

## DISCIPLINE, IDENTITY, AND COHESION IN ARMED ORGANIZATIONS

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*For a spirited army is not made so by having spirited men in it but by having well-ordered orders.*

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, II [167]

*You people are no longer maggots. Today, you are Marines. You're part of a brotherhood. From now on until the day you die, wherever you are, every Marine is your brother. Most of you will go to Vietnam. Some of you will not come back. But always remember this: Marines die, that's what were here for. But the Marine Corps lives forever, and that means you live forever.*

Senior Drill Instructor Gunnery Sergeant Hartman,  
instructing his graduating Marines in Stanley Kubrick's  
*Full Metal Jacket* (1987)

## INTRODUCTION

The relative predominance of civil, as opposed to international, wars in the last two decades (Fearon and Laitin, 2003), and the recent rise to prominence of international terrorism, has precipitated the emergence of significant body of research on the microfoundations of conflict (e.g. Gates, 2002; Kalyvas, 2006; Petersen, 2001; Weinstein, 2007; Wood, 2003). Despite the considerable progress made in many respects, I put forward that we still lack a good understanding of the internal dynamics of the armed organizations, state and non-state, that fight these wars. Ultimately, to better understand the dynamics of war, and in particular war termination, we need to know *how* (and *why*) armed organizations survive (or perish) and produce (or fail to produce) cooperative effort. Or in other words, we need a theory of *cohesion* in armed organizations. Cohesion captures two outcomes of interest; it is defined as *the survival of an organization as an intact entity and the production and maintenance of cooperative effort towards the attainment of the organization's goals*.

Cohesion has been a concern of military history and military sociology (MHMS) for some time. Scholars in this tradition have generally explained cohesion as the result of group- or organizational-level factors, whether primary unit solidarity (Shils and Janowitz, 1948; Gabriel and Savage, 1979), or systems of command and control (Rush, 1999, 2001; van Creveld, 1983). However, because soldiers have traditionally been conscripted to state militaries, little or no attention is given to their purposive or ideological motivations (but see Bartov, 1992, 1996). Indeed, the ideal soldier seems to be unambiguously non-ideological (Holmes, 1985). By contrast, in their studies of non-state armed organizations, scholars in political science and sociology (PSS) have explicitly focused on the question of why individuals *choose* to participate in insurrectionist or resistance movements. Various motivations for participation have been put forward, from purposive incentives, such as the satisfaction of some political, ethnic, or religious grievance (Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1970; Lichbach, 1994; Petersen, 2002), to material incentives, whether acquisitive greed or simply the need to survive (Collier and Hoeffler, 1998, 2004; Le Billon, 2001; Lujala et al, 2005; Scott, 1977). In reality, however, state armies have their share of ideologues (Bartov, 1992, 1996), while non-state armies have their share of conscripts (Blattman, 2007; Singer, 2006). While not usually considered together in

the literature, state and non-state armed organizations face the same challenge of attracting and retaining recruits and somehow wielding them to act cooperatively towards a common goal; considerable leverage can thus be gained from trying to derive a more general model of cohesion that covers both state and non-state armed organizations.

What is still lacking in the MHMS and PSS approaches is attention to the enormous socializing effect of organizational membership on the individual (Pearlman, 2007; Wood, 2008). As Janowitz (1960: 175) notes, "The military profession is more than an occupation; it is a complete style of life." Only a religious cult comes close in the extent to which every facet of the individual's life is controlled by the organization. Moreover, this applies just as much to non-state armed organizations (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008). Thus, while Weinstein's (2007) emphasis on organizational factors is a welcome departure from earlier approaches, it is still overly determined by the resource endowments of the armed organization, and hence, the balance of material or purposive selective incentives that the organization can provide its members. In reality, neither material nor purposive incentives are sufficient to account for variations in cohesion. Gould (1995: 18) rightly cautions that "organizations should be considered as pivotal not only to the mobilization of resources but to the formation of collective identities on a larger scale than would otherwise obtain." In other words, a complete explanation of cohesion must include consideration of the sense of identification the individual member comes to have with the organization, or *organizational identification* (OI). Neglected in the study of both state and non-state armed organizations, the extent to which the self-concept of the individual becomes coeval with her identification as a member of the organization provides a simple, yet powerful, explanation of variations in armed organizational cohesion.

In this paper, my goal is to show the inadequacy of existing theories of cohesion and to put forward a new model that puts OI at its core. I begin by setting the scope of the analysis, clarifying what is meant by the term, *armed organization*. In the second section, I define cohesion and disintegration. The challenge here is to relate individual- and group-level mechanisms to an organizational-level outcome. I then outline an alternative theory of armed organizational cohesion. I begin with the baseline set forth in the PSS literature, which is concerned with both material and non-material selective and collective incentives. Given the inadequacies of this baseline, I then add the disciplinary and solidarity mechanisms that MHMS scholars have put forward. However, this still leaves us short of an explanation of cohesion. What is missing is the concept of identity. Here I show how the salience of the individual's identification with the organization over alternative possible identifications provides a persuasive explanation of cohesion in armed organizations. In the final section, I evaluate the present model against current explanations of cohesion with respect to three prominent cases: the *Wehrmacht* (1943-1945), the U.S. Army in Vietnam (1968-1971), and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) (1970-1986).

## ARMED ORGANIZATIONS

Before proceeding, I must set the scope of the analysis and clarify what is meant by the intentionally broad term, *armed organizations*. To paraphrase Michael Hechter (1987: 16), an organization is *a collection of individuals who are engaged in a specific type of mutually oriented activity, with one or more criteria of membership, the presence of an authority (and, or constitutional) structure*. Thus,

*organizations* can be distinguished from *crowds*, *mobs*, or *social movements*, which have no membership criteria, and *social categories*, which do not entail engagement in a common activity (Hechter, 1987: 16). The definition does not have any preconditions regarding size, the nature of (social) interactions among the organization members, or the type of activity to which it is oriented (Forsyth, 1999). An armed organization is *an organization that uses or is willing to use or threaten violence in the context of a mutually oriented activity; armed organizations attempt (more or less successfully) to establish control over societal resources (i.e. people) or economic resources (i.e. financial or military)*. Political parties, interest groups, social clubs or social affiliations,<sup>2</sup> and labor unions do not, therefore, count as armed organizations. As Gabriel and Savage (1979: 20) note, "Military systems, especially the small-unit subsystems which are expected to bear the burden of killing, are categorically different in nature and function from the modern business corporation and its subsystems." Ultimately, the expectation that the member of the armed organization will kill or die for the organization renders these organizations distinct from other kinds of social organization.

While I suggest that the logic of cohesion is general, in this paper I am mostly concerned with organizations that are conventionally called armies. An army is literally *an organized body of persons armed for war*. Conventionally it refers to land-based forces that control territory and fight battles. It covers both nation-state armies and insurgent or guerrilla armies. For clarity of exposition, I exclude discussion of gangs, mafias, police forces, vigilante groups, navies, pirates, and air forces. The tendency, thus far, has been to see state and non-state militaries as categorically different; as a consequence, they are rarely analyzed under the same framework (for a recent attempt, see Arjona and Kalyvas, 2007). While the organizational forms, capacities, and resource endowments of state and non-state armies usually differ substantially, both must endeavor to attract and retain personnel and to motivate them to contribute towards the organization's goals. Thus, I argue that the difference is one of *species* rather than *genus* (Sartori, 1970). In this paper, therefore, I bring together insights from recent work in PSS on the microfoundations of conflict with the extensive MHMS literature.

## WHAT IS COHESION AND WHY STUDY IT?

There is considerable disagreement over what precisely is meant by cohesion (Carron and Brawley, 2000; Friedkin, 2004; Hogg, 1993; Siebold, 1999). One difficulty concerns the level of analysis (Careless, 2000). The terms *group* and *organization* are so part of our everyday lexicon that their precise meanings are not immediately apparent; for the purpose of this paper, it is important not to elide the two. Forsyth (1999: 5) defines a group very broadly as "two or more interdependent individuals who influence one another through social interaction." The key element to this, and most, social psychological definitions of the group is the presence of socially interdependent individuals. In this sense, a group could be anything from a family to a gathered crowd. In this sense also, an *ethnic group* is a misnomer in so far as the individuals who share a common ethnicity do not necessarily interact socially. Thus, even the possession of a common identity among two or more individuals does not confer up on that collectivity the status of a group. Groups can exist within and without organizations. For example, the U.S. Army would be correctly described as an armed organization; it meets the criteria of being a collection of individuals

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<sup>2</sup> One should differentiate with the boxing clubs described by Volkov (2002), which were a social clubs that evolved into armed organizations.

oriented towards an activity (or set of activities), with specific criteria for membership, and a well-defined command structure. Within the U.S. Army, however, smaller social groups exist; such groups are collections of individuals based around social interactions, usually referred to as units, within the Army. However, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which includes members of several *distinct* armed organizations, could also be considered a group in so far as they engage with each other through social interaction.<sup>3</sup> The most developed theoretical and empirical literature on cohesion comes from social psychology and has been mostly concerned with cohesion at the level of the group (Chang and Bordia, 2001; Forsyth, 1988; Griffith, 1988; Heckathorn and Rosenstein, 2002; Hogg, 1992; Houser and Lovaglia, 2002; McPherson and Smith-Lovin, 2002; Moddy and White, 2003; Mullen and Copper, 1994; Rempel and Fisher, 1997). In contrast, the focus of this paper is cohesion at the level of the organization.

In this paper, I draw on a rich and disparate literature on cohesion, from management and organizational sociology (Fligstein, forthcoming; Gibbons, 1998; Hardin, 1998; Hirschman, 1970; Seashore, 1954; Wilson, 1973, 1989), the analysis of political parties and interest groups (Hechter, 1987; Moe, 1988), and social anthropology (Friedkin, 2004; Hardin, 1995; Simmel, 1898, 1955). As noted earlier, organizational cohesion is defined as *the survival of an organization as an intact entity and the production and maintenance of cooperative effort towards the attainment of the organization's goals*. This definition of organizational cohesion incorporates both the minimum of organizational survival as well as the additional requirement of organizational *maintenance* (Wilson, 1989). The latter refers to the condition of the organization's members acting towards a common purpose; for de Tocqueville (2003), this is the very definition of an organization.

Cohesion derives its importance from its implications for the outcome of prolonged or severe conflict. It is clear that armed organizations that can sustain themselves over the long term and ensure that their members produce cooperative effort towards the organization's goals will be more effective, and one could hypothesize, more difficult to beat. Gabriel and Savage (1979: 32) suggest that, "Cohesion is revealed in levels of performance in battle and, like disintegration, is measurable only in relative terms." This imprecision is unsatisfactory and is one of the reasons that the study of cohesion has been avoided by political scientists. It is well known that even in the midst of war, soldiers spend much of their time out of battle. Whether it is the arduousness and brutality of life in the trenches (Fritz, 1995), or the boredom and solitariness of life as an urban guerrilla (Collins, 1996), some of the greatest demands placed on soldiers occur out of battle. Thus, we are concerned not only with performance in battle, but also with the cohesion of the armed organization in all moments of stress or crisis.

On the one hand, when we speak about cohesion we are really speaking about the combined actions of a specified population of individuals. On the other hand, I argue, individuals' behavior is inexplicable without reference to the organizational (and often societal) level context in which they are acting. There is thus a hermeneutic problem that cannot be easily dismissed; rather the dialectical nature of the individual-organization interaction must itself be problematized. To explain *organizational* cohesion and disintegration, I will argue later on that individuals do not choose their level of effort independently. A cohesive organization tends to produce cohesive behavior from individuals. This is because the behavior of

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<sup>3</sup> Here *social* is meant as including *professional*, not as distinct from it.

individuals tends to cluster around a dominant type. We might call this the effect of organizational culture. The result is a pattern of cohesion or disintegration at the organizational level. For clarity of exposition, I begin with the individual level theory that dominates rational models of collective action. I then proceed to discuss the impact of organizational culture on the individual.

In this case, there are essentially three possible types of individual behavior:

- Type 1.) The individual remains in the armed organization and contributes the *ideal* level of effort towards the attainment of the organization's goals as defined by the organization's decisionmaking apparatus;
- Type 2.) The individual remains in the armed organization, but does *not* contribute the *ideal* level of effort; the individual may shirk her duties, directly refuse to obey orders, or even go as far as killing fellow members and mutinying;
- Type 3.) The individual *exits* the armed organization; the individual may 'retire', or may create or join an alternative armed organization.

Having already joined the armed organization, either voluntarily or by compulsion, the individual must make a decision between whether to remain in the organization or to exit it (either according to a legitimate procedure or by desertion).<sup>4</sup> In many cases exit may not be possible, as in a conscript army, leaving dissatisfied members to choose between Type 1 and Type 2. The individual may choose to contribute Type 2 effort in the attempt to minimize personal risk and ensure her survival. The individual may also choose to contribute Type 2 effort if she can extract some benefit from organizational membership, such as the possibility to loot, even though she is not willing to contribute the level of effort demanded by the organization (the *ideal*).

How does individual behavior relate to organizational outcomes? When Type 1 behavior is dominant, an armed organization is cohesive; it persists as an intact entity in which members produce and maintain cooperative effort towards the attainment of the organization's goals. When Type 2 behavior is dominant, an armed organization is disintegrative; while it persists as an intact entity, orders are not always obeyed, members exploit their position against the interests of the organization, and members engage in activity that directly subverts the group's integrity. When Type 3 dominates, the organization experiences more intense disintegration; its members may leave the organization to join or form an alternative organization, or so many of its members leave that the armed organization completely dissolves or disintegrates as an organized entity.

## THEORIES OF COHESION AND DISINTEGRATION

In this section, I outline the main theories of armed organizational cohesion from the PSS and the MHMS literatures. These theories can be distilled into four categories. The first two are the purposive goals thesis and the selective incentives thesis, which are individual-level theories. The second two are the solidarity thesis and the command and control thesis, which are group- and organizational-level theories respectively.

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<sup>4</sup> I thus take the recruitment decision as exogenous.

**Table 1. Theories of Cohesion and Disintegration**

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Level</b>
Purposive goals	Individual
Selective incentives	Individual
Unit solidarity	Group
Command & control	Organization

The purposive goals thesis posits that contributing the ideal level of effort (Type 1) satisfies a pre-existing purposive goal of the individual (e.g. Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1970). It is usually held that there is some threshold of injustice that individuals in a society will tolerate, but that when these injustices outweigh the costs of effort and risk implied by joining an armed organization, such organizations will emerge and grow up to the point where the relative costs and benefits of action from an individual's purposive point of view are in equilibrium. Effort will only reach its ideal level if the organization's goal is the same as the individual's goal. This thesis should apply in theory to state armies also, in which individuals come together to form a collective defensive pact. The thesis suffers from the classic free-rider problem that is well noted in the collective action literature (Olsen, 1962). That is, because the purposive goal is a collective goal and its benefits cannot be restricted to the organization's members, there is an incentive for each individual to contribute lower levels of individual effort (including exiting the organization), while reaping the collective benefits. The outcome would be disintegration at the organization level.

To overcome this issue, the selective incentives thesis posits that membership in an armed organization confers selective benefits which are above and beyond the communal benefits that will result from collective action (Tilly, 2003). Traditionally these incentives are material in nature and have been put forward as particularly relevant to civil wars in Africa in recent decades (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004a, 2004b; Klare, 2001; le Billon, 2001; Lujala et al, 2005; Peters and Richards, 1998; Richards, 1996; Singer, 2006), but more recently have been applied to state armies (Asch and Warner, 2001; Lipsky, 2003; Massing, 2008). Every individual is assumed to have certain minimum material needs. For many individuals, membership in an armed organization is a survival strategy when other economic opportunities are so constrained (Singer, 2006). The selective material incentives offered by membership in the armed organization versus non-membership should therefore be one reason to join and remain in that organization (Weinstein, 2007). The organization would also like to devise selective incentives to induce individuals to contribute the ideal level of effort, not merely to stay in the organization (Brehm and Gates, 1994). However, because management cannot observe effort directly, it would have to base its rewards upon observation of cohesion. But cohesion is the result of collective behavior; thus, there would be an incentive for each individual to contribute lower levels of effort, or in other words, to free ride (Olsen, 1962); this would also result in the adverse selection problem, in which those inclined to shirk would be most inclined to join (Akerlof, 1970). As a consequence, while material selective incentives may influence the decision to join and remain in an armed organization, it will not influence the level of effort that an individual contributes once inside. While there is a growing acknowledgement of this fact among PSS scholars, there is still no agreement on what the other non-material motivations of individuals might be (Gutiérrez-Sanín, 2008; Wood, 2003).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> One prominent response has been to embed the armed organization in its social context and incorporate motivations such as status (Petersen, 2001) and dignity (Wood, 2003) into the decisionmaking calculus of rebels. Such an approach is compatible with, though not equivalent

Consequently, the focus of MHMS scholars on group- and organizational-level dynamics is helpful. Because effort in an armed organization entails great risk and sacrifice, most individual members of the organization are unlikely to contribute it unilaterally because of selective incentives or purposive goals alone. Therefore there must be some kind of enforcement mechanism (Hechter, 1987). The MHMS literature has posited two solutions. The first is coercive discipline, which I subsume under the broader category of command and control. It is argued that cohesion is maintained by the threat of coercive sanctions for failure to contribute the required level of effort. This thesis applies particularly to conscript armies (Fritz, 1995; Rush, 1999, 2001) or forced-recruitment armies (Singer, 2006), but applies also to volunteer armies (Gutiérrez Sanin, 2008). The logic of this argument is essentially the same as the selective incentives one. That is, it rests on the leadership's ability to observe behavior and to met out punishment for bad behavior (rather than rewards for good behavior) (Brehm and Gates, 1994). In the case of armed organizations, this is a highly unrealistic assumption. The feasibility of Stalin's now infamous strategy of placing a second line of soldiers behind the first to shoot any who turned to run is less obvious in an era where small unit guerrilla tactics dominate (Beevor, 1998). Indeed because of the inadequacies of coercive discipline, U.S. military policy has moved to adopt social control mechanisms instead (Radine, 1977).

The second solution is a kind of social discipline that is enforced through the primary group. This so-called unit solidarity thesis is most strongly associated with Shils and Janowitz (1948) in their study of cohesion and disintegration in the *Wehrmacht* in World War II. Small unit solidarity refers to the bonds of dependence and trust that are developed among members of small fighting units (i.e. at the squad or platoon level) in the course of their continued interactions. A plethora of works in MHMS have replicated Shils and Janowitz's (1948) finding in other cases (Gabriel and Savage, 1979; Sharom, 1976; Stewart, 1991; Watson, 1997; Wong, 2003; for a contradictory view, see Ben-Shalom et al., 2005). This mechanism certainly seems plausible, and there is experimental evidence that supports it (Levine and Moreland, 2002). The Individual contributes the ideal level of effort because failure to do so will result in social ostracism or punishment from her fellow members. However, this still doesn't answer the question of why any individuals come to accept this *ideal* level of effort as the socially acceptable standard to be enforced. In other words, social discipline only works to produce cohesion if that is the outcome that is collectively desired. Dyaram and Kamalanbhan (2005), for example, have adduced experimental evidence that group cohesion can in fact undermine performance. Bearman (1991) has also gathered data on patterns of desertion of Confederate troops during the U.S. civil war, and found that units that were more internally cohesive were more, not less, likely to desert en masse (see also Costa and Kahn, 2003).

## ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND COHESION

While I agree that discipline is an essential mechanism in maintaining cohesion, the question is how discipline is enforced. For soldiers to accept the imposition of sanctions as legitimate, they must perceive the enforcer of these rules as having a legitimate claim to control, or authority. Without authority, order breaks down. Weber's (1964) typology of the sources of legitimate authority is instructive. In the first instance, it may rest on charisma; this is often the basis of authority in

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to, the one followed here.



shorter-lived insurgent armed organizations. In the second instance, authority rests on tradition; this may be the basis of cohesion among warrior societies (Gat, 2006). In the third instance, authority is based on bureaucratic institutionalization. In the latter case, the individual identifies the superior as having a right to give orders that must be obeyed because of their very positions as leaders. Each order is not evaluated, but is to be obeyed simply because of the *authority* of the giver of the order (Raz, 1985). Authority is not inherent but is a product of a social environment. But what lies beneath the authority of military leaders? The main mechanism, I argue, is not discipline but identification.

It is the degree to which individuals identify themselves as members of the armed organization that contributes most to cohesion. Appeal to identity, or identification, as an explanatory mechanism is fraught with difficulty (Cerulo, 1997; Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). It is thus incumbent on the investigator to specify more clearly what is meant. Identification with the organization can be understood as the degree to which the individual defines her self-concept as that of a member of the organization, and hence, the degree to which the satisfaction of organizational goals becomes coeval with the satisfaction of her own goals. Self-categorization is thus the key element of identification (Ellemers et al, 1997). Individuals typically possess multiple identities (Laitin, 1986; Markus and Nurius, 1986; McCall and Simmons, 1978; Mead, 1934; Stryker and Serpe, 1982; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). This is not to imply that one always has a choice of identity (Smith, 2003: 34). Very clearly, one cannot (easily) choose whether or not to be female, or to be black, or to be Hutu. However, the extent to which one identifies oneself primarily as female, black, or Hutu will depend on the particular context (Gould, 1995). Some identities are more obviously "socially constructed", however constrained by geography or ability. Rarely, however, are identities plucked from thin air. When political elites emphasize a collective identity, whether based on class, race, or something else, this identity must resonate in some real way with those to whom the appeal is being made (Laitin, 1986; Smith, 2003). Moreover, it may be that some identities hold (however temporarily) a hegemonic status, which is difficult to shift (Laitin, 1986).

While the concept of identity has found fertile ground in the study of ethnic (Evans-Prichard, 1944), national (Brubaker, 1992; Laitin, 1998), and class politics (Blumin, 1989; Gould, 1995), remarkably little attention has been paid to the notion of identification in armed organizations per se (but see Akerlof and Kranton, 2005). A large body of social psychology holds that identities are defined in contrast to a competing and negatively viewed other (Staub, 1992; Sumner, 1907). However, more recent literature calls this simplistic interpretation into question. Identities and social memberships may not only overlap, but also be positively reinforcing, and cooperative (Allport, 1954; Brewer, 1999). A strong collective identity does not require a negative other. As social units, organizations are the product of individual beliefs, actions, and identities; however, organizations also construct, shape, and re-shape the beliefs, actions, and identities of their members. Precisely what constitutes acceptable behavior is part of an organizational culture. Organizational culture is in turn partly derived from the broader cultural context in which the organization is situated. Thus, organizations fall somewhere between a purely social identity (that is, a collective sense of identification resulting from individual patterns of contact) and an abstract collective identity (i.e. one that does not rely on face to face interaction, such as class or nationalism). As Ashmore et al (2004: 81) note:

Collective identification is first and foremost a statement about categorical membership. A collective identity is one that is shared with a group of others

who have (or are believed to have) some characteristic(s) in common... This shared position does not require direct contact or interchange with all others who share the category membership.

Over the last twenty years, a burgeoning body of research, known as social identity theory, has come to stress the importance of organizational identification (OI) in developing explanations of individual behavior in business and bureaucratic organizations (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Cheney, 1983; Dutton et al, 1994; Elsbach, 1999; van Dick, 2001). Because of the tendency to view soldiers as ideologically motivated, whether by patriotism in the case of state militaries, or by shared grievance in the case of insurgents, little effort has been made to apply these organizational theories to the study of participation in entities organized for the purpose of war. In fact, OI has simply been assumed to be operative as a constant in the military, while efforts are made to replicate it in civilian life (Akerlof and Kranton, 2005). However, OI cannot simply be assumed to exist in armed organizations. As I will show, variation in the salience of particular identifications offers a simple yet powerful explanation of variation in cohesion.

OI can be summarized as the extent to which the organization's goals and values are integrated as the individual's own (Hall et al, 1970). Edwards (2005) puts it as follows:

Deep... [OI] is where the individual has created such a link with the organization that an enduring cognitive schema exists whereby the employment relationship has in some way altered the mental model that the individual has of him or herself. The organizational identity has, in effect, been incorporated into the self-concept. In short, the organization becomes part of the individual's self-concept.<sup>6</sup>

In this approach, the organization is assumed to have an identity – or an organizational culture – whatever it may be (Haslam et al, 2003). What we are interested in is the extent to which the organization's identity and the individual's identity intersect. In particular, we are interested in the extent to which the organization's identity is adopted as the individual's own over time. As noted above, individuals are assumed to have several identities (Gould, 1995). Thus, we are interested in the difference between the closeness of the individual's identity to the organization's identity relative to the next best alternative identity; or in other words, the salience of the organizational identity to the individual's self-concept. The individual will produce higher levels of effort the closer her identification with the organization rather than to another identification.

However, this does not get us all of the way to an explanation of cohesion. Recall that *cohesion* is the outcome of every individual's level of effort. In an organization, individuals are rarely just concerned with the effort they expend themselves. For a few individuals, the level of effort contributed will not be dependent on the level of effort contributed by others (Forsyth, 1988; Gamson, 1975). Even for Shils and Janowitz (1948: 286), it was the presence of a "hard core," constituting approximately ten to fifteen percent of enlisted men, who were "imbued

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<sup>6</sup> OI is distinct from solidarity. The latter refers to interpersonal bonds based on social interactions, while the former refers more to an intellectual and affective attachment to the organization itself. It is important also to distinguish OI from the related concept of organizational commitment (OC) (Haslam et al, 2003). OC is a broader term that incorporates not only OI but also the behavioral manifestations of commitment such as loyalty, public defense of the organization, etc. OC, in other words, includes *cohesion*.

with the ideology of *Gemeinschaft* that explained cohesion in the *Wehrmacht*. For most other individuals, the level of effort that they contribute is dependent on the level of effort contributed by others and on the extent to which the prevailing organizational culture reifies the collectivity of the organization. It is worth repeating Gamson's (1975: 58-59) defense of the identification-based model of collective action:

The psychological processes involved in this pleasure are centered on identification and the investment of part of oneself in collective actors. To reap the rewards of such identification requires commitment... [S]ince I refer to a form of private personal satisfaction over and above any collective benefits produced by the group. In this sense, it is still a kind of selective incentive, but not one that is mediated by the group as a sanction. It is not useful to treat it as simply another form of inducement in the same category as a private good or service that the group provides to its members. Rather, it is an alternative, internalized means of overcoming the free-rider problem.

If the extent of OI is pivotal in producing organizational cohesion as I have argued, we need to delve further into how OI develops. Identification is an inherently collective concept. It points to the limitations of a solely methodological individualist approach. Gutiérrez Sanín (2008: 5) partly addresses this question. He claims "that the key to understanding different behaviors is the set of organizational devices that structure and organize the quotidian life of the fighters, and transform them in a given sense." Armed organizations differ in the extent to which they control the lives of their members. It is little wonder that the most cohesive armed organizations control almost all aspects of the lives of their members, from whom they can marry (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2008) to how they must cut their hair (Holmes, 1985). While discipline is critical to the fostering of this identity, it is important to distinguish this process from discipline as a component of the cost-benefit calculations of individuals. For example, many retired Marines will continue to maintain the self-discipline that they learned during their service; while sanctions no longer hang over the failure to fold one's clothes correctly, or to maintain one's sidearm, these habits become self-sustaining. Thus, training – particularly drilling – is key in the formation of identity (Holmes, 1985). The repetition, often to the point of boredom or injury, is designed not only to foster an instinctual reaction in soldiers when battle eventually comes, but also to inculcate in soldiers the absolute necessity to follow orders, however mundane or menial (Fritz, 1995: ch. 2). Armed organizations will differ considerably in their capacity to rigorously train and drill their soldiers. The expectation would be that state armies have more resources and more peacetime security with which to accomplish this task. In general, this is probably true. However, non-state armies have devised a number of ways to get around this disadvantage in resources.

As Todd (2004) argues, events are critical in the formation and change of identity salience. Thus, the recruitment process and the initiation stage can have a highly significant impact on identity formation. Recruitment to non-state armies typically involves a total break with the past. In the FARC, the whole social life of the soldier takes place within the bounds of the organization. On joining, the soldier pledges her life. Sexual partners are frequently found within the organization, and when female recruits have babies, they may be removed from the mother (Gutiérrez-Sanin, 2008). A *normal* family life is not possible. In the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, child soldiers are often forced to participate in ritual killings of innocent civilians or other children (Singer, 2006). Recruits are told that this act, along with mutilation of their victims and ritualistic cannibalism, will give them special powers. The result is to dehumanize both the soldier and the victim, making

the possibility of reintegration into one's former life difficult, if not impossible. In non-state armed organizations, therefore, social control, ritual, and spiritualism often substitute for the rigor of drill and order.

Identity per se is not the final word. There must be an ideological basis or founding myth for this identity. This is a theme equally prevalent in both state and non-state armed organizations, though the rallying call typically differs. As many authors have observed, organizational cultures can be directed for positive or negative purposes. Greenpeace, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International all have organizational cultures quite different to those of armed organizations. But armed organizations themselves can have organizational cultures and related identities that differ considerably, from the racist National Socialist ideology of the *Wehrmacht* to the liberation theology of Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador. Some identities may be more persuasive and more effective from the standpoint of cohesion. To explore this issue fully, a more comprehensive review of the varieties of armed organizational identities than is possible here would be required.

Bringing the above elements together, a number of predictions thus arise. All other things equal, the greater extent to which an individual's identity fits with the organization's rather than with another identity, the closer the individual will be to contributing the ideal level of effort. Identity is difficult to observe directly. Thus, we have to test a number of related predictions. (1) Because higher levels of OI should be associated with organizations that have long standing memberships, we expect that these organizations will be more cohesive. (2) Because higher levels of OI should also be associated with organizations that have more intensive training regimes and more encompassing behavioral rituals, we expect that these organizations will be more cohesive. As noted earlier, individuals possess multiple identities. This leads to a third prediction: (3) Armed organizations should be more cohesive when the organizational identity maps on to or exploits a salient pre-existing identity. The relative importance that the individual attaches to identity and purposive goals will vary. The more important are pre-existing purposive goals, then the more precarious is cohesion. When this is the case, the individual evaluates the organization's probability of success relative to external options, and she will choose the most expedient one. When OI becomes more salient, a change in the organization's probability of success does not directly alter the level of effort that the individual is prepared to expend. Thus, a fourth prediction is as follows: (4) If purposive goals are more important, we would expect that there would be multiple organizations, characterized by frequent organizational splits, dedicated to the same or similar goal(s). In this case we would expect to observe rhetoric in which the cause features predominantly over the interests of the organization as such (e.g. the Palestinian cause rather than the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) or Fatah). Finally, (5) we would not expect to observe a linear relationship between high unit cohesion and high organizational cohesion; rather, this relationship will be contingent on the prevailing organizational culture.

In the rest of this section, I evaluate these predictions with respect to three prominent cases in the literature: the *Wehrmacht* (1943-1945), which is held to be a model of perfect cohesion (Type 1 dominant); the U.S. Army in Vietnam (1968-1971), in which discohesive behavior was rampant (Type 2 dominant); and the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which split into its Provisional and Official wings in 1970 (Type 3 dominant), but remained cohesive in 1986, when a similar crisis occurred (Type 1 dominant).

### *The Wehrmacht (1943-1945)*

The most prominently cited example of preeminent organizational cohesion is the German *Wehrmacht*, which is widely asserted to have retained remarkable levels of performance and commitment even as the Third Reich was in its death throes in 1944. Two prominent theories have been put forward to explain this apparently extraordinary behavior: (1) small unit solidarity, and (2) discipline.

In the seminal work on military cohesion, Shils and Janowitz (1948) put forward that the cohesion of the *Wehrmacht* was due to high levels of small unit solidarity. As they conclude (p. 281):

...the unity of the German Army was in fact sustained only to a very slight extent by the National Socialist political convictions of its members, and that more important in the motivation of the determined resistance of the German soldier was the steady satisfaction of certain *primary* personality demands afforded by the social organization of the army.

It is argued that Prussian military tradition had long stressed the importance of developing internally homogenous fighting units that trained and fought together, which would have strong internal bonds (Craig, 1955); these traditions were upheld and reinforced in the *Wehrmacht* (Bartov, 1992). This thesis has been remarkably persuasive and still remains the starting point for any discussion of military cohesion. However, there are a number of objections. First, even a cursory reading of the abundant memoirs of frontline soldiers seems to redound the universality of the *band of brothers* experience in war; regardless of how soldiers feel about the military or the political objectives of their superiors, the bonds of loyalty between frontline soldiers seem to be all but universal. Thus, this would not seem to explain the variation in organizational cohesion that we observe across militaries. Second, and more specific to the *Wehrmacht* case, on the basis of extensive archival research, Rush (1999, 2001) and Bartov (1992: ch. 2) have shown that primary unit cohesion in the *Wehrmacht* was in fact very weak by the second half of 1944. Successive military defeats, which resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of men and the abandonment of the traditional replacement policy (Bartov, 1992) simply undermines the case that there was something unique about unit solidarity in the *Wehrmacht*. By extension, Martin van Creveld's (1983) proposition that the logistical and organizational structure of the *Wehrmacht* that kept these units fitted out was responsible for its performance is also defective. Hitler's now known preference for creating new divisions over refitting old ones, and the ad hoc way in which divisions were assembled in the last year of the war as communications broke down undermines the strength of this hypothesis (Rush, 1999).

What then explains the tenacity with which the *Wehrmacht* defended the West Wall as the Americans approached, or fought so fiercely as the Red Army forced its retreat from Soviet territory? Rush (1999, 2001) argues that it was the draconian discipline meted out by superiors against anyone suspected of desertion or *Wehrkraftzersetzung* (undermining the fighting spirit of the men) (see also Fritz, 1995: 89-98). "Squads were ordered to the front lines by pistol-waving officers, and officers followed attacks to ensure that there was no turning back" (Rush, 1999: 498). Deserters who were found would be shot and their families arrested. German military courts executed some 13,000-15,000 soldiers during the war for desertion or dishonorable behavior (Bartov, 1992: 96). Rush (1999: 500) thus concludes that,

"organized terror from above kept many soldiers in line, not an identification with their primary group, love of cause, nor respect for their officers."

Rush's (1999, 2001) argument is persuasive, but I suggest that it does not tell the whole story. Certainly, what appears to be cohesive behavior in retrospect was in part the result of the most strenuous coercion. What Rush plays down is the enormously important role of organizational culture in making this coercion possible. As Fritz (1995: 90) notes, "military standards came to reflect those of civilian society, as for historical reasons Hitler aimed at creating a tight-knit *Volksgemeinschaft*, both civilian and military, which would do his bidding without cracking under the pressure of war." In other words, the *Wehrmacht* did not exist in a social vacuum; far from it. With approximately twenty million German men fighting for the *Wehrmacht* during the war, the values of the organization and society were mutually constitutive. Bartov (1992: 6) argues that the "group" we should be concerned with is not the primary unit of Shils and Janowitz (1948), but "is in some respects the precise opposite of the one presented in the original theory, for it is very much the product not merely of social ties, but of ideological internalization, whereby humanity is divided into opposing groups of 'us' and 'them'." Organizational socialization does not occur in a vacuum. That soldiers in the *Wehrmacht* could commit the heinous crimes they did in the East "reflected the moral values these young men had internalized before their recruitment" (Bartov, 1992: 7).

Moreover, I want to reiterate the difference between authority and power, as it is particularly relevant in this case. Authority demands obedience; it is distinct from the power to coerce (Arendt, 1977). A single officer cannot prevent a mutiny; if all of the officer's men decide to mutiny and desert, nothing can be done. For coercion to be effective there must be an organizational culture that tolerates, even encourages it; this was clearly the case in the *Wehrmacht*. More generally, individuals within the organization must come to incorporate the organization's identity or culture as their own. Bartov (1992, 1996) and Wette (2006) have shown the depths to which Nazi ideology penetrated the *Wehrmacht*. Even the substantial number of generals, including Erwin Rommel, who participated in the plot, known as *Operation Valküre*, to kill Hitler in 1944, were motivated largely by strategic and practical concerns rather than a fundamental disagreement with the principals of National Socialism (Toland, 1976: ch. 28). Ultimately, even Shils and Janowitz (1948: 286) are forced to return to ideology; "The presence of a few such men in the group, zealous, energetic, and unsparing of themselves, provided models for the weaker men, and facilitated the process of identification" For discipline to be an effective enforcer of cohesion in a mass army, its cadres must recognize the source of this discipline as legitimate, even if they do not particularly like it.

The *Wehrmacht* was an organization with a long and distinguished history. It had fought with honor and success from the Prussian wars of unification and the victory over France in 1918, right up until its defeat in the First World War. The *Reichswehr* (1919-1935) upheld this military tradition (Wette, 2003), until Hitler openly disobeyed the military restrictions of Versailles and created the *Wehrmacht*. The anti-Semitic ideology of the *Wehrmacht* was not a creation of Hitler's but an exploitation of pre-existing sentiment (Wette, 2003). This longstanding organizational culture, both honorable on the one hand, but troublingly racist on the other, supports the first prediction. The *Wehrmacht* was also known for its stringent training regimen, which even in the moments of severe manpower shortage, did not drop below twelve weeks (Holmes, 1985). This supports the second prediction regarding OI. The third prediction, that organizational identification will tend to be

strongest when the organization's identity maps onto a strong pre-existing social identity, is also strongly supported. It is not possible to test the fourth prediction in this case. Finally, the prediction that small unit solidarity will tend to enhance cohesion when supported by organizational culture is also supported.

### *The U.S. Army in Vietnam (1971-1975)*

As noted above, disintegration refers to members engaging in deliberately subversive activities that weaken the unity of the organization. Short of leaving the organization, these activities include killing or fighting with colleagues or superiors, or the staging of a mutiny. This undoubtedly describes the behavior of the US Army in Vietnam, particularly after the *Tet* Offensive of 1968. The widespread use of narcotics by soldiers, the deliberate avoidance of the enemy, open refusal to fight, and the assassination of senior offices are further evidence of this disintegration (Cortwright, 1977; Gabriel and Savage, 1979; Stanton, 1985). Countless volumes have been written on the U.S. failure in Vietnam. Many of these have explored the strategic paradox that lay at the heart of U.S. military policy (Bergerud, 1993; Summers, 1982). While there is an undisputed necessity to consider this strategic framework in explaining the dynamics of the war, here I am interested in evaluating the theses put forward that focus on the internal disintegration of the U.S. Army.

We can begin with the unit solidarity thesis. Gabriel and Savage (1979) take up the logic outlined by Shils and Janowitz (1948) to argue that the U.S. Army in Vietnam collapsed from within because it lacked the kind of cohesive primary units that were believed to typify the *Wehrmacht*. They point to a number of processes which undermined primary unit cohesion. First, the U.S. adopted a man-for-man replacement policy. This meant that units were continually refitted at the front, while they did not have the time to build up strong group bonds. Second, there was the lack of respect for officers, which stemmed from the perception that officers did not share the burden of risk or sacrifice. The problem with the unit solidarity thesis is that in many cases, unit solidarity was very high; however, rather than this producing cooperative effort towards organizational objectives, whole units refused to carry out orders (Stanton, 1985: 349). Moser (1996: 62) describes the process:

Since soldiers were already organized into work or fighting units, dissident sentiments coalesced on the level of platoon, squad, or "buddy group." The organization for antiwar resistance was often a transformed version of the original military unit.

The small buddy groups were centers of personal loyalty, mutual protection and survival... The Vietnam War and the cultural explosions of the 1960s transformed some of these buddy groups into conduits for war resistance and for the expression of alternative culture and politics.

Moser (1996: 67) continues, regardless of whether the basis of the subgroup in question was racial or political,

...it certainly appears that by 1968 the dynamics of group solidarity and behavior were as likely as to transmit political dissent as military discipline... The power of these groups to promote dissent cannot be overstated; they were the day-to-day organizations of the soldier resistance in Vietnam.

A higher-level explanation looks at the enormous logistical and informational difficulties faced by the U.S. army in operating in enemy territory. As Stanton (1985) documents, rather than operating with one hand tied behind its back, the U.S. Army

was being stretched to its limit. For sure, but many armies have had to operate in alien lands, and have managed to remain internally cohesive (Keegan, 1976), including the U.S. Army (Linderman, 1997).

The U.S. Army experience in Vietnam provides a useful comparison with the *Wehrmacht* on the point of discipline. Allison (2006) documents the pervasiveness of the U.S. military justice system in Vietnam. 252 cases of insubordination, mutiny, and willful disobedience were brought to military courts in 1968, and 382 in 1970. However, while punishments (including execution) were dealt out in the *Wehrmacht* with brutal efficiency, in the U.S. Army, the application of military justice was highly inconsistent (Cortwright, 1977: 36). On the one hand, many acts of insubordination went unpunished, as officers in effect “negotiated” with their men in the implementation of orders (Cortwright, 1977: ch. 2). On the other hand, the Army imprisoned hundreds of American soldiers in appalling conditions for acts of defiance (Moser, 1995). The effect of this harsh treatment was to intensify disintegration rather than to mitigate it. The prisons became a major source of disaffection with the war. Discipline, whether implemented softly or handed down brutally did not enhance cohesion in the U.S. Army in Vietnam.

Why this disparity in outcome? PSS scholars have tended to focus on the motivations of soldiers (Moser, 1996). It is argued that the average recruit did not much care about the purported goals of the U.S. in Vietnam. Contrary to U.S. involvement in Europe in World War II or the Pacific War, Americans did not perceive the Vietnamese as enemies in the same sense. In part this was a result of the highly confused rationales that the administration put forward for the intervention (Kahin, 1986). As America’s true enemy was believed to be China, it was difficult to justify the perpetration of a war against a nation that also perceived itself to be an enemy of China. Simply put, soldiers did not know what they were fighting for. A related body of literature locates the disintegration of the U.S. Army within the broader social context of the radical social movements of 1960s America. In this sense, an ideology of non-conformity and resistance to the State is put forward as an explanation. Soldiers were said to have brought American values such as individual liberty and democracy with them into the military (Moser, 1996). However, there are a number of problems with this argument. U.S. forces have been involved in many overseas conflicts in which the political objectives did not seem to align with military strategy or deeper held democratic values, with no perceptible impact on cohesion (Miller, 1984). Second, it seems that many soldiers did in fact begin the war full of enthusiasm for the fight against the Communists (Edelman, 1988). The explanation, I will argue, lies in an inherent contradiction in the U.S. military personnel policy during the Vietnam War.

The difference between the intervention in Vietnam and successful interventions elsewhere, I argue, is in the character of the Army. The U.S. utilized the draft during the Vietnam War, yet failed to make the necessary preparation by moving the nation as a whole to a war footing. Thus, neither as a mass army of patriots dedicated to a cause, nor as a dedicated, professional volunteer army, the U.S. Army in Vietnam was plagued by an inherent contradiction. Unlike the anti-Bolshevik, anti-Semitic, anti-Slavic ideology drummed into every *Landser* (foot soldier in the *Wehrmacht*), which echoed National Socialist ideology more generally, the U.S. Army was unable to forge a coherent identity around a particular ideology. Democracy and liberty were the core American values that soldiers were told they were fighting for, yet on the ground, military strategy demanded actions that directly undermined these values.



Instead, other identities became far more salient for many of the men sent to Vietnam. One prominent example is black culture (Moser, 1996: 65-66):

African American culture within the military was represented by the brothers, or "bloods." The brothers were organized around distinctive African American qualities that distinguished them from other soldiers... With the brothers an African American army began to emerge. The brothers promoted war resistance through a racial analysis of war and society... An identity based on the [alternative] "sense of nationhood" was essential to the brothers. This sense of identity went beyond fellow African Americans to include the Vietnamese.

There was a problem of identity salience. In some instances, black soldiers expressed a greater identification with the North Vietnamese whom they were fighting, than with their fellow white countrymen. While Brewer (1999) notes that it is not necessary to view the *other* as an enemy (see Schmitt, 2007), it is necessary to view the relevant self-identity in a positive way; failing that, individuals seek an alternative identity that they favor.

The Vietnam case supports the prediction that organizations with longstanding memberships will be more cohesive. Because tours were short for fighting troops, and even shorter for officers, there was a relatively weak process of identification. However, training undergone by U.S. recruits before deployment to Vietnam was tough. We would thus expect higher organizational cohesion that we observe. However, the third prediction, that OI will be stronger when it overlaps with an existing identity, is strongly supported. The U.S. Army failed to instill a unifying organizational ideology in its recruits. This indicates that the ideological basis of the organization's identity is fundamental in maintaining cohesion, more so than training per se. Once again, the thesis regarding organizational versus personal goals cannot be tested with this case. Finally, the Vietnam case clearly supports the prediction that high unit solidarity can foster either organizational cohesion or disintegration depending on the prevailing organizational culture.

### ***The IRA (1970-1986)***

The IRA is one of the most extensively studied armed organizations in the world (e.g. Alonso, 2007; Bell, 1989, 2000; Bishop and Mallie, 1988; Coogan, 1987; English, 2003; Harnden, 1999; Moloney, 2002; Taylor, 1997; Toolis, 1995; White, 1988, 1992).<sup>7</sup> Most of the emphasis has been on the period 1969-2007, commonly known as *the Troubles*, during which time, over 3,600 people lost their lives (Bean, 2008); however, it should be remembered that the IRA, or *Óglaigh na hÉireann* (Volunteers of Ireland) was established as far back as November 1913, and even then was part of a centuries-long tradition of resistance to English settlement and rule over the island (Kee, 1972). Like many non-state armed organizations, the IRA has been plagued by internal factionalism; the most prominent split was the one of 1970 that resulted in the creation of the Provisional and Official wings of the IRA. That said the IRA managed to fight the superior British security forces to a stalemate in a low intensity conflict lasting almost thirty years. This relative cohesion since 1970 is pretty remarkable given the materially unequal nature of the conflict.

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<sup>7</sup> A full bibliography on the IRA can be found at the CAIN Web Service (<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/>)

Over the course of late December 1969 and early January 1970, the IRA split into the Provisional IRA and the Official IRA. The main explanation for the split is the internal dispute within the organization over the proposed abandonment of abstentionism – the policy that Sinn Féin-IRA candidates did not recognize the partition governments of Dublin and Stormont and would thus not take up seats in those parliaments (Coogan, 1987). Over the course of the 1960s, the IRA's leadership, Cathal Goulding and Tomas MacGiolla, had taken an ideological turn to the left. Goulding and MacGiolla proposed a winding down of the armed struggle, which had long been the core principle of Republican ideology (Bean, 2008), and advocated an all-Ireland strategy of socialist agitation. These tactics did not resonate with the rank-and-file of the organization. Indeed, scattered IRA attacks occurred throughout the 1960s, most of these on property, despite instructions against this activity from the leadership (Feeney, 2002: 241). The words of one IRA man express the dissent in the organization over the lack of action: "The traditional role of republicans [i.e. the IRA] at that time would have been defensive and I believe they should have carried it out. I would have disagreed with our organization's point of view."<sup>8</sup>

As late as 1969, the IRA had as few as sixty members.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the much-analyzed split of 1970 was more a battle among traditional Republicans for control of the potential new recruits among a Catholic community under siege. By the late 1960s many thousands of Catholics were marching for their civil rights, only to be met by a violent response from Protestants; amid the violence, almost 1,600 Catholic families were forced to flee their homes, making it the largest forced migration in Europe since World War II (Maloney, 2003). By 1970, Catholics in Northern Ireland had come to demand protection, resulting in the erection of barricades in Belfast and the creation of Citizens Defence Committees (CDCs) (Feeney, 2002). The locus of the violence was primarily in Belfast. Eventually, it was Belfast men in the IRA with a traditionalist philosophy, such as Leo Martin, Joe Cahill, Billy McKee, Seamus Twomey and Gerry Adams, who would all later become prominent in the Provisional IRA, that came to join and dominate the CDCs.

Republican ideology rested on armed struggle as a core principle. Given that there was now an exogenous demand for armed protection, either the IRA would provide it, or another organization would take its place. There was little perceptible ideological difference between rank-and-file who had stayed loyal to the 'Stickies' and those who joined the Provos in early 1970. In fact, many of those who stayed with the Officials were sympathetic to the Provisionals and loaned weapons to them for some operations.<sup>10</sup> However, the early Provos quickly recognized that whichever organization came to defend Catholics in Belfast would then be able to claim the mantle as the champion of Republicanism. It soon became clear that the Provisional IRA was the only organization prepared to act in a military sense.

It thus seems very plausible that the 1970 split was a result of the conflict over the ideological dispute surrounding the use of armed struggle. However, this logic fails to explain the subsequent cohesion of the PIRA as the leadership phased out armed struggle from the early 1980s. Indeed, in 1986, the PIRA voted to abandon abstentionism. While the average PIRA member's goals had not changed, the organization's had. It thus seems impossible to explain the choice between loyalty and exit in terms of the fulfillment of purposive goals alone.

<sup>8</sup> Francie Molloy, quoted in Taylor (2001: 43)

<sup>9</sup> Interview with anonymous IRA Volunteer, Derry, July 2007

<sup>10</sup> Interview with anonymous IRA Volunteer, Derry, July 2007

One explanation for the relative cohesion of the organization in the 1980s was the rigid discipline introduced by the Adams-McGuinness Northern leadership. One former volunteer told of how he was ordered to keep a dissident quiet in the lead up to the all important internal conference on absentionism in 1986:

[Adams's men] were telling me if I knew [volunteer X] to tell him to remove his name from the list of nominations to Ard Comhairle. And that was, to quote Mr. Adams, "an army order." I was manipulated then. Maybe because I was naïve. I was used by this present leadership to remove anyone they deemed as a threat to where they've ended up today. I wont ever forget that about that '86 split.<sup>11</sup>

About forty or fifty people walked out of the Ard Fheis and were led by Ruairí O'Bradaigh to form Republican Sinn Féin (RSF), yet the IRA itself did not split and the majority of Sinn Féin members stayed with the Adams-McGuinness leadership. However, the discipline hypothesis runs into difficulty. The IRA never prevented its members from leaving the organization, nor did it punish them for doing so. While the rank-and-file at that time were still committed to preserving the armed struggle, it was prepared to go along with the inherently contradictory "Armalite and ballot paper" strategy articulated by Danny Morrison. Thus, while discipline may explain why some dissenters were pushed out of the organization, it does not explain why the vast majority of volunteers remained loyal.

Political conflict in Ireland is unintelligible but for an appreciation of the multiple overlapping identities at its core (Ruane and Todd, 1996). One identity that is often neglected, however, is organizational identity. With a membership of only fifty or so by the late 1960s, although the organization had existed for over fifty years, there was little organizational identity to speak of (Taylor, 1997). Thus, the split of 1970 is entirely consistent with the first prediction. Moreover, because the IRA was virtually defunct by 1970, and because new recruits did not undergo any kind of serious training or indoctrination in the early days, the split of 1970 is also consistent with the second prediction. In contrast, because of the intensification of the conflict over the course of the 1970s and early 1980s, in which many comrades died (including those who died on hunger strike), in which family and friends were harassed, and volunteers were forced underground, on the run, and away from their old lives, membership of the PIRA became self-reinforcing over time. This is strongly supportive of the first and second predictions, that longstanding membership and traumatic events tend to reinforce organizational identity, and hence, cohesion. Having emerged as the defender of Northern Catholics in the early 1970s, the PIRA regained its mantle as the crucible of the Republican ideal of armed struggle. Thus, to continue to profess a Republican identity meant to support the IRA. This tends to support the third prediction, that OI should be stronger when it maps onto a pre-existing identity. Regarding the fourth prediction, if purposive goals are more important, we would expect that there would be multiple organizations, characterized by frequent organizational splits, dedicated to the same or similar goal(s). In the early days, leaders of the armed resistance tended to speak of Republican ideals in general; many people were simply unaware of the existence of the IRA. However, by the 1980s, IRA and its political wing, Sinn Féin, were familiar to all Republicans. The rhetoric had changed to loyalty to the representation of Republicanism, the IRA. It is not possible to assess the unit solidarity thesis directly with the IRA case. However, the evidence does seem to be consistent with the prediction outlined above. That is,

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with anonymous IRA Volunteer, Derry, July 2007

the relative lack of unit cohesion because of frequent arrests and the need to operate clandestinely, always made organizational cohesion more difficult in the IRA. Thus, that the IRA was continually plagued by informants (Collins, 1996) seems to support the view that small unit cohesion is necessary to attain the highest levels of cohesion. When this is not present, the full commitment of every *individual* – more difficult to produce – is required.

**Table 2: Cohesion & Disintegration**

	Type 1 <i>Wehrmacht</i> (1944)	Type 2 U.S. Army, Vietnam (1971)	Type 3 The IRA (1970)	Type 1 The IRA (1986)
Material incentives	No	No	No	No
Purposive goals	No	Yes	Yes	No
Solidarity	No	No	No	No
Command & control	No	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Identity</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

## CONCLUSION

The greater extent to which the individual defines her identity as that of a member of the armed organization, the greater will be cohesion. Organizational identification is a product of processes like initiation rites, training and indoctrination. OI may increase over time, but the relationship is not linear. Clearly, more work remains to be done on how the identities of members of armed organizations evolve over time, and how formative events contribute to the development of organizational identification. What this model does is to propose OI as the missing component of the individual's decision to continue to participate in an armed organization and to contribute the ideal level of effort. The combination of selective incentives and purposive goals is not sufficient to explain the continued contribution of effort to produce cohesive armed organizations. While coercive discipline serves to distinguish armed organizations from many others, it serves to strengthen cohesion only when considered as part of a normative organizational structure. Without cadres that feel a strong sense of identification for the armed organization, cohesion will tend to be fleeting, and highly dependent on the selective incentives offered by the organization and the immediate purposive goals to which it is oriented. Add identity, however, and armed organizations can remain effective over long periods of time, despite changing organizational goals, and often-weak selective incentives. It is a straightforward conclusion with a great deal of power. Further research along these lines could investigate the causal mechanism between types of organizational identity and the varied patterns of violence produced by armed organizations.

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