Chapter 5

**The Muqawama as a Counter-Hegemonic Project**

**(A project underway: books, TV series, websites, short films, songs and press)**

As demonstrated in the first chapter, hegemony according to Gramsci and Post-Gramscian philosophers is not static. On the one hand, hegemony is a continuous process that never stops; but on the other hand, it is a state that is capable, at a certain point in time, of gaining control over the society’s life, and imposes, through the “soft” power of commonsense, the social perceptions and behaviors prevalent in a certain society.

Hegemony can be perceived as a fluid movement that seeps through all vacuums existing in society, and encompasses the culture, institutions, economics and politics of this society. According to Gramsci, hegemony is inherent in all layers of society. Gramsci especially emphasises the need for both a political and cultural leadership to reach a state of hegemony.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Gramscian hegemony includes the dimension of compulsion; yet it also includes the subordinate groups’ acceptance of the moral and intellectual leadership, given that the project attempts, partially, to consider their interests.

Hegemony has cultural, political, and economic dimensions that highlight the synthesis among the different forces that build the hegemonic project, and their willingness to compromise and forgo narrow sectorial interests and promote the common will and interests.[[2]](#footnote-2) Hegemony includes the articulation of the different social, cultural, and economic leadership into a comprehensive political project.[[3]](#footnote-3) Moreover, Gramsci reveals different spaces or ‘hegemonic mechanisms’, in which hegemony operates, such as the press, publishing houses, educational institutions, social organisations, sports clubs, and different social and cultural networks.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Every historical-bloc that seeks to promote and strengthen its hegemonic project has to advance its unique culture among the masses through practices and pilot institutions of the leading force in the counter-hegemonic project, in order to attain hegemony over the political society and to take over the whole state. This includes voluntary and not (only) forced compliance of the other social groups. In other words, there should be an equilibrium between coercion and consent.[[5]](#footnote-5)

In this chapter, I attempt to show how Hezbollah has gradually succeeded, as the leader of the Muqawama project, in developing and instilling the “Muqawama” perception in the civil society, in schools, in the public discourse and even in the leisure life of youth and adults. This broad penetration in most life spheres was coupled with a certain extent of openness towards other players in the Lebanese political arena. Hence Hezbollah’s ability to continue enhancing the Muqawama narrative, according to its own perceptions and beliefs, and to open this narrative for the integration of other forces, beside its “natural audience” (namely the Shiite community in Lebanon).

1. **Books- Learning the Muqawama**

In order for Hezbollah to instill the Muqawama culture among the Lebanese Shiite community in particular, and among all the Lebanese people in general, it developed the genre of “resistance books’, which depicts the way Hezbollah and its potential allies in the Muqawama project perceive this term. One of the prominent examples of this genre is a book titled: Qiyam al-Muqawama: Khayar al-shahadah wal-Ḥaya (The Resistance Values: the Option of Martyrdom and Life)- an anthology of 20 essays written by different thinkers, clerics (Shiite, Sunni and Christian) and authors, in preparation for “The Permanent Resistance Conference” (Muaʾtamar al-Muqawama al-Daiʾema). As stated by Sheikh Shafik Jaradi, this book discusses the “perceptions, culture, development and implications of the Muqawama’s revival on the nation’s life and covert feelings”[[6]](#footnote-6).

This conference, like many others held by Hezbollah, is an example of the organization’s attempts to establish the philosophical and academic infrastructure for the Muqawama culture and project as a comprehensive project within the three main spheres that Hezbollah operates in: the local sphere, the regional sphere (the Islamic and the Arab world) and the international sphere.

In the conference opening remarks held by Naim Qassem, and included in the book, he argues that for Hezbollah, the Muqawama is not a “thoughtless or emotional reaction; it is rather a project of liberation and Mumanʿaah”[[7]](#footnote-7). He did not seek to hide the fact that this project is based on previous Muqawamas, from which it drew the components that fit its cultural and intellectual foundations[[8]](#footnote-8). He proceeds to say: “we refuse to detach our Islamic Muqawama from the context of the resistant activism both regionally and globally”[[9]](#footnote-9). These statements and many others demonstrate that the organization’s leaders do not perceive their Muqawama as a separated and one-time event, but rather as a part of a comprehensive culture that this book, like many other Muqawama books published by Hezbollah, sought to instill among the Muqawama community.

The first part of the book includes five essays that seek to establish the philosophical foundations of the Muqawama. In the essay of Hassan Jonny on “The Legitimacy of the Muqawama in the Light of the Law”[[10]](#footnote-10), he seeks to demonstrate that Hezbollah’s Muqawama is practiced compatibly with the provisions of the International law; it is thus part of a broader context of different resistance movements, not only those of the Middle East, but also the Vietnamese resistance in the seventies, and the French resistance during World War II[[11]](#footnote-11).

Broadening the context of the Lebanese Muqawama to encompass the whole world was also the purpose of other essays published in the book, like Mounir Shafik’s “The Muqawama following the End of the Cold War”[[12]](#footnote-12). In this essay, Shafik maintains that the end of the Cold War upon the fall of the Soviet Union does not mean that the United States of America has become the dominant power in the world. He further elaborates that the present resistance movements worldwide, and the countries that are not controlled by the USA are becoming a potent force in the face of the USA and its imperialist project[[13]](#footnote-13).

A special theme that gained considerable attention in this book was the legitimacy of the Muqawama in a pluralistic society. Several essays in the book resolved this issue from different perspectives. One of them is ʿAdnan al-Sayyed Husayn’s “The Source of Authority of the Muqawama Culture in a Pluralistic Society”[[14]](#footnote-14). In this essay, Husayn emphasizes that the Lebanese Muqawama started during the Civil War, but it has been always significant for maintaining national unity in Lebanon. He calls for fostering the concept of citizenship in Lebanon to help the Muqawama enhance the national unity within Lebanon[[15]](#footnote-15).

The second essay which further enhances and legitimizes the Muqawama project was written by the Christian cleric George Massouh, titled “The Meaning of Life in the Christian Perception”[[16]](#footnote-16). Massouh argues that the Muqawama is not only military and violent; it is rather all the nonviolent actions that seek to curb exploitation. He further emphasized that despite the advantages of nonviolent resistance, this does not mean that Christianity rejects all types of violent resistance to fight injustice and occupation; for in some cases, this form of resistance becomes an inevitable necessity, like the Lebanese resistance against the Israeli occupation and aggression[[17]](#footnote-17).

This book, like many others, bring the different constituents of Hezbollah’s Muqawama project into interaction and common thinking, where the Islamic religious dimension takes the lead, yet also giving space to the national Lebanese dimension, and enabling the integration of Christian, leftist and Arab nationalist perspectives.

Another book, comprised of 29 essays which discuss Hezbollah’s Muqawama and its “victory” over Israel in the 2006 Lebanon War, is titled *The Resistance Victory: The Essence of Victory and its Political Implications*. This book also includes academic, religious and military essays, written by experts from different disciplines, to discuss the Muqawama in general, and Hezbollah’s model in particular, to provide an ideological and academic platform for the Muqawama culture, which has continued to take shape trough daily culture, media and events promoted by Hezbollah.

Several essays published in this book contain the terms “Muqawama” and “Intiṣar” (victory). These two terms were considerably important for Hezbollah in a book published immediately following the end of the 2006 Lebanon war; but this pairing between the “Muqawama” and “Intiṣar” was also deemed a significant alternative for the regimes and officialdom in the Arab world in general, which according to Hezbollah, symbolize the culture of “Inhizam” (defeatism). The root ق.و.م appeared in the titles of 9/29 essays in this anthology, and the word “Intisar” appeared in 13 titles.

Another publication dating back to 2006 is *The Encyclopedia of the Lebanese Resistance*, comprised of 12 volumes discussing the history of the Israeli-Lebanese conflict, referring to “Al-Muqawama al-Waṭaniyya” (national resistance) as a major source for Hezbollah and its Muqawama. Among the resistive parties mentioned in the Encyclopedia: the Communist Party, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the Communist Action Organization in Lebanon, al-Baʿath Party, the Arab Socialist Movement, Amal Movement and others[[18]](#footnote-18). In the elections of 2009, Sheikh Naim al-Qassem referred to these names, in addition to The Free Patriotic Movement of General Michel ʿAoun, as the main constituents of the Muqawama in Lebanon.

Another encyclopedia published by Hezbollah is titled *The Encyclopedia of Nasrallah: the Man who Embodies a Nation-* comprised of three books deemed an autobiography of the real resistance leader, Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah. It is evident that this encyclopedia accentuates the Muqawama as both a movement and a culture that have led to the first victory of the Arab and Islamic nation (embodied in Nasrallah’s figure, as suggested in the title) over Israel.

Among the publications of Hezbollah’s publishing house, Dar al-Hadi, it is worth referring to two books by Hassan Fadlallah, one of Hezbollah’s leaders. In 1998, two years before the Israeli withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, the book*A War of Wills: The Battle between the Muqawama and the Israeli Occupier in Lebanon* was published. In this book, Fadlalah presents elaborately the history of Hezbollah as a religious Muqawama movement, and as a part of a broader Muqawama movement[[19]](#footnote-19). It was followed by *The Fall of Illusion: The Defeat of the Occupation and the Victory of The Muqawama in Lebanon*, published in 2001. In addition to the historical review of Hezbollah and of the military operations against Israel, Fadlallah devotes a full chapter to the future of the Muqawama, arguing that it is a culture that should be enhanced and instilled among the Lebanese people and the other Arab and Islamic people in the region[[20]](#footnote-20).

Another genre elaborately discussed by Dr. Abir Hamdar was the “Muqawama novel”, or the genre that tells the history of Hezbollah and of the Lebanese Muqawama through novels[[21]](#footnote-21). Hamdar indicates that this literary genre was not common for a very long period, and it was only until recently that it got a boost. Hamdar assumes that in 2014, the books market contained about 100 publications of this genre, half of which were published during the two years that preceded the publication of her essay.

Hamdar identifies the process of openness and Lebanonization which the organization has gone through, being the same process discussed by other researchers[[22]](#footnote-22). However, I would maintain that this change cannot be summed up solely in openness and Lebanonization, but goes far beyond this. This process constitutes a transition towards establishing a counter-hegemonic project in cooperation with other forces and movements at the national, regional and international levels.

In the review conducted by researcher Hamdar, the most outstanding autobiography is that of De Gaulle Abu-Ṭas, titled “Bila Qayd” (No handcuffs), in which Abu-Ṭas, a Christian from Southern Lebanon, tells his story of joining Hezbollah and the Islamic Muqawama, and how this experience has affected him:

"They [Hizbullah] […] turned their face outwards towards an enemy who was responsible for our suffering and misery … [this enemy] has occupied a land that both Christians and Muslims inhabit […] and for this reason we should be proud of Hizbullah and should embrace and follow in its footsteps." (p. 140)[[23]](#footnote-23)

De Gaulle emphasized the fact that he was a Christian integrated the ranks of Hezbollah’s Muqawama. He further emphasized that being a member of an Islamic and national Muqawama that protects everyone’s land has enhanced his self-respect and dignity:

I am honored to be a member of Hizbullah and, as a Christian, I am proud to be part of the Islamic resistance in a nation whose land is the property of everyone… for the difference in religious belonging is not reason for separation…the nation belongs to everyone. (p.143)[[24]](#footnote-24)

De Gaulle refers elsewhere to declarations made by his comrades in Hezbollah, emphasizing that their shared interests and beliefs as peers and sons of the same homeland is considerably stronger than their religious affiliation, an idea which reaccentuates the national dimension of the organization’s Muqawama project[[25]](#footnote-25).

Other novels, like the Moroccan author’s, Abdel Ilah Belkziz, “Ḥalat al-Ḥisar” (The State of Siege) about the 2006 Lebanon War, blur the limits between the whole Arab nation and the Muqawama fighters, and associate the national, socialist and anti-imperialist movements with the warriors of the Islamic Muqawama[[26]](#footnote-26). He writes: "Nasrallah is a Historical hero […] Leftists, nationalists, democrats and liberals wished he was one of them" (p.261).[[27]](#footnote-27)

In his novel, Belkziz, who witnessed the 2006 Lebanon War, points to the closeness all these movements to Hezbollah’s Muqawama and to the organization’s development from a small militaristic organization, representing a specific religious group (or a part of it) during the Lebanese Civil War, into one that represents Lebanese nationalism, Pan-Arabism and the anti-imperialist struggle worldwide.

These examples are merely a small portion of the Muqawama literature which seeks to instill and disseminate the Muqawama project to the wider public, not only to the organization’s “natural” public.

1. **The educational system and the schools**

Most students in Lebanon learn in private schools, and the trend of private schools and others associated with a certain religion, church or political movement is not unusual. A UN report indicates that about 70% of Lebanon’s students learn in private schools[[28]](#footnote-28).

Therefore, Hezbollah has not taken an exceptional step by developing its own educational system, to bequeath to the young generation the movement’s values, especially the Muqawama’s, since a very young age. Hezbollah -oriented educational system included at least three chains: the most important, and recent, among the three, is al-Mahdi’s, which started operating in 1993[[29]](#footnote-29). It first included three schools which were established, according to *Al-ʿAahd* (Hezbollah’s newspaper) “as an alternative to the state’s unsuccessful policy in the field of education, as in other fields, and as an alternative to the private educational system, which was unattainable to the disadvantaged communities due to its high fees”[[30]](#footnote-30).

Hezbollah’s additional schools were established later, meeting the needs of approximately 14,000 students of different age groups, in different Lebanese localities, especially in Dahieh, Beqaa governorate and Southern Lebanon[[31]](#footnote-31).

Another chain directly associated with Hezbollah, and contributing to the promotion of the organization’s project, is al-Mustapha school chain, first established in 1983[[32]](#footnote-32). In the academic year 2001-2002, this chain had 8,091 male and female students[[33]](#footnote-33).

A third chain, relatively independent of Hezbollah, but still affected by it and contributing to instilling the doctrine of the Muqawama ideal, is “al-Mabarat al-Khayriyya”, subject to supervision of Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah (deceased in 2010), who was considered for many years Hezbollah’s religious authority. The first school was established in 1997 to serve as an orphanage for the Shiite community in Lebanon. Six similar establishments are operating nowadays, containing 3,000 students in two schools in Beirut, two in Beqaa governorate and two in Southern Lebanon. Later, the chain established other twelve schools in other localities for all students from the Shiite community in Lebanon[[34]](#footnote-34).

In the schools that follow Hezbollah’s curriculum, and in order to adapt to Hezbollah’s Muqawama project, a special emphasis is placed on Islam according to the Shiʿa perception and to the revolutionary one that Hezbollah calls for. Still, this does not prevent the schools from concentrating on realistic subjects, natural sciences and technical subjects, which can prepare the students for a future that would help them integrate in the organization’s life and military activism.

At Nasrallah’s speech held at the opening of al-Mahdi school chain, he talked elaborately on the mental and cultural preparation of the students, towards their future integration in the organization, and active agency in the Muqawama project (that was still nascent at that time, containing a very potent religious dimension, without any reference to the project’s national or patriotic aspects[[35]](#footnote-35).)

A change was sensed in Nasrallah’s speech in 1997, during the graduation ceremony of 375 students from the Lebanese University in different disciplines. In this speech, Nasrallah referred to a quote by Jesus Christ “‘For God’s sake, bestir yourself̓, meaning that do not use your studies solely for your benefits at other people’s expense, but rather for the sake of the whole nation and of the Muqawama project.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

Nasrallah drew a comparison between the progress achieved by each student and the one achieved by the Muqawama warriors in their resistance against the Israeli army, urging them to conquer summits, like their counterparts in their resistance against the occupation[[37]](#footnote-37).

1. **Periodicals and contests for disseminating the Muqawama culture among students**

The Muqawama ideas articulated by Hezbollah were diffused through various means, including a periodical titled *Ajyal al-Mustapha* (the Prophet’s Generations), initiated in 1995 by “The Islamic Religious Teachings Organization”, founded and led mainly by Hezbollah’s clerics and activists, including the organization’s deputy Secretary-General, Sheikh Naim Qassem[[38]](#footnote-38).

Although the organization was established to enhance religiosity among the young generation, its periodical emphasizes the Muqawama values, and most of the drawings which the students publish in it are greatly affected by the Muqawama motif. On the front page of one edition, published after the liberation of Southern Lebanon, there appears a drawing of Lebanon’s map painted with the colors of the Lebanese flag, beneath Hezbollah’s flag. The sword of Hezbollah’s flag is stuck in the Star of David, signifying the Muqawama’s triumph and the end of the Israeli occupation in Southern Lebanon. The drawing is coupled with the statement “Kuluna Lil-Waṭan” (we are all committed to the homeland) and “Kuluna Muqawama” (we are all resistance)[[39]](#footnote-39)- a combination between the lyrics of the Lebanese anthem and Muqawama’s slogan, respectively.

This proximity between the words “waṭan” and “Muqawama” was a part of the consolidation of the new national Lebanese perception, namely the “Muqawama nationalism”. It is evident that a comparison of this kind was inconceivable during the pre-hegemonic period of Hezbollah, where its main goal was to overthrow the state apparatus, and where the ideas of the “Lebanese State” and of nationalism were not even recognized by Hezbollah. This was indicated by Ibrahim el-Amīn, one of Hezbollah’s leaders, in a speech he held in 1988, saying “our project is the project of Islam, not only in Lebanon, but worldwide”[[40]](#footnote-40).

Similar motifs could be found in the children’s drawing contest launched by the organization in February 1999, whose results were announced in *Al-ʿAahd* newspaper, in 5.3.1999. The winning drawing was that of sword, painted with the colors of the Lebanese national flag, and in the shape of Lebanon’s map. In this drawing too, the sword was stuck in the Star of David, as a connotation for the resistance to the Israeli occupation[[41]](#footnote-41).

The drawing ranked second contained images of Hezbollah’s warriors waving to civilians in Southern Lebanon, including an old man, a woman and a child, as a connotation for the close relationship between the people in the occupied south and the organization’s activists who fought for the sake of their dignity. This drawing features the cedar, which is a national Lebanese symbol.

A more general idea, also appreciated by the organization’s representatives and selected among the winning drawings in the exhibitions, was a drawing of a bird outside a cage, alongside a general humanistic statement: “Freedom for all creatures” (Al-Ḥurriya li-kul Makhlouq). The message behind the choice of this drawing is that the organization’s warriors fight for freedom, and that the Muqawama promotes the humanistic and basic message of freedom for all human beings[[42]](#footnote-42).

The dissemination of the organization’s messages among the young generation was not limited to drawing. “Ajyal al-Mustapha” periodical contained poetry written by school pupils, like the poem below, written in English, and referred to by the researcher Shaery-Eisenlohr:

*You have your Beirut and I have my Beirut*

*Your Beirut is high buildings smeared with black, and pocked with*

*snipers and bombers where warplanes shatter the sky’s silence.*

*Your Beirut is alleys in which fire is exchanged and shops blown up.*

*And my Beirut is a small brick house on whose walls children draw*

*pictures under the shadow of what they feel and what they think.*

*And my Beirut is an angel crowned a queen by the whole universe.*

*Your Beirut is an old portrait hung on the walls of each house.*

*And my Beirut is a young girl who doesn’t know but the silver touch of*

*moon and golden glim of the sun.*

*Your Beirut is a repeated poem by a very known poet who speaks to*

*himself in a mirror.*

*And my Beirut is a poem that is every day changing read by the sky and*

*written on the golden rocks of the seas.*

*Your Beirut is dinner parties full of most delicious food and my Beirut is*

*a piece of bread in a hand of hungry kid and a doll in the hand of a*

*poor girl.*

*Your Beirut is sandcastles against the storms.*

*And my Beirut is a tough rock that waves could not and will never*

*erode.*[[43]](#footnote-43)

The poem features an explicit contrasting between Beirut (also as a connotation for Lebanon) of the Mustaḍʿaafoun (the marginalized people), and its rich counterpart, pertaining to the Mustakbiroun (tyrants). It contrasts between the poor and the rich, the Muqawama’s downtrodden and strong supporters and those building sand castles on the beach (a comparison between the Muqawama project, namely the project of Hezbollah and the simple people, and the project of the merchants and bankers living in fancy houses and luxury buildings). The poem also contrasts between the strong Lebanon, through resistance, and the slogan of the old Lebanon “Quwat Lubnan fi Ḍaʿafih” (Lebanon’s strength lies in its weakness).

1. **Internet websites and television- the media of the Muqawama**

In the present world, electronic media plays a major role in the structuring of the hegemonic project. The global network is an additional arena that requires a special scope of investment by all socio-economic forces seeking to promote their own hegemonic projects. Moreover, this arena is actually a framework for resistance and for the dissemination of an alternative hegemonic project, since it competes with the traditional official media channels- television, radio and written press- which require greater investment, if compared with internet website, and are controlled by the ruling hegemony in general.

In his master’s research in 2003, Tal Pavel surveyed more than 23 official websites associated with Hezbollah, and several satellites websites no longer subject to the organization’s direct control[[44]](#footnote-44). Many of these websites pertain to civil society organizations and institutions operating under Hezbollah’s auspices (like “Jihad al-Binaʾ, “al-Jarha” and “al-Shahīd”, while others belong to the organization’s periodicals, newspapers, television and radio. In this section, I will focus on the reflection of the Muqawama and its culture in Hezbollah’s main and official internet website, simply called “Muqawama”, given the address: [www.moqawama.org](http://www.moqawama.org).

Through the website’s name, the organization seeks to merge with the Muqawama. The home page is overloaded with different Muqawama-related statements, containing links to the diary of the last war between Hezbollah and Israel in 2006, titled “Yawmiyyat al-Waʿad as-Sadiq (The Diary of the honest Promise). The Honest Promise” is the name which Hezbollah gave to this war, signifying that the promise of the Muqawama’s victory is real and honest, unlike the promises given by the Arab regimes, that do not pertain to the “Muqawama culture”, but to that of defeatism.

An additional part of the website, titled “Muqawama wa-Iḥtilal (resistance and Occupation)[[45]](#footnote-45) concentrates on the Muqawama’s activism and war against Israel. To remind us that the ultimate target of any Muqawama is Palestine, a special part surveys up-to-date events in the Palestinian territories all that concerns the Palestinian people.

The website contains plenty of pictures of the Muqawama Shuhadaaʾ (martyrs), alongside flash clips, video recordings, audio recordings of the Muqawama leaders, and special songs and video clips for the Muqawama. Two remarkable parts of the website greatly represent the project of creating an extensive Muqawama culture. The first one is titled “Mʿalam Siyyahi ʿaan al-Muqawama (A Historical Landmark about the Muqawama), including all journalistic articles and pieces revolving around the Muqawama’s touristic website, built in Southern Lebanon, in a village called Mleeta in Iqlim Al-Tufah district. It documents, through different artistic mediums (films, sculpturing and so forth), the history of Hezbollah’s movement in particular, and the Muqawama’s in general. It also features reconstructed battlefields of the Muqawama forces and the Israeli army[[46]](#footnote-46) .

Another remarkable part in the website is the Muqawama games, including a quick review of the military resistance to the Israeli occupation in Southern Lebanon, which is apparently directed to the younger generation. In the computer game, the surfer is required to take part in a battle against the last soldiers of the Israeli occupation. The player is one of the Muqawama warriors; he must shoot ten Israeli soldiers, so that he can open the gate of Intiṣar (victory) and liberate Southern Lebanon[[47]](#footnote-47).

The website also includes a portal called “Ilʿaab wqawim” (play and resist), containing a collection of games that can be downloaded to the PC, laptop or cellular phones, all related to the motif of the Muqawama and the war against the Israeli enemy[[48]](#footnote-48).

Moreover, the organization does not miss the opportunity to invade the leisure life of the youth through computer games. Every game is preceded with an explanation on the military operations of the Islamic resistance during and after the Israeli occupation in Southern Lebanon.

One of the games is called “Silsilat Alʿaab at-Tahrīr” (a series of liberation games). It is comprised of six levels, each featuring a special event or operation conducted by the Muqawama since the beginning of the Israeli invasion in Lebanon in June 1982 until 2000, the liberation year. In the first level, the player should play against the Israeli army in the spirit of confrontation that prevailed in Khaldi in 1982. Afterwards, he should try to reconstruct the occupation of Sejoud in 1986, during the Israeli occupation of Southern Lebanon. The third level is devoted to launching Katyusha rockets towards Northern Israel, as in the operation “Grapes of Wrath” in 1996. In the fourth level, the player is supposed to conceal a roadside charge in the reconstruction of the operation that led to the death of brigadier-general Erez Gerstein, the commander of the Lebanon of [Israel Defense Forces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel_Defense_Forces) Liaison Unit in 1999. The last level is the offensive on “ʿAaziyyeh” in Southern Lebanon, in January 2000.

Each level is accompanied with a detailed explanation of each operation, including the dates, the Muqawama’s press releases following each operation and extracts from interviews with the groups that took part in these operations. Moreover, to further accentuate the achievements and the reporting credibility, the game contains testimonies by Israeli militants who witnessed these operations.

Another game is called “ʿAayn al-Saḥab” (the eye of the clouds), in which the players seemingly flies an unmanned aerial vehicle in the Israeli skies. In each level, the player has to watch an Israeli locality, and all levels are accompanied with explanations and information on these targets. Among the targets that should be observed by the player: Kiryat Shmona, Rosh Pina Airport, several targets in Haifa, including the port, the power stations, the train stations and others, Ramat David Israeli Air Force Base, the power station in HHHadera, Sde Dov Airport, Ben Gurion Int. Airport, Port of Ashdod, Tal Nof, Dimona Reactor and Port of Eilat.

A short explanation is provided about the strategic importance of each of these targets to Israel, and about their coordinates, to acquaint the children and the players with the organization’s abilities, not only to gain their identification with its goals, but also to make them sense their potential contribution to the organization’s competences and Muqawama. There is also the remarkably important dimension of psychological warfare against Israel, which merges very strongly with the dissemination of the Muqawama culture and narrative, accentuating the need for constant readiness, and the organization’s ability to constitute a weighty enemy of Israel, and with the integration of the Muqawama in the life of the resistance community and supporters.

The 25th of May 2000, declared the “Feast of resistance and liberation”, is also allocated a special part in the website. This part does not solely address the activities conducted by Hezbollah and its subordinate organizations for the commemoration of the liberation, pertaining totally to “Libnan al-Muqawama”, but also to the activities held by other parties and movements, like the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, Attaghyir wal-Islah Party (change and reform), led by general Michel ʿAoun (who later became president), the Communist Party and others. The main goal of concentrating the parties commemorating the feast was to differentiate between the Muqwama’s affiliates and non-affiliates.

1. **Al-Manar- the development of a Muqawama’s channel**

Al-Manar TV channel started broadcasting in 1991, and in 2000, it launched its satellite broadcasts. In 2014, the channel unified its satellite and local broadcast, branding itself the channel of “Arabs and Muslims”, thus conveying an implicit message regarding the prioritization of the national-Arab dimension over the Islamic, as Hezbollah is accused by its adversaries of being Iran’s instrument.

The channel called for addressing the issues that would interest the Mustaḍʿaafoun (the marginalized) for the sake of the nation’s revival and confrontation against “Al-Istikbar” (tyranny) and its Zionist project, and against the Takfīriyoun (the Jihadist movements which the organization fights against in Syria and Lebanon)[[49]](#footnote-49).The channel has also aimed to survey all the Muqawama-related events, and further to the narrative of the “Muqawama victory”, the organization emphasizes its media review “of the Muqawama’s victories since the nineties, through the liberation in 2000 and up to the victory of July 2006)[[50]](#footnote-50). The organization also emphasizes that it adopts a discourse of openness, that opposes to sectarian or religious introversion.

Throughout the channel developmental process, lasting for about three decades, a remarkable progress is noticeable at both the technical and thematic levels. In the early years, the religious content was evidently dominant, and as time goes by, one observes a clear tendency towards openness to new forces and to integrating additional content into the broadcast, including actualities and non-Islamic Syrian, Egyptian and Lebanese TV series featuring unveiled women- something that could not be possible in the channel’s early years.

It is the “home channel” of the “Muqawama movement” supporters from all Islamist, leftist and nationalist movements and parties, constantly hosted in the channel’s programs. The channel’s openness towards the different movements allied together in the Muqawama project is also reflected in the documentary films about Arab Muqawama activists like Imad Mughniyeh (Hezbollah’s military leader, who was assassinated by Israeli forces in Syria, as claimed by Hezbollah) or Yasser Arafat, who had a complex relationship with the organization, for his attempts to achieve a peace accord with Israel in Oslo, before he regained the appreciation of the Muqawama when he was killed/died after being under the Israeli siege in Ramallah (the Palestinians claim that he was poisoned). International Muqawama figures, even communists, like Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Ho Chu Minh and Mao Zedong, are documented in the channel too. It is a very important step towards the establishment of a universal culture of Muqawama forces and resistance to the American and Israeli hegemony, in contrary to the first phase of the organization which included assassination of communist leaders associated with the organization or with its entourage.

Researcher Anne Marie Baylouny, who surveyed the development of the broadcast contents on Al-Manar channel, especially in the second half of the first decade of the 21st century, discussed the channel’s policy of openness, mainly in recent years. In her article, she indicates that the channels have become a framework for ideological exchange between affiliates of different religions, movements and parties in Lebanon and in the Arab world:

On Hizbullah’s al-Manar, non-veiled women dominate the airwaves on many programs. Only a small minority of programs on the television is religious. Christians regularly participate as experts and audience members, including priests and bishops, and scientific studies from the west are used as affirmative demonstrations of how Lebanese need to change. Problems are discussed in an open-ended, non-authoritative format, and a broad, multi-communal audience regularly participates. Programming promotes values often considered western, such as individual and human rights, and non-violence. Television shows tackle domestic violence by patriarchal figures and protest violence in video games. In a style echoing Oprah, civil society is urged to volunteer and help the disadvantaged, even though this affects the core of what many assert is Hizbullah's base of legitimacy--its provision of social services.

Hizbullah has had ongoing political alliances with other sects since its entrance into the electoral field in post-civil war elections, yet in its media in recent years the organization has gone beyond politically pragmatic moves to affirm its inclusion of alternative communities and sects. The media presentation of other communities demonstrates to viewers an acceptance of diverse lifestyles and ideas, often highly Westernized, that is communicated in the sphere of popular media run by Hizbullah members. This change has been taking place particularly since 2000, but was sped up in the following years.[[51]](#footnote-51)

I find it important to clarify that this perception is not necessarily pluralist in its “liberal-western” sense, but rather in the sense of recognizing the existence of other partners in a state, which Hezbollah claims to be protecting in its resistance project. Therefore, one should maintain and further enhance the openness towards the others, and to accept them not only as passive partners in the Lebanese state, but also as a force entitled to express its opinion through the main tool that serves for transmitting information and molding consciousness, which Hezbollah uses to promote its integrative project.

As mentioned above, Hezbollah’s openness towards the others derives, *inter alia*, from the flexibility of the Shiite Fiqh (jurisprudence) and its ability to change and demonstrate flexibility in all that concerns Ijtihad.

Baylouni also emphasizes the openness of Hezbollah’s channel towards women, unlike the attitude of religious-Islamic channels towards women. She elaborates that:

Programs with progressive and gender-liberating views coexist with religious programs on personal and family life (ila al-qalb, 2008-present), which, while not depicting an oppressive view of women’s roles, present the issue more narrowly, from the perspective of religion and Hizbullah’s traditional constituency. It is not a simple switch. This spectrum of multiple views is playing out on Hizbullah’s television, and the audience has become similarly diverse. The varied programming attracts different and new constituencies, and it appears that space is being provided for new perspectives in certain forums.

Moreover, 13 out of the 24 programs’ announcers in the channel are women; and in some programs, most of the women are unveiled[[52]](#footnote-52). This implies that the channel does not practice religious coercion, even with regards to women’s dress codes, and this is a part of the message that the organization seeks to transmit- flexibility and readiness to contain different segments and movements within Lebanon and the Arab world.

Al-Manar has provided a platform for different male and female figures from different religions movements, including long interviews with leaders and secretaries-generals of political parties, like the Communist Party, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, The Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, Amal Movement, the Free Patriotic Movement and others. It also broadcasts series that aim to enhance unity between the different religions, especially Christians and Muslims in Lebanon. A prominent example is the series about the life of Virgin Mary, widely viewed in Lebanon and the Arab world[[53]](#footnote-53).

The Muqawama culture does not pass over the numerous TV series produced for the Month of Ramadan. The series, produced by Al-Manar channel, which concentrates on the history of the Muqawama, is called Al-Ghaliboun (the victors). The name also refers to a Quranic Verse, included in Hezbollah’s slogan “Fa-ina Hezbollah hom al-Ghaliboun” (“indeed, the party of Allah - they will be the predominant”, Surah Al-Maidah, 56), and which appears in the party’s flag. The series brings together actors from different religious backgrounds around the concept of the Muqawama[[54]](#footnote-54).

A review of Al-Manar’s programs unveils the three dimensions of Hezbollah’s Muqawamah project, as indicated in the previous chapter:

* The religious dimension- the channel broadcasts religious programs, but they are not dominant in number, and they mainly seek to enhance unity between the different sects and religions, placing a special emphasis on the religious holidays, Ramadan and ʿAshuraʾ, the contents of the “resistive” Islam and references to ʿAshuraʾ in its revolutionary sense.
* The national dimension- as stated above, the channel features great openness, reflected in interviewing figures and experts of different religious and political affiliation. The channel attempts to increase its audience in the Arab world, and not only in Lebanon, and of course, not only from the Shiite community. Broadcasting Syrian, Lebanese and Egyptian TV series is a clear demonstration of this openness. Unlike other religious channels, Al-Manar does not attempt to adapt these TV series to a religious rigid line. Moreover, the channel constantly broadcasts nationalist Arab songs and videoclips from the Nasserite period, thus enhancing Hezbollah’s claim that the organization succeeds the Arab nationalist and anti-colonial movement represented by Nasser in the fifties and the sixties of the 20th century.
* The economic dimension- the channel’s programs place a special emphasis on the marginalized groups within the Lebanese society. For example, the program called “Yʿaishoun Baynana” (they live among us) concentrates on poor families of all religious backgrounds, and on the need for ameliorating their living conditions, by both spectators and citizens, but also by the different governments and governmental policies. This supports the popular-economic aspect that Hezbollah is developing in its project.

1. **Videoclips, flash clips and Muqawama songs**

One of Hezbollah’s special characteristics in Lebanon is its rapid ability to adapt to new media channels; and in this regard, it does not differ from other religious organizations in the Middle East and worldwide. Fundamentalism in general, and in the Middle East in particular, is a modern phenomenon; and the use which these organizations make of internet, social media and alternative media signifies the progress which these organizations have achieved. Without the technological revolution, especially in the field of information and computerization, the emergence of such organizations in history could have been impossible (or possible, but in a different manner).

In this regard, there are similarities between Hezbollah and fundamentalist organizations worldwide and in the Middle East. In its early years, Hezbollah succeeded in identifying the great potential of camera and television in the psychological warfare against Israel and other enemies. It was also the first to couple every military operation against the Israeli army in Southern Lebanon with a team of photographers, to broadcast the military operation on Al-Manar channel, and on other TV channels in the Arab world and worldwide. This effect was later enhanced by the development of satellite broadcasting in the Arab world in the early nineties.

Hezbollah was also among the first organizations to identify the great potential of the internet and its “resistive” and alternative nature, which has served as a direct channel for propaganda and communication with millions of spectators in Lebanon, the Arab world and worldwide.

However, despite the aforementioned commonalities which Hezbollah shares with fundamentalist movements, especially the Sunni Jihadist ones, there is a significant difference in the messages transmitted through this innovative medium, related to the level of these organizations’ openness towards the other. For Hezbollah, this message (and the organization itself) has gone through a process of change, from the organization’s very first years, until recent times. When the organization started developing its hegemonic project, the messages transmitted through different means were also adapted to the new project.

A remarkably interesting use was that of videoclips and flash clips processed and broadcast on al-Manar channels and on different websites, and which gained tremendous momentum during the most critical periods of the organization’s life, like the years preceding the Israeli withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, the short period following the Israeli withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, the 2006 Lebanon war, the events of May 2008 and the recent Syrian war.

Dozens of flash clips and videoclips were produced during the nineties, and even more forcefully during the 2000s. They were produced by Hezbollah, through al-Manar, the party’s information department or other means. These flash clips, especially those produced during July’s war and the following years, included the three main dimensions of Hezbollah Muqawama project: the religious Shiite-resistive dimension, with a special emphasis on the motif of ʿᾹshurāʾ and the linkage made between the revolution of Husayn and the Muqawama’s operation of present times; the national dimension which unites the members of the different religions in Lebanon and coronates Hezbollah the guardian of the national unity, and the protector of the Lebanese dignity in particular and of the Arab and Islamic world in general; and the economic dimension, where socioeconomic or class-related signifiers featured in these flash clips are mostly peasants and poor people, compatibly with Hezbollah’s self-perception, as the representative of the marginalized communities in Lebanon.

In the different videoclips, a special emphasis is placed on the terms “Intiṣar” (victory) and its diverse conjugations, “Muqawama”, “Waṭan” (homeland), “Shaʿab” (nation) and others that associate resistance with victory, and with Lebanon and the Lebanese people. For example, the video containing the song “Akbar Naṣr inkatab” (the greatest victory documented)[[55]](#footnote-55) is started with quotes from Nasrallah’s speech in the victory conference held on 22.9.2006, where he directly addresses the audience. The song begins with the lyrics “the greatest victory documented in the homeland’s book, and a strong nation supporting the Muqawama”. The word “people” is mentioned for the first time, with a picture of an old veiled woman, with the buildings destroyed by the Israeli army’s bombardments appearing in the background. The second time features an unveiled younger woman, with Christian symbols, with a special emphasis placed on the national unity and the attribution of victory to all the Lebanese people, not only to the Shiite community. Most of the videoclips that I reviewed feature different clerics and religious symbols: Shiite, Sunni, Druze and Christian.

This videoclip and many others, like “Naṣrak haz edeni” (your victory shook the world)[[56]](#footnote-56), feature the flags of Lebanon and Hezbollah, alongside flags of the other allies in the Muqawama’s project, like Amal Movement, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the Free Patriotic Movement (led by Michel Aoun), the Communist Party and other parties.

In addition to the Muqawama’s military dimension, prevalent in these videoclips, there appears to be a dimension of reconstruction and revival on the ruins of war, and the participation of Hezbollah’s civil society organization in these reconstruction works, as part of the Muqawama operations, and a complementary act of its military activism.

The motif of national unity and the attempts to render the Muqawama the main representative of all the Lebanese people, not only of Hezbollah, is dominant in most of videoclips available on Hezbollah’s different websites and on al-Manar channel. A remarkably powerful video combining between the Lebanese national anthem and the Muqawama is titled “Kuluna Muqawama kuluna lilwaṭan” (All for the resistance, all for the homeland)[[57]](#footnote-57). In addition to the national flags and symbols of Lebanese national landmarks, like the historical site of Baalbek, this videoclip ends with Lebanese flag, with the header “we are all for the homeland” and the footer “together, we will be triumphant”.

In each of these videoclips, like many others, Hezbollah’s activists appear alongside the Lebanese armed forces, alluding to the homogeneity between the Muqawama and the Lebanese army (and the Lebanese state as a whole), like the videoclip “Ya waṭani ya waṭan en-nour” (my homeland is the land of light)[[58]](#footnote-58).

Beside the dimension of the national unity and the transformation of the Muqawama (headed by Hezbollah) into the representative of the new Lebanese state, and not only of a certain community, a special emphasis is placed on the dimension of social class. For example, in the beginning of the videoclip “Naṣrak haz edeni”, there appears a young shepherd playing the flute calmly in a certain locality in Southern Lebanon. Hezbollah’s militants appear in the fields, the peasants applaud to them, and then Muqawama warriors appear with a man and woman working the land and sowing wheat seeds, mingling with the resistance bullets. This motif of the wheat seeds mingling with the Muqawama bullets was not new; it had already appeared in one of Hezbollah’s posters, published in *Al-ʿAahd* newspaper, prior to the conference held in 1997, “the unity between the people and the Muqawama” for the annual commemoration of the “Operation Grapes of Wrath”[[59]](#footnote-59). The motif of peasants and poor people (and less frequently, the proletariat) is intentionally recurrent in the organization’s videoclips, to remind us that the Muqawama belongs to the marginalized people by protecting them and their lands and homeland.

The military, national and class-popular dimensions appearing in these videoclips are complemented with a potent Islamic-Shiite dimension. One of the most powerful expressions of the comparison between the Lebanese resistance to the Shiite Islam in its revolutionary-resistive version and ʿᾹshurāʾ is a videoclip and a song called “Hayhat ya Muḥttal” (We will not be subjugated by the occupier)[[60]](#footnote-60). This is a famous statement said by the third Imam of the Shiʿa, Husayn, during his confrontation with Yazīd’s army in Karbalāʾ, when he was given the option to choose between death or acceptance of the legitimacy of Yazīd’s rule. The answer of Imam Husayn was “Hayhat mina al-dhilah”. Pertaining to the political Shiite Islam, Hezbollah has always used this statement, referring to this founding historical event to make comparisons that go far beyond time and space, based on the famous slogan: “every day is ʿᾹshurāʾ, every land is Karbalāʾ”. In this comparison, the organization assigns itself the role of continuing the legacy of Imam Husayn, while Israel is paralleled to Yazīd. Moreover, and further to the organization’s will to gain support, legitimacy and solidarity on the part of all the Lebanese people, this videoclip features the picture of Ali Abbas Moussawi, son of Hezbollah’s Secretary-General Abbas Mussawi- both declared martyrs, and reminding one of Hadi Hassan Nasrallah, son of the present Secretary-General, who also fell a martyr in a battle against Israel.

This fact elevates the organization’s status among the Muqawama’s supporters and in the Arab world, and defines it as a leader and an integral part of the nation, ready to sacrifice for the achievement of its vision, unlike the traditional leadership of the Arab regimes and the other sectarian organizations within Lebanon, that are mainly concerned with themselves and with their supporters.

It is worth indicating that these videoclips are generally accompanied with the organization’s band, called al-Wilayya band, serving as a main artistic means for the dissemination of the Muqawama culture directly from Hezbollah. Yet, other videoclips feature patriotic Arab songs, dating back to the Nasserite period, accompanying pictures and scenes that glorify Hezbollah and its leaders and warriors[[61]](#footnote-61). These videoclips, especially those produced during and following July’s war in 2006, include the famous song dating back to the sixties, of the Egyptian singer Abdel Halim Hafiz, called “Khali es-Silah Sahi” (keep the weapons prepared)[[62]](#footnote-62), and the song “Allahu Akbar” that gained great fame during the Suez Crisis in 1956.

In these videoclips, a direct line is drawn between Hezbollah of the 21st century and the Arab Nationalist Movement and the Nasserite Egypt. Besides, an imaginary line (though not explicitly mentioned) is drawn between the most appreciated Arab nationalist leader of the 20th century, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and the leader of the Lebanese Muqawama, the “legitimate” successor of the Arab nationalist and anti-colonialist movement, Hassan Nasrallah.

One of the major projects implemented by the Muqawama beyond the Lebanese borders and the entire Arab world is “Nassr el-ʿArab” (the Arabs’ victory)[[63]](#footnote-63), performed by a great number of artists and singers from different Arab countries, especially from Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. The title of the song features a pun; on the one hand, it talks about Nassr el-ʿArab, the victory of the Muqawama over Israel, a victory attributed to all the Arabs. On the other hand, the title explicitly implies that Nassr el-ʿArab is none other than Nasrallah, Hezbollah’s Secretary-General who has become, according to this narrative, “Nassr el-ʿArab” and the leader of the entire Arab nation. This fact was further enhanced when the videoclip was played in one of Nasrallah’s speeches, held during the 2006 Lebanon War, in which he promised victory in the war.

The Muqawama project’s permeation beyond Hezbollah’s “domestic” environment, namely the Shiite community and the direct supporters, was reflected, *inter alia*, in the great support that the organization gained, as the leader of the Muqawama, on the part of many intellectuals in Lebanon and the Arab world.

The Christian-leftist Lebanese singer, Julia Boutros, also associated with the Communist party and the Syrian Social Nationalist party, donated her revenues from the song “Aḥibaeʾi” (my beloved ones)[[64]](#footnote-64), whose lyrics are the words read by Nasrallah to his warriors in live broadcasting at the height of July’s war. Boutros sang for the guardians of the homeland and its citizens, and for the Muqawama’s activists who build the civilization and liberate the homeland.

Patriotic and leftist Arab poets, like Omar al Farra from Syria and Ahmad Fuʾad Nijm from Egypt, also wrote poems that praise the Muqawama under Hezbollah’s leadership, and the organization’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah. The Communist musician Ziad Rahbani expressed his support of Hezbollah as the leader of the recent resistance project[[65]](#footnote-65). Among the most prominent indicators of Hezbollah’s status- mainly of the organization’s leader Hassan Nasrallah, and of the deep permeation of the Muqawama project among the Lebanese people and its ability to affect other communities within Lebanon and in the Arab world, is the statement made by Ziad Rahbani about his mother Fairouz, a singer and Arab-Lebanese icon, who “loves Hassan Nasrallah”[[66]](#footnote-66). This statement ignited a stormy debate between the supporters and the opponents of Nasrallah, Hezbollah and the Muqawama, since Fairouz is highly appreciated in Lebanon and the Arab world. for the Lebanese and Arab consensus which Fairouz symbolizes.

**Interim summary**

The diverse videoclips that I analyzed in this subchapter feature the development of Hezbollah’s Muqawama project with its different dimensions, alongside the equivalence made between the different symbols of the Muqawama, so that they would intersect at the same point, namely the Muqawama.

The different videoclips feature the chains of equivalence which the Muqawama project established gradually. At the first level, namely the religious dimension, Hezbollah made a leap of more than one thousand years, back to ʿᾹshurāʾ and Imam Husayn, to import them to the present time and provide a continual resistive interpretation to a historical event that has turned into a timeless myth. Hezbollah curtailed the other interpretations of Shiʿa Islam (that endured for centuries, insisting on the necessity of Intiẓar and silence) and associated all references to the Shiʿa with the myth of Karbalāʾ in its resistive dimension. In the process of associating Shiʿism with resistance, Hezbollah coronated itself the ultimate representative of the Shiite community in Lebanon and worldwide.

The Muqawama signifier has expanded to contain the Lebanese people and the Lebanese state with its different ethnic, religious and political groups. Yet, it is not an equal Muqawama of all parties, rather it is a (Muqawama-People-Homeland) of the peasants, of the simple people who wake up early to work the land and guard the homeland, of the poor but proud people.

Being the leader of the Muqawama project, Hezbollah broadens the term “people” through special rhetoric, referring to the Shiite community (the environments from which Hezbollah emerged) and expands it to the Lebanese people (those who identified with the Muqawama in its struggle). Taking a step further, it becomes a signifier of all the Arab people in the region. The signifier which allows for this expansion of the term “people” is the Muqawama and the attitude towards it. The message of these videoclips and of the structuring of the new hegemonic project is that the “people” as a political subject will reach the zenith of its self-realization once it intermingles with the Muqawama.

Through the Muqawama, Hezbollah builds and leads a historical bloc, which brings together all the parties that follow the “Muqawama”. The developing historical bloc is based on the human mass of the Shiite community, especially its low and low-middle classes (most of the community members), and integrate supporters of the close parties, like the leftist parties, mainly comprised of Shiite Lebanese, but also Orthodox Christians, Sunnis, Druze and others. Later, the organization seeks to integrate Maronite Christians in its project, through the Free Patriotic Movement of General Michel ʿAoun.

It is worth noting that this developing hegemonic group has not completely annulled the previous hegemonic project, consolidated prior to the civil war, namely the project of merchants and bankers, or at least parts of its symbolic-perceptual stratum. It merely made some perceptual changes and conducted a new articulation between the different signifiers. For example, the developing hegemonic group has succeeded in including the dimension of the Lebanese multiculturalism and pluralism within the “Muqawama” framework, which provided a new-old interpretation of the Lebanese history as the land of religious minorities and the land of resistance to Orthodox Islamic hegemony, and later to European colonialism. Thus, the Muqawama project has become a natural successor of the Lebanese popular history and to that of the Lebanese people.

1. **The dissemination of the Muqawama through space design- the examples of Khiyam and Mleeta**

The dissemination of the hegemonic perception, or the hegemonic project, does not solely rely on propaganda, media and education. It is also promoted through changing (or maintaining) the physical space which the counter-hegemonic (or the hegemonic) project wants to control.

Following the liberation of Southern Lebanon, and all the more forcefully after the 2006 Lebanon war, Hezbollah’s activists, aware of this fact, started to invest special efforts in building memorial sites for “Consolidating consciousness” for the Muqawama people. Or as maintained by one of the planners in al-Jamʿiya al-Lubnaniyya lil Funoun (the Lebanese organization for arts), established by the organization in 2004 to achieve this goal:

"You can control people by narrating a specific heritage and memory. This is what the Israelis do. We are fighting their culture by providing a counter-culture. We want to fix our memory through architectural and design language. Few people read books but many people come to visit a building, a museum or a heritage website."[[67]](#footnote-67)

Researchers Muna Harb and Lara Deeb (geographer and anthropologist) maintained that the establishment of memorial sites of this kind is in fact the establishment of culture through space and within it[[68]](#footnote-68). These sites have become an integral part of the Muqawama tourism that flourished in Lebanon, or as defined by the two researchers, of the “religious and political tourism”[[69]](#footnote-69).

For this purpose, the organization built several sites, like Khiyam, Mleeta, Maroun ar-Ras Park, the Museum of the organization’s former Secretary-General Abbas al-Musawi in Beqaa Governorate, and the Muqawama museum and memorial site in Dahieh-Beirut[[70]](#footnote-70). These sites are currently under the responsibility of a body called Jamʿiyat Ihyāʾ Turath al-Muqawama (The Muqawama Heritage Organization).

* 1. **Khiyam**

Khiyam detention center in Southern Lebanon was used as a detention camp by the Israeli army in 1984. It was under the direct responsibility of South Lebanon Army, which collaborated with the Israeli army and continued operating in the occupied lands in Southern Lebanon until its liberation in May 2000. The detention center hosted 5000 Lebanese detainees who resisted against the occupation, or were involved in supportive operations in favor of the resistance[[71]](#footnote-71).

During the years 2000-2006, a committee of volunteers from that area was established, and started organizing guided tours for visitors. These volunteers were mostly former prisoners in Khiyam for different periods; and through their experience, they talked to the visitors about the different torture methods practiced against them.

Many of the volunteers who accompanied the occasional visitors of this memorial site were affiliated with Hezbollah; yet, in the past few years, the organization has hardly invested in this site. The volunteers guiding these tours sought to achieve three goals: to unveil the truth about the occupation; to reveal the harsh experience that the detainees went through in this detention center and to transmit a message to the future generation to keep the torch of resistance lit, and to enhance patriotic feelings among the youth[[72]](#footnote-72).

After 2006, Hezbollah has committed to further invest in this site, to render it a national and official memorial site. In 2009, a plan was prepared for expanding the memorial site, not only for commemorating the tortures inflicted on the Lebanese resistance in Southern Lebanon, but also for commemoration the detention and torture of all occupation opponents worldwide. Harb and Deeb attribute this change to the organization’s desire to be an integral part of other movements resisting injustice and imperialism, both region-wide and worldwide[[73]](#footnote-73).

* 1. **Mleeta**

Mleeta is a village located in Southern Lebanon, on a mountain bearing the same name. Due to its hard topography, the village served as a significant military base for the Islamic Muqawama, and in that specific location, military operations against the Israeli army and South Lebanon Army were organized since 1985, until the Israeli withdrawal in 2000, and later, in July’s war[[74]](#footnote-74). The site was officially opened in May 2010, commemorating a decade for the Israeli withdrawal from Southern Lebanon. It covers the area of 60,000 square meters, 4,500 of which are a built-up area.

The site has become a central attraction for the Muqawama’s audience; for within less than three months, between May and August 2010, it hosted about half million visitors- an average of 47,000 visitors per week[[75]](#footnote-75). At the site entrance, there is a grand square, with a pool in the middle; and beside the entrance, there is a hall containing 150 seats and featuring the needed equipment for screening a film that presents the site’s history and different wings, alongside the Muqawama’s history. The site also hosts an exhibition of the spoils gathered by the Muqawama warriors since 1982, until July’s war in 2006.

The site is saturated with symbols and connotations, and great intellectual efforts have been invested in it over the years, to enhance the visitor’s feelings of inclusion on the part of the Muqawama and to reinforce their identification with the Muqawama’s narrative. An example of the efforts invested in the site is an area covering 3500 square meters and called “Al-Hawiya” (the abyss), including Israeli military equipment, like the Merkava-4 battle tank, partially buried in the land. The abyss area is located on the western side of the memorial site, to symbolize the fall (the sunset) of the Israeli occupation. On the east, there stands Saḥat al-Taḥhrīr (The Liberation square), featuring the different types of weapons used by the Muqawama warriors over the years, in addition to a glass board containing quotes of the speeches held by the organization’s Secretary-General during the 2006 Lebanon War. These are also an observatory overlooking the villages of Iqlim at-Tuffah, and a hill of 1,060 meters, symbolizing the ascension of the Muqawama martyrs to heaven. Both the hill and the square are located to the east of the abyss, thus symbolizing the rise of the Muqawama and the liberation of the homeland[[76]](#footnote-76).

The site’s design helps it intermingle with the landscape, implying that the Muqawama warriors are an integral part of the topography of the place:

"Mleeta's buildings are low-rise concrete structures that are well integrated within the natural environment and do not seek to dominate it."[[77]](#footnote-77)

Sheikh Ali Ṭahir, former president of Al-Jamʿiya al-Lubnaniyya lil-Funoun, accentuates this point for the researchers Harb and Deeb during an interview they conducted with him. He elaborates on the idea of intermingling between the resistance warriors and the natural landscape in Southern Lebanon:

The resistance websites used to be the cradles of the soldiers. They know them inside out: they know the position of each tree, each rock, each flower, each pebble; they recognize their smells, their sounds; their textures; they know the animals who live there; these websites hold very precious memories.... We would like to conceive of projects that will narrate these memories, that would tell future generations about the occupation, its injustice, the wounds it inflicted. We would like a place to narrate this jihad, a place for everyone.[[78]](#footnote-78)

The main idea here is to be an “authentic” descendant of this land, and to transmit a significant message through the physical space. This message promotes the popular-national perception which glorifies the Lebanese nature and its beauty (the Switzerland of the Middle East), and that Hezbollah’s warriors are an integral part of the nature and landscape of Southern Lebanon, and they are the real representatives of the “people”, the homeland and its natural landscape, that is directly associated with the Muqawama.

1. **The Muqawama’s Press**- **al-Akhbar as an example of a field in which the Muqawama project came into being**

One of the major and relatively cheap Media in Hizbulla’s extensive network of communication is the newspaper. The organization’s weekly newspaper was first published in 1984, bearing the name *Al-ʿAahd* (the promise). In 2001, its name was changed to “*Al-ʿAahd wal-Intiqad*” (the Promise and the Criticism)[[79]](#footnote-79). However, the emergence of the Lebanese *Al-Akhbar* (the news) was far more interesting, as it was not Hezbollah’s official newspaper. It was first published in 2006, following the second Lebanese war. Although some American newspapers deemed it pertaining to Hezbollah [[80]](#footnote-80), there does not exist any evidence of this. Moreover, Hassan Khalil, the newspaper’s publisher, published an article demonstrating the discomfort of different organizations, including Hezbollah, regarding the freedom of expression manifested in the newspaper[[81]](#footnote-81). In his article, Khalil addresses the independence of this newspaper opposite to the various forces inside and outside Lebanon, including Syria, which had occasionally banned the newspaper’s entry to the country[[82]](#footnote-82).

What is interesting about “*Al-Akhbar*” is its being a laboratory of the Muqawama’s multidimensional project, which brings together different journalists, authors, artists and thinkers of different movements, who share the same belief in the Muqawama culture and project. Hassan Khalil, the newspaper’s publisher, is a Lebanese Shiite who decided to establish this newspaper in cooperation with the Christian journalist Joseph Samaha, who had previously worked for al-Safir newspaper (the Ambassador)- an independent-nationalist-leftist newspaper, first published in the mid-seventies, shortly after the outbreak of the civil war. He also worked for “al-Yawum al-Sabiʿa” (the seventh day), pertaining to the Palestinian Muqawama movement. The first edition of *Al-Akhbar* was published on the last day of the 2006 Lebanon War (August 14, 2006).

Joseph Samaha was formerly a member of an organization called “Munaẓamat al-ʿAmal al-Shuyūʿī fī Lubnān” (The Communist Action Organization in Lebanon), which established, together with the Lebanese Communist Party, “Jabhat al-Muqawama al-Waṭaniyya al-Lubnaniyya” (The Lebanese National Resistance Front). It served as the umbrella organization for the activism of all the Lebanese resistance movements, including Islamic movements which established Hezbollah later. The leftist and resistive orientation of *Al-Akhbar*’s personnel is demonstrated in a text published in the newspaper’s profile on the website:

A Left-oriented newspaper, affiliated with the camp that opposes to the hegemony emerging from heart of the United States and reaching the Far East, Africa, South America and Europe[[83]](#footnote-83).

Joseph Samaha, the newspaper’s lead editor and founder, did not hide the newspaper’s identity and support for the Muqawama and for the camp opposing to the American and Capitalist hegemony in the world. In his first article titled “The Right Time”, he writes:

We will declare our belonging to the camp that opposed to hegemony emerging from the heart of the United States and reaching the Far East, Africa, South America and Europe. We also declare that we professionally belong to the camp of pluralism, democracy, objectivity, modernity and creative culturalism. Al-Akhbar refuses another Lebanese setback to the pre-July period[[84]](#footnote-84), for it was a dependent land or farm meaninglessly called a state. One should prevent the restoration of this farm, to advance towards the construction of a civil state that is capable, through its justice, competences and independent thinking, of internalizing the outstanding readiness (of its citizens) to overcome all challenges, and to perceive the Muqawama, any Muqawama, as the nerve supporting and enhancing the national unity, protecting its Arabism and preventing its deterioration towards the great destruction which raises the banner of “neutrality” and hinders the brilliant Lebanese contribution…”[[85]](#footnote-85).

This way, *Al-Akhbar* sided with the “Muqawama”, constituting a bridge that allowed the project, under Hezbollah’s leadership, to communicate with the diverse audience, not necessarily the Shiite or religious audience, but rather with a wider public including seculars, revolutionists, leftist intellectuals from Lebanon and the Arab world who looked, during the second decade of the 21st century, for a revolutionary statement or alliances to face the American hegemony, the global neoliberalism and the local capitalism, and have found refuge in *Al-Akhbar*.

*Al-Akhbar* also boasts of the articles written by the famous Communist Lebanese musician, Ziad Rahbani. Rahbani was not likeable by Hezbollah’s activists, mainly for his explicit atheist orientation, and the musicals he composed during the civil war, which were piquantly critical of sectarianism, clerics and religion in general. He argues that religion was among the reasons behind the eruption of the blood-soaked civil war and the terrible suffering inflicted on the Lebanese people. Nevertheless, in his articles published in *Al-Akhbar*, Rahbani sided with the Islamic Muqawama, and called Hezbollah’s activists “Rifaq” (comrades), according to the Communist tradition[[86]](#footnote-86). He meant by this that they were comrades in the joint Muqawama project, and that there is a consensus on certain parts and controversy on others.

Rahbani constantly attended Hezbollah’s conferences, especially after July’s war, and demonstrated respect and appreciation for both Hezbollah and Hassan Nasrallah, regarding their resistance. Rahbani, known for his piquant language, was an integral part of the Muqawama project arsenal against Hezbollah’s enemies, not only the Lebanese right wing, including Al-Kataʾeb (the Phalange) and Al-Quwat of Samir Geagea or even Al-Mustaqbal of El-Hariri. He also criticized former members of the Lebanese Communist party, who split with the party and established the “Democratic Left” movement, that integrated in March 14 Alliance, led by El-Hariri.

*Al-Akhbar* has thus served as a platform for debates on the character of the new Lebanon and of the Muqawama project, through the writings of different intellectuals, politicians and journalists, like Ibrahim el-Amin (a former Communist, and currently a close associate of Hezbollah) the Communist artist Ziad Rahbani, Pierre Abi-Saab, Nahid Ḥittir (a leftist supporter of Arab nationalism as an anti-colonialist nationalism, and who was assassinated by ISIS in Jordan in 2016), Saadallah Mazrʿaani (former Vice General Secretary of the Lebanese Communist Party) and others. Furthermore, *Al-Akhbar* has promoted a prototype of the Muqawama project, which further accentuates the project’s irreligious dimensions, namely the class-popular dimension and the new imagined community, revolving around the Muqawama signifier which brings together all the popular communities of all religions and affiliations, to achieve integration between these diverse groups in the new Lebanon.

These accentuations appear in most of the newspaper’s editions, since its publication in 2006. Yet, they are mainly visible during the commemoration of July’s war.

In the edition of 12.7.2012, on the sixth anniversary of the 2006 Lebanon war (the war of al-Waʿad al-Ṣadiq), the newspaper dedicated a collection of articles to the Muqawama operations during the war. A special article revolved around the Muqawim ʿAli Saleh, deemed according to the headline, Mudamir Usṭurat al-Merkava (the terminator of the Mirkava myth). According to *Al-Akhbar*, Saleh destroyed 15 Merkava tanks (main battle tanks) during the war[[87]](#footnote-87). This is the prototype of the Muqawim which the newspaper promotes: a member of a poor family (a member of the proletariat/the marginalized), lacking academic education; yet an intelligent who knows how to undermine the power of the Israeli occupation, and simultaneously to joke with his comrades. The article portrays him as the person who destroyed the myth of the Merkava to build the myth of the Muqawim. The newspaper has consciously joined the efforts of structuring the Muqawama project, and the debating with the different parties integrated in this project.

A year earlier, in the edition of 12.7.2011, the editor-in-Chief to succeed Joseph Samaha, journalist Ibrahim el-Amīn, revealed that a meeting was held between Samaha and the leader of Hezbollah’s military branch, Imad Mughniyeh, in Southern Lebanon in 2006, a month before the eruption of the war and two months before the publication of *Al-Akhbar*’s first edition. This demonstrated the Muqawama’s great confidence in the figure of Samaha and the positions he represents, allowing him to meet with Mughniyeh, who was then a clandestine activist, sought after by different intelligence agencies[[88]](#footnote-88).

In addition to this significant article about the Muqawama’s military preparedness for potential wars with Israel, the newspaper praises Southern localities, which many of the Muqawama warriors originate from. However, it criticized the inability or the unwillingness of the state’s institutions to meet the needs of the residents of these localities, five years after the end of the war, and seventy years after the declaration of Lebanon’s independence[[89]](#footnote-89).

The same edition also pays tribute to the “American Shahīd”- a Lebanese from the South, holding an American citizenship, who lived in the USA and came to Lebanon to take part in the Lebanese Muqawama against Israel. The articles states:

This young American did not fight in Iraq or Afghanistan; he rather protected his homeland and died next to “Berket al-Hafour” in a battle which the local population deems heroic. He fought in “Maroun” next to his village, Yaroun, and not in Chicago. He did not take part in the occupation of Baghdad[[90]](#footnote-90).

Once again, we encounter the recurrent contrasting between the colonizer and the Muqawim, between the young man who returns to his homeland despite all the privileges that he could have enjoyed as an American citizen, and other non-American Lebanese people who are still serving the American hegemony in the region and fighting against the Muqawama and its symbols.

I would maintain that *Al-Akhbar* is multifunctional. It serves as a bridge connecting between the different parties constituting the Muqawama project in Lebanon; it is a lab in which the possibilities of coexistence between these parties is evaluated; and an arena in which each party fights for dictating its own Muqawama on the whole project.

As shown in this subchapter, Hezbollah demonstrates variedness in its use of the different media channels to advance its Muqawama culture and to transform the idea of resistance into a culture that attracts additional forces and gains mass support. Books, websites, TV and radio channels, periodicals and newspapers are a part of the ideological war’s arsenal which Hezbollah uses to impose the Muqawama culture in Lebanon, as an additional step towards the establishment of a global Muqawama culture.

1. **Developing the Muqawama into a “Muqawama project”- according to Hassan Nasrallah**

Hezbollah’s third and current Secretary-General, Hassan Nasrallah, is among the main determinants best exemplifying the development of the organization and its political strategy from the politics of “Blitzkrieg” into “Trench warfare”, and from a closed organization into a more flexible one, capable of enhancing political understandings and of bridging with different parties in the pluralist Lebanese arena.

The biography of Nasrallah, one of the organization’s main founders, and one of the representatives of “al-Ḥala al-Islamiyya”, as it is defined in Lebanon, embodies the advance of a whole generation towards the Shiite radical Islam, which attempted to provide an “authentic” solution for the unique problems facing Shiite youth in Lebanon, placed in the margins of the Lebanese society, economics and culture, by “getting back to the future”. By this, I mean the reference of Shiite activists and intellectuals to religious sources and the provision of innovative and active interpretation of these sources, rendering them an integral part of the “progressive” perception of history, towards an egalitarian, just and free society.

In other words, Nasrallah could be considered one of the organic intellectuals whom Gramsci referred to, in the sense that he is an intellectual who grew within a social group that sought a leadership that would guide this group towards the consolidation and establishment of a project of its own; he was an integral part of this group and became its leader.

This subchapter is based on numerous interviews and speeches of Hassan Nasrallah, before he was appointed Secretary-General, until the special speech he held during ʿᾹshurāʾ Day in 2015 against the American hegemony in the region, to follow up on the main perceptions in Nasrallah’s (and Hezbollah’s) ideology for more than three decades.

Hezbollah’s position in its first years, as demonstrated in the previous chapters, was that of a classical fundamentalist movement, unwilling to negotiate or reach a compromise with the other forces in a state inflicted with a civil war. Nasrallah’s positions during those years reflected the organization's positions In a speech given at one of Hezbollah’s conferences in 1985, as reported in *al-ʿAhd*, Nasrallah says:

‘This resistance originated from the land of Jabal Amel[[91]](#footnote-91), the homeland of Abū Dhar al-Ghafari, the friend of Imam Ali, peace be upon him. This resistance could not have been achieved had it be not directly associated with our history, tradition, Islam and religion… the resistance emerged because the history of the South and of Jabal Amel’s people includes ʿᾹshurāʾ, Husayn and Karbalāʾ… If there had not been a link between the residents and Karbalāʾ, the Muqawama would not have existed’[[92]](#footnote-92).

He continues by saying:

‘This resistance is an Islamic resistance; we should emphasize this fact, because this is the Muqawama of Muhammad, Ali and Husayn. This is the resistance of the Islam and the Muslim, the resistance of all those who belong to the religion of Allah’ (meaning to Islam- A.K).

The young Nasrallah refers also to the national resistance by saying:

‘The believers, who initiated the struggle, did not fight for their Lebanonism or Phoenicianism, but rather for the Islamic tradition and thought, and for the Islamic Husayini blood flowing in their veins, resisting injustice and occupation. Some think that we reduce the value of the Muqawama by considering it Islamic; but in fact, when we consider it “national”, we delimit it to 10,452 km (the area of Lebanon- A.K). By naming it Islamic, we call all the Muslims worldwide- we call one billion Muslims- to take responsibility.’[[93]](#footnote-93)

Motifs of this kind can be indeed found in Nasrallah’s speeches dating back to the last 90s-early 2000s. However, the speeches of the “young” Nasrallah feature a dimension of monopoly and control over the resistance, alongside the explicit and sharp sectarian discourse, that does not recruit other religions or movements, but on the contrary. It is a discourse of division and defiance.

Young Nasrallah does not conceal the totality and rootedness of the Hezbollah’s Islamic perception. He preaches in a Friday’s prayer, dating back to the early nineties, emphasizing that:

“The meaning of the Islamic choice included faith, devoutness and respect for all the Sharʿii divine limits in all life domains: politics, economy, security, society, culture and militarism”[[94]](#footnote-94).

In this speech, inclusion is interpreted according to Hezbollah’s fundamental perception, and people of other religions, like Christians, are deemed “ahl ul-dhimmah” (meaning protégé), and not full partners in the homeland and the state. In general, the term “homeland” is not part in the perception of the young Hezbollah and Nasrallah, for in those years, homeland was the whole Islamic world, and not only Lebanon or even the Arab world.

The secular forces were not immune to the piquant language of young Nasrallah. In a special conference commemorating the disappearance of Imam Musa al-Ṣadr in September 1986, Nasrallah attacked the seculars, comparing them to the Zionists: “the others wanted the Quranic Islam to turn into secular Islam, but God said his word, and the Quranic Islam did not change”*.* He proceeds to argue:

‘By commemorating the eights anniversary for his disappearance (al-Ṣadr’s), we stand for his ideas; for he suggested the Quranic Islam… and his war against secularism was an explicitly declared war; he sharply stated that seculars are like the Israelis, and that we should follow this path and beware of the transition to secularity, since secularity for the Imam (al-Ṣadr) is Zionism.’[[95]](#footnote-95)

In that speech, Nasrallah bound the secularity to al-Ṣadr’s reference to the dialogue with Christians, stating,

‘As for the dialogue, Sayyid Musa as-Sadr was in favor of dialogue with an-Nassara, not with the Israelis; Amine Gemayel is an Israeli and Samir Geagea is an Israeli.’[[96]](#footnote-96)

The word ‘*naṣārā*’ has a connotation of ‘protégés’ in the Islamic discourse, and he did not call them *masīḥiyun*, as the Christians call themselves. The reductive and guardian-like dimension in this discourse is evident, and was then predominant in Hezbollah’s discourse.

At the beginning of Hezbollah’s activism, as a radical religious movement, which considered itself a successor and an integral part of the Islamic revolution in Iran, the organization’s rhetoric was defined compatibly. The organization’s main perception was to fight against everyone: Christians, seculars, Muslims that did not adopt Hezbollah’s Islamic perception and even Shiites of a different line of thought. Therefore, and based on its position regarding the right strategy and tactic of operation against Israel in Southern Lebanon, Hezbollah declared war against Nabih Berri’s Amal movement.

By the early 1990s and by the end of the civil war, Hizbullah started developing a moderate orientation, both rhetorically and ideologically. It is clear that its transition from a revolutionary fundamentalist religious project of violently imposing an Islamic ideology in Lebanon into a gradual counter-hegemonic project, open for negotiations and collaboration with other parties, was not a sharp change that happened overnight; rather, it has been an ongoing, continuous process.

On this developmental axis, one could place the development of Hezbollah’s perception since the nineties until the early 2000s as a transitional period for preparing the grounds for a deep change in the organization’s rhetoric and discourse.

In Nasrallah’s very first interview as Secretary-General in 28.2.1992, succeeding the former Secretary-General and close friend Abbas Mussawi, the change in discourse, and the orientation towards openness were noticeable:

In the very first years, we were occupied with the establishment of our infrastructure, and this is normal for a project underway… for it cannot be directed towards others to develop relationships and alliances[[97]](#footnote-97).

Later in the interview, Nasrallah emphasizes that Hezbollah’s past criticism of Christians was directed towards a small portion who had had a close relationship with Israel. He adds that Hezbollah has never declared that it would forcefully establish an Islamic state in Lebanon, unless there is:

An objectively wide public basis which will accept this project (the Islamic regime) and will protect it… Historically, the nature of the Islamic state renders it unactualizable, if it does not have a wide popular basis. Therefore, we have the right, like all the Lebanese people, to dream and aspire towards realizing the idea of reaching the zenith of a just society and of security and peace[[98]](#footnote-98).

This statement apprises a change in Hezbollah’s Islamic thought from an absolute thought, as previously declared, into one among many others in the Lebanese “market of thoughts”. It is worth referring to the change in Hezbollah’s attitude towards the political framework called Lebanon, as a serious and independent framework, and not as a state that should be altered or destroyed. There is not any degrading attitude disregarding the independent existence of Lebanon, deeming it only a part of a broader Islamic state.

In a second interview, conducted later the same year, Nasrallah details the “openness” of Hezbollah towards the Christians, especially the Christian population that is distant from the leadership, which as Hezbollah claims, biased the Christians in favor of Israel:

We deem the openness towards the Christians a vital and normal move, and the openness towards the popular classes would be more effective and positive. I do not believe that these people are naturally biased in favor of Israel; their leadership that has certain political dreams and aspirations has manipulated them (the Christians) to make peace with Israel[[99]](#footnote-99).

This flexible attitude has further developed to include political parties and different organizations, and not only religious groups. Hezbollah started organizing and participating in conferences hosting secular parties and governments that have become an integral part of the alliances and the collaboration network, opposite to the Zionism discourse that prevailed in the eighties.

In an important speech by Nasrallah at the ‘Second National Islamic Conference’ in Beirut in 1997, progress in Hizbullah’s attitude towards ‘a historical reconciliation between two prominent movements against the enemy’s project’[[100]](#footnote-100) could be discerned*.* Nasrallah stressed that nationalism is not dissociated from Islam, and that Islam supports nationalism if it is not ‘racist’. He further emphasised that *muqāwama* is the deeper and broader common denominator, serving as a basis to enhance the collaboration between the two main movements – the national and the Islamic. Nasrallah asserted that in addition to its being a military resistance (and despite its crucial importance), Hizbullah also aims to revive the Arab nation and to establish a state based on social justice and fair distribution of sources between all citizens.[[101]](#footnote-101)

One week after this conference, Hezbollah announced the establishment of “al-Saraya al-Lubnaniya li-Muqawamat al-Ihtilal” (the Lebanese Resistance Brigades), a parallel organization to the Islamic Muqawama, to enable integration of all those willing to join the military resistance operations, even if they do not believe in Hezbollah’s line of thought. The main headline of Hezbollah’s weekly newspaper Al-ʿAhad was: *“A comprehensive national cadre towards confrontation with the enemy”*[[102]](#footnote-102). Nationalism ceased to be a marginal issue, and has not been associated only with Hezbollah or the Shiites. It has become a comprehensive framework that can include representatives of different parties, movements and religious groups, who should join forces to build the Muqawama against the Israeli occupation. As defined in *Al-‘Aahd’s* main editorial, the announcement of the establishment of As-Saraya is part *“of the context of establishing a national unity, and the construction of “al-Mujtamaʿa al-Muqawim”* (the resistance society)[[103]](#footnote-103). It was the first time that all the Lebanese people were mentioned within this context, and not only the Shiites or the Shiite regions in Lebanon.

Nasrallah’s open and nationalist stance gained momentum after the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Hezbollah marked the day on May 25, 2000 holding a ceremony for all the Lebanese people, and not only for Hezbollah and its members. In Nasrallah’s speech at Bint Jbeil the following day in honor of the Israeli withdrawal and the liberation of southern Lebanon, he attributed this victory to all the Lebanese people:

‘I would like all the Lebanese people to attribute this victory to themselves. It is not the victory of a specific party, movement or organization. It is not a victory for a certain religious group and a loss for another. He who believes so must be an ignorant. This is a Lebanese victory, and the Muqawama is the eternal power of this homeland.’[[104]](#footnote-104)

In this speech, deemed historical for the *muqāwama* project, Nasrallah called for building a ‘new Lebanon’ to replace the mantra of the previous project – ‘strong for its weakness’ – with a new one, ‘strong for its strength’. He continued to say:

‘Lebanon is inherently strong and steadfast… the new Lebanon is the land of the real shared life. From now on, no Muslim or Christian will allow the Zionists to manipulate us… the new Lebanon is a strong land against invaders, and a tolerant one when it comes to unity between its different factions.’[[105]](#footnote-105)

Despite Nasrallah’s reference to Iran, Syria, Imam Khomeini and Khamenei in this speech, he did not seek to defy other forces and religious groups. This was intended for expressing gratitude for supporting the Lebanese Muqawama, which is, essentially, a national resistance, according to Hezbollah. He thanked the different Muqawama organizations and parties twice, and mentioned the Islamic resistance, As- Saraya al-Lubnaniya li-Muqawamat al-Ihtilal, Amal movement and the Lebanese National Resistance Front[[106]](#footnote-106).

The expanding layout of Nasrallah’s discourse expanded after the 2006 Lebanon war. This war constituted a critical point in Hizbullah’s transition from a tightly closed Shiite radical organisation, of a pure Islamist rhetoric, into an organisation symbolising consensus among the Arab people.

In a speech on September 22, 2006, Nasrallah moved from openness towards the different religious groups within Lebanon and the political parties that supported the organisation during the war towards ‘resistive internationalism’ by referring to the Venezuelan president:

‘Your strong Muqawama and steadfastness have revealed the true face of the United State’s politics… which call for democracy, freedoms and dignity. Your strong Muqawama and steadfastness have raised the level of consciousness and enmity (consciousness preceding enmity) not only in the Arab and Islamic worlds, but also worldwide. Your endurance and Muqawama enabled a great man like Chavez to say these words in the United Nations General Assembly. The Lebanese Muqawama nowadays constitutes a source of inspiration for all resistors worldwide, for all freedom advocates worldwide, for all the decent souls worldwide and for all those who refuse to surrender to the Americans worldwide.’[[107]](#footnote-107)

Nasrallah associated the Islamic *muqāwama*, which has become, in Hizbullah’s discourse, a national Christian-Islamic one, with the global resistance operating on behalf of the movement and organisations that oppose American hegemony and imperialism in the world.

In doing so, Nasrallah paved the way for Hezbollah’s progress towards the next step in its developmental process, from narrow localism and factionalism within Lebanon, towards Arab nationalism, or even towards internationalism. This speech would not have been possible without the openness demonstrated by Hezbollah even before the war, upon signing the historical document with Michel ʿAoun’s patriotic movement, which gained two thirds of the Lebanese Christian votes in the elections of 2005[[108]](#footnote-108). This document was a main pillar in the establishment of the ever-present political alliance between Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement.

The “divine victory” speech features Nasrallah’s and Hezbollah’s detachment from the fundamentalist rhetoric and from the will to demolish the Lebanese state in favor of the Islamic state. Instead, Nasrallah called for the need for joint efforts- by both Muslims and Christians- to build the “steadfast and just” state, that raises the banner of social justice and the protection of the rights of all the Lebanese people, regardless of their affiliations[[109]](#footnote-109). There is no doubt that the Shiite motifs still exist in the speeches held by Nasrallah and other leaders of Hezbollah. Yet, these motifs feature inclusion of the other, and search for common denominator with Hizbulla’s partners in Lebanon and in the resistance framework against the imperialist hegemony in the world.

Nasrallah declared that Hezbollah does not seek to gain total control over Lebanon, but to fortify its position through its own hegemonic project and through the instilling of its perceptions into the “common sense” of the Lebanese citizens. This declaration was explicitly articulated in the press conference held after one of the most dramatic events that have recently happened within Lebanon, following Hezbollah’s increasing openness towards the different forces. It was the press conference held on 8.5.2008, after Hezbollah forces and allies gained control over vast areas in Beirut, and after attacking al-Mustaqbal and Waleed Jumblat’s forces. These events followed the Lebanese government’s decision to destroy Hizbulla’s wired network, and to dismiss General Wafīq Shoqayr, a close associate of Hezbollah [[110]](#footnote-110), from his position as security officer at Beirut International Airport. In that speech, Nasrallah said:

There are two outstretched hands; one offering dialogue, based on the cancellation of unjust decisions (dismantling Hizbullah’s special communication system in Beirut International Airport, and the dismissal of the security officer from his position in the airport, for being a close associate of Hizbullah and Amal- A.K), and sitting at the dialogue table, as suggested by Nabih Berri, speaker of the Parliament of Lebanon. The other hand holds a weapon; this weapon will not serve for harming others or for making a coup. We, in Hizbullah, have come to believe that if the Lebanese people, the Arabs, the Muslims and the international community tell us that we are good, that we function well and that we do not steal the peoples’ money, and they beseech us to rule Lebanon, we would say that we are not willing to take this responsibility, because Lebanon should be saved by joint efforts[[111]](#footnote-111).

In this speech, Nasrallah expressed absolute rejection of the sectarian division, indicating that there are currently only two projects in Lebanon:

That is why we are not concerned with the eruption of a Shiite-Sunni fitna… today’s battle is not between the Shiites and the Sunnis, for there is a pure resistance project (*waṭani muqawim sharīf*), and an American project fighting against each other... whoever wants to go there can do so, and whoever chooses to remain here can do so, regardless of what he is wearing… even if he is wearing the garments of Muslim clerics, Christian clerics or politicians. This is the nature of the battle taking place in this land[[112]](#footnote-112).

At those critical moments, Nasrallah did not mention the sectarian issue. Instead, he considered his project a national one, that should first recruit the greatest number of supporters from different factions, and secondly, a resistive Muqawama project, around which allies and positions should be consolidated.

There is no doubt that in May 2008, the sectarian tension reached a new zenith. This tension and the crack created in the Hezbollah’s Muqawama project following the organization’s use of weapons against internal Lebanese forces, were probably the main factors that urged Hezbollah and Nasrallah to further emphasize the organization’s new strategy towards establishing alliances that go far beyond the existing sectarian division. In this critical situation, Hezbollah had to avoid the scenario of sectarian tension, for it would undermine its strategy and aspirations to lead a comprehensive project, starting in Lebanon and expanding throughout the whole region.

Hence Hezbollah’s declaration of the organization’s political document in November 2009, in which it accepts the changes that occurred for the past twenty-five years, since the publication of the “Open Letter” in 1985. In Nasrallah’s press conference held after the publication of the documents (which I referred to in the previous chapter), he responds to one of the questions, saying that the lack of consensus around the “Muqawama” project is not a problematic issue, for in the history of all nations, there does not exist any resistance that gained full consensus:

Some collaborated with the occupation, and some sat aside and watched silently; even among those who resisted, some followed the political path of resistance, while others followed the military resistance path… this is not problem, as long as we can talk and dialogue with each other… I can also tell you that the consensus around the Muqawama is a prerequisite for its perfection and not for its existence... this does not mean that we do not seek to gain consensus around the Muqawama; this is what we want most[[113]](#footnote-113).

Nasrallah does not only seek to lower the flames in the aftermath of May 2008, he also demonstrates openness and readiness to negotiate not only with those unaffiliated with Hezbollah yet supporting the Muqawama project, but even with the factions that are skeptical of the Muqawama project. This shows a higher level of flexibility, compared with the past. Still, Nasrallah is not ready to renounce the Muqawama, nor does he agree with the question asked by a journalist who argued that the “Muqawama” of Hezbollah was apparently moved to one level below the establishment of a strong and just Lebanese state. Nasrallah answers that both levels are interwoven together:

No, what I said is that the Muqawama is still our main mission; I do not think that we are moving it to a lower level, the Muqawama comes first… In fact, to establish a state and state institutions, and to enhance peace, stability and security in Lebanon, our homeland should be first safe and resistant against the continuous Israeli dangers. Therefore, I believe that a real Muqawama is one of most important prerequisites that enable the Lebanese people to establish the state they long for…[[114]](#footnote-114).

Nasrallah moves from the level of the pure Muqawama to another in which it intermingles with the establishment of the fortified and just state. This statement features a great number of adjusted concessions, discussed in previous phases. This is the phase of achieving the national legitimacy of the Muqawama project, alongside the recognition of Lebanon as the homeland, and the establishment of a just state, not as an objective for the far distant future, with the reappearance of al-Imam al-Mahdi, according to the classical Shiʿa, but as political objective that can be achieved in the foreseeable future, together with the other partners within the homeland. This is a considerable revolution in iHizHi Hezbollah’s perception and comprehension, constituting a dramatic change in the organization’s line of thought, although it took it more than two decades to develop.

The gradual transition towards the establishment of a project that goes far beyond the Lebanese and regional boundaries gained momentum upon Hezbollah’s involvement in the Syrian war. It was the first time that Hezbollah uses weapons explicitly outside Lebanon, in an Arab and Islamic country, against Arab and Islamic forces, and more forcefully, against Islamist forces. It also supported a secular regime against declared Islamist organizations like the affiliates of Al-Qaeda (Jabhat al-Nusra) and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). Hezbollah’s discourse and Nasrallah’s speeches took a new twist in light of the new reality in the region.

I do not intend to delve into a general analysis of the dramatic change in Hezbollah’s discourse following the All-Out War fought against the Jihadist organizations in Syria. Yet, special attention should be paid to extremely significant points that explain the development of Hezbollah’s discourse towards clear definition of the Muqawama partners, at both the ideological and pragmatic levels. It is worth noting however that this is not an analysis of Hezbollah’s involvement in Syria, but rather of the way that Hezbollah chose to portray its involvement in the Syrian case. The path that Hezbollah chose has not been presupposed, for other Islamic movements chose pure sectarianism which enhanced the conflict, while Hezbollah has not done so.

In his analysis of Nasrallah’s speech, the Jordanian Marxist journalist Nahiḍ Ḥittir[[115]](#footnote-115)maintains that Nasrallah reached the limits of the materialist-historical analysis[[116]](#footnote-116) in his speech held on ʿᾹshurāʾ day in 2015. Ḥittir emphasizes that Nasrallah’s speech reached a level of total detachment from the political Islam, both the Shiite and the Sunni. He proceeds to argue that Nasrallah does not differentiate between the two camps on the basis of to the degree of belief of each side, but on the basis of the conflict between Imperialism and national liberation[[117]](#footnote-117).

I would maintain that Ḥittir goes beyond the bounds of reason in his evaluation of Nasrallah’s speech. Yet, there is no doubt that this is an especially important speech that reaches a new level in the development of Hezbollah’s discourse (the line I drew by following up on the development of Nasrallah’s discourse/speeches). A discourse that features openness and readiness to build a joint historical bloc with other forces not necessarily belonging to the organization’s “natural” religious surrounding, and the openness towards the discourse of leftist Marxist movements and organizations in the Arab world, and the revolutionary discourse of the Third World.

Nasrallah’s speech gains further importance for being held during a religious ceremony, namely ʿᾹshurāʾ Day.

Nasrallah opens his analysis by portraying the United States of America as the successor of the old imperialist countries, alongside Britain and France, and whose main objective is to gain hegemony over the whole region, “hegemony at all levels, so that the regions become subject to its political, security, economic and even cultural control”[[118]](#footnote-118). He proceeds to argue that:

What America wants obliges complete submission, and whoever refuses to submit, should be prepared for an intelligent and multifaceted war with the USA, a military war, and an economic-security-media war, in addition to sieges and sanctions. This is the price of freedom nowadays, not only in the Arab and Islamic world, but also for all those who want to be independent and make decisions according to the interests of his homeland, people and nation. This is not acceptable for the USA…”[[119]](#footnote-119).

He continues his speech saying:

They want to take over the crude oil, the gas and all the natural resources… The USA is not dominated by human rights organizations, but by the owner of giant petroleum and weapons companies[[120]](#footnote-120).

In other words, Nasrallah explicitly asserts that the motives behind the actions undertaken by the USA are not its “crusader’ beliefs, or its being Christian or anti-Muslim. The USA is mainly driven by its economic interests and those of the dominant elites. This discourse is similar to the discourses of the leftist movements in the Arab world and the revolutionary movements in the Third World.

Nasrallah further elaborates, saying “they want to control, so that we become their markets”. He adds elsewhere,

In this context, and according to the logic of the American hegemony in the region, there should not be strong state; there should not be a strong Arab or Islamic state; a strong state in the sense of an independent state, which makes its decisions independently. A state that takes into consideration the interests of its people, a state that invests in its economy, and makes achievements at the scientific, technological, cultural and administrative levels, and in all life domains. In the American hegemony project, this cannot happen… it does not matter if you are a Shiite, a Sunni or a Christian…”[[121]](#footnote-121).

He proceeds to analyze the situation prevailing in the Arab world as a war of attrition against those who do not submit, or who resist to the dominance of the imperialist states over the regions and its resources. Once again, he annuls the banners of democracy and human rights which the Americans raise in the region, saying:

I am not talking about theories, I am presenting facts. How many dictatorships are being supported by the USA in the region? The USA supports regimes that do not have constitutions, elections or even a sparkle of freedom of expression on the internet… For this reason, we should not be deceived by the American lies. Unfortunately, some peoples of the region are misled by these slogans (of the USA)[[122]](#footnote-122).

Nasrallah positions Israel as the second target of his attack. He considers it an “instrument” used by the USA and the other imperialist countries, and not the other way around. In other words, it is not the “Jews” and the Jewish lobby who dominate the United States, for Israel is merely a tool that serves the economic interests of the imperialist hegemonic project in the region. This analysis is close to the one provided by the Arab leftist movements that disagreed to use the anti-Jewish motifs of the Islamist rhetoric of the religious movements in the regions that did not differentiate between Israel and Zionism, and Judaism.

For sake of historical precision, in a previous interview conducted with Nasrallah for the Russian-Arabic channel RT, on 18.4.2012, Nasrallah expressed an opinion that is explicitly dissociated from the long anti-Jewish history of the organization. In response to a question regarding Hizbulla’s future perspectives on the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Nasrallah stated:

Israel is an illegal state; it was established on the occupied lands of other people… and on the massacres and displacement of the Muslim and Christian Palestinians. Therefore, the rights should be re-given to the original owner, even after decades… However, taking into consideration the ideological and legal positions, and the political facts, we would say that: the only solution is that… We do not want to kill anyone, and we do not want to abuse anyone. We simply want the rights to be returned to those who are entitled to them… the only solution is the establishment of a state on the Palestinian land on which Muslims, Jews and Christians can live peacefully in a democratic state. All other solutions would not be durable”[[123]](#footnote-123).

Nasrallah demonstrates a great deal of openness (relatively to an ideological organization like Hezbollah) in the organization’s perceptions. There is a transition from an anti-Jewish discourse and rhetoric as a nation of a special and timeless nature, from the dawn of history until present times, into a discourse that differentiates between Jews and Judaism on the one hand, and Zionism as a project of the imperialism on the other hand. A similar discourse is adopted by Arab leftist movements of the past decades; hence the possible dialogue and commonalities with these forces.

**Sub-Chapter conclusion**

In the reviewed samples of the speeches of Nasrallah, one of the Hezbollah’s most outstanding founders and leaders in the past twenty six years, the gradual change in the organization’s perception is noticeable. I have also shown the organization’s perceptual and ideological development that enabled the establishment of a joint camp with different factions and forces both locally and regionally.

Hezbollah’s line of development, surveyed in this sub-chapter, starts with a classical fundamentalist organization that seeks forceful imposition of the Shariʿa in Lebanon, that proceeds later towards identifying the unique potential of Lebanon, including the understanding that Lebanon is not Iran, and that it has a special mosaic that deserves inclusion. Upon the liberation of most of southern areas in Lebanon thanks to Hezbollah’s resistance, the organization has accelerated its developmental process of openness, based on self-confidence, defining itself as the “authentic representatives of the Lebanese nationalism” and of the Lebanese people.

Following the “divine victory” and the organization’s enhanced self-confidence, Hezbollah started introducing itself not only as the leader of the counter-hegemonic project at the Lebanese national-patriotic level, but also as the leader of a comprehensive national Arab project.

The great leap forward was made during the organization’s hardest times, and during its war alongside the Syrian regimes against Jihadist Islamists groups in Syria and Lebanon. The Muqawama project gained internationalist dimensions of confrontation with global imperialism, represented by the United States and its satellite states (from Hezbollah’s perspective), mainly Israel, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, Turkey and the Jihadist movements.

In this critical period, Hezbollah demonstrates a great deal of alertness regarding two battlefronts- the agitated blood-soaked front in the east, and the relatively calm front in the South, next to the Israeli borders. Hezbollah succeeds in promoting and instilling the “Muqawama” project together with its allies, for it perceives itself the guardian of the Lebanese homeland, and of the spirit of the “minorities” land in the Middle East, against the existential danger looming over Lebanon and the Levant. According to Hezbollah, this danger is currently embodied in ISIS and the other Jihadist movements, that would not accept any change, even if suggested by Sunni Muslims who do not side with their Jihadist ideology.

Hezbollah revives and appropriates one of the cultural characteristics of the hegemonic project in Lebanon in the first 30 years following the establishment of the state; namely the multiculturalism and the religious pluralism. Based on this perception, Hezbollah declares involvement in the Syrian war to protect the multifactional and multicultural Lebanon. iHi

**Conclusion**

This chapter provides a detailed review of the organizations, processes and arenas in which Hezbollah builds its unique Muqawama project in Lebanon. In this chapter, I reviewed “hegemonic mechanisms” used for the dissemination of the hegemonic project, like media channels (Al-Manar, Al-ʿAahd, Al-Akhbar and others); the chains of schools and colleges and Hezbollah’s educational system, through which it succeeded in instilling the Muqawama values in the young students’ lives from a very young age; the leisure culture for the youth, including the organization’s websites and computer games (and applications), through which the organization disseminates the Muqawama ideology among the youth who enjoy playing games. Books and novels were also an integral part of the establishment and dissemination of the Muqawama project. The physical space was equally present in the organization’s plans, and extensive efforts were invested in this field to visualize the Muqawama project in a way that affects the Muqawama tourism developing in Lebanon (the Switzerland of the Middle East).

To show the main features of the Hezbollah’s Muqawama project, I analyzed numerous videos and songs, partially associated with popular-national perspectives in Lebanon and in the Arab world, demonstrating the permeation of the Muqawama project as an authentic component and a “natural” representative of the diverse Lebanese society, and of the whole Arab world.

The establishment of the Muqawama project is also reflected in Nasrallah’s speeches, which have developed, over the past three decades, from a state of seclusion, into a quest after the national, religious and humane commonalities.

These reviews clearly demonstrate that the Muqawama is still a project underway. It is simultaneously operating in the different political, social, educational and communicative arenas, seeking additional spaces to permeate into. An evidence of the project’s ability to break out of its “natural” surrounding could be found in the interaction established with new organizations and intellectual groups, as shown in this chapter.

This chapter demonstrates that Hezbollah, with its advanced communicative, organizational and economic abilities, is capable of leading a hegemonic project that seeks to integrate (though not with total success) other forces and organizations. This process is still underway, and the degree of success or failure will be determined according to the organization’s ability to detach itself from its fundamentalist past, and establish more flexible and egalitarian alliances with potential allies. However, this is not an easy mission for an organization that was first established to represent a specific religious community, namely the Shiites in Lebanon, and is still placed in this category despite its openness.

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2. Anne Showstack Sassoon. *Gramsci and Contemporary Politics: Beyond Pessimism of the Intellect*. London: Routledge, 2000, 45, see also Perry Anderson 'The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci' , see also Christine Buci-Glucksmann. *Gramsci and the State,* London:Lawrence and Wishart, 1980, 7-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Peter Thomas. Hegemony, Passive Revolution and the Modern Prince, 27 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid, 28 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Gramsci, *Selections*, 181-182. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Shafik Jaradi, “The Organizers’ Foreword”, in: Al-Qassem (ed.), *The Resistance Values*, p. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Naim al-Qassem, “Foreword”, in: Al-Qassem (ed.), *The Resistance Values*, 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Hassan Jonny, “The Legitimacy of the Muqawamah in the Light of the Law”, *The Resistance Values,* 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Mounir Shafik, “The Muqawamah following the End of the Cold War”, in *The Resistance Values,* 255. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
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15. Ibid., 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
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19. Hassan Fadlallah, *A War of Wills: The Battle between the Muqawamah and the Israeli Occupier in Lebanon,* (Beirut: Dar al-Hadi, 1998). (in Arabic). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Hassan Fadlallah, *The Fall of Illusion: The Defeat of the Occupation and the Victory of The Muqawamah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Hadi, 2001), 219-223. (in Arabic). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Abir Hamdar. "“We are all Hizbullah now”: narrating the Party of God", *Journal for Cultural Research*, 18:2, (2014) 158-170. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Jousef Alagha. *The shifts in Hizbullah’s ideology: Religious ideology, political ideology and political program* (Leiden: ISIM/Amsterdam University Press, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Hamdar, We are all Hizbullah Now, 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ibid., 166 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid., 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Ibid., 167-168. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Thanassis Cambanis, "Hizbollah Mahdi Schools mix maths with doctrine" *Financial Times*, October 20, 2013, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e0be1122-2695-11e3-9dc0-00144feab7de.html#axzz4CKZMAQqa>, (last viwebsited in 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. *Al-‘Aahd*, 15.10.1993 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Flanigan & Abdel-Samad, "Social Jihad",122-137. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon,* 63. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ibid., 65. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Ibid., 74-75. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. *Al-‘Aahd*, 15.10.1993 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Al-‘Aahd*, 26.12.1997 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon,* 63 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid., 70 (see picture in appendix 1) [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. *Al-‘Aahd*, 12.2.1988 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. See appendix 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *Al-A’ahd*, 5.3.1999 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Quoted in Shaery-Eisenlohr, *Shi'ite Lebanon*, 67. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Tal Pavel, *Hizbulla’s Image and Plain Activism in the Internet, as Reflected in its Different Electronic Websites*, a master’s thesis, supervised by Dr. Meir Litvak, September 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
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46. <http://www.moqawama.org/essaydetailsf.php?eid=16910&fid=46> (last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. <http://www.moqawama.org/pagedetails.php?pid=4> (last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. <http://games.moqawama.org/> (last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. <http://www.almanar.com.lb/about> (last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Anne Marie Baylouny, "Not Your Father's Islamist TV: Changing Programming on Hizbullah's al-Manar" In *Arab Media & Society*, Volume 9 (Fall) 2009. [Hereafter: *Not Your Father's Islamist TV]*

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52. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. <http://www.almanar.com.lb/adetails.php?eid=189659&st=%C7%E1%DB%C7%E1%C8%E6%E4&cid=24&fromval=3&frid=41&seccatid=101> (last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE_5nRwV3E8> (last visited on 10.04.2018, Akbar nasr inkatab) [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IneNiXHcMnM> (last visited on 10.04.2018, Nasrak haz edeni) [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xpI_nT28zM> (last visited on 10.04.2018, All for the resistance, all for the homeland) [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXATop1ypdc> (last visited on 10.04.2018, my homeland is the land of light) [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Al A’ahd 11.4.1997 (see appendix 3) [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOw-KCLRNJ0>(The anthem of the Lebanese Muqawamah Hayhay ya Muhtal, last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Samer N Abboud & Benjamin J. Muller *Rethinking Hizballah: Legitimacy, Authority, Violence*. (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012), 54-55. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwArGXf97wE> (Abdel Halim Hafez, Khali es-selah sahi- last visited on 10.04.2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ycu1_ooHvnE> [(Nasr](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYxePIQ3aVE%20(Nasr) el-A’rab- last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkTqtStlBx0> (Ahebaei- Julia Botrus- 2006- last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. I will refer to Ziad Rahbani and to his position in the sub-chapter that analyzes Al-Akhbar periodical [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Al-Akhbar, 20.12.2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Mona Harb and Lara Deeb "Culture as History and Landscape: Hizballah's Efforts to Shape an Islamic Millieu in Lebanon" in *The Arab Studies Journal*, Vol 19 No.1 (spring 2011), 29. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Ibid., 16 [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Ibid., 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Ibid., 17 [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Ibid., 18 [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Harb & Deeb, *Culture as Landscape*, 19-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Ibid., 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Mleeta’s website: <http://www.mleeta.com/mleeta/definition0.html> (last visited on 10.04.2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Harb & Deeb, *Culture as Landscape*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. <http://www.mleeta.com/mleeta/definition2.html>. (last visited on 10.04.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Harb & Deeb, *Culture as Landscape*, 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Ibid., 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Salim Elias, *The Encyclopedia of the Lebanese Resistance*, Vol. 12, 66-67. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Noah Feldman, “Beirut Is The New Beirut”, in: *Wall Street Journal*,December 2, 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. *Al-Akhbar*, 27.3.2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. <https://www.al-akhbar.com/about> (last visited on 27.02.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. The period preceding the 2006 Lebanon War (July’s war). [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. *Al-Akhbar*, 14.8.2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. *Al-Akhbar*, 5.4.2007. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. *Al-Akhbar*, 12.7.2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. *Al-Akhbar*, 12.7.2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Ibid, “July 2006-2011: Huna Maroun al-Ras” [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. The use of Jabel Amel instead of Southern Lebanon is very important, for Jabal Amel has religious connotations associated with Shia Islam, while the term Southern Lebanon included the name Lebanon, whose existence is not legitimate. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. *Al-‘Ahd*, 24.5.1985. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. *Al-‘Ahd*, 10.12.1991 [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. *Al-‘Aahd*, 5.9.1986 [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. *Al-‘Aahd*, 5.9.1986 [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. *Al-‘Aahd*, 28.2.1992 (the interview was originally conducted by As-Safir newspaper) [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. *Ad-Diyar*, 21.6.1992 [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. *Al-‘Ahd,* 31.10.1997 [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. *Al-‘Ahd,* 7.11.1997 [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Nasrallah’s speech on 26.5.2000 (available on <http://www.moqawama.org/essaydetails.php?eid=16927&cid=141>) (last visited on 10.01.2019) [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Nasrallah’s speech (the divine victory), 22.9.2006 (available on<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KurXHcmjsOc>) (Hereafter; “the divine victory” speech) (last visited on 10.01.2019) [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. Al-Agha, *The Ideological History*. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Nasrallah’s speech (the divine victory), 22.9.2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. Jousif Alagha, *Hizbullah's Documents: From the 1985 Open Letter to the 2009 Manifesto* (Amsterdam: Pallas Publication, 2011), 175. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. <http://www.10452lccc.com/hezbollah07/nasrallah8.5.08.speech.htm> (last visited on 27.02.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. Al-agha, *Hizbullah's Documents*, 141. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. By the time of writing this thesis, Ḥittir was assassinated by an Islamist activist in Jordan, after having published a caricature against ISIS. He was assassinated on 25.09.2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Nahed Hattar, *Hassan Nasrallah and the National Liberation Issues*. Beirut: Maislaoun lil-Dirasat wal-A’alam, 2016, p. 105 (in Arabic) [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Ibid., 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Nasrallah’s speech on 23.10.2015 (Hereafter Nasrallah’s speech Ashura 2015) <http://www.mediarelations-lb.org/article.php?id=14183&cid=124#.V4PwZPl97IU> (last visited on 27.02.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. Nasrallah’s interview with RT <http://www.mediarelations-lb.org/article.php?id=9174&cid=94#.V4UFW_l97IU> (last visited on 27.02.2018) [↑](#footnote-ref-123)