Hizbullah’s Construction of National Identity:
“We are in principle not like Others”
Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to understand how national identity is discursively constructed by Hizbullah at a time of national crisis, and to shed light on its potential effects on the social world. The critical discourse analysis focuses on how difference and otherness are constructed on Hizbullah’s television channel Al-Manar. It illuminates Hizbullah’s discursive construal of a national in-group and an ‘enemy’ out-group, and identifies the main discourses that Hizbullah draws upon. The backdrop is the violent events in the Lebanese town of Arsal, erupting in early August 2014 and soon amounting to a national crisis. How Hizbullah, one of the main political actors in Lebanon and the region, constructs the world discursively does arguably have impact on the social world. The analysis identifies an order of discourse that on the one hand is permeated by pluralism and inclusion and on the other hand influenced by an exclusionary discourse connecting the out-group to terrorism. The author suggests that the Western discourse of ‘war on terrorism’ has been recontextualised by Hizbullah, and argues that there are reasons to pay close attention to the potentially harmful socially constructive effects of this discourse. Nevertheless, a cross-confessional national unity is simultaneously highlighted in Hizbullah’s discourse.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Hizbullah, Al-Manar, Discourse, Media, Nationalism, Identity construction, National Crisis, Recontextualisation, Terrorism, Lebanon
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1. Introduction

The development and maintenance of every culture require the existence of another different and competing *alter ego*. The construction of identity [...] involves establishing opposites and "others" whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their difference from "us". Each age and society re-creates its "Others".¹

Edward Said

Attentive of the media as important sites of ideological production, this paper examines Hizbullah’s representations of national identity in the speech² by Hizbullah’s General Secretary Hassan Nasrallah broadcasted on the organisation’s television channel, Al Manar, on 23 September 2014, as well as in the main news bulletin of the same day and in selected television programmes broadcasted within the same week. Using a critical discourse approach, the paper focuses on how the violent events in the Lebanese town of Arsal (‘Arsāl), erupting in early August 2014, prompted Hizbullah’s articulation of its Lebanese national identity. Drawing on Costelloe’s point of departure, that “national identity and expressions of nationalism are defined in an exclusionary way, and that a discourse of sameness constructs symbolic boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’”³, the analysis of this paper aims to examine how difference and otherness and the boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are constructed by Hizbullah on its television channel Al-Manar at a time of ‘national crisis’. A number of other studies have focused on how discursive ‘othering’ is achieved through the creation of in- and out-groups in various contexts. The media strategy and the media production of Hizbullah have enjoyed the academic limelight. Hizbullah’s discourse, as expressed in the speeches of its leader, policy documents, literature and poetry, has also attracted the attention of previous scholars. However, this paper adds to previous research by applying a critical discourse analysis of Hizbullah’s construction of difference and othering at a time of national crisis, and in a socio-political situation characterised as increasingly polarised. Moreover, by focusing on the television programmes broadcasted on Al-Manar, I have wished to illuminate the construction of a ‘we’ and an

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² Hassan Nasrallah’s speech on 23 Sep 2014 is available at al-Manar’s website in a “live” presentation (in which Nasrallah is using a mixed language of Lebanese Colloquial Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic) and in writing (Modern Standard Arabic only). This paper includes an analysis of the “live” presentation of Nasrallah’s speech. The Arabic language and transcriptions included in this paper include both Lebanese Colloquial and Modern Standard Arabic. I have chosen to “standardise” Nasrallah’s language somewhat by, for example, generally writing out the letter ǧāf which is largely omitted in Lebanese Colloquial Arabic. The verbal speech is available at: http://www.almanar.com.lb/programs/pdetails.php?pid=751&eid=124474&wid=3815. (Accessed from 2014-10-16).
‘other’ in texts and images that reach people in Lebanon (and far beyond) in their very living rooms and everyday life. Whereas policy documents and party programmes are important products as such, this paper aims to highlight important ideological construals that reach the levels of the grass roots as well as of the leaders. By applying Critical Discourse Analysis, I venture from the understanding that discourse is intertwined with the social world; that discourse and the social world mutually construct each other. Hence, how one of the major political actors in Lebanon and the region, Hizbullah, constructs the world discursively does inevitably have impact on the social world. The effects of discourse depend however on context and power and are difficult to determine. The analysis of this paper identifies an ‘order of discourse’ in the text and images of Al-Manar that on the one hand is permeated by pluralism and inclusion, and on the other hand is influenced by an exclusionary discourse connecting the out-group to ‘terrorism’. Notwithstanding the difficulties in predicting the socially constructive effects of discourse, I argue that there are reasons to pay close attention to the potentially harmful effects on the social world that Hizbullah’s exclusionary ‘discourse on terrorism’ may have.

1.1 Purpose
The purpose of this paper is to understand how national identity is discursively constructed by Hizbullah at a time of national crisis. Through a critical discourse analysis focusing on language and image on Al-Manar, the paper examines Hizbullah’s construction of in- and out-groups, of a national ‘we’ and an ‘enemy’ other. The over-all purpose is to shed light on the potential socially constructive effects of Hizbullah’s discourse on the polarised, destabilised and extremely fragile situation in Lebanon and the region.

1.2 Research questions
How are difference and otherness constructed in the text and images broadcasted on Al-Manar in late September 2014? What groups and actors make up the national in- and out-groups? What discourses does Hizbullah draw upon in its construction of national identity? What does Hizbullah’s order of discourse suggest in terms of potential effects on the social world?

1.3 Research design
While writing this paper I have stumbled into a fair number of questionable or troublesome concepts. At first, I applied the concepts of ‘religion’ and ‘Islam’ without much hesitation. Other concepts,

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such as ‘jihadi’ and ‘takfiri’ were, to me, more obviously in need of closer attention. However,
during my readings, I was alerted to the various, and many times questionable, ways several taken-
for-granted concepts are being used. I will start out by straightening out my understanding of certain
concepts used in this paper before venturing into the main texts. The section Troublesome concepts
follows immediately below. Thereafter, I strive to provide a substantive ground to stand on in terms
of theoretical and contextual information before tackling the analysis. Chapter 2, Theoretical
framework, includes aspects of critical discourse analysis relevant for this paper as well as theories
from the political and social sciences. The latter provide support in connecting ‘discourse’ to the
‘social world’. Hence, besides critical discourse analysis, theories related to media and ideology,
identity construction, nationalism and ‘othering’ are included in the framework. Chapter 3, Lebanon -
moving towards more polarisation, provides the reader with essential contextual information about
recent social and political developments in Lebanon. This chapter sheds light on important
developments during the last decades that have had, and continue to have, major impacts on
Hizbullah and Lebanon at large. The final section of this chapter deals with the immediate
background context of this paper, the so-called Arsal crisis. Chapter 4, Academic approaches on
Hizbullah, looks more closely at recent academic work on the organisation and argues for a critical
view on how Hizbullah has been ‘othered’ by a certain school of thought. The section on Hizbullah’s
ideology and nationalist view focuses on the standpoints of previous scholars on Hizbullah’s political
ideology and nationalist outlook. Following the academic overview, Chapter 5 on Data and
demarcations discusses the choice of data for this study and its limitations. The reader will be
familiarised with the media channel Al-Manar and the television programmes selected for the
purpose of my analysis. In the section on Translation and transcription, I strive to look at my own
subjective position and shed light on the limitations of translations. Chapter 6, on Methodology,
introduces the methodological tools used in the critical discourse analysis of language and image.
The analysis draws upon Fairclough’s analytical toolbox for textual analysis of language, and upon
Kress and Van Leeuwen’s critical analysis of images. Chapter 7, at last, takes us into the analysis of
Hassan Nasrallah’s speech on 23 September 2014. The chapter includes an analysis of the image, but
the core analysis focuses on the text (i.e. the language), more explicitly on the pronoun usage of ‘we’
and ‘them’, and on the collocations of words attached to the ‘Lebanese nation’ and the ‘Lebanese
people’. The following Chapter 8 deals with the critical analysis of Al-Manar’s main news bulletin
broadcasted the same day. This section relies heavily on the analysis of the image, drawing on the
methodological tools provided by Kress and Van Leeuwen. Brief summery sections end each of these
analytical chapters in order to allow for a re-cap of the major findings. The final analytical section in
chapter 9, Support networks and justifications, focuses on the programmes selected from Al-Manar’s
categories of political, social, resistance, and comedy programmes, that were broadcasted within a week of Nasrallah’s speech on 23 September 2014. Based on an analysis of the language and image, I argue that a multi-confessional and multi-national ‘support network’ for Hizbullah’s worldviews is carefully knitted in these programmes. Chapter 10, Discussion, will pick up one of the main discourses in Hizbullah’s order of discourse as of September 2014, namely the one on terrorism. The final discussion will center on this discourse on terrorism, as it comes across as a prominent and quite recent discursive construal of Hizbullah. Moreover, Hizbullah’s discourse on terrorism has, to my knowledge, not been elaborated on in previous studies. Finally, Chapter 11 includes the major findings of my analysis and the Conclusive remarks.

1.4 Troublesome concepts

The critical discourse analysis of this paper, focusing on Hizbullah, is a cross-disciplinary venture under the academic umbrella of History of Religion. Religion or religiosity per se is not the main focus of this paper. I do not aim to untangle, for example, Hizbullah’s understanding of a specific Shi’a tradition, a Quranic statement, Islamic dress code, form of marriage, or likewise. Nevertheless, religion may be seen as permeating Hizbullah’s discourse. The term ‘religion’ is also frequently used, largely without much hesitation, by scholars writing about Hizbullah. It has however become increasingly difficult within History of Religion, and I assume within academia generally, to come across using the concept of religion without a closer look at its contents and troublesome history. As Brent Nongbri (PhD in Religious Studies) points out, during the last thirty years, the notion of religion as a “universal given, present in some form or another in all cultures” has been increasingly criticised. Nongbri argues that the “isolation of something called “religion””, separated from politics, economics and science is not a universal feature. Rather, the idea of religion as a separate sphere is a recent development, beginning in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries onwards, and specific to the European context. Religion in the modern ‘Western’ world has come to stand for “anything that sufficiently resembles modern Protestant Christianity”, i.e. something resembling an internal, contemplative faith, not concerned with politics and other secular areas of life, argues Nongbri. A special concern for this paper is, as pointed out by Nongbri, that ‘religion’ does not correspond to any similar concept in Arabic. The Arabic word dīn is usually translated into English as ‘religion’ or ‘faith’, despite the fact that it does not correspond to modern ‘Western’ ideas of religion. In the Encyclopedia of Islam (1965) a wide semantic range for the word dīn is suggested,

including: “custom, usage, judgement, direction, retribution”. In line with Nongbri, I will not attempt to come up with a better or more cross-culturally valid definition of ‘religion’ here. For the purpose of this paper, I will stop at highlighting that the concept of religion is far from being a neutral concept that we will universally agree upon. Religion for a modern ‘Western’ reader is likely to be understood as something utterly different from politics. For the leadership and members of Hizbullah, as well as many other organisations and people worldwide, dīn may very well be included in the sphere of politics and vice versa. ‘Religion’ for Hizbullah is clearly not about contemplation and faith in the private sphere only. This may also be true in the case of many political actors in the so-called secularised Western world. It would, however, take the scholarly efforts of others to investigate these issues.

As you may already have noted in the above text, words signifying geographic entities such as ‘the West’ and ‘Western’ tend to be located between quotation marks. These and similar geographic or cultural entities are, like ‘religion’, contested fields. Edward Said thoroughly criticised the ‘Orientalist’ tendency of “grasping a vast region of the world and proclaiming it an entirely coherent phenomenon”. Said criticises “any attempt to force cultures and peoples into separate and distinct breeds or essences.” He is likewise critical towards categories such as ‘the West’, ‘the Orient’, ‘the Arab World’ (etc.), arguing that they are suspect entities concealing “a heterogeneous, dynamic, and complex human reality from an uncritically essentialist standpoint”. As emphasised by the sociologist Nilüfer Göle, ‘the West’ is not a coherent identity, which for example the differences between Europe and America in terms of religiosity and secularism show.

‘Islam’ is another contested concept in this paper. Said has criticised the ‘new Orientalist’ usage of the word Islam “to signify all at once a society, a religion, a prototype, and an actuality”. Unlike ‘normal’ (‘our’) societies, Islamic and Middle Eastern societies are characterised by ‘new Orientalists’ as totally political, in a reproach to Islam for not being liberal and able to separate (as “we” do) politics from culture, argues Said. For the Arabists and Islamologists there are still such things as an Islamic society, an Arab mind, an Oriental psyche. Göle is careful to define his

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8 Nongbri B., 2013, p. 41.
9 Nongbri B., 2013, p. 155.
understanding of ‘Islam’ not in terms of a distinct and separate civilization, but as “an idiom that provides a source for the redefinition of collective identity and self-affirmation of Muslims in modern contexts”. I conform to Göle’s understanding of ‘Islam’; that it is “the ways in which Muslims interpret and perform religious faith”.\footnote{Göle N., 2006, p. 140.} The related concept of ‘Islamism’ may be an even more contested one. Islamism has often been associated with the much disputed term ‘fundamentalism’. I wish to distance myself from such a correlation by conforming to the understanding of Islamism of Matthias Gardell, Professor of History of Religion. Gardell applies a broad definition of the term ‘Islamist’, in which he includes “everyone who draws upon Islam in the construction of political ideology”. Gardell’s understanding of Islamism is open to include radicals as well as moderates, revolutionaries and reformists, democrats and anti-democrats.\footnote{Gardell, Mattias, 2006. \textit{Bin Ladin i Våra Hjärtan, Globaliseringen och framväxten av politisk islam}, Stockholm: Leopold Förlag, p. 10. Free translation from Swedish: “om alla som utgår från ‘islam’ i konstruktionen av politisk ideologi”.}

The Arabic word \textit{takfīrī} is a prevalent term in the discourse of Hizbullah’s leadership in connection to the Arsal crisis. It is likewise used by recent scholars. I believe the word is commonly translated as ‘extremist’ in international media, although I have noticed the usage of the term ‘takfiri’ in more recent English media reports. \textit{Takfīr} in Arabic has, according to the dictionary of Hans Wehr, the meaning to “charge of misbelief”\footnote{Wehr, Hans, 1980. \textit{A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic}, Beirut: Librairie du Liban, p. 833.}. \textit{Takfīrī} (in plural \textit{takfīrīūn} and not ‘takfiris’ which is used in this paper as a simplification) is accordingly ‘the one who charges [someone] of misbelief’. Hence, ‘takfiris’ are people who charge others of being \textit{kuffār}, i.e. misbelievers/infidels. For Bilal Saab, Senior Fellow on Middle East Security, and Magnus Ranstorp, PhD and Researcher on Terrorism, the term ‘takfīr’ is explicitly tied to “Sunni Islam” and “jihadism”. Saab and Ranstorp understand “takfīr” as “excommunication of anyone opposed to the cause of Sunni jihadism”.\footnote{Saab, Bilal Y. and Magnus Ranstorp, 2007. “Securing Lebanon from the Threat of Salafist Jihadism”, \textit{Studies in Conflict and Terrorism}, Vol. 30, pp. 825–855, p. 837.} I do not, however, find reason to attach the definition of the term \textit{takfīrī} to any particular religious affiliation. I conform at large to the political scientist Sadiki Larbi’s understanding of the term ‘takfīr’ as simply those “practising religious ‘excommunication’.” (Some may however argue that ‘excommunication’ is a Christian-charged term.) Larbi moreover traces the rise of Islamist extremists and takfīrī to the 1980s and more explicitly venturing “from within Egyptian prisons and torture cells”.\footnote{Larbi, Sadiki, 2010. “Reframing resistance and democracy: narratives from Hamas and Hizbulla”, \textit{Democratization}, Vol. 17:2, pp. 350 – 376, p. 357.}
In the analysis of this paper, I identify the word ‘terrorism’ as playing a central role in Hizbullah’s discourse. Moreover, the term ‘terrorism’ also permeates a particular branch of scholarship on Hizbullah that categorises Hizbullah as a terrorist organisation. In my analysis, ‘terrorism’ is translated from the Arabic word *irhāb*, which according to Wehr carries the meanings of “intimidation, frightening; threatening; terror, terrorism (pol.); sabotage”. The Historian Faisal Devji notes that the word ‘terrorist’ “no longer retains its original reference to Europe’s secular and indeed antireligious revolutionaries”. Moreover, according to Devji, not only do those Muslims assigned with the label of ‘terrorists’ or ‘fundamentalists’ routinely invoke these terms themselves, “if only to refute them, thus turning their own terms into oppositional ones, they sometimes even accept these nominations in however qualified a fashion”. I will take Devji’s stance one step further, arguing that Hizbullah does not invoke this term to refute it, nor that Hizbullah has in any way accepted this nomination of the self. Hizbullah has rather come to appropriate the term of ‘terrorism’, applying it in its own discourse, in which it is used as a label for the ‘enemies’. During the course of analysis, the term ‘terrorism’, as understood by Hizbullah, will be in focus. Hence, it is primarily Hizbullah’s own understanding of terrorism that is of interest in this paper. Despite the prevalent usage of ‘terrorist/terrorism’ in this paper, I will refrain from providing a general definition of the word. I will on the other hand strive to illuminate what Hizbullah makes out of it.

‘Jihadi’ and ‘jihadism’ are other terms used by scholars as well as journalists, for example in relation to Hizbullah, or as common denominators for Al-Qaida inspired or affiliated movements such as the Islamic State and the Nusra Front in Syria. The words have, in my view, become commonly used in exchange for ‘Islamist/Islamism’ or the more derogative terms ‘fundamentalist’ and ‘extremist’. However, such a usage of the Arabic word and Quranic concept of *jihād* would supposedly be unthinkable for Hizbullah. As noted above, Hizbullah attributes the term *takfīrī* to the ‘others’, to the ‘out-group’. The out-group that stands out in terms of being *takfīrī*, according to Hizbullah’s discourse in September 2014, is the militant (self-proclaimed Sunni Muslim) organisation, the Islamic State, or *Dā’sh* which is the common Arabic abbreviation for the ‘Islamic State over the Levant countries’. In contrast to *takfīrī*, to be a *jihādī* (a person who pursues *jihād*) is something to aspire for, according to Hizbullah’s ideology. Naim Qassem, the Deputy Secretary General of

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Hizbullah, distinguishes between “the smaller jihad (battle)” and “the bigger challenge”, i.e. “Jihad with the soul”. The smaller jihad, understood as “a struggle against the enemy”, comes “only after fulfilment of the first”, meaning the jihad with the soul. This smaller jihad is, according to Qassem, “called upon during specific occasions of one’s life, […], when the nation is subject to oppression, occupation or humiliation”. Qassem moreover distinguishes between ‘Groundwork jihad’ and ‘Defensive jihad’. Groundwork jihad is understood as “the confrontation of the Muslims with others and the entry into others’ lands for reasons not tied to the reclamation of land or the fighting of aggression”. This form of jihad can only be ordained by the Prophet Muhammad or “one of the infallible Imams” and is therefore not applicable in our present day, argues Qassem. Defensive jihad, on the other hand, is considered a duty. Qassem quotes Ayatullah Khomeini when describing defensive jihad: “If an enemy comes to pass the land of Islam or its borders, one from whom there is a threat to Islam’s existence and societies, then such societies are obliged to defend the land in any possible way, dedicating wealth and souls”. The distinction between a smaller and greater jihad is not specific for Hizbullah. Gardell recognises that there are two forms of jihad within Islam. Gardell frames the greater jihad as an on-going spiritual struggle inside a person, and the smaller jihad as the physical struggle, often expressed as the just war or violent efforts in the sake of God.

2. Theoretical framework

Critical discourse experts and other scholars, not the least influential scholars within the field of Religious Studies (Paloutzian and Park for example) stress the need to apply a multi-disciplinary approach, and to integrate different levels (micro, meso, macro) in the study. From a Critical Discourse Analytical aspect, Norman Fairclough, Professor of Linguistics, argues that, “for discourse analysis to contribute to social research it needs to be embedded within transdisciplinary frameworks which theorise and develop methodologies for analysing […] dialectical relations between discourse and other [social] elements”. Fairclough aims at a “transdisciplinary synthesis”, drawing on categories within discourse analysis as well as compatible categories within theories from other disciplines. As Fairclough has put it elsewhere, “textual analysis is an inescapable part of social analysis”. For the purpose of this analysis, I will combine Critical Discourse Analysis mainly with

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theories on nationalism and identity construction from the fields of political and social science.

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis
Fairclough describes Critical Discourse Analysis as having “three basic properties: it is relational, it is dialectical, and it is transdisciplinary”. It is a relational form of research as it focuses on “social relations”. Moreover, discourse, for Fairclough, is itself “a complex set of relations”.29 The relations of discourse are multiple and include “relations of communication between people who talk, write or in other ways communicate with each other”; relations between “communicative events (conversations, newspaper articles, etc.)”; and relations between what Fairclough calls “more abstract and enduring complex discursive ‘objects’” (such as languages, discourses and genres). There are also relations between discourse and objects in the physical world – persons, power relations and institutions, interconnected by social activity. Hence, there are complex relations between discourse and social life, meaning, and meaning making.30 What Fairclough emphasizes with all these relations is their dialectical character, i.e. the relations are between objects that are different from each other, but not fully separated from each other. They flow into each other.31 Discursive practice “contributes to reproducing society (social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief) as it is, yet also contributes to transforming society”.32 Hence, the analysis inevitably cuts across the regular boundaries between disciplines (linguistics, politics, sociology, etc.) and it needs to be an interdisciplinary form of analysis, argues Fairclough.33

Critical Discourse Analysis departs from a recognition of “natural and social worlds”. The ‘social world’, but not the natural world, depends upon human action and is thus “socially constructed”. Fairclough emphasizes that the “socially constructive effects of discourse” are a central concern to Critical Discourse Analysis.34 Discourse can have “constructive effects on beliefs and attitudes, and so on how people act in and towards the material world, and so on the material world itself”.35 Fairclough makes however a clear distinction between construal and construction. Whereas the world is discursively construed in many different ways, we cannot determine which construals come to have socially constructive effects. This depends on a range of conditions, including power relations.36

‘Recontextualisation’ is another concept used by Fairclough that I will refer to in my discussion. Recontextualisation is, according to Fairclough, “the movement of a discourse from one context (one network of practices, one institution, one field and so forth) to another, a movement which […] is a dialectical relationship between colonisation and appropriation”. Moreover, this paper deals with ideological issues related to Hizbullah’s nationalist outlook, identity construction, and worldview. Fairclough understands ‘ideologies’ in terms of “ways of representing aspects of the world”, either by acting, interacting or being (identities), “that contribute to establishing or sustaining unequal relations of power”. He also suggests that “ideologies are primarily located in the ‘unsaid’”. He sums up ideologies as “beliefs and values which are naturalised as dispositions to act in and on the material world in certain ways, and as ways of being in the world.”

What then, based on the above, makes this paper a Critical Discourse Analysis besides its multi-disciplinary theoretical framework? First, the analysis of the language and image on Al-Manar focuses largely on relations. It is the internal relations between the ‘we’ and the ‘others’, the in-group and the out-group, the fine lines between ‘us’ and ‘them’ constructed in the discourse of Hizbullah that are at the centre of attention in the analysis. Also, the relations between discourses will be touched upon when discussing Hizbullah’s order of discourse, as identified in the analysis. Moreover, ideological issues are at stake. The discursive construction of in- and out-groups, in focus here, are intrinsically a part of drawing the national boundaries and of identity construction. However, it is the potential socially constructive effects of discourse that make the subject, the discourse of Hizbullah, an important field. What we say, write, communicate, including the images we communicate, may affect the social world. However, as Fairclough notes “the world is such that some transformations are possible and others are not”. By the end of this paper, I will make no claims regarding the socially constructive effects of any identified discourse of Hizbullah. Nevertheless, I will highlight potential effects of Hizbullah’s discourse on the social world. As Fairclough points out, the critical aspect of Critical Discourse Analysis is to bring a normative element into analysis. “It focuses on what is wrong with a society (an institution, an organisation, etc.), and how ‘wrongs’ might be ‘righted’ or mitigated”. To some extent, this can be done by highlighting gaps between what

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particular societies, institutions or organisations claim to be and what they are. With this critical aspect in mind, I will pay special attention to Hizbullah’s construction of its ‘enemy’ out-group and shed light on the ambivalent position of the ‘Syrian displaced people’ and the Palestinian refugees within Hizbullah’s order of discourse. Moreover, I will highlight potentially harmful socially constructive effects of Hizbullah’s discourse on terrorism.

2.2 Nationalism and the media

“[T]he media’s main sphere of operations is the production and transformation of ideologies” argues the cultural theorist and Professor of Sociology Stuart Hall. The work of the media is precisely to produce representations of the social world, images, descriptions, explanations and frames for understanding how the world is constituted and why it works the way it is said to work. In line with Hall, Fairclough notes that negotiating across difference is a central concern for the contemporary public sphere. Negotiating differences is simultaneously negotiating identities, argues Fairclough. “[W]orking out how I or we relate to others is simultaneously working out who I am or who we are.” The Anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod highlights television as a key institution for the production of national culture in the case of Egypt. Insofar as nationals are “imagined communities”, as suggested by Benedict Anderson, mass media “might have roles to play in producing nations and national feelings and in shaping national imaginaries”, argues Abu-Lughod. Abu-Lughod focuses her study on state controlled media in Egypt and argues that the television serials and the debates about them give us “special access to the rough processes involved in nation making and national cultural formation in changing circumstances”. In the case of Hizbullah’s media channel Al-Manar, we cannot talk about a state controlled or state dominated form of media. Abu-Lughod notes however that commercial broadcasts, uncontrolled by the state or not linked directly to state interests, can have the unintended consequences of bolstering national identity or pride. As a political party and part of the Lebanese government, Hizbullah is clearly linked to the Lebanese state. I will argue that Hizbullah, through its media channel Al-Manar, participates in the

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construction of a Lebanese ‘imaginary community’. This study asks what this imaginary community of Hizbullah, its national in-group and the ‘we’ as opposed to the ‘others’, constitute at a particular historical moment in September 2014. As Abu-Lughod underlines, “we are always studying nations at particular moments in their histories. The dynamics within and the forces that shape a nation are always in flux”.51 No nation is isolated and the boundaries of nations are fluid. The nation, nevertheless, continuous to be a powerful concept and the nation-state remains “the primary context for the everyday lives and imaginations of most of the people who produce media and constitute their audiences”, argues Abu-Lughod in the case of Egypt.52 Given the frequent referrals to such concepts as ‘Lebanon’, ‘the Lebanese people’, and national pillars such as ‘the government’, ‘the army’, ‘the security apparatus’ in Hizbullah’s discourse as expressed on Al-Manar in September 2014, I find reason to argue that ‘the nation’ remains a powerful concept also for Hizbullah and the media producers at Al-Manar.

2.3 Identity construction and othering

Ideology and nationalist ideology are closely tied to identity construction. Ethnic and national identities are, according to Amitayu Chakraborty, Researcher of English and Other Modern European Languages, based on certain senses of ‘groupness’ or group membership. They are however neither fixed nor essential.53 The bases of ethnic and national identity formations is the process of identification, which stems from perceptions that, according to Chakraborty, are “inclusionistic as well as exclusionistic and thus, depend upon the distinctions between “us” and “them””.54 Ethnic and nationalist ideologies stress the cultural similarity of its adherents, while drawing boundaries vis-à-vis others, who thereby become outsiders.55 Likewise, Ruth Wodak, Professor of Applied Linguistics and Discourse Studies, argues that “[i]dentity construction always implies inclusionary and exclusionary processes, i.e. the definition of ONESELF and OTHERS”.56 Moreover, Wodak notes that language is used to determine and define similarities and differences; to draw clear boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘others’. The very notion of identity presupposes that there are similarities/equivalences and differences. The differences are evaluated and often introduced through various forms of categorisations. The borderlines between ‘us’ and ‘others’ are however not fixed. Boundaries can be shifted - allegiances change, depending on political and other interests, according

to Wodak. Similarly, Laura Coestello, PhD in Applied Linguistics and French Studies, argues that national identity appears as a relational concept, in which the construction of the self is heavily dependent on the construction of the other. Placing emphasis on the common history, traits and characteristics of one in-group distinguishes it from an excluded out-group. Identity and national identity are as much defined by what you are not as what you are; there is no national ‘we’ without a foreign ‘other’. What Coestello calls ‘discourses of sameness’ implicitly point to difference from others, and as a result contribute to the discursive construction of a ‘them’ and ‘us’.

Fairclough uses the terms ‘equivalence’ and ‘difference’ to describe the tendencies towards creating and disseminating differences between objects, entities, groups of people, etc. (creating an ‘us’ and ‘them’), while at the same time undermining and erasing differences by representing objects, entities, groups of people, etc. as equivalent to each other (erasing differences within the ‘us’ as well as within the ‘them’). Engaging in equivalence and difference is an aspect of the continuous social process of classification and shape how people think and act as social agents. As Fairclough puts it, “classification is constantly going on in texts, with entities being either differentiated from one another, put in opposition to one another, or being set up as equivalent to one another”.

Jo Angouri, Senior Lecturer in Linguistics and Intercultural Communication, together with Wodak argue that public narratives about crises are intimately related to perceptions of history and shared identities and that major societal crises like revolutions and wars involve “‘contentious value mobilisation’ (right/wrong, good/bad, friend/enemy) and may in turn provide discursive foundations for building new (national) identities”. By drawing on Mercer (1990), Costelloe also points out that identity becomes a particular issue at a time of crisis: “when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty”. It is therefore not surprising that the crisis of Arsal in Lebanon prompted implicit and explicit contemplation of Lebanese national identity, by drawing lines between the in-group and the out-group. This paper sets out to examine how these lines between the in-group and the out-group are being constructed through the texts and images on Hizbullah’s television channel Al-Manar.

3. Lebanon - moving towards more polarisation

Tamirace Fakhoury, Assistant Professor in Political Sciences and International Relations, notes that Lebanon has been characterized as a power-sharing model with power organized along ethnic-religious lines. After the 1943 National Pact following Lebanon’s independence, a balance of power system stipulated that the president would be Maronite, the prime minister Sunni, and the Speaker of parliament Shi‘i. Religious communities were to be proportionally represented in the cabinet, in parliament, and in civil service institutions.63 Ohannes Geukjian, PhD in Peace Studies, argues that the confessional system of Lebanon aimed to satisfy the demands and maintain the privileges of religious groups rather than to build democracy.64 The civil war in Lebanon started in 1976 and ended in 1989 with the Ta’if Agreement that readjusted the power-sharing system between religious communities. In 1990, Lebanon’s parliament ratified Ta’if and thus re-institutionalised sectarianism.65 According to Fakhoury, the “Ta’if Agreement put into place a power-sharing settlement that failed to set Lebanon on track to consolidated peace and democratization”.66 Fakhoury argues that sectarian mistrust has become a salient feature in post-civil-war Lebanon, obstructing the emergence of feelings of cohesive national identity. “The moment external threats and domestic divisions nurture one another, Lebanese communities find themselves divided”, states Fakhoury.67

The Syrian occupation of Lebanon is another factor with persistent impact. Syria’s occupation began in the onset of the Lebanese civil war in 1976 and remained for 16 years after the war had ended in 1989. Pro- and anti-Syrian sentiments have moreover had great impact on Lebanese politics way beyond the Syrian withdrawal in 2005. After a period of increasingly strained relations with Syria, the Lebanese president Rafiq al-Hariri was assassinated in Beirut on February 14, 2005.68 The unsolved murder of al-Hariri and the following UN Security Council Resolution 1595, calling for an international investigation into Hariri’s murder, contributed to the division of the country into two political blocks. On March 8, 2005, an estimated half-million Lebanese attended a demonstration led

by Hizbullah and its allies, protesting Resolution 1559 which was seen as expressing US and French interests. A counter-demonstration on 14 March, with an estimated one million Lebanese, demanded the complete withdrawal of the Syrian army, the dismantling of its intelligence network in Lebanon, and an international investigation of Hariri’s assassination. The March 8 and 14 Alliances, as the political factions came to be known, illustrated the sharp political polarisation of the Lebanese society. Although the conflict between the two blocks was, at first, political and not sectarian, further dissent and tension were to develop between the Shi’i and Sunni communities, argues Geukjian.69 Since 2005, disputes between the March 8 and March 14 Alliances have led to the collapse of the government on several occasions. Whereas the March 14 Alliance has reiterated its support for the continuation of a UN-backed tribunal to investigate the Hariri assassination and for the disarmament of Hizbullah, the March 8 Alliance has taken a pro-Syrian stance, framed the Hariri tribunal as an instrument for external meddling, and claimed that Hizbullah’s weaponry is non-negotiable.70 The deadlock in the so-called ‘National Dialogue’, initiated in 2006, left “unresolved the question of what it meant to be “‘Lebanese’”, states Geukjian.71

Phillipe Droz-Vincent, Professor in Political Science and International Relations, emphasises that the March 2011 outbreak of the Syrian uprising against the Assad regime had an immediate potential to exacerbate relations between Sunnis and Shi’a in Lebanon. The initial massive peaceful demonstrations in Syria, convened around generic slogans calling for a free and democratic Syria, were in 2012-2013 transformed by, what Droz-Vincent describes as, “gruesome violence and increased militarization”.72 By 2013, the Syrian regime was firing Scud missiles at residential neighbourhoods, besides taking other violent measures.73 Simultaneously, the rise of “jihadis” at the forefront of the Syrian militarized opposition in 2013 played into the hands of the Assad regime in its claim to wage “a war against terror”.74 Lebanese politicians expressed their disagreements over public policy and the Syrian uprising explicitly in sectarian terms, argues Geukjian. While the March 14 Alliance expressed support to the Sunni regime in Bahrain and harsh criticism of the Syrian regime’s treatment of predominantly Sunni protesters, Hizbullah condemned the suppression of Shi’a in Bahrain but kept silent on repression in Syria.75 Moreover, Droz-Vincent notes that in 2013

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Hizbullah, along with Iranian and Iraqi Shi‘i militias, was directly involved in the conflict in Syria and was pivotal to the Syrian regime’s resilience. Meanwhile on the domestic scene, the Lebanese army had to quell Sunni militant groups in support of the Syrian opposition. William Harris, Professor of Politics, describes the dangerous context in Lebanon in 2012 in terms of “[a] Syrian regime locked in a mortal struggle within Syria, replication of the Syrian divide between the Syrian regime’s foes and allies in Lebanon, and continued impunity for assassinations”. In line with Harris, Fakhoury argues that the Syrian issue has become a dominant feature of sectarian identity politics in Lebanon. In addition, Fakhoury emphasizes that the massive influx of refugees stresses Lebanon’s already weak infrastructure, and that bombings and cross-border fighting challenge the capacity of the Lebanese state to protect itself and its people. An International Assessment conducted in Lebanon in the first half of 2014 highlighted the multiple layers of tension in the country, involving Lebanese-Lebanese, Lebanese-Syrian, Lebanese-Palestinian, and Syrian-Palestinian cleavages. In May 2014, the UNHCR expected the number of displaced people in Lebanon by the end of 2014 to be 1.6 million, including Syrian refugees, Lebanese returnees and Palestinians from Syria. “No country in recent memory has taken in more refugees proportional to its size”, according to the UNHCR Representative in Lebanon in September 2014.

At the political stage, the Lebanese government led by Prime Minister Najib Miqati from 2011 to 2013 endorsed the Syrian government’s domestic actions. However, the inability of Miqati’s government to function, due to the political stalemate between the March 14 (dominated by the Future Movement) and the March 8 Alliances (dominated by the Amal movement and Hizbullah), prompted the resignation of Miqati’s government in March 2013. Following ten months of government deadlock, Tammam Salam, politically close to the March 14 Alliance,

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81 The actual number of refugees from Syria who had been registered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) by 22 Jan 2015 was 1,154,593 persons, according to the UNHCR’s website: [http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122](http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122) (accessed 2015-01-27).
82 Inter-Agency Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA), 2014, p.5.
succeeded in forming a coalition government in March 2014 that included representatives from both the March 8 and March 14 Alliances. Despite promises to fill the presidential vacuum, the parliament had, at the time of the onset of the ‘Arsal crisis’ in August – September 2014, remained unable to elect a new president for a lack of quorum. During 2014, the situation in Lebanon was coloured by increased violence. In the north, the Lebanese government was enacting a “crackdown on the Sunni militias active in Tripoli” in a response to what Raphaël Lèfevre, PhD in Politics and International Studies, identifies as a “recent surge of Sunni extremism in Lebanon”. At the regional level, the summer of 2014 saw the rapid rise of the organisation ‘The Islamic State’ (known under the abbreviations of IS, ISIS, ISIL or, in Arabic, Dā‘sh) in the region, and “a core coalition led by the United States” geared up to confront “the militant Islamic State” in early September 2014, as noted by Yezid Sayigh, Senior Associate at the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut and previous Professor of Middle East Studies. In mid-September 2014, The Daily Star, a Lebanese national newspaper, described the situation in the Lebanese town of Arsal, close to the Syrian border, in the following words:

Islamist militants from ISIS and the Nusra Front are holding at least 22 Lebanese soldiers and policemen captive after they fought five days of heavy battles with the Lebanese Army last month in Arsal. The militants have released seven servicemen and executed two soldiers. Swapping the hostages with Islamist prisoners held at Roumieh Prison has been the militants’ key demand, while the Lebanese government refuses such exchange deal.

In October 2014, an article in The New York Times described Arsal as a “mainly Sunni town” and “[o]nce a sleepy village”. Arsal had, according to the article, transformed into a crowded city of 90,000, its population trebled by overwhelmingly Sunni Syrian refugees. The article framed the ‘Arsal crisis’ in the following terms:

[I]n August [2014], when open war erupted in Arsal between the Lebanese Army and insurgents,
some from the Qaeda-linked Nusra Front and others with the even more extreme Islamic State. The insurgents captured 30 soldiers and have since killed three, two of them Shiites and the other Sunni. 

The non-governmental organisation Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued a warning against the increased violence directed towards Syrian refugees in Lebanon following the incidents in Arsal. HRW claimed that “[t]he authorities in Lebanon are failing to take adequate steps to prevent and to prosecute increasing violence by private citizens against Syrians following the outbreak of clashes in Arsal in August 2014”,\(^91\) On the other hand, HRW acknowledged that there had been statements condemning the violence by some national politicians, one of them being “Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah from Hezbullah”.\(^92\)

Despite a degree of decreased media attention, the hostage crisis in Arsal was to continue well into 2015.\(^93\) In May 2015, Al-Monitor reported about an imminent deal between the Lebanese authorities and Jabhat al-Nusra on the release of soldiers held hostage in the barren lands of Arsal since 2 August 2014. No negotiation was, however, taken place between the government and the Islamic State. Jabahat al-Nusra was considered to be holding 16 soldiers and the Islamic State six, according to the Al-Monitor article.\(^94\)

\section*{4. Academic approaches on Hizbullah}

That Hizbullah is a prominent and influential organisation in Lebanon and the region is a common standpoint among scholars. A vast majority, if not all, would agree with Political Scientist Rosita Di Peri in her claim that “Hizbullah – the ‘Party of God’ – is one of the main actors in both the Lebanese and the wider regional political scene”.\(^95\) Beyond this point, the scholarly views on Hizbullah differ. The most flagrant division is between a so-called terrorist


\textsuperscript{92} Human Rights Watch, 30 Sep 2014.


approach and those highlighting Hizbullah’s ‘lebanonisation’, a commonly used term for Hizbullah’s transformation and political accommodation over time. These two separate approaches to the organisation have also been noted by, among others, Political Scientist Mona Harb and Reinoud Leenders, Reader in International Relations and Middle East Studies. The terrorist approach is represented by such scholars as the late Professor of Criminal Justice, Ayla Hammond Schbley (2000, 2004), Professor Emeritus and the founding Director of the Canadian Centre of Intelligence and Security Studies Martin Rudner (2010), and Ray Takeyh (2006), Senior Fellow in Middle East Studies at the US Council on Foreign Relations. According to their approach, Hizbullah is constructed in terms of a “radical Shi’a political and terrorist organization”98, “a core terrorist organization”99 that engage in “terrorist-related activity” in various parts of the world through an extensive and growing network of alliances and partnerships with other radical extremists and criminal groups”.100 In addition, Hizbullah is commonly framed as the “Lebanese protégé”101 of Iran and of Syria. Schbley and Rudner use vocabulary such as ‘cells’102, ‘sleeper cells’ and ‘fundraising cells’103 when referring to the structures of Hizbullah, and ‘elements’104 or ‘operatives’105 when referring to its members or supporters. A tendency towards a dehumanisation of Hizbullah and its members is, in my view, apparent in this choice of vocabulary. In line with Schbley and Rudner, Takeyh reduces Hizbullah to a ‘terrorist organisation’ created by ‘the pariah state’ of Iran, which ‘pathologies’ it also shares.106 While constructing Hizbullah as the ultimate ‘other’, the ‘West’ is constructed, by for example Schbley, as its opposite. The West is characterised by words such as “consciousness, democracy, freedom, and Western civility”.107 Framing Hizbullah as a ‘terrorist’,

102 Schbley A. H., 2000, p. 175.
104 Schbley A. H., 2000, p. 175.
‘fundamentalist’, ‘extremist’ organisation has been fiercely criticised by many scholars, perhaps most eloquently by Political Scientist Sadiki Larbi. Larbi argues that Hizbullah, like Hamas, is a political movement with the explicit ideology of *muqawama* (resistance), self-conscious of its claims to a national homeland, and utilizing violence primarily as a tool of resistance and liberation against Israel. At the same time, Larbi questions the “myth of a ‘peaceable’ and ‘civilized’ Western modernity – with its inherent democratic culture”. According to Larbi, binary knowledge is complicit in the reproduction of this ‘Western’ myth. Communism, Nazism, and Islamism have all served well in the role of the ‘barbarian’ ‘Other’. In the “Western project of modernity”, the ‘civilized democrat’ is positioned as opposed to the ‘barbarian’ communist or Islamist. Larbi specifically mentions the stigmatization involved in “the most recent misnomers, so-called Muslim ‘jihadism’ and ‘radicalization’”, arguing that it “goes beyond mere ‘orientalization’” i.e. “the tendency to misrepresent through generalization, contrast, and reductionism”. As noted also by Harb and Leenders, the production of knowledge about and understanding of Hizbullah has suffered from the labelling of Hizbullah as a “super-terrorist”. This “labelling exercise consists of imagining Hizbullah as the ultimate alien who can not be known or understood”.

The other scholarly stance, the so-called lebanonisation approach, is represented by a range of scholars from different fields. These scholars do by no means represent a unified stance towards Hizbullah but they all emphasise the *transformation* of Hizbullah since its inception in

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1982. The lebanonisation of Hizbullah is generally framed as the process that started in the aftermath of the civil war in Lebanon. Political Sociologist Daniel Meier, for example, holds that lebanonisation is the transformation of Hizbullah from a former militia into a “political force performing military resistance against an enemy state occupying the southern part of the country”. From this stance, some scholars have put emphasis on the social movement dimension of Hizbullah (for example Political Scientist Emmanuel Karagiannis). Others have emphasised Hizbullah as a political party and religious movement (for example Political Scientist Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, Political Scientist Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, PhD in Arabic and Islamic Studies Jacob Høigilt and Professor of Islamic Studies Joseph Alagha). Yet others have focused on Hizbullah’s communication strategies and media production – its newspaper, radio, television, internet, literature and exhibitions (for example Anthropologist Lara Deeb, Senior Lecturer in International Journalism Zahera Harb, Lina Khatib, Director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut, Dina Matar, Senior Lecturer in Arab Media and Political Communication, Atef Alshaer, PhD in Arabic Language and Culture and Abir Hamdar, PhD in Languages and Cultures in the Near and Middle East), as well as on its identity politics, ideology and discourse (for example Matar and Meier).

As recognised by Di Peri, among others, Hizbullah led a “violent and very aggressive campaign against Western powers in Lebanon throughout the course of the 1980s”. The major turning point came after the civil war ended in 1991 when Hizbullah chose to become part of the political system, which entailed a pursuance of pragmatic policies and dialogues with other religious and political groups. After 2000, Hizbullah “preaches co-existence, compromise and cross-sectarian cooperation” in domestic politics, argues Høigilt. Khatib, Matar and Alshaer

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114 Meier D., 2015, p. 6.
120 Deeb L., 2008.
121 Harb Z., 2011.
frame Hizbullah’s transformation as a development from being an “exclusivist Islamist jihadi movement” into a “more inclusive political party” between the years of 1982 and 2000. Matar has elsewhere framed this ‘transformation’ as an evolution “from a radical, clandestine armed Islamist militia to a ‘moderate, mainstream political party with a resistance wing’. As noted by Harb and Leenders, the lebanonisation approach highlights the efficiency of Hizbullah as a political party, negotiating its position within the complex arena of Lebanese politics, and managing a range of social services to the Shiite community. However, Harb and Leenders underline that, while contributing to producing knowledge about Hizbullah, the lebanonisation approach fails to “acknowledge or explain the interactions between the armed and the civilian activities of Hizbullah”. I tend to agree with this criticism of Harb and Leenders. For example, Hizbullah’s engagement in the war in Syria remains incomprehensible if looking at Hizbullah as a primarily social, religious, and political actor. The criticism voiced by Di Peri is likewise relevant in my view. Di Peri notes that previous studies “tend to separate the domestic dimension […] from the international one”. In addition, many “tend to concentrate on its [Hizbullah’s] religious dimension, ignoring the political one”. In line with Di Peri, Political Scientist Adham Saouli distinguishes a scholarly approach that differentiates between Hizbullah’s domestic and external behaviour. Saouli argues that, “understanding Hizbullah’s choices requires situating the movement at the crossroads of war-making with Israel and state-making in Lebanon”. In his article from 2013, Political Economist Karim Knio highlights the “contradictory positions articulated by Hezbollah vis-à-vis various Arab Spring movements”. As Knio notes, “[w]hile the party has publically supported the Tunisian, Egyptian, Libyan, Bahraini and Yemeni protests, it vehemently opposed the Syrian uprising and called instead for regime maintenance”. Given these sharp contradictions in Hezbollah’s discourse, “a rethinking of the identity and interests of this party and how these are portrayed in the academic literature are clearly needed”, argues Knio. Larbi notes that Hizbullah has “the capabilities of a mini-state

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endowed with its own dependent constituency, polity, civil society, intelligence and security apparatus, media, budget, foreign relations (including several successful third-party mediated prisoner swaps with Israel), and army. Its capacity exceeds that of a conventional political party but falls short of full statehood”. Larbi’s understanding of Hizbullah and its ‘capabilities as a mini-state’ necessarily implies a scholarly analysis of Hizbullah that takes multi-levels (being a political, social, religious, and military movement – at the domestic and regional/international arenas) into account.

4.1 Hizbullah’s ideology and nationalist view

I find it important to highlight the insight by Matar, that collectivities and identities are fluid, constructed in diverse ways and contextually defined. This understanding, argues Matar, is particularly relevant in discussing the Lebanese case where national identity, or what it means to be Lebanese, remains contested and fraught with controversy. In her study on Hizbullah’s narratives, Hamdar highlights how Hizbullah has transformed from a purely Islamic movement into a national one, “struggling for the sake of the whole of Lebanon”. Moreover, what emerges in Hizbullah’s literature of later periods is “an explicit attempt to render the Party a purely Lebanese resistance movement with no loyalty to any power except the Lebanese people”. Typically, the ‘Resistance’ exists for, and depend upon, both Christians and Muslims in Lebanon. Hizbullah’s narratives also attempt to “move beyond the limits of the nation state and speak to a larger pan-Arab audience”, seeking to “move beyond their specific Shi'i constituency to speak to, and on behalf of, a Lebanese, Pan-Arab and even global audience”.

Some years prior to Hamdar, Høigilt argued that Hizbullah’s discourse still revolved around the axis of inclusion/exclusion, but that its parameters had changed since 1991. The words ‘Muslim’ and ‘Islam’ were back-grounded and the notions of sect (ṭāʾīfā) and sectarianism (ṭāʾīfiyya) were negatively evaluated. Likewise, Saad-Ghorayeb claims that the organisation’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has since 1992 “accentuated the themes of Christian-Muslim reconciliation and co-existence in a politically pluralist society”. Hizbullah’s political ideology always “called for unity, both in the Islamic and domestic fronts”, argues Alagha, while underlying that

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139 Matar D., 2008, p. 123.
sectarianism within Islam has been downplayed by Hizbullah.\textsuperscript{146} In line with Alagha, Saouli notes that, in the aftermath of the 2006 war against Israel when the political divide on the domestic arena was sharply polarised, clips on Al-Manar television emphasised national unity, deprecating a Sunni–Shiite divide.\textsuperscript{147} Di Peri identifies a ‘strategy of moderation’ within Hizbullah from 2009 and onwards. She considers this moderation to be a strive by Hizbullah to legitimate itself as a party for all Lebanese. Hizbullah’s new manifesto (2009) did, for example, not mention the idea of establishing an Islamic state, notes Di Peri.\textsuperscript{148} What these scholars within the lebanonisation approach tend to agree upon is that the ‘we’, or the ‘in-group’ of Hizbullah (its ‘imaginary national community’ for those who wish), has expanded and become more inclusive over the years. I will now turn to the scholarly views regarding the out-group, the ‘others’ of Hizbullah’s worldview.

According to Harb and Leenders, Hizbullah’s main enemies are the Israeli state and the US government.\textsuperscript{149} The Israeli allies, also considered ‘prime enemies’, have in more recent years been spearheaded by the US and the UK administrations, notes Alagha in 2011.\textsuperscript{150} Deeb underlines that it is “vital to keep in mind that Hizbullah’s nationalism is articulated in a U.S.-dominated global context where the party has been subsumed under the label “terrorist”''.\textsuperscript{151} In addition to these external ‘enemies’, Khatib notes that “Hizbullah has tried to frame those who oppose it as traitors and Israeli collaborators’’.\textsuperscript{152} In so doing, “Hizbullah has been able to place its Lebanese political opponents on the same level as Israel, or, more precisely, as an extension of the Israeli threat’’.\textsuperscript{153} Likewise, Høigilt argues that ‘the enemies of national unity’, in Hizbullah’s view, include those who do not wholeheartedly support an uncompromising revolt against the Israeli occupation of Palestine.\textsuperscript{154} That Hizbullah’s discourse is deeply coloured by the Palestinian-Israeli case, is emphasised by for example Deeb.\textsuperscript{155} Alagha sums up the constituents of Hizbullah’s political ideology with the following themes: “oppressors and oppressed; Islamic state; relations with Christians; anti-Zionism; pan-Islamism; anti-imperialism;

\begin{itemize}
  \item Alagha J., 2011, p. 19.
  \item Saouli A., 2011, p. 936.
  \item Harb M. and Leenders R., 2005, p. 181.
  \item Alagha J., 2011, p. 22.
  \item Deeb L., 2008, p. 377.
  \item Khatib L. in Khatib L., Matar D. and Alshaer A., 2014, p. 28.
  \item Khatib L. in in Khatib L., Matar D. and Alshaer A., 2014, p. 29.
  \item Høigilt J., 2007, p. 129.
  \item Deeb L., 2008, p. 376.
\end{itemize}
and jihad and martyrdom”. By applying a framing analysis, Karagiannis, on his hand, identifies ‘master frames’ that Hizbullah uses to reach an international audience. These include “the master frame of anti-globalization in order to attract sympathy and support from leftist and human rights groups” and a “pan-Islamic master frame” aiming at bridging between Sunnis and Shia, Arabs and Iranians. Larbi argues that Hizbullah, like Hamas, is avowedly committed to *muqāwama*, literally meaning the act of “standing up to’ injustice, domination or hegemony”. For Larbi, resistance is their “common identity template, and quintessentially their raison d’être”. In line with Khatib and Høigilt, Larbi also notes a domestic ‘enemy’. The *muqāwama* is not only pitted against a foreign ‘occupier’ (Israel) or a neo-colonial US-led world order, “but also against an anti-resistance bloc”, foremost represented politically by the 14 March bloc.

According to Khatib and Matar, in the beginning of 2013, Hizbullah framed its intervention in Syria as confronting the threat posed by “Sunni takfīrī jihadi groups” to Lebanon while struggling to maintain an anti-sectarian position in justifying its military intervention in Syria.

As we will see in the below analysis, ‘takfīrī groups’, remain a central component in Hizbullah’s out-group. However, we will have reason to come back to Khatib and Matar’s claim that Hizbullah attached the words ‘Sunni’ and ‘jihadi’ to its ‘enemy group’ in 2013. I have argued above that *jihād* and *jihādī* are positively charged words for Hizbullah. The discourse analysis of this paper will illuminate the attributions Hizbullah makes to its out-group. Hence, the analysis will shed more light on the question whether Hizbullah’s ‘Pan-Islam’ discourse remains salient, as suggested by Alagha among others, or a Sunni-Shi’a divide comes forth, as suggested by Khatib and Matar. Immediately below follows a closer look at the data of analysis before venturing into the analysis itself.

### 5. Data and demarcations

The data of my analysis is available on Hizbullah’s media channel Al-Manar’s Arabic website. Hizbullah began operating its television station Al-Manar (“The Beacon”) in 1991. In 2000, al-Manar became a transnational satellite channel. As noted by Harb, Al-Manar was put

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156 Alagha J., 2011, p. 15.
161 Alagha J., 2011, p. 15.
on the US state department’s list of terrorist organisations in 2004.\textsuperscript{164} Today, Al-Manar cannot be found on this list, although Hizbullah remains designated on the list as a ‘Foreign Terrorist Organisation’ since 1997.\textsuperscript{165} Al-Manar is today a 24-hour television channel and has websites in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish, available at \url{www.almanar.com.lb}. Al-Manar’s Arabic site includes television programmes under the following headings: “Special meetings, General programmes, Environmental, Political, Religious, Social, Sports, News, Cultural, Law, Palestinian, Medicine, Voice and Image, Resistance, Scientific, Comedy”.\textsuperscript{166} The programmes draw on different genres, from formal speech to prose, poems, music, drama, and much more.

Hizbullah’s television offers a wide range of programmes touching upon multiple sides of life. The arena of identity construction virtually stretches from the official levels of formal speech and news reporting to the ones of cracking jokes in comedies; relations of love, family and fraternity in dramas; and the contemplation of martyrs in poets and songs, to mention but a few. When watching Al-Manar, it is not difficult to sense what Hamdar calls “the Party’s extremely sophisticated and wide-ranging media strategy”.\textsuperscript{167} This strategy stretches, however, beyond Al-Manar. It includes public demonstrations, the dedicated radio channel al-Noor (‘the light’), its newspaper Al-Ahed (‘the covenant’/’the promise’), also available online\textsuperscript{168}, and more.

Unfortunately, I lack recent information on the number of viewers of Al-Manar. However, in 2004, Al-Manar was estimated to have 10 million viewers.\textsuperscript{169} The relationship between Hizbullah and Al-Manar is reflected in the following words on Al-Manar’s website.

\begin{quote}
We are a part of the Lebanese Media Group. It is an independent company. It has an administrative council in which a group of shareholders in the company participate. Considering that the largest proportion of them are supporters of the politics of the Resistance and Hizbullah, they make the appointments to its general administration. The leader of the administrative council is usually a well-known personality who holds a position within Hizbullah. At the level of the staff, many are political supporters of Hizbullah and the Resistance. Hence, it is natural that the media policies of Al-Manar are to a large extent in harmony with the directions of Hizbullah and the Resistance.\textsuperscript{170}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{164} Harb Z., 2011, p. 223.


\textsuperscript{166} Al Manar’s website in Arabic, General Programme Site.

\textsuperscript{167} Hamdar A., 2013, p. 168, footnote 4.

\textsuperscript{168} Al-Ahed News Website: \url{http://www.alahednews.com.lb/category/151/%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87} (accessed 2015-05-28)

\textsuperscript{169} Matar D., 2008, p. 129.

\textsuperscript{170} Al-Manar’s website, “About Us”, free translation from Arabic: نحن جزء من المجموعة اللبنانية للاعلام وهى شركة مستقلة لديها مجلس إدارة يشارك فيها مجموعة المساهمين في الشركة وباعتبار أن النسبة الأعلى من هؤلاء مؤيدون لسياسات المقاومة وحزب الله
For the purpose of this paper, eleven programmes are included in the analysis. These programmes were broadcasted by Al-Manar during a period of six days around the speech delivered by Hassan Nasrallah on 23 September 2014. The programmes were selected from Al-Manar’s categories of ‘political’, ‘social’, ‘news’, ‘comedy’ and ‘resistance’ programmes. I chose to focus initially on Hassan Nasrallah’s speech as a means of mapping out how the in- and out-groups of Hizbullah are constructed by its leadership, how othering is done, and how Hizbullah’s national identity comes forth. Second, the main news bulletin on the same day, 23 September, was selected in order to enable an analysis of the discursive othering and the construction of in- and out-groups in relation to a range of issues, local as well as regional, of concern to Hizbullah. Finally, I have used remaining programmes on my data selection list (see Appendix 1) to highlight how they reflect specific discourses that have come forth in the analysis of Nasrallah’s speech and the main news bulletin, namely: the ‘Pan-Arab’, the ‘Pan-Islam’, the ‘Christian-Muslim’, the ‘Oppressors-Oppressed’, the ‘Muqāwama/resistance’ and the discourse on terrorism. I argue that Al-Manar and Hizbullah embrace diversity, but only within specific limits. In addition, I argue that the selected programmes from the ‘political’, ‘social’, ‘resistance’ and ‘comedy’ categories provide ideological support to Hizbullah’s worldview. The selected local news broadcast has fallen outside of the analysis for two reasons. First, it replicates much of the news items that the main news bulletin (included in the analysis) addresses. Second, the additional local news (on for example a road construction, a local village, a demonstration against increased university fees by university students, and the weather) come across as not emphasising issues of social categorisation and ideology to the same extent as the other selected programmes. I have, however, used the local news broadcast on 23 September to increase my own background information.

One may rightly argue that the programmes I have selected from Al-Manar’s political category are over-represented in the analysis of this paper. This is due to two circumstances. First, Al-Manar’s political programme category is virtually over-flowing with programmes in comparison to all other categories besides, I believe, the ‘news’ and ‘religious’ categories. Second, during the selected time period, only one social programme was, for example, broadcasted and available to watch online, *Habbit Misk*, “Grain of Musk”. (One other programme is marked as ‘social’ during this period; *Tarnīmat al-ḥannān*, “Hymn of Tenderness”. This programme is, however,
simultaneously marked as a drama series. In any case, it is not available to watch online. Likewise, a film marked as ‘social’ during the selected time period is not available to watch online.\(^{171}\) \textit{Habbat Misk}, “Grain of Musk”, was broadcasted on a daily basis during the period. I have, however, chosen to include only \textit{one} programme from any series of programmes, whether the programme was selected from the social, political, resistance, comedy, or news genre. Hence, only one episode of ‘Grain of Musk’ has been included in this analysis.

How come I selected eleven programmes and not fifteen, twenty or more for the purpose of this analysis? First, I selected what I found to be the most relevant programme categories on Al-Manar for the purpose of this paper: ‘political’, ‘news’, ‘social’, ‘resistance’ and ‘comedy’, leaving the cooking and sports programmes out, among others. I also excluded broad and potentially relevant programme categories, such as the ‘Palestinian’ and ‘religious’, due to time limitations. Drama series is another seemingly popular genre on Al-Manar with episodes from various series broadcasted on a daily basis. Drama series certainly make an excellent arena for identity construction and I would indeed recommend other studies to take a closer look at Hizbullah’s production of such series. However, the development and production of drama series take a fair amount of time. I therefore found it difficult to view them as a response to the Arsal crisis. Drama series were thus excluded from this analysis. Except for the news programmes, I collected \textit{one} programme from each series - within the political, social, resistance, and comedy categories - that were broadcasted around the speech of Nasrallah on 23 September 2014, precisely between 22 and 27 September. I ended up with eight political, social, comedy and resistance programmes during this time period, in addition to the two news bulletins and Nasrallah’s speech on 23 September 2014.

I must note here one shortcoming regarding the selection of programmes from the resistance category. I became aware of Al-Manar’s ‘programmes of the day’ site only at a very late stage of this paper.\(^{173}\) Before this, I relied on my own invented search technique for finding the programmes from each selected category and broadcasted during the specified days. When comparing my selection of programmes with this recently found programme site, I have realised


that two resistance programmes broadcasted during the selected time period, and one short clip (not even two minutes long) within the resistance category, have unfortunately fallen outside of this analysis. The programmes that have been excluded by mistake are Mashā’il al-ṭarīq, “Torches of the Way”174 and Ahiyā’ ’ind rabbihim, “Alive with their Lord”175, and the clip is called Zaman al-intiṣār, “The Time of Victory”176. To my defence may be noted that this ‘programmes of the day site’ of Al-Manar does not seem to be continuously accessible. Sometimes a list of programmes is available for a specific day, other times not.

One may moreover question the specific time period I have identified, a week (six days to be exact) around 23 September 2014, for either being too limited or for being selected in an ad hoc manner. First, the hub of 23 September was selected as Hassan Nasrallah delivered his speech on this date, in the middle of the ongoing Arsal crisis. Second, I agree that a period of six days is incredibly limited. At the same time, I do argue that it is enough in order to get a deeper insight in Hizbullah’s construction of national identity, of in-group and out-group, characteristic for this period. The total duration of the selected eleven programmes is 9.4 hours of broadcasting. Nine hours of broadcasting includes a tremendous mass of language, images, and sound. Hence, I am only able to touch upon the issues that could possibly be analytically extracted from this mass of material. Second, I do believe the sections of this paper focusing on theories and on the Lebanese context will provide answers to why I chose to focus on September 2014. In times of crises, national identity tends to become an issue. I argue that the Arsal crisis, beginning in August 2014 and continuing in September 2014, contributed to Hizbullah’s emphasis on its national identity during this time.

Prior to Hassan Nasrallah’s speech177 on 23 September 2014, Al-Manar had broadcast speeches by Nasrallah on six occasions during 2014. A majority of these speeches coincided with Islamic celebrations or special days of commemoration. By contrast, the speech on 23 September was

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primarily a response to the crisis in the Lebanese town of Arsal. After the customary greetings, Hassan Nasrallah opened up with the following words; “First, the initial topic is the issue of the kidnapped soldiers by armed groups in the barren lands of Arsal”[^178]. Second, the speech elaborates mainly on the US-led international military coalition against the Islamic State and similar organisations in Syria and Iraq. As we will see, these topics are recurring main themes in the selected programmes.

Television media naturally consists of (at least) three analytical levels: the text as in language, the image, and the sound. The level of sound has largely been excluded from this analysis due to time limitations. Another aspect left out is the ‘reception side’ of television. Abu-Lughod highlights that “[t]hough the cultural texts circulated on television and in other mass media have enormous power, it does not follow that viewers are passive recipients, reliably shaped by the messages and information they contain.” Media messages are “deflected” as they enter the everyday lives of viewers.[^179] It is unfortunately outside the scoop of this paper to include the ‘reception side’ of Hizbullah’s media channel Al-Manar. A study including the reception of specific programmes among the diverse audiences of Al-Manar would indeed have provided a thicker description and, I believe, a greater understanding of the potential socially constructed effects of discourse.

### 5.1 Transcription and translation
The process of making the data available for analysis has included a transcription in Arabic of Hassan Nasrallah’s oral speech (58:54 minutes of effective broadcast time) and of “The main news bulletin 7:30” (41:51 minutes of effective broadcast time). In addition, selected quotes from the other selected programmes have been transcribed into Colloquial and Standard Arabic. The Arabic texts have subsequently been translated into English. The Arabic language is not my native tongue, neither is my cultural background from the region.[^180] My Arabic language and cultural knowledge is based upon Arabic language studies in Syria and Sweden, a minor field study in political science in the West Bank, and work in Arabic-speaking countries for a few

[^178]: Al-Manar, “Words by the General Secretary”, 23 Sep 2014, free translation from Arabic: أولا، الموضوع الأول هو قضية العسكريين المخطوفين من قبل الجماعات المسلحة في جرود عرسال


[^180]: To come as close as possible to a ‘correct’ understanding, I have been assisted by a native Arabic speaking Arabic language teacher, Hasnaa Essam, who have been able to correct my listening comprehension at times as well as my many spelling mistakes. Hasnaa Essam has also facilitated much appreciated discussions on the understanding of ‘cultural specific expressions’ and Quranic quotes, where my own Arabic cultural, literary and linguistic understandings have proved too limited.
35 years. As Lazar points out, researching a community that is not one’s own can be problematic. When the research is not undertaken in collaboration with the locals or native scholars of the community and when the researcher’s personality is left inexplicit, i.e. “when (white) scholars from the north (or west) make authoritative knowledge claims about communities in the south, there is danger of re-enacting historical imperialism in academic neo-imperialistic terms”. By including the voices of local scholars in the above sections on the Lebanese context and Hizbullah, by consulting an Arabic native speaking teacher (who is, however, from Egypt) regarding linguistic and cultural interpretations, and by keeping a detailed record of my Arabic transcriptions in the footnotes, I strive to avoid this Western-biased and neo-imperialistic pitfall described by Lazar. However, linguistic and cultural translations are dubious endeavours and I apologise for possible mistakes made in this paper.

When translating single words from Arabic into English I have largely relied on A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic by Hans Wehr, as well as online dictionaries such as Google translate. Arabic words and quotes are mainly presented in the footnotes, or otherwise in their transcribed form in the text. When an Arabic name or word has a form generally accepted in English, I have normally used it. I have otherwise chosen to transcribe Arabic words according to Brill Online (Appendix 2). The language on Al-Manar is a mixture between Standard Arabic and Colloquial Arabic, depending on the speaker and context. Many times, Standard and Colloquial Arabic are mixed in one single sentence. I have mainly striven to reflect the usage of Standard and Colloquial Arabic when transcribing the quotes. However, to facilitate for the reader, I have transcribed Colloquial words in their Standard Arabic form when the surrounding context is one of Standard Arabic. For the sake of clarity, I have also chosen to write out the Arabic letter qaf although this letter is usually omitted in Lebanese Colloquial Arabic. The included quotes in this paper need one last comment. The underscores are not related to the speaker but have been added by me to emphasise relevant vocabulary and phrases for the analysis.

6. Methodology: CDA of text and image

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of this paper draws from a ‘tool box’ provided by Fairclough for the analysis of the language and by Kress and Van Leuwen for the image analysis. As Fairclough points out, a text is “any actual instance of language in use” and “texts such as

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television programmes involve not only language but visual images and sound effects”. 182 Regarding the latter, an analysis of the sound is briefly touched upon in this paper. When doing so, Van Leeuwen is the one providing the analytical frame. Moreover, when referring to ‘text’ in this paper, I imply ‘language’ (and not image or sound).

The method of Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis includes, at the overall level, an ‘interdiscursive’ analysis, i.e. analysis of the discourses, genres, and styles that are drawn upon in a text and how they are articulated together. 183 The interdiscursive analysis connects linguistic analysis with relevant forms of social analysis. 184 In this study, the linguistic analysis will, for example, focus on the possessive pronouns of ‘we’ and ‘they’. The findings of this analysis will be connected to social theories on identity construction and nationalism. Second, Fairclough’s interdiscursive analysis includes a ‘multimodal’ analysis of the different semiotic ‘modes’ (language, visual images, body language, music and sound effects) and their articulations, which make up the discourses, genres and styles. The analysis of this paper will, as mentioned, focus on the semiotic modes of language and visual images.

‘Orders of discourse’ are, for Fairclough, “the discoursal element or moment of social practices, social organisations and social institutions” 185 Orders of discourse can also be viewed as “domains of hegemony and hegemonic (ideological) struggle” within institutions or the wider social world. 186 Hence, it is the analysis of discourses, genres and styles – and in turn the analysis of orders of discourse – that will help us link the micro-analysis of texts to social and political analysis. 187 The below analysis of Hizbullah’s discourse, as expressed on Al-Manar, will identify a number of ‘discourses’ within different ‘genres’ (news bulletin, political speech, talk show programmes on political and social topics, and comedy clips). Coming forth are, for example, the discourses that I have identified, by drawing on previous scholarship, as ‘Sunni – Shi’a’ (or ‘Pan-Islam’), ‘Muslim-Christian relations’, ‘Oppressors – Oppressed’, and ‘Muqāwama/resistance’. In addition, a discourse on terrorism is identified. It is the struggle between these different, and at times contradictory, discourses that illustrate what Fairclough calls a ‘hegemonic (ideological) struggle’ - the orders of discourse - within the organisation of

182 Fairclough N., 2003, p. 3.
Hizbullah. The methodological tools, mentioned below, aim to facilitate the analysis of the text/language and visual images that make up the discourses, which in turn make up Hizbullah’s order of discourse at a specific time and context (late September 2014 at a time of national crisis).

One way of identifying different discourses is by looking at ‘collocations’ or patterns of co-occurrence of words. Fairclough recommends studying collocations through quantitative corpus studies.\[188\] Nevertheless, this can also be done by looking at which words most frequently precede and follow a specific word in focus, either immediately before or after this word, or two, three words a part.\[189\] In the analysis of Hassan Nasrallah’s speech, I will for example look at the collocations of words in relation to the in- and out-groups, as well as in relation to such words as ‘the Lebanese nation’ and ‘the Lebanese people’.

Fairclough also recommends that the “rather abstract theoretical point” of equivalence and difference is operationalised in text analysis by looking at how entities of various sorts (people, objects, organisations, etc.) are differentiated in texts, and how differences between them are collapsed, erased, undermined, by creating relations of equivalence between them.\[190\] Relations of equivalence are set up as semantic relations of addition and elaboration, whereas relations of difference are set up as semantic relations of contrast.\[191\] ‘Difference’ in texts involves ‘contrastive relations’ between clauses and sentences. The contrastive relations may be marked by conjunctions such as ‘but’ and ‘instead of’ and sentence adverbials such as ‘however’.

‘Equivalence’, on the other hand, involves “additive and elaborative relations, for example making entities equivalent by including them in lists”.\[192\] Drawing on Laclau and Mouffe (1985), Fairclough notes that equivalence and difference work according to two different logics; a logic of equivalence which subverts existing differences and divisions, and a logic of difference which creates differences and divisions. According to Fairclough, this can be seen as “a general characterisation of social processes of classifications: people in all social practices are continuously dividing and combining and, thereby, producing (also reproducing) and subverting divisions and differences”.\[193\] Elements such as words and phrases are constantly being textured

\[189\] Fairclough N., 2003, p. 131.
\[190\] Fairclough N., 2003, p. 88.
\[191\] Fairclough N., 2003, p. 104.
\[192\] Fairclough N., 2003, p. 88.
into relations of equivalence and relations of difference and these processes are an “important part of the textual moment of the social process of classification”. Hence, Fairclough sees the constant processes of texts to combine some elements and divide others as “part of the textual moment of the social process of classification”. For Fairclough, this social process of classification relates to “the textual work of controlling and regulating social relations and interactions”. Looking at difference and equivalence is one way of looking at “the production of social life in its textual moment”. One can for example apply a difference and equivalence approach when looking at linguistic constructions of identity. This is exactly what this paper strives to do. The difference and equivalence tool is reoccurring throughout the analysis of this paper. I have found this conceptual pair quite useful when looking at how linguistic entities are discursively categorised. According to Fairclough, “[b]y operationalising this theory in textual analysis, one also strengthens the claims of textual analysis to be able to contribute to social research on classification and processes of articulation and disarticulation”.

The last tool related to textual analysis that will be addressed in this paper is the one of ‘significant absences’. According to Fairclough, one needs to attend to the significant absences of a text, i.e. “what is significantly not ‘there’ as well as what is ‘there’”. This is because texts are, as Fairclough puts it, “selective actualisations of potentials”. The selection, texturing, and actualisation of all potential discourses, genres, grammatical constructions, vocabularies, etc. involve agency. A few significant absences in Hizbullah’s discourse will be highlighted in the below analysis. Among them, the absence of the ‘Palestinian refugees’ in relation to issues beyond ‘the liberation of Palestine’, and the absence of Lebanese women representing other religions besides Islam appear significant. More elaboration on this will follow in the analysis and discussion.

For the purpose of this paper, the analysis of the text as language will comprise the following methodological approaches: 1) vocabulary relations (focusing on the pronouns of we/us/our and they/them/their as well as ‘the Lebanese people’ and ‘Lebanon’/’Lebanese’, and their collocations), and 2) equivalence and difference (focusing on ‘equivalence’, ‘lists of equivalence’, ‘difference’, and ‘opposition’). Drawing on Costelloe, emphasis will be on the

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'we/us/our' (of the text and image) indicating in-group and the ‘they/them/their’ (of the text and image) indicating out-group. According to Costelloe, pronoun systems are a representation of social relations and can have implications regarding power, distance, formality, solidarity, intimacy and casualness.199

Regarding the critical discourse analyses of the image, Kress and Van Leeuwen argue for using three approaches, focusing on: the ‘gaze’, the distance, and the angle. “[I]mages allow us to imaginarily come as close to public figures as if they were our friends and neighbours – or to look at people like ourselves as strangers, as ‘others’”.200 Kress and Van Leeuwen focus the interactive dimension of images, i.e. the non-verbal communication between the producer, the image and the viewer. In this communication, social relations are being represented.201 These three approaches to the image, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, will be further elaborated upon in the analysis. Van Leeuwen also argues that the sound of the voice is an important factor in the system of social distance, as it creates imaginary social relations between what is represented by a sound and the listener. Van Leeuwen draws a range of social distance related to sound, distinguishing between: intimate distance (the whisper, soft voice), personal distance (soft, relaxed voice), informal distance (full voice), formal distance (overloud, higher and tenser voice), and public distance (shouting, the maximally loud voice).202

7. Critical discourse analysis of Hassan Nasrallah’s speech

7.1 Imaginary relation with the Secretary General

The Secretary General of Hizbullah, Hassan Nasrallah, delivers his speech on Al-Manar in the evening of 23 September 2014 in a live broadcast, as indicated by a small banner in the corner of the image. During the close to one-hour speech, the camera remains fixed on Nasrallah. Through the gaze and by his gestures in the direction of the viewer, a visual form of direct address is created between the represented participant (Nasrallah) and the viewer. In Kress and Van Leeuwen’s words, the image is one of “demand”, inviting the viewer to “enter into some kind of imaginary relation with him”.203

As no other image but the one of Nasrallah is included in this broadcast, there is no othering involved in the imaging. What may be of interest is however the sense of in-group, the sentiment of a ‘we’, that is created between the represented participant (Nasrallah) and the viewer. Besides Nasrallah’s gaze and gestures, familiarity is established through the size of frame. The image of Nasrallah ranges between a close shot and a medium close shot, as his image is cut off below the shoulders and above the waist. The image enables us, the viewers, to come as close to the Secretary General as if he were “one of our friends and neighbours”. At the same time, Kress and Van Leuwen note that the set-up for experts is normally the breast pocket shot and that this distance is used to signify respect for authorities. Hence, the image of Hassan Nasrallah is simultaneously the one of being a friend, a family member, and the one of being an expert. Regarding the sound of the voice, a personal distance is created through Nasrallah’s usage of a soft and relaxed voice. The choice of this voice constructs a personal relation. As issues get hot however, Nasrallah’s voice gets higher and tenser, indicating a formal distance, according to Van Leeuwen. Hence, a familiar relation and a more authoritarian relation are oscillating with the sound of the voice of Nasrallah. The familiarity aspect is moreover emphasised by Nasrallah’s language use. He adds such expressions as “oh brother” and “oh our people”. Moreover, he mainly speaks in Lebanese Colloquial Arabic (the everyday language) rather than the formal and more authoritative Standard Arabic.

Likewise, a dual relation (familiar – formal/authoritative) between the represented participant and the viewer is also communicated through the camera angle. The image of Nasrallah is more or less at eye level, indicating that the viewpoint is one of equality, in which no power is involved. However, a discretely tilted angle makes Nasrallah look slightly down upon the viewer, indicating that he has power over the viewer, or simply that he is in a position of authority. Moreover, the frontal angle says, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen: “what you see here is part of our world, something we are involved with”. A sense of straightforwardness and frankness is constructed by the image, as well as a sense of ‘we’, of an in-group shared by the represented participant and the viewer. Transparency and honesty are also emphasised.

207 Al-Manar, "Words by the General Secretary", 23 Sep 2014, free translation from Arabic: يا أهليّنا (29:13 – 31:51 min) and يا أخّي (17:46 – 19:23)
through the language, as indicated by the below words by Nasrallah.

We do not have two languages and two speeches, two faces and two tongues. If I am for, I say that I am for. If I am against, I say that I am against.210

7.2 Drawing boundaries between the ‘us’ and the ‘others’

As mentioned, identity construction always implies the drawing of boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘others’.211 There is no national ‘we’ without a foreign ‘other’.212 By focusing the pronouns ‘we’/’us’/’our’ and ‘they’/’them’/’their’ in Nasrallah’s speech, the analysis below strives to shed light on the boundaries drawn by the text (the language of Nasrallah) between an in-group and an out-group. The analysis aims to identify Hizbullah’s nationalist discourse(s) by looking at patterns of co-occurrence of words, of so-called collocations, connected to ‘we’ and ‘they’.213

The pronoun ‘we’/’us’ in Nasrallah’s speech refers to, on the one hand, ‘we as Hizbullah members’ or ‘Hizbullah the organisation’ and, on the other hand, ‘we, the Lebanese people’. The line between the two forms of ‘we’ is diffuse, suggesting that Hizbullah, at times, is equated with the nation. Fairclough calls such tendencies to erase differences within the ‘us’ and within the ‘them’ ‘equivalence’, and considers it an aspect of the continuous process of classification.214 In the quote below the possessive pronoun ‘our’ (‘our’ children, ‘our’ men, ‘our’ women, ‘our’ people) could simultaneously indicate the children/men/women/people of Lebanon and the children/men/women/people of Hizbullah. As noted by Wodak, the borderlines between ‘us’ and ‘others’ are not fixed.215 The below quote suggests that the borderlines of the ‘us’ are fluid.

[A]fter the bomb incident in al-Ruwais216 [Hizbullah stronghold area in southern Beirut], which led to the fall of dozens of martyrs and injured. There was not one or two soldiers killed, the issue is of course not about the numbers, but all of them are our children, all of them are our people, and all of them are our men, our women, and our children. That day, we told all the Lebanese people not to

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touch any Syrian refugee, any Syrian displaced person [...] , not to hold anyone else responsible for
the crimes of the terrorists and the takfiris.\footnote{217}

The pronouns ‘we’/‘our’ in the above quote above could simultaneously refer to Hizbullah, as the car
bomb went off in a Hizbullah dominated area, and to the nation, as the victims were all presumably
Lebanese. ‘We’, in the sense of Hizbullah, is however emphasised by the distinction drawn between
‘we’ and the ‘Lebanese people’ in the phrase: “we told all the Lebanese people”. We as in
‘Hizbullah’, perhaps also indicating ‘we’ as in ‘the Lebanese nation’, are moreover collocated with,
what I choose to call, a ‘vocabulary of resistance or muqāwama’. ‘Our people’, ‘our men’, ‘our
women’, ‘our children’ are collocated with ‘martyrs’ and ‘injured’. Re-calling Larbi’s understanding
that $\textit{muqāwama}$,resistance is Hizbullah’s raison d’être,\footnote{218} and that $\textit{muqāwama}$ provides a “political
identity where the narrative of the nation and a religious cosmology reinforce one another”\footnote{219}, we
notice that the in-group (the nation and simultaneously Hizbullah) is tied to a religiously charged
concept like martyrdom. The in-group is moreover differentiated from ‘Syrian refugee’ and ‘Syrian
displaced person’, and stands in contrast to ‘the terrorists’ and ‘the takfiris’ which are collocated with
‘crimes’.

On several occasions in the speech, Nasrallah emphasises the need to refrain from holding any
innocent person, whether Syrian or other, responsible for the deeds of ‘those criminals’. ‘Terrorists’
and ‘takfiri’ are here being equated with ‘criminals’. Høigilt\footnote{220}, Saouli\footnote{221}, and Alagha\footnote{222}, among
others, characterise Hizbullah’s discourse as one of ‘Islamic unity’. While ‘Sunni extremism’ and
‘Sunni militias’ are widely used labels for the concerned armed groups, involved in for example the
Arsal crisis, by Western journalists as well as scholars (for example Lèfevre\footnote{223}), there is no
connection between the words ‘terrorism/terrorists’ and any specific religious affiliation throughout
Nasrallah’s speech.

\footnotetext{217}{Al-Manar, "Words by the Secretary General", 23 Sep 2014, 27:22 – 29:13 min., free translation from Arabic: بعد حادثة التفجير في الرويس الذي أدت لسقوط عشرات الشهداء والجرحى، موضوع جندي أو جنديين. الموضوع طبعاً موضوع عدّ، لكن كلهم أولادنا و كلهم أهلي، وكلهم رجالنا ونساءنا و أطفالنا. يومها نحن خاطبنا كل اللبنانيين، أن لا يُحمل أحد مسؤولية جرائم الإرهابيين، وأي ذائع صوتي... أن لا يَتحمل أحد مسؤولية جرائم الإرهابيين و التكفيريين.

\footnotetext{218}{Larbi S., 2010, p. 358.

\footnotetext{219}{Larbi S., 2010, p. 364.

\footnotetext{220}{Høigilt J., 2007, p. 126.

\footnotetext{221}{Saouli A., 2011, p. 936.

\footnotetext{222}{Alagha J., 2011, p. 19.

In the below quote, ‘Hizbullah’ stands in explicit opposition to the ‘Islamic State’: “Hizbullah is against the Islamic State”. The in-group marked by ‘we’ (connected here to ‘Hizbullah’) are moreover opposed to ‘these killing takfiri factions’. The ‘Islamic State’ is thus conflated with ‘killing takfiri factions’. ‘We’ in the below quote is collocated with a ‘vocabulary of resistance’, or a ‘vocabulary of warfare’. The words of ‘fight’ and ‘make sacrifices’ may, in my view, signify warfare as well as resistance. ‘We’ in the second quote is collocated with a more straightforward ‘vocabulary of resistance’ signified by: ‘captives’, ‘disappeared’, ‘martyrs’, and ‘national resistance’.

First, everyone knows that Hizbullah is against the Islamic State, and close to two months ago I talked in detail about this issue and I talked at length that time, and we are against these killing, takfiri factions. We also fight them and we make sacrifices in this fight.224

[W]e are the most knowledgeable of people on the feelings and emotions of the families of the captives and the disappeared and the martyrs, through our experience of national resistance.225

When examining the possessive pronoun ‘our’ in the below quote it comes clear that Hizbullah aspires to stand for more than just ‘resistance’. The in-group, marked by ‘our’ and signifying Hizbullah, frames itself in terms of being a political party, a resistance movement, and a part of the Lebanese government.

And for sure, it is of our concern to define our position towards it [the Islamic State]. Our position, as a party, our position as a resistance [movement], our position then through our ministers in the Lebanese government.226

When looking at the pronoun ‘we’ in the above quotes, the in-group is mainly collocated with a vocabulary of resistance/war (‘martyrs’, ‘injured’, ‘fighting’, ‘captives’, ‘sacrifices’, ‘resistance’ etc.). Difference is constructed between ‘we’ and the ‘terrorists’/’takfiris’/’killing takfiri factions’/’criminals’/’the Islamic State’. I argue that the latter signify an ‘ultimate out-group’, constructed in complete opposition to the in-group, as the others in absolute terms. Lingering in between the in-group and the ultimate out-group are the ‘Syrian refugees’ and the ‘Syrian displaced’.

224 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 37:01 – 38:54 min., free translation from Arabic:
أولاً: الجميع يعرف أن حزب الله ضد داعش، وأنا قبل قريب الشهرين حكيت مطولاً بهذا الملف وطولت عليكم وقتها، ونحن ضد هذه الاتجاهات التكفيرية التقليدية.

225 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 05:06 – 05:32 min., free translation from Arabic:
نحن أعلم الناس بمشاعر و عواطف أهالي الأسرى والمنفقة و الشهداء من خلال تجربتنا المقاومة الطويلة.

226 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 37:01 – 38:54 min., free translation from Arabic:
و التي بالتأكيد نحن معينين بأن نحدد موقفنا منه، موقفنا كجهة، موقفنا كمقاومة، موقفنا إذا من خلال وزرائنا في الحكومة اللبنانية.
I will elaborate on the ambivalent group of the ‘Syrian displaced’/’Syrian refugees’ further below. A part from the ultimate out-group represented by, for example, ‘the terrorists’ and ‘the takfiris’, there is another entity in Nasrallah’s discourse that arguably belong to the out-group. This entity is represented in the text in the form of ‘some [people]’, and is connected to the pronoun ‘they’. ‘They’ and ‘some people’ are apparently posing a threat to national unity, and by extension to the entire nation. ‘They’ are connected to such actions as: ‘directing false accusations’, ‘making political scores’, ‘inciting sectarian strife’ and ‘ideological agitation’. The analysis suggests that this entity of the out-group is essential in Hizbullah’s construction of the finer boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’. It is an important ‘other’, I argue, that facilitates Hizbullah’s construction of the in-group and its characteristics.

Very unfortunately, some [people] turned this national issue into a matter of debate, directing false accusations and making political scores and inciting sectarian strife and ideological agitation on a daily basis.227

I do not want to do what I criticise them for, meaning to say that this case needs to remain outside of debate, outside of mutual accusations, outside of dispute, outside of making [political] scores.228

Here, Hizbullah distances itself from engaging in such actions as ‘debate’, ‘accusations’, ‘making political scores’ etc. - the actions that characterise ‘them’ (‘some people’). The in-group (‘we’) is differed from ‘some people’ (‘they’). Their characters and actions signify what ‘we’ are not and what ‘we’ do not engage in. Moreover, as indicated by the below quote, by justifying the acts of the ‘terrorists’, by engaging in a ‘blame-game’, and by making even higher demands than the ‘armed groups’/’kidnappers’ themselves, this entity of the out-group (comprised of ‘people in Lebanon’ and ‘some people’), becomes connected to the ‘terrorists’ and ‘armed groups’. We may re-call here that Hizbullah’s construction of ‘domestic others’ are not a new discursive construal in Hizbullah’s discourse. Khatib has previously noted Hizbullah’s tendency to place its Lebanese political opponents on the same level as Israel, or “as an extension of the Israeli threat”.229 Larbi has highlighted that ‘the muqāwama’ does not only direct its efforts against the external enemies (Israel and US neo-colonialism) but also against “an anti-resistance bloc” at the domestic level, foremost


228 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 10:36 – 11:33 min., free translation from Arabic: أنا ما بدي أعمل إلى عم بالتفهم عليه، يعني أنا عم أقول إن هذه القضية لازم تكون خارج المجال، خارج الاتهامات المتبادلة، خارج الصراع، خارج تصفية الحسابات.

represented politically by the 14 March bloc. This analysis suggests that the same ‘domestic others’, most likely the political opponents of Hizbullah in Lebanon, are now being discursively connected to terrorism by Hizbullah, as an extension of the terrorist threat.

[T]here are people in Lebanon who not only adopted the demands of the kidnappers, but moreover raised the ceiling higher than they anticipated, or than these armed groups used to anticipate. Instead of directing the condemnation and the blame towards those who attacked the army and the security forces and killed, injured, destroyed, kidnapped, slaughtered and stole, the condemnation was directed in other directions within Lebanon and some people addressed a justification of what the terrorists had done, in defence of them.

‘Some people’ are thus justifying and defending ‘the terrorists’ who attacked the army and the security forces and killed, injured, destroyed, kidnapped, slaughtered and stole. We will see below that the army and the security forces are constructed as national pillars. Hence, ‘some people’ are discursively constructed as supporting those who attack and threaten the very ‘nation’.

Similarly, ‘they’ and ‘others’ in the below quote are constructed as supporters of both the Americans and the Islamic State. Also emphasised in the below quote is the lack of principles and steadfastness of the ‘other’. Whereas the out-group is characterised as lacking principles, the principal stance of Hizbullah is over-emphasised elsewhere in Nasrallah’s speech. To give but one example: “[w]e have a principal standpoint of our rules, foundations and structures, which does not change from one place to the other”.

As noted by Costelloe, placing emphasis on the common characteristics of one in-group distinguishes it from an excluded out-group. Here, emphasis is placed on a common negative characteristic of the out-group (lacking principles), distinguishing it from the in-group (abiding by its principles). As also emphasised by Nasrallah’s words: “We are in principle not like others”.

We are in principle not like others, they are for the American intervention and request the American intervention for example in order for someone’s regime to fall, but if the American intervention were

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231 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 08:49 – 10:36 min., free translation from Arabic: يعنى فيه ناس في لبنان مثل بس اتبنوا مطالب الخاطفين، بالعكس رفعوا سقف أكثر مما تتطلع، أو كانت تتطلع إليه هذه الجماعات المسلحة، و بدل أن توجه الإدانة واللوم إلى الذين اعتدوا على الجيش و القوى الأمنية و قتلوا و جرحوا و نفروا، و جُهت الإدانة بإتجاهات أخرى في داخل لبنان، و تصدى البعض لتبرير ما فعله الإرهابيون لدفاع عنهم.
in order to strike the Islamic State they would be against it.  

In other parts of Nasrallah’s speech, he elaborates on a defamation campaign directed towards Hizbullah in connection to the Arsal crisis. As indicated by the below quotes, ‘some people’, ‘whoever’, ‘anyone’ and ‘he’ (signifying the out-group) are collocated with words such as ‘deceitful’, ‘liar’, ‘hypocrite’, ‘speculates’, ‘distortion’, ‘fraud’, ‘deception’, and ‘misinformation’. Interestingly, ‘the politicians’ seem to be equated with this entity of the out-group, by sharing a similar collocation to the words ‘not true’ and ‘lies’. Again, the out-group helps to define what the in-group is not, whether the in-group represents the national collective, ‘we’ as in Lebanese, or Hizbullah. In addition, the steadfastness of the in-group is again emphasised, as in: “our stand from the very beginning”.

This is our stand from the very beginning, and whoever says something else is deceitful and a liar and a hypocrite, excuse me for saying that.

If anyone speculates that he, through his actions - I am talking only out of concern for the families and the soldiers - if anyone imagines that he, through this distortion, fraud, deception, misinformation and hypocrisy that they enacted during these weeks towards Hizbullah, achieved political and media gains, he did not achieve anything.

Everything that has been said and what the politicians have told you is not true, [it is] lies!

Unlike the ultimate out-group (the ‘terrorists’, ‘kidnappers’, ‘killers’, ‘takfiris’, ‘armed groups’, etc.) the entity of the out-group signified by ‘they’, ‘some people’ etc. may be brought back on the right track and become included in the in-group, the national community. The conditions of such inclusion are cooperation and support to the government (and indirectly to Hizbullah as a part of the government), as indicated by the below quote, calling for ‘all of us’ to join forces and assist the government.

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236 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, from 26:23 min., free translation from Arabic: إذا حدى ممكن إنه من خلال اللي عمله، أنا عم باحكي بس حرصا على العائلات و على العسكريين، و إلا إذا حدى بيتصور أنه من خلال هذا التشويه و التزوير و الخداع و التضليل و اللجوء اللي مارسوا خلال هذه الأسابيع اتجاه حزب الله، أنه حقق مكاسب سياسية و إعلامية، ما حقق شيء، ما حقق شيء.

237 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, from 20:00 min., free translation from Arabic: كل ما قيل و قاله لكم السياسيون هو غير صحيح، كاذب!
I wanted to talk to say let’s end this atmosphere in order to work in a correct way, for all of us to work in the right way to serve this goal and to serve this case and to join forces and assist the government in its negotiations.238

7.3 The ultimate out-group
The so-called ultimate out-group here, i.e. the ‘terrorists’, ’armed groups’, ‘kidnappers’, ‘takfiris’ (etc.), tend to be characterised as ultimately evil; as lacking all moral and human characters. The same tendency was noted above regarding the academic approach that framed Hizbullah as a ‘super-terrorist’.239 I argue that this academic approach tends to dehumanise Hizbullah by, for example, using the non-human terms of ‘elements’ 240 and ‘operatives’ 241 when referring to its members. In the below quote, the negative characteristics attributed to the ‘other’, tend towards a similar dehumanisation in my view. The ‘ultimate others’ (here represented by ‘the armed groups’) do not even care about their own collective; they slaughter each other, steal from one another and insult each other’s women.

At times, there is a party that does not care, neither about the people, nor about the people of ‘Arsāl, nor about the family of someone, nor about Sunna and Shi’a, nor Muslims, Christians, Druze and I do not know whom… They do not care about anyone and they among themselves slaughter each other, kill each other, steal from each other, and insult each other’s women, I mean they do not care what so ever. Then you come and want to kidnap this one or that one in order to put pressure on the armed groups, this is not effective at all.242

In contrast to the in-group (‘we’), members of the out-group (‘they’) are collocated with such words as ‘sectarian’, ‘ideological’, ‘agitating’, ‘takfīrī’ and ‘ideological cleavage’. What ‘they’ stand for is precisely what ‘we’ (Hizbullah) are not. What ‘they’ do (“transfer the battle to Lebanon”) is precisely what ‘we’ (Hizbullah) do not. This statement is likely to be a response to the domestic accusations against Hizbullah that it transfers the battle from Syria to Lebanon by engaging in the Syrian war. Again, the characters and actions attributed to the ‘other’ defines what ‘we’ are not, what ‘we’ do not

238 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, from 27:20 min., free translation from Arabic: خليتنا نوقف هذا الجو لحتى نشتغل صح، كلنا نشتغل صح لخدمة هذا الهدف و لخدمة هذه القضية و نتضامن و ندعم الحكومة في مفاوضاتها.
240 Schbley A. H., 2000, p. 175.
242 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 29:13 – 31:51 min., free translation from Arabic: مرة فيه جهة مش سائلة، لا على الناس ولا على أهل عرسال ولا على عائلة فلان ولا على سنة و شيعة و مسلمون و مسيحيون و دوزو و ما أعرف من... ما سألين عن حدا و هم مع بعضهم يدبحون بعض و يقتلون بعض و ينهبون بعض و يسبون نساء بعض، فاصلا ما سألين يعني. مرة نجي أنت بديك تخطف فلان أو عائلة حتى تضغط على الجماعات المسلحة، هذا لا يجي نفعا.
These armed groups, all of their speech, from the beginning to the end, is sectarian, ideological, agitating, and takfiri. They want ideological cleavage in Lebanon and they want to transfer the battle to Lebanon. They, not we!  

After a careful construction of the ‘terrorists’, ‘takfiris’ and the Islamic State as ultimate others, as opposites to the in-group and a threat to the entire Lebanese nation and its people, the ultimate out-group is connected to the traditional ‘main enemies’ of Hizbullah, the Israeli state and the US government. As mentioned, Fairclough uses the terms ‘equivalence’ and ‘difference’ to describe the tendencies towards creating and disseminating differences between entities and groups of people (creating an ‘us’ and a ‘them’). At the same time, differences within the ‘us’ and the ‘them’ are diminished and erased. We can see in the below quotes that the entities of the ultimate out-group are being equated. ‘America’, ‘Israel’ and ‘terrorism’ are literary conflated.

America is, in our view, the mother of terrorism, and whoever wants to discuss [this] is welcome to discuss with us. It [America] is the root of the terrorism in this world. If there is terrorism in this world, so look at the American administration. We are of course not talking about the American people.

America is the absolute supporter of the Zionist terrorist state. The root [cause] of the terrorism in our region is the existence of the Israeli state, which enjoys absolute American support, military and security wise, politically, economically, financially and legally, even via the veto, even the condemnation in the Security Council is forbidden. Hence, the issue is connected to Israel.

The American administration is moreover characterised by its ‘lack of morals’ through its historic records of “nuclear bombs on the people in Japan and shameful wars and unspeakable cruelty in Vietnam and other places”. Through their ‘unspeakable cruelty’, the Americans share...
characteristics with the ‘terrorists’. At the same time, by being constructed as deceitful, the Americans share characteristics with Hizbullah’s domestic out-group signified by ‘some people’. The American-led international coalition against the Islamic State is depicted as simply a ‘pretext’/’argument’/’reason’ for American imperialism and a ‘re-occupation’ of the region (after the American failure in Iraq).

This is an opportunity, or a pretext, or an argument, or a reason for America to re-occupy the region once again, or to re-impose military bases that were rejected by the Iraqis in the past, to re-install them once again in Iraq or in the region in some countries once again, or to impose options of this kind.248

7.4 Pillars of national unity

The equivalence and difference approach of this analysis involves looking at how ‘Lebanon’ and ‘the Lebanese’ are constructed in the text; what ‘Lebanon/Lebanese’ are differentiated against, and how differences within ‘Lebanon/Lebanese’ are collapsed by relations of equivalence.249 Fairclough describes equivalence as “co-membership of a class”.250 He notes that semantic relations between sentences may involve making entities equivalent by including them in lists.251 Such lists of equivalence will be in focus here. In the below quote, a relation of equivalence is created between ‘Lebanon’/‘Lebanese’ and ‘state, people, army, institutions’. Differences within the in-group, in terms of ‘area’, ‘faction’, ‘political party’, ‘denomination’252 and ‘ideology’ are played down. Hizbullah’s emphasis on national unity and its negative evaluation of sectarianism, as previously noticed by Høigilt253 among others, appear as prevailing features in Hizbullah’s discourse.

Lebanon came to face a complete case called the kidnapped soldiers in the desolated ‘Arsāl [the barren lands surrounding the town of Arsal], by armed terrorist groups. This case is in itself a human, national and moral issue, and it is not specific for a particular area or faction or political party or denomination or ideology. Rather, it is the case of all Lebanese, meaning all of Lebanon, state and

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252 The Arabic word ṭā’ifa can, according to Hans Wehr’s Dictionary, mean among others: “people; class; sect; denomination; confession; communion; party; faction; religious minority” (Wehr H., 1980, p. 574.)

people and army and institutions, meaning all the Lebanese [people].

In a similar quote below, ‘Lebanese’ is collocated with a relation of equivalence, in which ‘the kidnapped soldiers’ are equated with ‘our brothers’, ‘our children’, ‘our parents’, ‘our beloved and dear ones’, ‘the sons of our army’, and the ‘sons of our state’. Differences based on region, denomination, and party affiliations are likewise erased through a negated list. ‘All Lebanese’ are equated with the ‘national organisation’ (the army) and ‘the state’. The frequent collocation of these three entities, ‘the Lebanese people’, ‘the army’ and ‘the state’ (sometimes in the form of listing) suggests that these entities are the pillars of national unity. The ‘security apparatus’ is, as we will see further below, sometimes included in this list of ‘national pillars’.

Let us say we are all Lebanese. They [the kidnapped soldiers] are the youths, they are our brothers and our children and our parents and our beloved ones and our dear ones. No matter to what region, to what denomination, to what party they belong, they are the sons of our national organisation [the army] and the sons of our state.

Another relation of equivalence is established by a list comprising the ‘Lebanese people’, ‘the Iraqi people’, ‘the Syrian people’ and ‘all the peoples of the region’. In turn, this in-group is differentiated against ‘America’ and by extension, the ‘international coalition’. We may re-call here what Karagiannis calls the anti-globalization master frame of Hizbullah, pitted against a neo-colonial and capitalist world order, and the organisation’s anti-imperialism theme, noted by Alagha. The ‘peoples’ of the region (the Iraqis, Syrians, and Lebanese) are equated, and differentiated against ‘America’ and ‘an international coalition’, playing upon the traditional anti-imperialism theme of Hizbullah.

[It is the right of the Lebanese people and it is also the right of the Iraqi people and the right of the Syrian people, and of all the peoples of the region, to have doubts about the intentions of America, based on this current [US] awakening and its urge to unite the world and to make an international

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254 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, from 07:37 min., free translation from Arabic: 

وأصبح لبنان أمام قضية كاملة اسمها العسكريون المخطوفون في عرسال من قبل الجماعات الإرهابية المسلحة. هذه القضية بحد ذاتها هي قضية إنسانية وطنية وأخلاقية، وهي لا تخص لا منطقة ولا جهة ولا حزب ولا طائفة ولا مذهب، وإنما هي قضية اللبنانيين جميعاً وتعني كل لبنان، دولةً وشعباً ودينًا ومؤسسات.

255 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 24:41 – 26:23 min., free translation from Arabic: 

خلو هذا على جنب، هنقول حطوا المزايدات على جنب. خلينا نجي نجي نجي نجي نجي نجي نجي نجي. نحن كي نقول تنح كي نقول تنح كي نقول تنح كي نقول تنح كي نقول تنح. نحن الشباب، نحن اللبنانيين جميعاً، نحن اللبنانيين جميعاً، نحن اللبنانيين جميعاً، نحن اللبنانيين جميعاً.


While the ‘Syrian people’ are equated with the Lebanese people in the above quote, the ‘Syrian displaced’, on the other hand, appear throughout Nasrallah’s speech as an ambiguous out-group. On the one hand, emphasis is placed on protecting the ‘Syrian displaced’. Nasrallah likes to point out that “Hizbullah protects the displaced people and defends them”. On the other hand, as in the below quote, an ambiguous connection is made between the ‘Syrian displaced’, ‘terrorism’, ‘civil strife’, and national ‘problems’.

The third matter, it is assisting Lebanon to solve the problem of the displaced people. If the problem of the displaced is solved, it will keep away a lot of the danger of terrorists and terrorism and of civil strife and the problems regarding the Lebanese situation.

Worth noting is also the choice of using the term ‘displaced’ rather than ‘refugees’ when referring to the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Whereas ‘refugees’ are protected by international law and enjoy particular rights, ‘displaced people’ do not to the same extent enjoy protection and rights under international law. The word ‘displaced’ does simply not oblige as much on behalf of the Lebanese state. In addition, the word ‘displaced’ may indicate a more temporary situation than the word ‘refugee’ does, particularly in a country like Lebanon where the Palestinian refugees from ‘al-nakba’ (‘the catastrophe’), i.e. the 1948 exodus from Palestine and the newly established state of Israel, have arguably become a ‘permanent’ refugee population in Lebanon.

In the below quote, a relation of equivalence is established between ‘political divisions’, ‘political outbidding’ and ‘incitement’, and this list is collocated with ‘terrorism’. This relation is moreover differentiated from a list of entities comprising the ‘nation’: the ‘Lebanese government’, the ‘army’, the ‘security apparatus’, and the ‘people’. The latter are collocated with: ‘harmony’, ‘cooperation’, ‘capability’, ‘resilience’, and ‘brave patience’. A binary relation between the out-group and the in-group - between ‘political opponents’ and ‘terrorists’ on the one hand, and the ‘Lebanese nation’, ‘people’, ‘government’, ‘army’, ‘security apparatus’ (and certainly Hizbullah) on the other hand - is

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258 Al-Manar, “Words by the Secretary General”, 23 Sep 2014, 43:52 – 45:01 min., free translation from Arabic: من حق اللبنانيين، و أيضا من حق العراقيين، و من حق السوريين، و كل شعوب المنطقة أن يشكوا بنوايا أمريكا من خلال يعني هذا اليقظة الآن و هذه الفيأة، وإنه بده يجمع العالم و يبيع تحالف دولي
We are capable, as Lebanese people, to confront the terrorists and the terrorism, and until today, despite the political divisions, despite the political outbidding, despite the incitement, despite everything I talked about earlier. Lebanon is still capable, and it is capable with a minimum of harmony, with a minimum of cooperation, which took place within the Lebanese government, this current government. Yes, Lebanon is capable to confront it through its army, through its security apparatus, through its people, through this resilience, this brave patience. Yes, we the Lebanese people are capable to confront it.  

7.5 Summery of Nasrallah’s speech

By applying critical discourse analytical tools, focusing on vocabulary usage (specifically pronoun usage), collocations, as well as equivalence and difference, the construction of a national in-group and out-group comes forth. The analysis of the image dimension, based on Kress and Van Leeuwen, confirms such positive characteristics of the in-group (Hizbullah) as ‘straight forwardness’, ‘transparency’, ‘honesty’, ‘familiarity’ (characteristics which also come forward in the text/language), as well as the ‘expertise’ and ‘authority’ of its Secretary General. The identified out-group is comprised of ‘terrorists’ (the ‘armed groups’/’militants’/’takfiris’/’criminals’ in Arsal, the Islamic State, etc.), the ‘mother of terrorism’ and the ‘terrorist state’ (America and Israel) and ‘some people’ in Lebanon who indirectly contribute to the aims of the ‘terrorists’. Moreover, the ‘Syrian displaced’ is an ambiguous entity of the out-group that, on the one hand, stands under the protection of the in-group (Hizbullah) and, on the other hand, is associated with the ‘terrorist problem’. In contrast to the out-group and its negative characteristics (not including the ‘Syrian displaced’) stands the in-group, comprised of the ‘Lebanese people’, the ‘state’/’government’, the ‘army’, the ‘security apparatus’, and, naturally, Hizbullah. In-group coherence is emphasised by the sharing of common positive characteristics and by playing down or erasing differences along sectarian, religious, geographic and political lines.

A discourse of resistance/war has been identified through the collocation between the pronoun ‘we’ (Hizbullah/the nation) and such words as ‘martyrs’, ‘fighting’, ‘sacrificing’. Likewise, the ‘Lebanese
people’ is characterised by ‘resilience’ and ‘brave patience’. ‘National unity’ is threatened by, among others, a domestic group under the label of ‘some people’. This entity of the out-group remains anonymous, but I argue that ‘some people’ are likely to comprise local political opponents to Hizbullah. Moreover, ‘some people’ serve an important role in the construction of the national ‘we’ and the ‘self’ (of Hizbullah) by representing what ‘we’ are not. Hassan Nasrallah’s discourse emphasises muqāwama/resistance, anti-sectarianism, anti-imperialism, and connects the out-group to ‘terrorism’.

8. Analysis of Al-Manar’s news bulletin on 23 September 2014

Al-Manar’s news bulletin strives, like any standard news bulletin, to present its news items in a neutral manner. Hence, the words ‘we’/’us’ and ‘they’/’them’ are left out and replaced by ‘the leader of a certain denomination’, the ‘Member of Parliament of a certain party’, or the ‘Americans’, the ‘Israelis’, the ‘Iraqi delegation’ said or did something. This does, however, not indicate an absence of othering. The analytical approach, however, needs to differ from the above analysis of Nasrallah’s speech. The analysis of the main news bulletin on 23 September 2014 will depart from the previous focus on the personal pronouns (‘we’/’they’), by paying attention to the construction of ‘we’ and ‘the other’ in the image. The analysis of the image will serve as a basis upon which the text analysis rests. Based on Fairclough, the subsequent text analysis will focus on the collocations, patterns of words, connected to the in- and out-groups identified in the image. The analysis of the language will strive to shed light on the characteristics of the in- and out-groups, thereby illuminating the characteristics of the national community embraced by Hizbullah.

8.1 Drawing the in-group through the image

‘Images of demand’ create direct contact between the represented participant and the viewer, as noted by Kress and Van Leeuwen. By looking directly at the viewer and perhaps by using a gesture in the direction of the viewer, the represented participant’s gaze and gesture demand that the viewer enter in some kind of imaginary relation with him or her. A close distance between the represented participant and the viewer (a close shot) and a frontal angle at eye level are further aspects that enhance a sense of familiarity and belonging between the represented participant and the viewer. Through images of demand, a sense of ‘we’ is created. Such images of demand are applied in Al-Manar’s news bulletin to depict, for example, a Sunni Muslim leader; a prominent Shi’i Muslim

\[262\] Fairclough N., 2003, p. 131.
authority and likewise Hizbullah leader; the family members of a martyred soldier; day labourers; and the leader of the so-called Houthi movement in Yemen. Attention will now be paid to the details of these images of demand and to the verbal texts accompanying these images.

An image of demand is used in a clip with The Mufti of Tripoli and the North, Sheikh Malik Al-Shi’ar. The Sunni Muslim leader looks directly at the viewer as he denounces the killing of a Lebanese army soldier, an incident that took place in Tripoli the same morning. Besides the contact between the represented participant (the Mufti) and the viewer through the gaze, the close shot of the Mufti (showing head and shoulders) reflects familiarity and intimacy. Moreover, the frontal camera angle suggests “something we are involved with”. In addition, the picture is at eye-level, indicating that the point of view is one of equality between the represented participant (the Mufti), the viewer, and likewise the producer of the image (Al-Manar/Hizbullah). The Sunni Muslim Mufti is arguably depicted as belonging to the ‘we’, the national in-group. As indicated by the below statement by the Mufti, a representative for Sunni Muslim leadership in northern Lebanon, he distances himself from acts harming the state, the security, the stability and the assistance to the army and the military organisation.

We are not with any position, nor with any judiciary, nor with any statement harming the interest of the state, the security, the stability, and the assistance to the army and the military organisation.

Not surprisingly, the image of demand also dominates a clip with the leader of Hizbullah’s Shari’a Council, Sheikh Muhammad Yazbek (also carrying the title of ‘The Representative of the Religious Authority Imam Khamenei in Lebanon’) when delivering what he calls a “unifying speech”. Yazbek stresses “the need of assisting the military organisation”. He calls upon the politicians to “elect a president of the republic”.

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other groups, to ‘all the Lebanese’, for the sake of national unity. Opposed to the national in-group stands ‘the ones who instigate civil strife’.

We appreciate every nice word, expressed in any situation and by any group for the sake of unity and affinity, because this nation is only protected by the meeting and understanding between all. We call upon all the Lebanese to not listen to the ones who instigate civil strife.273

Likewise, images of demand dominate a clip showing the relatives and friends of a ‘martyred soldier’ in Tripoli. The reporter describes the incident in the following words: “An armed group, described by a security source as militant, implemented the attack against an army checkpoint in the area of Al-Badawi, and the outcome was the martyrdom of a soldier”.274 Lamenting women relatives and neighbours are the primary focus of the news clip from the neighbourhood surrounding the home of the ‘martyred soldier’.275 Through the gaze and gestures276, the frontal camera angle277 and close up shots278, contact and a sense of familiarity with the viewer are established. Women and men are crying and the camera moves in for close shots of women exclaiming their anger towards the perpetrators of the crime. The size of frame and camera angle invite the viewer to become involved, a sense of ‘we’ is created with the ‘family of the martyr’ through images of demand. A pluralist (multi-confessional) national identity is embraced by this in-group, as suggested by the below statement by an ‘uncle of the martyr’.

The second matter, we are Muslims and Christians, Shi’a and Druze, we want to live together regardless of them [the ones who killed his nephew], whether they agree or not.279

The women relatives of the martyred soldier equal ‘them’ [the perpetrators and ‘killers’] with ‘non-believers’ in the below quotes. Moreover, a sister of the martyred soldier tells the world leaders that, due to their panic and apparent lack of action, she will herself take up the quest for revenge. The in-group, here comprised of women relatives of the martyr, is constructed as a group with agency. They


274 Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 23:50 min., free translation from Arabic: هناك مجموعة مسلحة وصفها مصدر أمني بالمتشددة نفذت الحجوم على نقطة جيش في منطقة البداوي, و الحصيلة استشهاد جندي


are ready to take action, to fight back, while world leaders are ‘panicking’. By evoking ‘the mercy of Muhammad’, the viewer understands that the sister of the martyred soldier is Muslim, but whether she is Shi’a or Sunni is not mentioned. The women apparently represent a unified stance against the ‘infidel’ perpetrators. The women interviewees are also more outspoken than the ‘uncle of the martyr’ when it comes to expressing their anger towards the ‘disbelieving perpetrators’ and world leaders, as indicated by the below quotes.

Where are the leaders [sheikhs/elders] of those disbelievers? From where does the Islam of those disbelievers come? Foe [exclaiming a spitting sound] on them!280 (One of the women)

I want to say to the great leaders, to the men among you; those who made you panic, those who are uncontrollable [the ‘armed groups’], on the mercy of Muhammad and on the mercy of my brother, the martyred soldier, I will take revenge on behalf on him [my brother] with my own hands.281 (The “sister of the martyr”)

Images of demand are likewise prevalent in a reportage concerning a conflict between Lebanese labourers and their employer (an electricity company). The local day labourers demonstrate fiercely against the lack of payment of their salaries by the electricity company.282 The other side, the employer, is absent from the image. Through close shots of the labourers, a sense of familiarity is created.283 The frontal camera angle suggests involvement284, and a visual form of direct address is created by the gaze and the gestures of the labourers, demanding that the viewer enter in some kind of relation with them.285 Here, the in-group is comprised of the ‘economically deprived’, represented by the day labourers. The employer is othered by his or her complete absence from the image, as well as his or her absent voice. This clip indicates that Hizbullah is up-holding its discourse of the oppressed versus the oppressors, as identified by Alagha, among others.

At the international level, a sense of familiarity is created through the image of Abd al-Malik al-
Houthi, the leader of the so-called Houthi rebellion of Zaydi Shi’a in northern Yemen\textsuperscript{287} in a close to one minute clip of his speech. The image of al-Houthi is a close shot and the angle is frontal. Contact with the viewer is established through the gaze and the gestures of al-Houthi. The size of frame, the angle, the gaze and gestures demand that the viewer enter in some kind of imaginary relation with al-Houthi. A sense of in-group is established.\textsuperscript{288} It is not quite within the scoop of this paper to entangle Hizbullah’s loyalties on the international arena. Nevertheless, from the below quote, we see that the characteristics mentioned by the Al-Manar reporter in connection to the Houthi Movement (‘national spirit’ and ‘just solution’ as opposed to a ‘conspiracy targeting the Yemeni forces’)) are largely in line with Hizbullah’s characterisation of its own ‘Lebanese situation’.

To Yemen, where the leader of the movement Ansarullah, Mr Abd al-Malik Al-Houthi, warned against a conspiracy targeting the Yemeni armed forces in all the provinces, and he considered that the return of the national spirit to the country requires a just solution to the southern issue.\textsuperscript{289} (The Al-Manar Reporter)

Based on the images of demand in this news bulletin, discussed above, I argue that a sense of belonging and a sense of a national ‘we’ cutting across religious and ethnic affiliations are established. ‘Muslim unity’ is underlined against a threat comprised of ‘armed groups’, ‘killers’, ‘unbelievers’ and ‘those who seek civil strife’. At the local level, ‘the oppressed’ [economically deprived] and ‘the family of the martyrs’ are highlighted within the in-group. Whereas Shi’a alliance may be noticed on the regional level [a sense of ‘we’ with the Yemeni al-Houthi movement], Shi’a identity is downplayed at the local level. Among the main themes of Hizbullah’s political ideology identified by Alagha\textsuperscript{290}, we can see that the themes of oppressors and oppressed, pan-Islamism, and (jihad and) martyrdom are emphasised. We may note that whereas martyrdom is discursively underlined, jihād is not. Moreover, martyrdom is now primarily evoked in the context of muqāwama/resistance against the ‘terrorists’ and ‘armed groups’, not in relation to the Israeli territories and ‘the liberation of Palestine’.


\textsuperscript{290} Alagha J., 2011, p. 15.
8.2 The image of equal partnership

Besides the above mentioned images of demand indicating a sense of in-group, the news bulletin includes a range of images of meetings that, I will argue, signify a form of ‘equal partnership’. The analysis below will initially focus on the meeting between the Syrian president Bashar al-Assad and an Iraqi delegation. This meeting serves here as a role model for a number of depicted meetings between representatives of political, religious and ethnic affiliations. I base this analysis on Fairclough’s understanding of Critical Discourse Analysis as a relational form of research focusing on social relations. Moreover, his understanding of discourse in terms of “relations of communication between people who talk, write or in other ways communicate with each other” guides me to examine the depicted social relations of communication in the images of these meetings. The analysis suggests that the represented participants in these meetings are to be viewed as equal partners, as allies of the in-group, i.e. of Hizbullah and its ‘national we’.

The images of the meeting between the Syrian president and the Iraqi delegation confer to what Kress and Van Leeuwen call ‘images of offer’. As no gaze or gesture is directed towards the viewer, the represented images (Bashar al-Assad and two Iraqi delegates) are “the objects of the viewer’s dispassionate scrutiny” and no relation is established between the represented participants and the viewer. The Syrian president and the Iraqi delegates are looking at each other while talking and smiling with their voices muted. Nevertheless, the size of frame conforms at large with the breast pocket shot, which is normally the set-up for experts and interviewers, and applied to signify respect for authorities. Moreover, the size of frame helps the viewer to come close to the represented participants. While not fully conforming to a close shot reflecting familiarity and intimacy, it reflects a personal distance, far from strangeness and otherness. Another dimension of the image is the angle between the represented participants (here: the Syrian president and the delegates) and the viewer. The men are depicted in a slightly oblique angle, however allowing the Syrian president to be viewed in a slightly more frontal angle. The difference between the oblique angle and the frontal angle is, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, between detachment and involvement. Whereas the frontal angle indicates ‘what you see here is part of our world, something we are involved with’, the oblique angle indicates: “what you see here is not part of our world, it is their world, something we

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are not involved with”.

The chosen angle, between oblique and frontal, indicates an ambivalence between involvement and detachment. The Syrian president and the Iraqi delegates are, based on the chosen camera angles, simultaneously depicted as ‘others’ and as part of ‘our’ world. A fourth and final dimension of the image is, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, the notion of power connected to the camera angle. Here, the image of the represented participants is more or less at eye level. The point of view is one of equality, in which no power is involved. Hence, the Syrian president and the Iraqi delegates are not depicted as having power over the viewer, nor over the producer of the image (Al-Manar/Hizbullah). The image reflects equal relations. Whereas sentiments of complete familiarity and intimacy are absent in these images, a sense of involvement, respect for authorities, and equality can be argued for. Based on this analysis, I argue that the images of this meeting indicate a form of equal partnership and a slight sense of in-group, shared by the represented participants, the viewer, and the producer of the image.

There are, as mentioned, several clips depicting meetings in a similar fashion to the one taking place between the Syrian president and the Iraqi delegation. The voices of the represented participants in these meetings, which I choose to call ‘meetings of partnership’, are mainly silenced. At times, the clips are commented by the Al-Manar reporters. Other times the image is the sole means of communication between the represented participants and the viewer. In the case of the Syrian president and the Iraqi delegates, the voices of the represented participants are silenced. The Al-Manar reporter assists in describing the essence of their meeting:

The Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad emphasised that Syria is making serious moves in the war against the takfiri terrorism, and that it [Syria] is for any international effort made in order to combat it [the terrorism]. (The Al-Manar reporter)

According to the Syrian news agency, the Iraqi envoy informed President Al-Assad about the latest arrangements and the up-coming steps regarding the exerted efforts to eliminate the terrorist organisations under their various names. (The Al-Manar reporter)

The textual analysis indicates that Syria and Iraq are partners in the war against the ‘takfiri terrorism’,

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298 Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, from 07:20 min., free translation from Arabic: أكد رئيس السوري: "أكد رئيس الأسّد أن سوريا ماضية بكل حزم في الحرب ضد الإرهاب التكفيري و أنها مع أي جهد دولي صب لمكافحته

299 Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 07:20 – 08:05 min., free translation from Arabic: بحسب وكالة الأنباء السورية فقد أطلع المبعوث العراقي رئيس الأسّد على آخر الترتيبات و الخطوات المفيدة للجهود المبذولة للقضاء على التنظيمات الإرهابية بمختلف مسماّها
in which they ‘make serious moves’, ‘exert efforts’ and ‘are for international efforts’ combatting ‘terrorism’. Through a range of similar meetings involving images of partnership, Hizbullah carefully knits a network of regional partners and a sense of national unity based on cross-confessional and cross-ethnic partnerships. Hizbullah’s network of partners cut across religious, ethnic and national affiliations (Shi’a – Sunni, Shi’a – Druze, Shi’a – Christian, Christian – Sunni, Lebanese – Palestinian). A sense of a pluralist national unity is moreover emphasised through the verbal statements by certain participants. In the meeting between the Maronite Patriarch, Cardinal Mor Bechara Boutros al-Rahi and the Mufti of the Lebanese Republic, Sheikh Abdel-Latif Derian, the Maronite Patriarch calls for mutual understanding between the March 8 and March 14 Alliances.

In line with Hassan Nasrallah’s speech on the same day, the Patriarch stresses the need of electing a president, national reconciliation and supporting the army and the security apparatus.

We find ourselves simultaneously before the need to act for the sake of mutual understanding between the two contesting parties, March 8 and 14, electing a president of the republic, undertaking national reconciliation, guaranteeing the regularity of the public institution, coordinating the judiciary, and supporting the army and the security apparatus.

In line with Hizbullah’s emphasis on Christian-Muslim reconciliation and co-existence, as

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identified by for example Saad-Ghorayeb\textsuperscript{302} and on Islamic unity, as noted by Alagha\textsuperscript{303} among others, these meetings of partnership hit the same strings of cross-confessional unity.

The formation of a ‘we’ necessarily implies an ‘other’. Through the images of these partnership meetings, Hizbullah identifies its ‘friends’ and likewise the ‘friends of Lebanon’. At the same time, an ‘other’ takes shape. Of relevance here are the absences, the ‘others’ who are not invited to the meetings, who remain absent from the image of partnership. As Fairclough argues, the selection, texturing, and actualisation of all potential discourses, genres, grammatical constructions, vocabularies, etc. involve agency.\textsuperscript{304} Likewise, the selection of represented participants in the images of partnership certainly involve agency. One significant absence is the one of the March 14 Alliance, Hizbullah’s main political opponents and likewise government coalition partners since March 2014. Whereas various political actors affiliated with the March 8 Alliance are represented in the images of these meetings, representatives from the March 14 Alliance remain absent. Their absence indicates, in my view, an important breach in the national unity that Hizbullah apparently aspires for, a breach that cuts through the Lebanese government itself. Images of representatives from the March 14 Alliance are however available in a few brief clips from the parliament. Here, representatives from the March 14 Alliance and the March 8 Alliance stress a common concern: to hold elections for a new president. A member of the Lebanese Forces Block (belonging to the March 14 Alliance), the Member of Parliament George Adwan states:

\begin{quote}
What is required before anything else, before the legislation is required and before any other thing is required, is the election of the president.\textsuperscript{305}
\end{quote}

Despite this joint call for presidential elections, the elections were indefinitely postponed at the time of this news broadcast. The Al-Manar reporter indicates in the below statement that the problem is to be found at the leadership level of the March 14 Alliance.

\begin{quote}
What has come to be no secret to anyone, the final decision [regarding the presidential elections] for the March 14 Alliance is connected to the decision by Fouad Siniora [the leader of the largest party, the Future Movement, in March 14]. According to the MPs of the Future [Movement]
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{303} Alagha J., 2011, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{305} Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 17:39 – 18:02 min., free translation from Arabic: المفروض قبل أي شيء ثاني، قبل التشريع، ضرورة.. و قبل أي شيء ثاني، يصير انتخاب الرئيس
themselves, progress in the communication with Siniora has been achieved but it seems like it is limited to the agreement on holding a legislative session regardless of the final result.\textsuperscript{306}

The final decision on the presidential elections is, according to the Al-Manar reporter, in the hands of Fouad Siniora and his March 14 Alliance. Their achievements regarding this issue, however, remain limited. According to this discursive construction, the March 8 Alliance (including Hizbullah) remains without blame for the postponed presidential elections, despite being part of the government. Whereas representatives of the March 14 Alliance are absent from the images of partnership meetings, they are included in a few other images in the news bulletin that can be characterised as images of demand, images that demand our attention and involvement.\textsuperscript{307}

\textbf{8.3 Imaging the ultimate other}

The analysis suggests that the significant absence from the image, as well as the voice, of certain entities in the ultimate out-group of Hizbullah arguably reinforces their ‘strangeness’ and ‘otherness’. First, the reportage\textsuperscript{308} about the attack on the Islamic State by “Washington and its partners” (the international coalition) lacks images of human beings. The clip includes images of nightly shootings and of a hangar ship from which missiles are being launched. As there are no humans involved, no contact is made between the viewer and represented participants. The viewer remains an invisible onlooker of unknown ‘others’, here represented by Washington and its partners, and the Islamic State. All images that do not include human or human-like participants looking directly at the viewer are, what Kress and Van Leeuwen call, ‘images of offer’, and involve othering.\textsuperscript{309} The otherness of Washington and its partners is further reinforced by the language text. As indicated by the below quotes, the military operation by the coalition is framed as ineffective. Washington is (again) characterised as a liar. Moreover, Syria, in contrast to Washington, is celebrated for its ceaseless and effective efforts in the war against terrorism.

\textit{The coalition partners launched missiles that did not come as a surprise. Tomahawk missiles struck locations of the Islamic State in the northern and eastern Syria, after weeks of threats.}

\textsuperscript{306} Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 19:15 – 19:38 min., free translation from Arabic: كما بات لا يخفى على أحد فإن القرار النهائي للفترة 14 من أذار مرتبط برغبة فؤاد السنيورة ولكن رغم ما حول ترويجه نواب المستقبل أنفسهم فإن تقدما في الاتصالات التي تجري مع السنيورة قد تحقق ولكن على ما يبدو فإنها بعدد الافعال على عند الجلسة التشريعية بعض النظر أن نتائجها النهائية


\textsuperscript{308} Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 03:50 – 05:25 min.

during which the terrorist organisation took precautions.  

Washington insisted stubbornly, or rather, it lied in its denial of notifying Damascus of the attacks. The lie continued to be a pillar in its diplomacy. It [Washington] lied yesterday when it denied proposing negotiations to Iran. Syria, on the other hand, continued the war against the takfiri terrorism, cooperating with any international effort.”  

Second, ‘the terrorists’ (the Islamic State, the militants, the armed groups, etc.) are only depicted in human form in one news clip that emphasises the support of Turkey to the Islamic State. Here, a short YouTube clip is included in the news bulletin. The clip shows two alleged members of the Islamic State commuting by train in Turkey. The two men are wearing black shirts with the Islamic State logo on. According to the below statement by the Al-Manar reporter, Turkey is clearly cooperating with the Islamic State.

Whether it [the YouTube clip] is right or wrong, the evidences of the Turkish cooperation with the Islamic State are more clear and accurate.

Besides the brief YouTube images of the alleged terrorists, the ‘terrorists’ are not depicted in human form in the news bulletin but rather as invisible targets. The images of Syrian army bombs exploding on mountain peaks and shooting taking place in town settings hint at the locations of the ‘terrorists’, however without showing them in person.

By contrast to the general absence of the Americans and the ‘terrorists’ from the image, Israel is indeed included in the image. The reportage on a Syrian aircraft allegedly shot down in the Golan Heights by the Israeli military starts out with images of animated aircrafts, fighter jets, and a lack of humans. However, the inclusion of a clip from an Israeli television channel, subtitled in Hebrew and dubbed into Arabic, allows for intertextuality with an Israeli news source. As noted by Fairclough, intertextuality opens up to difference by bringing other voices into the text. The most dialogical option is to explicitly attribute representations to sources and

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to include as much of the range of different voices that exist.\textsuperscript{315} Although the Israeli voices are mainly muted and dubbed into Arabic, the images in the reportage decrease the sense of otherness of ‘the Israeli enemy’. The integrated Israeli news clip shows close up images of Israeli militaries, indicating a sense of familiarity as well as respect for their authority.\textsuperscript{316} The militaries are depicted in frontal angles, transmitting a sense of ‘we’ and belonging, not surprising as the clip comes from an Israeli news source. Camera shots of the Israeli Minister of War from a low angle indicate his power over the interactive participants, i.e. the viewer and the producer of the image.\textsuperscript{317} In contrast to ‘Washington and its partners’, the ‘Israeli enemy’ is discursively constructed by the text and image as capable, powerful and efficient.

The Israeli Minister of War, Moshe Ya’alon, said, commenting on the shooting down of the airplane, that the airplane approached the Israeli territories and made out a threat. He claimed that it [the plane] exceeded the border, and added that we will not allow any agency to threaten our security and to violate our sovereignty and we will respond to all attempts of this kind, whether being on purpose or by mistake, and we will use all means to do so.\textsuperscript{318}

And the [Israeli] newspaper Yedioth Ahronot reported statements by Israeli military sources announcing that the discovery of the airplane and its identification and the shooting down of it were implemented in a professional and correct manner.\textsuperscript{319}

Hence, the ‘Israeli enemy’ is constructed as a trenchant enemy and a real threat. Israel is othered by the text, as the Al-Manar reporter refers to the Israeli state in terms of ‘the enemy’. However, at the level of the image, the otherness of the ‘Israelis’ is decreased through intertextuality with an Israeli news source.

8.4 An ambiguous border between the ‘we’ and the ‘others’
Al-Manar’s news reportage on the Syrian regime’s crackdown on the Islamic State, the ‘militants’ and ‘terrorists’\textsuperscript{320} includes images of Syrian soldiers and some Syrian civilians. The

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{315}{Fairclough N., 2003, p. 46.}
\footnotetext{318}{Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, from 09:28 min., free translation from Arabic:}
\footnotetext{319}{Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 08:05 – 09:28 min., free translation from Arabic:}
\footnotetext{320}{Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 10:04 – 13:40 min.}
\end{footnotes}
soldiers are depicted in action, from medium close shots (cutting off the subject at around the waist) of armed men running and shooting to medium long shots (showing the full figure). The camera moves in for a close shot of a Syrian soldier who is interviewed by an Al-Manar reporter. Whereas none of the soldiers connects with the viewer through the gaze, a sense of familiarity and in-group membership is nevertheless created through the size of frame, using mainly close shots, and some frontal angle shots. The ‘Syrian ally’ is once again discursively constructed as effective and powerful. In the below quote by a Syrian army official, “our beloved land” (Syria) is contrasted to “the dirt of those hired terrorists”.

With the help of God and the enthusiasm of the heroes of our armed forces, the return of security and safety to the farmlands south east of ‘Adra al-Balad [suburb of Damascus] was completed, and so was the killing of a large number of terrorists and driving away the remaining part of them. We will continue to defeat those terrorists until the complete liberation of our beloved land from the dirt of those hired terrorists.321

Regarding the images of Syrian civilians, the camera moves in for medium shots322 (cutting the subject at the knees) of civilians in a chaotic scene from a hospital after a missile attack by ‘the militants’ in the Syrian town of Hama. The medium shots of Syrian civilians reflect a sense of familiarity. An injured patient is however depicted through a high camera angle (probably the common angle when depicting people in hospital beds), suggesting that the interactive participants (the producer of the image and the viewer) have power over the represented participant (the injured civilian).323 An ambiguous sense of otherness is created foremost by the lack of contact between the viewer and the Syrian civilians in the form of gaze and gesture. Moreover, in contrast to the Syrian militaries, the voices of the Syrian civilians are silenced.

Another group lacking voice throughout the news bulletin are the Syrian refugees. They are mainly referred to in terms of ‘displaced’, accounted in numbers, and depicted through very long shots (the human figures occupy less than half the size of the frame), which, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, indicates strangeness and otherness.324 In the below quote, the ‘displaced persons’ are the subjects of the Turkish forces. The latter control the movements of the


‘displaced’, as well as the movements of the Kurdish fighters. Whereas the ‘displaced’ Syrians stand in opposition to the Islamic State in the below quote, Turkey is framed as an ally of the ‘militants’ (IS members).

The Turkish forces prohibited the displaced persons on its territories to return to ‘Ain Arab in order to defend it [the town] in the confrontation with the Islamic State, and reinforced the restrictions on entering and exiting along the border. Likewise, they imposed a ban on the return of the Kurdish fighters wanting to join the combat units against the Islamic State in Ain Arab. Parallel to this ban, Turkey continues to facilitate the movement of the militants to and from its territories.\textsuperscript{325}

8.5 Summary: the in- and out-groups of the news
An intricate picture of the ‘we’ and the ‘others’, and of national identity, comes forth from the analysis of the image and language in this news bulletin. Whereas a pluralist national identity can be argued for with regard to religious and ethnic affiliations, the absence of Hizbullah’s main political opponents (likewise its government partners) from the images of partnership meetings suggests a political breach cutting through the Lebanese government and society, rather than precisely the national unity that Hizbullah strives to emphasise. Lebanese women are included in the in-group, the national community, as ‘women of male martyrs’. While up-holding traditional female roles of mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives, the women of the ‘martyred soldier’ in Tripoli are more outspoken than their male counterparts, and verbally challenge both male leaders and the ‘perpetrators of the crime’. The in-group of the image and text in the news bulletin includes, as mentioned, Lebanese Sunni, Shi’a, Christian as well as Druze. The non-Muslim national in-group is however largely mobilised from male representatives. Moreover, emphasis within the in-group is put on ‘the deprived’, represented by demonstrating day labourers and ‘the families of martyrs’.

The in-group is not extended to include the Syrian refugees who are othered by the image (through long-shots) as well as their lack of voice in the bulletin. Another major refugee group that at large remains absent are the Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon. Whereas Hizbullah’s discourse emphasises the Palestinian case and freedom from Israeli occupation, as noted by

\textsuperscript{325} Al-Manar, Main News Bulletin, 23 Sep 2014, 13:40 – 15:08 min., free translation from Arabic: و منعت القوات التركية النازحين إلى أراضيها من العودة إلى عين عرب للدفاع عنها في وجه داعش و عززت قيودها على حركة الدخول و الخروج على طول الحدود. كما فرضت حظرًا على عودة المقاتلين الأكراد الراغبين بالانضمام إلى الوحدات المقاتلة ضد داعش في عين عرب. ومقابل هذا الحظر لا تزال تركيا تسهل حركة الملسنيين من وإلى أراضيها
Deeb among others, Lebanese Palestinian refugees remain largely absent from image and text. Nevertheless, a couple of short clips communicating a sense of in-group membership include Palestinians. First, a delegation from the Arabic Women’s Association in occupied Palestine and second, representatives from The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine in Lebanon participate in so-called partnership meetings. Palestinians are, however, represented only as actors for the ‘Palestinian cause’, not as having a stake on the Lebanese national arena or as being part of the Lebanese national community. The Palestinians are rather constructed as co-partners in the struggle against the ‘Israeli enemy’.

At the regional level, the construction of friends and foes reminds us of Hizbullah’s traditional patterns (anti-imperialism, anti-USA and Israel). However, ‘terrorism’ appears as a new lead theme. The American administration, Washington, is characterised as a liar and emphasis is put on its ineffectiveness in the battle against the Islamic State. The otherness of ‘Washington’ and the ‘terrorists’/‘armed groups’/‘takaris’ (for example the Islamic State) is emphasised through the lack of human representations of the Americans and the largely lack of such representations of the ‘terrorists’ (indicating complete otherness). Israel, on the other hand, is discursively constructed as effective and trenchant. Whereas ‘Israel’ is referred to as ‘the enemy’, the otherness of Israel is decreased through intertextuality with Israeli news sources. Moreover, Turkey comes forth as an ally of the ‘terrorists’ and the Islamic State. The primary ‘friend’ on the regional arena is arguably the Syrian state. The Syrian army is characterised as an effective and powerful ally in its ‘war against takfiri’ terrorism’. In addition, the Houthi Movement in Yemen is constructed as having a similar quest for ‘national spirit’ as Hizbullah. The Iraqi government is also found in the partnership category, as an ally of Hizbullah. Noteworthy is also that the presence of Iran in Hizbullah’s in-group is not emphasised. This largely absence of Iran may indicate that Hizbullah tend to stress the Pan-Arab discourse at a time of national crisis.

9. Construction of support networks and justifications

The analysis of the remaining programmes within the political, social, resistance and comedy categories suggest that they, to a large extent, serve the purpose of creating a support network for Hizbullah’s political standpoints and nationalist outlook. First, the various political programmes

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and the resistance programme provide time and space to elaborate on, and argue in line with, Hizbullah’s political standpoints and ideology. Second, a support network is carefully knitted through the invited guests in these programmes. It is a diversified support network in terms of religious affiliation that is being constructed in the political and resistance programmes. It includes, however, exclusively male representatives from Lebanese Christian, Sunni and Shi’a Muslim authorities, the prestigious and leading Sunni Muslim institution of al-Azhar in Egypt, Lebanese media and political analysts, and Directors of Study Centres representing Saudi and Iranian standpoints respectively. By and large, they all provide analyses in support of Hizbullah’s standpoints on the ‘hot’ issues of the Arsal crisis, The international coalition against the Islamic State (IS), Hizbullah’s involvement in Syria, ‘terrorism’, Israel, the USA, Yemen and the Houthi movement, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, etc. The analysis indicates that Hizbullah evokes its Sunni-Shi’a, Christian-Muslim, Pan-Arab and Pan-Islam discourses in the political programmes by constructing a sense of national unity and a support network that highlights cross-religious and cross-national relations. The apparent limits of diversity in the political and resistance programmes selected for this analysis include gender and political opinion. Besides one female programme presenter, Batoul Ayoub Na’īm, hosting one of the political programmes, only men are included to express their political views. A part from one clearly diverting opinion that comes to the surface (see more on this incidence below), the invited guests appear to be all in support of Hizbullah’s political views. It is an image of a unified ‘we’ that is transmitted. A ‘we’ in which internal differences of political opinion, religious affiliation, nationality, and gender are played down.

The viewer connects, through the gaze and gestures, with Al-Manar’s programme presenters, and slightly less with the invited guests in the selected political, resistance and social programmes (all are talk-shows). A familiar and friendly atmosphere, a sense of in-group membership between the represented participants (mainly the Al-Manar staff) and the viewer is established through images of demand.329 Simultaneously, a sense of authority is transmitted. The images of the programme presenters and their guests conform with the usual set-up for experts and interviewers; the breast pocket shot, signifying respect for authorities, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen.330 Van Leeuwen argues that the sound of the voice is also an important factor in the system of social distance, as it creates imaginary social relations between what is represented by a sound and the listener. The programme presenters and their guests at Al-Manar alter

between soft, relaxed voices, indicating a personal distance, and full voices, indicating informal distance.\textsuperscript{331} Hence, the sound of the voice contributes to creating a combined familiar and expert setting. In line with Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis, which focuses on social relations, and his notion of discourse that includes “relations of communication between people who talk”\textsuperscript{332}, I will highlight how relations of allegiance are constructed by Al-Manar in its political and resistance programmes selected for the purpose of this paper. As already noted, the connection to ‘terrorism’ binds Hizbullah’s out-group together. The below quote from a programme included in Al-Manar’s resistance category, serves to illustrate how the ‘terrorist groups’ are discursively connected to Israel and that the bond between the two entities relies on ‘terrorism’.

These terrorist groups, present in this region, have become members of the Israeli occupying army in this region. It [the Israeli army] is the one that leads them [the terrorist groups] and it is the one that stirs them, and supplies them with all forms of information, operational orders, the timing and the directions of movement, and it identifies the objectives for them. […] However, the matter of fact is that this project of terrorist gangs has become an Israeli project in absolute terms.\textsuperscript{333} (‘Researcher and Expert on Strategic issues’, Salīm Ḥarbān, participating from Damascus in “Eye on the enemy”)  

As we have noticed in Hassan Nasrallah’s speech as well as in the news bulletin, Israel is discursively constructed as connected to Hizbullah’s more recent enemy, terrorism. In the above quote, the ‘terrorist groups’ are arguably equated with the Israeli army. As noted by Larbi, \textit{muqāwama} is Hizbullah’s raison d’être. It has primarily been understood as resistance against Israel.\textsuperscript{334} By equating the ‘terrorist groups’ with the Israeli army, these ‘terrorist groups’ become legitimate targets for Hizbullah. Hence, the context is constructed to fit into the ideological mould of Hizbullah. The issue of making these ‘terrorist groups’ into legitimate targets for Hizbullah, of providing justification for Hizbullah’s warfare in Syria, comes forth in several programmes. Again, I wish to underline that this justification is provided through multi-religious and multi-national voices, quite in line with Hizbullah’s emphasis on national unity (previously

\textsuperscript{332} Fairclough N., 2013 (2010, 1995), p. 3.  
\textsuperscript{334} Larbi S., 2010, p. 358.
noted by Saouli, Alagha, Saad-Ghorayeb and others), by drawing on notions of pan-
Arabism, pan-Islamism, Sunni-Shi’a and Christian-Muslim relations (see for example Hamdar and Alagha). The opinions expressed by the invited guests at Al-Manar can naturally not be
attributed to Hizbullah. However, I wish to underline that the Al-Manar reporters, or other
invited guests for that sake, do not object to the statements included here, besides at one point
which is discussed further below. Christian-Muslim relations and the unified stance by Christians
and Muslims with Hizbullah, are emphasised in the political programme “The Talk of the
Hour”. The below quotes serve to show how the out-group is constructed by a Christian priest
and a Muslim imam and how ‘terrorism’ is the common denominator of this out-group.

Zionism and America […] created the Islamic State […]. First, the Hebrew state, which
demands from the world to be recognized, is a Jewish state, meaning a racist Jewish state. It is
indeed in its interest that racist states, or small states, similar to itself are created in the region, in
order to justify its own existence. (Christian Priest, ‘Kamīl Mubārak, Head of La Sagesse
University, guest in “The Talk of the Hour”)

Don’t think that the Islamic State is the top of terrorism. No, that is not correct. Israel is the top
of terrorism. (Muslim Sheikh, ‘Hāshim Manqāra, Head of the Council of the Islamic
Unification Movement’, guest in ‘The Talk of the Hour’)

In the above statements, the Islamic State and Israel are equated and both are characterised by
‘terrorism’. Differences between Christians and Muslims are downplayed as the invited guests,
one priest and one imam, tend to agree. One issue of agreement is, for example, Hizbullah’s
presence and actions in Syria. In the below statement, expressed by the priest, justification is
construed in terms of ‘terrorism’.

[B]ecause, it [Hizbullah] is, according to the information, fighting against the terrorism, and it is

340 Al-Manar, Ḥadīth al-sā’a, “The talk of the hour”:
16)
341 Al-Manar, “The talk of the hour”, 23:20 – 24:10 min., free translation from Arabic: الصهيونية و أمريكا ... خلقوا
داعش ... أولا دولة العبرية اللي طالبها من العالم يعترف فيها دولة يهودية. يعني دولة عصرية يهودية. من مصلحتها جدا أن تخلق في المنطقة
دول أو دولات عصرية تشبهها لتبرر كيانها.
342 Al-Manar, “The talk of the hour”, 50:56 – 51:04 min., free translation from Arabic: ما تحت بذن نحن داعش قمة
الإرهاب. لا ما صحيح. إسرائيل قمة الإرهاب.
Moreover, the ambiguous position of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, as already noted, is highlighted in a brief statement by the priest. Unfortunately, his statement remains hanging as the programme is rounded up a few seconds later. What can be noted in the quote below is, again, the choice of vocabulary, using the ‘Syrian displaced’ instead of the ‘Syrian refugees’. More striking however is that the priest questions why the Syrian refugees leave Syria. The below statement by the priest casts doubts about what the ‘displaced Syrians’ are really doing in Lebanon.

The Syrians are displaced to Lebanon. The area of Syria is almost twenty times, or more, the area of Lebanon and there are areas in Syria that are very safe, very safe. Why this displacement? Why don’t they go and live in the safe areas? (Christian Priest, Kamīl Mubārak, guest in ‘The talk of the hour’)

Naturally, this statement by an invited guest cannot be attributed to Hizbullah, or even said to be characteristic for Hizbullah. However, in the above analysis of Nasrallah’s speech an ambivalence was noted with regard to the discursive construction of the Syrian refugees. A tendency to ‘other’ the Syrian refugees was also noted in the news bulletin. The above quote by the priest also reflects an ambivalence, perhaps a doubt is more accurate, towards the Syrian refugees in Lebanon. A general observation is however that the Syrian refugee situation in Lebanon is not on the agenda of the selected programmes at Al-Manar. Among the significant absences, the Syrian refugee situation is one. Another significant absence in the support network, which is constructed in the selected Al-Manar programmes, is the one of Lebanese-Palestinian refugees. The absence of the Lebanese Palestinian refugees is, in my view, particularly significant in light of Hizbullah’s emphasis on the ‘Palestinian cause’ in its discourse, as noted by Deeb. The Palestinians appear to have a stake in the liberation of Palestine only, not in the Lebanese or regional issues.

343 Al-Manar, “The talk of the hour”, 59:45 – 60:05 min, Free translation from Arabic: لأنه عم بحسب الاعلان، عم يكافح الإرهاب. ومن مصلحة كل العالم المسلمين إنه حدى يكافح الإرهاب و هذها واحد منهم.

344 Al-Manar, “The talk of the hour”, 69:20 – 69:34 min., free translation from Arabic: السوريين نازحين إلى لبنان، السوريا مشكل مساحتها عشرين مرة تقريبا وأكثر مساحة لبنان و فيه مناطق آمنة جدا، ليس هناك نزوح؟ ليه ما بروحوا يعيشوا بالمناطق الآمنة؟

The Pan-Islam and Sunni-Shi’a themes are underlined by various participants, both through their words and their presence as representatives of Shi’a or Sunni authorities. In the political programme “And Then What”346, an Egyptian Sunni Muslim Sheikh from the prestigious Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo argues for the revival of Sunni-Shi’a contacts and relations. The main message of the Sunni Sheikh is against fitna (civil strife) among Muslims and for improved relations between Shi’a and Sunni as well as between the ‘Arab world’ and Iran. The enemy of Islam is, according to the Sheikh, terrorism. The root cause of terrorism is, according to the Sheikh, ‘Wahhabism’, a Sunni Muslim conservative school founded in, and exported from, Saudi Arabia. America is also among the enemies, argues the Sheikh, as the Americans support division among Muslims.

Wahhabism, because they are the agents of the Americans in blowing up the Arab house from within, and the Muslim house. They succeeded to do so in Syria and they succeeded in Iraq and it remains an issue in Egypt.347 (Egyptian Sunni Muslim Sheikh, Ahmad Karima, Islamic Intellectual and University Professor, from Al-Azhar Mosque, Cairo)

In the above quote by the Sunni Sheikh, Wahhabism is equated with the Americans. ‘They’, i.e. the Wahhabis, are ‘the agents of the Americans’. They are working to destroy Arab and Muslim unity. Wahhabism and Americans are differentiated from Syria, Iraq and Egypt. The latter are included in a list of equivalence, as part of the in-group.

To charge someone of disbelief [takfir], to pass judgements on people regarding polytheism, disbelief, immorality, and heresy. This intellectual violence created the armed violence. Ask yourselves, Osama Bin Laden and Al-Qaida, where did they come from? The Taliban, Boko Haram, those who are in northern Mali, the jihadist Salafism348 in Algeria, the jihadist Salafism in the Sinai, the Islamic State… The culture is unfortunately Salafist. It has sprung out of two dangerous sources considered as mines among Islam’s people, the Salafist references and the

348 This term of ‘jihadist Salafism’ has been translated from the Arabic السلافية الجهادية (Al-Salafiya al-jihādiya). This term is not used by Hizbullah’s spokespersons on Al-Manar in late September 2014, not in the programmes selected for the purpose of this paper in any case. In Hizbullah’s discourse, the word ‘takfiri’, rather than ‘jihadi’, is consequently attributed to its ‘enemies’/‘others’ of a similar kind.
ideologists of the [Muslim] Brotherhood. Unfortunately. (Sunni Muslim Sheikh, ‘Ahmad Karîma, from Al-Azhar Mosque, Cairo)

In the above quote, a list of equivalence is set up, through which an out-group is constructed and internal differences erased. This list erases the internal differences between: ‘Osama Bin Laden’, ‘Al-Qaida’, ‘The Taliban’, ‘Boko Haram’, ‘those in northern Mali’, ‘jihadist Salafism in Algeria’, ‘jihadist Salafism in Sinai’, and ‘the Islamic State’. They are united through the references to Salafists and ‘the ideologists of the [Muslim] Brotherhood’. In light of the Pan-Islam and Sunni-Shi’a discourses of Hizbullah, I believe it would be too offensive for its leadership to suggest equivalence between Osama Bin Laden and the (Sunni) Muslim Brotherhood. However, including an Egyptian Sunni Sheikh at Al-Manar making such suggestions, without being contradicted, may be another way of transmitting a message.

The programme M’a al-ḥadath, “With the Event”, provides support to Hizbullah and its political views on behalf of the Lebanese civil society. The editor of a Lebanese newspaper, Nāṣir Qandîl (an ex. Member of Parliament under Rafiq al-Hariri), is invited to discuss recent events, namely the shooting down of a Syrian airplane over the Golan Heights by the Israelis, and the international coalition against the Islamic State in northern Syria and Iraq. As the below quotes indicate, the editor provides support to Hizbullah and its worldview in various discursive ways.

The position of resistance [taken] by Iran, Iraq, Syria, I mean including Lebanon [through] Hizbullah, is a bridge incapable of breaking. (Lebanese Newspaper Editor, Nāṣir Qandîl)

Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Hizbullah are included in a list of equivalence, creating together an unbreakable unity, united by resistance.

They are oppressed, they are oppressed, this leadership of nationalists in Bahrain and in Yemen, just as Hizbullah is oppressed. It [Hizbullah] illuminates, with lamps and candles, for the


Lebanese parties, but it [Hizbullah] is the one who requires a certificate of its Lebanese identity. It [Hizbullah] protects the land and liberates it, but every day it needs to take a blood test to prove that it is Lebanese. It [Hizbullah] goes to fight the terrorism.”

In the above quote, the nationalist leaderships in Bahrain and Yemen, together with Hizbullah, are equated in a list, joined by 'oppression'. The equation suggests that Hizbullah shares the attribute of the others, i.e. being the ‘leadership of nationalists’. Hizbullah is moreover differentiated from the ‘Lebanese parties’. Hence, in contrast to these ‘other’ parties, Hizbullah ‘illuminates’ the way for them, ‘liberates the land’ and ‘fights the terrorists’ on their behalf too. Moreover, the notion of Hizbullah as a nationalist movement is emphasised through its ‘protection and liberation of land’ and its ‘fight against terrorism’. Part of the ‘oppression of Hizbullah’ is the ‘unjustified’ doubts, supposedly cast by the ‘other’ parties, regarding Hizbullah’s loyalty to the Lebanese nation.

Now, if the government was serious... I mean, 14 [14 March Alliance], what is the government? Half [of it] is here and the other half there. If 14, I mean the Future Movement, I mean if Saudi Arabia, if they wanted to confront this situation and protect Arsal and return the kidnapped persons, whom they initially left to be kidnapped. (Newspaper Editor, Näṣir Qandíl)

The above quote provides support to Hizbullah’s construction of the domestic ‘other’ or ‘enemy’ in terms of its political opponents. However, the editor is more outspoken regarding this ‘domestic enemy’ when he, in contrast to Hassan Nasrallah, identifies ‘them’ by labels. The government, the 14 March Alliance, the Future Movement, Saudi Arabia, are included in a list of equivalence. Moreover, the quote suggests that this out-group is somehow loosely connected to the kidnappers in Arsal, i.e. to the ‘terrorists’ or ‘armed groups’. ‘They’ (the government/14 March Alliance/the Future Movement/Saudi Arabia) ‘left’ persons to be kidnapped by ‘them’ (the ‘terrorists’).

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353 Al-Manar, “With the Event”, 64:50 – 65:08 min., free translation from Arabic: الآن، لو كانت الحكومة جادة يعني 14 يعني شو هي الحكومة؟ نص هو نص هو. لو 14 يعني أو تيار المستقل يعني أو السعودية. لو كانوا يريدون مواجهة هذا الوضع وحماية عرسال و استرداد المخطوفين، التي أصلا تركوها يخطؤوا.
Another topic is highlighted in the political programme “Between the Brackets”\textsuperscript{354}, namely a potential rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia. An invited political analyst takes a ‘Saudi approach’ and another male guest, available through image and sound from Teheran, takes an ‘Iranian approach’. The Al-Manar facilitator and the two guests welcome a rapprochement and agree upon the dire need for the Saudis and Iranians to meet at the negotiation table. Interestingly, at one point, the guest representing the Saudi voice expresses a clearly diverting opinion on Yemen and the Houthi movement from Hizbullah’s view on the same issue. Swiftly, the Al-Manar presenter intervenes, rejects the guest’s diverting opinion, and expresses standpoints to the contrary, fully in line with the ‘Hizbullah stance’, before closing the issue. This is, to my knowledge, the only completely diverting opinion from Hizbullah’s worldview that comes forth in the political programmes selected for this analysis. It is, in any case, the only expression of a diverting opinion, in the selected programmes, which provokes an Al-Manar presenter to intervene and decisively provide the ‘Hizbullah stance’ on the issue in question.

The guest, Sa’ad Bin ‘Umar, Director of The Arabic Century for Studies: “Do you expect what happened in Sanaa is not what happened in Al-Mosul? Al-Mosul, the Islamic State entered Al-Mosul and occupied it. Sana’a, the Houthi movement entered and occupied it. Same, same!”

The al-Manar presenter, Batoul Ayub N’aiːm: “But they [the ‘Houthis’] are the people of the country [natives, citizens] and they make a revolution for liberation, or in order to demand the justified claims of Yemen.”

The guest: “This is a small part of the Yemenite people and I wish all the best for Yemen.”

The presenter: “Whereas the Islamic State is a terrorist movement and it is imported from abroad and it is funded from abroad.”

The Guest: […]

The presenter: “But it is enough that a revolutionary movement reached what it aimed for and refused to receive the reins of the rule and power. Let me continue the discussion with Doctor Sidqiyān [the other guest].”\textsuperscript{355}

In the above quotes by the Al-Manar presenter, it becomes clear that the ‘Houthi movement’ of


Yemen is attributed with similar traits as Hizbullah. Hence, the suggested equivalence, by the guest, between the Islamic State and the Houthi movement is strikingly provocative. The Houthi movement is, by the Al-Manar presenter, justified in the same way as the *mugāwama/resistence* of Hizbullah is generally justified, i.e. in terms of being truly national (Yemenite/Lebanese), of making a revolution for liberation and raising justified claims, as well as by reaching its aims while (generously) abstaining from (legitimate) political power.

9.1 Gendered roles

Among the selected programmes for this paper, only one, ‘Grain of Musk’[^356^], is found among Al-Manar’s social programmes. In the selected Grain-of-Musk show, women programme presenters receive women experts to provide guidance on issues related to child rearing. Whereas the male guests in the political programmes include representatives from different religious affiliations, a similar support base is not mobilised from among these women. All women in the programme, apart from younger girls interviewed in the street, attend a strict Muslim dress code. (The compliance of Al-Manar’s programme presenters with a specific Al-Manar Muslim dress code seems to be a comprehensive over-all strategy.) Hizbullah’s ‘national we’, the in-group comprised of various religious and ethnic affiliations, is arguably absent when it comes to women in the selected eleven Al-Manar programmes of this analysis. Moreover, the issues discussed in the Grain-of-Musk show in question, are limited to women’s traditional gender roles (as mothers, key responsible for the household members as well as its interiors). The women experts (for example family therapists and teachers) as well as the women programme presenters themselves are nevertheless certainly there as sharp professionals and thus not confined to women’s traditional gender roles.

9.2 Comedians’ approach to ideological issues

The programme “First before last”[^357^] belongs to the comedy programme category of Al-Manar. This programme naturally diverts from the general character of the discussed social, resistance, and political programmes. Three male actors, together with supporting male actors, stage short comedy clips in various settings. I will briefly illustrate how this comedy programme connects to Hizbullah’s political ideology and how comedy clips provide the latter with ‘support’. First, the

[^356^]: (*Habbat misk*, Free translation from Arabic: حبة مسك

[^357^]: Free translation from Arabic: أول على آخر

viewer is invited, through images of demand and verbal speech, to connect with the economically deprived of Lebanon. The deprived are, for example, represented in one clip by street vendors, a taxi driver, and a grandfather surrounded by hungry grandchildren. Economic injustice in the Lebanese society is emphasised through the encounters between these men (they are all men), struggling for their daily bread, and a representative of the rich, capitalist world cruising by in the back seat of a black limousine, collecting rent money from the poor. The viewer is invited to enter in some kind of imaginary relation with the economically deprived in Lebanon, although in a jokingly manner. The capitalist is equipped with dark sunglasses, incapable of creating direct contact with the viewer through the gaze, and othered by being the mean guy throughout the clip and ending up as the laughingstock. Through this clip we are reminded of Hizbullah’s traditional ideological theme of the oppressors and oppressed, as identified by Alagha. To side with the poor and the deprived also arguably fall within Hizbullah’s concept of muqāwama, understood by Larbi in terms of the act of ‘standing up to’ injustice, domination or hegemony.

One of the main themes in Hizbullah’s contemporary discourse is, as mentioned, ‘terrorism’. We have already seen how the entities comprising Hizbullah’s out-group (whether being Israel, the USA, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the Islamic State or domestic political opponents) are discursively constructed as either being terrorists or being connected to terrorism. Interestingly, a short clip from the comedy programme strives to straighten out the relations within the out-group and their interconnectedness through terrorism. The setting is an outdoor café where two men are drinking coffee while reading newspapers. Suddenly one of them throws his paper on the table in an upset manner, whereupon his friend asks:

- What’s wrong [with you]?
- Listen my brother, some Arab states are financing the Islamic State, right?
- Right.
- And these Arab states are the allies of America, right?
- Right.
- And the Islamic State [fighters/members] are crossing the Turkish border, right?
- Right.

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360 Alagha J., 2011, p. 15.
- And the Turks are allies of the Americans, right?
- Right.
- And Israel is the ally of America, right?
- Right.
- And the Americans are saying that they are fighting the Islamic State, right?
- Right.
- Meaning that there is something wrong!
- Right.\textsuperscript{362}

In the above conversation, a list of equivalence is created, including: ‘some Arab states’, the Islamic State, America, the Turks and ‘the Israeli enemy’. The listed states are bound together through alignment. ‘Some Arab states’, Turkey and Israel are moreover connected to the Islamic State through various forms of support. Hence, the USA, an ally of ‘some Arab states’, Turkey and Israel, cannot seriously be fighting the Islamic State. In a median form, a condensed justification of Hizbullah’s political stance against the so-called US-led International Coalition against the Islamic State is provided. In addition, Hizbullah’s construction of the out-group and its articles is confirmed.

10. \textbf{Discussion on the identified discourse on terrorism}

In the analysis of the text and image at Al-Manar in late September 2014, several different and at times contradictory discourses of Hizbullah have been identified. It is the struggle between these different discourses that illustrate what Fairclough calls a hegemonic (ideological) struggle and the order of discourse within the organisation of Hizbullah.\textsuperscript{363} In the analysis of this paper, various discourses stressing a cross-confessional and cross-ethnic national unity come forth. By drawing on previous scholarship, these discourses of Hizbullah have been labelled as Sunni-Shi’a, Pan-Islam, Pan-Arab, Muslim-Christian relations, Oppressors – Oppressed, Anti-imperialist, and \textit{Muqāwama}/resistance. In contrast to these discourses stands the identified exclusionary discourse on terrorism. To my knowledge, Hizbullah’s discourse on terrorism has not been elaborated on in previous studies, at least not prior to 2011 and the out-break of the Syrian up-rising. In 2013, Khatib and Matar note that Hizbullah framed its participation


alongside the Syrian army in the battle of Qusair (a small town in western Syria), “as an existential battle against the United States and Israel, while adding a new dimension: the fight against Sunni takfiri jihadis”. In line with Khatib and Matar, the discursive connection Hizbullah makes between the ‘takfiris’/’terrorists’/’armed militants’ (etc.) and its ‘ultimate enemies’, Israel and the United States (usually under the labels of ‘the American administration’ or ‘Washington’), has been highlighted in this paper. However, my analysis suggests that Hizbullah does not connect the words ‘Sunni’ and ‘jihadi’ to any entity in its out-group, at least not in September 2014. On the contrary, the Pan-Islam and Sunni-Shi’a discourses are emphasised in various ways. The analysis of the text in, primarily, Nasrallah’s speech and the news bulletin has highlighted a significant absence of collocation between the word ‘Sunni’ and any entity of the out-group. Moreover, the analysis of the image indicates that Hizbullah’s in-group is carefully constructed in terms of Sunni-Shi’a and Muslim-Christian partnership. On the other hand, the analysis indicates that the entities included in Hizbullah’s out-group are all connected to ‘terrorism’ and bound together by ‘terrorism’. As the emphasis on ‘terrorism’ in Hizbullah’s contemporary discourse has not been elaborated upon in previous studies (in contrast to its discourses highlighting Pan-Islam, Pan-Arab, Sunni-Shi’a and Christian-Muslim relations, Oppressors-Oppressed, and Muqāwama/resistence), I will focus my final discussion on this central discourse on terrorism in Hizbullah’s order of discourse as of September 2014.

To approach this theme of terrorism, I will draw on Fairclough’s notion of ‘recontextualisation’, which he describes as “the movement of a discourse from one context (one network of practices, one institution, one field and so forth) to another, a movement which […] is a dialectical relationship between colonisation and appropriation”. At the same time, I wish to re-call Deeb’s argument that it is “vital to keep in mind that Hizbullah’s nationalism is articulated in a U.S.-dominated global context where the party has been subsumed under the label “terrorist””. Drawing on Deeb, Hizbullah has supposedly spent much effort in relating to this ‘terrorist’ label. Perhaps it is not farfetched to assume that Hizbullah is more familiar than most with the discourses underlying the Western lists of ‘terrorist organisations’. Drawing on Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis of the American National Security Strategy (2002), I wish to shed light on the perhaps most prominent Western discourse on terrorism during the last couple of decades. First, Fairclough identifies in this National Security Strategy what he calls “a new hybrid

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security discourse”367, articulating expressions associated with diverse discourses: political-economic, development, and military security.368 The document identifies terrorists and rogue states as the enemies (of peace, free and open societies, ‘our Nation’, civilisation, etc.). Fairclough notes that these two enemies are connected through terrorism, as ‘rogue states’ are characterised as sponsoring terrorism.369 We may note here a straightforward similarity in Hizbullah’s discourse as of September 2014. On the one hand, there are the ‘enemies’ identified as ‘takfiri’/armed groups’/’terrorists’ (for example the Islamic State). On the other hand, there are the ‘enemy states’, i.e. Israel, the ‘American administration’, alongside such states as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The ‘enemy states’ are either constructed as supporters of terrorism (Turkey, Saudi Arabia) or the very ‘mothers of terrorism’ and the ‘root cause of all terrorism’ (the USA and Israel). Hence, the same categorisation of the ‘enemy’ in terms of ‘terrorists’ and ‘rogue states’ is prevalent in Hizbullah’s discourse. In addition, the analysis of this paper has indicated a third component in the out-group of Hizbullah, a ‘domestic’ entity, supposedly comprised of Lebanese political opponents of Hizbullah. This out-group is constructed as loosely connected to ‘terrorism’ by directly or indirectly contributing to the aims of the ‘terrorist groups’. There is no apparent connection between this domestic out-group in Hizbullah’s discourse and the American security/war on terrorism discourse, as discussed by Fairclough.

Fairclough concludes from his analysis of the American National Security Strategy (2002) that “we have a national strategy document which provides no analysis or explanation of where the enemy has come from, how it has got to be an enemy, why it is hostile to the USA and its allies”. Moreover, Fairclough argues that the labelling of the enemy as evil implies that “no explanation is necessary, or indeed possible”. The primary value dichotomies in this American discourse are, according to Fairclough, freedom/fear, good/evil, and civilisation/barbarism.370 In the discourse of Hizbullah, we have noticed a tendency towards a dehumanisation of the ‘enemy’, as when Hassan Nasrallah states that the ‘terrorists’ “among themselves slaughter each other, kill each other, steal from each other and insult each other’s women, I mean they do not care what so ever”.371 Likewise, the ‘barbarism’ of the Americans is emphasised by, for example, Hassan Nasrallah when referring to America’s historic records of “shameful wars and unspeakable

371 Al-Manar, Speech by the Secretary General, 23 Sep 2014, 29:13 – 31:51 min., free translation from Arabic: وهم مع بعضهم يذبحون بعض و يقتلون بعض و ينهبون بعض و يسيرون نساء بعض، أصلًا ما سائلين يعي..
In addition, the strangeness and otherness of the ‘terrorists’ and the Americans are underlined by their general absence from the image, as noted in the analysis of the Al-Manar news bulletin on 23 September 2014. Primary value dichotomies that come forth in Hizbullah’s discourse are the ones of good/evil and civilisation/barbarism, largely in line with the value dichotomies in the American security/war on terrorism discourse. Additional value dichotomies in Hizbullah’s discourse include steadfastness/lack of principles; martyrdom/takfirī terrorism; national unity/political division and terrorism; honesty and transparency/deceitfulness and lies.

Fairclough further underlines “the lack of historical depth and of analysis and explanation” as significant absences in the American National Security Strategy (2002). Fairclough concludes that “we might say that the gap left by the absence of analysis is filled by ideology – the ideology of a struggle between good and evil”. Regarding Hizbullah and its provision of analysis and explanation, one must acknowledge that Al-Manar provides plenty of space and time to discuss many of the ‘hot’ issues raised in Hassan Nasrallah’s speech, not the least the ‘terrorist threat’. However, these discussions are spearheaded by persons in support of Hizbullah’s political standpoints. My analysis suggests that Hizbullah, through text and image at Al-Manar, carefully knits a support network in favour of its own policies and actions. Hence, a one-sided narrative is created. Critical analysis and self-reflexion remain, in my view, largely absent. Also in conformity with the US strategy document, as noted by Fairclough, an ideology of a struggle between good and evil comes forth in Hizbullah’s discourse. A struggle between the steadfastness, principles, transparency and honesty of Hizbullah and the “distortion, fraud, deception, misinformation and hypocrisy” of the ‘others’. The “resilience”, “brave patience”, and “capability” of Lebanon, the Lebanese people, army, and security apparatus versus the “killing, takfīrī factions”, the ‘terrorists’ and ‘states supporting terrorism’.

Fairclough notes that the US National Security Strategy has been subjected to “extensive and
intensive recontextualisation […] in many other texts of various types”.\textsuperscript{377} As noted above, there are certain, in my opinion striking, similarities between the American ‘new hybrid security discourse’, identified by Fairclough, and Hizbullah’s discourse on terrorism identified in this paper. Hence, I argue that there are reasons to consider whether a movement of a discourse from one context to another has taken place, i.e. that the American security discourse, or war on terrorism discourse as some label it, has been recontextualised by Hizbullah. As noted by Fairclough, recontextualisation is a “dialectical relationship between colonisation and appropriation”.\textsuperscript{378} Whereas Western war on terrorism discourses certainly have had great impact on Hizbullah (itself constructed as a ‘super terrorist’ by such discourses), I argue that Hizbullah has simultaneously come to appropriate this discourse, adapting it to its own needs and context. In addition, Hizbullah has turned its discourse on terrorism against the American administration, i.e. against an agency that contributed to the spread of a war on terrorism discourse in the first place.

To wrap up this discussion, I wish to highlight what Fairclough calls the “socially constructive effects of discourse”\textsuperscript{379} or the “operationalisation”, i.e. “the enactment of discourses in ways of acting and interacting, their inculcation in ways of being or identities, and their materialisation in changes in the physical world”.\textsuperscript{380} The construal effects of discourse on the social world is highlighted by Fairclough in the following statement.

\begin{quote}
We might say that operationalising an imaginary which construes the enemy in an ahistorical and irrational way, enacting the imaginary militarily and in other forms of force, has predictably led to perverse effects: the threat is increased rather than diminished, and in a certain sense acting as if the enemy were in reality the flawed construal of it contributes to constructing it as something more closely resembling that construal.\textsuperscript{381}
\end{quote}

In relation to the American security discourse, Fairclough argues that “it is difficult to believe that the construal of the enemy as dehumanised and irrational has no effect on how the enemy is treated”.\textsuperscript{382} Another difficulty with this construal of the ‘enemy’ as terrorists or as terrorism as such, is, according to Fairclough, that it fails to make crucial discriminations between actual

\begin{footnotes}
\end{footnotes}
perpetrators of terrorist actions and others who are “arguably exercising the right to resistance”, while excluding what is “arguably state terror” on the part of certain states allied with the USA. In the case of Hizbullah, I argue that the discursive construction of the ‘enemy’ as ultimately evil and, to a certain extent, dehumanised may have effect on how Hizbullah’s ‘enemies’ are treated. Hizbullah’s construal of its ‘enemy’ in terms of ‘terrorism’ and ‘terrorists’ may also fail to make crucial discriminations between actual perpetrators of terrorist actions, civilians allegedly providing support to the ‘terrorists’, and others who, for example, may arguably exercise the right to resistance against, for example, the Syrian regime. Likewise, it may exclude what is arguably state terror on the part of, for example, the Syrian state. A last reflection here goes to the ambiguous group of the ‘Syrian displaced’ people in Hizbullah’s discourse and the domestic ‘others’, supposedly local political opponents of Hizbullah. The Syrian refugees: an ambiguous out-group somehow connected to the ‘terrorist threat’, yet under the protection of Hizbullah. The domestic ‘others’: supposedly political opponents of Hizbullah, loosely connected to ‘terrorism’ by contributing to the aims of the terrorists. I find reason to question if the discursive construal of political opponents in terms of ‘supporters of terrorism’ benefits Hizbullah’s apparent quest for national unity. Moreover, I find reason to pay close attention to the potentially harmful socially constructive effects the ambiguous discourse on the ‘Syrian displaced’ may have on the treatment of, and interaction with, the Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

11. Conclusive remarks

We have seen that the Arsal crisis prompted Hizbullah’s value mobilisation (right/wrong, good/bad, friend/enemy) and functioned as a discursive foundation for the building, or re-confirmation, of national identity, in line with scenarios drawn by Angouri and Wodak and Costelloe in times of major societal crises. Through the construction of difference and otherness in the text and image on Al-Manar, a national in-group and an ‘enemy’ out-group are created. The national in-group is characterised by coherence and positive qualities (such as harmony, cooperation, capability, resilience, and brave patience). Difference in terms of religious, ethnic, geographic, and national affiliations, as well as political opinion, is erased within the in-group, by playing on Hizbullah’s traditional discourses of Pan-Islam, Pan-Arab, Sunni-Shi’a and Christian-Muslim relations, Opressors-Opressed, and Muqāwama (resistance).

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The main out-group of Hizbullah is comprised of ‘terrorists’/’takfiri’/’armed groups’, the American administration, Israel, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Difference within the out-group is downplayed, and its entities are bound together by ‘terrorism’. The analysis suggests that this ultimate out-group is divided into ‘terrorists’ (for example the Islamic State) and ‘states supporting terrorism’ (Israel, USA, Turkey, Saudi Arabia). By conflating the entities in the out-group, through their connection to ‘terrorism’, Hizbullah manages to locate its traditional ‘enemies’ (USA and Israel) alongside the Islamic State in Syria and thus provide justification for its military operations against it ‘enemies’ in Syria. Through this construction, there is no need for Hizbullah to reconsider its raison d’être, identified by Larbi as *mujādama/resistance* in light of its new quest in Syria. This quest fits well with Hizbullah’s ‘standing up to injustice, domination or hegemony’ as the traditional ‘enemies’ of Hizbullah (Washington and Israel) are now discursively constructed as located in Syria.

The analysis suggests that terrorism is the binding force and common feature, holding the out-group of Hizbullah’s discourse together. I moreover argue that the discursive construction of Hizbullah’s out-group is similar to the construction of the ‘enemy’ in the American security discourse in 2002 (also called ‘war on terrorism’ discourse), as identified by Fairclough. I suggest that the American security/war on terrorism discourse has been recontextualised by Hizbullah in the Lebanese and Syrian contexts. In relation to the American construction of the ‘enemy’ in terms of terrorism, Fairclough emphasises that “the construal of the enemy as dehumanised and irrational” may have effects on how the enemy is treated. I highlight a similar concern regarding Hizbullah’s construction of an out-group characterised by ‘terrorism’. Attention needs to be paid to the potentially harmful socially constructed effects of a discourse on terrorism, whether appropriated by Western authorities or by one of the most influential actors in Lebanon and the region, Hizbullah. This concern relates for example to the treatment of prisoners of war as well as of civilians allegedly associated with the ‘terrorists’.

Notwithstanding the emphasis on terrorism in Hizbullah’s discourse, the analysis also points to the organisation’s stress on national unity at a time of national crisis. Through the analysis of image and text on Al-Manar in late September 2014, the construction of a support network cutting across religious, ethnic, national, and (partly) political boundaries (different partnerships

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within the March 8 Alliance are underlined, but not between the March 8 and March 14 Alliances) has been identified. Hizbullah emphasises throughout how its national unity includes Sunni and Shi’a Muslims, Christians as well as Druze. However, at the regional arena, alignments with the Syrian regime, the Houthi movement in Yemen, and the Iraqi regime are specifically underlined (all of them being ‘Arab states’ dominated by non-Sunni Muslim denominations). Nevertheless, Hizbullah’s strong emphasis on its Sunni-Shi’a discourse and the actual cross-confessional political alignments in Lebanon (although March 14 is dominated by Sunni and March 8 is dominated by Shi’i-led parties) suggest that the polarisation in Lebanon cannot simply be framed as a ‘Sunni-Shi’a divide’. To exclusively frame the situation in terms of a Sunni-Shi’a divide lacks, in my view, explanatory power, and may lead analysts astray.

The analysis moreover indicates that the multi-confessional, multi-ethnic national in-group of Hizbullah, with its diverse support network, is largely male. Hizbullah does not mobilise a similar multi-confessional national in-group comprised of women. The Lebanese women included in the selected programmes at Al-Manar do not represent other denominations besides Islam. Confessional pluralism is seemingly only essential for the male national community. Women are mainly included carrying their traditional gender roles as mothers, sisters, etc. We have noticed the mothers/sisters of martyrs and the mothers and teachers responsible for child rearing and the upbringing of righteous citizens. Likewise, no woman is invited to participate in the political discussions. However, the professional Al-Manar women staff and programme presenters, as well as the invited women experts in the social programme, certainly contradict the depicting of women confined to traditional gender norms.

Two groups are surrounded by a certain degree of ambiguity in Hizbullah’s discursive construction of the national ‘we’. First, one entity of the out-group, characterised as deceitful, liars, political agitators (etc.) are loosely connected to terrorism by contributing to the aims of the ‘terrorists’ and by supporting the ‘terrorists’. The analysis suggests that this group is comprised of local political opponents of Hizbullah, supposedly belonging to the March 14 Alliance as it comprises the main political opposition to Hizbullah and its March 8 Alliance. As the two blocks are likewise partners in the Lebanese government today, Hizbullah’s construction of its political opponents as loosely connected to terrorism does not pave the ground for national unity and political cooperation at the government level. The second group marked by ambiguity is the Syrian refugees, or the so-called Syrian displaced people. On the one hand, Hizbullah repeatedly emphasises its protection of the ‘Syrian displaced’. On the other hand, the ‘displaced’ are
othered by the image and constructed as loosely connected to the ‘terrorists’. Again, attention needs to be paid to the potential socially constructive effects of this kind of ambiguous discourse, for example harmful treatment of the Syrian refugees residing in Lebanon. Finally, worth mentioning is the significant absence in language and image of one major group in Lebanon, the Palestinian refugees, when it comes to issues stretching beyond ‘the liberation of Palestine’. The Lebanese Palestinian refugees are constructed as co-partners against the ‘Israeli enemy’. However, the stake of the Palestinian refugees on the Lebanese national arena, or in the region at large, seems miniscule in Hizbullah’s worldview as of September 2014.
12. References


### 12.1 Online references

See references to selected programmes on Al-Manar in Appendix 1.

Al-Ahed News Website:  
[http://www.alahednews.com.lb/category/151/%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87](http://www.alahednews.com.lb/category/151/%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%AD%D8%B2%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87) (accessed 2015-05-28).


Al-Manar’s website, *Ahiyāʾ ind rabbihim*, “Alive with their Lord”:  

Al-Manar’s website, *Al-mulḥima al-khālīda*, ”The Timeless Saga”:  


Sayigh, Yezid, 18 September 2014. “To Confront the Islamic State, Seek a Truth in Syria”, Carnegie


13. Appendix 1, List of Selected Data from al-Manar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Name of programme</th>
<th>Date of broadcasting</th>
<th>Duration (min)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Political | *Baina al-qawsain*<sup>389</sup>  
"Between the brackets" | 2014-09-22 | 48:02 |
| Political | *Kallimat al-‘amīn al-‘ām*<sup>390</sup>  
"The speech by the General Secretary" | 2014-09-23 | 58:54 |
| Political | *M’a al-hadath*<sup>391</sup>  
"With the event" | 2014-09-23 | 70:54 |
| Political | *Hunā Dimashq*<sup>392</sup>  
"Here is Damascus" | 2014-09-24 | 60:19 |
| Political | *Madhā b’ad*<sup>393</sup>  
"And then what" | 2014-09-25 | 67:42 |
| Political | *Hadīth al-sā’a*<sup>394</sup>  
"The talk of the hour" | 2014-09-26 | 70:55 |
| Social | *Habbat misk*<sup>395</sup>  
"Grain of Musk" | 2014-09-23 | 48:27 |
| News | *Nushrat al-akhbār al-ra’īsiya 7:30*<sup>396</sup>  
"The main news bulletin 7:30" | 2014-09-23 | 41:51 |
| News | *Al-akhbār al-mahaliya*<sup>397</sup>  
"The local news" | 2014-09-23 | 19:48 |

<sup>389</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>390</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>391</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>392</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>393</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>394</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>395</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  

<sup>396</sup> Accessed at al-Manar’s website 2014-10-16 and onwards:  
| Resistance   | ‘Aīn ’alā al-‘adou[^398]  
               | “Eye on the enemy”   | 2014-09-27 | 53:40 |
|--------------|------------------------|------------|-------|
| Comedy       | Awwal 3lā ākhīr[^399]  
               | “First before last”  | 2014-09-26 | 26:39 |


# 13.1 Appendix 2: Transliteration of Arabic

Transliteration table for Brill Online
source: http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/pages/help/transliteration-islam

Abbreviations: A = Arabic; T = Turkish

<table>
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<td>Arabic Letter</td>
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<td>Short Vowels</td>
<td>a, e, i, ı, o, ö, u, ü</td>
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</table>

**Please note for EI3:**

- no word-initial *hamzas: al-amr*
- no sun letters
- elision of *al-*, according to rules of Classical Arabic: *wa-l-kitāb, fī l-masjid, Muḥyī l-Dīn, bi-l-kitāb*, but *lil-masjid*
- compound names with Allāh are in general written as one word: ‘Abdallāh, Hībatallāh
- other compound names are written as two words: ‘Abd al-Raḥmān
- ibn and bint written as b. and bt., except when it is part of the name by which the person is known, e.g. ‘Alī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, but Ibn Hazm.
- š is written as -a, in *idāfa* as -at