

DEFNE ACUN

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS' FOREIGN POLICY
BEHAVIOR: A ROLE THEORETIC APPROACH

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ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS' FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR: A ROLE THEORETIC APPROACH

A Master's Thesis

by
DEFNE ACUN

Department of
International Relations
İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University
Ankara
May 2025

To My Family



ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS' FOREIGN POLICY
BEHAVIOR: A ROLE THEORETIC APPROACH

The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
of
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ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS' FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR: A ROLE
THEORETIC APPROACH

By Defne Acun

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

İbrahim Özgür Özdamar
Advisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

Özlem Tür
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations.

Crystal Marie Whetstone
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences

Refet S. Gürkaynak
Director

ABSTRACT

ARMED NON-STATE ACTORS' FOREIGN POLICY BEHAVIOR: A ROLE THEORETIC APPROACH

Acun, Defne

M.A., Department of International Relations

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Özgür Özdamar

May 2025

Armed non-state actors (ANSAs) operate outside of state authority and pursue foreign policy to achieve their objectives in international politics through violent methods. Thus, it is important to understand what shapes ANSAs' foreign policy behavior. With a role theoretic approach, this thesis explores how these actors perceive their roles in their external relations and conduct foreign policy. Therefore, role theory provides an opportunity to integrate ANSAs in the foreign policy analysis (FPA). As a foreign policy behavior, this thesis focuses on the alliance portfolios of ANSAs. It examines Hezbollah and Hamas's foreign policy behavior at the initial stages of the Syrian uprising with their engagements in the Axis of Resistance. Accordingly, this thesis applies a content analysis method to identify the foreign policy role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas, and examines how these actors locate and perform their foreign policy roles. The findings reveal that these actors have cohesive role conceptions. Depending on the salience of role conceptions, they

perform different foreign policy behavior when deciding to show allegiance or leave the alliance. Therefore, this thesis portrays role theory as a significant approach, and salient role conceptions are crucial to understanding ANSAs' foreign policy behavior.

Keywords: Role Theory, Armed Non-State Actors, Foreign Policy Behavior



ÖZET

DEVLET DIŐI SİLAHLI AKTÖRLERİN DIŐ POLİTİKA DAVRANIŐI: ROL TEORİK BİR YAKLAŐIM

Acun, Defne

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Tez Danışmanı: Prof. Dr. Özgür Özdamar

Mayıs 2025

Devlet dışı silahlı aktörler (DDSA), devlet otoritesi dışında faaliyet gösterip uluslararası politikadaki hedeflerine ulaşmak için şiddet içeren yöntemlerle dış politika izlemektedirler. Bu nedenle, devlet dışı silahlı aktörlerin dış politika davranışlarını nelerin etkilediğini anlamak önemlidir. Rol teorik bir yaklaşımla bu tez, bu aktörlerin dış ilişkilerindeki kendi rollerini nasıl algıladıklarını ve dış politikalarını nasıl yürüttüklerini araştırmaktadır. Bu nedenle, rol teorisi devlet dışı silahlı aktörleri dış politika analizine entegre etme fırsatı sunmaktadır. Bu tez devlet dışı silahlı aktörlerin bir dış politika davranışı olan ittifak portföylerine odaklanmaktadır ve Hizbullah ve Hamas'ın Suriye ayaklanmasının ilk aşamalarındaki dış politika davranışlarını ve Direniş Eksen'i'ndeki etkileşimlerini incelemektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu tez Hizbullah ve Hamas'ın rol kavramsallaştırmalarını belirlemek için içerik analizi metodunu uygulamaktadır ve bu aktörlerin dış politika rollerini nasıl konumlandıklarını ve sergilediklerini incelemektedir. Bulgular, bu aktörlerin

tutarlı rol kavramsallaştırmalarına sahip olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu aktörler rol kavramsallaştırmalarının belirginliğine bağlı olarak, ittifaka bağlılık gösterme veya ittifaktan ayrılma kararı verirken farklı dış politika davranışları sergilemektedirler. Bu nedenle, bu tez, rol teorisinin önemli bir yaklaşım olduğunu ve belirgin rol kavramsallaştırmalarının devlet dışı silahlı aktörlerin dış politika davranışlarını anlamak için önemli unsurlar olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar: Rol Teorisi, Devlet Dışı Silahlı Aktörler, Dış Politika Davranışı

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

International politics is an arena in which a large number of actors exist and pursue their own objectives with different means. Traditionally, the International Relations (IR) discipline considers states as the main actors and pursues approaches at systemic, state, and individual levels to make sense of world politics. Nevertheless, with their increasing numbers since the 1970s (Keohane & Nye, 1977), non-state actors have been present in the international sphere. They have challenged or worked with states, and this signals their actorness based on being independent from states, having cohesive structures, and goals to accomplish (Josselin & Wallace, 2001). This thesis aims to adopt a new approach to studying non-state actors, specifically armed non-state actors (ANSAs), by undertaking a Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) lens that essentially focuses on individual and group level and cognitive elements, perceptions of the actors to understand foreign policies.

FPA scholarship criticizes IR discipline because it focuses on the state level and perceives states as billiard balls that operate similarly (Hudson & Day, 2020). FPA scholars aim to underline the unique characteristics of individuals and group

dynamics that play a role in international politics and how these actors make decisions (Carlsnaes, 2013). Paradoxically, FPA scholars sometimes fall into their own criticism and only study the actors in the state mechanism and disregard the other impactful actors in international relations (Brummer, 2021). Darwich (2021a) also points out the IR and FPA literature gap and emphasizes the need to examine ANSAs' foreign policy decision-making structures and behavior. Hence, this thesis takes the self-criticism of the FPA literature seriously and responds to Darwich's (2021a) call to integrate armed non-state actors (ANSAs) into the literature using the FPA toolkit. The importance of this gap increases in the international arena as globalization and technological developments thrive, and actors who opt to use violent methods can overcome state boundaries to challenge states and citizens to achieve their objectives. Therefore, this thesis also aims to provide a new lens to understand ANSAs, their decisions, and their actions.

Accordingly, armed non-state actors (ANSAs) are significant in the world arena since they use violent methods to achieve their objectives and challenge states by operating trans-border (Aydinli, 2016). However, they have goals and aims in international politics, and even if they challenge states, they are sometimes willing to cooperate with other states and non-state actors. Their objectives usually lie in their ideologies, which facilitate the definition of their friends and enemies in political spheres. ANSAs having cohesive, defined goals, methods, and relations with others pave the way for the research question of this thesis. Therefore, establishing external relations signals having foreign policies, and this thesis starts from the question of how armed non-states perform foreign policy behavior and how their perceptions of their roles influence their behavior.

It is essential to unpack the mechanisms behind the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs because it provides other scholars, researchers, and policymakers with a new perspective to evaluate these actors by putting the perceptions of ANSAs about others and external relations under the microscope. Therefore, to be able to understand the relationship between actors' perceptions and foreign policy behavior enables predictability, which would be a crucial contribution to the studies on armed non-state actors because the violent methods that these actors use hurt human lives and threaten stability in the regional and international dynamics.

Therefore, Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) tools are vital to understanding ANSAs and how they perform foreign policy behavior in their relations with others. The tools provide the opportunity to examine these actors, focusing on their own cognitive structures, and a pathway to study the actors in a detailed way.

Role theory suggests that perceptions of one's self-image and the roles one thinks play in the international arena are at the heart of the decision-making process and reflect in one's behavior as a role performance (Holsti, 1970; Thies, 2010). In that sense, role theory provides a framework to explore how ANSAs see their roles in the external world, and these conceptions about their roles influence their foreign policy behavior.

Non-state actors, especially armed ones, engage in foreign policy behavior in their external relations (Carlsnaes, 2013). Even though ANSAs usually define their enemies and talk about their perceptions of them, they also talk about their friends, how they perceive these relations, and their own roles. Therefore, this thesis is about the alliance behavior of ANSAs as a product of foreign policy role location and performance. Since ANSAs develop relations with other states and actors, support

each other, and seek benefits from these relations, they engage in alliances and perform foreign policy behavior with complete allegiance or tendencies to break it (Lemke, 2008). Accordingly, using the role theory and Holsti's (1970) role conceptions, this thesis aims to show that it is possible to identify role conceptions of ANSAs, and these role conceptions can reveal insights regarding the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs in alliances.

Therefore, this thesis seeks to understand a foreign policy behavior, namely the alliance behavior of two ANSAs, Hezbollah and Hamas, during the Syrian revolt in 2011, as the parties of the resistance axis. Also, this thesis is one of the first attempts to have a role theoretic approach to examine armed non-state actors (ANSAs) in the FPA literature. It aims to enrich the studies on non-state actors' research in both IR and FPA.

Hence, this thesis focuses on two armed non-state actors (ANSAs) in the Middle East region that pursue similar ideological objectives and have similar enemies, namely Hezbollah and Hamas. More specifically, this thesis focuses on their foreign policy behavior during the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War since these two actors engaged in a resistance axis with Iran and Syria (Mohns & Bank, 2012). This case is significant for the purposes of this thesis because these two actors pursue two different foreign policy behavior when the other alliance members demand their commitments, such as Hezbollah showing allegiance and Hamas falling out of the alliance. Thus, this thesis argues that identifying the role conceptions of these actors provides insight into their perceptions and how these perceptions influence their foreign policy behavior.

As the second chapter explains in detail, this thesis uses content analysis as the method to identify the role conceptions and put the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs on a role theoretic ground. Hence, by taking into consideration both the latent meanings of the text in the context and the frequency, this thesis provides new data on the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas and seeks to understand the relationship between how the actors locate the roles that signal alliance behavior and the role performance in the alliance.

Accordingly, the first chapter of this thesis introduces a detailed literature review. By unpacking the multiple discussions in the literature, this thesis shows that armed non-state actors have the capability to pursue their own foreign policy behavior.

Therefore, the literature review examines the discussions regarding the actorness of non-state actors, their foreign policy, and role theory in detail. The second chapter introduces the theory and hypotheses. It also explains the method, the data collection, and the coding process. The third and main chapter introduces the content analysis results and describes how the role conceptions are re-conceptualized for the armed non-state actors. Furthermore, it examines the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas in the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War with a perspective on their commitments to the resistance axis. It discusses the findings of content analysis in that process. Lastly, the fourth chapter concludes the thesis and underlines policy relevance, limitations, and pathways to further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section offers a detailed exploration of the International Relations (IR) and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) literature regarding the positioning of non-state actors (NSAs) and armed non-state actors (ANSAs) in world politics. Therefore, this chapter first examines the approaches toward non-state actors and their foreign policymaking capability. Then, it focuses on the armed non-state actors, their role conceptualization, foreign relations, and how scholars understand their foreign policy actions and their suitability in FPA tools. Following that, this chapter introduces FPA approaches, especially role theory, to evaluate ANSAs' foreign policy behavior. Lastly, the chapter points out the lack of focus on the armed non-state actors in the FPA literature and how this thesis can contribute to the application of FPA methods, making it possible to understand ANSA foreign policy decision-making by using role theory with the cases of Hezbollah and Hamas.

2.2 Non-State Actors in International Relations Literature

International Relations (IR) literature has recognized the significance of non-state actors (NSAs) since the 1970s, when the interdependence literature underlined the increasing interactions between states and non-state actors in the international arena (Keohane & Nye, 1977). Further efforts to understand the non-state actors occur in perceiving them as transnational actors and how they can influence state policies (Risse, 1995). The pluralist perspective emphasizes the need to step out of the state-centric approach to understand world politics and the need to integrate a wide range of non-state actors, whether violent or multinational cooperation. The International Relations (IR) discipline points to the rapprochement in traditional IR theories of realism and liberalism that enables the improvement of the study of NSAs (Little, 1996).

Other scholars examine the non-state actors within the globalization and global governance debate (Stengel & Baumann, 2017) and based on the idea that social interactions go beyond state borders (Zangl & Zürn, 1999) and involvement of non-state actors in this process that can challenge the state authority by functioning outside of state regulations (Zürn, Binder & Ecker-Ehrhardt, 2012). Global governance literature underlines that non-state actors have a certain level of governance (Baumann & Stengel, 2014).

Furthermore, scholars underline that globalization, as a phenomenon that blurs the lines between national borders, increases the possibility of the dispersion of social, political, and economic interactions beyond sovereign state borders, mainly thanks to technology (Higgott, Underhill & Bieler, 2000). Higgott et al. (2000) identify two

camps on the idea of globalization that one considers the retreat of the state in a globalized world (Strange, 1996), and internationalists argue that the state is the unchanging main actor. Even though there is no consensus regarding positioning NSAs in the international arena in the literature, IR scholars recognize the crucial role that NSAs play in world politics (Risse, 2002) and how they can be influential (Mishali-Ram, 2009). In addition, the shift in power relations and authority created space for IR scholars to examine the agency of non-state entities and authority beyond states (Avant, Finnemore & Sell, 2010; Aydinli, 2015).

After the end of the Cold War, there was a change in conflicts with the involvement of violent non-state actors in international politics. Therefore, a change in global political dynamics and increasing state fragility leads to increased influence of non-state actors (Kaldor, 1999). Nevertheless, rather than being solely a challenge to the states, they also provide an alternative way of governance outside state authority (Rosenau, 1995). Schneckener (2006) underlines that fragile statehood is the platform that poses a threat to global governance, and this problem is emphasized in the literature with a security-focused approach after 9/11, showing the global impacts that terrorism and transnational crime would rise. Therefore, according to Schneckener (2006), a decrease in state authority, especially in the fragile ones, creates a security issue in the global sphere.

2.2.1 Actorness of Non-State Actors

In the efforts of understanding non-state actors, scholars have no agreement on the definition of NSAs, but some common criteria that lie in the actorness and agency of these entities that being able to make decisions independently from states and

implement them regardless of state borders (Aydinli, 2015; Josselin & Wallace, 2001). According to Aydinli (2015), actorness evolves around the two elements for non-state actors, which are to be able to make decisions and policies and have the capacity to implement them and offer a framework based on examining autonomy, recognition, and influence to evaluate the actorness of NSAs, especially for the violent ones.

Even though there is no one-size-fits-all definition for non-state actors, there are considerable efforts to classify them to provide a better conceptualization in the literature. Josselin and Wallace (2001) underline transnational characteristics and emphasize that one does not need to completely operate outside state authority to be considered a non-state actor. The most important criterion is to have transnational characteristics that have specific purposes that try to achieve influence on a transnational audience and operate autonomously at a certain level of state authority (Josselin & Wallace, 2001). Other scholars examine authority (Hall & Biersteker, 2002) and territorial influence to determine the status of NSAs. To understand the actorness of NSAs in international politics, Arts (2000) looks at the relations between regimes and non-state actors.

2.2.2 Non-State Actors' Relations with States

The debate regarding understanding the role of NSAs in international politics is twofold; they can be allies or rivals to the states within a spectrum (Josselin & Wallace, 2001). Therefore, the literature focuses on two different characteristics of NSAs that can be good or bad for states in terms of their relationship dynamics.

In an attempt to classify non-state actors and to understand their actorness, power relations, and classify differences, scholars usually consider their roles concerning states in international relations. Therefore, they can be benign and work together with states or be illicit and damage states (Aydinli, 2015). Scholars perceive their actorness as rivals (Chong, 2002) or allies to the states (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Baumann & Stengel, 2014). In other words, NSAs can be good and bad from a state-centric perspective. In the literature, scholars tend to group NSAs in a good and bad dichotomous manner vis-à-vis their relations with states, such as heroes and villains (Josselin & Wallace, 2001).

The autonomy of NSAs from state authority is on a spectrum, whether they are perceived as good or bad by states, whether states approve their operations, and where they stand may change (Josselin & Wallace, 2001). For instance, multinational corporations may have special relationships with their home states and banks, and epistemic communities can seek funding from states, and NGOs can provide policy advice. They can be transnational activists, and even violent non-state actors may consult state sponsorships (Josselin & Wallace, 2001) and create alliances (San-Akca, 2009). Even transnational activists, advocacy networks (Keck & Sikkink, 1998), and epistemic communities still challenge state authority with peaceful methods and try to participate in decision-making.

This hybrid foreign policymaking can also take place with multiple states and non-state actors, as Baumann and Stengel (2014) underline problem representation, agenda setting (Keck & Sikkink, 1998), decision making, implementation (Avant, 2004), and evaluation. This also considers these actors as allies who volunteer to work with states.

The other end of the spectrum focuses on the malign behaviors of non-state actors, such as using violent strategies to seek success in their objectives, and the most common actors are armed non-state actors (ANSAs) and criminal ones (Aydinli, 2016). As Aydinli (2016) emphasizes, IR scholars focus on these violent actors through different perspectives, such as examining them in civil wars, conflicts, security studies, and terrorism (Moore, 2015). They try to understand the violent strategies and their use and seek new members and states to engage with them (Salehyan, 2010). Accordingly, depending on how they perform malign behaviors that influence states or engage in different methods and objectives, these actors are positioned in multiple categories, such as rebels and terrorists (Krause & Milliken, 2009).

Non-state actors are able to conflict with states and pose as rivals by being against states to challenge the ideas that they perceive as threatening their identities, as in the case of Islamist movements (Chong, 2002; Josselin & Wallace, 2001).

2.3 Foreign Policy Analysis and Non-State Actors

As examined above, IR literature tends to analyze the external relations of NSAs from a state-centric perspective by focusing on their influence on the states' foreign policy decisions in the scope of their actorness, as rivaling or in alliance with states. In states' foreign policy decisions, NSAs can take part in foreign policy decisions by involving a hybrid decision-making process that involves multiple actors, whether state or non-state, in creating policies (Baumann & Stengel, 2014).

Nevertheless, some scholars define foreign policy as not necessarily a state capability

(Hill, 2015; Carlsnaess, 2013; Darwich, 2021a). Any independent actor with a strategic perspective that conducts relations with external actors outside of their control can engage in a foreign policy action, and their foreign policy decisions can be subject to foreign policy analysis (Darwich, 2024).

2.3.1 Capability of NSAs Foreign Policymaking

Hill (2015:4) defines foreign policy as “the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually but not exclusively a state) in international relations”. Accordingly, the independent actor element allows room for including non-state actors, and the rest of it signals that non-state actors can conduct and pursue coherent decisions and policies towards actors other than themselves that they have perceived as foreign (Hill, 2015; Darwich, 2021a).

Furthermore, Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), as an agent-based discipline, examines the decision-making during the foreign policy-making process (Carlsnaes, 2013).

Therefore, it mainly focuses on the process rather than the outcome. Furthermore, it assumes that focusing on an individual level is also necessary to understand foreign policy and the international arena. As humans are behind the decisions, their influences reflect the decisions, unlike the system-level IR approach of perceiving states as unitary, billiard-ball-like actors (Hermann, 2001).

While system-based traditional IR theories tend to ignore the role of individuals by accepting states as unitary rational actors, FPA scholars consider the elements that may affect individuals in decision-making positions to act rationally (Hudson & Day, 2020). In that sense, FPA scholars examine different influences on decision-making,

such as misperceptions that may stem from beliefs towards the outside world (Jervis, 1976), roles that individuals and groups perceive themselves in world politics (Breuning, 2018; Holsti, 1970; Walker, 1987), personality traits and leadership types (Hermann, 1987), attributes that prevent humans making rational choices such as loss aversion, not being able to reach perfect information, time limitations, crisis. Cognitive elements such as shortcuts and schemes also affect individuals' decision-making processes. Jervis (1976) underlines the hurdles to rationality. One of the elements can also be related to survival in a political position that affects the decision-making process for individuals.

Furthermore, FPA scholars also critique their discipline by paradoxically being so focused on the state agents (Brummer, 2021). Since non-state actors are formed with individuals capable of conducting foreign policy actions, they can also be subjects to foreign policy analysis (FPA) research. Furthermore, FPA methods are suitable for understanding the influences of individuals and small group dynamics on decision-making due to groupthink (Janis, 1982), and bureaucratic relations of the group (Allison & Zelikow, 1999).

Carlsnaes (2013) argues that non-state actors also have the capability to pursue foreign policies since they have consistent aims and commitments that want to influence external others. They are not just random actors. Their actions produce influence in the international domain as they have their own principles, beliefs, roles, and operating mechanisms. Even though these are not as organizational or stable as states, conscious actions have influenced causes and results in foreign policy production.

Therefore, the FPA methods can be helpful in understanding non-state actors.

Baumann and Stengel (2014) also mention the applicability of the FPA toolkit to the examination of non-state actors since the essence of the FPA focuses on the decision-making conducted by human beings. Like states, non-state actors form with individuals with similar and different ways of thinking, living with heuristics that shape their decision-making processes. Also, Baumann and Stengel (2014) underline that the literature examines the NSA's influence on states' decisions and overlooks the decision-making processes behind non-state entities, which can also be significant for international politics. The influence of NSAs in state decisions can occur both in domestic and international spheres.

2.4 Armed Non-State Actors and Foreign Policy Analysis

As the subject of this thesis and a part of non-state actors, the IR literature approaches understanding armed non-state actors (ANSAs) from different perspectives to define, categorize, and examine their actions in the international arena.

As non-state actors who use violence to achieve their goals (Aydinli, 2016), scholars have tried to classify armed non-state actors (ANSAs) as rebels, terrorists, and criminals. Furthermore, their foreign relations are examined through conflict literature by focusing on how they interact with states during civil wars, and considering them as the actors of proxy wars (Moghadam & Wyss, 2020), negotiations, and the technological use to speak to a broader audience (Higgott et al., 2000).

There is not one concrete definition that fits all armed non-state actors in the

literature. Nevertheless, common points to define the characteristics are opting for violent methods to achieve their goals and having independence from state mechanisms (Schneckener, 2006). Scholars agree on having cohesiveness in its organizational structure and violence as a method (Malthanner, 2007; Shultz, Farah, & Lochard, 2004), being independent, having an identity (Hofmann, 2006) to understand ANSAs. Cohesiveness in their dynamic is the key element in defining non-state actorness, which signals a common goal and capabilities to achieve these goals, whether entirely independent or, to a certain level, in line with state interests.

Berti (2016) underlines that it is difficult to define these actors with some typical types, such as terrorists, since they also provide social services even though they use terrorist tactics. While describing these actors, Moghadam, Berger, and Beliakova (2014) call them insurgent groups since they both engage in political and military activities and seek support from their constituencies.

Building upon the efforts of defining ANSAs, the literature also tries to categorize them through multiple efforts in typologies. In that sense, Schneckener (2006) identifies types of ANSAs by their aims to change the status quo, operating borders, methods of using violence, and motivations, whether political or economic, and calls them rebels, militias, warlords, clans, terrorists, criminals, marauders, and mercenaries.

Nevertheless, the scholars who try to identify types of ANSAs and define them also accept the problem of creating an ideal-type definition of each kind since these actors can fit multiple categories (Schneckener, 2006). This situation can also signal the importance of decision-making of the actors since those considered the same type do not even act or react in the same way. That is also why FPA is suitable for

understanding them and focusing on their unique characteristics.

Furthermore, Krause and Milliken (2009) perceive ANSAs as challenging the states' authority, especially how they pose a threat against the legitimate use of violence.

Their taxonomy to classify armed non-state actors also differentiates them with their level of control over a territory, the essence of their motivations, and the scope of operations under five essential types, namely, insurgent groups, militants, warlords, militias, and transnational groups. As another way of classifying ANSAs, Schlichte (2009) focuses on the formation of these groups through mechanisms such as political crisis, repression, and war.

To provide a new perspective in classifying armed non-state actors (ANSAs), Zohar (2015) provides a novel typology for them by considering contemporary developments and characteristics of these groups. In that sense, rather than traditional names such as rebels and insurgents, Zohar (2015) creates four types to understand ANSAs: secessionists, revolutionary left, revolutionary sectarian, and global revolutionary. He pursues criteria similar to Schneckener's (2006), looking for objectives, organizational structures and profiles, activity scope, warfare methods, and weapon choices.

2.4.1 Armed Non-State Actors in the Middle East and Foreign Policy

Armed non-state actors spread worldwide, and as scholars underline, they do not show the same characteristics under one umbrella term. Schneckener (2006) also emphasizes that there is no need to operate entirely outside of state relations to be considered an ANSA. Accordingly, the ability to operate outside the official state

mechanisms is sufficient. State actors can support or interact with them, such as by being in alliances or financing them. This point also signals the capability of ANSAs to have external relations other than their groups and conduct policies to achieve their objectives.

Therefore, some studies try to unpack and conceptualize the actors in the Middle East to talk about their foreign policies. After agreeing on some umbrella definitions of the armed non-state actors, scholars also show efforts to conceptualize different armed non-state groups worldwide. For the Middle East region, Berti's (2016) work provides significant insights into conceptualizing the non-state armed groups by focusing on the organization of Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic State (IS) groups. Berti (2016) also points out that both armed and non-armed characteristics of ANSAs, such as social, political, and economic actions based on their identity perceptions, are crucial in examining them.

According to Berti (2016), the Middle East is also a significant region that has witnessed state fragility and instability, which resulted in the empowerment of armed non-states and their alternative ways of governance as the states failed to provide public services. Rebel governance is based on institutionalization that provides social services to civilians (Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly, 2017; Mampilly, 2011) so that ANSAs can achieve a certain level of authority and legitimacy (Snow, 1996) to mimic states and challenge them (Berti, 2016). Therefore, some armed non-state actors "blur the lines between state and non-state actors through direct involvement in governance" (Berti, 2016:5).

Berti (2016) also underlines that the ANSAs in the Middle East pursue various objectives and have different ideologies and identities, as well as changing levels of

transnationalism, capabilities, and governance, and influence regional and global politics. On a spectrum, according to their organizational developments, Berti (2016) considers Hezbollah at one end of it with the highest level of cohesiveness, integrated into the politics of Lebanon but with a governance network and military power independent from state authority. In the middle of the organizational development spectrum, there is Hamas. At the other end, there is the Islamic State (IS), which is significantly anti-status quo and pursues transnational governance.

In their relations with states, ANSAs are not always against them (Staniland, 2012). They can have relations with other states and groups. This can occur through political elections (Berti, 2016) or with other states.

Darwich (2021a) underlines that ANSAs having foreign relations like foreign policy with their relations with states and non-state actors during conflicts and peacetimes make it suitable to be examined with FPA lenses. Nevertheless, according to Darwich (2021a), although the ANSAs have different characteristics, they pursue foreign policy decisions that influence other actors. Darwich (2024) also argues that it is not necessary to be an ANSA to operate internationally to be a part of FPA perspective.

2.4.2 Hezbollah and Hamas in the Literature

Berti (2016) conceptualizes ANSAs in the Middle East, especially Hamas and Hezbollah, with their hybrid nature that pursues political, military, and social actions. Berti (2016) also disagrees that violent non-state actors only pursue asymmetric warfare and exemplifies this with the adopting conventional warfare methods by

some ANSAs.

Scholars usually consider Hezbollah and Hamas to be similar actors as they both formed based on religious ideologies and pursue violent methods (Gleis & Berti, 2012). Some also focus on the sectarian differences between the two groups by emphasizing Hezbollah being Shiite and Hamas being Sunni and underlines the rationality in the foreign policies of the groups due to having relations even though there are sectarian differences (Rabasa, Chalk, Cragin, Daly, Gregg, Karasik, O'Brien & Rosenau, 2006). According to some scholars (Daher, 2018; Seurat, 2018), both Hezbollah and Hamas produce and pursue foreign policies that prioritize their interests and engage in relations with other international actors.

For Hamas, scholars underline that although the group uses violent methods to achieve its objectives, it has also pursued grassroots activism in universities and trade unions (Caridi, 2010) since its establishment. Their involvement in political elections in 2004-2005 showed their willingness to be part of political life, but this decision did not let them leave the armed wing. Events of the 2007 Palestinian Civil War resulted in Hamas's control in Gaza, providing complete control over the territory and governance that is based on the continuation of providing social services from education and health to development (Caridi, 2010).

In the case of Hezbollah, the group was established to fight against the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the 1980s, with radical ideas of replacing the Lebanese state with an Islamic state due to the belief that Lebanon failed to protect Muslims against Israel. Later, the group changed its stance and became a part of Lebanese politics. However, the literature still considers the group part of ANSAs since it has a military apparatus (Berti, 2016) that operates outside state control. Furthermore, the group

also provides civil services as a part of their operating mindset and organizes charity work.

Both Hezbollah and Hamas have similar enemies, such as Israel, and friends, such as Iran (Gleis & Berti, 2012). Nevertheless, they do not operate in the same mindset in every case and have different organizational elements, such as Hezbollah's positioning in Lebanon, while Hamas may be considered a quasi-state (Rabasa et al., 2006). Accordingly, both engage in hybrid warfare based on a combination of conventional and asymmetric warfare methods.

Most scholars emphasize the sectarian differences between Hamas and Hezbollah. Nevertheless, it does not stop them from being in alliance with Iran. According to Bilgin (2019), the security understanding and promotion of Iran provides a stage for this alliance since Iran emphasizes that the Islamic State is there for all Muslims, not only Shiites.

More recently, FPA scholars have also been interested in the armed non-state actors and have started to seek ways to apply FPA tools to understand ANSAs, as this thesis also aims. The studies that focus on the ANSAs in the Middle East and Hezbollah and Hamas usually focus on the individuals of the groups. For instance, Özdamar and Canbolat (2023) apply operational code analysis to the leaders in the Middle East region and include both state and non-state actors such as Hasan Nasrallah of Hezbollah and Khaled Meshaal of Hamas, with other leaders of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, and Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel. Furthermore, Rapport (2017) explores the suitability of the leader approach to study ANSAs.

As another effort to use FPA methods to examine armed non-state actors, Mintz, Chatagnier and Samban (2019) conduct a leader-level analysis through the rational-

cognitive framework. Accordingly, they benefit from poliheuristic theory and try to understand the rational behavior of the leaders and other motivations such as religion, nationalism, and economy. They also study Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah.

Besides the leader focus, it is important to underline that Hezbollah and Hamas have organizational structures that play different roles in decision-making processes; therefore, group-level studies are significant in studying these ANSAs (Oseran, 2013). Accordingly, even though this thesis examines the speeches of the individuals, it includes multiple people in the groups that reflect cohesive foreign policy decisions and consists of the manifestos of the groups that are a product of group efforts that I will also highlight in future chapters.

2.5 Foreign Policy Analysis Methods and Role Theory

Foreign Policy Analysis revolves around the idea that individuals matter and it is significant to examine their decision-making, whether alone or in groups (Hudson & Day, 2020). The discipline moves beyond the traditional IR theories and their approaches to international politics that consider states as unitary actors and explore the agent-specific elements that play a role in foreign policy making. Therefore, it is suitable to examine ANSAs and other non-state actors.

Baumann and Stengel (2014) argue that FPA can be implemented to understand the foreign policy-making of NSAs because individuals make decisions, and the FPA scholarship examines factors that influence foreign policy decision-making by focusing on human agency. For the FPA tools, scholars use polyheuristic theory (Mintz, 2004) to examine cognitive shortcuts and operational code to play off

individuals' beliefs in decision-making. Recently, FPA scholars have pointed out the opportunities for the implementation of broader research topics for FPA methods (Kaarbo & Thies, 2024). One of these FPA theories is role theory.

As one of the theoretical perspectives, role theory was pioneered in the literature by Holsti (1970) based on individual decision-making and the introduction of national role conceptions to the literature, moving from the social psychology and sociology fields. Rather than a one decision-specific approach, role theory is more helpful in understanding the general worldview of the actors in foreign policy decision-making. Therefore, how decision-makers perceive the world and their roles in this world matters in the foreign policy decisions and behavior.

The role theory literature has developed since different generations of scholars have focused on other parts. The current trend lies in the idea of understanding perspectives on specific issues. The first generation, as introduced by Holsti (1970), tries to understand foreign policies with role conceptions and patterns that are more general. Role theory is born from the sociology and social psychology disciplines, and scholars have integrated it into FPA and IR research. Holsti (1970) focuses on outside-world influences and foreign relations to construct role conceptions.

According to Breuning (2022), while first generation role theory scholars concentrate on the structure and how it is perceived (Holsti, 1970; Walker, 1987), the second generation scholars examined the two-way interactive shaping relation between society and humans (Breuning, 1995; Wehner, 2016; Walker, 1992). Lastly, as the third way, Schafer and Walker (2021) recently developed a focus on the binary role theory with game theory.

According to Holsti (1970), a state's position in international politics influences how

the decision-makers perceive the national role conceptions and make foreign policy decisions. Therefore, how one perceives their position in international politics and believes they have some role in the conjuncture, their beliefs, and self-images influence their foreign policy-making, decisions, and behavior. Role theory posits that the role conceptions of one perceive oneself in the world at the heart of foreign policy.

Holsti (1970) introduced some national role conceptions, and some scholars implemented them (Hermann, 1987; Rosenau, 1987; Walker, 1987). These scholars have made efforts to examine the valuable assets of the role theory, such as Rosenau (1987), who argues the benefits of role conceptions in understanding macro-level foreign policies. Hermann (1987) looks at the Sub-Saharan Africa region and how national role conceptions and role theory are helpful in understanding foreign policies in the region.

Breuning (2022) underlines that second generation role theory scholars emphasize the agency further in their research through the individuals' capacity to make inferences with the knowledge at hand and influence the structure. Second generation primarily advocates enriching the methodological perspective of the role theory, implementing automated coding for content analysis, and increasing the number of cases (Breuning, 2022). They tried to open up the role conceptions and understand contestation horizontally and vertically (Cantir & Kaarbo, 2016), including domestic influences, adding survey data, and focusing on ideational factors.

Furthermore, role theory has a broad conceptual language that allows scholars to examine different dimensions of the interactions between the roles and behaviors, such as having interrole conflict due to conflicting role demands that produce role

strains or having different role expectations (Thies, 2010).

Lastly, it is important to underline one significant role of theory study in the literature that inspires this thesis. Accordingly, Akbaba and Özdamar (2019) adopt the role theory lens to examine the individuals in states in the Middle East region. They discuss the material and ideational factors shaping role conceptions and eventually influencing foreign policies. Nevertheless, this study only presents state actors of Egypt, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. However, as their study provided a connection between role theory and the Middle East region, this thesis believes that this connection can be broadened by including ANSAs in the region to study with role theory and perceive the role theory study of Akbaba and Özdamar (2019) as an example, especially in applying method, content analysis, and collecting data which I will elaborate in the next chapter.

2.6 Contributions to the Literature

This thesis aims to answer the call in the FPA literature that goes beyond the paradoxical situation of the field, criticizing IR, focusing on states, and then examining state actors (Brummer, 2021). Recently, FPA scholars have underlined the need to integrate non-state actors into the field and the possibility of FPA methods and theories to understand the foreign policy decisions of these actors (Kaarbo & Thies, 2024).

Since FPA is prominent in examining the foreign policy decision-making processes by considering the individual level, its application to armed non-state actors can uncover the rationale behind their decision-making processes that affect states

(Darwich, 2021a). This thesis aims to adopt role theory, based on revealing the perceptions political actors' positions in the politics that affect their foreign policy behavior, to implement the understanding role perceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas as the two significant ANSAs in the Middle East region that influence both regional and international politics with their foreign policy decisions and behavior.

Therefore, as a novel attempt in the literature to apply role theory to armed non-state actors, this thesis proposes a contribution to the literature and further room to develop this research. Accordingly, the premises of this thesis include providing a new perspective to policymakers who engage in cooperative or conflictive relations and providing a sense of predictability by identifying role conceptions.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter moves on from the literature review and introduces what the thesis seeks to achieve by providing detailed information regarding the questions and theory. Building on that, this thesis presents three hypotheses, two focusing on explaining a specific foreign policy behavior. Furthermore, this chapter elaborates on the method and data to provide a better insight into the research design.

3.2. Research Question and Theoretical Approach

Non-state actors are significant in international politics (Keohane & Nye, 1977; Mishali-Ram, 2009; Risse, 1995). They influence states' foreign policies and challenge their positions in the international political arena. The literature examines their agency and their impact by using typologies and their characteristics (Aydinli,

2015; Josselin & Wallace, 2001) as being allies and rivals to states (Chong, 2002; Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Baumann & Stengel, 2014). Building on that perspective, non-state actors are cohesive entities and conduct relations with international actors that they consider as foreign or other; they are also capable of producing foreign policy (Baumann & Stengel, 2014; Hill, 2015; Carlsnaess, 2013). Therefore, foreign policy analysis (FPA) scholarship focuses more on non-state actors and suggests implementing FPA methods to examine non-state actors and their foreign policy behavior. As one of the non-state entities, IR literature also emphasizes the importance of armed non-state actors (ANSAs) (Berti, 2016; Darwich, 2024). Scholars examine them through conflict, civil war, and rebel literature and focus on actorness and how to identify their characteristics (Salehyan, 2010; Krause & Milliken, 2009).

Nevertheless, only a few studies in the FPA literature position ANSAs in foreign policy analysis (Darwich, 2021a; Darwich, 2024). The definition of foreign policy does not necessarily define it as a capability belonging to states (Hill, 2015). ANSAs produce foreign policy behavior as they challenge and are rivals to states. They show some state characteristics such as providing social services and performing a certain level of governance in domestic and regional spheres, engaging in foreign relations with constituencies outside their groups (Berti, 2016). These actors can have relations with states and other groups, which can be based on alliances or conflicts produced by their foreign policies.

This thesis suggests that role theory as an FPA element provides the lens to understand the research question of how role conceptions influence the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs and examines the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas in explaining their foreign policy behaviors in participating in the Syrian

Civil War within their engagements in the resistance axis.

Role theory as a theoretic approach to understand foreign policy revolves around how the actors perceive certain roles in the international arena and how these roles influence behavior. According to Walker (1992), how one interprets expectations of others and one's own self-conceptions results in the occurrence of the roles. Thies (2010) underlines that role theory is not one single theory; instead, it is the intersection of theories that considers the role as a concept at the heart of social life and understanding foreign policy.

As the introductory work of role theory to foreign policy analysis literature, Holsti (1970) underlines that roles evolve around one's self-perception in relation to others. Roles influence an actor's foreign policy behavior, and an actor considers the other, or alter, as foreign in the international system. Holsti (1970) considers the role, or role performance, as the behavior, role prescriptions as the rules and expectations of the society in certain positions. He underlines that role theory is helpful to understand "the interaction between the role prescription of the alter and the role performance of the occupant of a position (ego)." (1970: 239). Furthermore, one's perception of their position in the social environment and thinking about the appropriate behavior in this structure leads to role conceptions.

Thies (2010) underlines that in foreign policy studies, role enactment, performing the role, as a part of role theory, can be a dependent variable based on how many roles there are, which role actors prioritize, and a comparison of one role with others. Foreign policy scholars focus on role expectations, demands, location, and cues as independent variables.

Role location as an independent variable directly relates to role enactment (Thies,

2010). Role location is the process by which an actor internalizes a role for the social settings in relation to perceiving self and others. As cited in Thies (2010) and Walker (1979), foreign policy behavior is the product of a role location. Therefore, an actor conducts foreign policy behavior by following the proper role conception that fits their perception of the self in the socialization process (Thies, 1999).

Hence, role conceptions and role theory become helpful in understanding foreign policy since the actors in decision-making form their perceptions regarding their national role conceptions in the international social environment, and these affect foreign policy behaviors, role performance, and role location. Therefore, it can also apply to ANSAs as they also perceive the other and their self-conception in the international sphere.

3.3. Hypotheses

This study aims to identify the foreign policy roles of armed non-state actors and how these elements are part of a theoretical lens that explains the relationship between role locations and foreign policy behavior. This thesis builds on Holsti's (1970) role conceptions and the enthusiasm in FPA literature to investigate non-state actors and their foreign policy approaches. Non-state actors can have foreign policies against the entities they consider the other (Hill, 2015). Then, armed non-state actors also perform foreign policy behavior. Role theory and foreign policy analysis provide tools to examine the relationship between role conceptions and foreign policy behavior. Based on the assumption that role conceptions explain the armed non-state actors' (ANSAs) foreign policy behavior, this thesis seeks to understand the relationship between role location and role performance of armed non-state

actors by implementing content analysis. Therefore, the first hypothesis, based on the literature, aims to posit non-state actors in foreign policy analysis as follows:

H1: Armed non-state actors have role conceptions that influence their role location and role performance in their foreign policies.

Building on the assumptions that ANSAs have foreign policies and role conceptions that affect foreign policy role performance, this thesis puts alliances as a foreign policy behavior under a microscope that ANSAs undertake to portray with role conceptions. Accordingly, as a foreign policy decision, ANSAs can be a part of alliances with states and other groups. Alliance behavior as a part of foreign policy is not only subject to states but also to non-state actors (Darwich, 2021a; Lemke, 2008). According to Lemke (2008), non-state actors that pursue survival, act independently, and engage in conflicts in an anarchic order can also be a part of alliance politics, and their alliance behavior can be examined, similar to that of states.

Therefore, alliance behavior, which is a foreign policy behavior that both states and armed non-state actors engage in, creates an opportunity to understand the role location and role performance of armed non-state actors (ANSAs).

When Holsti (1970) identifies seventeen role conceptions, he acknowledges the Cold War dynamics that led to role conceptions closely related to understanding the alliance behavior of actors in their foreign policies. Hence, some role conceptions can signal the foreign policy behavior of the ANSAs that is based on the role conceptions they locate and perform. These role conceptions prepare the grounds for the other hypotheses that this thesis argues.

Accordingly, Holsti (1970) identified role conceptions based on the Cold War

dynamics, that alliance understanding was based on being with one of the two blocs, or non-alignment, or isolation. Thus, understanding these roles' essence is applicable to ANSAs in contemporary politics. In that sense, when Holsti (1970) explains 'faithful ally' role, he emphasizes that solely being a part of an alliance or treaty that ensures mutual assistance does not make the members of the alliance faithful allies. Having a 'faithful ally' role conception means that the actors are not only concerned about the benefits of the alliance as protective means, but also give statements that ensure the allegiance and commitments to the objectives of their other alliance members. It ensures that the ones that have the 'faithful ally' role conception support the actions and policies of the others they perceive as their allies. Then, if ANSAs are a part of alliances, they can also perceive their role in international and regional politics as a 'faithful ally'. Therefore, they locate this role conception in their foreign policies and perform it as their foreign policy behavior. As a result, the second hypothesis of this thesis suggests that:

H2: ANSAs that have and locate 'faithful ally' role conception are more likely to show foreign policy role performance of allegiance in their foreign policies.

The second role conception that is useful for understanding the foreign policy behavior of armed non-state actors is the 'active independent' role. Holsti (1970) defines this role conception based on the non-alignment idea of the Cold War dynamics. Nevertheless, the essence of this role conception applies to understanding the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs. Thus, Holsti (1970) points out that the 'active independent' role can take place with a non-alignment perception without being isolated. Also, it means being eager to establish diplomatic and commercial relationships with others and willing to act as mediators, if necessary, while

prioritizing independence. Therefore, actors with an ‘active independent’ role conception are open to having multiple external relations and foreign policies, away from being isolated. This role conception applies to ANSAs that are concerned about their independence but also engage in external relations with other states and non-state actors. They are involved in alliances, but can move further away from the alliances if their self-determination and independence are at stake. Consequently, the third hypothesis aims to explore the foreign policy behavior applications of the ‘active independent’ role conception of ANSAs:

H3: ANSAs that have and locate ‘active independent’ role conceptions are more likely to show foreign policy role performance that fall out from their alliances.

As the hypotheses suggest, how ANSAs perform foreign policy behavior in alliances is a significant indicator that gives space to understand the relationship between role conceptions, location, and performance. Focusing on a situation in which the actors are involved in the same alliances that produce different foreign policies is a case that makes it possible to test these hypotheses. Therefore, I will examine how Hezbollah and Hamas locate role conceptions in their foreign policies and produce foreign policy behavior in the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War as a step to introduce role theory to understand role conceptions of armed non-state actors and their part in foreign policy outcomes in the next chapter.

3.4. Method

In foreign policy literature, scholars usually apply content analysis as a method to

identify the role conceptions in role theory research. (Hermann, 1987; Holsti, 1970; Thies, 2010). This method is popular in foreign policy research since it enables researchers to have information about individuals, such as political leaders, without talking to them directly (Hermann, 1980). Holsti (1969) emphasizes that theoretical reasoning is key to implementing content analysis. Accordingly, this thesis applies content analysis to identify the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas in terms of role theory reasoning.

Content analysis as a research method to analyze the communication in a given text provides opportunities for researchers to make inferences (Breuning, 2010; Weber, 1990) through a coding process (Babbie, 2004). Furthermore, content analysis helps quantify qualitative data in a systematic and replicable way (Bryman, 2004).

Therefore, content analysis is helpful in producing quantitative data from the qualitative one. The researcher focuses on and identifies specific meanings, words, frequency, or a theme in a text and measures the elements. It is possible to look for exact words, but the general meaning is useful for coding. Furthermore, the coding process signals the importance of intercoder reliability (Krippendorff, 1980).

The content analysis method can be conducted in multiple ways, such as qualitative and quantitative content analysis (Breuning, 2010). In qualitative content analysis, researchers rely on their expertise rather than a systematic coding procedure and try to capture nuances in a text. On the other hand, quantitative content analysis focuses more on systematic coding schemes and frequency (Breuning, 2010). According to Hermann (2008), the range of quantitative and qualitative content analysis can be considered as a spectrum, which means some content analyses may be more or less quantitative and qualitative depending on the attention to the existence of some elements and the frequency of exhibiting those elements.

In this study, similar to Holsti (1970), to code the role conception, coders focused on the meanings in the context of the text, not just solely seeking exact words or phrases, because contextual cues matter in understanding roles. Furthermore, frequency and salience are key to understanding general role conceptions. Therefore, through the coding process, coders relied on understanding the context's general content and coded the frequency similar to the role theory research of Akbaba and Özdamar (2019).

3.4. Data

Since this research aims to understand foreign policy behavior, the focus is on the foreign relations of the groups, and the data are collected accordingly in a purposeful manner. Based on the time frame, the speeches are selected from trustworthy Internet sources such as LexisNexis by focusing on the texts about foreign policy perceptions.

This thesis examines speeches and interviews of the leading personalities of Hezbollah and Hamas between 2006 and 2013 that were translated from their original language to English. This period includes Hamas's involvement in Palestinian elections in 2006 and Hezbollah's July War of 2006, to the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War until 2013. This period also witnessed Hezbollah's new manifesto, which was revised in 2009. Therefore, this thesis also includes the 2009 manifesto of Hezbollah and Hamas's original charter.

In justification of using both individuals' speeches and charters, when analyzing the organizational level of role theory in foreign policy, Thies (2010) underlines that role

theory is suitable to understand role conceptions at all levels, individual, state, and system. Since ANSAs are entities with strong leaders and small group characteristics, the products of the group, charters, and leaders' speeches regarding foreign policy are crucial for this thesis.

When identifying national role conceptions for the states, scholars focus on individuals at the elite level since foreign policy-making is in the hands of the ruling elite (Akbaba & Özdamar, 2019). For ANSAs, foreign policy decisions are still made at the elite level in the in-group. Therefore, the leaders and their close advisors are significant sources besides the charters.

Thies (2010) underlines that role theory content analysis usually faces concerns about samples and intercoder reliability. To overcome the possible problems, this study collects data from multiple resources such as speeches, charters, and interviews. The variety of the data is vital to strengthen the findings for the groups, since even the leaders are assertive; usually, the actors create documents like charters based on group efforts. Furthermore, to improve intercoder reliability, the author and one master's student work as coders. Holsti's (1970) definitions of national role conceptions become a guideline for understanding ANSA's role conceptions in the international system and their foreign policies. The ground roles are based on seventeen role conceptions from Holsti's (1970) work. The coders focus on the general meanings of the roles and follow Holsti's (1970) role identification instructions by focusing on their applicability to armed non-state actors (ANSAs).

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDIES AND FINDINGS

This thesis aims to understand the foreign policy behavior of armed non-state actors (ANSAs) with a role theory lens by including the perspectives of groups and understanding how they perceive their roles in world politics. Even though this thesis does not argue that the sole explanation behind the foreign policy behavior of the armed-non state actors is the role conceptions, it considers identifying foreign policy roles of armed non-state actors and how these elements explain the relations between role locations and foreign policy behavior is an important contribution to integrate armed non-state actors (ANSAs) in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) and International Relations (IR) literature and present a novel perspective. Therefore, this chapter aims to explain the alliance foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas, as the parties of the resistance axis, during the initial stages of the Syrian uprisings by identifying and examining their role conceptions.

This chapter first introduces Hezbollah and Hamas as armed non-state actors, how this thesis considers them under this category, and their capability and organization in producing foreign policy. Later, this chapter introduces Holsti's (1970) taxonomy of national role conceptions and how they are applicable to investigate role conceptions of armed non-state actors (ANSAs). In doing so, I briefly explain seventeen roles that Holsti (1970) identified and two more roles that I encountered that are special to ANSAs during the content analysis, as well as how these roles fit the perception of armed non-state actors. Lastly, this chapter examines the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas during the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War within the Axis of Resistance by introducing findings of content analysis and explain how the results, the most salient role conceptions, can help understand role location and role performance of armed non-state actors in their foreign policy behaviors.

4.2. Hezbollah and Hamas as ANSAs and Their Foreign Policies

The Middle East is a region where armed non-state actors produce foreign policies and challenge the norms based on a state-centric approach (Lecocq, 2020). ANSAs conduct relations in the region within a conflict environment. Hezbollah and Hamas are two of the significant ANSAs in the Middle East. They meet the criteria of being an armed non-state actor based on independence, having goals and ideologies, and using violence to achieve aims (Aydinli, 2016; Schneckener, 2006). As Darwich (2021a) also underlines, having an independent decision-making structure that influences others, operating regardless of state borders, and having objectives with a belief that can be met only with violent methods are key elements that define armed

non-state actors (ANSAs). Therefore, both Hamas and Hezbollah meet these criteria, and they develop external relations with other states and actors in the system to achieve their goals, which indicates their foreign policy conduct and production (Hill, 2015).

Armed non-state actors (ANSAs) is a term that embraces independent actors that have decision-making capabilities that influence those around them, using violent methods to reach their objectives and have a cohesive decision-making system (Lecocq, 2020). Nevertheless, the actors that fit this category do not operate in the same manner that scholars use different typologies to classify them (Berti, 2016). Scholars use the term state within a state to talk about Hezbollah and its characteristics of operating in Lebanon, while some consider Hamas as a quasi-state (Darwich, 2021a; Rabasa et al., 2006). Nevertheless, both actors have characteristics of being the umbrella term ANSAs and have foreign policy decisions and relations. They both have structural elements dedicated to conducting external relations, such as Hamas's foreign bureau and Hezbollah's foreign relations spokespersonship (Daher, 2018; Gleis & Berti, 2012; Seurat, 2018).

Furthermore, Hezbollah and Hamas identify their regional objectives and enemies, friends in their charters, and their perceptions towards their relations with others. They are open to having alliance relationships with others (Darwich, 2021a). Also, Hezbollah is considered an armed non-state group because even though they later got involved in Lebanese politics, the group carries violent resistance and a duty to provide social services to people regardless of Lebanese authority (Khalili, 2007).

Nevertheless, as all ANSAs are individual actors, assuming they behave as unitary ones can result in scholars and policymakers mistaking their actorness and the

influences in decision-making processes (Schneckener, 2006). Therefore, integrating them into FPA scholarship significantly contributes to the discipline by getting a closer look at each actor, underlining their agency, how their behaviors differ, and the influences on their foreign policy behavior. Consequently, role theory offers a lens to understand the mechanisms behind the foreign policy behavior of each armed non-state actor by focusing on their role conceptions. Henceforth, how each armed non-state actor perceives their roles in international politics defines their role conceptions and locations that affect the role performance (Thies, 2010). In that sense, Hezbollah and Hamas are two ANSAs that are suitable for the application of the role theory to ANSAs because they are from the same region and pursue similar ideologies that focus on fighting against oppression with an Islamic mindset (Gleis & Berti, 2012). However, they do not necessarily produce the same foreign policy behavior even if they engage in the same alliances. Their role conceptions towards their roles in alliance and regional politics can explain the differences in their behaviors in a systemic manner by integrating role theory conceptual tools into armed non-state actors' studies.

As Holsti (1970) suggests, policymakers have role conceptions in foreign policy-making and influence foreign policy behavior. Material and ideational factors, such as actors' capabilities, geographical influences, characteristics, and systemic elements, build role conceptions. Thus, role conceptions explain how actors' perceptions about their image in international politics influence how policymakers or policy-making organs define their state's role and, for this thesis, armed non-state groups. Accordingly, to understand the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas, the next section of this chapter explains the background of the actors and other material and ideational factors of the groups, such as their ideologies, decision-

making structure, and relations with other actors. The following section will elaborate on both groups' structure, ideologies, and foreign policy capabilities.

4.2.1 Hezbollah: Background, Ideology and Decision-Making Mechanisms

Hezbollah began to form at the beginning of the 1980s, influenced by the rise of political Islam in the region, the Islamic revolution of Iran, and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon and came to the international scene by declaring its open letter to the world in 1985 with its armed wing (Gleis & Berti, 2012). With this letter, the group declares their friends, the ones oppressed, and their enemies, Western oppression. The group's main objective was to stand against the Israeli presence in Lebanon (Herrick, 2011). Hezbollah pursues a foreign policy that may differ from the context without moving beyond its red lines, which is based on its ideological structure; therefore, the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah may seem contradictory at times, but overall functions complementarily (Daher, 2018).

Hezbollah's main understanding of establishment lies in the idea of resistance and carries it in a dual approach by engaging in politics and resisting opponents in Lebanon and outside with violent methods (El Hussein, 2010). Therefore, Hezbollah establishes its external relations based on the principle of opposing the oppressor other. In the beginning, it was also against the Lebanese state and defended the establishment of an Islamic state that would replace Lebanon and defeat Israel and all other Western influences (Bilgin, 2019). In their ideology, the group focuses on having an Arab Islamic unity discourse that the Iranian Revolution also influenced to establish resistance to the idea of jihad (Abboud & Muller, 2012). The group perceives resistance as a responsibility and considers the Palestinian issue part of its

agenda. It is involved in conflicts such as the 2009 Gaza War (Alavi, 2020) and pursues an ideological discourse by emphasizing its fight against Zionism and imperialism (Stein, 2021).

Accordingly, its other main objectives are throwing out all external influences from Lebanon, namely the US, French, and Israeli, seeking justice for the oppressors and the Phalange, and creating an Islamic state that will replace Lebanon. The occurrence of the group with objectives gathered support from Iran and Syria, which traced back to the good relations and alliances between them (Gleis & Berti, 2012).

Later, the group engaged in Lebanese politics, which meant leaving the idea of dismantling the Lebanese state after the 1989 Taif Accords, which aimed to reorganize the political representation structure in Lebanon. The death of Khomeini of Iran in 1989 and the end of the Cold War also influenced the group to engage in politics (El Husseini, 2010). The Taif Accord does not satisfy Hezbollah and makes it keep the armed wing when the other militant groups decide to leave the weapons because the accord does not correspond with the Shiite community, according to Hezbollah (Gleis & Berti, 2012; Khalili, 2007).

Nevertheless, after the Lebanese Civil War, Syria continued its presence in Lebanon with the responsibility to maintain peace, and the Taif Accords became the start of an alliance between Hezbollah and Syria because after Hezbollah decided to join elections in 1992 and did not abandon its armed wing, Syria facilitated the help route from Iran to Hezbollah (Gleis & Berti, 2012). After the 1992 elections and receiving eight seats in the Lebanese parliament out of the 128 seats, Hezbollah continued to participate in elections in 1996, 2000, and 2009 parliamentary elections while still operating militarily outside of the control of the Lebanese state (Daher, 2018; Gleis

& Berti, 2012).

The Lebanese political system prevailed in a sectarian structure even before 2011. (Gleis & Berti, 2012). Therefore, even though Hezbollah is a part of the political system, it has its own objectives and operates with an independent decision-making mechanism and an armed wing. It is also one of the reasons Hezbollah emphasized that they are there for all Muslims, not only Shiites, to increase representation and get involved in Palestinian discussions.

The 2009 Manifesto does not significantly carry much foreign policy difference from the 1985 Open Letter. The most significant difference is changing the political tone that moving away from establishing Islamic state to integrating Lebanese system that indicates Lebanonisation (El Husseini, 2010), adding the alliance dimension, and openly declaring its regional alliance that is a part of the Axis of Resistance supporting Syria and Iran, indicates its efforts to integrate international and regional politics in its foreign policy (Gleis & Berti, 2012). Therefore, the group is open to having external relations, creating ties based on their ideology, and performing alliance behavior in their foreign policy. Furthermore, Hezbollah takes foreign policy actions as an independent actor from state authority that affect state relations, such as initiating the 2006 July War with Israel (Tinas & Tür, 2018).

The main body of the organizational structure of Hezbollah is the Shura Council (Darwich, 2021a), which consists of seven members, six of whom are clerics and are elected every three years (Gleis & Berti, 2012), and the leadership is based in Lebanon (Lecocq, 2020). The council is the group's main decision-making and policy-making body. It monitors the other executive parts of the groups, namely, Judicial, Parliamentary, Executive, responsible also for the External Relations Unit,

Jihad councils, and Politburo (Daher, 2018). The council later selected the secretary-general and the deputy of the group, and Hasan Nasrallah took the role of secretary-general position of Hezbollah in 1992 and served as a popular regional leader from the 2006 July War with Israel until he died in 2024. Even though he acts like a charismatic leader, the group still operates with the decision-making system within the Shura Council and shows an effort to be an independent actor in politics as they seek diverse financial incomes other than Iran (Gleis & Berti, 2012). Also, Hezbollah works for social welfare and operates independently from the state apparatus, enabling it to be autonomous in decision-making and planning of foreign policy, which takes place in the Foreign/External Relations Unit (Daher, 2018).

4.2.2 Hamas: Background, Ideology and Decision-Making Mechanisms

Hamas occurs in international politics as an armed non-state actor established on Islamic principles that put the Palestinian liberation fight at the heart of its ideological understanding in 1987. According to Seurat (2018), Hamas conducts a foreign policy similar to that of states that prioritizes its interests and adds its values and norms into the equation while pursuing its foreign policy in an international sphere, like other actors and states.

The group's main ideological objective lies behind the idea of resisting the Western project that threatens Arab Muslims with domination (Hroub, 2006). Based on the idea of resistance, the group was born out of the First Intifada of 1987 to seek Palestinian liberation from Israel. It has ideological roots in the Muslim Brotherhood and promotes Islamic principles (Seurat, 2018). Nevertheless, Hamas is concerned about bringing the resistance with jihad, meaning entailing the fight. The group also

found influences in the Iranian Revolution of 1979 to integrate Islamic resistance into their ideology and argue that other Palestinian groups lack religious commitment. These religious efforts also brought financial revenues from Iran to Hamas in 1992, and the group integrated its armed wing into its structure in 1991 and started to carry out attacks on Israel (Gleis & Berti, 2012).

The group aims to have a Palestinian state and mainly fights against Israel and its Western supporters. Nevertheless, they do not refuse any help from these Western actors, such as accepting aid from the EU and having external relations (Darwich, 2021a). Hamas uses ideology in its foreign policy regarding its enemies and regional rivalries. Hamas is open to having talks that shows pragmatism (Seurat, 2018) and this also signals pursuing an 'active independent' role in its foreign policy.

Therefore, the main foreign policy is built on the idea of resistance to attract support, and Hamas uses religious emphasis in differentiating itself from the regional actors and other Palestinian rivalries, such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) (Seurat, 2018).

Hamas believes that the objectives can only be achieved with violence, and they maintain their armed wing even though they have a political approach by joining the 2006 Palestinian elections. They differentiate themselves from other Palestinian groups by emphasizing their Islamic character, independent decision-making, and working for the well-being of the Palestinian people (Caridi, 2010; Seurat, 2018). These arguments lie behind the idea of involving elections and accusing other Palestinian leaders of failing to provide for the people. This aspect also shows the willingness of the group to operate and see it as a responsibility to provide social welfare services. (Caridi, 2010; Hroub, 2006).

Even though the group has ideological concerns about jihad and establishing a Palestinian system based on Islamic principles, the group integrates its political side in Palestinian elections, shows elements of pragmatism in its decision-making, and provides welfare to its constituents (Seurat, 2018). The death of Yassin Arafat in 2004, the founder of Hamas, provided an arena for the other members of the group to engage in Palestinian politics in 2005 with municipal elections and the 2006 Legislative Council election. Hamas won the leadership of the Palestinian Authority (PA), and Ismail Haniyeh became the leader of the group and the Palestinian Authority. Nevertheless, the tensions between Fatah and Hamas in authority turned into violent confrontations between the groups, and Hamas lost aid from Western sources. This conflict led Hamas to consolidate its power in Gaza in 2007 and develop closer ties with Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah. Later, Hamas was involved in a conflict with Israel in 2007 and later in the 2008-2009 Gaza War (Gleis & Berti, 2012).

Therefore, the 2006-2013 period witnessed internal and external struggles for Hamas. Nevertheless, the group carries a foreign policy that concerns all ideological and material factors in a pragmatic manner (Seurat, 2018), which also influences the role conceptions, as Holsti (1970) argued, and all play a collective role in role location and performance.

Hamas indicates its ideology in the 1988 Charter and keeps its essence in its decision-making processes. The primary approach of the group is based on promoting nationalism and Islamic principles, and the main objective of the group is to liberate Palestinians from Israeli oppression (Gleis & Berti, 2012). The group also

sees providing social welfare as an internal aspect of their objectives that promotes the Islamic lifestyle among Palestinian people (Caridi, 2010).

In its organizational structure, Hamas has two main organs, namely, the Shura/Advisory Council and the Political Bureau, and the other organs are Foreign Affairs, Internal Security, Propaganda, and Finance (Gleis & Berti, 2012). The leadership is spread through the region, which may lead to disagreements within the group and Hamas stations in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon, East Jerusalem, and Syria, but moves from Damascus to Qatar after breaking out from the resistance axis (Lecocq, 2020).

The Advisory Council operates as the main decision-making body of the group. It reflects the decisions of the group's leadership, including those in the Palestinian territories and outside of them. On the other hand, the Political Bureau is responsible for executing the decisions and deciding actions that take place and has the role of being the foreign policy authority (Seurat, 2018). Other than the Gaza headquarters of the Political Bureau, the other one, stationed in Damascus, led by Khaled Meshaal, left Syria after Hamas departed from the Axis of Resistance (Gleis & Berti, 2012). In Hamas, Ismail Haniyeh acts as leader in foreign policy decisions and conducts these relations through important names of the group, such as Mahmoud al-Zahhar in Gaza and Khaled Meshaal outside Gaza (Seurat, 2018).

The Political Bureau is also influential in the decision-making process, and it is even subordinate to the Shura Council. Therefore, its influential nature makes the Political Bureau leader, Khaled Meshaal, important for the group's decision-making. Nevertheless, the Shura Council, being the head of decision-making, maintains the cohesion of the foreign policies of the group even when there are disagreements

among the individuals of the group, such as making decisions in the face of 2011 reconciliation talks with Hamas and Fatah in which Khaled Meshaal and Gaza leaders especially Mahmoud al-Zahhar disagreed (Gleis & Berti, 2012; Seurat, 2018). Therefore, even when in-group dynamics occur, the group acts cohesively and systemically produces policy decisions.

4.3. Role Conceptions of Armed Non-State Actors

In order to identify the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas, it is significant to understand the core of role conceptions proposed by Holsti (1970), and I apply these conceptions to ANSAs. According to Holsti (1970), perceptions of actors and how they place them in their foreign policies form roles. Actors shape their roles with their perceptions of the world and their position in the world and perform these roles as foreign policy behavior. In this part, I will describe each role conception of Holsti (1970) as the framework of the roles and explain how it is possible to apply it to understand the role conceptions of ANSAs. When Holsti (1970) introduced seventeen national role conceptions, he defined them as centering on the idea that actors with perceptions will be state actors.

As a novel effort to introduce role conceptions to armed non-state actors and foreign policy analysis literature, I re-conceptualized the necessary role conceptions in a way that can apply to armed non-state actors. Therefore, during content analysis, coders focus on understanding the meanings of the texts in the contextual setting, which is in line with Holsti's (1970) redefined role conceptions for armed non-state actors.

While identifying the seventeen roles, Holsti (1970) examines a large amount of data from 71 governments based on speeches, parliamentary debates, and press conferences that focused on the period between 1965 and 1967. The period is significant since Holsti (1970) underlines some role conceptions with Cold War orientations, such as faithful ally, anti-imperialist agent, defender of the faith, bastion of the revolution, regional protector, and protectee. Nevertheless, these roles can adapt to elements outside of the Cold War and non-state actors, as they have indicated foreign policy behaviors that can occur outside of the Cold War and state-centric understanding. According to his pioneering study, Holsti (1970) identifies seventeen main national role conceptions and explains them with some speech examples that also guide this research.

4.3.1. Re-Conceptualized Role Conceptions

As the first role conception, the ‘bastion of revolution-liberator’ role indicates that policymakers have the perception that encourages liberation in others and imports ideological and physical support, perceiving it as a duty. For ANSAs to perceive this role conception, their willingness and capacity to provide support for others and show it in their discourse are significant.

Holsti (1970) explains the role of a ‘regional leader’ by stating that policymakers see themselves as having the duty of regional politics and aspire to be the leader. Unlike the previous role, the ‘regional protector’ role implies that policymakers believe that their state or group also protects adjacent regions and has specific responsibilities in their regions. This role reflects the objectives of ANSAs that have broader goals, such as aiming for regional influence.

The ‘active independent’ role indicates a non-alignment perception without being isolated, being eager to establish diplomatic relationships with others, and being willing to act as a mediator if necessary while prioritizing independence. This role conception is underlined for ANSAs if they are open to having external relations with other states and groups, willing to accept their help based on supporting their ideologies without perceiving any duties for other parties, and prioritizing their own self-interests.

The fifth role, ‘liberation supporter’ underlines the support to liberation movements without perceiving any responsibility. The ‘anti-imperialism agent’ role conception considers imperialism a problem to fight. In the Cold War setting, the communist states usually had this perception. For ANSAs, this role reflects the idea of being against the oppressive forces, such as Israel and the United States, from the perspectives of Hezbollah and Hamas.

The role of the ‘defender of the faith’ is evident when the foreign policy objectives involve protecting the ideology that their states defend. This role conception applies to ANSAs as they have specific goals and aims, which can be observed in achieving freedom and having an Islamic ideological emphasis for Hezbollah and Hamas.

ANSAs can have these role conceptions, emphasizing religious ideologies and their fight against oppression as an objective.

The ‘mediator-integrator’ role signals that actors voluntarily engage in tensions between others to find a common ground between them. ‘regional-subsystem collaborator’ role means that policymakers may be willing to work with other actors in the region for short periods. Furthermore, the ‘developer’ role indicates working

for an underdeveloped world by making donations. The 'bridge' role underlines actors' enthusiasm to engage and be in contact between different cultures.

The 'faithful ally' role signals that the actors perceive their role in their external relations based on providing allegiance to their commitments. They emphasize their commitments to the alliances they belong to and show support for the objectives of their allies. Accordingly, ANSAs with commitments to each other or states have this role conception.

The 'independent' role was a non-alignment during the Cold War. For ANSAs, it is the perception that independence becomes the center of foreign policy to prioritize their own objectives regardless of those of others, even if they are allies. Unlike the 'active independent' role, this conception does not show signals of being open to communication with others or concerns about external involvement.

The actors have an 'example' role conception, trying to achieve influence in the international arena by presenting examples of their internal policies and seeking prestige.

An 'internal development' role indicates that actors tend to be more concerned about their domestic improvement than engaging in external relations. They pursue international relations in an economic sense that can help internal development.

'isolate' role conception is based on having minimal international relations, primarily due to the fear of external involvement that can damage self-sufficiency. The

'protectee' role is the willingness of the actors to give others permission to protect. It occurs in ANSAs when the groups accept the protection of another group or state.

This role also reflects when the states or groups emphasize others' responsibility to

protect them, such as some ANSAs in the Middle East, underlining other Arab states to act to protect their mutual Arab Muslim interests.

Holsti (1970) also created another category, 'other' such as balancer. Nevertheless, he underlines that the other roles are not frequent enough to be a part of his taxonomy. In this thesis, other novel roles can be salient for ANSAs. The two roles presented in this study are also key to understanding the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas in their foreign policy decisions.

Accordingly, the first role conception, 'retaliator' points to actors' perceptions that they have the role of answering what others do to them. Especially, ANSAs have armed capabilities and use violent methods to achieve their objective. Therefore, if they are also faced with violent reactions, they may have the role to answer immediately and conduct a foreign policy in this direction. Secondly, the 'provider' role conception signals the actors responsible for providing social services to their constituency. This role conception is special to ANSAs as they operate outside the state mechanisms to offer goods and other services to people with the same ideology.

4.4 Examining Role Conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas and Their Alliance Foreign Policy Behavior

Based on the assumption that role conceptions explain the foreign policy behavior of armed non-state actors (ANSAs), this thesis seeks to understand the relationship between role location and role performance of armed non-state actors by implementing content analysis to two armed non-state actors in the Middle East

namely, Hezbollah and Hamas and examining their foreign policies in the Syrian Civil War with role theory lens.

As two significant armed non-state actors in the Middle East, Hezbollah and Hamas are influential in regional politics, and it is crucial to understand their role conceptions to examine their foreign policy behavior with role theory to explain the hypotheses whether they have role conceptions that they locate in their foreign policy behavior.

Moving up on Hill's (2015) definition of foreign policy, which emphasizes that non-state actors can have foreign policies against the entities they consider as the other, Hamas and Hezbollah also perform foreign policy behavior. They engage in relations with states and other groups and challenge state mechanisms as providing a certain level of governance (Darwich, 2021a).

One of the political engagements of the two groups is the alliance of the Axis of Resistance. The Axis of Resistance implies the alliance between Iran, Syria, and regional non-state actors, most prominently Hezbollah and Hamas, and later includes other non-state actors such as Houthis and other non-state groups in the region (Cingöz, Özkan, Alkan & İzol, 2024). Nevertheless, this thesis focuses on the time period that posits Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, and Hamas as the main actors of the alliance and emphasizes that the members have had bilateral relations since the 1980s (Mohns & Bank, 2012). The Axis of Resistance occurred in the region to create alliances against the external influence of the US and Israel and has a further impact on the region than other regional actors such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt (Darwich, 2021b). As El Hussein (2010) points out, the 2003 Iraq War strengthened

the regional concerns. It made the actors of the axis closer based on the principle of resistance against the US and Israeli influence.

The axis formed with three actors: Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah, and later, Hamas, participated, and the alliance became apparent in the regional politics in the post-Iraq War (Karmon, 2008). As Karmon (2008) underlines, some scholars consider the July 2006 War against Israel as a consequence of this quartet alliance.

Some scholars explain the participation of the groups in the alliance with their dependency on Iran since Iran supports them (Tabatabai, Martini & Wasser, 2021). Nevertheless, Moghadam and Wyss (2020) point out that armed non-state actors are more than dependent on their patrons; they seek alliances with states and other actors to engage in their independent objectives. Nevertheless, explaining their behavior in the initial stages of the Syrian revolt solely with their relation to Iran ignores their capability to have a foreign policy with cohesive purposes and an organizational structure.

When the Syrian revolt broke out in 2011 as a result of the Arab Uprising that influenced the countries in the region (Brom, Berti & Heller, 2014), Iran declared support for the Assad regime (Mohns & Bank, 2012). The alliance's other members, Hezbollah and Hamas, exhibited two different foreign policy behavior, and this thesis seeks to explain these behaviors with role theory.

The pre-2011 period witnessed an enduring alliance between Syria, Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas (Darwich, 2021b). Nevertheless, the uprisings in Syria because of the Arab Spring that sparked in 2011 show the different alliance behavior of two armed non-state members of the alliance. While Hamas decided to break off relations with

the alliances in 2012, Hezbollah opted to support the Assad regime in Syria with Iran.

Darwich (2021b) tries to explain Hamas's behavior from an alliance cohesion perspective and underlines Walt's (1987) assumption of change in alliance dynamics due to changes in threat understandings, credibility, ideological approaches, and domestic influences. Therefore, she argues that the threat of war increases in the region with the Syrian Civil War, and Hamas is concerned more about the domestic elements that may come from its constituents, who consider people in Syria as the ones who stand against the Assad regime, as standing against oppression.

However, this also applies to Hezbollah because Hezbollah also supported other Arab Spring movements and faced backlash from its constituents when the group supported the Assad regime. Nevertheless, this thesis suggests that role theory provides a more comprehensive tool to understand the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas in the Syrian Civil War because the content analysis that traces back to the years before the civil war shows the stable role conceptions of the groups, how they perceived themselves in international politics and shaped their foreign policies accordingly.

Therefore, to provide a better reading of the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs by focusing on alliance behavior, this thesis offers an alternative to look for both ANSAs in the alliance and investigate their role conceptions in their foreign policies and how this influences their foreign policy behavior in alliances.

To begin with, Hezbollah and Syria have had historical ties since the establishment of Hezbollah, born out of the Lebanese Civil War of the 1980s (El Hussein, 2010).

The balance in the relationship changes over time. Once Syria left Lebanon in 2005 and Hezbollah had a victory against Israel in 2006, one more benefit from the relationship became Syria, according to Mohns and Bank (2012), while continuing to receive weapons from Iran (Daher, 2018).

Furthermore, the Syrian regime perceived Hezbollah as a ‘trustworthy partner’ (Mohns & Bank, 2012: 28). When the revolts started, Hezbollah declared support for the Assad regime, unconditionally sending fighters and aid (Mohns & Bank, 2012). It framed the revolts in line with Iranian perception, considering standing against Arab states that support the West (El Hussein, 2010; Mohns & Bank, 2012).

Therefore, this thesis expects that Hezbollah’s support to the Assad regime presents the role location of the ‘faithful ally’ in its role performance because Hezbollah not only supports Syria for Iran but also due to its role conception that posits Hezbollah in an international environment. Furthermore, being a ‘faithful ally’ is a significant characteristic and role conception of Hezbollah because the group supports revolts rose from Arab Uprisings in other countries but only for Syria; they stand with the ruling government underlining they are against the pro-Western countries in the region, that this thesis considers as the part of ‘anti-imperialist agent’ role conception.

On the other hand, Hamas’s foreign policy behavior differs from that of Hezbollah, and the group does not act in line with the alliance members during the Syrian Civil War. Hamas benefits from its alliance with Syria due to the routes that Iran sends supplies to Hamas and Hezbollah (Mohns & Bank, 2012). Also, Syria backed up Hamas during the conflict with Fatah, which was a part of the alliance and had been receiving sponsorship since the 1990s (Darwich, 2021b). Therefore, the alliance with

Syria is significant for Hamas, and it did not commit to the alliance when the revolt in Syria broke out. The other members of the alliance declared that their commitment to the Assad regime, while Hamas jeopardized its supplies coming from the members, especially from Iran.

Nevertheless, Hamas still took risks and faced a decrease in aid (Mohns & Bank, 2012). Syria and Iran ask for a statement from Hamas since the beginning of the unrest in Syria and declare their commitment and allegiance (Seurat, 2018). Hamas rejected pledging an allegiance publicly because the group underlines that the revolt is a domestic problem for Syria, and Hamas would not involve itself in the domestic affairs of others (Berti, 2012). The group emphasizes that the alliance between Syria and Iran is strategic and against the common enemy. Nevertheless, when pressure kept coming from its allies, and also the Palestinian constituents of Hamas did not support the Syrian government in 2012, Hamas left Damascus officially. It broke out of the alliance, causing the loss of the financial benefits of the alliance, especially coming from Iran (Darwich, 2021b).

Furthermore, Hamas perceived itself in the alliance with a strategic mindset based on a heavily resistance idea rather than religious unity with Iran, Syria, and Hezbollah to leave a space for opportunities to have benefits from external relations from non-Muslim fronts such as Russia (Seurat, 2018).

Hence, the group adopts a neutral approach when evaluating the initial stages of revolt by mentioning condolences for the deaths on both sides of the internal conflict. Thus, this thesis argues that Hamas's abstention from involving the Syrian uprising with the side of the Syrian regime expects the role location of the 'active independent' in its role performance because the group made decisions

independently without isolating itself from the international political sphere and supported Arab masses later in the conflict (Akhter, 2022).

4.5 Findings and Discussion

This thesis applies a content analysis of text data collected from the charters, manifestos, speeches, and interviews of Hezbollah and Hamas's prominent foreign policy decision-makers and spokespersons. Hamas and Hezbollah are the armed non-state actors (ANSAs) in the Middle East that establish external relations and alliances with international and regional actors and talk about them publicly. The content analysis is a valuable method because it presents the role conceptions of the groups related to alliance behavior and helps to understand their foreign policy behavior and role performance.

Even though the ANSAs are not institutionalized as states, they still have organizational apparatuses. In Hezbollah and Hamas' cases, they also have organs that conduct external relations, as explained in their structures previously. Furthermore, the speeches of the leaders and spokespeople of the group portray the role conceptions.

In the content analysis, I collected data from reliable internet sources such as LexisNexis and other scholars. As the author, I and one of my Master's student friends worked on the coding process. Intercoder reliability is calculated at around 92% for Hezbollah, 93% for Hamas, and 92% in total according to percent agreement method of calculating intercoder reliability, which is based on dividing numbers of agreements on data (how much data collected the same) to maximum

numbers of possible agreements that can be achieved on data between two coders (Mao, 2017).

As explained in the ‘Re-Conceptualized Role Conceptions’ part, coders took into consideration the roles that I adopted for armed non-state actors, which are updated versions of Holsti’s (1970) original national role conception definitions. All text data is presented in English as translated from the sources, and coders focus on the context related to the external relations of the actors that signal their foreign policies. Therefore, to understand the role conceptions of ANSAs to make assumptions between their role locations and role behavior in their foreign policies, the coders also aimed to identify the latent meaning of the texts depending on the context that shows the perceptions of the actors towards the external actors and their stance on this outside world.

In total, 34 texts and 117.326 words were analyzed (see Appendix B). 14 texts were identified from 2006 to 2013 to identify role conceptions of Hezbollah and focused on 63.237 words. The period indicates the time from the strengthened relations in the axis to the initial stages of the Syrian uprisings. The exact period applied to Hamas and 20 texts analyzed with 54.089 words. For Hezbollah, I collected text data from the manifestos of Hezbollah both from 1985 and 2009, and the speeches and texts from the prominent members of the group, namely, Secretary-General Hasan Nasrallah and his deputy, Naim Qassem. Similarly, I focused on the Hamas covenant of 1988 and speeches from Ismail Haniyeh, elected prime minister of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in 2006, and the leader of the group, Khaled Meshaal, leader of the Political Bureau in Damascus that later moved to Qatar, and Mahmoud al-Zahhar, foreign minister of Palestinian Authority, spokesperson of the group and prominent

member of the Political Bureau in Gaza. These people are important to understand the role conceptions of the group since they both participate in decision-making and also talk about the policies to foreign media apparatus by giving interviews. Charters and manifestos are also significant indicators of the foreign policy of the ANSAs, as they state the ideologies and objectives of the groups clearly and how they perceive others and their own roles in international politics.

Accordingly, coders focused on the meaning of the texts to identify role conceptions and how often they are mentioned to determine the salience of the roles, similar to the study of Akbaba and Özdamar (2019) and the figures created by following their steps, as in their research. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative concerns occurred during the analysis.

This thesis portrays the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas by identifying them with content analysis, and Figures 1 and 2 below reveal the results. As the first step to implementing role theory in armed non-states, the first hypothesis argues that ANSAs have role conceptions. Accordingly, the Hezbollah and Hamas cases present that role theory applies to ANSAs as they have cohesive role conceptions about their roles in their external relations, and content analysis is a valuable method to identify them. Furthermore, the findings show that both groups have salient and less salient roles. Hence, the groups consistently locate and perform the same role conceptions in their foreign policy speeches. Building on that perspective, the following part seeks to understand the findings in-depth and especially explain how the role conceptions that indicate alliance roles reflect foreign policy behavior and performance.

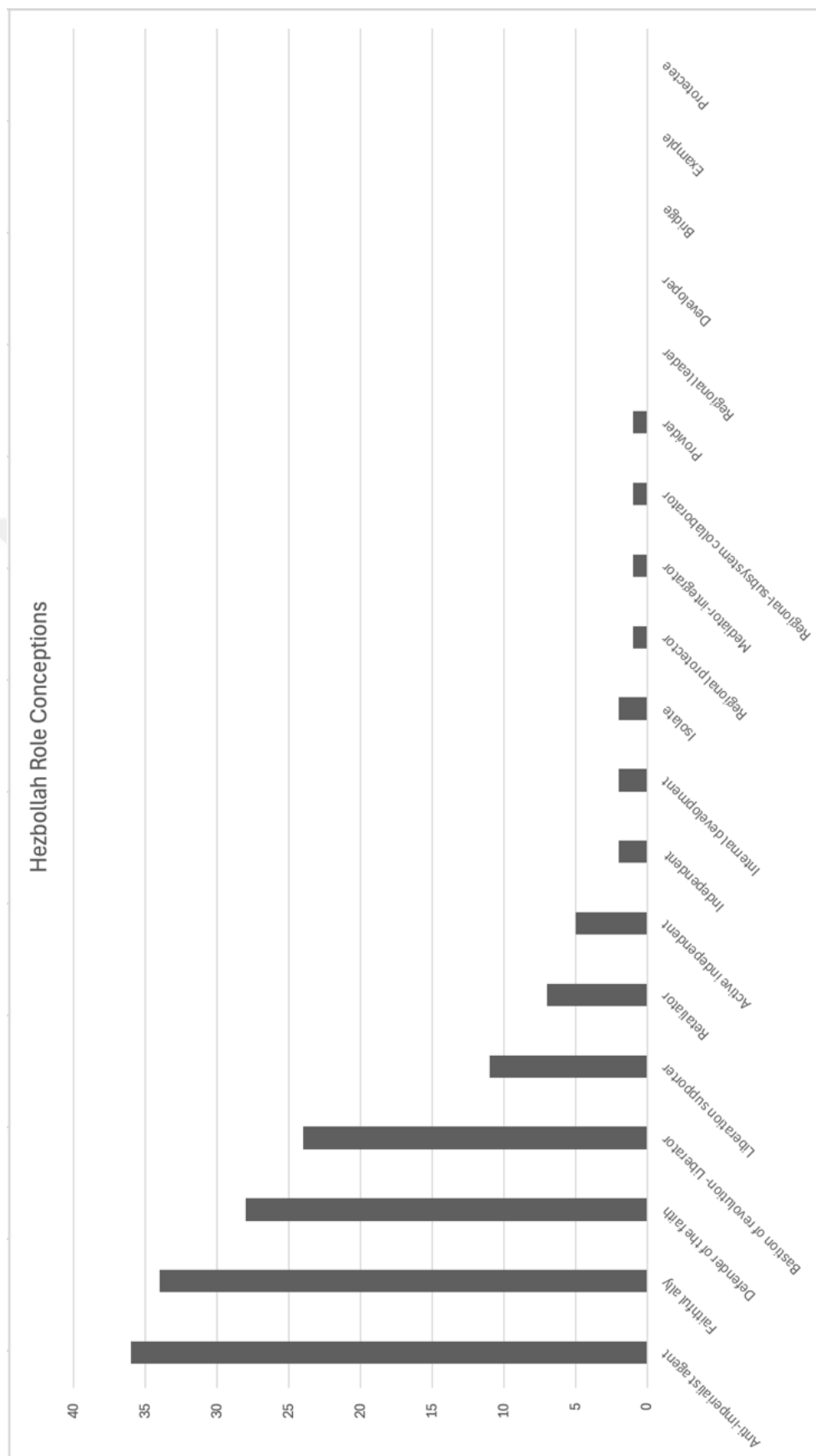


Figure 1. Hezbollah Role Conceptions (Created by the author)

Figure 1 presents the result of content analysis that aims to identify the role conceptions of Hezbollah (see Appendix B). Accordingly, it presents Hezbollah's most salient role conceptions as 'anti-imperialist agent', 'faithful ally', 'defender of the faith', and 'bastion of revolution-liberator'. These role conceptions are crucial elements in understanding Hezbollah's foreign policy. It implies that Hezbollah as a group perceives its roles in external relations foremostly as being fighting against imperialism, which can apply to the understanding of fighting against oppression, which is also an integrated part of Hezbollah's ideology that implies the 'defender of the faith' role. In line with these role conceptions, Hezbollah also locates the 'bastion of revolution-liberator' role in its discourse by underlining seeing the support of the liberation of others, especially Palestinians, as a responsibility for the group.

Furthermore, the 'faithful ally' role presents as the second most salient role conception that relates to actors' alliance foreign policy behavior and helps explain the second hypothesis that I presented. As the hypothesis expected, Hezbollah perceives being a good ally to others in its external relations as an important role in international and regional politics. This explains its commitment to supporting the Assad regime and the Axis of Resistance during the Syrian Civil War. Therefore, as the 'faithful ally' role salient, the armed non-state group performs the role clearly in its foreign policy behavior and portrays this role location clearly in its discourse, which reveals the perceptions towards the group's roles in the outside world.

However, to acknowledge the presence of the other salient roles, it is crucial to understand Hezbollah's role performances and foreign policy behavior to acknowledge the presence of the other salient roles. The presence of the 'bastion of revolution-liberator' and supporting the Assad regime at the same time creates a

sense of conflict in the role conceptions of Hezbollah. Nevertheless, the group does not put the Syrian uprisings in the same basket as other Arab uprisings in the region. On the other hand, the other three salient roles explain that Hezbollah's behavior, since they support the 'faithful ally' role conception with a discourse that serves the 'anti-imperialist agent' and 'defender of the faith' role conceptions.

Therefore, for Hezbollah, the protection of an alliance that is in line with its ideology and main objectives comes before supporting the liberation movements of others, especially the oppression that comes within states, not from external powers.

Furthermore, how the group defends the foreign policy behavior of 'faithful ally' shows the importance of perceptions of the actors and their roles in international politics because Hezbollah frames its commitments to its allies without distorting its role perception being 'bastion of revolution-liberator' and 'liberation supporter' by perceiving Syrian people who rebel against the Assad regime as a product of Western project.

Therefore, this explanation shows the prevalence of the 'anti-imperialist agent' role conception. Even though there are criticisms from the public because the group supports other uprisings of the Arab Spring, it only supports the Syrian government. The group perceives only the Syrian revolts as a Western project and supports its ally, the Assad regime, due to the conception of the prevailing 'faithful ally' role. Therefore, Nasrallah considers Syria as "a partner in the victory of the resistance movements." (see Appendix A) ('Lebanese Hezbollah chief raps USA, hails Syria in lengthy TV interview', 2011) and supports the Assad regime being a good ally, underlining that:

We are not for toppling an opposition and resistance regime which is ready for reforms and which has begun reforms. We do this in the interest of the Syrian people because the alternative, which they, the West, and the other camps want in Syria, is either a regime that submits to the US will and gives Israel what it wants, such as the so-called moderate Arab regimes, providing this will not be in the interest of the Syrian people or the interest of Syria's position and its regional and pan-Arab importance; a civil war in Syria; or partition. (see Appendix A) ('' Lebanese Hezbollah chief raps USA, hails Syria in lengthy TV interview'', 2011)

and perceives ''the security of Lebanon and Syria is one''. He considers ''the Syrian regime is the only regime that cannot be described as subject to the United States' will.'' (see Appendix A) ('' Lebanese Hezbollah chief raps USA, hails Syria in lengthy TV interview'', 2011). These statements signal the commitment of the support of Hezbollah to Syria as a faithful ally. Accordingly, the group perceives and declares their allegiance with a discourse that does not damage its other salient roles.

The significantly salient role of 'anti-imperialist agent' supports the argument of El Hussein (2010) underlining the foremost characteristic of Hezbollah as an anti-imperialist group that aims to stand against Western and Israeli influences.

In their general perception towards the resistance axis, Naim Qassem explains the Damascus meeting between Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah in 2010 as ''The Damascus meeting is not a joint defense treaty, but it is an expression of the meeting of visions and of preparedness to cooperate in facing up to the challenges confronting the region.'' (see Appendix A) ('' Lebanese Hezbollah official defiant over Scud missiles, discusses dialogue'', 2010) Moreover, Nasrallah underlines that ''The

experience of 30 years of Hezbollah's life proves that it is a friend of Syria not an agent of Syria." (see Appendix A) (Assange, 2012).

The last example that presents the role conceptions of Hezbollah and how the group performs these roles, which they locate in their foreign policy behavior, is explicit in a public speech of Nasrallah. It shows its support to its ally and underlines the commitment as part of its resistance that closely ties it to its ideological perspective and explains joining the Syrian civil war by telling "Our presence in Syria is aimed at defending Lebanon, Palestine and Syria which is the backbone of the resistance." (see Appendix A) ("Nasrallah Says Hizbullah in Syria to Defend Lebanon, Rejects March 14 Conditions. Naharnet.", 2013)

Henceforth, the content analysis results (see Appendix B) show that Hezbollah, as an armed non-state group, perceives itself as an ally of the resistance axis and the members as partners. The group locates this role conception in its alliance foreign policy behavior. Hezbollah performs the role conception in its discourse and its involvement in the Syrian Civil War in its successive stages. Even though the 'faithful ally' role conception explains the alliance behavior, the other salient role conceptions provide a framework for the group's perception of its allies and how it can be a 'faithful ally' without abolishing or conflicting with its other perceptions.

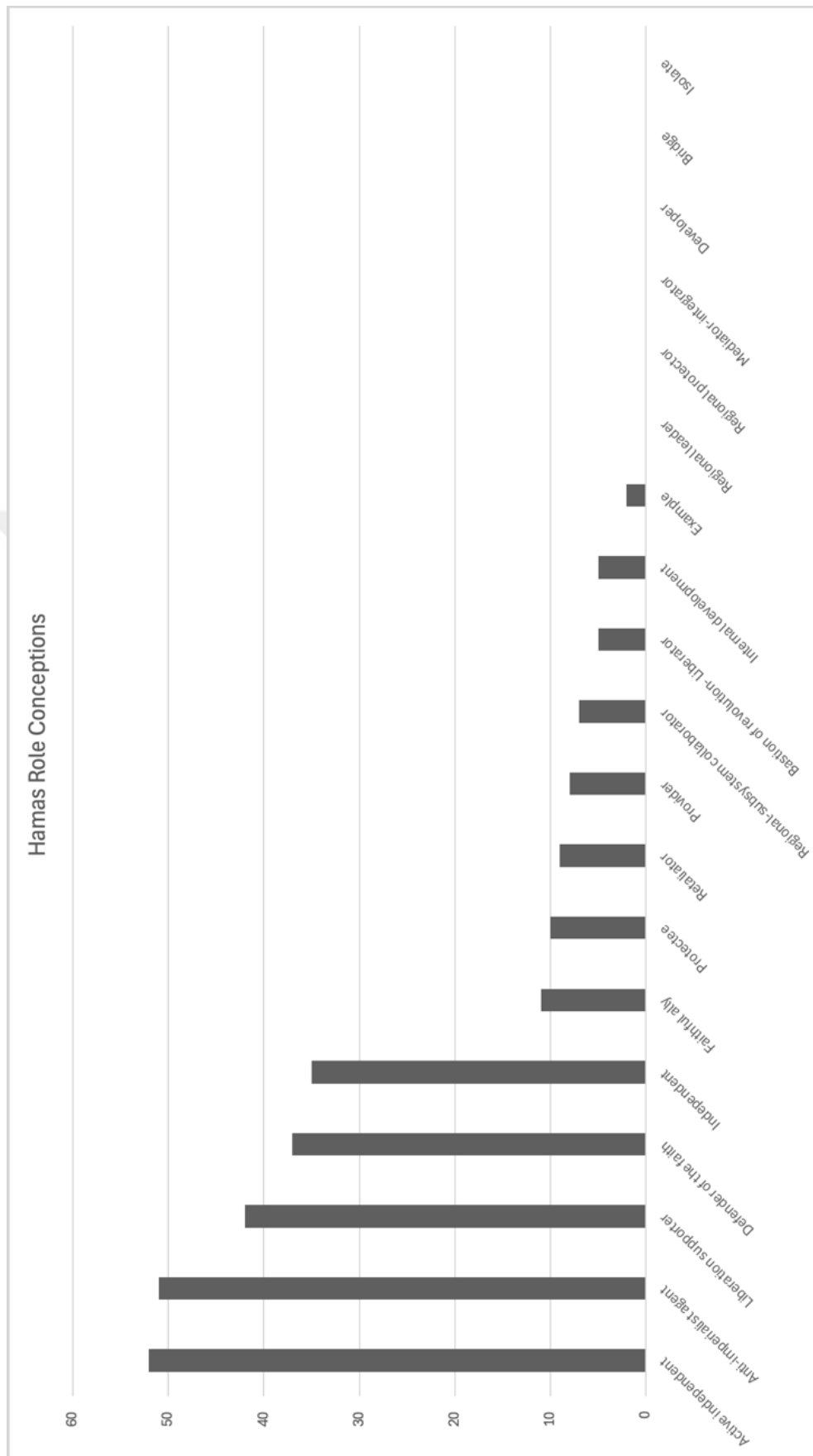


Figure 2. Hamas Role Conceptions (Created by the author)

As Figure 2 indicates, the content analysis results of Hamas's role conceptions, the most salient roles can be listed as 'active independent', 'anti-imperialist agent', 'liberation supporter', and 'defender of the faith' (see Appendix B).

The results reveal that Hamas and Hezbollah share two role conceptions in their foreign policy perspectives, 'anti-imperialist agent' and 'defender of the faith'. It signals that armed non-state actors that have similar ideological perspectives and common enemies, such as Israel in the case of Hamas and Hezbollah, may share the same role conceptions. Nevertheless, having common role conceptions does not mean their foreign policy behavior will be the same and perform similarly due to differences in their other salient role conceptions and how they shape their external relations together.

In that sense, role conceptions that affect the alliance foreign policy behavior become crucial to explain the role performance of armed non-state actors. Accordingly, this describes how even though Hezbollah and Hamas have some common salient role conceptions, their foreign policy behavior differs in the Syrian Civil War when the other alliance members ask for the commitments of both Hezbollah and Hamas to the Syrian Assad regime. Nevertheless, Hezbollah has a 'faithful ally' role conception, it provides allegiance to the alliance, while Hamas broke ties with its allies due to having an 'active independent' role conception.

The most salient role, 'active independent' indicates that Hamas is open to having external relations. Therefore, ANSAs may engage in alliances but prioritize their objectives and ideologies. Thus, even though the benefits of alliances are at stake, they may choose the options that align with their objectives as the hypothesis expects. In the Syrian Civil War case, this resulted in Hamas losing financial

benefits. The group loses the benefits that it receives from Iran, due to falling out with the Axis of Resistance, by emphasizing that Syrian rebels seek liberation from the oppression of the Syrian government. Therefore, ‘liberation supporter’ and ‘anti-imperialist agent’ roles also take place and shape the perceptions of roles for Hamas.

Hence, having ‘liberation supporter’ and ‘active independent’ roles salient makes Hamas shape its discourse and role in external relations, which is more likely to leave the alliances and be hesitant to show commitment. Accordingly, Meshaal talks about the alliance that explicitly shows these role conceptions, saying:

Look, the resistance – or the axis of the resistance – is not a hotel in which people stay and then leave. I am a resistance movement. I was of the resistance; I am of the resistance today, and I will continue to be of the resistance. That is my choice. (see Appendix A) (‘ Al-Jazeera TV interviews Hamas’ Mish’al on reconciliation, stand on Syria.’, 2011)

Therefore, the group does not leave, putting the idea of resistance at the heart of their foreign policy. However, they also do not perceive the relations with the alliance as a conditionality of their resistance. Hence, Hamas emphasizes the ideological common ground in the alliance, but they see their role in the external world as unattached to the alliance. Even though the group does not give allegiance, they do not consider that this fallout would change their resistance identity, and this signals their ‘active independent’ role conception in their foreign policy.

Meshaal also underlines the significance of the resistance in its ideology and how it shapes external relations with an ‘active independent’ role conception by saying, ‘‘Ultimately we are a resistance movement, and we will continue to be a resistance movement, while at the same time, we support democracy, reform, and the rights of

the Arab and Muslim peoples.” (see Appendix A) (‘‘ Al-Jazeera TV interviews Hamas’ Mish’al on reconciliation, stand on Syria.’’, 2011)

Hamas also shows its commitment to the Syrian people over the Assad regime with the words, “We are with the Syrian people and the Arab peoples in their aspirations for freedom.” (see Appendix A) (‘‘Palestinian Hamas’s Mish’al says reviving “resistance” group’s top priority’’, 2013). Hamas also acknowledges losing the benefits of the alliance ‘‘You see, the relationship with Iran is present. But, yes, it was affected and harmed by our di – our disagreement about Syria.’’ (see Appendix A) (Amanpour, 2012) but still pursue the role conception of being ‘active independent’.

Lastly, it is important to mention the domestic influences on Hamas. When Haniyeh gave a speech and said, “I salute the heroic people of Syria who are striving for freedom, democracy and reform.” People respond with words, “No Hezbollah and no Iran, the Syrian revolution is an Arab revolution.” (see Appendix A) (‘‘Hamas Abandons Assad, Backs Syrian Rebels.’’, 2012). That shows the public support for breaking ties with the alliance and influence on role conceptions.

This thesis explains the alliance behavior of armed non-state actors and focuses on the most salient roles. However, future research can elaborate on other interesting observations. For instance, before the coding process, this thesis introduced two new role conceptions, namely ‘provider’ and ‘retaliator’. As Hamas and Hezbollah are armed non-state actors that provide goods and services to their constituents and use violence to answer oppression as they use resistance discourse, it is surprising that they do not have these roles as salient as others when they talk about their foreign policy behavior. Therefore, the findings of this thesis can also signal the source of

the most salient role conceptions for armed non-state actors, such as ideology and security. This approach can be a starting point for further research about the ideational and material sources of the role conceptions of armed non-state actors that can align with the role theory work of Akbaba and Özdamar (2019).

Therefore, the findings explicitly show that armed non-state actors have foreign policies and role conceptions that influence their foreign policy behavior. For the alliance behavior, 'faithful ally' and 'active independent' role conceptions are significant to determine their likelihood to show commitment or leave the alliance when there is an event that the alliance members need to make the decision to act together or alone, such as in the initial stages of the upheavals in Syria.

This thesis revealed the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas and underlined the influence of the located salient role conceptions on role performance and foreign policy behavior. The results show that even both groups have the same role conceptions, namely, 'anti-imperialist agent' and 'defender of the faith', that can prepare a ground for them to join the same alliances with ideological and security concerns, how they pursue a foreign policy when there is an event that requires emphasizing allegiances, the role conceptions about alliance behaviors influence the decisions. Therefore, this thesis observed two important role conceptions that produce different foreign policy behavior, namely 'faithful ally' and 'active independent'. The role conceptions are significant in understanding the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs because deciding whether to show allegiance to the alliance created problems for both groups. In that sense, the actors performed their role conceptions. Hamas took the risk of losing support, especially financially, from its allies. Hezbollah undertook the risk of losing public support from the constituents of the other Arab public who supported the uprisings. Therefore, if the actors made

different foreign policy decisions, role theory would expect them to have different salient role conceptions. For instance, if Hezbollah had a ‘regional leader’ role conception, the group could opt to support the Syrian public to seek regional popularity. Similarly, if Hamas had a ‘faithful ally’ role conception that was more salient, the group could act with the resistance axis and pledge allegiance immediately when Syria and Iran asked.

Consequently, role theory provides a lens to understand the foreign policy behavior of armed non-state actors by determining their role conceptions and how they locate them when they perform these roles in their foreign policy decisions and behavior.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This thesis seeks to approach a novel way to position armed non-state actors (ANSAs) in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) and International Relations (IR).

Therefore, it moved from the question of how armed non-state actors have external relations and perform foreign policy behavior in international politics. Seeking to provide meaningful research, this thesis provides a detailed literature review to show the discussions regarding the non-state actors, their actorness, capabilities,

categories, how they engage external relations, how they interact with states, and most significantly, how they pursue foreign policies in International Relations (IR).

It is crucial to underline that non-state actors are capable of performing foreign policy behavior as they have cohesion in their objectives, organizational structures, and ideologies. This is a significant step for this thesis as it addresses understanding the influences on the foreign policy behavior of armed non-state actors.

Furthermore, this thesis connects multiple elements from different parts of the International Relations (IR) discipline and makes separate contributions for each. Accordingly, there are three main areas that these contributions lie behind.

Firstly, this thesis acknowledges the criticism in the literature that underlines the paradoxical approach in the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) studies and integrates armed non-state actors (ANSAs). Traditionally, FPA scholars argue that it is essential to understand individuals, groups, and other cognitive elements that influence foreign policy-making and not consider states as unitary actors in the system. However, as some FPA scholars point out (Brummer, 2021; Darwich, 2021a), the paradox occurs when the FPA scholars only focus on the state actors and ignore non-state actors capable of producing foreign policy that influences international politics.

Therefore, this thesis examines the capability and actorness of non-state actors in the international arena and shows how non-state actors operate outside of state authority and pursue their objectives with different means. Some non-state actors have cohesive organizational structures and produce foreign policy to influence states and other non-state actors. Therefore, examining these actors with an FPA lens is vital to understanding the unique characteristics that shape their foreign policy decisions because, as the FPA scholarship argues, no states or other actors are like billiard balls and operate unitarily in their decision-making (Hermann, 2001).

Accordingly, this thesis contributes to FPA by integrating armed non-state actors (ANSAs) as one of the non-state actors that perform foreign policy behavior. This thesis portrays how armed non-state actors exist in the international arena outside of state authority, using violent methods and having organizational structures that

pursue cohesive foreign policy objectives. Therefore, ANSAs exist in the international spheres and engage in relations with states and other non-state actors. Furthermore, they do make a good fit in FPA literature because how they pursue these relations and make decisions regarding their external engagements is what FPA scholarship examines.

Like other actors in the international sphere that have objectives and goals, ANSAs use violent methods. However, using violence is not the sole foreign policy behavior they perform. They also engage in diplomatic talks and participate in alliances. All this foreign policy behavior presents a decision-making process. Hence, like state actors, ANSAs have elements that impact their foreign policies. These can be at the individual and group levels.

On top of that, cognitive factors such as misconceptions, beliefs, perceptions, shortcuts, schemas, and personal characteristics that individuals have, as well as group dynamics, play important roles in understanding the foreign policy of ANSAs. Therefore, this thesis portrays that ANSAs fit the FPA literature and FPA methods and tools provide important insights to scholars to examine foreign policy decision-making and behavior of armed non-state actors (ANSAs).

Furthermore, this thesis underlines that a detailed examination of ANSAs can provide scholars and policymakers with another perspective to understand their thought process. By using FPA methods, there are ways to understand the patterns and influences on ANSAs' foreign policy behavior.

Secondly, this thesis contributes to role theory. Role theory is a theoretical approach examining perceptions of actors that influence foreign policy decision-making.

Accordingly, role theory focuses on how one perceives their roles in the outside world. Therefore, identifying the role conceptions of actors reveals their cohesive understanding of their places in world politics and provides a stable sense of self. In this way, the actors with salient and stable role conceptions tend to perform these roles in their foreign policy.

Role theory comes from sociology and social psychology and applies to understanding humans (Holsti, 1970). Therefore, any actor that engages in politics, conducts a foreign policy, and influences international politics can be a subject of role theory. Thus, a role theory lens is a suitable theoretical approach to understanding and explaining the foreign policy of non-state actors. Therefore, this thesis contributes to the role theory literature by integrating armed non-state actors (ANSA).

This thesis portrays that ANSAs also have some perceptions about their role in world politics. Their speeches and written documents reveal them and show that these role conceptions are apparent when discussing their foreign policy goals. Furthermore, ANSAs are likely to perform these roles in their foreign policy behavior. This is a significant contribution since this thesis provides an opportunity to unpack the rationality behind the foreign policy behavior of ANSAs.

Accordingly, by focusing on alliance behavior as a foreign policy behavior, this thesis prepares the ground to understand how the locating role conceptions and the foreign policy behavior performance of ANSAs are related. This is a significant contribution to role theory studies as it becomes one of the pivotal efforts to have a role theoretical approach to understand armed non-state actors' foreign policy behavior.

Like states, armed non-state actors also pursue foreign policy that prioritizes their interests in the international arena. Even though they use violent methods in some cases, they also engage in non-violent relations with other actors in the international political sphere. By examining the texts that indicate foreign policy, which is based on how to conduct external relations, the findings of this thesis reveal that Hezbollah and Hamas have stable and salient role conceptions.

They have consistent perceptions of their role in the external world, and the speeches of prominent individuals and their charters are credible sources that portray these elements. Furthermore, this thesis shows that role conceptions can help understand how an armed non-state group conducts its relations in an alliance and decides whether to show allegiance or not.

Furthermore, this thesis shows the applicability of role theory to ANSAs. It becomes pivotal to further studies that may examine the other foreign policy behavior of ANSAs and how non-salient role conceptions also play a role in this process.

Therefore, by taking into account the cognitive elements of how one perceives their role in the world, this thesis presents a theoretical approach to ANSAs. Hence, by using role theory, this thesis built a bridge between FPA and IR scholarship, focusing on the perspectives of armed non-state actors and how they reflect these perspectives on their behaviors in the international arena.

This thesis's third contribution belongs to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) studies because it focuses on two armed non-state actors from this region. Especially, the Middle East region hosts multiple actors that try to influence regional politics and many armed non-state groups due to state fragility (Kaldor, 1999). Accordingly, these ANSAs can bypass the state authorities easily.

Nevertheless, they do not always seek to dismantle the states, but rather seek their own objectives with their own methods. This thesis portrays that Hezbollah does this while operating within the Lebanese state, and the efforts of Hamas to establish a Palestinian state under Islamic principles. Most importantly, even though they use violence against some state forces, they do not alienate themselves from establishing external relations with all states and engaging in communication. They can be willing to receive help and join the same alliances with states.

Furthermore, this thesis contributes to MENA studies by examining the nature of the state and armed non-state actors' relationship from the ANSAs' perspectives. Thus, by focusing on how Hezbollah and Hamas have role conceptions and perform them in alliance foreign policy behavior, this thesis reveals that these actors do not consider the states with which they are in an alliance as their patrons. On the contrary, they acknowledge the benefits of alliances and support from states, but when the alliance demands things that are not in line with their role conceptions, they can back out, as in the case of Hamas. Furthermore, as Hezbollah did, salient roles become useful in explaining allegiance.

This thesis provides a novel perspective on the decisions of Hezbollah and Hamas in deciding to pursue commitment in the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War, in which Syria and Iran ask for allegiance. Still, the ANSAs face a dilemma from the possible public backlash in the region due to siding with state actors rather than the people's uprising.

Therefore, this thesis suggests that examining the perceptions of the ANSAs and how they perceive their roles in the outside world can help study ANSAs in the Middle East region. Hezbollah and Hamas, as the two prominent actors in the regional

dynamics, are the main subjects of this thesis, and their foreign policy behavior and how they see their roles are interconnected with each other, especially when there is a need to understand their foreign policy behavior.

Accordingly, this thesis suggests that there are multiple ANSAs in the Middle East region, and implementing role theory and understanding role conceptions of ANSAs can promise further implications in the literature.

Lastly, other than these three contributions to the literature, the findings of this thesis are significant. Accordingly, this thesis focused on one foreign policy behavior, namely alliance behavior, and examined the ‘faithful ally’ and ‘active independent’ role conceptions related to alliance behaviors directly and how their saliency influences the actors and their role performance. Therefore, to show the relation between role location and role performance of ANSAs, this thesis examined two armed non-state actors who engage in the same alliance but perform different behaviors. More specifically, the author and one other coder applied content analysis to the speeches, interviews, and manifestos of Hezbollah and Hamas, identified the role conceptions of the two groups, and then examined their behaviors during the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War by considering the context that they were both part of a resistance axis with Syria and Iran.

The analysis of the findings revealed two pivotal findings. Firstly, the collected data and the coding process showed that ANSAs have a cohesive perception regarding their roles in the external world and portray these role conceptions in the speeches of the group's prominent members and their written and spoken charter documents. This thesis created new data that identified Hezbollah and Hamas’s role conceptions during the 2006-2013 period through a content analysis that considers latent

meanings, contexts, and quantitative elements such as frequency. Even though this thesis only focused on alliance behavior, the content analysis findings indicate that role conceptions of both groups can be helpful in examining other behaviors of the groups, which can be considered an opportunity for future research.

Secondly, not all role conceptions are salient at the same level, and their saliency helps to understand the foreign policy behaviors of ANSAs. Accordingly, actors are likely to perform the roles they locate as more salient in their role conceptions in their behaviors. As explained in the findings part of the fourth chapter, when the ‘faithful ally’ role conceptions are one of the most salient roles, actors tend to stay loyal in their alliances. On the other hand, if the ‘active independent’ role is more salient, the actors still engage in alliance relations; nevertheless, they tend to fall out or break their allegiances more easily than those who have the ‘faithful ally’ role more salient.

However, this analysis also underlines the necessity of considering the other role conceptions. Even though the fourth chapter of this thesis met the expectations of its hypotheses, the content analysis revealed other salient role conceptions for both actors. These are significant because when the role performances of Hezbollah and Hamas are examined, it revealed that the other salient role conceptions became helpful for the actors to support their behaviors and frame a cohesive response with their other role conceptions, such as Hezbollah emphasizing ‘anti-imperialist’ role to justify its allegiance to the alliance with ‘faithful ally’ role and Hamas underlining ‘liberation supporter’ role to breaking out from the alliance in the sake of its support to uprisings.

5.2 Policy Relevance and Future Pathways

This section elaborates on how this thesis can reflect on real-life day-to-day international politics, and the findings can be helpful for policymakers who seek ways to deal with armed non-state actors. To begin with, this thesis reveals that examining role conceptions of ANSAs can provide important insight into the other actors that seek to establish relations with ANSAs. These relations can take place through engaging in conflict or planning policies towards ANSAs that states consider as terrorists. On the other hand, the relations can be non-violent if some actors consider some ANSAs to be possible actors for cooperation. In both scenarios, role theory gives an idea about what to expect from ANSAs. Therefore, policymakers can decide how to approach ANSAs by looking at their role conceptions.

This thesis focuses on the alliance behavior of ANSAs. It examines how the salient role conceptions about the nature of the roles that can signal alliance behavior, namely ‘faithful ally’ and ‘active independent’, are helpful to explain the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas actors during the initial stages of the Syrian Civil War. Furthermore, these findings can help policymakers understand whether or not ANSAs are cooperative in the sense of being in an alliance. The findings of this thesis reveal this for Hezbollah and Hamas. However, further research on different ANSAs can provide further insight.

The salient role conceptions can also signal the areas of cooperation that ANSAs are willing to engage. For instance, Hamas has an ‘active independent’ role conception that is more salient and open to engaging in multiple external relations. However, Hamas is also more likely to abandon alliances. Therefore, policymakers may engage in relations in an economic sense so that the group does not feel threatened with their

other salient role conceptions, such as being a ‘liberation supporter’. For Hezbollah, engaging in communication and getting allegiance may be more challenging for states. Nevertheless, once the group becomes a part of an alliance, the group shows commitment steadily. Therefore, policymakers can acknowledge that the group is likely to pursue its commitments and is less likely to back out of its commitments.

Furthermore, states can benefit from role conceptions to understand and play a role in the regional dynamics. Especially, if a state recognizes an ANSA as a terrorist group, the state can learn about the group by role theory and plan policies accordingly. In that sense, states can gain insight into how the ANSA perceives its role in international politics and its role in alliances. Therefore, the state may understand if the ANSA has good relations with states, as in the case of Hezbollah and Hamas with Iran, the state has an understanding of whether the relations are strong with the sponsor states and ANSAs.

The findings of this thesis can also shed light on real-life events other than examining the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas during the initial stages of the Syrian uprisings and portray policy relevance. In that sense, the October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas on Israel is a significant event in the region and played a crucial role in the international political agenda. Accordingly, role theory is a useful theoretical approach to understanding the actors who engage and react to this event. The findings of this thesis can be instrumental in examining the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas.

The deteriorated relations between Hamas and the axis members started improving in 2016 when Hamas engaged in a Strategic Dialogue with Iran and Egypt (Hamoud, 2024) and got better with the axis by 2020 (Mizobuchi, 2025). Accordingly, Hamas

got close to the resistance axis again. Thus, Iran, Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas, Houthis, and pro-Iran Iraqi ANSAs became the prominent members of the axis before the 2023 attack (Wyss, 2024).

The surprise attack of Hamas on Israel shows the independent decision-making in Hamas, and while the group has closer ties with the alliance, it still operates independently. In that sense, both Iran and Hezbollah underline to the media that the 7th October attacks were solely Palestinian and they did not have any prior control or knowledge (Smyth, 2023). Therefore, this foreign policy behavior indicates that Hamas locates 'active independent' role conceptions and performs behavior accordingly.

Furthermore, the other actors of the axis show support for Hamas in their rhetoric later. For Hezbollah, the group still perceives Hamas as an ally in the same axis and shows further support by attacking Israel (Wyss, 2024). Therefore, Hezbollah's foreign policy behavior is also in line with the findings of this thesis and portrays the 'faithful ally' role conception. It also underlines the other salient role conceptions of Hezbollah. Having 'anti-imperialist agent' and 'bastion of revolution-liberator' role conceptions, the policymakers can make sense of Hezbollah's support to Hamas and could predict. A further role-theoretic approach to understand foreign policy behavior of other actors in the axis, such as Iran and Syria, can also be beneficial to understand states' perceptions and alliance behavior when they engage in relations with ANSAs, and further research can elaborate on this topic.

In today's regional politics, Hezbollah and Hamas have weakened due to attacks by Israel that targeted the important leading members in the groups. Therefore, the changes in leadership and power dynamics provide a sphere for both actors to

evaluate new foreign policy pathways. Thus, there can be changes in the role conceptions of Hezbollah and Hamas. Nevertheless, the salient role conceptions are less likely to change since they are the product of ideological sources, which are also the operational mindset of the ANSAs. Hence, for the future decades, policymakers and scholars can expect Hamas to perform foreign policy behavior that still engages external relations but operates independently and more easily breaks the relations. Furthermore, Hezbollah is more open to having allies and showing commitment to the alliances that they are a part of.

5.3 Further Research, Implications, and Limitations

As a pivotal step in the Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) research, this thesis aimed to reveal the possible application of role theory to understand the behaviors of armed non-state actors ANSAs. As mentioned, this thesis focused on Hezbollah and Hamas and identified their role conceptions. Therefore, further research can benefit from this to explain other behaviors of these two actors in their external relations or expand the period to seek other implications of the role conceptions in alliance behavior. Furthermore, this study hopes to influence other scholars to identify the role conceptions of other ANSAs in the world and test other hypotheses regarding other foreign policy behaviors in the context of how these actors locate and perform them. Lastly, future research can focus on other role theory concepts, such as role conflict, and apply them to understand ANSAs as another novel attempt.

Furthermore, this thesis aimed to fill the gap in the International Relations (IR) discipline that tends to think about armed non-state actors within conflict studies or focuses on categorization. By including the perception of ANSAs through FPA

mechanisms, IR theory can seek a middle-range theory that may reach further implications.

Scholars, researchers, and policymakers can benefit from the implications of this study as they can explain, understand, and predict armed non-state actors. Especially, the state actors that engage in relations with ANSAs, whether violent or peaceful, can have insights into how these actors perceive themselves in the world and own their roles so that they can create or design policies accordingly. For instance, when state policymakers discuss a possible concession to an armed non-state group, they can analyze the role perceptions of the group. They can have an idea regarding their perceptions towards cooperation, similar to alliance behavior, and achieve a level of predictability.

The author acknowledges the limitations of the thesis, which result from limited sources. In that sense, since the coders do not know Arabic, the data was collected in English, which is present as translated in the sources. Furthermore, only two coders participated in the content analysis process. The data collected would also increase if more language-skill coders were available. Also, there could be more individuals from the group who could be taken into consideration. Nevertheless, even though this is a limitation, the content analysis of this thesis still provided significant results as the data collected from the speeches of the prominent individuals from the group that share the cohesive and agreed role perceptions with the media.

In final conclusion, this thesis portrayed the application of role theory to understand and explain the influence of role conceptions on the armed non-state actors (ANSAs) by examining the alliance behavior through the example of the foreign policy behavior of Hezbollah and Hamas as the actors that engage in the same alliance

during the initial stages in the Syrian Civil War. Identifying the role conceptions of these two actors with content analysis, this study revealed that Hezbollah and Hamas, as armed non-state actors (ANSAs), have role conceptions that they locate and perform in their foreign policy behavior, which is explicit in their decision to be loyal to or leave the alliance.



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APPENDICES

A: DATA RELATIVE TO CHAPTER 4

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APPENDICES

B: CODING SHEETS

Coder 1, Hezbollah

Name	Bastion of revolution-Liberator	Regional leader	Regional protector	Active independent	Liberation supporter	Anti-imperialist agent	Defender of the faith	Mediator- integrator	Regional- subsystem collaborator	Developer	Bridge	Faithful ally	Independent	Example	Internal development	Isolate	Protector	Retailer	Provider	Word Count	Source	Date (DD/MM/YY)	Text Type
Hezbollah 1985	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2460 (Book) Hi	16/02/1985	Manifesto
Hezbollah 2009	9	0	0	0	1	5	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6911 (Book) Hi	30/11/2009	Manifesto	
Hezbollah 2006	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	1521 Journal of	17/07/2006	Speech	
Hezbollah 2006	4	0	1	2	0	5	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	12018 LexisNexis	21/07/2006	Interview	
Hezbollah 2007	1	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8471 LexisNexis	10/05/2007	Interview	
Hezbollah 2007	1	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6035 LexisNexis	24/07/2007	Interview	
Hezbollah 2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	111 LexisNexis	19/01/2008	Speech	
Hezbollah 2009	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2746 LexisNexis	18/04/2009	Interview	
Hezbollah 2009	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5738 LexisNexis	07/08/2009	Interview	
Hezbollah 2010	1	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2014 LexisNexis	01/04/2010	Interview	
Hezbollah 2010	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3231 LexisNexis	10/04/2010	Interview	
Hezbollah 2011	0	0	0	1	3	6	2	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	8534 LexisNexis	26/10/2011	Interview	
Hezbollah 2012	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2998 Journey	29/09/2012	Interview	
Hezbollah 2013	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	449 LexisNexis	14/11/2013	Speech	

Coder 1, Hamas

Name	Bastion of revolution or Liberator	Regional leader	Regional protector	Active independent	Liberation supporter	Anti-imperialist agent	Defender of the faith	Mediator-integrator	Regional-subsystem collaborator	Developer	Bridge	Faithful ally	Independent	Example	Internal development	Isolate	Protector	Retailer	Provider	Word Count	Source	Date (DD/MM/YY)	Text Type
01. Hamas 1988	2	0	0	0	1	8	9	9	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	9191 Yale Law Sc	18/08/1988	Manifesto	
02. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	2	1321 LexisNexis	06/02/2006	Interview	
03. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	2	0	1	0	1	1057 LexisNexis	22/02/2006	Interview	
04. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	4	0	4	2	0	1	0	0	1	5	0	1	0	1	0	0	2982 LexisNexis	08/03/2006	Interview	
05. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	1	1033 Spiegel	12/06/2006	Interview	
06. Hamas 2007	0	0	0	5	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	3628 LexisNexis	11/09/2007	Interview	
07. Hamas 2008	2	0	0	4	4	3	6	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	3	0	1	6820 LexisNexis	23/01/2008	Interview	
08. Hamas 2008	1	0	0	3	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1726 LexisNexis	28/01/2008	Interview	
09. Hamas 2008	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1701 LexisNexis	26/11/2008	Interview	
10. Hamas 2009	0	0	0	3	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1811 LexisNexis	09/02/2009	Interview	
11. Hamas 2009	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1023 LexisNexis	09/03/2009	Interview	
12. Hamas 2009	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	2012 LexisNexis	19/08/2009	Interview	
13. Hamas 2010	0	0	0	8	7	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	7816 LexisNexis	27/07/2010	Interview	
14. Hamas 2011	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1963 LexisNexis	10/05/2011	Interview	
15. Hamas 2011	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1504 LexisNexis	14/11/2011	Interview	
16. Hamas 2011	0	0	0	5	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3744 LexisNexis	30/12/2011	Interview	
17. Hamas 2012	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25 LexisNexis	24/02/2012	Speech	
18. Hamas 2012	0	0	0	4	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	711 LexisNexis	18/03/2012	Interview	
19. Hamas 2012	0	0	0	3	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1964 LexisNexis	21/11/2012	Interview	
20. Hamas 2013	0	0	0	3	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	2057 LexisNexis	13/05/2013	Interview	

Coder 2, Hezbollah

Name	Bastion of revolution	Regional leader	Regional protector	Active independent	Liberation supporter	Anti-imperialist agent	Defender of the faith	Mediator-integrator	Regional-subsystem collaborator	Developer	Bridge	Faithful ally	Independent	Example	Internal development	Isolate	Protects	Retailer	Provider	Word Count	Source	Date (DD/MM/YY)	Text Type
01. Hezbollah 1985	1	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2460 (Book)Hi	16/02/1985	Manifesto	
02. Hezbollah 2009	9	0	0	0	1	5	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6911 (Book)Hi	30/11/2009	Manifesto	
03. Hezbollah 2006	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	0	1521 Journal of	17/07/2006	Speech	
04. Hezbollah 2006	4	0	0	2	0	4	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	12018 LexisNexis	21/07/2006	Interview	
05. Hezbollah 2007	2	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8471 LexisNexis	10/05/2007	Interview	
06. Hezbollah 2007	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6035 LexisNexis	24/07/2007	Interview	
07. Hezbollah 2008	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	111 LexisNexis	19/01/2008	Speech	
08. Hezbollah 2009	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2746 LexisNexis	18/04/2009	Interview	
09. Hezbollah 2009	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5738 LexisNexis	07/08/2009	Interview	
10. Hezbollah 2010	1	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2014 LexisNexis	01/04/2010	Interview	
11. Hezbollah 2010	1	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3231 LexisNexis	10/04/2010	Interview	
12. Hezbollah 2011	0	0	0	1	3	6	2	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8534 LexisNexis	26/10/2011	Interview	
13. Hezbollah 2012	0	0	0	2	0	3	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2998 Journey	29/09/2012	Interview	
14. Hezbollah 2013	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	449 LexisNexis	14/11/2013	Speech	

Coder 2, Hamas

Name	Bastion of revolution- Liberator	Regional leader	Regional protector	Active independent	Liberation supporter	Anti- imperialist agent	Defender of the faith	Mediator- integrator	Regional- subsystem collaborator	Developer	Bridge	Faithful ally	Independent	Example	Internal developme nt	Isolate	Protector	Retailor	Provider	Word Count	Source	Date (DD/MM/YY)	Text Type
01. Hamas 1988	1	0	0	1	8	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	9191	Yale Law	18/08/1988	Manifesto
02. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	2	2	2	1321	LexisNexis	06/02/2006	Interview
03. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	1	1057	LexisNexis	22/02/2006	Interview
04. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	0	4	0	4	2	0	1	0	0	1	5	0	0	1	0	0	2982	LexisNexis	08/03/2006	Interview
05. Hamas 2006	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	1033	Spiegel	12/06/2006	Interview
06. Hamas 2007	0	0	0	5	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	3628	LexisNexis	11/09/2007	Interview
07. Hamas 2008	2	0	0	5	4	3	6	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	0	6820	LexisNexis	23/01/2008	Interview
08. Hamas 2008	0	0	0	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1726	LexisNexis	28/01/2008	Interview
09. Hamas 2008	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1701	LexisNexis	26/11/2008	Interview
10. Hamas 2009	0	0	0	3	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1811	LexisNexis	09/02/2009	Interview
11. Hamas 2009	0	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1023	LexisNexis	09/03/2009	Interview
12. Hamas 2009	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	2012	LexisNexis	19/08/2009	Interview
13. Hamas 2010	0	0	0	8	6	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	7816	LexisNexis	27/07/2010	Interview
14. Hamas 2011	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1963	LexisNexis	10/05/2011	Interview
15. Hamas 2011	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1504	LexisNexis	14/11/2011	Interview
16. Hamas 2011	0	0	0	5	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3744	LexisNexis	30/12/2011	Interview
17. Hamas 2012	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	LexisNexis	24/02/2012	Speech
18. Hamas 2012	0	0	0	4	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	711	LexisNexis	18/03/2012	Interview
19. Hamas 2012	0	0	0	5	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1964	LexisNexis	21/11/2012	Interview
20. Hamas 2013	0	0	0	3	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2057	LexisNexis	13/03/2013	Interview