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Rogues, degenerates, and heroes: Disobedience as politics in military organizations

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Abstract

Disobedience in military organizations affects critical outcomes such as the quality of civil–military relations, the likelihood of civilian abuse, and battlefield effectiveness. Existing work on military disobedience focuses on group dynamics; this article instead investigates the circumstances under which individual officers disobey. We argue that officers interpret military orders based on their concurrent positions in multiple social networks and that, contingent on the soldier's environment, such orders can "activate" tensions between overlapping social network identifications. These tensions create motivations and justifications for disobedience. We develop this theory via in-depth case studies of individual officers' disobedience in the Chinese military and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), combined with an examination of 10 additional cases outlined in an online appendix. Relying on primary sources, we demonstrate how identifications with overlapping social networks led two ostensibly dissimilar officers to disobey in similar ways during the Sino-French War (1883–1885) and the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1989). Our theory thus shows how overlapping social networks create conditions of possibility for even well-trained, loyal commanders to disobey their superiors. In doing so, it highlights the critical fact that even within the context of intensive military discipline and socialization, individuals draw on identifications with varied social networks to make decisions. Further, it implies that individual disobedience should be studied as conceptually separate from collective events such as mass desertion or unit defection.

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Introduction

On June 22, 1941, the 2nd Panzer Army of Germany's Third Reich invaded Russia under General Heinz Guderian's command. Guderian was a highly trained, wealthy, respected member of a tight-knit military family. His father was a prominent commander; Heinz served in the General Staff during the First World War and was central to German military thought in the interwar years (Koch, 2003). The general reached the Moscow area on December 1 (Biesinger, 2006: 432), where frigid weather battered his forces. While Adolf Hitler's orders dictated that German forces in Russia were to hold fast, Guderian believed withdrawal strategically necessary. He met with Hitler on December 20 to ask for an exception. Hitler refused, ordering Guderian to dig in. Guderian subsequently disobeyed Hitler's order and led a retreat, reportedly telling his commander: "I will lead my army in these unusual circumstances in such a manner that I can answer for it to my conscience" (Evans, 2009: 212).

Existing research struggles to explain cases like Guderian's. Scholarship tends to focus on militaries' obedience to civilian authority, disciplinary outcomes for low-ranking soldiers (Richards, 2018), or aggregate predictors of disobedience, such as insufficient training or lack of social cohesion (Castillo, 2014; Manekin, 2013; Rose, 1982; Shils and Janowitz, 1948). Yet, insubordination like Guderian's — an act of strategy and conscience rooted in obligation to the men under his command — implies different causal processes. An overarching lack of training or poor physical conditions might explain patterns of civilian abuse or the prevalence of desertion. But, why do highly trained, experienced soldiers disobey certain operational orders even as they follow others?

Individual disobedience may express anything from personal opportunism, to strategic brilliance, to principled resistance. However, disobedience such as Guderian's can also be considered conceptually distinct from mere insubordination; it is based on both military and social norms that officers feel obligated to observe because of their positions. In order to study officer-level disobedience, we build a theory using in-depth case studies of disobedience — that is, refusals to obey direct orders from the chain of command — by well-trained, high-ranking, experienced officers. We compare the decision-making trajectories and relational environments of two otherwise vastly dissimilar people: one a commander in the Chinese military; the other an officer in a Palestinian militant organization. Using primary sources, including military records, memoirs, and interviews, we show that overlap between formal military command structures and other social networks — including informal intra-military networks — can generate tensions that make officers' disobedience more likely. Specifically, we contend that disobedience becomes possible when three factors are present: An officer: (1) inhabits a formal role within a military hierarchy; and (2) receives an explicit order via that hierarchy; which (3) activates an identification with a second role nested in a different set of relations. When these factors coincide, contradictory imperatives may lead to disobedience.

Studies of 10 further cases, highlighted in an online appendix, clarify the conceptual boundaries of the phenomenon and imply a large, if difficult to empirically identify, universe of similar cases.

Understanding officers' behavior requires examining command structures, personnel, and threat environments, in addition to grasping how orders interact with the overlapping and often opposing imperatives rooted in soldiers' social networks. Examining the three factors specified earlier reveals how competing incentives and obligations — particularly vis-a-vis networks beyond the chain of command — shape officers' behavior (Costa and Kahn, 2008; Koehler et al., 2016; McLauchlin, 2014).

Why individual disobedience matters

Studying officers' disobedience builds on studies that link military cohesion and doctrine to outcomes such as battlefield effectiveness, military behavior, and strategic innovation. Centering individuals' disobedience highlights a tension between imperatives for adherence to the military organization and the necessity of internal dissent (Avant, 1993; Farrell, 2010; Murray, 2009; Posen, 1984; Russell, 2011; Zirakzadeh, 2002). This scholarship indicates that it is neither possible nor desirable to eliminate transgression within military organizations, as it emerges from the very agency central to adaptability and cohesion. Those who disobey may epitomize certain military ideals, rather than undermine them.

Studying individual officers' disobedience further elucidates crucial military and political dynamics in at least three ways. First, disobedience influences military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and broader wartime dynamics. Efforts to prevent the kinds of disobedience that can later develop into coups, for instance, can constrain a military's battlefield effectiveness (Ohl, 2016: 147–152; Talmadge, 2015). Ensuring that militaries obey civilian rulers is the focus of a vast literature on civil–military relations (Avant, 1994; Desch, 1999; Feaver, 1999; Huntington, 1957; Janowitz, 1971). Equally critical, obeying orders is a requirement for the application of effective command and control (Biddle, 2010; Grauer, 2016). Moreover, the interaction of conflict environments with individual agency can lead to shirking (Manekin, 2017). Acts of disobedience can also change the course of a conflict by, for instance, forcing tactical shifts or disrupting peace negotiations.

Second, military disobedience often has immediate, far-reaching political ramifications (Albrecht and Ohl, 2016), while also contributing to popular beliefs regarding conflicts. For example, during the Arab Uprisings, certain acts of disobedience may have motivated further civilian dissent. In early 2011, Egyptian General Mohamed el-Batran refused orders to open prisons during anti-regime protests. *AhramOnline* notes:

> Manal El-Batran, Mohamed's sister, insists that her brother was killed by a police officer from the prison's tower for refusing to follow the orders of former minister of interior Habib El-Adly to set prisoners free to create chaos and terror in the country. (El Gundy, 2011)

This explanation quickly spread throughout the opposition. As El-Batran's case demonstrates, the effects of officers' disobedience may reverberate far beyond the disobedient

act itself. Individual instances of disobedience provide crucial opportunities to understand phenomena central to international security and conflict studies, such as strategic decision-making, internal military dynamics, civil–military relations, and battlefield outcomes.

Third, disobedience may indicate or precede outcomes of concern, such as civilian abuse, torture, or wartime sexual violence. Studies have identified commanding officers and small-group dynamics as crucial to such outcomes (Browning, 1998; Cohen, 2013; Green, 2016, 2018; Kelman and Hamilton, 1989; Osiel, 1999; Wood, 2006, 2009; Wood and Toppelberg, 2017). For example, fearing the consequences, Chinese Major General Xu Qinxian (徐勤先) refused to lead his troops to Tiananmen Square during the 1989 protests. His actions "fanned leaders' fears that the military could be dragged into the political schisms and prompted party elders to mobilize a huge number of troops" (Jacobs and Buckley, 2014).

The limits of existing explanations

Prior studies of disobedience do not adequately explain when and how officers become likely to disobey orders, focusing instead on identifying general motivations, such as poor leadership, questionable battlefield objectives, and cultural tendencies (Mantle, 2006; Orbach, 2017; Osiel, 1999). Huntington (1957: 74–75), for instance, identifies key situations in which individual officers might be justified in disobeying orders. Even if we take Huntington's scenarios as predictors, though, his work offers few ways to empirically identify critical junctures or to forecast how soldiers will decide to act. Other scholarship focuses on how military organizations' internal structures and modes of oversight influence discipline (Richards, 2018). For instance, Feaver (2005: 56) argues that military agents work when monitored by civilians and shirk when unsupervised, emphasizing that preference alignment between military agents and civilian principals makes shirking less likely.[1] By empirically focusing on well-trained, loyal career officers' disobedience, our relational approach theorizes hard cases where principals' and agents' preferences are largely aligned and disagreement is an aberration. Moreover, by focusing on officers' responses to specific orders in particular contexts, we showcase how the dynamic nature of conflict produces evolving and often unpredictable agent preferences. This perspective is only possible given our ability to leverage extensive primary-source documents to build fine-grained reconstructions of each case.

Similarly, scholarship on disciplinary breakdown does not adequately explain acts of disobedience on the level (individual) or of the type (normative) evinced by the examples outlined earlier. However, it does provide important insights into the role of the relational environment and local context in fueling disciplinary outcomes. Extensive research examines the causes of *collective* disciplinary breakdowns, emphasizing links between physical conditions, deteriorating morale, and outcomes like desertion and mutiny (Gal, 1985; Rose, 1982; Shils and Janowitz, 1948; Smith, 1994). Subsequent research has emphasized that soldiers' links to co-ethnics or co-locals in their units heavily influence their incentives to desert (Albrecht and Koehler, 2018; Bearman, 1991; McLauchlin, 2010, 2014). Others underscore relationships between material incentives in recruitment, indiscipline, and civilian abuse (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2006; Weinstein, 2007). A

third scholarly trajectory explores the relationship between military socialization, education, and training in creating cohesion and driving — or discouraging — outcomes such as sexual violence or civilian abuse (Cohen, 2013, 2016; Green, 2016, 2017, 2018; Wood, 2006, 2009). Scholars such as Manekin (2013, 2017) build on this work by emphasizing the importance of soldiers' environments and deployment durations for outcomes such as civilian victimization and shirking, thus introducing the role of evolving context in fluid outcomes.

Examining individual officers' disobedience from a relational standpoint recognizes intra-military social dynamics' influence on soldiers' behavior while highlighting those individuals' agency and multivocality (their concurrent roles in distinct webs of relationships). This analytical pivot also allows us to build on extensive micro- and meso-level work on civil wars and counter-insurgency which demonstrates, for instance, that the environments in which soldiers operate and their identifications with multiple social networks influence organizational structure, defection, factionalization, and remobilization (Parkinson and Zaks, 2018).

Relational approaches have yet to be applied to officers' disobedience. While past work often assumes that soldiers become unquestioningly loyal to military organizations, arguing that "discipline would destroy the loyalties and habits of behavior that soldiers brought with them into the army from society" (Rosen, 1995: 17), scholars have increasingly challenged this prior (Albrecht and Ohl, 2016; Manekin, 2017). Indeed, while unquestioning obedience has been seen as crucial to unit cohesion, battlefield effectiveness, and harmonious civil–military relations (Brooks and Stanley, 2007; King, 2006; Marshall, 1947; Siebold, 2007), it rarely (if ever) obtains. By shifting the unit of analysis and emphasizing individual officers' agency, we nuance the processes undergirding individual-level decision-making and strategic choice, providing a crucial complement to existing theories of both state and non-state military actors.

Scope

Our theory addresses individual-level disobedience and specifically officers' decisions to disobey discrete orders (rather than simply behaving insubordinately or deserting). It applies to soldiers in both state and non-state military organizations. We define "military organizations" as organizations that: (1) are primarily responsible for the application of violence to achieve political ends; and (2) incorporate a formal, ranked, organization-wide hierarchy of command. Our definition includes state military forces, rebel organizations, paramilitary groups, and regional militias, but excludes organizations like mafias that do not focus on political goals, as well as more nebulous organizations like the global al-Qa'ida group.

Our focus on responses to clear orders means that we do not attempt to explain, for instance, general incidences of dereliction, desertion, or civilian abuse; such behaviors do not always result from disobeying specific orders. To the contrary, military organizations have incentives to encourage such behaviors in certain circumstances (Cohen, 2016; Downes, 2008). We also do not attempt to explain collective behaviors such as mutiny, "staying quartered" (Pion-Berlin et al., 2014), or general patterns of insubordination (Shibutani, 1978), except when they originate in individual choices to disobey

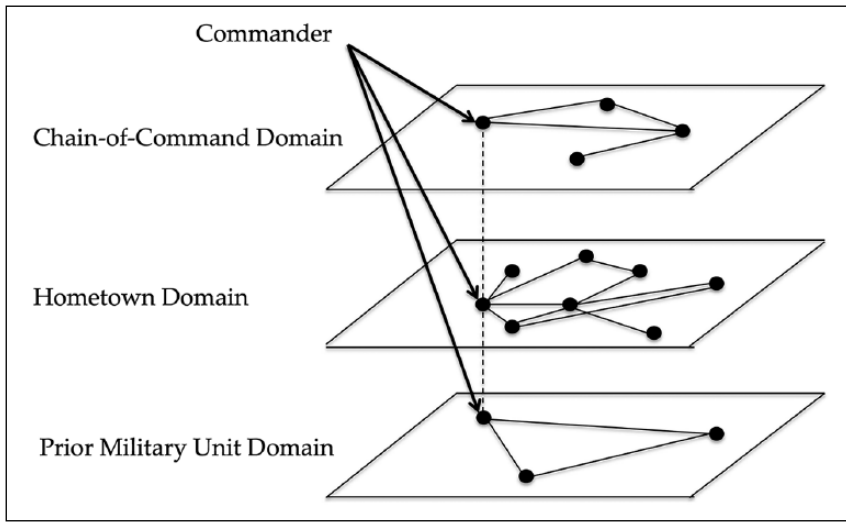

Figure 1. Identification with multiple network domains.

specific orders. Even in such cases, we only attempt to explain those initial choices, not the ensuing dynamics leading to collective resistance.

Our cases and discussion center on officers occupying command positions. By empirically spotlighting why well-trained, loyal, experienced, respected officers still choose to disobey, we are able to gain substantial analytical leverage on the relational processes that undergird individual decisions to disobey discrete orders. However, we see no reason why our theory would apply *only* to such high-level officers; excluding others is a methodological and empirical choice for the sake of crisper theory development.

Theorizing disobedience: A relational approach

We adopt a relational approach, meaning that our theory treats officers as actors embedded in webs of social relations that influence their characteristics and actions to such a degree that "to construe them as independent is a grievous misunderstanding" (Granovetter, 1985: 482). This analytical move "places the focus on the social ties that allocate resources, information, and meaning differentially across populations of actors … the structure of these relations both empowers and constrains the choices of the individual actors" (Hadden, 2015: 6–7).

In line with social network approaches to organizational and role emergence (e.g. Padgett and Ansell, 1993; Padgett and McLean, 2006), we treat individuals as simultaneously inhabiting roles within multiple networks; they span network domains constituted by the types of actors present, the content of ties connecting them, and the "rules and skills" necessary for membership (see Figure 1). Individuals inhabit distinct roles in each domain (e.g. "parent" or "sibling" in the kinship domain) that are determined by the structure of ties (e.g. a matriarch in a hierarchal clan structure) and the practices, rules, and skills that accompany membership (e.g. deference to elder kin).

Military organizations are hierarchical, institutionalized, routinized social networks. The rules, social norms, codes of conduct, and laws that govern the behavior of individual soldiers (who occupy roles) and groups of soldiers (who form clusters of ties) constitute roles in the military domain. For example, military socialization influences whether soldiers obey orders (Browning, 1998; Green, 2016, 2018; Kelman and Hamilton, 1989) and the practices they adopt (Cohen, 2016; Green, 2017; Wood, 2009; Wood and Toppelberg, 2017). Codes of conduct and legal frameworks determine whether soldiers' roles *within the military domain* obligate them to refuse immoral or illegal orders (Keijzer, 1978; Osiel, 1999). However, individuals within the military vary in the degree to which they prioritize these obligations.

This is because "the military" is only one subset of soldiers' social contexts; they do not operate in a social vacuum. Soldiers identify with multiple social groups and, correspondingly, have loyalties to multiple in-military groups, as well as to groups outside the military. They are not only military personnel loyal to their statutory superiors; they are also family members, comrades, colleagues, and servants of the nation. Even in the rare case that a commander knows no life outside the military, they will still be subject to potentially conflicting imperatives from competing *intra-military* groups and pressures, such as when receiving illegal orders (Osiel, 1999). Seen through this framework, soldiers judge whether orders flowing through hierarchical command structures in the military domain are "just," "rational," or "reasonable," both as subordinates and as actors immersed in overlapping, potentially contradictory, sets of social relations. Even individuals who are loyal, professional, and committed members of an organization may critique or even occasionally subvert "the prevailing values, strategy, system of authority, and so on" (Ashforth and Mael, 1989: 22).

In a military organization, therefore, a superior gives an order to an officer, who evaluates the order's content as a multivocal actor. An order is thus not simply a clear call to action; it is a signal to be interpreted by the individual across their multiplex network identifications. Simultaneously weighing multiple identifications in this way expands the range of choices that a commander may accept as necessary, moral, strategic, or legitimate (Gal, 1985).

Patterns of embeddedness: Collective versus individual frames

Scholarship on military organizations' social embeddedness underlines the necessity of examining network micro-structures in order to understand soldiers' behavior. Broadly, scholars have identified social factors such as kinship (Goodwin, 1997; Parkinson, 2013; Viterna, 2013), associational memberships (Gould, 1995; Petersen, 2001), past military service (Hundman, 2016; Lyall, 2010; Parkinson, 2016), regional-level ties (Bearman, 1991; Daly, 2016; McLauchlin, 2014, 2015), and other "everyday" relationships (Kim and Crabb, 2014) as influencing outcomes of interest. These findings imply the existence of multiple, non-linear processes influencing soldiers' decision-making.

Orders interact with officers' multivocal nature and create role strain. Multivocality encompasses "the fact that single actions can be interpreted coherently from multiple perspectives simultaneously, the fact that single actions can be moves in many games at once" (Padgett and Ansell, 1993: 1263). Actors "borrow … from multiple domains of

meaning" to "make multiply conceived (framed) and constructed moves that are interpretable from multiple perspectives" (McLean, 2007: 15–16). In military organizations, the presence of multiple actors with structurally similar sets of ties — for example, people in the same unit from the same region — often act collectively because they can rely on ties exogenous to command hierarchies. One classic study of insubordination, for instance, notes that "The manner in which a situation is defined is often as much a reaction of the participants to one another as it is a reaction to the event itself" (Shibutani, 1978: 13–14).

While *all* military personnel are multivocal actors, not all kinds of multivocality are likely to impinge on military orders. Only a narrow subset of military orders in a relatively specific range of situations will activate one's hometown ties, for instance. As socialization and training specialize and isolate higher-level officers over time, those soldiers become more likely to broker distinct networks in operationally relevant ways, creating the components for emergent role strain given a salient order. For example, it is conceivable that a colonel deployed to their home region would be the only person there who also inhabits that rank. This multiplex position affords them social influence; they may be able to apply unique knowledge of that region to military operations, but may also interpret military decisions based on their situated knowledge. Nonetheless, for elite and low-level soldiers alike, the composition of such a decision frame depends on the interaction between the orders they receive, the environmental pressures that they face, and the perceived relevance of their competing network roles.

Activation

Military individuals thus consider orders through multiple frames. When an officer receives an order, they interpret both its content ("do X") and its social resonance ("What will doing X mean?"). They may conclude that their multiplex identifications demand divergent responses to the order. Any social network *may* resonate with orders, leading to the possibility of perceiving pressures to respond in contradictory ways. As an officer's military role demands obedience to a chain of command, receiving an order that they interpret as problematic in other social domains produces tension between the officer's multiplex roles (see Figure 2). We label this process of generating role strain "activation."

When activation occurs, some subset of the officer's other ties become newly salient to the military role in which they receive their orders. In other words, at least one of the officer's military identities comes into conflict with a competing identification, generating episodic strain in the military role that can lead to disobedience. However, "identity" is not permanent or unchangeable; it is embedded in and generated by networks of dynamic social ties.

Activation generates strain in an officer's role by bringing two such sets of ties into conflict — the officer decides how to respond to military orders creatively by drawing on the rules and skills of multiple, distinct networks. Conflicts between multiple strong loyalties can lead to a need to adjudicate irreconcilable imperatives. An actor's multiple identifications may not be compatible or even mutually comprehensible, which is why the process of adjudication is critical. Membership in a social network does not

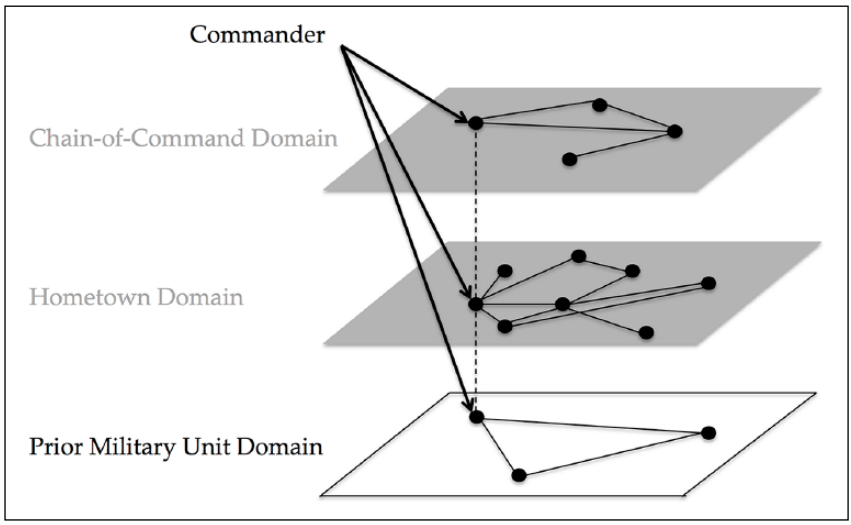

Figure 2. Activation of multiple network domains.

necessarily involve intrinsic acceptance of fixed authority, norms, or behavioral standards. Rather, the individual's need to resolve the tangled, contradictory pressures and information presented by each network makes disobedience conceivable and potentially legitimate to the commander. The activation of multiple identifications and the resulting role strain produce the conditions of possibility for disobedience.

Role strain can produce disobedience but we cannot precisely predict how specific brokers will perceive orders, interpret multiple domains' demands, or ultimately decide to act. Given the infinite universe of political contexts and commands, our theory does *not* explain exactly which orders will activate particular network ties, which modes of identification will matter to a given decision, or how an individual will adjudicate between competing identity claims. However, past research and the casework we present in the online appendix suggest several *kinds* of social domains that would be most likely to compete with strong military ties: (1) identifications with past military units; (2) identifications with home region, city, or village; (3) civilian communities in general; (4) kinship and marriage ties; and (5) ethnic identification. We use our case studies to explore these possibilities but leave deeper empirical exploration and hypothesis testing for future work.

Methodology

We develop a relational theory of disobedience by comparing cases in a Chinese military unit during the Sino-French War (1883–1885) and in Palestinian units during the Lebanese Civil War (1975–1989). We identified the phenomenon of normative disobedience during research for two broader projects on military organizations. Each author independently recognized a pattern in their research: elite, highly trained, volunteer,

career officers in good standing who disobeyed direct orders from top-level military leaders. These officers' choices do not fit with extant conceptualizations of military disobedience. By their own, private accounts, disobedient officers were not subject to circumstances commonly correlated with insubordination (e.g. harsh living conditions). Nor did these officers report opposition to the wars in which they were engaged; on the contrary, they enthusiastically participated up until the moment they disobeyed. Nor did officers identified as "disobedient" choose between "resistance" and "loyalty" (Albrecht and Ohl, 2016); rather, each chose to disobey a specific order under very specific conditions.

Analyzing advanced career officers' disobedience presented a hard case for our outcome of interest: individual disobedience. It is intuitive that a conscript deployed in difficult physical conditions with bare-bones training and few hopes for advancement would disobey. However, privileged officers' disobedience is counter-intuitive given their demonstrated commitment to the organization, volunteerism, experience, training, and socialization. Their actions also likely have broader consequences than those of an enlisted recruit. Restricting the empirical scope of our research to such officers allowed us to focus on the mechanisms undergirding normative disobedience by studying those who are, based on existing theory, least likely to disobey.

Having pinpointed an empirical puzzle, we sought to abductively theorize it (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2013: 24–38) using two cases of an under-theorized phenomenon within a larger class of behavior (military disobedience).[2] In line with strategies of abductive inquiry, which involves engaging in a dialectic between empirical discovery and theoretical refinement, we followed previous scholarship on disobedience that focuses on constitutive ties and small-unit dynamics. Having already collected extensive data on each officer's relational environment and decision-making process, we identified similarities and divergences between the phenomenon we observed and existing theories of military socialization and discipline. We thus adopted what Joe Soss (2017: 2, 10) terms a "nominal" approach to case identification, where we set about "casing" a discrete phenomenon within our broader studies of military behavior and engaged in "an act of conceptualization in which the particular is recast in more abstract terms, as an instance bearing on something more general," in order to create "a distinctive direction for analytic generalization."

Put differently, rather than seeking cases from a preset, broad class in order to deductively test theory, we instead conceptualized officer-level disobedience as a distinct category of analysis, "cased" individual instances of it, and abductively theorized it. Empirically, this involved mapping officers' relational environments using archival materials, in-depth interviews, memoirs, and secondary historical sources. The result was a comparative process of assembling "cases of relations" that allowed us to assess our broad hypothesis that group dynamics, multiplexity, and the nature of specific orders contributed to these officers' decisions to disobey.[3] The cases deployed here were central to building our theory, in part, because extended primary-source research in local languages allowed us to convincingly reconstruct each officer's egocentric relational, constitutive, and historical environment. This wealth of evidence also allowed us to assess the possibility that alternate dynamics were at play.

Our first main case focuses on the commander of China's military forces on Taiwan during the Sino-French War (1883–1885), an undeclared war between China and France over control of northern Vietnam and access to trade. It emphasizes how role strain resulted from tension between two different types of military networks, leading to the possibility of disobedience based in assessments of military strategy. The case emerged from archival research conducted between 2012 and 2015 in Taiwan's National Palace Museum Library Archives and China's First Historical Archives. In 1884, the French had been clashing with the Chinese in northern Vietnam for almost a year and, unable to obtain their desired concessions, increased pressure along the Chinese coast. After the French captured the northern port city of Keelung (基隆) on Taiwan, the Qing court repeatedly ordered its commander there to retake it. However, this commander refused and concentrated his forces elsewhere, arguing that he was making the better strategic choice. While he allowed the enemy to maintain a foothold in northern Taiwan — an area that was a crucial part of the island's coal-mining industry and one of only two major ports on its north side — had he chosen to obey, the French would likely also have captured the port closest to Taipei, which would have given them more leverage in the war.

The second main case involves Palestinian members of Black September and Fatah violating orders that they felt conflicted with their community-level obligations. It draws on nearly two years of archival, interview-based, and ethnographic research on the evolution of Palestinian militant organizations in Lebanon. During the 1976 Battle of Damour between Lebanese militias and Palestinian troops, members of Fatah stole a Lebanese militia leader's car. Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), the head of security and intelligence for the PLO, and PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat ordered its return. Rather than obeying, an elite officer working with Khalaf illicitly notified the guerrillas of the order but instructed them to destroy the car; the guerrillas publicly burned it. At the time, the PLO was trying to de-escalate tensions and earn goodwill following a series of brutal engagements. Burning the car after Arafat committed to returning it risked embarrassing the PLO, Fatah, and Arafat in the midst of a tense conflict.

Comparing network positions

Within each case, we focus on the locus of disobedience: an individual officer. As our theoretical approach centers on officers' multiplex social network positions, we examine the multivocal roles that each soldier inhabited when they disobeyed and the decisions that they made as a result. We use personal correspondence, interviews, government documents, military documentation, media reports, memoirs, and secondary sources to reconstruct each soldier's role, individual understanding of the situation, and relational context. This strategy provides multiple deep, network-based perspectives on each officer's actions, as well as information regarding the larger socio-political environments in which they operated.

To tease out the mechanisms that informed each officer's decision to disobey, we examined two types of evidence. First, we sought indications that an officer consciously referenced identifications with multiple social networks in his decision-making; for example, we looked for mention of friends from a previous assignment, connections to a

civilian community, or resonant family ties. This tactic illuminated each officer's multiplex social networks at the time of disobedience. Second, we sought evidence that the order that each soldier disobeyed activated multiple sets of social relations, examining their justifications and motivations while seeking contravening evidence (e.g. indications that the officer was poorly trained).

Risking wrath for the sake of strategy: Disobedience in the Sino-French War

At the height of the Sino-French War (1883–1885), the Chinese emperor ordered commander Liu Ming-ch'uan (劉銘傳) to retake a French-held position. This order precipitated tension between Liu's loyalty to Chinese officialdom and his pre-existing ties to successful, unofficial military organizations. Liu judged this order to be strategically ill-advised on the basis of his prior military experience. The friction that he perceived between strategic necessity and the imperative to obey pushed him to disobey a direct order from the Chinese emperor himself. Military ties and experience were, counterintuitively, directly responsible for an elite commander's choice to disobey.

On July 16, 1884, Liu arrived on Taiwan to take charge of China's defenses. He arrived a decorated commander with extensive combat experience. Liu labored to improve Taiwan's defensive situation (Speidel, 1967: 44–47); the Beijing-based Qing imperial court subsequently commended him for his tactical choices and explicitly referred to him as "adept in military affairs" (夙嫻兵事) (First Historical Archives of China, October 10, 1884).

On August 23, the French assaulted Fuzhou (福州) on China's southern coast, hoping that they could force China to concede. Their efforts failed (Eastman, 1967: 165). On October 1, the French captured Keelung, a port on the north-east coast of Taiwan that Liu was charged with defending, forcing a Chinese retreat (Garnot, 1960: 22–24). While Liu contained the French in Keelung, news of its capture reverberated throughout Chinese officialdom. Liu found himself under strong pressure to retake the critical port. One foreign observer wrote: "Liu is denounced by everybody under him as a cowardly, incompetent, stubborn fool, who, having no plans of his own, is without the wit to adopt those of his staff" (*North-China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*, quoted in Speidel, 1967: 78).

Chain-of-command and strategic imperatives produced role strain in Liu's position. On October 10, the court in Beijing ordered Liu to retake Keelung (*Da Qing*, October 10, 1884). While the state's ultimate military commander gave the orders, Liu disobeyed by refusing to move on the port, arguing that good strategy required him to refrain.[4] He persisted in his disobedience despite the emperor's ongoing concern with the issue — official records indicate that the emperor raised the Keelung issue no fewer than 24 times between October 1884 and April 1885 (*Da Qing*, various dates). The emperor's concern eventually escalated into personal attacks. For instance, the emperor referred to Liu as "faint-hearted" (怯懦) (*Da Qing*, April 2, 1885) and accused him of "blindly" sticking to his old approach (一味株守) (*Da Qing*, February 19, 1885). However, Liu continued to disobey and the French held Keelung until the end of the war.

Liu's assessment of the situation appears to have been accurate. From a purely strategic perspective — given minimizing French gains as a goal — Liu was making the best choice among bad options (Chu, 1963: 3; Huang Zhennan, 2000: 10). Tamsui (淡水) and Keelung were the two main naval access points to Taipei. As Liu had insufficient troops to defend both (Hsu Yu-liang, 2008), his choice to protect the route to Taipei and contain the French at Keelung was a case of "sacrificing the knights to save the king," a lesson he had taken from prior military endeavors (丢車保帥) (Huang Zhennan, 2000: 104).

Loyalty versus strategy: Liu's roles as official and commander

Liu's multiplex roles explain his disobedience in the face of the emperor's wrath. Liu had been a murderer and outlaw (Chin, 2002; Hummel, 1943: 526; Speidel, 1967: 4), the head of his own local military force (Chu, 1963: 2; Qingshi Gao, 1976-77: 12,077), a commander in Li Hongzhang's (李鴻章) famed Huai Army (淮軍)(Spector, 1964), and a military official for the Qing government. As a Chinese military officer, he maintained connections with local armed groups, fellow Huai Army officers, and Qing officialdom.

The emperor's orders concerned specifics of military operations. Given his background, Liu was intimately familiar with these matters. In his own words, Liu's simultaneous identifications with (1) powerful non-state military groups and (2) the Chinese state created role strain and led to him interpreting the emperor's order as problematic. Specifically, his understanding of successful military strategy clashed with the emperor's expectations of his role as an officially appointed Qing military commander.

Liu found success as a military commander early in life; one scholar describes him as a "fighting general" who rose to prominence through "merit established on the battlefield" (Green, 2003: 7). Importantly, his military successes began outside of — at times, in direct opposition to — the Chinese state bureaucracy. He started out leading a "band of freebooters who were engaged in the sale of salt" (Hummel, 1943: 526). Shortly after this, Liu organized a powerful volunteer corps to defend his hometown against Taiping rebels (Qingsh Gao, 1976-77: 12,077; Hummel, 1943: 526). One observer noted that this was "early evidence of his independence and daring" (Chu, 1963: 1), not to mention military talent. According to another, by 1860, "Fighting was what Liu knew best.… For years he had been fighting the [Qing] authorities, the Taipings, the Nien, other hoodlums, and even other militia corps" (Chin, 2002: 27).

Early demonstrations of Liu's aptitudes led Li Hongzhang, commander of the semi-official Huai Army, to recruit Liu and his personal troops to help suppress the Taiping rebellion (Spector, 1964). In other words, his position as an independently successful local military commander served as the basis for his entry into a second military network, still separate from China's official forces. While serving in the Huai Army, Liu developed a strong sense of personal loyalty to Li Hongzhang, who was among the most powerful government officials in China by the Sino-French War. Li reciprocated this loyalty; he "was to use his influence on Liu's behalf on numerous occasions, and Liu came to be known as a 'Li man'" (Chu, 1963: 1). Liu was "independent and

daring" but he was also fiercely loyal to his commander and to command structures in the Huai Army.

Liu's successes as a Huai commander and Li Hongzhang's patronage afforded him entry into a third network constituted by loyal Qing officials. Starting in 1864, after the Taiping rebellion, Liu was appointed to high official positions in Fujian province and Taiwan (Shifu Qian, 1980). He devoted himself to serving the Qing dynasty, just as he had committed himself to Li Hongzhang when he joined the Huai Army. Although Liu maintained both loyalties, as Li Hongzhang noted, Huai Army commanders like Liu would "worry about their country in the same way they worry about their family" (Chin, 2002: 28). Liu's appointments constituted national recognition of his capabilities and highlighted his dedication to and identification with officialdom even as he maintained his ties to the Huai. Although he spent years at home enjoying the fruits of his victory after the Taiping rebellion, the court in Beijing still thought highly enough of Liu's talents to call him out of retirement during the war against the French. He heeded this summons and, by most accounts, fully devoted himself to his new job (Chu, 1963).

Activation: Liu's prior military networks

The order for Liu to retake Keelung activated Liu's identifications with other military organizations — his hometown militia and the Huai Army — and created strain with his role as a military commander beholden to the Qing emperor. On the basis of these other identifications — specifically, on the basis of the skills, knowledge, and confidence that those ties conveyed to him — Liu argued that obeying the emperor's command would be strategically unwise. He noted in memorials to the throne that he had insufficient troops to both defend Taipei and retake Keelung (*Da Qing*, December 3, 1884; Speidel, 1967). In other words, he judged that if he were to apply sufficient force to expel the French from Keelung, they could have taken control of a crucial trading and population center and, ultimately, Taiwan's administration. Such a loss would have devastated the Chinese war effort, if only as leverage for the French to extract indemnities.

One can imagine Liu's dilemma. He could obey the emperor as his role in the Qing military chain of command demanded, damage his military reputation, and likely be punished for failure anyway — officials in 19th-century China were routinely severely punished when their choices had poor outcomes, with consequences ranging from loss of position to execution (Davis, 2008: 293). Or, he could draw upon the knowledge and perspective that his long-standing connections to non-state military organizations provided to justify his actions, protect a large swath of Taiwan's economically critical north, *still* risk harsh punishment, and hope that success and his patrons would protect him. This last point reveals an important aspect of our theory: elite officers can use their network connections to both justify their disobedience and mitigate personal ramifications.

Adjudicating contradictory, incommensurable pressures is hard; comparing the costs of certain military loss against the potential costs of disobeying is a complex calculation. Liu's continued refusals in the face of the emperor's, the court's, and the public's wrath are difficult to explain without reference to his strong identifications with the Huai Army and his hometown militia. Without his long-standing ties to non-state military groups, Liu would have been less likely to be able to judge the strategic import of his orders *and*

less confident in continuing to act on that judgment in the face of furious disagreement from the pinnacle of the Chinese state.

The emperor rejected Liu's argument that taking Keelung was strategically unwise; court networks thought Liu cowardly or foolish. When Liu retreated south in order to defend against an anticipated attack on Tamsui, rumors spread that he was fleeing to southern Taiwan. He was therefore greeted in Taipei by riots and several days of imprisonment (Davidson, 1903: 227). Liu nonetheless stood by his decision, arguing with China's ruler and even requesting punishment for himself in acknowledgment of his transgression (Huang Zhennan, 2000: 9).

Alternative explanations

Existing theory cannot explain Liu's disobedience. Most theories of military disobedience take a normative stance against it, and struggle to explain strategically beneficial transgressions. However, Liu was not surrendering or deserting. Nor was he a mutineer; rather than simply disregarding the emperor (or inciting rebellion), Liu took care to make arguments to defend his choices and requested punishment within the norms of the national military (Speidel, 1967). Perhaps the most common alternative explanations for the type of command breakdown that Liu's disobedience constitutes are improper training (King, 2006), insufficient commitment to the military (Gal, 1985), insufficient autonomy during training (Castillo, 2014), or failure to understand the situation properly (Van Creveld, 1987: 7–9). None of these mechanisms operate in Liu's case. He was a decorated, talented military commander with vast experience, much of it with near-total autonomy. For instance, 10 years before the war, he was recommended to the court as one of the few officials at the time who were versed in the use of Western weapons and training techniques (Li, 1875). It is also unlikely that he disobeyed because he misunderstood his situation — he was well informed about China's wartime situation and knew the potential consequences of disobedience.

Liu Ming-ch'uan's disobedience demonstrates how professional military affiliations can create role strain based on an order's strategic implications as it interacts with an officer's military identifications outside the chain of command. Given that Liu left retirement to fight and had a long record of loyal service, his commitment to the military cannot be doubted. Such commitment can, however, lead to less desirable outcomes from the perspective of the military hierarchy, as shown in the next section's discussion of a similar case of disobedience that occurred in a vastly disparate context, 1970s Lebanon. This second case underscores another common source of role strain: tension between soldiers' military roles and identifications with hometown and civilian communities.

Stealing the red Jaguar: Defying Arafat in the Lebanese civil war

In January 1976, the right-wing Christian Lebanese Front was at war with the PLO and the leftist Lebanese National Movement. After nearly a year of fighting, the Lebanese Front besieged Palestinian refugee camps in East Beirut and massacred Palestinians, Syrians, and Kurds living nearby. Dany Chamoun, son of Lebanese Interior Minister

Camille Chamoun, commanded the right-wing Tigers militia in both attacks, aided by Lebanon's Internal Security Forces (ISF). On January 20, 1976, Palestinian fighters affiliated with the Palestine Liberation Army, Fatah, and al-Sa'iqa[5] responded to these attacks by targeting Damour, a town south of Beirut. The elder Chamoun directed the Lebanese defense of Damour from the neighboring village of Sa'diyat but eventually had to be extracted by helicopter to East Beirut (Fisk, 2002: 79; Hanf, 1994: 210–212; Picard, 2002: 110; Sayigh, 1997: 374–376).

In the context of a longer conversation with the researcher about the Lebanon conflict, Ahmad, a former Fatah guerrilla who was present at Damour, described the battle's aftermath:

> After we won at Damour, some guys stole Dany Chamoun's car. You know Dany Chamoun? He was the leader of a militia. [Researcher: *An-Numūr*?] Yes, exactly, the Tigers. The family had a villa outside of the village where they hid during the battle. Well, the *fidā'yīn* wanted to kill them, and the leadership sent a helicopter to fetch them from their roof before the *fidā'yīn* could get there. They saved the guys we were fighting! *Kis umhu!* Why were the poor people fighting if it was for nothing? The leaders were just watching for their own safety. So, Dany had this red sports car, and these guys stole it and they went driving all around South Lebanon in it. They were speeding around Sur and celebrating when the guys in the regional Fatah office got a call from someone in the leadership; they were to bring the car to East Beirut and return it to Dany immediately. You know who it was? Abu Iyad, the number two in Fatah. *Kis urkhthu!* You know what the guy did? You know the al-Buss roundabout in Sur? He burned the car in the middle of that roundabout. (Parkinson oral history with Ahmad, Summer 2011)

While he had not personally witnessed the incident, Ahmad relayed this story to illustrate the schisms between Palestinians who had grown up in refugee camps in Lebanon and leaders such as Yasir Arafat who had not. For him, the incident encapsulated the distinction between leaders and guerrillas, who were unflinchingly loyal to their home communities — and, by extension, to the revolution — rather than beholden to the vagaries of politics. Importantly, the al-Buss roundabout abuts one of the refugee camps; the location of the car burning was tailored to attract people who felt that Chamoun had been targeting communities such as theirs.

Existing scholarship generally interprets this type of episode as evidence of a lack of discipline. However, when asked about the event, Abu Khalid, a veteran of Black September and Fatah,[6] further complicated the story:

> My brother was the one who took it.… At the time, I was working with Abu Iyad, I was in Black September. Do you know what Black September was? [Researcher: Somewhat. Tell me.] We were the security for the PLO … we weren't just any fighters. To be a member, you had to have morals, ethics, you had to be smart, because we had the hardest assignments, we were the ones who went inside Palestine for operations, we were the ones who did Munich. Nine out of 10 who started the training left, it was so hard. [Researcher: So, was it like Force 17?] Force 17? [His tone indicates that I have said something uninformed or vaguely insulting.] They were Abu Ammar's [Yasir Arafat's] bodyguards; we were security for the whole PLO! [Researcher: I understand.] During Damour, I was with Abu Iyad in Beirut. When I heard that Abu Ammar gave him the order to call and tell them to give the car back, I called my brother and told him "Burn it now!" [Researcher: Why exactly did you call your brother?] It wasn't right. Abu

> Ammar was playing formal politics, but it wasn't right, it wasn't ethical to give back the car. (Interview with Abu Khalid, Parkinson's field notes, Summer 2012)

Two related instances of disobedience occurred during this series of events. First, Abu Khalid learns that Yasir Arafat ordered Abu Iyad to return the stolen car; Abu Khalid subsequently violates the chain of command by instructing his brother, who is in a guerrilla unit, to defy the order by burning the car. Second, the brother, knowing he should not take orders from Abu Khalid — especially orders that would contradict those of his commanding officer — obeys Abu Khalid anyway. Rather than simple failures of discipline or cohesion, here, disobedience stemmed from multiplex ties and the strain that Abu Khalid experienced between his roles as an elite officer, a member of Black September, and a member of a refugee camp community.

Activation: Multiple military memberships

Like Liu Ming-ch'uan, Abu Khalid's identification with a discrete sub-network within the larger military organization — Black September — was crucial to his decision to disobey. Abu Khalid explained that he disobeyed the chairman of the PLO and head of Fatah *because* of his ties to Black September, not despite them. For example, he emphasized the exceptional intellectual, physical, and moral standards for membership in Black September. He also underscored the distinction between being answerable to Arafat (Force 17) and being answerable to the entire PLO. To him, discrepancies like these meant that members were both qualified and responsible for taking actions that other elite units could not. Abu Huli, another former member of Black September, confirmed that Abu Khalid's views were broadly held within the group, pointing out that members received advanced training in both Jordan and Europe. Abu Khalid interpreted Arafat's order in light of what he understood as his ethical obligations to a broader Palestinian community and in terms of his understanding of the damning local political implications of yielding to the Chamouns in front of Palestinian civilians.

The activation of Abu Khalid's ties to Black September produced role strain. He saw his choice to disobey Arafat more as a moral decision linked to Black September membership and a tactical corrective in terms of local refugee camp politics than as a violation of his obligations to the broader PLO and Fatah organizations. As a member of Black September, he equated returning the car with capitulating to the militia that Palestinian forces had just defeated. In Abu Khalid's mind, the leading representative of the PLO and Fatah had ordered a dishonorable and immoral action that would be poorly received in Palestinian refugee camps given events in East Beirut. Abu Khalid's actions were both a protest and a corrective rooted in the standards of a sub-organization whose members saw themselves as moral and ethical arbiters for the entire PLO. He knew that his actions had potentially irreversible consequences; Arafat and Abu Iyad were both notoriously intolerant of dissent. Both Fatah and the PLO had standard, formal disciplinary mechanisms that included military prisons, legal processes, physical punishment, and expulsion.

Even today, it is hard for many former guerrillas to reconcile their image of Arafat with the idea of him ordering the car's return. For instance, when the topic arose in

conversation with Nadr — a former member of the elite Force 17 unit — he insisted that Arafat would only have demanded the car's return "for show" and that "when the Chamouns weren't looking, he'd [Arafat would] wink at you and tell you to burn it." In other words, he worked to absolve both Arafat and Abu Khalid of perceived wrongdoing by insisting that the order lacked sincerity, thus avoiding role strain.[7] These narrative moves indicate that this order did not activate competing identifications for Nadr and Abu Huli; they offer an alternative interpretation as a way to reconcile their view of Arafat with an order that, if serious, they would have found problematic.

Activation: Kinship and community ties

Community and family ties also contributed to role strain in Abu Khalid's position. In his interpretation, the order to return the car wrongly privileged diplomacy with the Lebanese Front over the PLO's moral obligations to Palestinian refugee communities. Similarly, Abu Khalid's actions invoke kinship- and community-based loyalties; to prevent the car's transfer, Abu Khalid deploys a kinship tie that bridged ranks within Fatah and between Black September and Fatah. While he seeks to keep the organizations "honest," he simultaneously keeps his brother and co-members unsullied by giving them an excuse to disregard what he views as an unethical and strategically problematic order.

Abu Khalid's experiences growing up in a refugee camp under the Lebanese *Deuxième Bureau*'s[8] control sensitized him to Lebanese targeting of Palestinian camps. Given the context of the then-recent attacks on the refugee communities outside Beirut, those experiences also influenced his response to Arafat's order to return the car. The Fatah branch where Abu Khalid's brother served (and to which Abu Khalid issued his disobedient orders) was described by another of its members, Ahmad, as cohesive and well trained. It was also reinforced by family networks and socially embedded in the refugee camps. For Ahmad, who had grown up in camps then controlled by the *Deuxième Bureau*, membership in Fatah's military scouts and participation in the *fidā'yīn*'s activities gave him feelings of belonging and honor. He mentioned winning control of the intelligence office near his camp as a moment when he felt that Palestinians had taken back their community (Parkinson oral history with Ahmad, Summer 2011). Former militants repeated these themes throughout interviews, referencing feelings of honor and pride in identifying as scouts, members of dance teams, members of politically active families, and public protesters. For Abu Khalid, telling his brother to burn the car helped Palestinians from the camps reclaim dignity and power after the East Beirut massacres.

Arafat's move to appease the Chamouns threatened that dignity and activated Abu Khalid's identifications with community-level networks. He interpreted Arafat's order to return the car return as a betrayal of Palestinian refugee camp communities in pursuit of "formal politics," with implications for civilian support, recruitment, and group morale.[9] Burning the car constituted an act of authenticity and loyalty to Palestinian camp communities. Indeed, when former *fidā'yīn* from the refugee camps recalled the story, the two brothers were always portrayed as heroes, not degenerates. This implies recognition of multivocality and the salience of the order to the commanders' identifications with quotidian social ties.

An alternate explanation? The leadership's view

In line with scholarship on socialization, civilian abuse, and desertion, some in the PLO and Fatah leaderships also saw the relevance of class and regional networks in Damour, though interpretations of the guerrillas' actions differ. In his memoir, Abu Iyad notes that in the battle's aftermath:

> [t]he palace of Saadiyat was looted and reduced to rubble by destitute peasants from villages in the south.… [Camille] Chamoun claimed to be disconsolate over the disappearance of a portrait of his deceased wife. Yasir Arafat immediately opened an investigation and tracked it down, paying the villager who stole it 5,000 Lebanese pounds and then returning it to Chamoun. (Iyad and Rouleau, 1981: 180)

This version of events demonstrates that class, urban–rural, and regional divides layered onto *fidā'yīn*–leadership divides. It also shows that the Palestinian leadership was involved in retrieving looted goods for the Chamoun family; in Abu Iyad's telling, this move is a practical and honorable decision that corrected for the behavior of undisciplined, poorly trained, impoverished troops. Despite acting primarily in his dual military-political role as the second in command, Abu Iyad alludes to potential tensions with other domains, writing: "We had a thousand reasons to kill the man responsible for so much bloodshed … [h]owever, numerous political figures friendly to the Resistance, including Kamal Junblatt and Saeb Salem, intervened in his favor" (Iyad and Rouleau, 1981: 180). Abu Iyad implies that political savvy and responsible decision-making drove the leadership's choices in the political-military domain.

While the ground soldiers were certainly poor, material arguments — for example, looting as a form of salary payment — cannot explain Abu Khalid's or his brother's disobedience. Particularly in the wartime context of January 1976, burning Chamoun's car carried class and communal undertones; it was not rooted in economic motivations. For example, one account indicates that many Palestinian units refused orders to loot at Damour (Sayigh, 1997: 777, fn. 16) — it does not appear that these units looted for profit or abused civilians due to a general lack of discipline. Abu Khalid told his brother to *publicly destroy* the car, not to sell it or scrap it. The common narrative also indicates that faced with the order to return the vehicle, the fighter (Abu Khalid's brother) did not hide it for later recovery. Even if the brother's initial motivations included profit, he did not act on them. Instead, he turned the car's destruction into a performance. Destroying the car in this fashion connoted political calculation and public spectacle as opposed to wanton destruction or greed.

Abu Khalid evaluated his orders from the leadership based on his overlapping identifications with the PLO, Fatah, Black September, camp communities, and kin — those orders created role strain in his multiplex network position. His response reveals tensions between his concurrent elite status in the PLO, Fatah, and Black September, as well as his kinship to his brother and his relationship to the Palestinian refugee community. A complex, historically contingent interaction between everyday constituent networks and formal military hierarchies created the conditions of possibility for elite disobedience.

Conclusion

To better understand military disobedience, it is crucial to interrogate the nature of identity. Network theory provides a point of entry toward better understanding identity as embedded in networks of social ties. This article presents a theory of military disobedience that relies on the mechanism of role strain. It highlights how individuals draw on multiplex identifications with varied social networks to make decisions, even within the context of the intensive discipline and socialization common in military organizations. By examining elite officers' multiplex social ties, we show how military disobedience is often linked to role strain, where certain orders "activate" competing identifications with distinct social networks. This activation creates tension in which an officer must adjudicate between competing, often incommensurable, demands, which generates the conditions of possibility for disobedience. In line with previous literature, it suggests that previous military experience and home region or town may be particularly strong influences on officers' behavior.

This article suggests the existence of unofficial loci of power within military organizations. However, these roles are only contingently powerful. Further research could productively explore whether certain contexts — for example, strategic escalations and de-escalations, or larger political shifts — create environments that are likely to "activate" these roles and empower multivocal actors such as Liu Ming-ch'uan and Abu Khalid. Future research should also explore the ways in which the consequences of such activation might persist, for instance, by empowering individuals in the longer term.

Exploring connections across levels of analysis using network theory promotes better conceptualizations of mass behavior in and by military organizations. For instance, the absence of ethnic ties in our cases suggests that these ties may be too diffuse to compete with strong ties built on in-person interactions (Koehler et al., 2016). Our theory also implies that elite disobedience should be studied as conceptually separate from collective events such as mass desertion or unit defection. That is not to say that it is unrelated; our theory indicates that elite-led collective action may be more of a sequence or cascade of choices rather than the single decision point that previous studies have theorized.

Our framework suggests at least two new avenues for future research on military disobedience. First, scholars should further theorize motivations. Our theory notes how network overlap produces potentially disobedient roles but it does not explicitly theorize the motivation to disobey. Rather, we see motivation as embedded in different constituent audiences. Our cases reveal two distinct motivations for disobedience: mission goals and morals. Importantly, both of these are substantially other-focused (altercentric) drivers; in neither of our cases are the commanders demonstrating wholly selfish motivations. Liu Ming-ch'uan's disobedience stemmed from his evaluation of his strategic situation and his motivation to maintain his reputation for success. Abu Khalid, however, acted in the name of moral and emotional motivations, with strategy coming second. With some notable exceptions (McDoom, 2012; Pearlman, 2013; Petersen, 2002, 2017; Wood, 2003), emotional motivations remain under-studied in scholarship on military organizations.

Second, while our theory cannot systematically predict how identifications with competing social networks *will* matter, it does suggest several potential trajectories for future work in this realm. Analytically divorcing constitutive networks from hierarchical military

organizational structures enables novel avenues of inquiry and may illuminate previously misunderstood cases of military disobedience. For instance, adopting a multiple-network approach allows scholars to distinguish between *organization* and *identity*, allowing for a more fruitful exploration of each concept *and* examination of their mutually constitutive natures. Such an approach will allow scholars of military politics to problematize, rather than to presuppose, the impact of factors such as ethnicity on soldiers' behavior. It may also help to capture ways in which participating in violent conflict can alter or shatter understandings of identities and groups (Aspinall, 2007, 2009; Gould, 1995, 1996; Wood, 2008).

Research on military politics has skewed toward extremes, assuming either that military organizations absorb soldiers easily and completely, or that soldiers' behaviors are wholly determined by pre-existing identity factors. Recent work on doctrine, military innovation, insubordination, and ethnic conflict highlights how these assumptions obscure important determinants of military change and decision-making. Reality falls somewhere in the middle. For example, while research focusing on identifications with hometown localities has already expanded understanding on the intersection of military hierarchies and identity-based networks, we suggest a more sophisticated treatment of identity via constitutive networks. This approach does not reify identity; instead, it treats it as flowing from fluid, strong-tie connections situated in historical and social context. Examining processes such as decision-making via this analytic perspective opens new possibilities for studying military politics. Moreover, research using this technique has the capacity to highlight broader, dynamic processes, such as structural adaptation and changing behavior in the military.

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Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Notes

1. On commitment and preference alignment, also see Gal (1985: 555).
2. Hundman (2016) identifies three distinct types of disobedience based on subordinates' support for their superiors and social network positions.
3. For further description of the methodology and additional cases, see the online appendix.
4. Both primary and secondary sources indicate that this was Liu's response (Da Qing, January 21, 1885; Speidel, 1967). Liu was consistent in his reasoning — he made similar arguments a few months prior (Liu Ming-ch'uan, 1928: 173–175).
5. A Syrian-trained and -supported Palestinian guerrilla group.
6. Abu Khalid saw himself as simultaneously inhabiting roles in Black September, the Fatah movement, and the umbrella PLO organization.
7. Abu Huli was present for this conversation and agreed with Nadr. In one-on-one conversations with Abu Huli, though, he tended more toward Abu Khalid's interpretations. Abu Huli may have been cautious about expressing his real opinion in front of Nadr, or reluctant to have him see Arafat criticized in front of a foreign researcher.
8. Prior to the 1969 Cairo Agreement, the Lebanese *Deuxième Bureau* monitored Palestinian activities closely and frequently interrogated individuals whom it suspected of political involvement (Sayigh, 1979: 151).
9. Yasir Arafat and Abu Iyad were from the professional class and had not been raised in refugee camps.

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