

Iranian Involvement in Lebanon

Eyal Zisser

Israel's military engagement with Hizbollah in the summer of 2006 has been called by many different names and monikers, including, of course, the Second Lebanon War, which was adopted by Israel as the official name of the war. Some commentators on Arab television stations called it the sixth Arab-Israeli round. In truth, however, most of the Arab world, at least its leaders and important segments of its ruling elites, supported Israel, and more precisely, stood aside with the expectation, which ultimately was not met, that Israel would defeat Hizbollah. Hence this was not another round in the battles between Israel and the Arabs, a direct continuation of the bloody conflict of over one hundred years between the Zionist movement and the Arab national movement, and between Israel and the Arab states and the Palestinians. Rather, it seems more accurate to call this war – as in fact, several commentators proposed during the course of the fighting – the First Israel-Iran War.¹ Latent in this term was the sense that Iran had succeeded in establishing its presence on the Mediterranean coast, and that for the first time this presence sparked an all-out war in which an organization, inspired by Iran and armed with Iranian weapons, fought against Israel.

The Iranian presence in Lebanon, Iran's major influence and perhaps even control over Hizbollah, and its ability to motivate the organization to act in its name and under its auspices are a known reality, including in Israel. Nevertheless, the question that remains is whether the Iranian presence in Lebanon and Iran's control over Hizbollah will turn all of

Professor Eyal Zisser is the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and holds the Yona and Dina Ettinger Chair of Contemporary Middle Eastern History at Tel Aviv University, and is a senior research fellow at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies.

Lebanon into an Iranian vassal or satellite, giving Tehran complete freedom of action in Lebanon and against all the forces operating there.

Surprisingly, it was actually Bashar al-Asad who addressed this question from a singular angle. In an interview in late 2010 with the Arab newspaper *al-Hayat*, the Syrian president was asked to compare Tehran's influence in Iraq with its influence in Lebanon. After all, Syria preceded Iran as kingmaker in the Lebanese arena, and to a large extent Tehran exploited the weakness of Damascus and its having been pushed out of Lebanon to take its place. Although Bashar did not provide an entirely expected answer, the response is understandable to anyone deeply familiar with the Syrian-Iranian relationship, as well as Syrian ambitions in Lebanon. In his response, Bashar was unable to avoid taking a stab at Tehran as he attempted to draw Syria's red lines vis-à-vis Iran:

It is not possible to compare what is happening in Iraq with what is taking place in Lebanon. It is therefore impossible to compare the role played by Iran in Iraq with the role it is seeking to play in Lebanon. Furthermore, Syria's geographic tie to Lebanon is completely different from the tie between Iran and Iraq. Therefore, it can be said that Iran does not get into fine details in the Lebanese context, but takes a detached panoramic view and deals only with major issues. What is important to Iran is to maintain the resistance [Hizbollah]. Syria, on the other hand, familiar with the fine details of the Lebanese arena, knows these minute details much better than Iran and deals with them, since after all, it has decades of experience with the Lebanese issue.²

It is quite possible that Bashar, and with him Syria, missed the train that has already left the station, and that Damascus will find it difficult if at all possible to regain its longstanding influence in Lebanon and undermine Tehran's presence. But it is also possible that the battle for Lebanon is not yet over, and that what appears to be Iranian domination in Lebanon is neither the complete nor the completed picture. This may be seen, for example, in the historic – if somewhat comical – visit of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Lebanon in October 2010. Hizbollah gave the Iranian president a welcome fit for a king. Posters with “*khosh amadid*” (welcome, in Persian) lined the roads to the Shiite areas of Beirut and the Bekaa Valley and to the south. However, the visit also exposed the dispute within Lebanon regarding Iran's influence in the country. Many Lebanese in the Sunni and the Christian camps did not hesitate

to declare that Ahmadinejad was not their guest and was not welcome, and therefore Ahmadinejad's visit was limited to Shiite areas. This phenomenon was mirrored one month later, in November 2010, with the visit to Lebanon, this time mainly to Sunni areas, by the prime minister of Turkey – an Iranian ally, who is actually competing for influence in the region. Here too posters adorned the streets, but this time they were in Turkish: “*hogeldin*” (welcome, in Turkish).³

Events in Lebanon took a dramatic turn in early 2011 with the collapse of the Saad al-Hariri government, following the resignation of Hizbollah representatives and their allies in the government. The background to the dismantling of the government was Hizbollah's demand that the Lebanese government disavow the international tribunal investigating the assassination of former prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri. Lebanese Druze leader Walid Jumblatt subsequently announced his defection to the opposition from Hariri's March 14 camp. Following this move Najib al-Miqati was delegated the task of forming a new government, which under the circumstances will function under the auspices and control of Hizbollah. Miqati is known for his close ties with Syria, and Walid Jumblatt's moves came in the wake of orders he received from Damascus. For this reason, Lebanon's future does not necessarily entail a takeover by Hizbollah and Iran, and perhaps heightened tension between Iran and Syria over control of Lebanon is the more likely scenario. Not only has the struggle for Lebanon not ended, but in a sense it is just beginning with new-old players.

The Roots of Iranian Involvement in Lebanon

The Islamic Republic of Iran should be seen as the successor of the Iranian state entity that existed throughout history in the space occupied today by Iran, and accordingly, this is an entity that has more than two thousand years of history behind it. From the dawn of history the state entity that stretched over the Iranian highlands – today's Iran – eyed the expanses to its west as a possible region of influence and a security zone. The Persian Gulf area was a potential Iranian zone of influence; Iraq was a frontier and border region and from many points of view the gateway to the heart of Iran; and the Mediterranean coast was a likely security zone against future provocation.⁴

Nevertheless, it was only in the mid 1950s that Iran once again set its sights on the Mediterranean coastal area. This was a direct result of

the stabilization of the shah's rule in Iran and the establishment of the Iranian nation state, two developments that helped consolidate a new Iranian interest on the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean, and in this context, an interest in influence in Lebanon as well. In addition to a longstanding geopolitical interest, the Iranians were troubled by the threat of Arab nationalism and sought to turn Lebanon – and not only Lebanon – into a frontline base in the struggle against the Nasserist advance, which Iran perceived as a real threat. As was explained in the late 1950s by a senior official of the SAVAK (the National Intelligence and Security Organization under the shah), Iran must stop Nasser's threat on the Mediterranean coastal states; otherwise Iran will have to shed its own blood on Iranian soil in order to repulse it.⁵ In Lebanon, it was actually powerful Christian elements that shared the Iranian view and not the Shiite community, which was basically backward and lacking in sophistication, and more importantly, not well organized and even too religious for the shah. Nevertheless, as part of the efforts to strengthen their standing in Lebanon, the Iranians invested significant resources in Shiite religious institutions.⁶

Since the late 1950s, Shiite history in Lebanon has been shaped by the religious sage Musa al-Sadr, who was born in Iran to a Lebanese father and returned to Lebanon in 1959. Presumably the shah's regime sought to make use of Sadr for its purposes, and even assisted him from time to time. Thus, for example, Sadr had an Iranian diplomatic passport and maintained a close connection with the Iranian embassy in Beirut, although this did not make Sadr into a lackey working in the service of the shah. In the early 1970s, Musa al-Sadr reached the height of success and established a leading status for himself among members of the Shiite community, and it appeared that he would be able to lead the community to play a more significant role in Lebanon. Yet once the civil war broke out in Lebanon on April 13, 1975, most if not all of his achievements during the preceding years were obliterated. In 1978, Musa al-Sadr visited Libya at the invitation of Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi and disappeared without a trace. Libyan authorities apparently brought about Sadr's liquidation because of his refusal to cooperate with Qaddafi's attempts to establish a foothold in Lebanon during those years.⁷

Iran and Hizbollah

The collapse of the shah's regime took place against the backdrop of Lebanon's civil war and its deterioration into bloody hostilities. Iran's own turmoil prevented it from playing a significant role in events in Lebanon precisely when there was a window of opportunity to do so. However, following the fall of the shah, an opportunity for Iran in Lebanon presented itself again in the form of Hizbollah. More than any other element, Iran contributed to the organization's founding and consolidation in Lebanon. It was Iran that acted to establish Hizbollah among Lebanese Shiite forces that it assembled under its auspices. It was Iran that acted as middleman and unified these forces, and it also provided them with a common shelter and aid at the start of their journey. It is no wonder that Hizbollah made *wilayat al-faqih* (rule of the cleric) a main ideological principle. This principle, which was cultivated by Ayatollah Khomeini, states that the community of Islam is obligated to subjugate itself to the authority of the most senior cleric in its midst and to obey his will.⁸ On this subject, Hizbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah stated:

From the first moment, we saw ourselves as committed to the principle of the rule of the cleric (*wilayat al-faqih*), and we saw Imam Khomeini, may God have mercy on him, as the leader and the ruler *wali al-imam*; after Khomeini's death, we see Imam Khamenei as such a leader. For twenty-three years we have been committed to this principle of *wilayat al-faqih*, and we also implement it.⁹

Hizbollah burst onto the Lebanese stage with great fanfare in late 1983. A string of painful attacks by Hizbollah against Israeli and Western targets in Lebanon left hundreds of dead and wounded, and eventually brought American and French involvement in Lebanon, and then Israeli involvement, to an end. Hizbollah slowly assumed leadership of the military struggle against Israel in the security zone along the Israeli-Lebanese border, until it became the IDF's main adversary on this front, eclipsing the Palestinian organizations that previously were Israel's bitter adversaries there.¹⁰

Hizbollah's arrival on the scene in Lebanon as a radical militant organization waging a violent struggle against the West – and Israel in particular – and against the organization's domestic enemies reflected the formative influence of two significant regional events on the organization.

The first event was the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, which for the Shiite community in Lebanon was a source of inspiration and a model for emulation. The second was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, which made Israel an easy target and a ready object of radical Lebanese Shiite fervor, and in particular, Hizbollah. These two events, however, were overshadowed by the Lebanese civil war between 1975 and 1989, when the Shiite community burst onto the Lebanese scene with new weight and became a major player in Lebanon.

After the Islamic revolutionaries established themselves in power in Iran, they began to exhibit increasing interest and involvement among the greater Shiite community, with the goal of harnessing more support for Iranian interests. It was the Islamic regime in Iran that led to the establishment of Hizbollah as a new organizational framework that was to serve, at least in Tehran's view, as a tool for promoting Iranian interests in Lebanon. It was also Iran that was behind the decision by prominent Shiite leaders to abandon the ranks of Amal, which until then was the main framework for the Shiite community in Lebanon, and to join the ranks of Hizbollah, and it encouraged or even compelled other Shiite forces, and sometimes competitors or adversaries, to unite under this new organizational umbrella. Iran subsequently became Hizbollah's main source of economic, military, and political support. Iranian aid to the organization included the dispatch of Iranian volunteers, some 2,500 members of the Revolutionary Guards, who arrived in Lebanon in 1982. Nearly 1,500 of them remained in Lebanon in the following years and helped establish Hizbollah's military power. Since then, the Revolutionary Guards have been the principal channel connecting the Islamic revolutionary regime with Hizbollah.¹¹

In the late 1980s, Hizbollah became the leading force in the Shiite community, and it appeared that it was within its power to take over Lebanon, or at least to impose its authority over Shiite areas and establish an Iranian-style Islamic order. In October 1989, the Taif agreement, which concluded the Lebanese civil war, was signed in Saudi Arabia. The civil war had provided a fertile background for Hizbollah activity, but upon its resolution Hizbollah proved itself a pragmatic organization that ostensibly aspires to productive activity and is prepared to abandon its commitment to ideological concepts, or at the very least to postpone their realization to the distant future. When Hizbollah evolved from a militia to

a political movement, the scope of its activity among the Shiite population throughout the country increased substantially. Already in the mid 1980s, with generous Iranian aid estimated at tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars a year, the organization launched a welfare and social services system, which was intended to gain the support of members of the Shiite community and at the same time provide an alternative framework to the services offered – or that were supposed to be offered – by the Lebanese state. This system was significantly expanded as the organization consolidated its hold on the Shiite community over the years.¹²

Today the Hizbollah educational system includes hundreds of educational institutions in the Shiite areas of Lebanon with hundreds of thousands of students. The organization has also established an Islamic health care system that treats nearly half a million patients every year. It runs an organization that builds and rehabilitates houses, mosques, schools, and hospitals, paves roads, and even supplies water to Shiite villages. In addition, Hizbollah runs financial institutions that provide financial aid and loans to the needy. The organization has a fund for the fallen and has provided assistance to thousands of families of Shiite dead, wounded, and imprisoned. It established a judicial and arbitration system in the Shiite areas of Lebanon, and it is represented in workers unions in Lebanon. Hizbollah likewise has an extensive public relations operation: four radio stations and a television station, al-Manar. Under Iranian sponsorship, Hizbollah has also become an economic empire that includes industrial factories, small and medium sized businesses, and real estate. According to various estimates, Hizbollah has nearly 100,000 activists and members, including those employed in its institutions.¹³

Thus since the mid 1980s Hizbollah has built itself up as a viable, powerful organization. On the one hand, it is an organization in possession of a powerful militia focusing on the struggle with Israel, but at the same time, it is an organization that is a political and social movement whose goal is to promote Shiite interests in Lebanon.

The al-Quds Force

Iran-Hizbollah communication, including Iran's aid to the organization, is conducted through the al-Quds Force, an elite unit that is part of the Revolutionary Guards and whose purpose is "exporting the Islamic revolution" beyond Iran. This is a secret branch with a wide range of

clandestine activities beyond Iran's borders, including establishment of an educational system and indoctrination, aid to organizations such as Hizbollah and Hamas, terror and espionage, and much more.

Testimony from Hizbollah members and material captured by Israel during the Second Lebanon War reveal that members of the al-Quds Force have established and operated a training network for Hizbollah members to prepare them to use the advanced weapons supplied to Hizbollah by Iran. Some of this training has been carried out in Iran itself.¹⁴ In a speech on October 20, 2006, not long after the Second Lebanon War and on the occasion of Jerusalem Day, the al-Quds Force commander Qasim Suleimani declared:

In the wake of Hizbollah's victory in Lebanon, a new Middle East is being formed, not an American [Middle East], but an Islamic one . . . The Shiite Hizbollah has succeeded in exporting and marketing to Palestine its model of a way of life of faith in God. The organization is also helping change the Palestinians' stones into missiles.¹⁵

At the same time, involvement by the al-Quds Force has not been limited to training. In practice, members of the al-Quds Force, headed by their commander, have become Hizbollah's supervising commanders, and they are involved in the organization's operational activity as advisors, supervisors, and even as the "go to" people, that is, as adjudicators with respect to decisions about the organization's operational activity against Israel and against its adversaries in Lebanon.¹⁶

Iran and Hizbollah: The Iranian Interests

Iran's interest in Lebanon stems from strategic considerations and possibly identification with and commitment to members of the Shiite community, as well as from the desire to strengthen the image of the Islamic revolutionary regime in Tehran as a promoter of Islam. Yet the sole destination where Iran has been able to export the idea of an Islamic revolution and play an active role, adopting a local client that expressed interest in the merchandise Iran had to offer, is Lebanon. Thus, not only was the idea of an Islamic revolution in Lebanon not contrary or threatening to Iranian interests; it actually advanced these interests, especially regarding the regime's image.

And indeed, the Levant's coasts were far from Iran, and it appeared that the Iranians felt and still feel even today that they can afford to

promote a foreign policy that provides an outlet for Islamic sentiments and thereby mitigate domestic pressures from conservative circles calling for the adoption of a more Islamic policy, without paying an immediate price for it. This is a reason for Iran's involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and this increasing involvement has turned Iran in Israel's eyes into an enemy, and vice versa.

Iran's decision to establish Hizbollah as an Iranian frontline against Israel first of all transformed the organization into a well oiled, high powered military machine by supplying thousands of advanced missiles to Hizbollah, which today reach most of the territory of Israel and can hit their targets with a high degree of accuracy. The logic behind Tehran's decision to supply Hizbollah with close to 50,000 such advanced missiles, thereby turning it into a powerful force even in relation to the region's conventional armies, was of course Iran's desire to make use of the organization in order to deter Israel. Indeed, other than Hizbollah Iran has no real answer against Israel, and without Hizbollah, its ability to deter Israel from operating against Iran and against its nuclear facilities – or alternatively, Tehran's ability to respond and exact a price from Israel in the event of an Israeli or American attack against Iran – is highly limited. This is why Hizbollah is so important to Tehran. Syria has played an important part in allowing Iranian missiles to be moved through its territory to Hizbollah, and has also supplied thousands of its own missiles, especially, advanced missiles such as the rockets that Hizbollah fired at Haifa during the Second Lebanon War and Scud missiles, which are the crowning glory of the Syrian missile arsenal.¹⁷

In this context, it is clear why Iran did not hide its dissatisfaction with the outbreak of the Second Lebanon War, when the missile arsenal it had supplied to Hizbollah was exposed unnecessarily and then used for a different purpose than for what it was intended. After the war, Iran tightened its grip on Hizbollah, a trend that was strengthened with the liquidation of Imad Mugniyeh, the commander of Hizbollah's military wing, in the heart of Damascus in 2008.¹⁸

Interestingly, Iran has an important ally in Damascus in the form of the Syrian Alawite regime. It was by no means self-evident that there would be any congeniality between Iran and Syria, considering that the Syrian Ba'ath regime is secular and Arab nationalist, not to mention that it is an infidel regime, as there are serious doubts in the Islamic world concerning

the Alawite commitment to Islam, and more precisely, the commitment of its leaders. (The first person to issue a religious ruling allowing the Alawite community to be considered Shiite was Musa al-Sadr.) Still, this is an alliance of interests, and these dictate the moves of both states. The basis of these interests is fear, or in any case, the need for mutual assistance in light of the threats from the United States and from Israel, which appear to be acute and urgent in the eyes of Tehran and Damascus. However, it is actually Lebanon that may change from being a basis for cooperation between Syria and Iran and become a focus of dispute. This will occur if Syria concludes that Hizbollah's strengthening in Lebanon through Iranian backing endangers essential Syrian interests.¹⁹

Joining the political upheavals in Beirut in early 2011, that is, Hizbollah's overthrow of the Saad al-Hariri government and the establishment of a new government controlled by Hizbollah and Syria, are the shockwaves reverberating throughout the entire Middle East following the fall of the Husni Mubarak regime in Egypt in early February 2011. These events have created a new situation in which Lebanon is slowly distancing itself from the circle of American influence (to which Saad al-Hariri and his associates were inclined), and is linking itself with the opposing camp. This camp is united with respect to the struggle against Israel and the United States, but it has a different view concerning the future of Lebanon. Bashar al-Asad spoke to this issue that when he explained why it is appropriate for Syria and not Iran to become a stakeholder in Lebanon, and perhaps even the boss.

The Future of Iranian Influence in Lebanon

The Iranian presence in Lebanon appears more stable than ever, as does Tehran's hold on Hizbollah, which now depends on Iran's financial and military aid more than at any time in the past. At the same time, Hizbollah is growing stronger within the political system in Lebanon, a result of its efforts to become a legitimate and almost exclusive representative of the country's Shiite community. Not surprisingly, there are those inside and outside of Lebanon who warn of a future Hizbollah takeover of the country, through physical or demographic strength of the Shiite community, which over the years has become the largest community in Lebanon.

However, Hizbollah does not in fact represent and is not automatically supported by most of the Shiites in Lebanon, and even those who do support it are not keen to adopt its ideological concepts, especially its religious and ideological links with Iran. Just as in Iraq, in Lebanon too there are many who believe that the Shiism of the Khomeini school does not represent their authentic faith or the religion they grew up with. Amal, the competing Shiite organization, is still active in Lebanon, and it has not insignificant support, even though the weakness of its leaders, headed by Nabih Berri, leaves the Shiite field open to Hizbollah activity and control. Furthermore, it is actually the Iranian Shiite challenge felt today throughout the Middle East, and not just in Lebanon, that is stirring reactionary sentiments. Members of the Sunni community in Lebanon and other Arab states are determined to try to stop Iran. Turkey has joined them from a Sunni starting point, not an Arab one.

Iran has become a key player in Lebanon; of this there is no doubt. But the battle for Lebanon is far from over, and there are other forces in the race for control of Lebanon besides Iran. One of these forces is of course Syria, today a close ally of Iran, but perhaps in the future Iran's rival in the battle for Lebanon.

The foothold and the dominance Iran has achieved in Lebanon over the years undoubtedly stemmed from a convergence of factors, among them the collapse of the Lebanese system; the rise of the Shiites in Lebanon, at least numerically, and their failure to assume a leading role in society, the economy, and government; the Israeli challenge, which pushed Hizbollah into the arms of Iran and made it dependent on Iran; elements that brought a group of Iran-associated Shiite clerics and activists to the leadership of Hizbollah; and the weakness of Syria.

Iran's presence in Lebanon was built on the disorder, chaos, and anarchy prevailing in Lebanon over the years, and the ongoing tension and outbreaks of violence within Lebanon and with its immediate neighbors – Israel, Syria, and the Palestinian Authority. Hence, resolution of the internal Lebanese tension and diminished regional tension through promotion of a political settlement are enough to harm and erode Iran's status in Lebanon. Iran has little of value to offer Lebanon, especially to members of the country's Shiite community, other than an open ended supply of missiles.

Even without these factors, Iranian involvement in Lebanon is likely to encounter not insignificant difficulties. Syria has slowly returned to assume a key role in Lebanon, despite the domestic challenges the Syrian regime is facing following the storm of regional change that has reached Damascus, and this will undoubtedly occur at the expense of Iran and with ongoing friction between the two countries. Other Arab states as well, such as Saudi Arabia, are active in the Lebanese arena, and even Turkey has once again joined the fray. In the short term, this regional and inter-Arab energy will be concentrated against Israel, in a false display of demonstrations of solidarity against the challenge Israel presents to Lebanon. But in the long term, Iran will encounter increasing difficulty in imposing its will and the will of its Lebanese protégé, Hizbollah, on Lebanon.

The various sides in Lebanon are likely to reach the moment of truth following the outbreak of an Israeli-Iranian or an American-Iranian confrontation due to the Iranian nuclear project. In the event of such a confrontation, the question is whether Hizbollah will join the battle or even serve as the long arm of the Iranians, whereby, and especially with the missile arsenal in Hizbollah's possession, Iran will seek to respond to a possible Israeli or American attack on its nuclear facilities. Hizbollah's decision to respond to the Iranian diktat and open a front in the north of Israel is no trivial matter, since this would likely doom or at least seriously damage its standing in Lebanon even among members of the Shiite community if it becomes clear that Hizbollah has brought destruction to Lebanon, such as what it suffered in the Second Lebanon War, all in the service of Iranian interests. On the other hand, Iran has not supplied tens of thousands of missiles to Hizbollah, well beyond what the local arena requires, for naught. These missiles were supplied with the assumption that they would be used when Iran needed.

Therefore, an Israeli-Iranian confrontation will create difficult dilemmas, and perhaps even disputes on the Beirut-Tehran axis. In the past, Hizbollah leaders in Beirut and their superiors in Tehran knew how to walk the fine line between Iranian needs and the organization's local Lebanese interests. After all, Iran is conducting a rational foreign policy that recognizes the limitations of its power, and it will not want to endanger its investment in Lebanon. On the other hand, at the moment of truth, it appears that it is Iran that will be the player of influence through

the mechanisms of control – direct and indirect – that it has imposed over Hizbollah, and it will have the last word.

Thus, Iran's entrance onto center stage in Lebanon via Hizbollah is a fascinating chapter in history, but is not necessarily the end of the Lebanese story, which is still far from over.

Notes

- 1 Al-Jazeera, July 15 and 16, 2010; *Yediot Ahronot*, July 21, 2010; *Haaretz*, July 21 and 28, 2010.
- 2 *Al-Hayat*, October 26, 2010.
- 3 See al-Jazeera, October 26 and November 21, 2010. See also *al-Mustaqbal*, October 25 and 26, 2010.
- 4 For more on Iran's relations with Lebanon, see H. E. Chehabi, ed., *Distant Relations: Iran and Lebanon in the Last 500 Years* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).
- 5 See Shimon Shapiro, *Hizbullah: Between Iran and Lebanon* (Tel Aviv: Kibbutz Meuhad, 2000), p. 26.
- 6 Concerning the connections of Iran under the shah with Lebanon, see Abbas William Samii, "The Shah's Lebanon Policy," *Middle East Studies* 33, no. 1 (1997); Abbas William Samii, "The Security Relationship between Lebanon and Pre-Revolutionary Iran," in *Distant Relations*, pp. 162-79. See also Shapiro, *Hizbullah: Between Iran and Lebanon*, pp. 28-54.
- 7 On Musa al-Sadr see Fouad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1986).
- 8 Ahmad Nizar Hamzeh, *In the Path of Hizbullah* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), pp. 27-43.
- 9 See Nasrallah's interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper *al-Ray al-A'am*, August 27, 2005.
- 10 On Hizbollah's early days, see Hala Jaber, *Hizbullah: Born with a Vengeance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).
- 11 For more on Iranian aid to Hizbollah in the organization's early days, see Shapira, *Hizbullah: Between Iran and Lebanon*.
- 12 See Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah: The Changing Face of Terrorism* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004); and Eyal Zisser, "The Return of the Hizballah," *Middle East Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (2002): 3-12. See also Amal Saad-Ghorayeb, *Hizbullah: Politics and Religion* (London: Pluto Press, 2002); Wadah Sharara, *Dawlat al-Hizbullah, Lubnan-Mujtama'a Islami (The Hizbullah State, Lebanon: Lebanese Society)* (Beirut, 1996); and Eitan Azani, *Hizbullah: From Revolutionaries and Pan-Islamists to Pragmatists and Lebanese*, doctoral dissertation, Hebrew University, 2005.
- 13 See Eyal Zisser, *The Bleeding Cedars: Lebanon – From Civil War to the Second Lebanon War* (Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz Meuhad, 2009), pp. 241-73.
- 14 Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il>.

- 15 See al-Manar television station, October 20, 2006.
- 16 *Haaretz*, February 23, 2008.
- 17 See *Haaretz*, December 17 and 24, 2010.
- 18 See Meir Elran and Shlomo Brom, eds., *The Second Lebanon War: Strategic Perspectives* (Tel Aviv: Institute for National Security Studies, 2007). See also *a-sharq al-Awsat*, September 9, 2008.
- 19 See Ahmad S. Khalidi, *Syria and Iran* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1995); Anoushiravan Esteshami and Raymond A. Hinnebusch, *Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System* (New York: Routledge, 1997); and Jubin M. Goodazri, *Syria and Iran: Diplomatic Alliance and Power Politics in the Middle East* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).