terrorism provides for, the widespread techniques are lone-wolf, sometimes connected to close circle, and networks (Europol, 2017). Europol 2018, in showing the number of arrests in 2017, put France in the first place with 373 jihadists, then Spain with 78, and Germany with 52. Italy holds the seventh position with 26 arrests (Europol, 2018).

Obviously, the European Parliament has tried to adopt different measures to deal with the threats, such as the ones of 2017 that provided for mandatory checks at external borders or for stronger controls on firearms and on the exports of arms. However, nothing has proved to be sufficient. Terrorist attacks have continued, and even in recent times, we have experienced the happening of tragic events not only in Europe but across the World.

Nonetheless, not all of these attacks are pertaining to al-Qaeda. In fact, since the establishment of the new Caliphate in 2014, ISIL has represented a valid competitor to al-Qaeda. The former, exploiting the strategy of decentralization, has started to attract a growing number of followers from the international arena, leading al-Qaeda to put more and more efforts in the recruitment process. This has created a real global competition between the two. One of its manifestations are their fights via tweets, whereby each organization declares itself the most feared by the West (il Post, 2015).

The strength of al-Qaeda turned out to be affected and overshadowed by this war of supremacy.

However, this may have been an occasion for the latter to strengthen its capabilities and renovate its structural organization. It is not still clear what the future holds, but something is undebatable: the terrorist threat is not in decline.

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Abstract

I tempi moderni hanno sperimentato l'irrefrenabile avanzata di un fenomeno che ha causato, e causa tutt'oggi numerose vittime in tutto il mondo.

Esso prende il nome di Terrorismo e la sua definizione è ancora oggi largamente discussa.

Nonostante quella più generica del vocabolario lo identifichi come la minaccia di azioni violente compiute per motivi prettamente politici, al momento non esiste davvero un'esplicitazione più dettagliata che unisca e accordi tutti universalmente. Questo è infatti uno dei fattori per cui gli Stati, designando le organizzazioni da loro considerate terroristiche, non sempre risultano essere d'accordo.

E' importante sottolineare ciò, poiché nel corso di questa ricerca, verranno portati come casi da analizzare due organizzazioni Islamiche estremiste molto diverse tra loro.

Una di esse, Al-Qaeda, viene infatti riconosciuta come organizzazione terroristica pressoché a livello globale, mentre l'altra, Hezbollah, rappresenta un modello più difficile da osservare.

Quest'ultima venne fondata a fine degli anni 80' con scopi e fini prettamente terroristici, ed i suoi attacchi ne erano una dimostrazione. Nel 1992 la decisione di entrare in Parlamento ha messo in dubbio il suo carattere "terroristico". Da questo momento in poi, Hezbollah è diventato un partito politico a tutti gli effetti, e ciò ha creato accesi dibattiti nell'arena internazionale intorno al comportamento da tenere nei suoi confronti. Dall'Agosto 2017, l'Unione Europea ha negato la denominazione di Hezbollah come organizzazione terroristica nella sua totalità. Solo i suoi apparati militari ed il Consiglio del Jihad vengono riconosciuti come tali. Menzionare queste due organizzazioni, significa quindi menzionare un gruppo di individui che ha deciso di partecipare alla vita attiva e passiva di queste due entità.

Ovviamente, questa è una scelta che coinvolge una ferma e profonda condivisione dell'ideologia dell'organizzazione da parte del reclutato. A maggior ragione in questo caso, in cui gli individui sono pronti a perdere la loro stessa vita nel combattere per difendere e diffondere le convinzioni e le basi religiose del proprio gruppo.

E' proprio qui che la nostra curiosità subentra.

Come può un singolo individuo essere attirato da una realtà così estrema?

Come si può decidere di voler perdere la propria vita compiendo atti che nuocciono anche alla vita di altri esseri?

Ovviamente tutto segue una logica e un processo ben dettagliato.

Ci sono varie strategie e tattiche che vengono utilizzate prima per radicalizzare questi individui, ed in seguito per reclutarli. In tutto ciò, il leader riveste un ruolo centrale. Lui non è solo il rappresentante dell'organizzazione a livello globale, ma è anche la figura di riferimento dei seguaci.

I futuri aderenti, ascoltando le sue parole ed i suoi messaggi, devono trovare la forza e la volontà per intraprendere un tale indottrinamento.

Prima di trattare e sviluppare questa tematica, è, però, necessario inquadrare storicamente la nascita e l'evoluzione delle due organizzazioni prese in analisi.

Hezbollah comparse sulla scena durante la Guerra Civile Libanese (1975-1990) ed uno dei religiosi che più ispirò la sua fondazione fu proprio Musa al-Sadr.

Durante questa guerra, l'intervento e l'occupazione Israeliana del Sud del Libano causò, a sua volta, l'intromissione dell'Organizzazione per la Liberazione della Palestina all'interno degli affari Libanesi. Quest'ultima aveva come primo obiettivo l'espulsione e la istruzione di Israele.

Comunque il nemico sionista non si fece intimorire, così lanciò diverse Operazioni che prevedevano l'invasione e l'attacco ai villaggi della parte meridionale del Libano.

Fu proprio in questi anni che alcuni Sciiti decisero di unirsi tra loro per collaborare contro le forze Israeliane. Su esempio della contemporanea rivoluzione Iraniana guidata da Khomeini e delle sue basi ideologiche, nel 1982 crearono Hezbollah, con l'obiettivo di creare un regime Islamico in Libano.

I primi anni furono completamente dedicati a puri attacchi terroristici contro Israele, poi nel 1985 si iniziarono a sperimentare i primi cambiamenti, ma comunque il suo carattere terroristico persisteva.

Quando la Guerra Civile sperimentò delle battute di arresto, Hezbollah iniziò a cercare il consenso delle masse all'interno della Comunità Libanese, per poi comunicare nel 1992 la sua decisione di candidarsi alle elezioni Parlamentari. Ciò fu accompagnato dall'elezione di un nuovo leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

Alle elezioni di quell'anno, Hezbollah ottenne un grande successo, segnando il suo passaggio da pura organizzazione terroristica a partito politico.

Un'altra mossa fondamentale per la scalata al successo di Hezbollah la si può collocare nel suo schieramento a favore di Najib Mikati nel 2011, che poco dopo la caduta del governo Hariri ne prese il posto diventando Primo Ministro. Oggi, Hezbollah detiene la preminenza politica nel territorio Libanese.

Molto diversa è invece l'evoluzione di al-Qaeda.

Questo diversamente dal primo, che è focalizzato prettamente su tematiche locali e territoriale, si colloca tra i movimenti di jihadismo globale. Essi sono uniti tra loro da caratteristiche simili, quali per esempio l'odio sfrenato contro l'Occidente, e soprattutto contro gli Stati Uniti, denominati *Far Enemy*.

L'ideologia dei fondatori di al-Qaeda, Bin Laden ed al-Zawahiri, si ispira agli insegnamenti di Sayyid Qutb, che vennero adattati e cambiati seguendo i bisogni e le necessità di questa nuova organizzazione.

La culla di al-Qaeda fu proprio l'Afghanistan. Gli anni che lo videro coinvolto nella guerra contro il regime comunista al potere, rappresentarono una grande occasione per questa organizzazione, che vide radunarsi migliaia di Musulmani da tutto il mondo per combattere.

Così Bin Laden, adattando gli insegnamenti del suo mentore Shaykh Abdullah Azzam e Sayyid Qutb, nel 1988 fondò al-Qaeda al-Asarkyia. Comunque, le prime posizioni anti-Americane si iniziarono a manifestare durante la Guerra del Golfo, in cui l'intervento degli Stati Uniti venne interpretato come una tattica per sfruttare le risorse petrolifere degli Stati Arabi. Queste posizioni si andarono estremizzando con l'accettazione da parte dell'Arabia Saudita dello stazionamento delle truppe Americane sul suo suolo, considerato sacro. Fu così che il Jihad iniziò ad avere un carattere transnazionale, e gli attacchi terroristici si iniziarono ad intensificarsi a livello globale.

A parte un breve periodo in Sudan, Bin Laden e i suoi seguaci trovarono nell'Afghanistan un porto sicuro, soprattutto sotto il regime Talebano, che consentì loro di reclutare e addestrare un crescente numero di giovani. Al-Qaeda venne formalmente creato nel 1998, e pochi anni dopo inscenò il suo più celebre attacco, quello alle Torri Gemelle del 2001.

Nonostante esso rappresenti un successo dell'organizzazione strategicamente parlando, molte persone all'interno del mondo Musulmano iniziarono a criticare l'accaduto ed al-Qaeda in sé.

L'invasione Statunitense dell'Afghanistan nel 2001 portò ad una crescente decentralizzazione di al-Qaeda, che da questo momento in poi ha iniziato ad avere insediamenti segreti sparsi in tutto il mondo, capaci anche di organizzare attacchi autonomamente. L'avvicinamento di al-Zarqawi ad al-Qaeda ha segnato l'inizio del periodo di declino di questo gruppo, che è diventato sempre meno centralizzato e più disperso a livello globale. Nell'ultimo decennio la morte di Bin Laden e la nascita dello Stato Islamico in Iraq hanno portato un'ulteriore decadenza di questa organizzazione.

Hezbollah ed al-Qaeda condividono la medesima base religiosa, ossia l'Islam, che sebbene interpretato in due modi molto diversi tra loro, uno Sciita ed uno Sunnita, rappresenta il centro di tutto.

La legge Islamica, la *Sharia*, è fondata sul Corano e sulla Sunna ed è proprio questa che dovrebbe essere applicata all'interno della Comunità Islamica Ideale, l'*Umma*. Le terre che oggi sono già governate secondo la *Sharia*, vengono definite *Dar al-Islam*, qui un'azione di promulgazione, *Dawa*, è sufficiente.

Per quanto riguarda la restante parte di territorio, *Dar al-Harb*, qui l'ordine deve essere stabilito attraverso un'azione di Jihad. Nonostante questo termine in sé non definisca un'azione violenta, le organizzazioni terroristiche, ed in particolare quelle che stiamo trattando, lo interpretano come uno sforzo difensivo ed offensivo violento contro tutti coloro che osano ostacolare la realizzazione della *Umma*.

E' proprio il Jihad e l'eventuale sacrificio che garantiscono agli individui un posto sicuro in Paradiso dopo la morte. Tutto ciò è condiviso sia dagli individui facenti parte di Hezbollah che dai componenti di al-Qaeda.

Comunque, come gli scopi e le aspirazioni di al-Qaeda hanno sempre abbracciato un panorama più vasto di quello locale, anche le sue basi ideologiche comprendono riflessioni più onnicomprehensive.

Bin Laden analizzando il mondo Islamico che lo circondava, si rese conto che i Musulmani sembravano essere affetti da un malessere generalizzato, la cui unica cura era la fondazione di uno Stato Islamico, che riportasse il giusto ordine delle cose. Ancora una volta l'ostacolo a tutto ciò non era solo impersonato dallo Stato di Israele, ma soprattutto da quello Americano, e le sue aspirazioni Imperialistiche.

Quindi, secondo l'ideologia fondante di al-Qaeda, il Jihad è un obbligo morale che ogni Musulmano deve protrarre in qualsiasi parte del mondo, senza distinzioni tra combattenti e civili.

Come espresso all'inizio, gli aderenti a queste due organizzazioni subiscono un indottrinamento tale che, alla fine, risultano essere così convinti delle loro credenze, che sono disposti a compiere qualsiasi atto pur di onorare il loro credo. Ovviamente la religione è un tassello importante all'interno di questo processo, ma non l'unico. Per analizzare le tattiche e le strategie utilizzate dai leader delle due organizzazioni per attrarre nuovi aderenti e reclute è stato indispensabile l'analisi dei loro discorsi, programmi elettorali (nel caso di Hezbollah) e lettere.

Partendo da Hezbollah, data la sua interna scissione tra apparato istituzionale-politico e militare, è opportuno dividere a sua volta gli approcci e le strategie.

In ambito politico, dopo lo studio attento di vari discorsi di Hassan Nasrallah e dei diversi programmi elettorali, emerge una chiara evoluzione dai primi anni ad oggi.

Inizialmente i temi religiosi e l'antagonismo con Israele erano l'argomento principale di questi scritti.

Essi venivano sfruttati per incuriosire ed appassionare la parte più povera e quella più indottrinata della società Libanese. Con il passare degli anni, l'entrata in Parlamento e la politicizzazione del movimento, i temi religiosi hanno iniziato a rivestire un ruolo sempre meno centrale, lasciando spazio a tematiche sociali ed economiche riguardanti perlopiù il territorio Libanese. Giustizia ed uguaglianza sono adesso il motto di questo partito politico, che sembra battersi per il benessere dei cittadini Libanesi e della loro terra.

Un atteggiamento tale ha favorito l'avvicinamento al partito di una più larga fetta di popolazione, che è più interessata alle tematiche economico-politiche attuali di Hezbollah e del suo leader, che alle sue basi religiose Islamiche.

Per quanto riguarda l'apparato militare di Hezbollah, il reclutamento di nuovi combattenti segue un processo ben delineato, volto alla formazione di individui pronti a compiere atti estremi in onore del loro credo.

Questo indottrinamento ha inizio durante l'infanzia dell'individuo, per poi continuare nell'età più adulta attraverso allenamenti estremamente duri e severi. Ci sono casi in cui l'interessato decide di approcciarsi ad Hezbollah durante una fase più matura della sua esistenza.

Il percorso da affrontare non è comunque facile: molte prove e sforzi lo aspettano, il tutto per testare la sua profonda convinzione nei riguardi del cammino che sta intraprendendo.

Essendo al-Qaeda una pura organizzazione terroristica, la distinzione fatta per Hezbollah tra apparato politico e militare adesso non è necessaria.

In questa circostanza è doveroso analizzare la propaganda ed il processo di reclutamento utilizzati all'interno di questa organizzazione, ed i vari cambiamenti apportati durante il corso degli anni.

Con il passare degli anni e la modernizzazione, le innovazioni tecnologiche sono subentrate anche all'interno della quotidianità di tale gruppo. Questo, e soprattutto l'uso di piattaforme virtuali, ha permesso la diffusione di al-Qaeda a livello globale. Oggi infatti al-Qaeda è un'organizzazione a più livelli, che lavora attraverso mezzi molto diversi tra loro, attuando una strategia diversa a seconda del caso e della situazione che si trova a dover affrontare.

Ovviamente, la presenza di un leader potente e carismatico, quale Bin Laden, ha sempre rappresentato un punto di forza per al-Qaeda. Dall'analisi delle sue lettere, dei suoi discorsi e delle sue Fatwas, emerge, anche in questo caso, un profondo attaccamento alle tematiche religiose, volte ad unire chi è adiacente a questo gruppo ed a rendere legittimi certi atti estremi.

Per comprendere più a fondo le strategie oratorie adottate da Bin Laden è stato utile affiancare la sua dichiarazione di Guerra all'America del 1996 all'analisi di Bar-Tal dell'*Ethos* del conflitto.

Da questo paragone emerge il modo in cui lo stato emotivo degli individui che condividono una determinata situazione di conflitto, viene sfruttato dal leader come collante e mezzo di convincimento per combattere il nemico.

Sebbene nel primo caso il passare degli anni abbia portato ad una maggiore istituzionalizzazione delle tematiche adottate ai fini di convincimento, nel caso di al-Qaeda il tempo ha solo addotto una crescente tendenza alla radicalizzazione ed al carattere terroristico dell'organizzazione.

La sua dilagante diffusione nel mondo ha inoltre fatto sì che il processo di reclutamento abbia subito un fase di depersonalizzazione. Esso infatti è passato dall'essere un qualcosa di individuale e personale, all'essere svolto su piattaforme virtuali, senza un reale incontro tra reclutate e reclutato.

Questa è stata una delle principali cause alla base del fenomeno di *Homegrown Terrorism* in Europa, che negli ultimi anni, come riportato dalle statistiche dell'Europol, è andato incontro ad una drastica e crescente disseminazione. Al giorno d'oggi, sempre più attacchi terroristici vengono perpetrati da cittadini e residenti degli Stati Occidentali, dopo essere andati incontro ad un processo di radicalizzazione, svoltosi anch'esso nello stato di residenza.

A seguito di uno studio attento e dettagliato da parte del Dipartimento di Polizia di New York, è emerso che anche questo atto di radicalizzazione e reclutamento segue delle fasi ben precise.

Esse sono quattro - *Pre-Radicalization*, *Self-Identification*, *Indoctrination*, and *Jihadization* - e solitamente il tutto culmina con l'esecuzione del vero e proprio attacco terroristico.

A questo punto, cercando di riassumere quanto detto fino adesso, la componente religiosa è stata sia un fattore di attrazione, sia un collante per i sostenitori di queste due organizzazioni.

Comunque, come è già stato sottolineato, nel corso degli anni sia Hezbollah che al-Qaeda sono andate incontro ad un processo di cambiamento ed evoluzione.

Per quanto riguarda Hezbollah, le tematiche politiche ed economiche hanno iniziato a rivestire un ruolo più centrale, permettendo così a questo partito politico l'ottenimento di un più vasto consenso pubblico e di simpatizzanti facenti parte di classi sociali più elevate.

Dall'altro lato, sebbene i primi documenti di Bin Laden e Nasrallah fossero molto simili, al-Qaeda non si è mai avvicinato alla competizione politico-elettorale. Questo ha invece sperimentato una maggiore identificazione con il suo carattere estremista e radicale. La sua guerra contro gli infedeli non ha mai accettato e tuttora non accetta limitazioni. I suoi seguaci devono essere pronti a combattere in nome di Allah e dell'Islam, senza alcun tipo di distinzione tra combattenti e civili.

Mentre in Hezbollah i primi cambiamenti si sono iniziati ad intravedere con la sua entrata in Parlamento, quindi dopo la sua presa di coscienza dell'essenzialità di attrarre un nuovo tipo di audience, nel caso di al-Qaeda lo spartiacque viene rappresentato dall'attacco alle Torri Gemelle.

Conseguentemente al 9/11, i suoi seguaci, con l'intento di trovare un posto sicuro in cui risiedere, hanno iniziato a spargersi per il mondo, formando piccoli nuclei terroristici capaci di intraprendere attacchi dall'interno degli stati considerati nemici.

E' proprio da qui che ha avuto origine il fenomeno chiamato *Homegrown Terrorism*, che ha fatto sì che gli attacchi negli ultimi anni si siano moltiplicati in modo preoccupante.

Inoltre, è da ciò che deriva la più netta differenza tra Hezbollah ed al-Qaeda.

Il passare del tempo e l'evoluzione di questi due attori, nel primo caso ha favorito un approccio sempre più devoluto alla dimensione locale e territoriale del Libano, in uno scenario di legalità e legittimità.

Al-Qaeda invece si è sempre più spinto verso obiettivi ed ambizioni globali.

Ciò fa sì che la minaccia terroristica non sia più limitata a territori circoscritti nei confini Arabi o Israeliani, bensì ad un panorama che investe tutto il globo e tutti i cittadini del mondo.

Oggi infatti, nonostante le diverse misure adottate dai vari Stati per cercare di ostacolare la dispersione di queste cellule terroristiche e dei loro attacchi, tragici eventi sembrano poter accadere ogni giorno.

Con il passare del tempo, se nulla cambia, le speranze di un futuro non contaminato dalla minaccia terroristica sembrano destinate a diminuire.