Exporting the Iranian revolution to Lebanon: Iran and Hezbollah operate an extensive network of cultural and religious institutions as well as publishing houses. This network is used to inculcate Lebanese society, primarily the Shi’ite community, with Iranian radical Islamic ideology.
“...Victory is the result of resistance [i.e., terrorism]. Resistance is a product of culture, and it is a culture unto itself” (Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah speaking at a fair organized by the Cultural Islamic Al-Ma’aref Association, affiliated with Hezbollah, May 2006).

“...Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah considers himself a soldier of Iran's leader [Khamenei], and Hezbollah members follow the example of the brave men and women of Iran...” (Sayyid Yahya Rahim Safavi, the Iranian leader's military advisor and former chief of the Revolutionary Guards, Iran's Fars News Agency, November 16, 2008).

Sayyid Yahya Rahim Safavi during the speech; in the background are photographs of Khamenei and Khomeini (Fars News Agency, November 16, 2008)

Overview

1. Lebanon is a unique example of Iran’s success in exporting the Islamic revolution through Hezbollah, an organization established by Iran with Syrian assistance in the summer of 1982. That success is reflected both in the establishment of Hezbollah’s extensive military infrastructure, with a proven track record of being able to hit Israel’s home front, and in the strengthening of Hezbollah’s political force on the internal Lebanese scene, to the point of being able to veto decisions made by the Lebanese government in the Doha Agreement (May 2008). On top of those political and military abilities, one must also consider the extensive social and cultural network established by Hezbollah, through which Iran deepens its long-term influence in Lebanon—mostly with the Shi’ite community, that country's largest ethnic group.

2. More than just a tool to expand Iran’s influence, the ideological activity conducted by Hezbollah is meant to inculcate the Lebanese society with the concept of “society of resistance”—that is, a society entirely devoted to a long-term armed struggle against Israel, with Hezbollah at the forefront. That concept was introduced during a speech recently given by Hezbollah's Deputy Secretary-General Sheikh Na’im Qassem, at a ceremony held by a Hezbollah organ responsible for commemorating the martyrs of the
Faculty of Science in the University of Lebanon. That speech echoed the speech of an Iranian leader on the “culture of resistance” in Iran.¹

3. In his speech, Sheikh Na‘ím Qassem called for the establishment of a “society of resistance”, in which everybody lives their normal lives at school, at the university, at the factory, or at the store. However, “if someone is called to the front, they will do what is required of them and then go back to their daily lives”. He said that would turn Lebanon’s entire society into a “society of resistance”, which is concerned first and foremost with its duties and then with its daily life. Qassem further noted that it would help the society of resistance organize its arms, power, and abilities for the confrontation (with Israel). Such a society would tighten the noose around Israel’s neck and defend the Lebanese country from outside pressure. As part of that concept, Hezbollah should obviously not be disarmed but rather incorporated into a “comprehensive defense strategy” of Lebanon (Al-Manar TV website, November 20, 2008).

**Exporting the Islamic revolution in Iran through Hezbollah**

4. Hezbollah, used by the Iranian regime as the main instrument of exporting the revolution to Lebanon, is also an effective means of spreading radical Shi’ite Islamic ideology. Iran and Hezbollah operate an extensive network of religious, educational, cultural, and social institutions among the Shi’ite community in Lebanon. It is coupled with Hezbollah’s media empire (which includes a satellite TV station, a radio station, websites, newspapers, libraries, and book publishing houses). All of those serve Hezbollah and the Iranian regime in the war for the hearts and minds of the Lebanese public, increasing their political and ideological influence among the Lebanese society in general and the Shi’ite community in particular.²

5. The Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center has recently re-examined the activity of Iran and Hezbollah’s societies and cultural centers operating in Lebanon as well as the contents of their publications. The results show once again that Hezbollah’s publications, which include Iranian literature in Arabic translation, are meant to spread Iranian ideology in Lebanon and to nurture the personality cult of Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the instigator of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini. Those publications also inspire hatred against Israel, the US, and the West, encourage terrorism and violence

¹ On November 15, 2008, a memorial ceremony was held in Esfahan; it was attended by Khamenei’s military advisor and former chief of the Revolutionary Guards, Sayyid Yahya Rahim Safavi. He said that the “resistance” and the self-respect of the Iranian people during the Iran-Iraq war made the threats of war cause the growth of the “resistance culture”. He also noted that “Nasrallah considers himself a soldier of Iran’s leader [Khamenei] and Hezbollah members follow the example of the brave men and women of Iran…” (Fars News Agency, November 16).

² For details, see: “Hezbollah as a case study of the battle for hearts and minds” (June 2007).
against Israel ("resistance"), and commemorate Hezbollah's shahids, turning them into role models for Lebanese teenagers viewed by Hezbollah as the next generation of its military operatives.

**Societies and cultural centers operating in Lebanon on behalf of Iran and Hezbollah**

6. Iran and Hezbollah have established in Lebanon an extensive network of educational, religious, and cultural institutions, which they predominantly use to shape the hearts and minds of the Shi’ite community in Lebanon.3 Those institutions "import to Lebanon the Iranian radical Shi’ite ideology the way it is, with Hezbollah's role usually limited to that of a contractor, without making significant ideological contributions of its own. The establishment of that educational, cultural, and religious system, starting from the mid-1980s, was guided by Iran and its various proxies: the Revolutionary Guards, the cultural attaché’s offices in the Iranian embassies in Damascus and Beirut, as well as Iranian-based social institutions that have branches in Lebanon. Iran's involvement also includes significant sums of money for the establishment and operation of that extensive network of culture institutions.

7. One of the most important associations operating in Lebanon is the Cultural Islamic Al-Ma'ref Association4 (hereinafter: Al-Ma'ref Association). Founded in Lebanon in 1996, its aim is to spread Islam in accordance with Khomeini's ideology and in accordance with the concept of the Islamic revolution in Iran, "filling a natural role in an inter-cultural dialogue or confrontation" (according to the association's website). The association has dozens of cultural centers all of which act in the spirit of the Khomeinist ideology, including the Al-Nur Anti-Illiteracy Center and women’s culture centers. The association operates an extensive network of institutions and is connected with other culture centers in Lebanon that spread Khomeini's teachings and ideology (see below).

8. Al-Ma'ref Association has its own publishing house. It holds international book fairs and is associated with other cultural centers involved in spreading Iranian radical Islam. The

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3 On the establishment of that system in Lebanon, see chapter on Hezbollah and building the new Islamic society in Shimon Shapira’s *Hezbollah between Iran and Lebanon* (Hebrew), Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishers, Tel Aviv, 2000, pp. 134-171.

4 In Arabic: *jam'iyat al-ma'ref al-islamiyya al-thaqafiyya*. Al-Ma'ref means "general knowledge".
association publishes Shi'ite Islamic ideological periodicals: Baqiyyat Allah,\(^5\) Sada al-Wilaya ("The echo of responsibility to the House of Ali") and Dawhat al-Wilaya ("The dynasty of the house of Ali").

10. In 2006 and 2007, international book fairs were held in Beirut by Al-Ma'aref Association. Taking part in those fairs were publishing houses from the Arab and Islamic world. The fair was not held in 2008, probably due to the lack of international interest in the fair held last year.

11. The May 2006 book fair was held in the Sheikh Abbas Moussawi (Sayyid al-Shuhada') Hall in the neighborhood of Al-Dahiya, in the southern Shi'ite suburb of Beirut (Hezbollah's stronghold). Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who sponsored the fair, gave there a speech. He mentioned the anniversary of the IDF's pullout from Lebanon (May 23, 2000), saying that the victory was "a result of the resistance [i.e., terrorism]. Resistance is a product of culture, and it is a culture upon itself".

\(^{5}\) Baqiyyat Allah is a Quranic term that causes contention between Sunnis and Shi'ites. Sunnis believe that the term refers to everything left on Earth by Allah, and all the wealth he promised to his believers in the afterlife. In Shi'ite tradition, the term is another name for Imam al-Mahdi (the Vanished Imam), left by Allah to guide the believers. They believe that the verse containing the term motivates the believers to believe in the Mahdi. The term is commonly found in Shi'ite literature, and there are Shi'ite organizations and institutions that use the term as their name.
Following are some characteristics of cultural centers and publishing houses in Lebanon associated with and supported by Iran and Hezbollah, acting under the inspiration of the Shi'ite Islamic ideology of the Iranian regime:

a. **The Imam Khomeini Culture Center**: an institution with many branches in Lebanon, its main office is situated in the Shi'ite neighborhood of Harat Hreik (Hezbollah's stronghold) in the southern suburb of Beirut. The center is involved in translating and disseminating Imam Khomeini's ideological legacy, nurturing the "culture of resistance" (i.e., culture of terrorism), and in perpetuating the personality cult of Imam Khomeini and his successor, Khamenei. The center organizes assemblies and symposiums on Khomeini's philosophy.

![The address of the Imam Khomeini Culture Center](image1)

b. **Ma'had Sayyid al-Shuhada' [Lord of Martyrs Institute]**: an institution which publishes Shi'ite religious books, dealing primarily with the martyrdom of Imam Hussein. Parts of those books are available on the Al-Ma'ref Association website. The institute organizes assemblies and conventions to promote Khomeinist ideology. Those conventions have been attended by Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and other senior figures from that organization.

![The logo of the Lord of Martyrs Institute](image2)

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6Iran also has an institution which publishes Imam Khomeini's works, which distributes Imam Khomeini's philosophical writings.

7 Sayyid Shuhada' al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya is the alias of Sheikh Abbas Moussawi, the Hezbollah leader who died in an Israeli targeted killing in 1992. Originally, "Lord of the Martyrs" referred to Hussein bin Ali, who was killed in the Battle of Karbala in 680 A.D. and became the most prominent Shi'ite martyr.
c. **The Imam al-Mahdi Institute**: established in 1990, it describes itself as an institution which publishes Islamic culture. It specializes in publishing and distributing Islamic Shi'ite literature based on Khomeinist ideology.

d. **Markaz Baqiyyat Allah al-A'zam lil-Dirasat (Baqiyyat Allah Study Center)**: a publishing house of Shi'ite religious literature which promotes the publication of books about the Islamic revolution in Iran. In particular, it publishes the writings of Ayatollah Khomeini and Ali Khamenei.

e. **Dar al-Hadi Publishing**: an important publishing house belonging to Hezbollah, even though it avoids formally associating itself with that organization. It publishes books about Hezbollah, religion, the legacy of Imam Khomeini, as well as anti-Israeli, anti-Zionist, and anti-Semitic incitement.

f. **Imam al-Mahdi Publishing (Hezbollah's youth movement)**: a publishing house specializing in books and pamphlets for children and teenagers, inculcating them with the values of radical Shi'ite Islam, hatred against Israel and the importance of jihad against it, as well as the personality cult of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.
12. Following are examples of publications (books, pamphlets, and periodicals) published in Lebanon on the following topics:

a. The personality cult of Khomeini and Khamenei
b. The ideology of the Iranian regime
c. Jihad (holy war) according to Khomeini and Khamenei
d. Hezbollah’s martyrs as role models
e. Nurturing the values of terrorism (resistance)
f. Indoctrination of children and teenagers
g. Anti-Semitic literature
h. Anti-American literature
A. The personality cult of Khomeini and Khamenei

Sada al-Wilaya periodical
Publisher: Al-Ma’aref Association, November 2008 issue
Contents: Deals mostly with Ali Khamenei’s image

Book: My Leader (Qa’idi)
Publisher: Imam al-Mahdi Scouts (Hezbollah’s youth movement), undated.
Contents: Nurturing Ali Khamenei’s image as a role model and an example to be followed by children and teenagers. A copy of the book was found in the village of Yaroun in the second Lebanon war

Book: Milestones in the Life of Imam Khomeini and his Holy War
Publisher: Imam Khomeini Culture Center, 1999
Contents: Biographical details from Khomeini’s life

Dawhat al-Wilaya periodical

Dawhat al-Wilaya periodical
Publisher: Al-Ma’aref Association, October 2008 issue. The central page features images of Khomeini and Khamenei
B. The ideology of the Iranian regime

**Book**: *A Reappraisal of The Path of Eloquence* [an important book in Shi'ite tradition]

**Publisher**: Markaz Baqiyyat Allah al-A'zam lil-Dirasat, 2000

**Contents**: In the book, Khamenei addresses the characteristics of the Islamic government from a Khomeinist worldview, based on the book *Nahj al-Balagha* (The Path of Eloquence). The major theme of the book is the principle of the rule of the religious jurisprudent (*Wilayat al-Faqih*), as propagated by Ayatollah Khomeini. Khamenei stresses the dominance of Islam as a major factor in that government (p. 38), the central place of the Imam as the leader and spiritual guide of Islamic rule (pp. 20-32), and the need to win people in the Muslim world over to the idea of Islamic rule (pp. 55-71). The book was originally written in Farsi and was translated into Arabic in Qom, the Shi'ites' holiest city in Iran.

An undated pamphlet with a speech given by Ali Khamenei for the month of Muharram (the first month in the Muslim year). The speech emphasizes the importance of martyrdom in Islam [*shahada*] and the importance of the Islamic revolution, which strives to rectify the deprivation created in the world by the West.

**Publisher**: Hezbollah's central information unit

**Book**: *Oh, [My] Dear*

**Publisher**: The complete text of the book is available on the Al-Ma'aref Association website. There are no details on the year of publication, but it seems it was published sometime in the last three years.

**Contents**: The book deals with Khomeini's teachings.

**Book**: *Lessons in [the concept of] the Rule of the Religious Jurisprudent*

**Publisher**: Al-Ma'aref, 2005

**Contents**: Khomeini's view on the rule of the religious jurisprudent. The book is probably meant for school children.
**Book: The Movement for Renewal and Awakening**  
**Publisher:** Dar al-Hadi, 2007  
**Contents:** Khomeini’s teachings.

**Book: The Mosque in the Reflections of Imam Khomeini**  
**Publisher:** Imam Khomeini Culture Center, 2002.  
**Contents:** The book deals with the importance of the mosque, perceived also as a means of spreading the spirit of jihad and as a place of gathering for Islamic wars. A copy of the book was found in the village of Maroun al-Ras in the second Lebanon war.

**Book: How to Recite the Quran**  
**Publisher:** The complete text of the book is available on the Al-Ma'aref Association website. There are no details on the year of publication, but it seems it was published sometime in the last three years.  
**Contents:** Khomeini’s teachings.

**Book: The Woman in the Reflections of Imam Khomeini**  
**Publisher:** Imam Khomeini Culture Center, 2002.  
**Contents:** The woman’s role in society according to Khomeini. The book says that women must play an active part in jihad when a foreign invasion takes place.
C. Jihad (Holy War) according to Khomeini and Khamenei

Book: Holy War (Jihad)
Publisher: Khomeini Culture Center, 2004
Contents: In this book, Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader, lays out his view of jihad. Khamenei considers jihad to be a doctrine and a course of action through which a Muslim can "sacrifice his life for the sake of Allah and go to Paradise." According to Khamenei, the pinnacle of jihad is shahada, martyrdom for the sake of Allah. The cover of the book shows a picture of Khamenei and a photograph of three fighters (most likely Hezbollah operatives).

D. Hezbollah's Martyrs as Role Models

Book: The Jihad of the Soul in the Reflections of Khomeini
Publisher: Khomeini Culture Center, 2002.

Book: Victory in the Reflections of Khomeini
Publisher: Khomeini Culture Center, 2002.

Book: Lord of the Martyrs and Prince of the Resistance Fighters (Sheikh al-shuhada' wa-amir al-muqawimin), the Story of the Lord of the Martyrs, Sheikh Ragheb Harb
Publisher: Al-Ma'aref, 2003
Contents: The book is dedicated to "the martyrs of the Islamic resistance".
It tells the story of Sheikh Ghareb Harb, Hezbollah's top cleric in south Lebanon, who was killed in 1984. In the book, Ghareb Harb is described as being pious, moral, brave, a person who sought to reach the peak of sacrifice in martyrdom (shahada), who taught the "resistance" to the young generation. The book says that Ghareb

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Another book in that series is Freedom in the Reflections of Imam Khomeini (Al-Hurriyya fi Fikr al-Imam Khomeini), published in 2003. Based on Ayatollah Khomeini's views of freedom, the book lashes out at the Western concept of freedom, saying that freedom should be confined to what is permissible in Islam and in state law. In the book, freedom is described as independence from Western imperialism or foreign occupation.
Harb liberated south Lebanon from "the filth of the Zionists". This book and the books covered below were published by Hezbollah's central culture unit and the Martyr Institution.

Book: Princes of Paradise, the Self-Sacrificial Martyr Sheikh As'ad Berro
Publisher: Al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya [the Islamic resistance, i.e., Hezbollah], 1998
Contents: The book is dedicated to the suicide bomber As'ad Berro, who blew himself up near an IDF convoy at the Fatma Gate, near the Israeli town of Metulla on August 19, 1988. Seven IDF soldiers were killed in that terrorist attack. As'ad Berro was turned into a role model by Hezbollah.9 The book praises Berro, saying he was a hero who had the power of sacrifice and a person of high awareness. The book praises jihad, suicide bombings (istishhad), and shahada (martyrdom in Islam), mentioning the Battle of Karbala as a model.10

9 It should be mentioned that As'ad Berro was a relative of Ibrahim Mohsen Berro, who perpetrated the suicide bombing attack at the Jewish community center (AMIA) in Argentina, killing 85 people and injuring 151. For more details, see: ‘Argentina accuses Iran of responsibility for the Hezbollah terrorist attack which destroyed Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, 1994. The Argentinean Attorney General’s office announced it had found Iran responsible for the terrorist attack and an Argentinean judge issued arrest warrants for seven senior Iranians and one senior Hezbollah member” (http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/malam_multimedia/English/eng_n/html/argentina_amia_e.htm).
10 The Battle of Karbala - a battle held near the Iraqi city of Karbala in 680 A.D. On one side was Hussein, the son of Ali bin Abi Taleb and his supporters, who wanted the caliphate for themselves; on the other side was Yazid, the Umayyad caliph. That battle, in which Hussein was killed, symbolizes the height of martyrdom in Shi'ite Islam, and is annually commemorated by Shi'ites on the Day of Ashura by beating themselves to blood.
Book: Knowledge and Action (‘Ilm wa-amal), the story of the martyr Sheikh Ali Karim
Publisher: Al-Ma’aref, 2003
Contents: A book dedicated to Sheikh Ali Karim, the aide of Abbas Moussawi, the Hezbollah leader who was killed in 1988. Ali Karim was born in 1965 in a village in the Bint Jbeil region. His family relocated to Beirut. In 1976 he went to study in Najaf, Iraq, and returned to Lebanon in 1977 after serving a short prison term under Saddam Hussein’s regime. Following the establishment of Hezbollah in 1982 by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, he graduated from Hezbollah’s first military course. He was a military operative and cleric who encouraged many people to join the resistance (i.e., terrorism) against Israel. He was shot dead in his car in 1988.

E. Nurturing the values of terrorism (resistance)

Book: Angels of Mercy (Mala’ikat al-rahama)
Publisher: Dar al-Hadi, 2007

Book: Asheq al-shahada (He Who Craves Martyrdom)
Publisher: Dar al-Hadi, 2007

Book: part of a series titled Pages of Glory
Publisher: Hezbollah’s military wing (1996)
Contents: this and other books from the series praise Hezbollah, its warriors, the values of shahada (martyrdom) and istishhad (suicide bombing attacks), and Hezbollah’s martyrs. The book begins with the pictures of Khomeini, Khamenei, Abbas Moussawi, Ragheb Harb, and Hassan Nasrallah (in that order)

Book: The Historical Victory of the Resistance in Lebanon and the Rebuilding of Arab Mind
Publisher: Dar al-Hadi, 2007
F. Indoctrination of children and teenagers

Pamphlet: The Evil Sharon
Publisher: Imam al-Mahdi Scouts, 2002
Contents: A book about a little kingdom called "Paradise" (symbolizing Palestine), whose people lived happily until an evil king called Sharon (referring to Ariel Sharon) rose to the throne. King Sharon was able to rule the kingdom by manipulating, torturing, and oppressing his people. Sharon could hear no sound "but the cries of the injured and the sighs of the suffering", and liked no color but "the red blood". He issued a decree requiring all pregnant women to drink a liquid that would make their children short. The salvation came to the kingdom when children (insinuating to Palestinian children) decided to take revenge on the evil Sharon and got assistance from a good king in a neighboring kingdom (insinuating to Hezbollah). Ultimately, the children stoned Sharon and his wife, the good king sentenced Sharon and his entourage to life imprisonment, and the people of "Paradise" once again had wealth and happiness.

Book: Daughter of [Bint] Jbeil
Publisher: Dar al-Hadi, 2007
Contents: part of a children's book series called "Victory over the Zionists"

Pamphlets issued by the Imam al-Mahdi Scouts in 2002. Left: Biography of the Lord of Martyrs of the Islamic Resistance, Sayyid Abbas Moussawi [the Hezbollah leader who preceded Nasrallah], His Life, His Jihad, and His Martyrdom; Right: Jihadi youth.
G. Anti-Semitic literature

Book: The Talmud and the Roots of Zionist Terrorism  
Publisher: Dar al-Hadi, 2008

H. Anti-American literature

Book: America [i.e., US] is the Source of Terrorism  
Publisher: Hezbollah  
Contents: the cover page of the pamphlet shows the flags of Israel and the US on fire, with Palestinians crying against the background of the Dome of the Rock mosque in Jerusalem. On the right is a prominent image of Ali Khamenei.

Book: America in the Age of the Fourth Reich [insinuating that the US is the successor of Nazi Germany]  
Publisher: Dar al-Hadi, 2005

Book: The University between Traditionalism and Westernization (Al-Jami‘ah bayn al-Asala wal-Tagharrub)  
Contents: A pamphlet which contains the text of a speech given by Ali Khamenei to students in 2001. In the speech, Khamenei warns the students against the imperialist ideas of the West, mainly the US, which disseminates ideas designed to enslave peoples. Furthermore, he calls upon the students to uphold the noble values of the Islamic revolution of Iran.