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## **The Genie in the Bottle: Opportunist and Antagonistic Responses to Whole of Government Approaches**

**Erik A. Claessen**  
*Belgian Joint Staff*

**Col. Arthur D. Simons Center**  
*for the Study of Interagency Cooperation*

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

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Claessen's *The Genie in the Bottle: Opportunist and Antagonistic Responses to Whole of Government Approaches* won first place in the Simons Center Interagency Writing Competition conducted from September 2011 through March 2012.

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# Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Constraints on the Use of Force.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Initiative .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Integrity.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Recuperation .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Fundraising .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Operational Implications.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Endnotes .....</b>	<b>17</b>

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# Introduction

In 1985, Yitzak Rabin—then Israeli Defense Minister—observed that:

“...among the many surprises, and most of them not for the good, that came out of the war in Lebanon, the most dangerous is that the war let the Shi’ites out of the bottle. No one predicted it; I couldn’t find it in any intelligence report.... If as a result of the war in Lebanon, we replace PLO terrorism in southern Lebanon with Shi’ite terrorism, we have done the worst [thing] in our struggle against terrorism.”<sup>1</sup>

On June 6, 1982, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) invaded Lebanon to defeat the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). The name of the operation left no doubt about its aim: Peace for Galilee. Within a few weeks, the IDF trapped the PLO in Beirut and forced it to flee to Tunisia. After the successful eviction of the PLO, Israel attempted to create a self-administered buffer zone in the area. Under the plan, Israel envisaged the creation of the Organization for a Unified South. This organization consisted of a civil guard—recruited at village level—and a system of village and district councils. The councils would receive Israeli assistance in commerce, agriculture, and finances.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Israelis tried to stabilize southern Lebanon by means of a whole of government approach. The plan seemed feasible. No one ever cared about the Shi’a south. The infrastructure in this destitute area left much to be desired. There were almost no job opportunities, and the Shi’a leadership itself consisted mostly of rich landowners who were more interested in maintaining their privileges than in developing the region and its population. Furthermore, the indigenous Christian and Shi’a populations in the area were glad to be rid of the Palestinians. “Angered at oppressive PLO domination and PLO cross-border attacks, which invited Israeli retaliatory strikes against their villages, many responded to Israel’s anti-PLO invasion of 1982 with relief and support.”<sup>3</sup> Finally, the Israelis received the support of an indigenous militia—the South Lebanese Army (SLA) of which Shi’a soldiers constituted sixty percent.<sup>4</sup>

On May 24, 2000, the IDF hurriedly left southern Lebanon, and Hezbollah took over the region. What had happened? Had the whole of government approach failed? On the contrary, between 1982 and 2000, the availability of potable water and much needed

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electricity, as well as education and healthcare improved markedly; however, Israelis were not the only ones who seized the opportunity to fill the power vacuum left by the eviction of PLO forces. A new organization—Hezbollah—emerged and gained the allegiance of the Shi'a Lebanese by competing with the Israelis on the whole of government level rather than on the military level alone.

When intervening forces create a safe and secure environment to implement a whole of government approach, they simultaneously create opportunities for hitherto unnoticed and powerless opponents to do the same—and sometimes more successfully. This paper makes the case that a whole of government approach is not a minimal concluding effort to replace an outfought opponent, but rather a full-fledged struggle to out-administer any opponent who exists or might emerge in the conflict area. A whole of government approach is only valid in dealing with security threats if it takes this reality into account.

To support this argument, this paper first clarifies the problem by presenting a number of recent examples of emerging opponents who match a whole of government approach with an alternative that appeals more to the local populace. Next it analyzes the conceptual components of the mechanism behind this emergence. Finally, it derives operational implications from that analysis by proposing measures and precautions that should supplement a whole of government approach to increase its validity in dealing with emerging, adaptive, and innovative security threats.

The Israeli experience in southern Lebanon was by no means unique. During the spring of 2003, the eyes of the world focused on the U.S. Army's advance in Iraq. Few people noticed that a parallel offensive took place. "As U.S. tanks dashed across Baghdad, Muqtada al-Sadr and his vanguard of like-minded clerics reactivated mosques, deployed a militia, assumed control of regional Ba'ath Party institutions, and prepared social services."<sup>5</sup> While Saddam Hussein's regime crumbled, Sadr's followers worked hard to create an alternative administration. Just three years later, the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group Report considered the previously unknown Muqtada al-Sadr one of the three vital power brokers in the Shi'a community.<sup>6</sup>

Similar developments took place in the territories Israel occupied in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. During that war, Israel almost annihilated the conventional armies of the countries surrounding it, but paradoxically, this victory provided the Muslim Brotherhood—an organization that until then was unable to influence internal or external politics—with opportunities it could only dream of when it was subject to Egyptian and Jordanian rule. This Israeli victory was the start of a silent organizational struggle between the occupied and



the occupier.

Upon occupation, the Israelis had to set up a government of sorts for the occupied territories. Unfortunately, they made no conscious effort to genuinely incorporate the large Palestinian population into their society. Instead, they provided a minimalist government to keep the territories quiet. This left the Palestinians without many of the services normally provided by government. As a result, they [Muslim Brotherhood] organized to provide labor, educational, medical, and social services...In essence, they formed a local government and began to take care of their people.<sup>7</sup>

Over time, the Muslim Brotherhood gained legitimacy and credibility among Palestinians and evolved into an Islamist resistance movement. Hamas announced its existence in a statement on December 14, 1987, shortly after the eruption of the first *Intifada*.<sup>8</sup> Eighteen years later, Hamas's combination of parallel government and armed resistance culminated in Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

Hezbollah, Hamas, and Muqtada al-Sadr's *Jama'at al-Sadr al-Thani* share two main characteristics. First, they did not emerge despite the presence of an intervening military force, but because of it. Second, they owe their emergence to a superior whole of government approach rather than to their military strength. The takeaway is that the intervening forces are not necessarily the only ones trying to implement a whole of government approach. Moreover, they do not even hold the initiative in that field. As everyone knows, when more than one actor tries to do the same thing at the same time, competition is the most likely result. The question then arises who is likely to win this competition? To answer that question, it is necessary to analyze the conceptual components of the mechanism allowing the emergence and development of these actors: constraints, initiative, integrity, recuperation, and fundraising. These components translate into a number of actions at the tactical and operational levels. Though these actions are visible, they are often not immediately recognized as being part of an opportunist and antagonistic response to the intervening community's whole of government approach.

**The takeaway is that the intervening forces are not necessarily the only ones trying to implement a whole of government approach. Moreover, they do not even hold the initiative in that field.**

## Constraints on the use of force

Emergence is a chaotic process because it takes place after an intervention that upsets the balance of power in the conflict area. Military interventions such as the invasion of Lebanon, the Six-Day War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, or the eviction of the Serb Army from Kosovo eliminate a coercive ruling power and replace it with a military force that does not provide an immediate alternative social contract with the local population.<sup>9</sup> The chaotic nature of the transition depends on the characteristics of the ousted regime. Generally speaking, “the more coercion required, the greater the collapse when that government’s power is reduced.”<sup>10</sup> The key factor governing the process of emergence is popular support or the lack thereof.

By their very nature repressive regimes use complex systems of overlapping security, paramilitary, and military forces to hold on to power despite their lack of popular support. A military intervention that ousts such a regime creates a transition from a coercive to a constrained military presence in the area. Western military forces are subject to limitations on the use of force. These constraints stem from international laws, rules of engagement, the scrutiny of the press, and the imperative to nest military operations into a political timing and logic.

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From the local population’s perspective, the transition from a coercive to a constrained military presence offers new opportunities. Organizations that suffered most under the ousted regime often believe they have a rightful claim to a leading role in the new social order. They may choose to rely on the intervening community’s help to consolidate that leading role, or they may decide to take matters in their own hands. Examples of such organizations are Musa al-Sadr’s Movement of the Disinherited (*Harakat al-Mahrumin*) in southern Lebanon,<sup>11</sup> Sadiq al-Sadr’s vocal and militant clergy (*al-Hawza al-Natiqa*) in Iraq,<sup>12</sup> Sheikh Ahmed Yassin’s Islamic Center (*al-Mujamma al-Islamiya*) in Gaza,<sup>13</sup> and Ibrahim Rugova’s Democratic League of Kosovo (DLK) in Kosovo.<sup>14</sup> These organizations are the “genies in the bottle,” but they are often not recognized as such. With the exception of Rugova’s DLK, nobody had anticipated the preponderance of these organizations in the aftermath of the military intervention that eliminated the repressive power that kept them in the bottle.

The intervening community can either co-opt or ignore such organizations. In Kosovo, NATO and the UN co-opted the DLK, which resulted in the disarmament of the militant branch of the Kosovo resistance (the UCK), peaceful elections, the creation

of democratic institutions, and a slow, but relatively uneventful transition toward independence. By contrast, in Iraq, Lebanon, and Gaza, the intervening forces decided to ignore the organizations that challenged the coercive power of Saddam Hussein, the PLO, and Abdel Nasser respectively. In Gaza and the other territories they occupied after the 1967 Six-Day War, the Israelis focused on eliminating the PLO as a threat. In Lebanon, they supported Christian rather than Shi'a leaders and organizations. In Iraq, the coalition favored returning exiles and an Iran-based quietist branch of the Shi'a clergy at the expense of grassroots Shi'a organizations in Iraq proper.<sup>15</sup> However, because members of such organizations see the ordeal they suffered under a repressive regime as a source of legitimacy, they refuse to be sidelined. In February 2004, one Iraqi citizen concisely expressed this view: "We have all come out of Saddam's prison cells! Our families sacrificed their lives under the dictatorship. We have nothing to do with all these political parties that lived lives of luxury abroad, in London, Washington, or Tehran. It is not fair that these individuals return now to govern us."<sup>16</sup>

At the tactical and operational levels, organizations like the Lebanese *Harakat al-Mahrumin*, the Iraqi *al-Hawza al-Natiqa*, and the Gazan *al-Mujamma al-Islamiya* can impose their participation in the transition process by spawning a resistance movement with a dual militant and civilian structure. The civilian branch overtly provides essential services and humanitarian assistance to the local population. Civilian branch members can do so because constraints on the use of force prevent the intervening community from harming them. Because "the public will turn to almost any actor to fulfill basic needs,"<sup>17</sup> their actions will create widespread, popular support, which allows the military branch of the organization to conceal its leadership, fighters, and weapons among the people. When these emerging resistance organizations covertly organize violent actions against the intervening community, they can escape retaliatory action from the intervening forces by hiding among the populace. Such courses of action were impossible under the ousted, repressive regimes because—contrary to the intervening forces—repressive regimes are not bound by constraints on the use of force.

Examples of such dual military and civilian structures are the Lebanese Hezbollah and its military branch, the *Al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya* (The Islamic Resistance); the Gazan Hamas and its *Izz al-Din al-Qassam* brigades; and the Iraqi *Jama'at al-Sadr al-Thani* (The Movement of the Second al-Sadr) with its *Jaysh al-Mahdi* (The Mahdi Army) militia. These movements evolved out of the Lebanese *Harakat al-Mahrumin*, the Gazan *al-Mujamma al-Islamiya*, and the Iraqi *al-Hawza al-Natiqa* respectively.

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## Initiative

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Because they understand the importance of popular support, organizations that want to oppose the intervening community seize the initiative to take care of the people. On the tactical and operational levels this translates into quick and aggressive actions to take control of the infrastructure needed to cater for the needs of the population. In Iraq, even before the fall of Saddam's regime, "Young imams, invoking Sadiq al-Sadr's [Muqtada al-Sadr's father] name, rushed to fill the vacuum created by the collapse of the state apparatus. Surrounded by armed volunteers, they seized control of mosques, welfare centres, universities and hospitals and, particularly in Sadiq al-Sadr's former strongholds, instituted forms of local governance."<sup>18</sup> Hezbollah likewise immediately started relief and reconstruction operations after the end of the 2006 Israeli incursion in Lebanon. A New York Times journalist observed that "while the Israelis began their withdrawal, hundreds of Hezbollah members spread over dozens of villages across southern Lebanon and began cleaning, organizing and surveying damage. Men on bulldozers were busy cutting lanes through giant piles of rubble. Roads blocked with the remnants of buildings are now, just a day after a cease-fire began, fully passable."<sup>19</sup> The rationale behind this dash is simple: when people's need is most dire, relief efforts have the biggest impact. In times of crisis, no one forgets who showed up first and provided hot drinks, food, and shelter.

Therefore, speed is of the essence. As mentioned in U.S. Army doctrine, "the speed with which the COIN [counterinsurgency] operations are executed may determine their success and whether the populace supports them. This is especially true for operations that involve restoring essential services. Planners must strive to have the smallest gap of time between when they assess essential services and when U.S. forces begin remediation efforts."<sup>20</sup>

## Integrity

Integrity is another important source of popular support for emerging resistance movements. Individuals and organizations that cooperate with the intervening community are often corrupt. In the run up to Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S. officials worked with the Iraqi National Congress, headed by the secular expatriate Ahmad Chalabi, to create a government in exile. However, "the CIA and the

State Department broke with Chalabi late in 2002 when he proved unable to account for about \$2 million of the \$4 million they had given his Iraqi National Congress.”<sup>21</sup> The people in the conflict area are not unaware of this widespread corruption, and they are often appalled by the fact that collaborators embezzle funds destined to finance humanitarian relief efforts and reconstruction projects. Emerging resistance movements can capitalize on this resentment by adhering to stringent standards of integrity themselves.

A recent example of this phenomenon is the whole of government approach that accompanied the implementation of the Oslo Accords. The Accords envisaged the creation of a Palestinian Authority combined with a gradual Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. The international community seized this unique opportunity to end the Arab-Israeli conflict. The aim of the whole of government approach was to facilitate the peace process by supporting those who accepted the Accords—the PLO, led by Yasser Arafat—while simultaneously weakening those who opposed it—the resistance movements Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The fact that donor contributions surpassed the amounts pledged illustrates the international community’s resolve to end this conflict once and for all.<sup>22</sup>

Things did not work out that way. Because it could count on a continuous flow of international financial contributions, the PLO depended less on popular support to hold on to power. Funds and lucrative positions of political and economic power were oriented toward a small elite. Ben Yishay holds that “the Palestinian Authority’s heavy handed involvement in the market—including important commodity monopolies, corruption, and tight control over foreign investment, credit sources, and protected areas of the economy—essentially constituted a transfer of income from poorer groups to the political elite.”<sup>23</sup> As a result “the Oslo Accords initiated a new period of both centralization of political power and cooperation between the old elite social class and top Palestinian Authority officers, creating a conservative and anti-democratic ruling alliance.”<sup>24</sup> By contrast, Hamas continued to invest in humanitarian assistance and essential services and campaigned on its integrity, which laid the foundation for Hamas’s victory in the 2006 elections, the opposite of the intended results.

If the intervening community fails to reign in corruption while the emerging resistance movement campaigns on its integrity, the latter’s relief efforts—though more modest for want of money—can be more effective in generating popular support than the former’s.

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## Recuperation

**When emerging actors recuperate a whole of government approach, they convince target audiences that the intervening community's efforts should be taken for granted and that what they provide is what really matters.**

For an emerging resistance movement, recuperation is a force multiplier. The intervening community's financial and economic wherewithal usually dwarfs that of emerging actors. However, emerging actors are better aware of local mores and cultural sensitivities. When emerging actors recuperate a whole of government approach, they convince target audiences that the intervening community's efforts should be taken for granted and that what they provide is what really matters.

During an interview in the aftermath of the 2006 Israeli withdrawal from its latest incursion in southern Lebanon, a Lebanese citizen concisely explained what recuperation really means. "The government may do some work on bridges and roads, but when it comes to rebuilding houses, Hezbollah will have a big role to play."<sup>25</sup> Although the Lebanese government put the financial support it received from the international community to good use by repairing the country's transport infrastructure, restoring houses generated more popular support.<sup>26</sup> Emerging resistance movements have a tendency to focus on assistance that is relatively cheap, but that requires a thorough knowledge of the local language and culture. Prime examples are education, healthcare, and assistance to widows and orphans. In the Occupied Territories, "the case of the Islamic Assembly of Gaza, one of the large Hamas-affiliated organizations, is illustrative. Aside from providing cash assistance to roughly 5,000 orphans and hundreds of poor families, it distributes food, school bags and winter clothing, organizes wedding parties and sponsors nurseries, clinics and sports clubs. Its impact probably is felt in varying degrees by tens of thousands of Palestinians."<sup>27</sup>

Another way to recuperate the intervening community's whole of government approach is to seize control of humanitarian assistance coordination. Because its militia usually controls parts of the conflict area, nongovernmental organizations may have no other option but to coordinate relief efforts with the civilian branch of an emerging resistance movement. Hezbollah, for instance, "has a standing membership in Lebanon's network of nongovernmental organizations, and throughout the conflict, its representatives participated in coordinating the relief effort."<sup>28</sup> This membership allows the resistance to take credit for services someone else provided.

Emerging resistance movements can even take this tactic one step further by participating in the legitimate political process. Hezbollah holds twelve seats in the Lebanese parliament and has two ministers in the government, which allows it to recuperate the whole of government approach at the political level. The *Jama'at*

*al-Sadr al-Thani* applied similar strategies in Iraq. The Iraq Study Group notes that “several observers remarked to us that Sadr was following the model of Hezbollah in Lebanon: building a political party that controls basic services within the government and an armed militia outside of the government.”<sup>29</sup> The effectiveness of this strategy depends on the level of control emerging resistance movements can gain on key ministries. This level of control can be such that the intervening community loses all leverage. Concerning the situation in Iraq, the Study Group reported:

A major attempt is also being made to improve the capacity of government bureaucracies at the national, regional, and provincial levels to provide services to the population as well as to select and manage infrastructure projects. The United States has people embedded in several Iraqi ministries, but it confronts problems with access and sustainability. Moqtada al-Sadr objects to the U.S. presence in Iraq, and therefore the ministries he controls—Health, Agriculture, and Transportation—will not work with Americans. It is not clear that Iraqis can or will maintain and operate reconstruction projects launched by the United States.<sup>30</sup>

In practice, the intervening community will always lack the cultural awareness and the linguistic proficiency needed to lead relief efforts in sectors like education, healthcare, and social assistance. To avoid recuperation, the intervening community should co-opt local grassroots organizations with sufficiently large constituencies to deny that void to emerging resistance organizations.

## Fundraising

Worldwide fundraising is a source of strength for emerging resistance movements. Competing on the whole of government level requires a sustainable deficit in the regional balance of trade and payments. For a resistance movement, it is simply impossible to sustain a competing, whole of government approach with funds raised inside the conflict area itself. International fundraising is by far the most underestimated factor in contemporary conflict termination.

The effect of new, global, fundraising methods becomes clear when one analyzes the problems resistance movements had when these methods did not yet exist. In 1928, Mao Zedong established a base area in the Chigkang Mountains. The crux of protracted revolutionary war was to answer the question “how one or more small areas under Red political power could survive when

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completely encircled by the White régime.”<sup>31</sup> The area had to be rich and autarkical enough to sustain the revolutionary armed forces operating in it. This approach proved more difficult than expected. Its economic problems, especially the shortage of cash, were extremely difficult. As a result of the enemy blockade, Mao noted in October 1928: “Necessities such as salt, cloth, and medicines have been very scarce and dear...which has upset, sometimes to an acute degree, the lives of the masses...the soldiers are under-nourished, many are ill, and the wounded in the hospitals are worse off.” Though 20 per cent of the crop in the central base area had been collected by the Communists as tax, other parts of the “independent régime” were hilly areas “where the peasants are so poverty-stricken that any taxation is inadvisable.”<sup>32</sup> Clearly, the lack of external funding presented Mao with a dilemma between levying taxes and fostering popular support.

Without an external source of money, resistance movements must rely on local sources to generate funds. Options are limited. Licit economic activities generally yield low profits. Illicit activities, such as smuggling, drug trafficking, prostitution, blood diamonds, extortion, or kidnapping, generate much more money, but they place such a high burden on ordinary citizens that applying them will almost certainly alienate many of them. Even then, proceeds will be barely sufficient to finance the militant branch of the resistance. Few, if any financial resources will be left to cater to the local population’s needs. This course of action does not provide a solid basis for a successful resistance campaign.

Resistance movements that can tap into foreign sources of money face none of these problems. They can survive and thrive in areas surrounded or even occupied by intervening forces. Global fundraising coupled with Western constraints on the use of force allow emerging resistance movements to co-exist with intervening forces in one area. Two evolutions have considerably increased emerging actors’ capabilities to raise funds abroad. These evolutions are the proliferation of diasporas and the liberalization of Islamic organizations that are eligible for Islamic alms or *zakat*.

As a result of the increased mobility of people during the twentieth century, a significant percentage of people live outside their countries of origin. For instance, approximately two million people live in Kosovo, but several hundred thousand Kosovars live in other European countries. Moreover, modern communication technology allows the diaspora to keep in touch with the homeland. If an emerging resistance movement obtains the support of the diaspora, it can tap into the wealth of its members. That is what Ibrahim Rugova did in Kosovo. After the Serbian president Slobodan Miloscevic nullified the autonomy of the province, Rugova set up



parallel clandestine educational and health care institutions for ethnic Albanians. He financed these with proceeds from international fund raising. “Kosovo’s exile Albanian population (approximately 180,000 in Switzerland and 150,000 in Germany) contributed to the maintenance of a ‘parallel government’ through an informal tax of 3 percent of income collected both inside Kosovo and from the diaspora. This revenue allowed Albanian clans to conduct a sustained period of passive resistance to the Miloscevic regime in the early 1990s under the parallel government led by Ibrahim Rugova’s Democratic League of Kosovo.”<sup>33</sup>

Another important source of funding for contemporary emerging resistance movements in the Islamic world is almsgiving, or *zakat*. *Zakat*, is one of the five pillars of Islam. In the Sunni interpretation, a Muslim should donate 2.5 percent of his wealth to *zakat* per lunar year. In the Shi’a interpretation, almsgiving is more often referred to as *khums*. Literally, this means “one-fifth” because Shi’a calculates the alms to be donated as one-fifth of the increase of one’s possession per lunar year. *Zakat* is as old as Islam itself, but a foreign intervention in an Islamic region dramatically changes its influence on the local social, political, and military dynamics. Muslim regimes typically keep *zakat* fundraising and the social organizations who benefit from it in check by subjecting them to an elaborate system of registration, licensing, and surveillance. By eliminating that system, a foreign intervention unleashes Islamic organizations in the conflict area. The Six-Day War illustrates this. Tamimi holds:

The Palestinian Islamists may be viewed as pioneers in the way they transformed their intellectual and ideological discourse into practical programmes providing services to the public through voluntary institutions. Their brethren elsewhere in the Arab world had, for decades, been denied such opportunities because the majority of the Arab countries had imposed restrictions on any form of non-governmental activity linking religion and education, or of a voluntary and charitable nature.<sup>34</sup>

Israel abolished these restrictions in the Occupied Territories. According to Tamimi:

The irony was that the situation changed in the aftermath of the 1967 war and the Israeli occupation. Israel opted to revive certain aspects of archaic Ottoman law in its administration of the affairs of the Arab populations in the West Bank and Gaza. This permitted the creation of voluntary or non-governmental organizations such as charitable, educational, and other forms of privately funded service institutions.<sup>35</sup>

The change in legislation gave Islamist organizations, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Gaza, access to a large, continuous, and uninhibited flow of funds that enabled them to implement a parallel whole of government approach in the Occupied Territories. Over time, the Muslim Brotherhood evolved first into the social services provider *al-Mujamma al-Islamy* and later into the resistance movement Hamas. The transition to armed resistance did not end its access to the proceeds of Islamic charitable fundraising.

While it does not appear that Islamic social welfare organisations affiliated with Hamas have been directly funded by governments, they have benefited extensively from charitable societies active in the Gulf (some of which “operate under royal patronage”), Europe, and North America. Although Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim expatriate communities play an important role in contributing to such charities, the majority of foreign funding has traditionally come from the Gulf region.<sup>36</sup>

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The financing of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon follows a similar pattern. Judith Palmer-Harik writes, “In my interviews with Hezbollah officials, I discovered that the financial sources for the eight associations they run include contributions from Lebanese individuals, Hezbollah members, Iran (including charitable organizations) and donations that are part of Shi’ite religious obligations to provide a fifth of one’s income to help those in need.”<sup>37</sup> However, charitable Islamic fundraising is only an advantage if one has sufficient religious credentials to secure access to it. This was not the case for Muqtada al-Sadr in Iraq. Contrary to Sunnis, Shi’a have a highly structured and clerical hierarchy. One’s place in this hierarchy is based on academic credentials.<sup>38</sup> The highest religious authorities, with the rank of Grand Ayatollah, are called *Marja al-Taqlid* (sources of emulation). A lay Shi’a is free to choose his *marja’* but must then pay him alms and follow his pronouncements.<sup>39</sup> Although Muqtada’s father, Sadiq al-Sadr, collected *khums* as a *marja’*, Muqtada was by no means his father’s natural heir.

Prior to his death and under pressure from his associates, Sadiq al-Sadr had appointed Ayatollah Kadhim al-Ha’iri, a prominent *marja’* of Iraqi origin, as his official successor—or, more precisely, as the source of emulation to whom Sadiq’s followers should turn in the event his writings left a question unanswered...Nor did Muqtada enjoy any material advantages: Sadiq al-Sadr’s most important asset, the *khums* (alms paid by Shiites to their *marja’*) was conveyed to his legate al-Ha’iri.<sup>40</sup>

As a consequence, Muqtada al-Sadr initially focused his actions on asserting his religious credentials. In a first step, he struck a deal with Kadhim al-Ha'iri, who lacked any independent Iraqi constituency. According to a Crisis Group Report, al-Ha'iri was “aware of these shortcomings [and] seems to have considered Muqtada a useful transitional figure who would pave the way for his eventual return to Najaf. As a result, he delegated to Muqtada rights that, in principle, must only accrue to a *marja'* (e.g., the right to issue *fatwas* or to receive *khums*), while simultaneously trying to keep a watchful eye over him.”<sup>41</sup> This deal seemed to benefit both. Muqtada al-Sadr obtained the religious authority he could not claim because of his youth and lack of academic credentials, while Ayatollah Kadhim al-Ha'iri obtained the formal leadership of al-Sadr's constituency. The deal did not last long. After he consolidated his leadership, al-Sadr simply ignored al-Ha'iri. According to a Crisis Group Report, “although Ayatollah Kadhim al-Ha'iri withdrew his formal endorsement of Muqtada, the young Sadr continues to assert the rights of a *marja'*, such as leading Friday prayers and collecting *khums*. To be sure, Sadiq al-Sadr also disputed the *Hawza's* knowledge and erudition-based hierarchical structure; but Muqtada has taken this a significant step further, entirely discarding the concept that legitimacy flowed from academic credentials.”<sup>42</sup> It was only after securing his power base and the associated financial resources that Muqtada al-Sadr considered the use of violence against coalition forces.

Global fundraising is of vital importance to emerging resistance movements. Two important fund raising mechanisms are remittances from diasporas and religious charitable donations. Ideally, the intervening community should co-opt or at least avoid alienating the sources of such funds. Framing a whole of government approach in a clash-of-civilization context will almost certainly backfire in the shape of a copious flow of funds toward extremists in the conflict area.

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## **Operational implications**

Two main operational implications follow from this analysis. To increase its validity against emerging resistance movements, a whole of government approach should include measures and precautions to find the genies in the bottle and stem their growth.

### **FIND THE GENIES IN THE BOTTLE**

When coalition forces invaded Iraq in 2003, their intelligence focused on the regime itself, the military and paramilitary forces supporting it, the established Shi'a clergy, and the leading figures

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among the Iraqis in exile. Nobody analyzed the remnants of Sadiq al-Sadr's movement who were brutally crushed by Saddam Hussein in 1999. As Haugh states, "[Muqtada al-Sadr's] rise to prominence within the Shi'a community largely went unnoticed by the United States government."<sup>43</sup>

In Gaza, the Israelis ignored Islamist organizations after they occupied the area in 1967. They only worried about the PLO and various left-leaning Palestinian extremist groups, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Abu Nidal Organization, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. "The Israeli authorities generally took the view that the Islamist movement was less threatening than the militant PLO, that it could usefully absorb the energies of Palestinian youth and could be a valuable instrument to promote 'disputes and schisms among Palestinians.'"<sup>44</sup> As a consequence, Sheikh Yassin's *al-Mujamma al-Islamiya* could grow unhindered until the *Intifada* broke out.

In a similar vein, Israeli intelligence failed to recognize Musa Sadr's *Harakat al-Mahrumin* as a threat. Instead, they focused on the PLO it wanted to crush and on the South Lebanese Army it wanted to co-opt. Yitzak Rabin's quote at the beginning of this paper demonstrates that strategically this led to the replacement of one resistance movement (the PLO) with a more dangerous one (Hezbollah).

These intelligence failures can be avoided. Haugh holds that: "In retrospect, a leader emerging from the al-Sadr school of Islamic thought should not have been a surprise."<sup>45</sup> Prior to major combat operations, the intervening community should conduct a thorough analysis of all grassroots organizations (both violent and non-violent), their current and potential constituencies, their popularity among relevant diasporas, and their access to funds such as remittances and religious almsgiving. If at all possible, the intervening community should co-opt such organizations and integrate their growth in the whole of government approach. This was the case in Kosovo with Rugova's DLK. However, when the intervening community cannot co-opt these groups, the whole of government approach should include measures to stem the growth of anti-Western grassroots organizations.

### **STEM THEIR GROWTH**

Grassroots organizations will spontaneously grow after the fall of the autocratic regime that oppressed them. Some will grow large enough to spawn armed resistance movements. To prevent this, the intervening community should work on all conceptual components of the mechanism allowing the emergence and development of these actors: constraints, initiative, integrity, recuperation, and

fundraising.

Democratic troop-contributing nations will always impose constraints on the use of military force. However, if one grassroots organization violently monopolizes the infrastructure in order to provide humanitarian assistance and social services, constraints may not preclude military action by the intervening forces to level the playing field for all active humanitarian organizations.

The intervening community must strive to reduce the time between the fall of a repressive regime and the start of remediation efforts. Failure to do so will give anti-Western organizations the opportunity to seize the initiative by starting remediation efforts themselves. When they succeed, they will derive legitimacy and popular support from their activities.

The intervening community often accepts a level of corruption in a whole of government approach. This is a mistake. Corruption not only diminishes the amount of funds available for stability and reconstruction, it also offers anti-Western organizations the opportunity to do better and campaign on their integrity.

From the start, the intervening community has to cover all aspects of social assistance and essential services, including sectors like healthcare, education, and social assistance to orphans and elderly people. Otherwise, emerging actors will claim these niches, which will allow them to recuperate the whole of government approach by pointing out that the intervening community's efforts should be taken for granted and what they provide is what really matters. This does not mean that intervening forces should organize healthcare and education themselves. On the contrary, they will simply lack the cultural and linguistic capacity to do so. To deny that void to emerging resistance organizations, co-opted local grassroots organization with sufficiently large constituencies should provide these services.

Fundraising is crucial for emerging resistance movements. Without it, they are unable to provide social assistance and essential services from which they derive the popular support they need to assimilate their fighters into the population. The main sources of these funds are remittances and religious almsgiving. Therefore, the intervening community should avoid antagonizing relevant diasporas and religious communities. Ideally, a whole of government approach should integrate pro-Western grassroots organizations that have access to the sources of funds.

## Conclusion

**A whole of government approach must include a full-fledged struggle to out-administer any opponent who exists or might emerge in the conflict**

When intervening forces create a safe and secure environment to implement a whole of government approach, they simultaneously create opportunities for hitherto unnoticed and powerless opponents to do the same—and sometimes more successfully. A whole of government approach must include a full-fledged struggle to out-administer any opponent who exists or might emerge in the conflict area and is only valid in dealing with security threats if it takes this reality into account. Intervening forces must recognize emerging resistance movements as soon as possible and stem their growth before they can consolidate a popular support base that allows them to fight among the people. **IAP**

# Endnotes

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- 3 Laura Zittrain Eisenberg, “Israel’s South Lebanon Imbroglio,” *Middle East Quarterly*, June 1997, pp. 60–69.
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- 5 Timothy Haugh, “The Sadr II Movement: An Organizational Fight for Legitimacy within the Iraqi Shi’a Community,” *Strategic Insights*, Vol. 4, Issue 5, May 2005.
- 6 James A. Baker III and Lee H. Hamilton, *The Iraq Study Group Report*, Vintage Books, New York, 2006, p. 16.
- 7 Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century*, Zenith Press, St. Paul, 2004, p. 96.
- 8 The first *Intifada* (uprising in Arabic) started in Gaza on December 9, 1987, after an Israeli truck ran into and killed four Palestinians. “Intifada, Then and Now,” BBC News, December 8, 2000, <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/1061537.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/1061537.stm)>, accessed on January 9, 2012.
- 9 In this, the aforementioned operations differ from Operation Desert Storm. Desert Storm evicted the Iraqi Army from Kuwait after which the Emir and his Government could return to rule their country as before. Emergence did not occur.
- 10 Colonel Arthur D. Simons Center for the Study of Interagency Cooperation, *Interagency Handbook for Transitions*, CGSC Foundation Press, Fort Leavenworth, 2011, p. 4.
- 11 Judith Palmer Harik, *Hezbollah, The Changing Face of Terrorism*, I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, London, 2004, p. 22. Musa al-Sadr (15 April 1928–31 August 1978) was a cousin of Muqtada al-Sadr’s grandfather. Allegedly he was killed on orders of Gaddafi during a mission in Libya.
- 12 Crisis Group Middle East Report No. 55, “Iraq’s Muqtada’s al-Sadr: Spoiler or Stabiliser,” 11 July 2006, p. 3. Sadiq al-Sadr (March 23, 1943–February 19, 1999) was Muqtada al-Sadr’s father. He was also named “Second al-Sadr” (al-Sadr al-Thani) to distinguish him from Baqir al-Sadr, the founder of the Iraqi al-Dawa party and the author of influential works in Islamic banking. He was killed in 1999 on orders of Saddam Hussein, who feared the growing mobilization of the Iraqi Shi’a majority.
- 13 Jim Zanotti, *Hamas: Background and Issues for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, Washington, 2010, p. 40. Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (1937–March 22, 2004) was the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood (a movement outlawed in Egypt) in Gaza. When Israel took control of the—until then Egyptian—Gaza Strip, Yassin founded the *Mujama al-Islamiya*, a charity that organized schools, clubs, mosques, and libraries. The movement later evolved into the resistance organization Hamas. Yassin was killed in an Israeli air raid.
- 14 Ibrahim Rugova (December 2, 1944–January 21, 2006) was the President of Kosovo. “Mr. Rugova emerged in the late 1980s as the unlikely figure to lead Kosovo’s Albanian population as the Serbian leader of that era, Slobodan Milosevic, imposed difficult conditions on Kosovo, using it as the motor for a virulent nationalist revival....After he became involved in politics, his dogged determination to demand independence, but without the use of force, won him international respect. After ethnic Albanians were fired by Kosovo’s institutions in 1991, the Democratic League established a parallel state, providing education and health services to Albanians, financed largely by donations from the Albanian diaspora in Europe and the United States.” See Nicholas Wood, “Ibrahim Rugova, 61, Kosovo Albanian Leader, is Dead,” *The New York Times*, January 23, 2006.

- 15 “The major religious Shi’ite groups with which the Americans were negotiating were part of Chalabi’s group and included the Tehran-based Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the London branch of the al-Da’wa party, and the Khoei Foundation,” none of which had shared the suffering caused by Saddam Hussein’s violent repression of the Shi’a uprising in the aftermath of Desert Storm. See Juan Cole, “The United States and Shi’ite Religious Factions in Post-Ba’thist Iraq,” *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 4, Autumn 2003, pp. 543–566.
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- 27 Crisis Group Middle East Report No.13, “Islamic Social Welfare Activism in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: A Legitimate Target?” April 13, 2003, p. 9.
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- 34 Azzam Tamimi, *Hamas: Unwritten Chapters*, Hurst, London, 2007, p. 37.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Crisis Group Middle East Report No.13, p. 12.
- 37 Judith Palmer-Harik, *Hezbollah, The Changing Face of Terrorism*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2005, p. 93.



38 Crisis Group Middle East Briefing, "Iraq's Shiites Under Occupation," September 9, 2003, p. 9. "Clerics may advance from novice, to teacher, to *hujjat al-Islam*, to ayatollah and, finally, to grand ayatollah. Promotion results from an *ijaza* or certificate, granted by a higher authority or, alternatively, through recognition of an individual by a majority of clerics of lower rank. The process is not akin to a Vatican-type election. Rather, it is a lengthy selection that uses organized disorder to produce recognized leaders."

39 Ibid.

40 Crisis Group Middle East Report No. 55, p. 6.

41 Ibid., p. 8.

42 Ibid., p.18.

43 Haugh.

44 Crisis Group Middle East Report No. 13, p. 4. See also: Anat Kurz and Nahman Tal, " Hamas: Radical Islam in a National Struggle," Memorandum No. 48, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv, 1997.

45 Haugh.





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