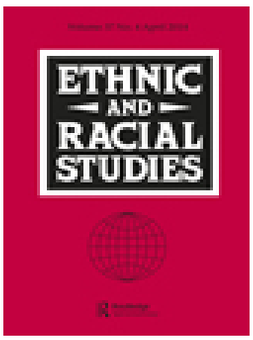

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The paradox of power-sharing: stability and fragility in postwar Lebanon

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ABSTRACT
This article examines the consequences of civil war and power-sharing settlements for the development of sectarian networks of mobilization. While power-sharing presents a viable mechanism for ending civil war, it allows the participating militias-turned-parties access to state resources and leaves their population networks and organizations intact. This continuity reduces the militias-turned-parties' start-up costs for violent mobilization in the future, enabling them to mobilize more effectively than new parties with no combat experience. I exploit rich variation in the wartime legacies and settlement status of the major postwar parties in Lebanon to explain whether and how parties mobilized during the clashes of May 2008, the most serious internal violence to plague Lebanon since the end of its civil war in 1990.

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KEYWORDS Civil war; postwar violence; mobilization; networks; sectarian parties; power-sharing

Introduction

Divided societies recovering from protracted conflict are becoming more common in our world, as internal wars have increasingly been ended through negotiated power-sharing settlements (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003). These states and societies face the huge tasks of economic and social recovery. However, the success of these efforts hinges on preventing the recurrence of conflict. While a rich literature has done much to illuminate the national-level and institutional characteristics that make the recurrence of war more likely (Licklider 1995; Walter 1997; Luttwak 1999; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003, 2015; Walter 2004; Roeder and Rothchild 2005; Doyle and Sambanis 2006; Collier, Hoeffler, and Soderbom 2008; Collier 2010; Toft 2010), less attention has been paid to how civil war transforms associational life and creates networks that facilitate mobilization for violence.

In situations where outright victory is neither possible nor desirable, ending the war in a way that ensures that powerful players will have an incentive to

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cooperate often sows the seeds for recurrent violence. This article examines the consequences of civil war and power-sharing settlements for the maintenance, destruction, and development of sectarian networks of mobilization. I argue that the challenges of controlling territory during civil war force militias to develop networks within the population. If a war ends in power-sharing, this leaves the participating militias-turned-parties organizationally intact and allows them access to state resources. These advantages reduce parties' start-up costs for violent mobilization in the future and allow them to do so more effectively than both defeated militias and new groups with no combat experience. And yet, because of their organizational capacity, these parties are also able to restrain their members, preventing conflict when it is in their interest to do so.

Research objectives and contributions

This articles provides an analytic framework for thinking systematically about how wartime network-building and the terms of a settlement affect postwar parties' likelihood of participating in violence, and how successful their mobilization efforts are likely to be. In doing so, it proposes a possible mechanism underlying the propensity of post-conflict countries to revert to civil war and uses a case study of postwar Lebanon to demonstrate the validity of the mechanism. The study also underscores a key paradox inherent in power-sharing agreements. Although it is a viable resolution to civil war, power-sharing retains the basis for conflict and instability. Such arrangements give a political role to and preserve the organizations of those who achieve power during a civil war. In doing so, power-sharing retains these organizations as bases of power and sites for mobilization in times of crisis. While this dilemma is particularly acute in fragile postwar contexts, such tensions between the devolution or dispersal of power and the imperatives of state-building are ubiquitous (Stein and Rosecrance 2006).

The analysis below generates new insights into the factors contributing to Lebanon's simultaneous stability and fragility. In contrast to the policy-making and scholarly community's focus on foreign support for domestic groups as a primary explanation for patterns of conflict in Lebanon (i.e. Ellis 1999; Zahar 2005; Talbot and Harriman 2008; Hourani 2013), I emphasize the equally important role of outside powers in defeating or demobilizing other groups during the war or immediate postwar period. Moving beyond international and external explanations for Lebanon's instability, this research also highlights the importance of domestic factors in their own right. Understanding how foreign support or repression interact with local organizational structures is critical to evaluating the potential for recurrent conflict in Lebanon and other post-conflict countries.

Methodology

I demonstrate the plausibility of the argument through a case study of postwar Lebanon, drawing on the secondary historical literature. I exploit rich variation in the wartime legacies and settlement status of Lebanon's major postwar parties to generate theoretical expectations for each group's ability to mobilize successfully during a moment of crisis. I then use this classification of political groups to explain patterns of mobilization in the clashes of May 2008, the most serious internal violence to plague Lebanon since the end of its civil war in 1990. The event study relies on a media analysis of the archive of *The Daily Star*, Lebanon's largest English language newspaper. I use a search for the keyword "clashes" in all articles written between 1 May and 31 May 2008, the month surrounding and including the weeklong crisis. The search generates twenty-eight articles.[1] I conduct a comprehensive analysis of these articles and supplement the data with accounts in the secondary literature.

Networks for high-risk mobilization

Several scholars have pointed to the importance of mobilization networks for explaining patterns of ethnic conflict. Networks and effective brokers who link different networks together are key for coherent mobilization (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). The reason that people mobilize along religious or ethnic lines is simply that their social networks are more likely to be within their own group (Kaufman 2011). In his investigation of ethnic riots in India, Varshney (2002) finds that towns with organizations that cross communal lines experience much less rioting than those in which networks exist primarily inside ethnic groups. Scacco (2010) finds that membership in local social networks makes an individual more likely to participate in a riot. These studies provide insight into the importance of networks in shaping individual decision-making and the geographic distribution of violence. However, less attention has been paid to why different ethnic or religious groups, within the same context, mobilize differently and with varying degrees of success. I ask why some groups participate in violent clashes while others do not. Furthermore, why are some more effective mobilizers than others?

I find that a party's previous experience as a civil war militia allows it to establish networks that are effective in mobilizing partisans for violence. This is one of the reasons why postwar countries can remain unstable after negotiated settlements, even years after the initial commitment problems (Walter 1997) have been solved and militias have disarmed. Several scholars have shown that networks are crucial to understanding organizational behaviour during conflict. Weinstein (2007) demonstrates that rebel organizations that rely on social networks exhibit more discipline than those that rely on

economic endowments. Parkinson (2013) finds that high-risk mobilization during civil war involves extensive networks of support beyond the front lines and understands organizational resilience to stem from the overlap between formal and social networks. These new and transformed networks of mobilization rarely disappear with the termination of conflict and can leave enduring legacies (Wood 2008). One of them is the facilitation of mobilization for future violence.

Legacies of civil war militias

The development of militia organizations during civil war has long-term consequences for postwar stability. If the organizational structures and population networks of a militia remain intact after the conflict, they serve to significantly reduce the start-up costs of violent mobilization. If leaders are in favourable political positions after the war, they will use their organizations for electoral politics. However, if shifts in the political context or in the behaviour of other actors are perceived as threats to the sectarian group or its leadership, these networks can be used to mobilize the organization for violent confrontation. That said, these organizations are cohesive enough to be able to enforce restraint among their members when politically advantageous. For example, Hezbollah exhibited both of these behaviours during May 2008. It responded violently to a policy and personnel change that threatened its telecommunications networks and control over the Beirut airport. And yet, it also demonstrated an ability to restrain its militia members and prevent further escalation (Dakhlallah 2012). In contrast, militias defeated during the civil war and new parties with no experience during periods of conflict are likely to face higher start-up costs and are therefore less effective at mobilizing their group for violence. The rest of this section elaborates the logic of this argument.

Militia development

Most militias have a goal of consolidating control over territory during a civil war. Acquiring territory is advantageous for several reasons. It can provide access to natural resources, ports, and the control of drug traffic, while making it more feasible to use the population as a tax base, source of local information (Kalyvas 2006), and pool of recruits. Territory also provides groups with a military advantage by functioning as a safe haven. So great is the importance of controlling territory and the population that inhabits it that scholars and warlords alike consider territorial control to be the best proxy for a group's bargaining position vis-a-vis other players in negotiations. For example, Christia (2012) uses changes in territory as a crucial metric for understanding shifts in the balance of power during the Afghan Intra-Mujahedin War in 1992–98.

Despite its advantages, controlling territory can be a liability, as populations can turn against a militia and provide information to its opponents. Militias need populations to be cooperative or quiescent. In order to accomplish this, militias pursue a variety of strategies. They may change the composition of the population through forced displacement of perceived opponents. They may also work to attract displaced sympathetic populations, such as co-religionists, through the promise of safety from other groups' attacks (Steele 2009). Militias must also focus on turning the remaining population into an advantage, by co-opting local elites and providing safety and services in exchange for cooperation. They must also develop systems for detecting and punishing the uncooperative. To accomplish these goals, militias need to develop organized contact with the population. Over the course of the conflict, the repeated interactions with populations needed to consolidate territorial control allow militias to establish networks that can be mobilized for political participation.

Postwar migration of networks

Keeping a wartime network intact in the postwar era is not an automatic process. Militias need to gain postwar control over a consistent stream of resources to maintain networks and survive politically. They need to ensure that the war's settlement gives them a share of government power and resources. This may include everything from election quotas and integration into the state's armed forces to control over ministry budgets and reconstruction projects. Militias-turned-parties can then combine this access to the state with their wartime networks. This powerful mix gives settlement beneficiaries large advantages in mobilizing populations for costly and violent political participation.

Another closely related factor that contributes to militias' ability to migrate networks into the postwar era is foreign patronage. In fragile postwar contexts, where borders are still permeable and the central state weakened, foreign patrons are likely to continue funding groups that further their interests. In the Lebanese case, the foreign powers that shaped the terms of the war's ending settlement remained intimately involved in the country's politics by continuing to fund their domestic allies and clients.

In contrast to settlement beneficiaries, particularly those with foreign patrons, defeated militias are not able to maintain robust networks for mobilization. While they may have had significant organizational infrastructure at certain points during the conflict, defeated groups no longer have access to resources. Instead, their organizations are often dismantled through repression, or their networks simply atrophy.

Postwar parties with no civil war background may also emerge, particularly in situations where a vacuum of leadership exists in a sectarian community. New postwar parties may even have success in accessing resources and

building their capacity for political mobilization. However, these parties are qualitatively different from the war-tested and cohesive militias-turned-parties (Lyons 2016). Deploying militants for violent confrontation is orders of magnitude costlier than peaceful political mobilization (Collier 2010) and requires an organization with the capacity to motivate its recruits for high-risk behaviour through significant material, social, or ideological investment (Weinstein 2007).

Former militias also have another, less tangible advantage over new parties. They have communal legitimacy as organizations that, despite their harsh methods, protected their co-religionists in times of great insecurity. New postwar parties cannot make such claims. In a fragile postwar context, this legacy of demonstrated ability to "protect" may be worth a great deal to core supporters – the type of persons most likely to participate in violence. Recent developments in the Lebanese case illustrate this dynamic. The conflict in neighbouring Syria has led most of the country's religious communities to rally around their respective militias-turned-parties. However, the major Sunni party, an organization with no history of militancy, has experienced a crisis of confidence. In their search for protectors in an unstable environment, some Sunnis have gravitated towards a variety of smaller but historically militant Islamist organizations that are willing to take more strident positions against the Syrian regime and Hezbollah (Lefèvre 2014).

The Lebanese civil war

Lebanon's civil war and postwar experience make it an ideal case for testing the plausibility of the argument. First, Lebanon's civil war led to the proliferation of sectarian militias and when it ended in a power-sharing settlement, many of them were able to maintain their wartime networks for mobilization. Others, however, were defeated or repressed, leading to the dismantling of their wartime organizations. Lebanon also has a prominent postwar party with no background as a civil war militia. This diversity of experience among the major postwar players allows for comparisons to be made while holding the national context fixed. Furthermore, the parties also have varying degrees of foreign support, allowing for an exploration of how this factor interacts with on-the-ground networks to produce different patterns of mobilization for violence. The rest of this section provides a brief background on the Lebanese civil war and postwar period. Based on this narrative, I place each of the six major postwar parties within the framework of the argument and outline the expectations for whether and how each group should mobilize for violence in a moment of crisis.

Background

Since independence in 1943, Lebanon's political system has been based on consociational power-sharing between elites from the country's many sectarian communities. The largest of these communities include Shia and Sunni Muslims, Druze, and Maronite and Orthodox Christians. This system enshrined strict sectarian quotas in all parts of government and administration, with the ratio fixed at five Muslims to every six Christians. In the pre-war era, political life was controlled by notables from landowning families, whose legitimacy derived from their ability to strike compromises and maintain a peaceful if fragile status quo. In the 1960s and 1970s, rapid social and economic changes, including rural migration to urban areas and growing inequality, created a sizeable disenfranchised population that became the constituencies for ideological and religious movements that sought an alternative to the consociational system (Hanf 1993).

In 1969, the watershed Cairo Agreement allowed Palestinian guerrillas resisting Israeli occupation to move their headquarters to Lebanon. The Lebanese population differed sharply on how to handle this new armed population. These differences were compounded by divisions over support for the consociational system. Christians and right-wing groups supported a status quo in which they held a privileged position. They also prioritized Lebanon's sovereignty and sought to detach it from the majority-Muslim Arab world surrounding it, which meant keeping a neutral stance in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Muslims sought a much greater connection to the rest of the Arab world, often espousing the ideology of pan-Arabism. This translated to supporting the Palestinians, even if that meant getting involved in a conflict with neighbouring Israel. They were joined by leftists who sought to overturn the sectarian system (Hanf 1993). In the early 1970s, tensions between the two coalitions rose as both sides acquired more weapons. In 1975, a massacre of a bus of Palestinian civilians became the spark that ignited the war.

Militias during the war

The Lebanese civil war began in 1975 and lasted fifteen years. The war ended largely because of the Taif Agreement, a power-sharing deal that was brokered by Saudi Arabia and enforced by a Syrian military occupation (Hanf 1993). The Lebanese civil war was a complex conflict, which, in its final years, resulted in the collapse of the state. There were a multitude of militias involved in the war, and although the fighting began as a two-sided conflict, the war quickly degenerated into a sectarian war of all against all. Much of the worst fighting was due to power struggles between rival militias competing to be the dominant representative of a single community (Hanf 1993; Cammett 2014). Several excellent studies exist detailing the developments of the war

itself (Salibi 1988; Fisk 1991; Hanf 1993; Traboulsi 2007), but I will focus on the rise of militia organizations and networks, and the implications this had for postwar party development.

The outbreak of conflict in 1975 meant that power was now achieved through force of arms, giving a comparative advantage to those leaders who could mobilize militia fighters to effectively compete in the struggle for control over Lebanon's political future. As the war went on, "the established political and religious leaders gradually lost power to mercenary bosses" (Hanf 1993, 181). Pre-war elites were effectively marginalized by a new generation of wartime leaders (Hanf 1993). The rise of militias also had profound implications for the population living under their rule. To consolidate their control over territory, militias expelled populations whose denomination differed from their own. Territories became sharply defined by sect. A full third of the population was expelled or forced to flee with little possibility of return (Hanf 1993).

In order to finance their operations, militias taxed the population under their control. Protection rackets developed that required businesses and homeowners to pay a direct tax. Much of the militias' revenue came from customs duties on goods entering or exiting their territories and the cultivation and trade of drugs. These activities were made possible and profitable because several militias controlled access to Beirut's most important ports. Bank robberies, fraudulent banking practices, and outright thievery were also part of the militias' repertoires (Hanf 1993; Picard 2000; Zahar 2000; Makdisi and Sadaka 2003). Overall, Makdisi and Sadaka (2003) estimate that the militias were able to amass $15 billion from these various sources.

In order to extract most of the revenue, militias set up administrations, military and civilian police forces, and intelligence agencies. Doing so required the cooperation of the population as well as the rank and file of the militias. This was of particular concern because none of the main militias ever monopolized the political scene in their respective sectarian community and had to constantly fend off other militias looking to poach their supporters and fighters. This competition increased expenditures, making revenue and networks of civilian support critical (Picard 2000). The largest militias provided generously for militiamen and their families and established social welfare departments, and press and media outlets (Zahar 2000). Militias gained popular loyalty by providing security and relative order. However, the militias' financial success meant that substantial personal wealth was also accumulated by the leadership (Makdisi and Sadaka 2003), causing more popular resentment as the war dragged on (Zahar 2000). This was perhaps one of the reasons motivating most wartime leaders to accept the terms of the Taif Agreement.

By 1985, the Lebanese Forces (LF), Amal Movement, and Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) emerged as the three largest militias. All three became very similar in organization and behaviour. They controlled large territories

where they had homogenized populations, co-opted local elites, gained control of ports, established civil administrations, and taken control of state facilities (Picard 2000). It is not an exaggeration to say that each operated as a state within a state (Hanf 1993). By the end of the war, these militias had a wealth of local information, networks of members that they selectively rewarded, and institutionalized contact with the population – all assets for future violent mobilization. This also became true of two other militias that emerged after the mid-1980s. These were Hezbollah (Shia), which contested Amal's control of Shia strongholds in the later years of the war, and the Aounist faction of the Lebanese Army (Christian), which gained control of heavily populated Christian areas in the last year of the war until its routing by the Syrian Army (Hanf 1993).

The Taif Agreement

The Taif Agreement was signed in 1989 by the surviving members of the pre-war parliament and provided the basis for a deal that would end the Lebanese civil war. It was signed in Taif, Saudi Arabia with the support and backing of Syria, which was to act as the guarantor of the agreement (Hudson 1999). The agreement reinstated Lebanon's sectarian power-sharing system but included provisions for restructuring the parliament's sectarian quotas, taking the proportion of Christians to Muslims from six to five to an equal five to five. The Christian president's powers were reduced and the powers of the Sunni prime minister and Shia speaker of the parliament were strengthened. This created a "troika" executive, where the president, prime minister, and speaker govern together in a more equal arrangement.

The Taif Agreement also included provisions for the disarmament of militias, which were enforced by the Syrian Army. Plans were made for the rehabilitation of militia men and many took positions in the Lebanese army, intelligence, police, and civil service. The government collected most weapons but gave up on small arms, which many believe the former militias still have hidden in Lebanon in case war should break out again (Hanf 1993). Hezbollah was allowed to keep its arms to resist Israeli occupation of the south (Hudson 1999).

By making Syria the enforcer of its provisions, Taif legalized the Syrian army's indefinite presence in Lebanon. The Christian camp, which was generally against Syrian involvement in Lebanon, split over whether to accept the terms of the agreement. This led to a bloody confrontation that further divided the Christian community and resulted in the defeat of General Aoun, the leader of the faction that did not accept the agreement, at the hands of the Syrian military (Hanf 1993). The Taif Agreement also increased the size of parliament. The number of deputies was a contentious issue particularly because the vacant and new seats were to be filled by appointees

chosen by Damascus until elections could be organized (Hanf 1993; Wantchekon 2000). This gave the upper hand to warlords and militiamen, particularly those that were Syrian allies, and led to a severe underrepresentation of most Christian parties (Hanf 1993).

Postwar developments

When the civil war ended, militia leaders transformed their organizations into political machines that continued to provide services and mobilize their constituents for demonstrations and elections (Cammett 2014). However, the success of militia leaders in transforming their militias into parties depended heavily upon their relationship with a Syrian regime that virtually ruled over postwar Lebanon. Militias that were allies of the Syrian regime or were willing to cooperate with Syria were successful in transforming their military power into political power (El-Husseini 2012). In addition to Syrian influence, Iran, a close ally of the Syrian regime, had its own particularly close relationship with Hezbollah. This provided the group with unrivalled financial resources for maintaining and expanding its patronage networks and recruiting core supporters for high-risk activities.

The important militia leaders all received positions as ministers in the first postwar government and gained access to resources necessary for maintaining their wartime organizational capacity. Several gained control of agencies that were critical in the process of reconstruction, including the Ministry of the Displaced (PSP leader) and the Council of the South (Amal leader), which was tasked with region-specific reconstruction efforts. These positions provided militia leaders with great discretion in the distribution of state resources (El-Husseini 2012), and allowed them to maintain loyalty and further develop sectarian patronage networks in their regional strongholds. Postwar elections became a mechanism for monitoring constituent loyalty and reinforcing patron–client relationships. Corstange vividly describes this process:

> [The] parties insert themselves deeply into people's social networks by leaning on kinship and sectarian links, organizing machines of their own, collaborating with local notables, and subcontracting with "electoral keys" (roughly analogous to the old "ward bosses" or "precinct captains" of American city machines) to deliver political support in the latter's bailiwicks. (2012, 448)

However, not all militia leaders ended up with the freedom and resources to maintain their organizations. Syria's strong influence over the implementation of the Taif Agreement and military superiority allowed it to sideline anti-Syrian militias and their leaders (Hanf 1993; El-Khazen 1994; El-Husseini 2012; Cammett 2014). Aoun was militarily defeated by the Syrian army, as was previously mentioned. The LF, although formally a signatory of the agreement, was quickly repressed for its lack of cooperation. The organization was

banned and its leader was imprisoned (El-Khazen 1994). While these two militias were significant wartime organizations, their networks and capacity were either destroyed or left to atrophy following the war.

The only major party that emerged as a new organization, without links to a civil war militia, was the Future Movement (FM) led by Rafik Hariri. This was made possible by the fact that the Sunni community ended the civil war with no clear militia leadership. The community's position in this regard was due to several historical reasons. At the beginning of the war, Lebanese Sunni militias were closely allied with and dependent on Palestinian militias that were a dominant player in the first half of the civil war. When Palestinian groups were defeated by the Israeli military in 1982, Sunni militias were significantly weakened and later defeated in conflict with other militias (Cammett 2014). This created a political and military vacuum within the Sunni-majority regions of Lebanon. Although religious figures and Islamist parties sought to fill this void, they were only moderately successful, partly due to Syrian interference to prevent a strong Sunni militia from emerging (El-Husseini 2012).

Hariri, an independently wealthy businessman, used this opening to establish networks among the population through a private charitable foundation. Although he had no military presence on the ground, Hariri's close relationship with Saudi Arabia led him to become that country's key representative in mediating the Taif Agreement. Saudi patronage and backing, as well as his substantial private wealth, facilitated Hariri's entrance into Lebanese politics. Much of Hariri's success in postwar politics can be traced back to his appointment as head of the Council for Development and Reconstruction, which became an important source of patronage for the FM (Cammett 2014).

In 2005, the assassination of Hariri prompted a popular protest movement against Syria's presence in Lebanon, as well as a counter protest supporting Syria. Under international pressure, Syrian troops withdrew from Lebanon. This shock to the political system granted greater freedom to Syria's traditional opponents. Geagea and Aoun, the marginalized leaders of the LF and Lebanese Army faction, respectively, quickly revived their militias as parties and contested the 2005 elections. Despite their legalization, the Christian parties had much rebuilding to do, as fifteen years of repression had significantly atrophied their networks and mobilization capacity. This is evident in the marked weakness of their service and patronage distribution systems as compared to other parties (Cammett 2014).

Postwar parties

Table 1 summarizes each organization's history of militia organization, whether the group was a settlement beneficiary, whether the group is still officially armed, and whether or not it has a consistent international patron. The PSP had a close relationship with Syria in the immediate postwar years, but

Table 1. Postwar parties in Lebanon.

Party	Civil war militia	Position in war Settlement	Still armed	Consistent international patron	Violent mobilization in crisis	Successful mobilization
Hezbollah	Yes	Beneficiary	Yes	Iran/Syria	Yes	Yes (most success)
Amal	Yes	Beneficiary	No	Syria	Yes	Yes (most success)
PSP	Yes	Beneficiary	No	__	Yes	Yes
FM	No	Beneficiary	No	Saudi Arabia	Yes	No
LF	Yes	Repressed (legalized in 2005)	No	__	No	__
FPM (Aounists)	Yes	Defeated (legalized in 2005)	No	__	No	__

this relationship was inconsistent and deteriorated markedly after 2000, ending with the party's support for Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005. Also, while no party besides Hezbollah is officially permitted to have a militia, frequent allegations are made that several other parties have access to light weapons and conduct training exercises in preparation for crises (Rowayheb 2011).

Based on the profile of each group, we should expect them to behave differently in a moment of crisis. Each of these key variables affects both the availability of networks for mobilization and how well those networks are supplied resources through foreign patronage. On the two extremes are Hezbollah and the Christian parties. Hezbollah is the actor most likely to mobilize and to do so successfully during an internal conflict. The organization has a standing militia and its networks are intact and well supplied. The Christian parties are the least likely to mobilize, despite the fact that they had cohesive militias during the civil war. The dismantling of their organizations in the postwar period and their lack of access to state resources and foreign patronage impede mobilization.

The interesting cases are Amal, the PSP, and the FM. Amal and the PSP have the advantage of being organizations that had mobilized for armed conflict in the past, but that have also been able to preserve those networks, if not their formal militias. Amal has the further advantage of foreign patronage. In a moment of crisis, the argument suggests that these parties would be able to effectively mobilize supporters for an armed conflict in a cohesive and disciplined way. However, Amal should be more successful than the PSP in this effort due to the resources its patron supplies. The FM, while it has other endowments, does not have experience as a civil war militia. In this sense, it is the opposite of the PSP, a group with military experience but no consistent foreign patron. We should expect that due to its resources and favourable position in the power-sharing agreement, the FM would be able to mobilize

its supporters. However, since it is a group that only has experience winning votes and not battles, its networks are structured to meet those electoral goals. This is evident in the FM's pattern of service provision. They provide patronage to a wide but shallow network, incentivizing large numbers of supporters with smaller, more temporary goods and services. This is effective for winning votes, but not for high-risk mobilization (Cammett 2014). For this reason, the FM's mobilization efforts will be relatively unsuccessful, lacking the cohesion, discipline, and the effectiveness of other groups.

The May 2008 conflict

In this section, I examine the clashes that occurred in Lebanon in May 2008 with the aim of investigating whether the patterns of mobilization during the conflict accord with the theoretical expectations outlined above. This event is a good candidate for examining the plausibility of the argument, as it represents the most serious episode of internal conflict in Lebanon since the end of the civil war in 1990. With over sixty-five dead and 200 wounded, many observers feared that these clashes were the beginning of Lebanon's descent into another civil war (Dakhlallah 2012), making it a theoretically important instance of mobilization.

The clashes of May 2008 were the culmination of an eighteen-month stalemate that had its roots in the 2005 withdrawal of the Syrian army from Lebanon after the assassination of Hariri. The protests that ensued after the assassination split the country and the political landscape into two opposing coalitions, one for and the other against the Syrian military's continuing presence in Lebanon. These coalitions were named March 8 and March 14 for the respective dates on which their largest protests occurred. March 8 was mostly composed of Shia supporters of Hezbollah and Amal, whereas March 14 began as a mixed grassroots protest against Syrian occupation but was soon co-opted by the Druze and Sunni parties. Eventually, Syria withdrew from Lebanon under international pressure and the coalitions struck a bargain in anticipation of the 2005 elections. The LF and Aounists (now the Free Patriotic Movement [FPM]) were legalized and resurfaced as members of the March 14 coalition. After the elections, the FPM, frustrated by being shortchanged by its own partners, abandoned the March 14 coalition and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Hezbollah (Mansour 2010), making it an official partner in the March 8 coalition.

The two coalitions soon reached a stalemate. Hezbollah demanded greater representation for its allies in the cabinet so that it could have a veto over government decisions. This occurred as the government was passing a law to create an international court to try the perpetrators of Hariri's assassination (Haddad 2009). To block the signing of the law, Hezbollah and Amal members resigned from the cabinet. When the remaining members passed

the law, the president declared the cabinet unconstitutional for no longer having representatives from all of Lebanon's sects. March 14 refused to give March 8 veto power, so the opposition coalition retaliated with a massive sit-in protest in downtown Beirut that lasted for eighteen months (Knio 2008). In early May 2008, the government took two important decisions that Hezbollah interpreted as an attack on its militia apparatus and a de facto declaration of war. The Lebanese cabinet declared Hezbollah's telecommunications network "illegitimate, illegal and a violation of state sovereignty and public funds". The government also relieved Brigadier Shoucair of his post as head of airport security due to allegedly close ties to Hezbollah (Dakhlallah 2012). On 7 May, clashes erupted between Hezbollah and Sunni militias affiliated with the FM. Within 12 hours, Hezbollah and Amal controlled half of Beirut. Clashes began spreading to other cities and renewed civil war became a real possibility. It was averted by Hezbollah's decision to pull its men off the streets (Dakhlallah 2012) and international pressure convincing all parties to meet in Doha, Qatar to work out a comprehensive political agreement, which they did on 21 May (Haddad 2009). The following section details the roles and responses of the various Lebanese parties in the conflict.

Party mobilization

Despite being deeply involved in the political crisis and committed to their coalition partners, the FPM (March 8) and the LF (March 14) remained completely on the sidelines due to their military weakness and lack of weapons (*The Daily Star*, May 13, 2008). These two parties also have the experience of fighting against each other in the so-called war of elimination at the end of the civil war, when internecine conflict almost destroyed the Christian community from within (*The Daily Star*, May 13, 2008). Finding themselves on opposite sides during the crisis, LF and FPM leaders seemed eager to avoid such a situation, despite forcefully backing the political stances of their coalitions. These decisions align with the theoretical expectation that the two parties would be unable to mobilize effectively due to a variety of disadvantages. Also, mobilization against members of one's own sectarian community would be a higher cost activity, making the two Christian parties unwilling to mobilize.

The effective mobilization of Amal and Hezbollah fall at the other end of the spectrum. Amal and Hezbollah began their mobilization carefully and deliberately, timing it to correspond to a twenty-four-hour general strike and using civil disobedience to persuade the government to reverse its decisions (Quilty 2008). When the government did not back down, Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah announced that shutting down the party's telecommunication network was a serious threat to the party's resistance against Israel, stating that "we will cut off the hand that targets the weapons of the Resistance" (Quilty 2008). After the speech and the still resolute response from the FM,

Hezbollah and Amal almost immediately changed their tactics, launching a series of armed attacks in Beirut that quickly spread to other regions, most notably isolating and threatening the PSP's strongholds in southern Mount Lebanon (ICTJ 2013). The offensive is described as a "carefully calculated and coordinated operation" (Haddad 2009, 409). Within twelve hours, Hezbollah and Amal had taken over the better part of West Beirut, the epicentre of the FM, disarming the party's outposts and hundreds of its militants, and shutting down and vandalizing its media offices. The military defeat of the FM was swift and humiliating (Quilty 2008; Dakhlallah 2012). The victory in Beirut was so decisive that one security official stated on condition of anonymity that "there are no clashes anymore because no one is standing in the way of the opposition forces" *(The Daily Star*, May 9, 2008). And yet, Hezbollah and Amal's organizational capacity is also evident in the restraint and discipline demonstrated by their militias. Once they had taken over west Beirut, Hezbollah systematically turned each neighbourhood over to the army (Dakhlallah 2012), which had stayed out of the fighting for fear of dividing along sectarian lines. They disarmed pro-government militants instead of resorting to more violence to subdue them. Perhaps most interestingly, when Hezbollah and Amal surrounded and isolated West Beirut and parts of Mount Lebanon, the militants were careful to spare FM leader Hariri (the son) and PSP leader Jumblat's residences (Haddad 2009), potentially a signal of their amenability to a resolution.

And yet, Hezbollah and Amal's successes had their limits, particularly when encountering militants in PSP strongholds in Mount Lebanon. In contrast to the Sunni community, "the Druze combatants were able to resist and even repel the Hezbollah offensive against their regions" (Haddad 2009). Despite having disarmed after the civil war and having no formal militia, the PSP's ranks were united and cohesive. And yet, they were noticeably weaker in material terms. A young Druze youth describes the situations. "We only had our own personal weapons, they were shooting M-16s and rockets at us. All we had were guns" (*The Daily Star*, May 13, 2008). Their cohesiveness, coupled with the militants' familiarity with the terrain in their home region, terrain they had experience fighting on during the civil war, allowed them to put up a strong front and challenge Hezbollah's fighters. Even though the PSP had disarmed in 1990, its organization remained intact and its members still trained and were able to coordinate to defend their home region (Rowayheb 2011). This is perhaps surprising, given that the PSP has no consistent foreign patron. Yet, the preservation of networks and capacity built during the civil war explain the resilience of this organization. This is evident in its successful mobilization despite being faced with a much more militarily sophisticated opponent.

The PSP's pattern of mobilization stands in contrast to that of its ally, the FM (Rowayheb 2011). If anything is certain about the FM, it is that in 2008, their party was awash in resources stemming from the Hariri family's

private wealth, its access to state coffers, and foreign patronage. Yet, this conflict clearly demonstrated that the party was in no way prepared to challenge Hezbollah militarily. Although FM partisans were armed, they were ill-trained and these arms were much fewer in quantity and lower in quality than Hezbollah's arsenal. In fact, FM militants only used violence against Hezbollah in a few small cases when it took over their Beirut neighbourhoods, but generally responded by surrendering (Rowayheb 2011). This stands in contrast to the PSP rank and file's reluctance to put down their weapons (*The Daily* Star, May 12, 2008) until urged by their leader to cooperate with army searches for heavy weapons (*The Daily Star*, May 16, 2008).

One explanation for the FM's inability to mobilize effectively centres on party leaders' lack of interest and investment in building a militia. When the Sunni community ended the civil war without a strong militia-turned-party, this provided an opportunity for a new class of business elites, including Hariri and other FM members, to emerge as the community's leaders. With significant investments to protect throughout the country, playing the electoral game and eschewing violent modes of contestation became the favoured strategy of this new elite (Cammett 2014). These elites also used patronage to create an election-based clientelist machine that siphoned Sunnis away from more militant Islamist groups (Rowayheb 2011).

While the FM's prioritization of an electoral politics is undeniable and crucial to understanding the leadership's strategy for party development, such accounts imply that the FM was simply unwilling to create a militia. However, the FM was also unable to create a militia. Journalists allege that the FM had been in the business of attempting to do so through the Secure Plus company, a private security firm with over 3,000 employees and unofficial associates on the payroll. The party militants' poor performance in the 2008 crisis is evidence of the failure of this experiment in military organization. When speaking about the reasons for failure in 2008, one expert in the field of private security stated, "You can't just spend millions of dollars to build an army in one year, they have to be motivated and believe in something. They have to be willing to die" (*Los Angeles Times*, May 12, 2008). This simple statement demonstrates that while material resources may be a very helpful asset in building a capacity for violence mobilization, they are not enough. When compared to militias-turned-parties, parties developed and built around the contestation of elections, which require the gathering of large and loose coalitions of supporters, have a distinct disadvantage in mobilizing a core of supporters for high-risk behaviour.

Conclusion

This article argues that civil wars, through their often profound impact on social networks, have the potential to leave enduring legacies on postwar

political mobilization and modes of contestation. When power-sharing allows civil war militias to translate their organizations into political parties, they become able to use their networks to mobilize partisans for violent activity in a way that is cohesive, disciplined, and effective. This is in contrast to parties that developed in times of peace, building organizations that are designed for electoral and other peaceful forms of mobilization. The plausibility of this argument is examined through a study of the Lebanese case. An investigation into how sectarian militias and parties mobilized during the May 2008 conflict demonstrates that a party's history of organizational development is key to understanding its willingness and ability to mobilize for violent activity.

The analysis demonstrates that the media and scholarly community's focus on the importance of foreign funding in explaining patterns of conflict, particularly in Lebanon and other Middle Eastern cases, obscures important domestic factors. Understanding the processes and organizational structures through which foreign support is translated into local action is a crucial factor in evaluating the impact of foreign funding. It is this interaction between the international and the local that has the potential to produce war or peace in fragile and divided post-conflict countries.

Finally, this study examines the consequences of civil war and sectarian militia building for perpetuating violence in the postwar era. In doing so, it proposes a possible mechanism underlying the propensity of post-conflict countries to revert to civil war. This study also highlights one of the central dilemmas inherent in power-sharing agreements. By empowering wartime leaders and preserving their power bases, power-sharing stunts the process of state formation and postwar unification, and leaves intact their capabilities for inciting future conflict. Paradoxically, it is precisely this inclusion of wartime groups in a settlement and the preservation of their capacity for organizational discipline and restraint that allow for the possibility of enduring peace.

Note

1. List of articles and links available upon request.

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