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**SOLIDARITY MODELS: A SOCIOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK
FOR COMPARATIVE CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION**

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A SOCIOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARATIVE CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION

ABSTRACT

Criminal organization, which is a kind of secret society, is a form of complex organization. The present inquiry offers to describe the expected differential impact of solidarity models on two important dimensions of criminal organization: internal control and symbiotic participation.

Three major solidarity models have been identified as kinship (the Lupollo Family), sworn brotherhood (Chinese secret societies), and fictive kinship (Yamaguchi Gumi). This paper attempts to demonstrate that the fictive kinship model is not in the mid-way along a continuum of system rigidity and its associated characteristics, with kinship model at one end and brotherhood at the other.

INTRODUCTION

Criminal organization is one type of complex organizations which possesses a formal structure. While there are voluminous studies on complex organizations, few are on criminal organizations, and even fewer are on the rationality of criminal groups. Of the numbered studies on illegitimate bodies, Cressey's (1972) Criminal Organization stands out as an inspiring source for constructing a perspective. To Cressey, a near-group or violent gang as defined by Yablonsky (1962: 200f.) cannot be taken as a criminal organization. A criminal organization must possess in its organizational structure at least a position known as, or equivalent to, a Task Force Guide. An organization is said to be proportionally and increasingly rational if it has also in its structure the additional position, actual or symbolic, of Tactician and Guide, Strategic Planner, Corruptee/Corruptor, Corruptee/Corruptor/Enforcer, and Commissioner. These positions are structured unidimensionally upward and thus the rationality of a criminal organization can be reflected from the kind of positions within the structure.

Criminal organization is conceptually not on the same level of abstraction as organized crime, although both are sometimes used interchangeably in crime literature. Organized crime primarily refers to the incident or behavior that involves the co-operation, or conspiracy of several different persons or groups for its successful execution of illegal activities to gain power and influence (Kelly, 1986:10-3). Organized crime is thus "an illegal act which is judged to be plotted and performed organizationally in the light of its process and other evidence." (Hoshino, 1971: 3).

On the other hand, a criminal organization may be seen as "an organization of individuals who produces and supplies goods and/or services that are defined illegal." (Ianni, 1975: 15)

The two definitions represent only a sample of definitions regarding each concept (see, for example, Kelly, 1986: 10f.). But in whatsoever way organized crime or criminal organization is defined, and despite the fact that such crime is committed in a collective manner, it is a social, rather than a legal category (Cressey, 1969: 199). In other words, organized crime, or criminal organization, is a social reality that can be interpreted in its own right without having any legal reference. Hence, the framework to be presented here is solely a sociological one.

All criminal organizations are clandestine in nature. Indeed, criminal organizations are only one of the many kinds of secret organizations. By target of victimization or attainment of culturally prescribed goals, we have secret organizations that are ritualist, retreatist, revolutionary, conformist, and criminal in essence. Ritualist groups are set up to stamp out subversive elements, and the retreatists try to keep their members secluded from the society. While revolutionary secret organizations are formed to overthrow the establishment, the conformist secret groups are oriented to attack the undesirable elements in the society at large. A criminal organization, in our perspective, is a secret society that aims at accumulating economic wealth, and hence has as its target, any civilian who could be made obligated to realize the organization's goal.

All these five categories of organizations share in common certain characteristics which may be found in the following definition of secret society: "a group which has a set of well-defined norms, secret rituals and an oath that are intended subjectively to bind the members to secrecy

regarding the group's affairs." (Mak, 1981: 8). Thus, any collectivity that is organized around the principle of protecting the secrecy of the group may be conceived as a secret society.

Secret organization can be analyzed at three levels. At the macro-level, it is treated as a social phenomenon; at the meso-level, as a category of secret groups such as the criminal organizations; and at the lowest or micro-level of analysis the focus is on a particular individual unit within the categoric organization. The study of Yamaguchi Gumi, for instance, falls into this level of analysis. Despite the analytically distinguishable levels of abstraction, there are problems commonly and readily related to each and all of the three levels. Problems related to organizational structure, functions, prerequisites for emergence and persistence are good examples. Our present study on the solidarity models is yet another such cross-cutting problem.

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY MODELS

Criminal organization, like any secret group, consists of members who are bonded to one another by some kind of ties, which are constantly reinforced through rituals and ceremonies. Cutting through all the criminal organizations are three dimensions of social relationship: that between the leaders and the followers, that among the followers, and that among the leaders.

Weber (1947:56-77, 328ff) identified three pure types of legitimate authority: the traditional, the charismatic, and the legal-rational. Traditional leaders, or bearers of the traditional authority, are those who achieved their leadership through the legitimacy of their status such as seniority in the social system. While charismatic leadership is

characterized by the leader's self-claimed or other-perceived divine quality that the leader possesses, legal-rational leadership is essentially based upon institutional appointment.

After a survey on a number of criminal organizations (e.g. Ianni, 1972; Catanzaro, 1985; Mak, 1981; Kelly, 1986; Hoshino, 1971; DeVos, 1984), three major types of solidarity base can be identified. These three bases seem to form a continuum from one end where the leader-member relationship is very close, to the other where such relationship is relatively distant. At one extreme is the kinship model, exemplified by the Italian and the American mafias. At the other end is the sworn brotherhood model, which is adopted by the Triad Society in China, and all the contemporary Chinese secret societies in Singapore, Malaysia and American Chinatowns.

In between the two solidarity models are a number of variants, of which the most interesting and prominent one is the so-called fictive-kinship system practised by some formidable Japanese criminal organizations. Other variants include the associational model practised by the Black Mafia (Ianni, 1975), the tribe-based model found among the Mau Mau in Kenya (MacKenzie, 1967), and the dialect-group-based Kongs¹i in the 19th-century Straits Settlements (Wynne, 1941).

We shall now examine in detail the characteristics of each of the three basic solidarity bases and their likely impact on two theoretically meaningful aspects of the organization: symbiotic participation and internal control.

SYMBIOTIC PARTICIPATION AND THE THREE MODELS

Unlike some secret groups and outlawed collectivities which carry out their activities, socially and physically speaking, at the periphery of a

society, criminal organizations literally operate inside the society. Their members interact with the people in the society. One of the prerequisites for the survival of such types of secret groups and gangs, especially the criminal subcultural groups, has been identified to be some kind of convergence of values between the illegitimate groups and the legitimate society (e.g., Cloward and Ohlin, 1962: 161-86; Matza, 1964: 34ff; Catanzaro, 1985). Such value convergence exists not only at the cultural level, but is also translated into action. Some members of the illegitimate groups will thus have to act as the carrier of the values of both the underworld and the legitimate society.

These carriers, or more neutrally, double-role players, may be exemplified in part by the role of a corrupter with the duty to bribe, buy, negotiate and most of all, to establish relationship with the police, public officers and influentials (Cressey, 1972: 36-37). The functioning of the double-role players provides the affiliated group with some mechanism for reducing conflict between the illegitimate group and the society at large. Logically, the quality of the relationship between the illegitimate body and the society at large is contingent upon the quality of the double-role players. Such quality of the double-role players may be achieved quantitatively through the selection of members from a broader source, or through giving special training to members with such a supposed potential.

Because of the kin ties, a kinship-based organization is more willing to provide, even on a long-term basis, facilities and resources for training suitable family members to become well-qualified double-role players, or to fill the so-called specialist role in the 'family'. It is quite evident from the Lupollo Family (Ianni, 1972:113-125) that some prominent members were rather well educated. For example, Basil Alcamo,

the son of Phil Alcamo, was a certified public accountant. Charley Lupollo and Phil Alcamo were considered to be some kind of specialists among the third-generation family members. The former was active in city and state politics, while the latter had established good contacts in Washington, especially with regulatory agents such as judges, commissioners and congressmen.

The kin-based organization, on the other hand, suffers from a much restricted source of potential members. Its limited pool of talents to serve as leaders, and as double-role players, would have serious impact on the persistence of the organization. Ianni (1972: 192-4) has already signalled that members of the younger Lupollo Family members were increasingly disengaging themselves from the family business. Quite a number of the fourth-generation professionals, e.g., the sons of Joe and Charley who were doctors, accountants and lawyers, had not shown keen interest in the family business. This situation may be construed to mean that replacement of office-bearers in the upper hierarchical structure would pose a serious problem to the survival of the family.

At the other extreme is the sworn-brotherhood model which is also a common solidarity base for many criminal organizations such as the Triad in China, the tongs in American Chinatowns, most kongsis in the early Straits Settlements, and the Chinese criminal organizations in Singapore and Malaysia. Theoretically, it may be assumed that kinship ties should normally be stronger than sworn-brotherhood bond, and therefore would yield unreserved and unconditional loyalty from the double-role players. It is unfortunate that due to the lack of relevant data, the effectiveness and efficiency of the double-role players associating with both solidarity models are difficult to be compared directly.

Nevertheless, empirical findings do reveal some divergence in the process of becoming a double-role player in the two solidarity groups. In the case of the American Mafia organizations, double-role players are traditionally groomed for their role in the family or for their legitimate role as a professional or specialist. But those who are in the brotherhood-based societies achieved either of these roles or both through their own effort. A substantial number of the double-role players or headmen of the kongsi, led a legitimate official role such as Kapitan China, tingchu, kangchu, or excise farmer. So far, evidence seems to indicate that the double-rolers' legitimate leadership was associated with the influence of their key roles in the underworld (Yong, 1967).

Some very impressive examples are Zheng Jingui (Chung Kengkwee) of the Hai San Kongsi, Qiu Tiande (Khoo Thean Teik) of the Ghee Hin Kongsi in 19th-century Penang (Mak, 1987, forthcoming), and Chen Du-sheng (Tan Tock Seng) of the Ghee Hin Kongsi in 19th-century Singapore (Wynne, 1941; Wong, 1967).

Types of leadership also assume a differential process in attaining them. Unlike the kinship-based criminal organization where traditional leadership is institutionalized, in the fraternity-based criminal organization, the leaders tend to be charismatic. Charisma is a quality which does not require grooming, or need to be conferred upon by others. Charisma is personal and it is a self-driving force.

Again, because of the less restrictive nature of the fraternal solidarity base, the pool of talents from which potential leaders and double-role players are drawn would be much wider. As a consequence, by inference, the mechanism for reducing conflicts between the group and the

society at large should ensure some degree continuous and effective functioning.

INTERNAL CONTROL

Once members are admitted into the organization, internal control will exercise its share of the organizational responsibility and solidarity. Internal control is based on authority structure which is a very crucial component that regulates the flow of influence between the leaders and the followers. An organization's authority structure rests much upon its solidarity base which has considerable bearings on protecting the organization's secrecy. Closer ties between leaders and followers tend to minimize the risk of betrayal through leakage of the group's secret. It would not, therefore, be difficult to assume that kinship-based societies are more effective in protecting group secrecy and in providing stability to the organization.

Common to the many Cosa Nostra organizations is the high degree of organizational rationality, which is reflected in their four-level hierachical structure. The central family is the highest level with the most power and authority for decision making. The second level comprises of near and distant relatives who function as supervisory personnel. The third level consists of employees who hold mid- and lower-level positions. Those who form the fourth level are employees who have no knowledge of the illegal operations of the organization. The complexity is certainly efficient in secrecy protection, although not so in executing orders.

Group stability is vital for group survival, and instability is usually caused by persistent deviant behavior of dissatisfied members and by power conflict among members. In all probability, dissident members in

a kinship-based society are less likely to set up rival lodges, or to betray their natural family members, for blood is thicker than water.

Also, there is much too little chance for this type of organization to have mistakenly recruited a decoy drilling deep into their nerve. Even after the organization's dissolution due to external forces, the organization's old members at the first two levels of the hierarchy would not find much difficulty in staging a reunion, thanks to the kin ties.

Succession of leadership is universally an important source of internal conflict among eligible candidates. In kinship-based organizations, transfer of power and leadership always appears to be smooth. In reality, the process of power transition among consanguineous and affinal members seems to be tedious, unpredictable and most of all, painful for the persons involved. For example, there were at least three power networks in the Lupollo family (Ianni, 1972: 120-5), that of Joe's, Charley's and Phil's. The game of power struggle had gone on for quite a long while. Although "these networks of power alliances are visible within the family, ... they do not create enough static in the normal system of power flow to generate tension or dysfunction." (p.122) The main contributing factor to such a prolonged process is perhaps the unwillingness of the parties involved to be too ruthless to one's family members.

Yet another major concern about leadership is its quality. In kin-based groups, leadership quality may suffer from its ascriptive nature in selecting leaders. Traditional leaders are chosen not so much for their ability and capability as for being advanced in chronological age. Already in the Lupollo family (Ianni, 1972: 120) some senior members were displeased with the boss Joe Lupollo for his conservatism in managing the

family. When aging and conservatism go hand in hand, the quality of traditional leadership would become problematic toward the end of a reign.

Compared to the kin-based societies, the sworn-brotherhood criminal organizations are on the whole less stable in the leadership transition. Besides, they are more elaborate in their efforts in ensuring secrecy protection, and their process of power transition is usually manifest and fast.

Charismatic leadership succession almost by definition does not ensure long-term stability, for the transfer of leadership is often through open conflict. While biological seniority is objectively determined, charisma can be self-professed and self-claimed, which often results in intense internal power struggle.

To bind together members who are recruited from a source where loyalty cannot be presumed to be akin to the kinship framework, more ritualistic and ceremonial efforts would have to be made to ensure that secrecy is protected and internal stability preserved. Such practices begin with the recruitment of members. The screening of the recommended candidates of trusted incumbent members is widely practised by the modern Chinese secret societies in Singapore and Malaysia. To subject them to the brotherhood bondage, new recruits must go through some kind of initiation ceremony where the feeling of fraternity is first germinated.

Reinforcements of such brotherhood ties are important and numerous in the form of regular or occasional meetings and gatherings. In the case of the kongsis, the Qingming festival had been a regular gathering for members of such organizations, as implied in some inscriptions (Franke and Chen, 1985: 692-6). Meeting or receiving members from out-stations, and

encounters with members of a presumably rival organization, are ties reinforcement mechanism.

In keeping secrecy, positive as well as negative methods are adopted. The positive method is to provide the members with sign language, codes, and passwords. To bring deviant and defiant members back to the structural path, punishment in varied forms is used. To a considerable extent, loyalty in a brotherhood-based society is ensured through fear of punishment and actual punishment.

However, brotherhood criminal societies are endowed with a much broader base for membership recruitment, and the shortage of eligible members as well as leaders is hardly a problem to the survival such the groups. The worst risk that is associated with recruiting members from among non-kins is the admittance of undercovers.

THE FICTIVE KINSHIP MODEL

Between the two models there is one outstanding variant: the fictive kinship solidarity model. This type of ties rests neither on natural consanguineous/affinal bond nor sworn fraternity. It is a created kinship.

The fictive or ritual kinship as a social institution is not a product of the Japanese underworld. Known as oyabun-kobun institution, it is claimed to have been developed in the late feudal period around 1700, during which artisans, merchants, peddlers and some other occupational groups had organized their guilds along the lines of the system. It had also permeated into the upper class of the society. The system reached its peak toward the end of 19th century and continued to prevail even until the American Occupation period, when political movements and parties were also modelled after the oyabun-kobun system (Ishino, 1953).

While the system has become less prevalent in the legitimate society after the Occupation because of the rise of alternative organizational methods, it has found its way in the underworld. Despite the fact that the underworld fictive kinship system differs somewhat from the conventional oyabun-kobun pattern (Ishino, 1953), e.g., the exclusion of o-oyabun (the grandfather role) and the focus on shatei (younger brothers as the oyabun sees it) instead of ojibun (the uncle role as relative to the kobun), it however derives its legitimacy in the society's historically and customarily honored value patterns.

This historical sketch reaffirms the well-established finding on the convergence of value patterns, subterranean or otherwise, between the legitimate society and illegitimate groups.

The fictive kinship system is not adopted by all the Japanese underworld groups. It is however being practised by some of the bigger and more powerful criminal organizations in Japan, of which the Yamaguchi Gumi is one.

THE YAMAGUCHI GUMI: A FICTIVE KINSHIP MODEL

The world of organized criminals in Japan is made up of a multitude of unlawful organizations and it is dominated by professional criminals known as Yakuza, or more appropriately, boryokudan. These violent groups are mostly engaged in racketeering which comprises diversified forms of extortion of money, shady business, and physical violence through illegal use of group pressure to accomplish their ends. All these groups exhibit some distinctive organizational features such as formal structure, patterned behaviour, codes, value orientations and argot.

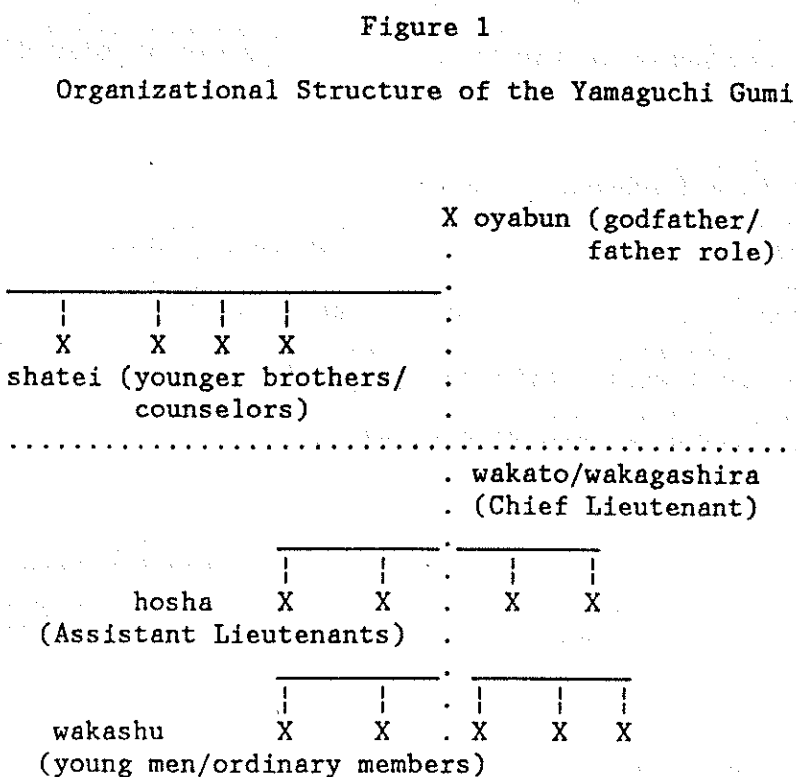
The boryokudan can be roughly divided into three main types. The Bakuto which was established towards the latter part of the Tokugawa period (1750-1867). They were engaged principally in gambling and bookmaking within their protected territory known as 'nawabari'. The Tekiya is a group of peddlars/shopkeepers who act as confidence men in cheating their customers. After World War II, they ventured into the black market, dealing with the distribution and sale of smuggled goods and the provision of erotic entertainment.

The third type is the Seishonen-furyodan (or Seifu, gang of adolescents) which specializes in extortion, murder, assault and intimidation. Presently, this group is also known as Gurentai, or hoodlums. Bigger criminal organizations like the Yamaguchi Gumi operate along these three lines.

The Japanese underworld is certainly not homogeneous, with 600 boryokudan and a total of over 2,200 lodges and sublodges. Yamaguchi Gumi is only one of the them, although it commands greater respect and influence in the whole Japan, especially in the Western region. Despite the fact that most criminal organizations share certain modes of operation, not all of them adopt the same kind of structure and/or solidarity base. The Yamaguchi Gumi, being the dominant boryokudan with 480 lodges and about 13,000 members in 1986, is organized around the deep-rooted, traditional Japanese conception of family or ikka. The approximation of ikka is fictive-kinship relationship nesting mainly unrelated individuals. The head of the ikka or gumi performs the role (bun) of the father (oyaji), hence the term oyabun. The followers are called kobun which refer to members who play the role of a child. The fictive kinship demands the kobun to pay absolute obedience to the supreme authority of the oyabun. In

other words, the oyabun-kobun relationship is analogous to the father and children familial relationship. They not only address each other as such, they also develop rules and norms to ensure that the relationship is the best approximate of the concept ikka. Rules and codes that are enforced to control the members range from reprimand to successive amputation of finger joints and to death penalty.

The different ranks of the oyabun-kobun relationship is illustrated in Figure 1.



The group leader (oyabun) oversees the whole organization. Below him there are two lines of staff. The younger 'brothers' (shatei) who do not normally succeed the head, are brotherly to the head. These are the councillors or advisers to the leader. The leader and the shatei are respectively 'father' and 'uncle' of the wakato/wakagashira, hosha and

wakashu. Occupants of the wakato position are entitled to assume headship should the occasion arise. Usually, only the most trusted, and influential one would be chosen as head.

The kobun, because of the differential influence and/or seniority in faction age, are stratified among themselves. There are the 80 percent (as is conventionally used to mean the eldest) as against the 20 percent (i.e. the youngest) brothers, followed by the 70% (very senior) vs. 30% brothers, then by the 60% (senior) vs. 40% brothers, and lastly the 50%:50% equal brothers (Hoshino, 1973). Such a stratification is not merely structural, it is also economic in that the share of income is also distributed according to the ratio.

This is a fundamental and general structure of all the individual gumi, under the banner of Yamaguchi, including that at the Hyogo headquarters. A branch household (bunke) is formed when a member collects sufficient followers. With the grace of the parent Gumi (honke), the branch household is then affiliated through the Japanese traditional honkebunke relationship. Not all of the household units are of equal status. The most influential and powerful ones are regarded as the First-line gumi or groups which command certain degree of respect and loyalty from the Second-line gumi. There are in general more than four levels of such a hierarchical order within the big 'family' (Harada et al., 1985).

Now we shall examine the Yamaguchi Gumi's symbiotic participation and internal control, as we did with the kinship-based and brotherhood-based criminal organizations.

Yamaguchi Gumi's headquarters has been in Hyogo Prefecture where the first Gumi was founded in 1915 by a fisherman by the name Harukichi Yamaguchi. The Gumi was then a subclode of another well-established Oshima

Gumi in the same Kobe area where the busiest port of Japan was located. Harukichi has been traditionally honored as the First-Generation Leader.

The Second-Generation Leader was his son Noboru Yamaguchi who assumed the leadership when he was only 23 years old. The Gumi became an independent organization after he was excommunicated from the parent body Oshima Gumi, for his defiance and the phenomenal growth of the gumi led by him. The Yamaguchi Gumi had been able to monopolize the cargo transportation business at the Kobe wholesale market, social and erotic entertainment, and the traditional and popular Japanese vocal art (rokyoku). Noboru died in 1942, after which there was a long lull period for the Gumi until Kazuo Taoka took the reign after the War in 1946.

Kazuo Taoka was a member of the Yamaguchi Gumi as early as 1932. He was nominated to become the third son of Yamaguchi Gumi and was thus installed as the Third-Generation Leader of the Gumi. He led his Gumi into show and stevedore businesses. He himself also established his own company by the name of "Kobe Entertainments Inc." He was also the Vice-Chairman in the Professional Wrestling Association. Besides this legitimate position, he had also held executive positions in as many as 11 companies and organizations, e.g., the Kodokai (Forwarders' Association) which was later developed into the Council for Stevedoring, and the All Japan Stevedoring Promotion Association.

For efficient internal control and effective business management, Taoka divided his men into two major groups. Those who had the business acumen were asked to manage the Gumi's economic interest, and those who were skillful in gang wars were appointed to be combative men to fend off intrusions from the enemies. In 1963, a Committee of the Seven, i.e., the supreme council, was formed to oversee the fast growing conglomerate.

Later the Gumi allied with the Inagawa, the largest boryokudan in Tokyo area, to extend its influence in the country.²

The Third-Generation Leader ended his 35 years of rule when he passed away after a heart attack in July, 1981. The heir apparent to the Fourth-Generation Leader, Kenichi Yamamoto, died suddenly in February the following year before he could be officially installed. A council was then formed to rule the Gumi collectively. The leadership (acting for the Third-Generation Leader) went to the then top Lieutenant Hiroshi Yamamoto, and the position vacated by him was filled by a combatant member by the name of Masahisa Takenaka who also had keen interest in the top post. The ambitious duo split in 1984 with Takenaka taking over the reign of Yamaguchi Gumi and Yamamoto setting up a rival group known as the Ichiwa Kai.

Takenaka was officially installed the Fourth-Generation Leader of the Yamaguchi Gumi in July, 1984, but was assassinated by Ichiwa-Kai men seven months later. The then Chief Lieutenant Kazuo Nakanishi (Osaka) was appointed the Acting Fourth-Generation Leader. The position vacated by him was taken by Yoshinori Watanabe (Kobe). The conflict with the Ichiwa Kai has resulted in 187 attacks in 17 prefectures by October, 1985. These Yakuza wars, as they are known in Japan, have so far received no arbitration nor mediation from either the legal control agencies or the underworld itself.

CONCLUSION

The Japanese underworld in general and the Yamaguchi Gumi in particular, has shed some light on the relationship between the disadvantaged ethnic minority groups and organized crime. A number of

scholars claimed that organized crime is an avenue for vigorous minorities to bypass the traditional and orthodox routes to influence and power in the host country (e.g. Kelly, 1986: 10). So the Irish, the Jewish, the Italian and then the Hispanics have taken turn to dominate in the American underworld, which is made possible in a country where laissez-faire economy is practised. Anomie theory and Import theory have been offered to explain the relationship between ethnic minorities and organized crime.

After comparing the modus operandi of the vice industry in the American Chinatowns and the Black ghettos for the period of 1880-1944, Light (1977) feels that the provider's culture, social organization and demographic composition are important intervening factors in accounting for the emergence and persistence of organized crime. But he does not sever totally the link between ethnic minorities and organized crime.

The Japanese boryokudan, or the Yamaguchi Gumi presented above, suggests that the disadvantaged ethnic minorities may be a sufficient but not a necessary condition in accounting for the emergence of organized crime. The Japanese criminal organizations were not formed by ethnic minorities, nor by immigrant groups, although there have always been Japanese Koreans in most of the boryokudan.

As illustrated above, the fictive kinship is a dual structural system with both the approximated father-child and fraternal relationship in the same structure. The unique feature of fictive kinship lies in the father-child relationship, and for this reason, fictive kinship in this paper shall refer only to this kind of relationship. Earlier on it was put forward that the fictive-kinship solidarity model falls somewhere in between the kinship and the brotherhood models in terms of social distance

among the members. The two testing rods have been participation and internal control on secrecy.

The fictive-kinship model, as in the case of Yamaguchi Gumi, benefits from having a relatively unrestrictive pool of candidates for membership. In the meantime, the protection of group secrecy which is a perennial problem with brotherhood-based societies, is ensured by the oyabun-kobun relationship. The members have internalized such a relationship pattern to the extent that they think that it is the children's duty to shoulder whatever burden that falls onto the godfather. They in effect, show great spontaneity and willingness to go to prison for the crimes committed by their oyabun.

A study (Hoshino, 1973) on 667 members of semi-national criminal syndicates reveals that the degree of group morale is higher among members from societies founded upon oyabun-kobun relationship. So, it can be safely assumed that these societies are more resilient than others to revive their organizations should they be forced to dissolve. This would rarely be the case among the brotherhood societies, for under the same circumstances, a few scattered members would be able to contact other scattered members to revive their disorganized groups.

Theoretically, an organization based on fictive kinship should show some reasonable degree of stability in leadership succession. This does not turn out to be so, in the case of the Yamaguchi-Gumi. Harukichi Yamaguchi's (the First Yamaguchi Generation leader) severance of his ties with his former affiliation, i.e., Oshinma Gumi, and the factional fights between Masahisa Takenaka and Hiroshi Yamamoto for the group leadership suggest that the fictive kinship is closer to the brotherhood model in this respect.

Most criminal organizations show relatively high degree of integration in certain key social values with the legitimate society. It hardly needs further explanation that the "organized crime in Japan is extraordinarily politicized. The modern history of the Yakuza is intertwined with that of Japan's extreme right wing, a bizarre group of emperor-worshipping activities..." (Kaplan and Dubro, 1986: 10; also 32-40, 116-123). Even till now some traditional Japanese values such as firi-ninjo (justice and charity), kao (face) and hara (guts) are still being upheld by the Japanese underworld (Iwai, 1986). The Yamaguchi Gumi's subculture is said to have gradually drifted into utilitarianism in modern times (Hoshino, 1974), but its fundamentals have been derived from the traditional Japanese cultural system. As a matter of fact, "A certain folklore has grown up around gangsters." (Ames, 1981: 120-1) The Gumi's enthusiastic promotion of the Japanese vocal art illustrates once again the point that criminal organizations live in the socociety not only at the cultural, but also at the action level.

In the process of being a double-role player, like in the case of brotherhood organization, the Yamaguchi-Gumi leaders personally own, through the facilities of the Gumi, private businesses. They also join legitimate organizations to serve on the boards. These enhanced their social status.

The Yamaguchi case, as an illustration of the fictive kinship solidarity model, shows that such a model is locationally not in the midway between the kinship and the brotherhood models. Rather, it is an overlapping of both in terms of the functioning of the structural parts. The model is therefore not a matter of degree in process and consequence, as compared to the other two solidarity models. In short, the fictive-

kinship model absorbs the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the other supposedly extreme models.

Solidarity models of criminal organizations, or even all secret organizations are crucial to the understanding and control of such organizations. Cressey (1972:81-106) proposes the use of a social science model to study organized crime, and the solidarity model is such an example.

NOTES

1. The term kongsì in a specific context was widely used for some types of locality/dialect-based voluntary associations, e.g. Ngee Ann Kongsì and Meizhou Zhongqi gongsì (Kongsì). A number of Chinese secret societies also named their societies kongsì, these were perhaps the more localized and economically oriented secret societies, in contrast with the Triad's offshoots such as Hungmen zhi qong tang. Ghee Hin Kongsì, Ghee Hock Kongsì and Hai San Kongsì were the most prominent Chinese societies in the early Straits Settlements. For other uses of the term, see Wong (1979).
2. It is yet to be unveiled how the two powerful organizations resolved their affiliative relationship with regard to the fictive kinship model.
3. Being a member of any of the criminal groups is not unlawful in Japan. As such, a member is only arrested if he commits a crime.

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GRAMMAR AND POLITY: THE CULTURAL
AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND
TO STANDARD MALAY

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