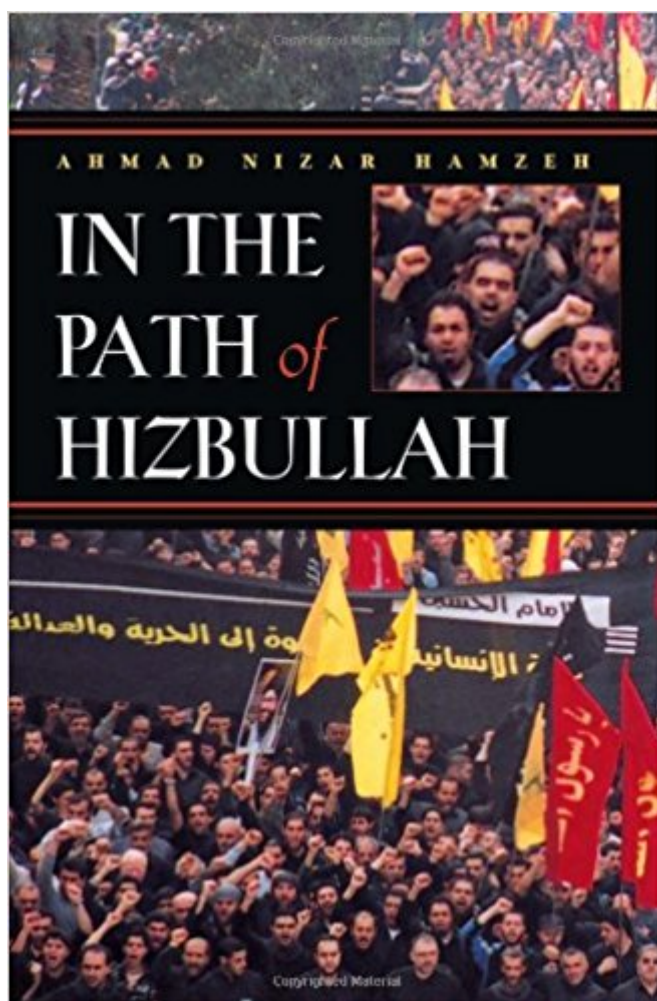


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# In The Path Of Hizbullah (Modern Intellectual And Political History Of The Middle East)



## Synopsis

Of the many Islamist groups that have emerged within the Muslim world over the last two decades, perhaps none has had so great an impact on Middle Eastern and International affairs as Hizbullah, the Party of God. This group of mainly Lebanese Shā'ite Muslims gained both infamy and fame by its resort to militancy mixed with political pragmatism in the pursuit of its goals. The oscillation between these two extremes has left most scholars and policymakers perplexed. This book serves as a pathway for understanding not only Hizbullah but also for other Islamist groups and their challenges to contemporary politics. A. Nizar Hamzeh examines the Hizbullah of Lebanon through a structural analysis using original and archival sources. Based on a constructed theoretical framework from a number of theories on crisis conditions, leadership, political parties and guerrilla warfare, *In the Path of Hizbullah* stands alone in its qualitative and quantitative treatment of one of the most complex contemporary Islamist organizations and provides a view of the party's future.

## Book Information

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. . .unique is that it focuses not so much on Hizbullah's ideology but on its complex, sophisticated organizational structure. -- Choice...author provides a wealth of new and original information. If you read one book about Hizbullah, read this ... -- As'ad AbuKhalil, author of *The Battle for Saudi Arabia: Royalty, Fundamentalism, and Global Power*...concise comprehensiveness of a good handbook. A short historical sketch of the emergence of Hezbollah is followed by... -- Foreign Affairs...illuminating/timely book looks objectively at the dynamics of one of the most important yet

least understood forces. . . .Essential. -- ChoiceExcellent. -- The NationThis is the first comprehensive study of Hizbullah that addresses the historical dynamics of its emergence, its ideology, leadership... -- R. H. Dekmejian, author of Islam in Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World

A. Nizar Hamzeh is associate professor of political science at American University of Beirut. He has written numerous articles on Islamic movements and is the coauthor of 1998 Lebanese Municipal Elections (in Arabic).

With "In the Path of Hizbullah," Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh has produced one of the most detailed and in-depth accounts of what is quite possibly the most powerful force in Lebanon today. Hamzeh forgoes the history surrounding Hezbollah's formation and immediately dives into the mechanics of the group. What you'll find here is an up-close look at how Hezbollah operates and how it is organized. Hamzeh's main thesis states that Hezbollah's goal of establishing an Islamic order in Lebanon has not changed from the group's inception. What has changed however, are the methods employed by the group to achieve this goal. Hamzeh shows that when conditions are favorable, the group will employ more militant methods. This was the case during the relative chaos of the 80s. When militant methods become ineffective, as they did in the 90s and continuing presently, Hezbollah adopts a more pragmatic approach. Through this analysis, Hamzeh shows that the Lebanese political structure is the only factor that can really affect Hezbollah's range of action. If the state is strong enough to contain Hezbollah, the group becomes less effective. On the other hand, if the state is weak or nonexistent, Hezbollah can get away with much more. Hamzeh also provides a wealth of information on how the group is structured. He provides an inside look at the chain of command, committees, financial organization, as well as the impact of third party influences such as Iran and Syria. Hamzeh's book is not for the novice. A prior understanding of Hezbollah and its history is required before getting into the specifics provided here. As such, Norton's short history of Hezbollah is a good place to start before moving on to Hamzeh. These two books taken together go a long way in shedding light on what type of group Hezbollah is and what to expect from the group in the future. Hamzeh leaves his personal feelings out of his work, which is commendable, and the end result is much more helpful and more balanced in tone than Harik's book.

I have read a lot of material on Hizbullah and this book, while a little out dated, provides a great intro into the organization. I highly recommend this along with Hezbollah: The Global Footprint of

Lebanon's Party of God by Matthew Levitt and Hizbullah's Identity Construction by Joseph Alagha.

This is a short, well researched and concisely written book on Lebanese Hizballah (LH). I recommend it highly for those of us who do not have lots of time to read lengthy and overly verbose books.

Associate professor of political science Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh presents *In The Path Of Hizbullah*, a thorough examination of the history and present-day situation of the Islamist group known as Hizbullah, or the Party of God. Consisting of mainly Lebanese Shiite Muslims, Hizbullah is well known for using both militant and moderate tactics to pursue its goals. Indeed its changing back and forth between extremes has puzzled those who would study it or those who are forced to confront it. *In The Path Of Hizbullah* details the crises that led to Hizbullah's emergence, its clerical leadership and hierarchical structure, and examines its shifts between militancy and gradualist pragmatism. Research, statistics, and tables flesh out the close scrutiny of Hizbullah's activities, in this unbiased examination of all that Hizbullah is and speculation upon what Hizbullah will become. A welcome contribution to contemporary Middle Eastern studies shelves.

Of the many Islamist groups that have emerged within the Muslim world over the last two decades, perhaps none has had so great an impact on Middle Eastern and international affairs as Hizbullah, the Party of God. This group of mainly Lebanese Shiite Muslims gained both infamy and fame by its pragmatic use of both militant and moderate tactics in pursuit of its goals. Hizbullah's oscillation between these two extremes has left most scholars and policymakers perplexed. This book serves as a road map for understanding not only Hizbullah but also other Islamist groups and their challenges to contemporary politics. Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh examines the Hizbullah of Lebanon through a structural analysis using original and archival sources. Employing a theoretical framework drawing on a broad range of studies on crisis conditions, leadership, political parties, and guerrilla warfare, *In the Path of Hizbullah* stands alone in its qualitative and quantitative exploration of one of the most complex contemporary Islamist organizations and offers a thoughtful perspective on the party's future. Excerpt: This book has been an unhurried project. Its origin dates back to six years ago when I decided to write a book on Hizbullah. For a long time, I have been researching and writing on Lebanon's Islamist movements, in particular Hizbullah. I intended neither to write a book that serves as a medium for academic promotion, nor to treat Hizbullah's phenomena from a journalistic perspective. Four years and four drafts later, the present work

is the result of my efforts. One reason it took so long to write this book is that I spent a lot of time working out a conceptual model to lean on and to guide the analysis. The book fills what I believe to be an important gap in the literature. Although there are some books on Hizbullah, almost none draw heavily, as I do, on the sophisticated organizational structure and functions of this Islamic group. Moreover, I have tried to write this book as a mode of inquiry, intelligible to any literate person interested in the subject. My aim has been to be reasonably clear without being simplistic, and to be somewhat original without being merely idiosyncratic. I believe that the result, though slow in coming, is unique. Studying one of the most complex organizations of all Islamist movements in terms of structures and functions, rather than ideology, has allowed me to develop a conceptual framework of crises and responses that are solidly based on widely accepted theories. The conceptual framework specifies linkages between crisis conditions and responses in terms of ideology, organizational structures, and modes of action. I found it hard to understand Islamist movements, Hizbullah or others, without the aid of conceptual touchstones found in the traditions of Islamic theology, history, and writings of the group's ideologues or fountainheads.

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