

Abstract

This thesis explores the timing and frequency of Hezbollah's attacks against Israel from 2000-2015, determining how these attacks correlate to significant geopolitical shifts in the region, the Second Intifada, the Iraq War, the Syrian Civil War, and the 2014 Gaza War. By proving spikes in terror during the first six weeks of the selected conflicts using a Poisson Bayesian regression model, the thesis quantitatively analyzes the temporal tendencies of Hezbollah's aggression. The findings are framed through the sociological normative constructivist lens to explore the motivations driving Hezbollah's strategic decisions, and reveals a complex interplay of religion, history, and ideology driving Hezbollah's behavior, leading the group to attack their foundational enemy, Israel, at particular times. The group acted most strongly in conflicts involving Palestinians, the Second Intifada and 2014 Gaza war, emphasizing the importance of the two groups' shared history. Conversely, Hezbollah's increase in aggression towards Israel during the Iraq War and Syrian Civil War was, while still statistically significant, more cool. In the case of the Iraq War, because their ideological ties to Al-Qaeda were weak, and in Syria because they were actively involved in the fighting, leaving little resources for attacks on Israel. The nuanced look offered in this thesis emphasizes the significance of sociological normative constructivism in explaining motivations of non-state actors.