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BACKSTAGE LABOR AND ORGANIZATIONAL ADAPTATION

Munadileh was deployed just behind the Palestinian guerrilla lines in Saida, a major coastal city in South Lebanon, as she watched the Israeli army approach. It was June of 1982, and the teenager had been well trained to use the AK-47 slung around her back. On that day, however, it wasn't her job to use it. Munadileh was a nurse, and she saw the fighters' positions primarily in terms of their distance from the sterile operating rooms of the hospital. Instead of training her sights on the approaching Israeli forces, she scanned for Palestinian casualties to transfer into an ambulance for the jaw-clenching, rubber-to-the-road ride to a medical facility.

When Munadileh drew the fighters' positions for me in the spring of 2011, she sketched them as a semicircle to the south of a dot representing the hospital; her puzzle was how to get injured guerrillas from the semicircle to the dot without being obliterated by the Israel Defense Forces' (IDF's) ongoing bombardment. Back and forth, back and forth until the Palestinian lines collapsed, at which point Munadileh retreated to the hospital. She was treating patients when bombs started falling around the medical facility itself. With each shuddering impact, the medical workers paused their suturing, withdrew a syringe, or pulled a little more tightly on an unsecured bandage. Those in charge decided to evacuate. In the chaos, anyone who was still physically capable grabbed stretchers, wheelchairs, or gurneys as wounded civilians and soldiers streamed out of the hospital. Munadileh believes that there were still people in the building when a gas tank received a direct hit, creating an explosion that engulfed the facility in

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flames. Then the arrests began, Munadileh told me, and "*sar al-dunya sawda*"—the world became black.

Raised in a family associated with the leftist Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM), Munadileh knew her way around weapons and had served in frontline combat positions. But, when she described her career trajectory to me, Munadileh emphasized the other roles she had played: as battlefield medic, trauma nurse, ambulance driver, social worker, even logistician. When she told me her story, Munadileh emphasized how much skill went into these different forms of labor, how much education and training they required, and the degree to which taking on these assignments required her to trust and be trusted. She asked me to call her *Munadileh*—which translates from Arabic as "a struggler"—rather than to identify her as a *muqatila,* meaning a fighter. She wasn't, and had never been, "just" a fighter. Another veteran asked me to call her "*Zahra,*" or "flower." This seemingly delicate choice harks back to a specific role in the resistance: the girls' wing of the military scouting unit of Fatah, a leading Palestinian faction, was called the *Zaharat,* the plural of *zahra*. Each woman wanted her experiences understood in terms of her individual story as well as representing the complicated realities associated with participating in an armed national project.

This book highlights people like Munadileh: militants who take on ostensibly "backstage" roles in asymmetric wars. Every armed conflict involves backstage labor—that is, logistic, intelligence, medical, finance, and human resources work that facilitates organizational continuity, resilience, and survival, but that may not involve using a weapon. Indeed, most experienced militants with whom I spoke did not consider the physical labor of *killing* the most important aspect of armed conflict. Rather, these militants approached unconventional warfare as a series of challenges focused on information, logistics, and coordination. They needed to keep mobile forces supplied, identify collaborators, disrupt rival belligerents' operations, and provide essential services such as healthcare to their cadres and to the populations on whose support they depended. Militant organizations that persist do so because they have found ways to negotiate these challenges. Understanding the importance of noncombat roles and the people who serve in them offers essential insights into why militant organizations behave the way they do.

I trace the backstage labor that made it possible for Palestinian resistance groups to adapt and survive in Lebanon in the 1980s, despite repeated military campaigns by Lebanese, Israeli, and Syrian forces. In the pages that follow, I take these roles as being essential to understanding mobilization, political violence, resistance to occupation, organizational adaptation, and armed conflict in general. My commitment to this approach reflects an ambition to engage with the role of individual and collective actors as drivers of expressly organizational out-

comes. In no case is a militant "simply" a militant. Rather, the relational perspective that I adopt sees individuals as simultaneously playing multiple roles in distinct social networks. I take seriously Munadileh's insistence that she must be understood as not merely a fighter, but also a nurse, a spouse, a sister, a friend, a coworker, a classmate, a teammate, and a community member.[1] This social complexity, and specifically the way that it interacts with militant organizations' formal hierarchies, is essential to understanding organizations' capacity to adapt and evolve.

Going beyond the Lines in Intrastate War

Zahra, like Munadileh and many other militants, started off her political and military career as a scout at a fairly young age. As a teenager, she survived the months-long 1976 siege of the Tel al-Zaʿtar Palestinian refugee camp in East Beirut's suburbs. Right-wing Lebanese militias blockaded the camp in January 1976, as the Lebanese Civil War escalated. They besieged the population throughout the summer before eventually massacring survivors following the camp's surrender in August 1976. Zahra and her family fled to a village outside Beirut, where Zahra became a military instructor, drilling dozens of other young women eager to fight as guerrillas for the Palestinian resistance. They moved again and were living in South Beirut in September 1982, when militiamen affiliated with the Lebanese Kataʾib, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), and other predominantly Christian militias entered the Greater Shatila district, disappearing and killing between two and three thousand predominantly Palestinian civilians.[2] Zahra again escaped, but she returned forty days later for demonstrations that memorialized the victims.[3] Worried about being arrested, she concealed the Palestinian flag that she had brought along in tribute to the victims in her clothing. At the last moment, standing over the mass grave south of the camp, she pulled it out and laid it gently on the dirt.

Throughout the 1980s, Zahra served in both social service and intelligence positions. Though she was targeted by rival factions and by the Syrian *mukhabarat* (intelligence services), Zahra continued to travel incognito to a blockaded camp to teach in an informal school that the residents organized. People, she underscored to me, did not want their children to fall behind in their education. Zahra also used her position as cover to smuggle messages and supplies into the camp for the guerrilla faction. At one point, a childhood friend from Tel al-Zaʿtar who was affiliated with a rival, Syrian-allied Palestinian faction saved Zahra from a prison sentence by destroying her intelligence file. Her luck ran out about a year later, when the Syrian *mukhabarat* captured and incarcerated her in a notorious prison

under the Beau Rivage Hotel in Beirut. Upon her release, she went straight back to political work. This time, she moved into a subunit focused on social aid, becoming an active member of the General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW).

Over the course of her career as a militant, Zahra survived multiple camp sieges, several massacres, imprisonment, torture, and constant surveillance by rival Palestinian factions, Lebanese militias, the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), and the *mukhabarat*. At one point during the 1990s, the Syrians installed a checkpoint in front of her building in an attempt to rearrest her. Zahra responded by sleeping at friends' houses—shoes on, in her street clothes—for the better part of the decade. Despite intense violence, repression, and, at times, the faction's unpopularity within the refugee camps, she remained loyal to Fatah. She remains frustrated that, as a woman, she is currently barred from serving in the organization's military wing despite her long years of service.

When I asked Zahra why she remained active, even after being tortured, she told me: "I didn't train [to fight] because I love war, I trained [to fight] because I love life (*Ma darabt ashan bhib al-harb, darabt ashan bhib al-hayat*)." While anthropomorphizing organizations has its limits, one might ask similar questions of Fatah, the Popular Front, or any of the other Palestinian factions that one wants to ask of Zahra: Why did you remain active? What made you resilient? How did you adapt?

A major takeaway of my research is that both women's and men's militant careers tended to include various roles over time. Only one of my interlocutors portrayed his guerrilla activities solely in terms of violent participation. Now a high-ranking officer in Fatah, Ibrahim joined his refugee camp's defensive front in the mid-1980s at the age of fifteen, was arrested shortly thereafter by Syrian *mukhabarat*, and spent the rest of the war in a military prison in Syria. He described his teenage self as "an idiot spraying bullets [*rash al-rasas*] at anything that moved." He acknowledged that this was not a particularly helpful contribution to the organization. As our conversation progressed, he explained that he did not become valuable to the organization until he was imprisoned with hundreds of other cadres in Syria, at which point Fatah members educated him politically.[4] Not coincidentally, teenage Ibrahim had far less preparation than most Palestinian militants, who tended to move through distinct combat and noncombat roles in the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) or the guerrilla parties over time.[5] This pattern of transitioning through various forms of violent and nonviolent participation is true for both men and women militants. The practice allowed them to carry skill sets across multiple roles and subdivisions, which in turn contributed to organizational learning.[6]

In this book, I specifically examine how processes of network adaptation, driven by the hidden labor of quotidian social networks, led to the formation of

logistics and smuggling apparatuses, intelligence and counterintelligence units, personalized militias, tactical teams, and, eventually, the emergence of local community defensive fronts among military Palestinian factions operating in Lebanon. I argue that militant adaptation and resilience operate as a continual feedback loop between belligerents engaged in asymmetric conflict as they deploy repertoires of violence—that is, "that set of practices that a group routinely engages in as it makes claims on other political or social actors" (E. J. Wood 2009, 133)—that in turn reshape social networks.[7]

I identify three levels of organizational adaptation in response to external pressure. First, when militants use everyday relationships to reroute organizational communications and resources—for example, orders, intelligence, weaponry, or payments—without altering their fundamental organizational structure, they are engaged in *repurposing*.[8] In a second stage, when these adaptations become systematic across an organization—that is, routinized and institutionalized to the extent that actors rely upon them, rather than on the top-down, formal hierarchies described "on paper"—*remapping* occurs.[9] The third and final step of this adaptive process, *emergence*, only occurs when an organization incorporates new rules, skills, and practices into network ties, thereby creating new constitutive understandings of collective membership and goals (Padgett and McLean 2006; Padgett and Powell 2012; Obert 2014, 2018; R. Gould 1995). In effect, emergence brings about both new structures and organizational identities via endogenous network processes. Building an understanding of organizational adaptation, emergence, and evolution through the interaction of social networks with repertoires of violence facilitates a more complete, better grounded, and representative understanding of conflict dynamics.

Violence, Quotidian Social Networks, and Organizational Resilience

In the contemporary era, multiparty and intrastate conflicts similar to the ones in 1980s Lebanon—for example, those in Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Libya—annually account for millions of civilian casualties and displaced persons. In 2019, 11.7 million refugees, which accounts for 57 percent of the total global refugee population, originated from just three countries experiencing such conflicts: Syria, Afghanistan, and South Sudan (UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2020). These complex intrastate wars often involve diverse state and nonstate armed actors, including rebel and militant groups, paramilitaries, local militias and community civil defense committees, state armed forces, mercenaries, and sometimes foreign military advisers.[10] Foreign

governments and corporate entities may fund or otherwise materially support belligerents; regional organizations such as the African Union or the United Nations may send observers or peacekeepers in the hopes of enforcing treaties and stemming violence.

Conventional, front-based combat does not generally characterize these types of "civil" wars; they often feature irregular warfare (Kalyvas and Balcells 2010), varying in both the strategies and tactics that military organizations use as well as in the intensity of hostilities over time. A conflict of this sort may feature aerial bombardment some months, hit-and-run guerrilla engagement during others, and periods of ostensible "calm" punctuated by kidnappings and disappearances. Belligerents and civilians alike must constantly update their survival strategies. These conflicts reach directly into people's neighborhoods and homes via tactics such as informing and siege, with a massive human cost. For example, the 1,417-day Siege of Sarajevo (1992–1995) killed nearly 19,000 people; infrastructural damage to the city totaled US$18.5 billion (Sito-Sucic 2006). Experts have estimated that between 2011 and 2019, the Syrian regime incarcerated approximately 1.2 million of its citizens; in that last year, the Syrian Network for Human Rights reported that government agents had tortured more than 14,000 people to death since the civil war's beginning (Black 2014; Safi 2019). Yet war also affects people's everyday lives by infusing daily activities such as going to work, shopping for food, and attending school with potentially mortal risks. Organizational adaptability and resilience shape how parties to the conflict, as well as civilians, experience wartime violence beyond its public and the spectacular instantiations that garner media attention (Hermez 2017, 9; Parkinson 2015), including in their homes, in prison camps, and on the run. They can mean the difference between a state's fighting isolated, inexperienced, fragmented armed cells or a robust, multiparty insurgent front with a professionalized advocacy wing. They can also affect whether civilians living in rebel-controlled areas have access to food, healthcare, protection, and education.

The repertoires of violence and repression deployed against nonstate armed organizations affect militants' organizational and social networks, shaping the potential for and patterns of repurposing, remapping, and emergence. The first section below discusses the material and social consequences that violence has on militants' networks. The second asks how these groups respond to these material and meaning-based effects. In the face of challenging circumstances and unpredictable futures, the content and structure of militant groups' social network ties evolve, creating new procedures, resource flows, and practices that may ultimately produce additional organizational units.

Experiences of Repression

Violence and repression affect militants' quotidian social networks both via "material" changes to network structure—that is, by disrupting nodes (people) and ties (relationships)—and via shifts in the collective meanings embedded within social relations. For example, when an individual is arrested or is killed, a network has been disrupted; a node in the network has disappeared. Alternatively, when a person joins an organization, marries into a family, takes a new job, or starts worshipping with a new congregation, a new node with fresh ties is created in the relevant network. When a group replaces someone who has been arrested, or redistributes tasks previously assigned to a person who has died, or initiates new lines of communication within prisons, we are witnessing the first level of organizational adaptation: repurposing.

Other transformations within organizations' social infrastructure may be less obvious. As evinced by both Zahra's and Munadileh's telling of their own stories, people interpret encounters with violence and repression via their roles in multiple networks. They come to understand their positions in new ways, and they recalibrate their roles and relations within social structures accordingly.[11] In Zahra's case, her family's and community's experience of Tel al-Zaʿtar and the Sabra and Shatila massacre shaped her own future understanding of wartime risks to civilian communities. These experiences helped to develop the responsibilities she felt and projected onto her organization, the roles she sought out, and even the way that she leveraged her quotidian relationships to organizational ends.

In much the same manner that this account focuses on the wide variety of roles within and adjacent to militant organizations, it eschews an overly narrow understanding of violence. Instead of counting bodies, it explores how people, communities, and organizations experienced a wide array of violent and repressive tactics. It emphasizes how counterinsurgent states and their nonstate allies (such as local paramilitary organizations and militias) deploy tactics that are both visible and surreptitious, sensational and banal, fast and drawn out, often all simultaneously. The effects of the type of violence and repression I discuss—pressure to collaborate and inform, incarceration and detention, sieges and forced starvation, nonlethal intimidation and harassment—are, admittedly, more difficult to quantify than body counts. Nevertheless, these broader repertoires of violence shape key organizational outcomes by creating feedback loops through social networks that, in turn, influence militant groups' trajectories.

This approach examines, theorizes, and compares the distinct network effects of specific violent and repressive tactics—for example, a combat death via an artillery barrage versus a combat death involving hand-to-hand fighting, or the

subsequent desecration of a corpse versus the assassination of a high-ranking commander. In one sense, each death has the same material effect on the network, in that each has removed a single node. Focusing on the *meaning* of those deaths, however, produces new analytical insights into how militant groups persist in the face of repression. A meaning-based approach asks how those in the deceased soldiers' social networks understand these deaths—for example, as "lawful" or "unlawful"—and whether those understandings subsequently influence their social networks. In terms of organizational change and adaptation, a qualitative difference can be seen between different types of deaths, as well as between a death, a capture, and a disappearance. A particularly gruesome murder, for instance, might inject a new sharpness into everyday conversation focused on the enemy's barbarism. Taking this observation a step further, we might then ask how those meanings influence organizational decision-making and behavior. Each of these situations holds implications for how people interpret violence, how those understandings ripple through social networks, and how organizations adapt and mobilize in response to those meanings.[12]

Social Infrastructure and Organizational Change

Everyday relationships shape the ways that militants both experience and fight wars. I use the term *social infrastructure* to refer to patterns of overlap between quotidian networks—that is, everyday kinship, marriage, friendship, and community relationships—and formal organizational hierarchies.[13] These latter structures are best thought of as elements of an organization's "official," institutionalized configuration, including chains of command, subdivisional layouts, and planned task differentiation between bureaus, subunits, and so forth (Sinno 2010; Pearlman 2011; Bakke et al. 2012). Overlays and intersections within the social infrastructure influence which quotidian networks are proximate to which formal, intraorganizational ties. Put more concretely, it matters whether an informant plays soccer with the recruiter's cousin or whether the unit commander is married to the general's son.

The overlaps between the multiple types of networks that constitute social infrastructure also influence how violence reverberates through social systems. A counterinsurgent state military's mass detention of "fighters," for example, might broadly target boys and men as "suspected insurgents" based only upon gender (Mikdashi 2014), but communities might experience it as the disappearance of husbands, fathers, children, and brothers, who are also simultaneously understood as, for example, "breadwinners" or "star athletes." This social infrastructure matters both within and across organizations. In Zahra's case, her friendly, ongoing, everyday relationships to other Tel al-Zaʿtar survivors—who had many

different affiliations—facilitated much of her militant work, including the destruction of her intelligence file.

On a deeper conceptual level, both Munadileh's and Zahra's stories reveal how the malleability of social ties, via both agentive choice and collective interpretations, allows militants to reshape their social relationships to organizational ends and vice versa. I call this innate malleability of social relationships "relational plasticity," a term I have modified from "neuroplasticity"—that is, the brain's ability to reconfigure neurons in response to stimuli. Relational plasticity allows for increasingly complex relationships to emerge among militant cadres in wartime environments. Munadileh, for instance, met her husband through her Marxist group, an experience shared by many militant women I interviewed. A professional relationship became a personal one because Munadileh's work made her a more desirable spouse. In part, this was because she and her future husband developed profound trust in and admiration of each other because of the nature of their work. Yet it was also because many factions, including Munadileh's, encourage marriage within organizational boundaries.

Both Munadileh's and Zahra's experiences illustrate how one's quotidian relationships are *repurposed* for organizational ends, a practice facilitated by relational plasticity. In each case, the specific relationships formed a network bridge—that is, a connection between otherwise unconnected or distantly connected maps of social ties, and between formal organizational hierarchies and everyday relations. Munadileh's organization went a step beyond, actively *remapping* organizational roles by systematically repurposing specific types of quotidian relationships to *routinely* perform particular organizational functions. In her case, Munadileh and her husband's faction assigned them as well as other married couples to tactical teams together, an arrangement that leveraged systematic overlap between marriage ties and high-skilled operational divisions within the guerrilla faction. That is, militants actively leveraged one facet of the underlying social infrastructure to create a new and distinct type of mixed-gender guerrilla unit. The militants who participated in it had distinct motivations, expectations, and understandings of their roles, in comparison to the positions they had previously inhabited in the group. The destruction of Zahra's intelligence file, in contrast, was a one-off event based on repurposing but not remapping; there was no systematic, routinized repurposing of Tel al-Zaʿtar survivor relationships to destroy all intelligence files.

Repurposing can be collectively organized without necessarily reaching the threshold of remapping; this dynamic frequently applies in the case of ad hoc, collective responses to a specific event or threat. For example, another of my interviewees, Yusif, formed a rapid-response team with his childhood friends to extract their kidnapped former scout leader from a Lebanese militia's prison in the early 1980s. The group disbanded after the operation, having mobilized

around a shared response to an individual's predicament and having accomplished their mission.

In certain situations, however, these quotidian networks and formal organizational hierarchies become so intertwined, so responsive to one another's needs, that new organizations materialize or, sometimes, spin off from existing organizations. This final stage constitutes *emergence*. Some of these emergent organizations gain a degree of semipermanence or permanence, continuing to exist either in whole or as networks that share specific practices even after a war draws to a close. For instance, the emergent camp defensive fronts that I discuss in chapters 6 and 7 created routines that persist today for blood donation along with systems for securing the camps during crises. The following chapters demonstrate how organizational forms evolve by acquiring routines, institutions, and structure based on broader, collective understandings of threats and goals. In doing so, they also underscore the constructions of collective meaning in war (Mampilly 2011; Balcells 2012; Arjona et al. 2015; Shesterinina 2016; Metelits 2018) and the ways that emotions and symbolic processes shape individual-level identities as well as both quotidian and organizational networks' behavior (Swidler 1986; Emirbayer and Goodwin 1996; McLean 2016).

Emergence often occurs even as the official, "on-paper" organizational diagram does not change. Indeed, the cases of remapping and emergence that I describe in this volume were not initially designed, ordered, approved, controlled, or indeed always appreciated by Palestinian factions' elite leaderships, who largely spent the 1980s living in Tunis or Damascus. In some cases, as with the woman-dominated smuggling networks in the early 1980s, foreign leadership recognized, reinforced, and co-opted local innovations to regain top-down control and reassert expressly factional loyalties. In others, as with camp-level, cross-factional guerrilla fronts in the late 1980s, leaders or state patrons ordered members of multiple factions to cease participation and punished disobedience. Emergent organizations became sites of contestation among members of the same militant organizations and engines for engaging in internal critiques of leadership.

Lebanon in the 1980s

This analysis of organizational adaptation and emergence focuses specifically on Palestinian militant organizations in Lebanon between 1982 and 1990, a period that is nested within that of the fifteen-year (1975–1990) Lebanese Civil War. Palestinian militant organizations, such as nationalist Fatah, the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the Ba'thist al-Sa'iqa, have been active in Lebanon since the 1960s. These organizations found support both in Pal-

estinian refugee camps and in middle- and upper-class urban Palestinian communities, both products of the 1947–1948 war that resulted in the creation of the state of Israel as well as the dispossession and flight of between 100,000 and 130,000 Palestinian refugees into Lebanon.[14] Palestinians became heavily involved in Lebanese domestic politics, including through their alliances with various Lebanese leftist and sectarian parties. Palestinian military activity in South Lebanon, the Israeli reprisals that it prompted, and political cleavages regarding the appropriate response to Israeli actions all contributed to the Lebanese Civil War.

The specific setting of 1980s Lebanon provides rich ground to explore social and organizational change in war, specifically because of the hyper-localized nature of the various subconflicts that took place and the way that they fed back into the larger national and international context.[15] Following the PLO's withdrawal of its leadership and guerrilla fighters from Beirut in 1982 (see chapter 3), local branches of larger guerrilla parties and of PLO umbrella institutions were shattered. Tens of thousands of their members had fled, been imprisoned, or died; the invasion annihilated Palestinian militant organizations' social and political apparatuses in South Lebanon and Beirut. Soon, however, Palestinian militant organizations began reemerging under conditions that ranged from Israeli military occupation in South Lebanon to Lebanese government control in West Beirut.

This historic moment serves as a starting point for a cross-regional study focused on Palestinian organizational and quotidian networks' adaptation to localized repertoires of violence in three cities: Beirut, Saida, and Sur. From 1982 to 1985, the Israel Defense Forces occupied Saida and Sur; the Lebanese government and right-wing, Christian militias controlled West Beirut until 1984, when a left-wing coalition of Lebanese militias pushed them out. From 1985 to 1988, the predominantly Shi'i Lebanese militia Amal, working with the LAF's 6th Brigade and the Syrian government, tried to expel all members of the PLO and Fatah from camps in each city. Amal drew on a wide variety of repressive techniques, using different repertoires of violent tactics in Saida than were used in either Beirut and Sur—and employing multiple different repertoires within Sur. During these time frames, Palestinian officers at the regional level (meaning each city and its immediate surroundings) coordinated their strategy across each city in tune with predominating conditions.[16]

The Lebanese Civil War, including the concurrent Israeli occupation of South Lebanon and the Syrian occupation of northern and eastern Lebanon, reflects the realities of contemporary and recent intrastate conflicts—such as those in Iraq, the Central African Republic, or the former Yugoslavia—in contrast to the simplified, dyadic state-versus-rebels game-theoretic and quantitative models commonly used in political science. Specifically, this was a heavily internationalized,

multiparty intrastate war, fought along intersecting political, socioeconomic, and social cleavages, that was profoundly shaped by foreign funding, military intervention, and diplomatic engagement. Examining how these dynamics played out across time and space thus serves to inform more-detailed, nuanced understandings of contemporary conflict.

Plan of the Book

The rest of this book explores organizational dynamics in Palestinian militant groups in Lebanon between 1982 and 1990—the PLO, guerrilla organizations, and eventually, emergent local actors—across Beirut, Saida, and Sur, three cities in southern and central Lebanon. It identifies how militants made sense of and responded to various forms of violent repression through their social networks. Throughout, I call attention to forms of organizational fluidity, resilience, and adaptation that only become visible by centering the essential labor of militants who are not serving on the front lines.

Chapter 1 further situates the work within the research on political violence, intrastate conflict, and social networks; details my ethnohistorical approach to studying militant organizations; and introduces the concept of "organizational metadata." Chapter 2 provides historical background to contextualize the outcomes of interest in the rest of the volume: organizational adaptation and emergence. Drawing on archival sources, interviews, and secondary literature, I trace the development of the PLO and Palestinian guerrilla organizations in Lebanon between 1948 and 1982. In particular, I pay attention to the ways in which organizational subunits layered onto and drew upon quotidian social ties. This chapter thus provides a foundation from which to evaluate change to organizations' structures, behaviors, and informal practices.

Building on this groundwork, chapter 3 details the regionalized repertoires of violence deployed against Palestinian militant organizations during the Israeli invasion of June 1982, the subsequent Siege of Beirut, the "mopping-up" operations conducted by the LAF that fall, and the Sabra and Shatila massacre in September. While laying out the comparative framework for the remainder of the book, the chapter also reveals how a more nuanced treatment of categories such as "indiscriminate" and "(in)direct" violence can help explain outcomes linked to organizational adaptation, particularly through a deeper understanding of how militants and civilians alike experience and narrate them.

Chapter 4 traces the emergence of clandestine supply and intelligence networks in wartime Lebanon. It examines how militants remapped quotidian relationships into woman-dominated smuggling, logistics, and intelligence

networks and how they redesigned mobile guerrilla cells in response to gendered counterinsurgent tactics. Cadres' mixed-gender, trust-based relations—especially kinship, friendship, and marriage ties—provided alternate pathways for organizational resource flows when formal bureaucratic pathways were inaccessible. These networks adopted specific routines and practices, producing semiofficial auxiliary information channels and alternative organizational hierarchies.

Chapter 5 examines how the Israeli forces' mass internment of Palestinian boys and men, alongside widespread Israeli use of collaborators, spurred Palestinian women and youth in South Lebanon to remap ties across political affiliations and between generational cohorts. These processes created community-based advocacy and counterintelligence networks. Narratives of shared fear, resentment, and vulnerability; resistance toolkits; and, eventually, practices of unmasking and anticollaborator violence constituted these emergent networks.

Chapter 6 moves north to Beirut, where it follows processes of network adaptation and emergence from 1982 to 1990. Specifically, it maps the emergence of community-based, cross-faction defensive fronts in Burj al-Barajneh and Shatila camps. While the chapter underscores the development of clandestine communications, logistics, and intelligence networks along similarly gendered lines to those in South Lebanon, it also notes subtle differences in organizational adaptation arising from regionally distinct repertoires of violence that Israeli and Lebanese forces deployed against Palestinian communities. I explore how Beirut-based defensive fronts—in contrast to those in South Lebanon—relied heavily both on quotidian relationships between midlevel officers and on marriage ties between Palestinians and Shiʿa communities in South Beirut. The chapter also delves into cleavages between on-the-ground fighters and their exiled leaderships, exploring how constitutive understandings of community obligations often proved stronger than factional affiliation.

Chapter 7 returns to South Lebanon, presenting a comparison between the War of the Camps in Saida and Sur. Saida was the center of PLO reinfiltration and the site where Palestinians fought a factionally segmented, front-based guerrilla war against Amal. Meanwhile, groups operating out of the camps in Sur demonstrated at least two distinct trajectories based on collective understandings of threat and previous violence: one camp's militants reconsolidated into a shared combat front, while another camp's militants and population collectively declared political neutrality. Throughout the chapter, I show how long-term feedback between violent repertoires, quotidian networks, and organizational structures in Saida resulted in the emergence of an atomized, personalized logic of factional organizing.

In the conclusion, I summarize the book's findings and draw out its implications for theories of civil war, militant organizations, political violence, and

postwar transitions. I emphasize one of the book's core, overarching findings: that militant groups with similar social infrastructures adapt in remarkably different ways to localized repertoires of violence and repression. Building on this conclusion, I note potential trajectories for future research, emphasizing approaches that incorporate social network and gender analysis. I conclude with a discussion of the policy implications of the work. I encourage both scholars and policymakers to broaden their analytical focus beyond spectacular modes of wartime violence and participation in armed conflict. Instead, I contend that gaining an understanding of the less-visible dynamics of asymmetric war, the hidden labor of militant organizations, and the social processes that drive organizational change will yield better engagement with both the challenges posed by intrastate conflict and its broader effects on society.