THE MAFIA, THE TRIADS AND THE IRA:
A STUDY OF CRIMINAL AND POLITICAL SECRET SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT:

The Sicilian Mafia, The Chinese Triads and The IRA are three secret societies that have evolved from rural peasant protection groups developed to fight back against oppressive feudal regimes. Through kinship (familial and fictive), violence and symbiotic relationships with officials, each group (often many groups operating under the umbrella label) grew in size and adopted hierarchical structures with clear figureheads: The Mafia's 'Capo de Tutti Capi' ('Boss Of Bosses',' Godfather', 'Don'), The Triads 'Dragon Head' ('489'), and the IRA's 'Brigade Commander'. All aided governments throughout history in various conflicts and at other times revolted against them. The Sicilian Mafia and the Chinese Triads have both been partly responsible for overthrowing unpopular regimes in their native countries and have been forced to emigrate in vast numbers due to economic and political oppression. Both groups evolved into profit-orientated organisations. The IRA has fought many years for the unification of Ireland and a withdrawal of the British occupation of Northern Ireland. With the current IRA ceasefire, many members are not engaged in violent conduct. If the evolutionary line of other violent secret societies is followed, then members of the IRA may start moving from political agendas into profit orientated endeavours, possibly organised crime, as the socio-economic and political climates balance. Splinter groups, such as the 'Real IRA' and the 'Irish National Liberation Army', have already been formed and evidence suggests that at least one is working with the (Columbian) Medellin Cartel aiding drugs and arms smuggling. Punishment beatings are still occurring in local communities as inactive IRA members attempt to maintain the regulation of violence and control within their communities. The idea of criminal groups splintering from inactive IRA members is a plausible one on the basis of historical analysis and contemporary indication. Whilst it is not claimed that any such group would equate with the Mafia or the Triads, the pattern of organised crime group evolutions suggests such a direction to be a genuine possibility[1].

[1] See' Blueprint Of Circumstance', p.49-50

Organised Crime and Secret Societies: A New Phenomenon?

In an attempt to understand and explain all forms of human behaviour there is a need to consider the motivations, opportunities and surrounding circumstances of the given action. This is no different for the understanding of crime and criminality.

Organised crimes and organised criminality has over the past century increasingly become the focus of media, academic and governmental concern. However, organised crime is by no means a new social phenomenon. Organised criminal groups have been traced back as far as 206 BC in China (Huston 1995). Moreover, organised banditry has existed throughout history, two of the most infamous examples being the Huns and Mongols. Initially both groups shared nomadic lifestyles praying upon weaker peoples from whom they extracted tributes in return for peace (Bequai 1979). Equally, the legend of Robin Hood and his 'Merry Men' is perhaps one of the most popular and prominent examples of an organised criminal group that still enjoys heroic and mythical status (Hobsbawm 1969). Although such criminality can be traced throughout the ages, it has not always been the focus of study and political policy making by Western scholars and politicians, to the extent that it is today. In America, one of the earliest legal cases that brought the issue of organised criminal activity to the judiciary was an 1890 lawsuit against the Chicago Laundrymen for malicious interference with a business by way of a protection racket (Tyler 1962). The introduction of 'The Mafia' to the American public has been attributed by many commentators, to the McClellan Committee hearings of the early 1960's (Ryan and Rush 1997). The Committee hearings were televised across the nation and with it the testimony of Joseph Valachi, a former Mafiosi and government informer. Valachi impregnated the American psyche with terms such as "Cosa Nostra, Capo, Made Men, the

Commission and Omerta" (Ryan and Rush 1997, p.1). In Britain the activities of organised criminal 'firms', such as the Kray's and the Richardson's (Levi 1981) in London during the 50's and 60's, were arguably responsible for bringing organised crime to the fore of media attention and law enforcement focus for the first time. In almost every country in the world there exists some form of organised crime or criminality, and in many it has existed since the recording of history began, it is arguably a universal phenomenon. Human societies, by their nature are organised by rules and taboos and within societies groups of people are organised in their endeavours to prosper. Eventually, elements in society will become organised in the ways that break the laws of their people.

Like organised criminal groups, secret societies have existed for thousands of years. From the 12-century Knights Templar, to the Mau Mau of Kenya, secret societies exist across time and continents (MacKenzie 1967). Secret societies can be formed for a multitude of reasons. These include: "patriotic groups (Orange Order in Ulster), ritualistic brotherhoods (Freemasons), political groups (IRA, Bolsheviks), military groups (Knights of the Templar), racialist (Ku Klux Klan), criminal business orientated groups (Chinese Triads, Mafia) and moralist (Alcoholics Anonymous!)" (Mackenzie 1967, p.15).

The Study

It is clear that much study and theoretical debate exists with regards to organised crime and organised criminality. However, there appears to be a distinct lack of research that considers the direction of criminal groups by exploration of their historical underpinnings, creation and evolution. Furthermore, there is a need to consider the possibility of utilising any findings to predict the future direction of such groups.

The starting point for this study is the analysis of the secret peasant protection group. Historical accounts suggest that the Sicilian Mafia, the Chinese Triads and the IRA all began as peasant protection groups in feudal based societies with very similar intended purposes. Therefore, if the purpose for creation is the same, why did the Sicilian Mafia and the Chinese Triads evolve as they have, into profit-orientated criminal groups that prey upon the wider society? Is the current purpose of each group, indicative of the end of their respective evolutions? If not, how and why might they evolve further? This study will attempt to consider these questions and provide possible explanations with the intention of utilising any patterns and findings to create a 'Blueprint of Circumstance' as a risk assessment tool to predict future evolution. Analysis will be undertaken of groups, which do not appear to correspond to any emergent patterns, and consequently the reasons for this will also be explored. The Triads, the Sicilian Mafia and the IRA have been chosen, as they are three secret society groups that are of much focus of research, media, and governmental concern. Furthermore, the similar circumstances from which all three have evolved, provides a comparative basis from which to explore the issues mentioned above.

The goal and purpose of this study is not to reduce very complex political, religious and historical issues into a purely descriptive list to be adopted in an 'A' plus 'B' equals 'C' type equation relying purely upon history to predict future direction. Nor is it the intention to create some sort of grandiose theory that presumes to explain and predict highly complex forms of social action. The aim is to attempt to take an approach that is not totally restrained by issues of definition and compartmentalization[2] and to offer an alternative interpretation of an already well-explored area. Whilst Sicilian and American Mafiosi and Chinese Triads are traditionally viewed as organised criminals and the IRA as a terrorist organisation; this study will attempt to highlight the increasingly tenuous nature of such a uniformed dichotomy. By exploring the evolutions of these groups to consider their respective directions, motivations, activities and reactions to the wider societal circumstances in which they exist, it may be possible to strip away and cut through misconception, rhetoric and myth. This is often perpetuated through the lack of cohesive definitions, and research that is hindered by theoretical hurdles. Therefore, there is a need to consider all aspects of the groups involved in a historical and evolutionary sense in order to understand why they are involved in these particular activities and in what evolutionary direction they may be moving. This needs to be done without simply restraining oneself to rigid compartmentalized, and pre-existing, definitions of organisation and purpose.

[2] See 'Definitions', p.6

Definitions. A Wall To Climb: Do Labels Carry Baggage?

Organised Crime and Terrorism

Conducting research in a way that attempts to consider the essence of criminal groups and their evolutionary link with crime, risks neglecting well founded definitions and equally becoming restrained by them. According to Cressey (1995) "perceptual screens" pose serious problems for criminologists in the study of organised crime (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p5). Initially, there is a need to put to one side labels such as 'organised criminal group' and 'terrorist group' in order to logically and systematically explore any inherent similarities and differences. Whilst one cannot ignore the political climates in which these groups evolve, one must also recognise how labels carry 'baggage' and are perpetuated by political rhetoric for purposes other than a continued understanding (such as vote winning punitive populism!). This is exemplified by the current 'War on Terrorism'. Literature proliferated by the US and the UK makes constant reference to 'international terrorist networks' and 'weapons of mass destruction' (US Dept Of Justice 2002). Whilst these issues are of great societal concern, the political weight that such definitions carry are of clear advantage to governmental agendas. Beare & Naylor (1999), for example, point to the politicisation of organised crime and terrorism and the pragmatic need for law enforcement agencies to attribute labels for resource purposes. Whilst definition serves a purpose and is somewhat inevitable, it does not occur in a political vacuum and thus can be counter-productive to criminological research. (Reuter 1999).

Abadinsky (1994) cites eight characteristics that define an organised criminal group, the fundamental distinction being "non-ideological", with the pursuit of profit being the paramount goal (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p6). Whilst this distinction appears to be practically sound, it assumes that organised crime groups have no ideology. It negates the possibility of the pursuit

of profit for the continuation of the group being an ideology in itself. As this study will highlight, the traditional ethics and rules of the Sicilian Mafia, the American Mafia and the Triads are indeed ideological as are the IRA's. Again this distinction can be seen as a 'perceptual screen' counter-productive in any attempt to avoid rigid definition (Cressey 1995). Moreover, terrorism is generally defined as acts designed to create terror and fear for the purpose of specific ideological goals (NCIS 2002). However, this definition also appears too rigid. Terrorist groups have often focused upon accumulating profit for a sustained period in order to finance their activity, such as illegal arms deals and drug farming by 'Narco-Terrorists' in Columbia (Council Of Foreign Relations 2002). Groups traditionally seen as 'organised' have utilised terrorist tactics, such as the bombing of judges and jurors by the American and Sicilian Mafia (Bequai 1979). Abadinsky's (1994) characteristics describe generalisations that can be seen in organised crime groups and terrorist groups alike. For example, an aspect such as "specialized division of labour" can be found in many groups labelled 'terrorist', with bomb making units and strategists occupying specific roles (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p.6). "Hierarchy", "exclusive membership" and "explicit rules and regulations" are often found in 'terrorist' groups and 'organised crime groups' alike (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p6). Whilst it is accepted that such a list is not necessarily meant to be definitive and exclusive, it does highlight the theoretical complexities and ambiguities of relying upon rigid definitions.

It is acknowledged that an approach that attempts to deconstruct traditional labels and typologies is likely to run contrary to the current political rhetoric and public perception. However, such an approach is essential in exploring a perspective that views such groups as existing and functioning in a manner that mirrors the fluidity of the wider society. Whilst the IRA would not see themselves as an organised criminal group and Mafia 'families' and Triad groups would not consider themselves as political paramilitary activists, closer inspection of their respective histories reveals that such groups have and do engage in both types of activities.

Although they have evolved into their current states from rural peasant protection groups, as secret societies, their primary goals do currently differ. This raises the question of whether the status quo of each group is a temporary point of their individual evolution? If this is so, where are they heading? For the purposes of this study, the current position of the three groups will be referred to as secret societies in an attempt to avoid a problematic dichotomy.

Secret Societies

Mackenzie (1967) defines a secret society as an organisation that places a premium upon secrecy for survival, has specific rules designed to maintain secrecy, has selective membership, generally hierarchical in structure and adopts initiation rituals. Furthermore, Mackenzie (1967) acknowledges the differing agendas of secret societies loosely categorising them as political, patriotic, spiritual, moralistic and criminal. Mackenzie (1967) also recognises the fluid nature of these categories and how such societies can evolve and encompass numerous agendas. This acknowledgement of the process of evolution avoids rigid compartmentalisation and is therefore a useful label to adopt for the purposes of this study, which aims to avoid strict uniformed classification. This definition of a secret society also acknowledges the similarities between non-criminal secret societies such as the freemasons, and those of a criminal nature. The secret societies under discussion, do share organisational features that enable them to fit Mackenzie's (1967) typology and as such only criminal business groups (Triads, Mafia) and sometimes criminal/ political societies (IRA) will be focused upon. Whilst none of these groups initially started as secret societies, they have all evolved into collectives fitting Mackenzie's (1967) criteria.

Clearly, the Triads and the Sicilian and American Mafia are traditionally labelled as organised crime groups and the IRA a paramilitary terrorist group and this may be functionally accurate

as the current purposes and goals provide a foundation for the distinction. However, this is not and was not always so. Therefore, if one imagines a continuum of evolution with peasant protection being the beginning, and the current situation of each group being the most recent position, what happens in-between these two points may reveal patterns that could be used to predict future evolutions of emerging groups. In this sense, labels, whilst useful, are seen as fluid and indicative of a particular point in history. Typologies should be utilised to explain and conceptualise equally fluid activity rather than binding it.

Methodology

Due to obvious restrictions in the study of secret societies and their historical foundations and evolution in terms of criminal activity, a secondary analysis/literature review methodology was deemed the most appropriate. However, there have been significant and invaluable contributions by researchers and journalists in conducting primary research using ethnographical research methods. Such studies provide insight and detail that is often unattainable through historical accounts. Ethnographic research by Blok (1972) into the Sicilian Mafia, Posner (1998) into the Triads, and Toolis (1995) into the IRA allowed for invaluable starting points for the historical study of these groups. Employing a critical secondary analysis/literature review method was necessary for the exploration of the histories of the respective groups and allowed for this type of longitudinal research by mapping and understanding the connections between events and activities over time. It also enabled quality data to be utilised from respected academic sources and allowed for the cross-cultural analysis necessary to study groups from different parts of the world (Bryman 2001). As no known similar type of study has been attempted, these advantages are vital. Although it is acknowledged that research has been conducted into the evolution of individual secret societies, comparisons between these groups' evolutions is seldom considered. The reason for the three primary groups being chosen was to enable focus and also to allow for the researching of three groups, created in different cultures, in different parts of the world at different points in history. Consequently any emergent patterns could not solely be attributed to a 'western phenomenon' and any issues about coincidence would be, at least, somewhat reduced. Overall, looking at the three distinct groups presents an opportunity to examine clear differences as well as similarities, while allowing for the possibility of recognising what might reveal to be universal rules. If such universal rules of group evolution exist, they may prove invaluable for predicting the risk of emerging crime problems.

Socio-Economic Conditions, and the Stage of State Formation: The Rise Of Peasant Protection Groups.

"Social banditry is universally found, wherever societies are based on agriculture and consist largely of peasants and landless labourers ruled, oppressed and exploited by someone else- lords, towns, governments, lawyers, or even banks." (Hobsbawm 1969, p15).

Hobsbawm's (1969) observation, whilst historically valid, can be seen to be stating the obvious. In any oppressed society there will be at least a minority that is willing to dedicate themselves to an attempt to break the status quo. Some individuals will seek legitimate ways of effecting change, others will choose illegitimate ways. Hobsbawm (1969) refers to social banditry in peasant societies as those who "attack and rob with violence" for some specific reason or cause (Hobsbawm 1969, p13). In this sense the literature omits to equate social banditry with peasant protection groups or secret societies, although it is recognised that this link does not always exist. One of the most unifying characteristics of Sicily, China and Ireland during the times that peasant protection groups were formed is the degree of feudalism and the oppressed condition of the peasant. Blok (1972), Barend (1998) and Kelley (1988) provide explicit descriptions of the often-futile socio-economic conditions experienced by rural peasant farmers working for sustenance in oppressive conditions. However, they all fail to make a comparative cross-cultural example. The evidence is clear with regards to a cross- cultural link between exploitative socio-economic positions for peasant communities and the rise of peasant protection groups.

Sicily

During the 1800's the oppression of landless peasant labourers (*Contadino*), was partly due to abolishment of the feudal system in 1812. With it ended the rights to hold estates (*Feudi*) and the common rights of the peasantry to pasture (Blok 1972). The throwing open of the purchase of land to market forces, led to the creation of mass estates (*Latifondo*) as the gentry accumulated land. The return of the Bourbon state in 1816 resulted in efforts to restrict the power of the landowning aristocracy by offering the peasantry returned land rights[3]. However, the lack of adequate centralised control allowed landowners to maintain authority over the estates and over peasants land rights. Consequently, the peasantry were often refused land rights and thus traditional sources of income. However, an increasing trend occurred of landowners moving to the city entrusting the running of the estates to individual leaseholders (*gabbelloto)*. These leaseholders would rent small areas of the estates to peasants, for a specified share of the crop. Estate security was entrusted to local peasant strongmen (*Campieri*), who acted as armed guards, rent collectors and general supervisors. Through the use of these peasant strongmen, the entrepreneurial leaseholders began to increase their power base (Sterling 1993). They began to protect peasant farmers against banditry, increasing peasant reliance upon such protection in the face of weak central state control. Through the use of violence, these peasant protectors often insisted upon gifts as a form of payment for such protection. The protector's propensity for solving disputes through fear, control and economic status, gained them the title of "Men Of Respect" (*Uomini Rispetto*) (Farrell 1997, p.13). Throughout the 19th century these men of respect lent support to peasant interests[4] in return for loyalty, favour and secrecy (*Omerta*). According to Hess, " The Mafia in its first form, as a rural force, made its appearance" (Hess 1973, p61).

[3] See Appendix 1, p.54
[4] See Appendix 1, p.54

Ireland

Irish peasant protection groups can be traced to the Gaelic defenders of the 12th century (Kelley 1988). The successful invasion by Henry II resulted in the installation of a feudal system[5]. This led to massive oppression of Catholic Gaels, forcing them to defend themselves and the peasant populous. The reduction and removal of land and civil rights from the Catholic Gael community continued throughout the next four hundred years[6]. Despite these oppressive regimes, Catholic protection groups continued to form. The isolation of rural Ireland facilitated these groups to operate providing a geographical barrier from the invading forces throughout the 17th century. The 1700 penal laws, introduced following the victory of King William of Orange at the Boyne, removed rights of property for Irish Catholics. This caused massive unrest from Catholic populations and a surge of groups created to fight for Catholic rights. A significant turning point was the 1800 Act of Union, passed by Westminster, creating the United Kingdom, binding Ireland to its control (Kelley 1988). The consequence was an increasing move from peasant protection to political action (Toolis 1995).

China

Chinese history is riddled with invasion, war and peasant oppression[7]. Feudalism has been a distinctive feature of China's socio-economic system throughout history, and many of the original peasant protection groups were formed to fight for increased peasant rights and improvement of rural conditions. Huston (1995) maintains that during periods when dynasties were weakened, peasant populations were left without civil protection usually afforded by central authorities. Consequently, peasant groups were essential in providing protection during these power vacuums[8]. However, the poor socio-economic conditions and violent oppression of

[5] See Appendix 2, p.56
[6] See Appendix 2, p. 56
[7] See Appendix 3, p.58
[8] See Appendix 3, p.58

the mass peasant populations led many peasant protection groups to evolve (Barend 1998). As increasing numbers of peasants became willing to make proactive gestures to better their collective socio-economic position, the need for increased cohesion became apparent (Posner 1988). This was achieved through initiation rituals, identification with Triad mythology (perpetuated through the 'foundation account')[9], consolidated social networks and mutual support. Many of these groups would later evolve into Triad secret societies.

From Peasant Protection to Secret Societies: The Historical Foundations

The Secret Society As A Sub-Culture

The secret peasant protection group can be viewed as an early form of a secret society. Members are united by a particular agenda, be it profit or political (or both) and seek to achieve such goals through collective action. Secret peasant protection groups such as the 'Red Eyebrows' (China), the 'Fasci' (Sicily) and 'The Whiteboys' (Ireland), were all pre-cursors to the formation of increasingly organised, cohesive, self-regulating, self-recruiting, hierarchical groups[10]. In this way the peasant protection group could be analogously equated with a child or youth attempting to define themselves, experiencing "status frustration" (Hobbs 1998, p.806) with their lack of resources or 'cultural capital' (Cloward and Ohlin 1960). Whereas the secret society can be paralleled with the adult: established, distinct and increasingly sophisticated.

The move from the secret peasant protection group to the secret society is an evolution that reflects the cohesive position of such collectives facilitating increasingly sophisticated organisation and operation. Such an evolution is characterised by a pre-occupation with secrecy as the group grows in number and influence. This results in selective membership and

[9] See Appendix 3, p.58
[10] See Appendices 1,2 and 3, p.54-59

increasing divisions of labour that necessitate the formation of hierarchical chains of command. Secrecy and discretion is enforced by these chains of command and emphasised through ritual (Barend 1998, Monti 1994). The bond shared by members is maintained by oaths or pledges that place importance upon the solidarity and fraternity of the group. The association with the collective sub-culture replaces the 'master status' of the individual. Therefore, becoming the individual's primary source of identity, support and community (Cohen 1955). In this respect one could regard such secret societies as sub-cultures within sub-cultures. This is maintained by Simmel (1950), for whom the secret society represents a specific typology of a sub-culture.

Simmel (1950) defines the secret society sub-culture as being characterised by:

- Membership exclusion and inclusion policies
- Limitations upon organic growth
- De-personalisation of members
- Correlations between centralisation of power and use of violence
- Blanking-out of competing allegiances
- Release of secrecy according to seniority
- Group loyalty over individuality
- Replacement of government as the principle source of protection and support (Lim 2000, p34).

Simmel acknowledges the internal and external factors, which facilitate the evolution from peasant protection to secret society. External circumstances dictate and facilitate the internal group factors that form the secret society. The socio-economic climate and wider political

dimensions are both external factors that work in symbiosis with internal group factors such as sub-culture and kinship.

The Political Dimension

The Sicilian Mafia, The Chinese Triads and The IRA find their historical roots in countries riddled by political uncertainty. These foundations are found in times of rapid political change, wars, invasions and socio-economic oppression. The various English incursions into Ireland and the resulting oppression of the Catholic populations, eventually gave rise to secret societies. Gaelic peasant protection groups evolved into secret societies such as 'The Whiteboys' 'The Oakboys' and 'Phoenix'[11]. As the need for increasingly sophisticated tactics became apparent, so did the need for increasingly coherent collective political action (Kelley 1988). This situation is mirrored with regards to Chinese Triad secret societies. The peasant protectors that provided security from bandits and Mongolian invaders in rural China quickly evolved into secret societies. The traditions that fuelled the formation of secret societies were born from identification with the 'foundation account' of Triad mythology[12] (Barend 1998). Peasant protection groups adopted the rituals and lore provided by this 'foundation account' as increasing disillusionment with successive governments occurred. This oppression of the rural masses by feudal regimes motivated the transition from peasant protectors to secret societies[13]. Similarly, the peasant protectors of rural Sicily gained a foothold in their villages as various changes of government allowed them to monopolise local control. With this came respect and acquiesce of the controlled populations. As this power increased, so did the need for secrecy and solidarity (Blok 1972).

[11] See Appendix 2, p.56
[12] See Appendix 3, p.58
[13] See Appendix 3, p.58

The unifying feature of these evolutions is the absence of strong central control and a disillusionment and distrust of legitimate authority or government exemplified, by an ancient Chinese proverb:

'Armies protect the Emperor; Secret Societies protect the people' (Posner 1988, p31)

The geographical nature of rural Sicily, Ireland and China proved difficult to control from cities often hundreds and thousands of miles away. Coupled with unstable governments, invasions, wars, economic oppression and isolation, the inevitability of power vacuums is apparent. These power vacuums resulted in banditry, corruption and distrust of formal authority. This distrust of authority stems from the oppression of the mass populations, occurring due to the inadequacies of legitimate authority. Furthermore, the alternative authority offered by these secret societies, was viewed by oppressed populations as highly effective. This is apparent when one considers that the 'Catholic Association' fought for and gained back Catholic civil rights, the 'White Lotus Society' were instrumental in overthrowing the Qing Dynasty and the 'Fasci' were a sufficient enough force to ensure some land-rights were maintained for Sicilian peasants[14]. Providing support, protection, respect and purpose affords legitimisation as an alternative to legitimate authority. The ability of these groups to monopolise violence in their respective communities allowed the maintenance of secrecy and compliance (exemplified by the Mafia code of secrecy known as 'Omerta' meaning 'manliness'). This entrenches the position of the secret society within the social milieu and culture in which it exists and operates.

[14] See Appendices 1,2 and 3, p.54-59

Culture & Kinship

The historical foundations of the Sicilian Mafia, The Chinese Triads and The IRA are rooted in both the political and the cultural dimension. Traditionally, Sicily, China and Ireland are characterised by cultures that place emphasis upon the familial unit and the community in which it operates (Barend 1998, Mahan and O'Neil 1998, Toolis 1995). Consequently, the rise of the secret society in any three of these countries is constructed around this nucleus.

"Those displaced from secure means of livelihood responded to the situation by forming organisations for mutual aid and self protection" (Lim 2000, p.2).

Irene Lim (2000) believes there are essentially two forms of solidarity patterns within secret societies, "Mechanical" and "Organic" (Lim 2000, p.36). Mechanical solidarity is based around similarities, values, customs and beliefs. Organic solidarity describes groups based around specialist functions and interdependency. Furthermore, Lim (2000) provides typologies of groups that range from 'Mechanical' to 'Organic'[15]. 'Kinship' based groups, according to Lim (2000) are based around blood ties, whilst 'Fictive Kinship' groups are based around ideological bonds. Traditionally, the Sicilian Mafia were based upon 'Kinship' bonds, while Irish Catholic secret societies revolved around 'Tribal and Territorial' kinship. Chinese Triad groups are traditionally based around 'Sworn Sibling'/ 'Fictive Kinship' bonds.

Lim's (2000) assertions are descriptive of traditional principles. Therefore, the validity of these typologies become questionable as these secret societies evolve, requiring increasing divisions of labour and resources from individuals not necessarily tied by traditional ideologies. Despite

[15] See Appendix 4, p.61

this, the importance of solidarity in the emergence of the secret society is apparent when one considers the circumstances from which they evolve.

Blok (1972) provides an insightful description of the environment in which the Mafia conducted their business also reflecting the origins of the Triads and the IRA:

"A violent struggle for land geared to a flexible social framework in which links of bilateral kinship are supplemented by ties of ritual kinship and friendship. The most comprehensive social units in both areas are patrimonial families. Violent competition for control over land and rights, leads to an orientation towards death and an acceptance towards homicide as a means of attaining particular goals" (Blok 1972, p161).

If one considers violence, death and homicide as a natural part of their social milieu, then kinship and friendship ties are essential tools for survival. If land is the greatest political asset in feudal and rural societies, then kinship and friendship networks may be the greatest weapon for the acquisition of these cultural goals. Moreover, kinship and friendship bonds afforded by secret societies facilitate the internalisation of beliefs and values along inter-generational lines, exemplified by the Mafia's "strict code of Omerta" (Blok 1972, p212). Without state intervention or adequate discourse with isolated communities, one can only expect the perpetuation and proliferation of trans-generational values and the continued existence of secret societies that uphold and act upon these beliefs.

Migrant Patterns

Throughout the respective evolutions of The Sicilian Mafia, The Chinese Triads and The IRA, certain points in history have acted as catalysts to solidify their sub-cultures. Such events have

often revolved around emigration and dispersal of secret society members and indigenous populations.

Sicily

The migrant patterns of the landowning elite in 19th century Sicily were instrumental in the growth of the Mafia. The movement of the landowning aristocracy from the rural to the urban allowed local strongmen to occupy supervisory positions for absentee landlords. Occupation of power-broking positions between the peasantry and the ruling class, allowed the exploitation of both. These entrepreneurial middlemen became known as Mafia (derived from the Arabic word meaning 'place of refuge').

Following the invasion of Sicily by Garibaldi and his 'Redshirts' in 1860, Mafia 'families' transferred their support from the Bourbon regime to the ensuing Republic (Sterling 1993). Mafia power rose significantly as they were able to acquire many of the large estates from the new Republic, for "low prices"[16] (MacKenzie 1967, p.245). By controlling the land, the Mafia controlled the people. In order to avoid confrontation, peasant populations had to concede to Mafia control. Peasants could seek 'refuge' under Mafia protection in return for acknowledgement of Mafia authority over the State (Farrell 1997). However, the 1920's witnessed the arrival of Mussolini's fascist regime and with it an attempt to eradicate the Mafia (Blok 1972). Although some Mafiosi survived this persecution, many were forced to emigrate to North America for survival. A further exodus of Mafiosi into the US occurred due to the natural disintegration of some of the large estates. From here the cycle would begin again. Over time the Sicilian immigrants, now a minority group in the US, formed gangs, acquired

[16] See Appendix 1, p.54

businesses and rebuilt reputations through the monopolisation of violence within their communities (Mackenzie 1967). The evolution of the American Mafia had begun.

China

Any attempt to pinpoint all possible events that may have affected the migrant patterns of Chinese history is bound to fall short due to the complex and varied accounts. However, relative to the evolution of Triad secret societies, two events are identified as catalysts for mass Chinese migration. In 19th Century China a Triad secret society evolved known as 'The God Worshippers' (Huston 1995). Initially dedicated to protecting local peasant populations from roaming bandits, 'The God Worshippers' became increasingly frustrated with the condition of the peasant under the oppressive feudal regime. Growing in number 'The God Worshippers' begun to operate under the name of 'The Taipings'. Membership became widespread throughout China and resulted in an open revolt against the government causing millions of deaths[17] (Posner 1988). Once defeated, many surviving Taiping members fled to Britain and North America where new Triad secret societies were established.

Following the defeat of invading Japanese forces in 1940[18], a civil war broke out between Chinese Nationalists and Communist guerrillas. With the Communists close to victory, Chinese Nationalists called upon Triad secret societies to unite against the Communist threat. Many Triad groups responded, initiating new members in mass ceremonies. United under the auspices of existing Triad members, the new group named itself '14' as homage to the address of its Headquarters in Canton. However, Communist guerrillas eventually defeated the Nationalists and the Triad '14' society. Approximately 3 million Chinese citizens, including many Triads,

[17] See Appendix 3, p.58
[18] See Appendix 3, p.58

emigrated to Taiwan and Hong Kong where 'open door' policies had been adopted for refugees of the conflict. Taiwan and Hong Kong now played host to Triad secret societies

Ireland

The potato famine of 1845 killed thousands of Irish Catholics due to the skewed distribution of resources and agricultural patterns in favour of English settlers (Kelley 1990). Many survivors emigrated to America in search of a better life. Irish American settlers formed new protection groups and secret societies in support of Irish rights in Ireland. 'The Fenians' and 'The Irish Republican Brotherhood' were two of the largest, and worked in conjunction to provide arms, men and financial support to the oppressed Catholic populations of Ireland. With this support Arthur Griffin eventually formed 'Sinn Fein' to campaign for Irish Catholic rights and to promote Republicanism.

In 1919 Michael Collins formed '*Oglaigh na hEireann'* (The Irish Republican Army) recruiting members from various existing secret societies. With support from Sinn Fein and the various Irish American secret societies, The IRA was able to legitimise itself within both Irish and American Catholic communities. The Trans-Atlantic link was formed and would prove to be a valuable asset in the years to come.

Sub-Cultures, Politics, Kinship and Migrant Patterns: The Catalysts For Social Evolution

All of these factors are inter-related and operate to maintain both the status quo and affect change, within the social microcosms of secret societies and on a macro level of the wider society. Sub-cultures of secret societies are formed by the wider culture of kinship and in response to particular political climates. Patterns of migration and dispersal occur both voluntarily and out of necessity in response to major political events such as wars, invasions,

oppression and persecution. The Sicilian Mafia, The Chinese Triads and the IRA evolved out of these inter-relations and have become established within their countries of origin and the countries to which they migrate. Ironically, the often-forced exodus of secret society members to other parts of the world, only served to forge trans-national links, which were maintained by sub-culture and kinship. Arguably it is at these points in their respective evolutions that the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA moved from being a localised problem to one spanning countries and continents.

The Mafia, The Triads and The IRA: Dimensions of Secret Societies Into The 21st Century

Organisation and Structure: What's in a name?

The Mafia

One of the earliest discoveries in America of a secret society known as the 'Mafia' was made in the early 1900's, somewhat ironically, by Joe Petrosino, a New York Detective of Italian origin (Bequai 1997). However, during a visit to Palmero in 1909 Petrosino was shot and killed by Don Vito Cascio Ferro, the Capo De Tutti Capi of Sicily (Farrell 1997).

Arguably, it was the emergence of Alphonse Capone as the head of the Chicago Mafia in 1925 that led the evolution from the traditionalism of their Sicilian ancestry, towards an expansive profit-making organisation (MacKenzie 1967). In 1929 Capone organised a national convention of Mafia chiefs in Atlantic City where the United States was divided up into "territories" (MacKenzie 1967, p.251). Control of each territory was assigned to the particular 'Don' of that city. The American Mafia had evolved into an organised crime group that reflected the economic opportunity of the wider society. However, the Sicilian Mafia continued as a way of

life, more coherent and controlled than their American contemporaries, reflecting the socio-economic climate and traditions of their homeland (Bequai 1997).

The years that followed witnessed an increased focus upon the American and Sicilian Mafia and their organisation and structure. The Kefauver Committee and the Valachi confessions[19] introduced the American public to a supposed monolithic, centrally controlled, hierarchical organised criminal conspiracy known as the Mafia or 'La Cosa Nostra' (Mahan O'Neil and 1998). This led to a wave of academic interest regarding the validity of such assertions. Donald Cressey became the pioneer in the study of organised crime creating the "Governmental Model" (Albini 1988, p.16), which subscribed to the findings of the Kefauver Committee (1951) and the assertions of Joseph Valachi[20]. However, this 'traditional', conspiratorial view of the American Mafia's structure has been deeply criticised.

Whilst acknowledging Cressey's (1969) pioneering work, many commentators assert that his view of a monolithic centrally controlled secret society is misleading (Albini 1988). Cressey (1969) believed that the American Mafia consisted of 24 'families'; located in the large US cities, subject to the overall control of 'The Commission'. The families were hierarchical in rank[21] and controlled by the family 'Boss'. However, Smith (1975) proposes that such a view is romanticised by "The Slippery Label" of the Mafia (Smith 1975 p.142). Smith (1975) believed that the mystique and fear afforded by such a label not only served the criminal fraternity, but was also perpetuated by law enforcers to justify increased resources and legislative powers.

Albini (1988) and Reuter (1983) both conform to a view of the American Mafia based around the patron-client dyad and loose criminal networks of Sicilian decent operating under the name

[19] See Appendix 1, p.54
[20] See Appendix 1, p.54
[21] See Appendix 5, p.62

of Mafia. However, the difficulty inherent in quantifying the concept of 'organisation' highlights the complexity of accurately defining such social action. Furthermore, the codes of secrecy employed by secret societies and law enforcement authorities act to increase the gap between 'truth' and 'reality'. Secrecy perpetuates the formation of theory, rhetoric and myth.

Bequai (1997) and Sterling (1994) believe that the traditional structure of the Mafia is still functional in the US and Sicily and is characterised by a loose association of 'families' averaging 15 to 20 members who are controlled by a "Capo" (Bequai 1997, p.14). Sterling (1994) argues that co-operation between Mafia 'families' occurs primarily to resolve conflict and for opportunities of mutual gain. In this way Mafia families adopt an interim relationship that is also based around the patron-client dyad.

The Chinese Triads

Many of the secret societies evolving out of China, ally themselves with the traditions and practices of the original Triad organisations born from the 'foundation account'[22]. Therefore, the name Triad has become somewhat synonymous with all Chinese organised crime, known in China as the "*jiang hu*" ('Dark Society') (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p.78). Unlike the debates regarding the organisation of the Mafia, commentators are largely unified in the agreement that Triad secret societies are fragmented and many in number (Vines 1998). Chin (1996) supports this assertion and maintains that Triad secret societies do not form one coherent organisation but represent a number of Triad groups differing in size and influence.

As the migration patterns of China forced many Triad secret societies to the West, academic interest became intensified (Huston 1995). The various Triad secret societies that emigrated to

[22] See Appendix 3, p.58

the US, Britain, Hong Kong and Taiwan have largely maintained their original hierarchical structure starting with the 'foot soldier' and ending with the 'Dragon Head' or '489'[23] (Posner 1988). The largest Triad secret societies operational internationally are "The Wo Hop To, The 14K, The United Bamboo and the Sun Yee On," (Vines 1998, p.249).

However, in San- Francisco and New York, new Chinese organisations have been established known as 'Tongs'. Tongs are primarily respected and legitimate ' sworn-brotherhood' ('*Hui*') organisations for Chinese immigrant businessmen and are likened to the 'Freemasons' (Huston 1995). Not all are involved in criminal activity but some are. According to Huston (1995) certain Tong groups are infiltrated with members of Triad secret societies. These Tong groups often form alliances with Chinese criminal gangs such as "The Ghost Shadows and The White Eagles" (Huston 1995, p.63). Affiliated gangs form a symbiotic relationship with the Tong group via the Tong contact known as the "*ah kung*" ('Grandfather') (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p.75). Gangs are used as 'muscle' in return for resources, protection, leadership and legitimisation from the Tong group. Huston (1995) found that gang members who proved themselves over the years would often be initiated into a Tong group or Triad secret society. This is done much in the same way a '*Picotti*' ('Foot soldier') may become a 'Made Man' in American Mafia 'families'[24]. The main criminal Tong groups in the US are believed to be "On Leong, Tung On and The Fukien American Association" (Huston 1995, p.63). The opaque relationship between Tong and gang ensures that the '*ah kung'* remains in a position of low visibility from enforcement agencies but can still initiate criminal enterprise.

[23] See Appendix 6, p.63
[24] See Appendix 5, p.62

The IRA

The early Gaelic defenders of Ireland operated in Clans and Tribes to wage a type of guerrilla warfare upon the invading English forces (Kelley 1988). Although little is known about the organisation and structure of the Catholic secret societies of the 18th and 19th century, the formation of the IRA in 1919 initiated a wave of political and academic interest into its organisation and structure. Adopting a hierarchical structure the 'Army Council' assumed overall responsibility for IRA operations (O'Brian 1995). IRA 'Volunteers' were divided into 'companies' or 'battalions', which operated within a designated area. These would be placed under the direction of the 'Brigade Commander' of the particular area (Toolis 1995). Within the IRA structure other units were responsible for arms smuggling, money laundering, transportation and bomb making (Council Of Foreign Relations 2002). However, responding to numerous infiltrations by law enforcement bodies and an increasing number of informants, the IRA changed its structure in 1976 (Toolis 1995). The new structure included a weakening of the Army Council's power and transference of control over to " A mini-Army Council to oversee all operations in the North" (Toolis 1995, p.318). This 'mini-council' fragmented the IRA structure into small individual units known as 'cells' comprising of 30 to 60 men[25]. The Army council continued to supply resources, intelligence and links with Sinn Fein and the US fund raising wing known as 'NORAID' (Northern Irish Aid).

Organisation and Structure: Similarities and Differences

It may be more appropriate to differentiate between profit-motivated structures and politically motivated structures by reference to the differing consumer\client relationships and power flows (Reuter 1999). A politically motivated structure revolves around the need to affect

[25] See Appendix 7, p.64

change in a way that may be ultimately satisfied; the goal may or may not be achieved. Profit-motivated structures represent the need for a continued relationship and supply flow between patron and client. Although the product and market may change, ideally, the consumer will never be satisfied. The only goal is the continuation of the group and a healthy profit margin by operating within the fringes of formal authority. However, the IRA are motivated by a political ideology that does not fully recognise the formal authority and is therefore not as constrained by it. Therefore, one may logically infer that if IRA splinter groups were to evolve into profit-orientated motivations, then the consumer\client relationship would evolve accordingly. Consequently, the structure of the group could change in a way that would reflect this evolution, from the 'cell', to the explicitly hierarchical 'corporate' structure (Savona 1998).

Toolis (1995) maintains that the power flow of the 'cell' structure functions from the 'bottom upwards', contrasting to the 'top-down' flow of the Mafia and Triads. Despite this, IRA cells require training, resources and support. Consequently, this supposed 'bottom- up' flow of power is only assumed and is theoretically more complex than this simple disparity suggests. As with the flow of power within any society, secret society sub-cultures form complex webs of inter-related informal 'contracts' maintained by rules, norms and taboos. Therefore, the flow of power may alter with a fluidity that represents the specific context in which it operates. The flow of power is back and forth, horizontal and vertical, not one way.

Activities: The Move From Traditionalism To Modernity

The Mafia

The traditional power base of the Sicilian Mafia revolved around the occupation of power-vacuums and monopolisation of violence affecting the land-owning elite and the peasant

populations. Mafia influence became embedded within the social milieu of rural Sicilian life and with it the ability to provide protection and mediation that;

"Offered a pragmatic dimension of the state in terms of controlling tensions and actual control and authority" (Blok 1972, p.96).

According to Bequai (1997) it was the move post World War II from the rural to the urban that gave rise to Mafia 'families' evolving into the lucrative commerce and business markets. Furthermore, the dispersal of Mafiosi to North America created a trans-national link that would be exploited for criminal purposes. Ianni (1972) highlights the impact created by the new Sicilian/Italian immigrants. Drawing from the work of Bell (1964) and his claim that America was a "Queer Ladder of Social Mobility" (Bell 1964, p.13), Ianni (1972) summarised the changing face of American organised crime as a form of "Ethnic Succession" in which the Mafia succeeded Irish and Jewish gangsters (Hobbs 1998, p.824)

The traditional activities of the Sicilian Mafia were replaced with racketeering, embezzlement, blackmail and a move towards the domination of vice markets (Bequai 1979). This so-called 'New Mafia' responded to increasing globalisation and quickly learned how to "work the levers of capitalism"(MacKenzie 1967, p.253), enabling many 'families' to move into legitimate business markets as well illicit ones. Police and judges were assassinated, kidnapped and corrupted to ensure Mafia survival.

In the US, descendants of Sicilian Mafiosi had evolved to form new 'families'. Their ability to coerce through the use of violence, reputation and corruption ensured cooperation from communities in which they operated. American Mafiosi had adopted much of the principles of

their Sicilian counterparts. However, it was merged with a new desire to exploit the illicit and licit markets in America's relatively stable socio-economic climate. Mafia 'families' responded to this socio-economic climate by providing what legitimate authorities could or would not. Mediation of disputes within Mafia 'zones of influence', loan sharking, control of vice markets and the extortion of protection money from businesses, established and maintained reputations (Reuter and Rubinstein 1978). The ability of the American Mafia to acquire business legitimately through illegitimately raised capital provided 'fronts' for illicit activities. Increased profit margins enabled greater loans to be offered to accumulate greater interest rates (Sterling 1993).

The Labour Unions of America were to become prime targets for Mafia exploitation. As the presidency of a Labour Union afforded a politically powerful position corrupt Union officials colluded with Mafia 'families' to intimidate voters ensuring the election of a particular Mafia 'backed' candidate (Network First 1994) Mafiosi became 'labour consultants' for employers, ensuring union cooperation via Mafia contacts. Union funds have been used to provide loans to Mafia owned businesses in return for 'kickbacks' to corrupt labour officials (Bequai 1979). The Labour Unions have provided the Mafia with both monetary gain and political power (Arlacchi 1988).

Exploiting the international connection between America and Sicily allowed the Mafia to enter into the illicit Heroin trade, providing capital, resource and distribution. The Mafia were at one point responsible for "approximately 85% of the Heroin importation into the US market" (Bequai 1997 p.135). Profits increased to such an extent that in 1993 the major Sicilian and American 'families' acquired the island of Aruba buying all of the "major properties and institutions" (Sterling 1994, p.21). Forming alliances with the Columbian Medellin cartel in

1987, the Sicilian Mafia moved into Cocaine trafficking. Under the leadership of Salvatore "Toto" Rinina, argued to be the Sicilian Mafia's 'Capo De Tutti Capi' (Sterling 1994, p28), the European Cocaine market became a joint venture. At the time of this agreement the annual turnovers of both groups' drug trafficking 'interests' were estimated at around $300 billion (Sterling 1994).

Currently, the American and Sicilian Mafia are believed to have lost a significant proportion of their influence in the drug trafficking markets (Reuter 1995). Most of their assets are believed to lie in legitimate businesses (Mahan and O'Neil 1998). The Mafia's control of the US Heroin market has diminished as Mexican, Asian and Afghan source Heroin has become available to other organised crime groups (Reuter 1995). The control of the Labour Unions has been damaged significantly by aggressive law enforcement and legislation[26]. Mexican importation has changed the trafficking routes to avoid areas under Mafia control (Farrell 1997). Traditional trafficking routes through Sicily, Southern Italy and France have been replaced with direct importation via the West coast of America by other criminal secret societies such as Chinese Triad groups (Reuter 1995). Essentially, the increased involvement in legitimate business has increased risks and consequences upon Mafia 'families' involvement in illicit markets. Following his arrest in 1960 the alleged Capo De Tutti Capi of New York, Charles 'Lucky' Luciano summed up the future of American and Sicilian Mafia;

"If I had my time over again I'd do the same sort of thing, only I'd do it legal. Too late I learned that you need just as good a brain to make a crooked million as an honest million" (MacKenzie 1967, p.265).

[26] See 'Governmental Responses', p.37

The Chinese Triads

Like the Sicilian Mafia, Chinese Triad secret societies formed as part of a social survival strategy to provide a network of support "sharing in an exclusive body of ritual and narrative lore" (Barend 1998, p.1). Triad secret societies provided peasant populations with a means of affecting political change whilst offering opportunities to reduce rural alienation (Posner 1988). The protection of peasant populations and the mediation of disputes were vital activities, although the diversity between Triad groups ensured a range in methods from the 'noble' to the 'exploitative' (Hobsbawm 1969). However, during times of relative political stability, Triad secret societies often exploited their social networks for monetary gain (MacKenzie 1967). Many Triad groups resorted to piracy, smuggling, extortion and vice crimes to ensure the survival of the collective.

Following the collapse of the Chinese Nationalist government and the Communist take over in 1945, the Truman Administration sponsored Chiang Kai Shek's Nationalist party and their military wing known as KMT via CIA front companies. This 'Truman Doctrine' was formed to contain the perceived threat of global Communist expansion (Finckenauer 2000). Triad groups including the 'Green Gang' were instrumental in orchestrating and facilitating this US support (Posner 1988). After several failed attempts to retake China the KMT leader 'General Li' decided to focus upon the 'Golden Triangle'[27] eventually taking control of its Opium production (Posner 1988). Several Triad secret societies remained in collusion with the CIA funded KMT. The CIA were also responsible for introducing the KMT and its Triad followers to the anti-Communist Thai General Phao Sriyanonda, the man responsible for the majority of Heroin trafficking into China (Posner 1988). Following, a military coup Triad groups and the KMT assumed control over all trafficking into China. Consequently, Chinese Triad groups are

[27] See Appendix 3, p.58

believed to have surpassed the Sicilian and American Mafia with regards to the US and European Heroin markets, via their control of the 'Golden Triangle' (Bequai 1979). The greater access to Asian source Heroin has allowed Chinese Triad groups to increasingly dominate the world Heroin trafficking markets (Reuter 1999).

The ability of Chinese Triad secret societies to exert control over Chinese communities the world over has ensured their survival. In Hong Kong Triads control many of the Casino's and illegal gambling dens (Posner 1988). Protection rackets, counterfeiting, loan sharking, corruption and pervasive embezzlement are activities in which many of the Triad and Tong (US) secret societies are involved (Posner 1988). Like the Mafia, Triad groups in the US and Hong Kong have moved into legitimate business ventures as fronts for their illicit interests reflecting their move towards capitalist ideals (Huston 1995). Triad groups have also been linked to the smuggling of illegal aliens into the US and UK. These 'Snakehead' groups are believed to charge up to 25,000 US dollars for smuggling Chinese aliens into the US (Savona 1998).

Triad influence was evident in the years leading up to the 'handover' of Hong Kong from British rule to Chinese rule. According to various reports the Chinese government sent a representative to convene a secret meeting between the 'Dragon Heads' of the major Triad groups operational in Hong Kong prior to the 1984 'handover' agreement was signed (Vines 1998). At this meeting it is believed that a kind of treaty was made:

"The loosely stated deal was clear. The Triads could get on with their business quietly as long as they did nothing to jeopardise the smooth handover of power to China" (Vines 1998, p.253).

The IRA

Like their Gaelic ancestors, the IRA waged a type of 'guerrilla warfare' on the British government and her agents. Mao Tse-tung's analogy of guerrilla warfare views the guerrillas as 'fish' and the local populace as the water:

"The former must live and operate among the latter and their support, or at least their acquiescence, is essential for the guerrillas' survival and success" (Murray 1984 p.35).

IRA operations have not changed significantly since its creation in 1919[28]. Bombings, assassinations, beatings, intimidation and arms smuggling have all been utilised by the IRA (Toolis 1995). Although operations have been carried out at various periods since 1919, it was the Ulster riots of 1969 that marked the beginning of what is commonly referred to as the 'Troubles' (Kelley 1988). The split between the Official IRA and the Provisional IRA a year later in 1970[29], marked the beginning of a long 'campaign' against the British government and its occupation of Northern Ireland.

High profile IRA attacks in Northern Ireland and England have proved devastating. The July 1972 bombings in the centre of Belfast known as 'Bloody Friday' left 9 people dead and 130 injured (Council Of Foreign Relations 2002). In 1979 the IRA assassinated Queen Elizabeth II's Uncle, Lord Mountbatten and in 1984 bombed a meeting of Margaret Thatcher's cabinet in Brighton leaving 9 dead and others injured (Toolis 1995). These, and many other attacks on military and civilian targets, highlight the IRA's commitment to their cause. However, the current IRA 'ceasefire' following the 'Good Friday' agreement has led to a number of splinter groups forming to continue the fight for a United Ireland[30].

[28] See Appendix 2, p.56
[29] See Appendix 2, p.56
[30] See Appendix 2, p.56

There are indications that IRA splinter groups such as the 'Real IRA' and the 'Irish National Liberation Army' have utilised trans-Atlantic connections with arms smugglers and drug traffickers. Several members of the 'Real IRA' are on trial in Columbia for attempting to traffic Cocaine with the Columbian Medellin cartel and the INLA are believed to be involved in more profit motivated activities then they are political (Taylor 2003).

Like Mafia and Triad secret societies, the IRA became influential within their own communities. The IRA evolved into enforces of law and order within Catholic communities where legitimate authorities have informally conceded to this de facto authority (Knox 2002). The communities that support the existence of the IRA have also conceded to their informal control in the administration of 'justice'. This summary 'justice' revolves around a graduated scale of punishments depending upon the crime committed;

"From threats or warnings, through curfew, public humiliation, exile and punishment beating, to kneecapping, or, in exceptional circumstances 'execution'" (Knox 2002, p.173).

Silke (1998) argues that this represents a pragmatic need to control criminal behaviour as defined by the community, and to punish those who pose a threat to the de facto authority. However, the support or acquiescence to insidious IRA violence by Catholic communities is finely balanced between a presumed legitimacy and criminality (Moxon-Brown 1986). The contention by the IRA that the formal criminal justice system is ineffective supports Simmel's (1950) assertion that the secret society replaces the formal authority as the primary source of protection and support[31]. Consequently, the support of the community is paramount, as any alteration between the balance of legitimacy and criminality, may affect the status quo. Knox

[31] See 'The Secret Society As A Sub-Culture' p.14

(2000) highlights this shifting balance and how several of the Irish paramilitaries are evolving into criminal organisations involved in racketeering and illicit drug markets. Whilst, such evolutions reflect the increasing political stabilisation of Ireland and a move towards democratic resolutions rather than violence, it jeopardises the IRA's informal legitimacy (Kiley 1999). Focus group interviews in Belfast (1999) of both Catholic and Protestants revealed the extent to which this may be true;

"I want the police to have the power to look after this community. As far as I'm concerned the paramilitaries have no place in Northern Ireland. They were set up to protect one side and fight against the other. Well that's done. We've got peace now. They're big businesses. They are hiding behind this paramilitary protection of communities but really all they are is big businesses and extortionists into fraud and drugs. There is no place for them" (Focus group participant, November 1999) (Knox 2002, p.177).

The Mafia, The Triads and The IRA: Governmental Responses

'Iatrogenesis' is a medical term used to describe a condition in which a given disease is *"caused or exacerbated by the intervention that attempts to alleviate or remedy the problem"* (Cohen, 1985, p.169). Iatrogenesis usually occurs when symptoms of a particular problem are targeted for intervention without first acquiring a clear understanding of the problem and interrelationships with the symptoms (Hicks 1998). Such a term can be paralleled analogously with governmental responses to the secret societies discussed.

Governmental Reponses: Policy, Legislation and Law Enforcement

Policy and Legislation

The evolution of the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA has been shaped and directed by governmental policy and legislation that has been both oppressive and pro-active[32].

All three secret societies have sought to react to legislation and policy that has persecuted their communities. Mussolini's fascist regime in the 1920's sought to eradicate the growing influence of the Mafia families. Led by Mussolini's chief of police Cesare Mori, the fascist regime deported, tortured and imprisoned many Mafiosi (MacKenzie 1967). However, this governmental policy failed primarily on two accounts: firstly, Mussolini had mistakenly 'written off' the Mafia as a type of rural delinquency and thus failed to recognise the Mafia's entrenched influence that resulted through years of inadequate central government control. Secondly, the persecution of Mafia 'families' only served to increase the distrust of legitimate authority, and dispersed the problem to other countries were this distrust would be super-imposed upon another culture.

[32] See Appendices 1,2 and 3, p.54-58

The isolation of Sicilian communities from the wider society in the US was characterised by the view that Sicilian Immigrants were second-class citizens (Lindberg 1999). Organised criminal activity was an equal opportunity employer that afforded Sicilian immigrants, status and social mobility. The Volstead Act (1920) created the prohibition era in Chicago providing the American Mafia with an ideal opportunity to increase profit and expand influence.

However, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (1967) (R.I.C.O) led to many of the Mafia's head figures being imprisoned or exiled (Lindberg 1999). Equally, the Italian *Pio La Torre* law (1982) was a legislative response to make 'Mafia Conspiracy' a new crime (Beare and Naylor 1999). These relatively successful legislative responses were aimed at the Mafia's involvement in the illicit business markets. Increased federal involvement in local government financing and the ability of federal agencies to initiate prosecutions in the US has rendered corruption of local officials increasingly difficult (Reuter 1995). The Mafia's Achilles heal has become their profit margins and their business reputations and successful legislative responses have sought to target and exploit this (Hicks 1998).

Voluntary migration patterns and forced dispersal of Triad secret societies created Chinese immigrant communities around the world[33]. These new Chinese immigrants found themselves in hostile environments in which they were viewed as second-class citizens (Bequai 1979). US legislation compounded this hostility when it legislated to prevent Chinese witnesses from testifying in court against white Americans (in *People v. Hall,* California 1854) (Bequai 1979, p.23). Like Sicilian and Irish communities, this legislative response increased the distrust in formal authority giving Triad secret societies a reason to exist and evolve by providing an alternative authority. As with the Mafia, Chinese communities in the US became insular and

[33] See 'Migrant Patterns' p. 19

self-reliant, dominated by Triad and Tong secret societies in a wider society that did not understand their customs or culture.

The IRA evolved out of hundreds of yeas of oppressive legislation. The statutes of Kilkenny (1366), the Penal laws of 1700 and the Act of Union (1800) removed civil and land rights for Irish Catholic communities[34]. Like the Mafia and the Triads, these legislative responses fuelled the evolution of Irish Catholic secret societies increasing hostility and distrust toward the formal government. The formation of the IRA in 1919 provided an informal alternative to the legitimate authority.

In 1971 Stormont invoked the Special Powers Act (1922) to intern suspected terrorists without trial (Carlton 1981). This led to violent reactions from the IRA increasing the average death toll from 8 to 114 in a four-month period (Carlton 1981). Consequently, Prime minister Heath appointed a Royal Commission, chaired by Lord Justice Diplock, to consider alternative legal procedures. In 1972 the Special Powers Act (1922) was abolished and the recommendations were incorporated into the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act (1973). The Act created the 'Diplock' courts to try political cases. In these courts juries were abolished and cases were heard in front of a single high or county court judge. While the Act may have been an alternative to internment, Irish Catholic communities viewed it as another oppressive legislative move (Carlton 1981). This was exacerbated when the United Kingdom decided to treat all paramilitary prisoners convicted after 1976 as criminal inmates. This resulted in the infamous 'dirty protests' by IRA prisoners in Long Kesh who felt that being tried under special provisions should mean treatment as political prisoners (Carlton 1981). The IRA responded with a campaign aimed at the prison officers, murdering 17 by the end of 1979 (Carlton 1981).

[34] See Appendix 2, p.56

Such legislative reactions only increased the determination of the IRA and the perception that their goal could only be resolved by direct action.

Law Enforcement

By their very nature, criminal and political secret societies present numerous problems to law enforcement agencies. The emphasis on secrecy and distrust of legitimate authority poses dilemmas in the gathering of intelligence and evidence. Furthermore, law enforcement operations are bound by the same problems, pressures and considerations as legislative responses. Consequently, the medical analogy previously[35] employed for legislative responses, applies to law enforcement policies and operations; the 'cure' may be contributing to the 'disease'.

Globalisation affects law enforcement efforts as economies and markets become increasingly inter-dependant (Beare and Naylor 1999). The effect of law enforcement efforts in one country or locale may cause an equal or opposing effect in another. Take for example, 'Operation Green Ice', one of the largest international law enforcement efforts ever directed at one criminal group; Columbia's Cali drug cartel (Hicks 1998). Led by the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) the operation was against what was believed to be one of the most powerful criminal organisations in the world (Smith 1992). Approximately, $47 million was seized, 140 bank accounts frozen throughout the world and numerous arrests made (Hicks 1998). Whilst this was a political success and an undoubted image 'booster' for the DEA, the actual disruptive and preventative effects were marginal at best. The seizure of $47 million represented 0.16% of the Cali Cartel's annual profit conservatively estimated at $30 billion (United Nations International Drug Control Programme 1994). The indirect effect of this operation on the international

[35] See 'Government Responses' p.37

financial system was an increase in the 'premium' paid for illicit money laundering services, as criminal groups anticipated further operations (UNIDCP 1994). Consequently, Mafia 'families' and Triad groups increased their profits by laundering Columbian drug money through their legitimate businesses (Hicks 1998). Arguably, the indirect effect of 'Operation Green Ice' was an increase in criminal collaboration. Equally, the recommencement of Afghan poppy cultivation in October 2001 following the removal of the Taleban regime by US and UK forces is expected to increase the saturation of worldwide Heroin production (NCIS 2002). It is speculated that this will increase the profits of organised crime groups such as the Triads, the Mafia and increasingly IRA splinter organisations such as the Irish National Liberation Army (Council Of Foreign Relations 2002).

As criminal and politically motivated activities have become increasingly sophisticated[36] law enforcement agencies have evolved in a manner that reflects this progression. However, multi-agency co-operation both domestically and internationally has often proved difficult. Political dimensions again come into play as agencies guard intelligence in a reluctance to share prestige and 'political capital' that may result from effective operations (Beare and Naylor 1999). The need for multi-agency cooperation is ever more apparent as organised crime and terrorism becomes increasingly trans-national as globalisation and technological advances make borders more permeable (Reuter and Petrie 1999). Law enforcement efforts have to overcome differing national laws and regulations that provide opportunities for exploitation, what Passas (1998) calls "Criminogenic Asymmetries" (Passas 1998 p.2). Without effective multi-agency co-operation, criminal and political secret societies are afforded the chance to exploit gaps and vacuums left by bureaucratic power struggles.

[36] See 'Activities' section, p.28

The need for co-operation at all levels of the law enforcement 'chain' is apparent. Hobbs (1998) maintains that it is the manifestation of organised criminal activity at the local level that is of equal significance to the macro level. It is important to acknowledge that groups such as the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA cater to the needs of their perceived consumer base[37]. The Mafia and the Triads involvement in illegal markets is a response to the "native" demand for "illicit drugs, sex and gambling" (Hobbs 1998, p.408). Similarly, the IRA responds to the demand for a political and social 'tool' from which to vent anger and mount collective action. As shown in Ireland with the recent referendum and move towards a power-sharing government, if the consumer base is 'satisfied' then the need for a group like the IRA diminishes. Consequently, Hobbs (1998) argues that law enforcers need to recognise the local aspects of global crime as it is at "the local level that organised crime manifests itself as a tangible process of activity" (Hobbs 1998, p.408). The problem is not one of an alien conspiracy corrupting the native society, and without this recognition the evolution of secret societies such as the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA would be greatly facilitated.

Symbiotic Relations With Formal Authority: A 'Mutual Benefit' Paradigm?

Symbiotic relations with formal and legitimate authority have facilitated the evolutions of the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA. These relationships have been legitimate, corruptive, often necessary, frequently political and usually mutually beneficial.

Relationships of necessity have often been formed between formal authority and secret societies. Often these symbiotic relations, constructed for a perceived mutual benefit, have contributed directly to each group's evolution. In 1943 Allied forces removed the fascist regime from Sicily with the aid of the American and Sicilian Mafia. The Allied forces brokered an

[37] See 'Organisation and Structure', p.23

informal deal to ensure the Mafia's acquiesce to the Allied invasion of Sicily (MacKenzie 1967). After securing the Island, Allied forces made Don Calo, the 'Capo De Tutti Capi' of Sicily, Mayor of Villalba (MacKenzie 1967). Calo put other Mafiosi into positions of power and thus the Allies delivered Sicily back to the Mafia. In 1937 the Chinese Nationalist government enlisted the aid of numerous Triad groups to fight against Japanese invaders and Communist guerrillas[38] (Huston 1995). When they were defeated and abandoned by the Nationalist government many fled to the US and UK while others worked for the CIA supported KMT[39]. Similarly, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 led to 80,000 Irish secret society volunteers (pre-cursor to the IRA) to enlist in the British Army under the advice of their leader John Redmond in the belief that such sacrifice would be looked upon favourably by the British government. Upon realising that this would not be the case, various anti-Redmond Irish secret societies, combined to form the IRA (Kelley 1988).

Corruption has allowed the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA to survive in the face of aggressive law enforcement. The ability of these groups to acquire 'connections' with formal authorities allows for impunity and influence, political and pragmatic. Be it corruption of political figures, criminal justice officials or bureaucratic organisations, the power that such symbiotic relations afford is vital (Bequai 1979). The extent of corruption is often difficult to quantify, although high profile cases such as the recent IRA 'spy ring' in Stormont ensure media coverage[40]. The state of police corruption by Triad groups in Hong Kong became so prevalent that an independent anti-corruption agency was created 1974: 'The Independent Commission Against Corruption'. One of its first major cases found 5 officers of the anti-Triad Bureau to be 14K Triad members (Vines 1998).

[38] See Appendix 3, p.58
[39] See 'Chinese Triads' p.32
[40] See Appendix 2, p.56

Rather than corrupt officials, secret society members are increasingly moving into political positions themselves. As the Mafia became increasingly involved in legitimate business ventures, they sought to move into positions of legitimate influence both in the US and Sicily becoming Mayors and Union Officials (Bequai 1979)[41]. This is apparent with the IRA as they sought to legitimise themselves politically through support of Sinn Fein[42]. Similarly, Chinese Triad members have historically occupied positions of political authority, exemplified by the appointment of Chiang Kai Shek, the leader of the 'Green Gang', as China's President in 1920[43]. Although Chinese communities in the US still remain largely insular, their political influence in China is undoubted. In 1993 Tao Siju, the Chinese Minister for Public Security announced that many Triad members were "patriotic citizens" and had "a role to play in the building of the Chinese nation" (Vines 1998, p.252).

This politicisation of secret societies reflects the increasingly blurred dichotomy between the legitimate and the illegitimate. Political and social constraints that regulate the organic growth of these secret societies are being avoided as lines are crossed and boundaries broken; from the illegitimate to the legitimate, the activist to the politician.

[41] See Appendix 1, p.54
[42] See Appendix 2, p.56
[43] See Appendix 3, p.58

The Japanese Yakuza and The Jamaican Yardies: Exceptions That Prove The Theoretical Rule?

The Mafia, the Triads and the IRA share numerous evolutionary characteristics that can be compared and paralleled to create an evolutionary pattern. However, in analysing the validity of creating a 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' it is imperative to consider how other groups may or may not correlate with the given pattern.

The Yakuza and the Yardies have been chosen as they are increasingly of focus in academia, law enforcement and media fields. Both groups are characterised by distinctly different countries of origin, therefore allowing a certain degree of cross-cultural comparison with the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA.

The Japanese Yakuza

According to legend, Japanese Yakuza groups descend from bands of noble outlaws and roaming '*Ronin*' (master-less Samurai) (Posner 1988). 'Yakuza' is derived from a traditional Japanese card game named '*hanafuda*'. 'Yakuza' means 8-9-3 and represents the worst possible combination in the game (Mahan and O'Neil 1998). Consequently, the term Yakuza became synonymous with these bands of outlaws, who would often frequent gambling dens, as a reference to their status on the fringe of society (Mahan and O'Neil 1998).

Increasingly the Yakuza moved into the 'floating world' of vice, drugs and other illicit activities. In the 17th Century Japanese authorities banned all firearms as a reaction to the cold-blooded nature of war and as a gesture to an enduring commitment to the sword (Sterling 1994). The 1958 'Firearms and Swords Control Act' continued this legacy. This opened up an

illicit market for distribution and importation in which Yakuza groups came to dominate (Sterling 1994). It is estimated that 89% of all firearms seized in Japan are distributed by the Yakuza (Posner 1988). The outlawing of hard-core pornography in Japan also allowed the Yakuza to cater to the native demand for vice. Yakuza groups are believed to be in control of the Japanese tourist markets around the world particularly in America (Mahan and O'Neil 1998). Gambling, loan-sharking, drugs and arms trafficking, vice, blackmail and racketeering are all activities undertaken by Yakuza groups (Sterling 1994). Moreover, increasing movement toward legitimate business ventures has allowed Yakuza groups to maintain fluid movement between the "underworld and the up-world" (Mahan and O'Neil 1998, p.85).

The Yakuza conform to MacKenzie's (1967) definition of a secret society[44], adopted for this study. The hierarchical structure is 'top-down' and codes of secrecy and ethic are enforced through violence and ritual (Mahan and O'Neil 1998). The core of Yakuza tradition revolves around the relationship between the foot soldier or '*Kobun'* and the leader or *'Oyuban'*. This mentor/student relationship ensures adherence to secrecy, discipline and ethic (Mahan and O'Neil 1998). The Yakuza are a number of secret societies operating under a collective term, the largest of which is believed to be the 'Yamaguchi-Gumi' (Sterling 1994).

Japanese culture has afforded Yakuza groups a unique position in which they are widely accepted by the legitimate authority. Japanese authorities employ a 'see no evil, hear no evil' philosophy to the existence of the Yakuza providing informal boundaries are not crossed and polite Japanese society is left un-disrupted (Sterling 1994). In this sense the Yakuza are accepted as the informal regulators of the Japanese criminal underworld. This symbiotic relationship allowed the Yakuza to acquire international wealth and influence that made them

[44] See 'Secret Societies', p.8

almost indistinguishable from legitimate authority in both licit and illicit markets (Mahan and O'Neil 1998).

The Jamaican Yardies

Hailing from Tivoli in Jamaica, the original Yardie gang the 'Shower Posse' was the creation of one man. Jim Brown is considered the 'original Yardie' and he became a legend of the Jamaican people following his death in 1984 (Assignment 1994). Brown was essentially a criminal, entering his 'Shower Posse' into the Crack-Cocaine markets of Jamaica and eventually the US. However, the 'Shower Posse' also allied with the Jamaican Labour Party (JLP) in an attempt to gain political backing, resources and funding. The fragile nature of the Jamaican political system meant that elections were fought not with marketing strategies but with violence (Assignment 1994). The JLP used the 'Shower Posse' as defenders of the JLP supported communities against the rival party the Peoples National Party (PNP). As, the capital Kingston is essentially split into two politically and violently opposed sides, rival Yardie groups became the unofficial armed wings of the PNP and the JLP (Assignment 1994). However, Yardie groups existed primarily to control the Crack-Cocaine markets.

Yardie gangs are not hierarchical nor are they secretive societies. The name Yardie refers to the back yard gang culture of Jamaica. Consequently, Yardie gangs are seen as loosely structured networks of violent criminals (BBC News Online 1999). The poor socio-economic conditions of Jamaican inner cities has led many Yardies to move their criminal activities to the US and the UK following the illicit consumer trends of the Crack-Cocaine and illegal arms markets. New York is believed to be the primary source of Yardie gang activity in the US (BBC News Online 1999). In the UK Yardie gang networks are increasingly attracting the attention of law enforcement agencies as they become increasingly active in the illicit drugs and arms markets.

The Metropolitan Police's 'Operation Trident' is predominantly aimed at increasingly violent Yardie gang crime (BBC News Online 1999). Explosive, unrestricted violence is a characteristic of Yardie activity and the lack of a coherent organisation poses serious problems for law enforcement agencies.

Exceptions That Prove The Theoretical Rule?

The socio-economic oppression that characterises the evolution of the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA is evident in the evolution of Yardie gangs. However, Yardie culture is not specifically characterised by reliance upon the family unit as an enduring social support network (Assignment 1994). This contrasts to Sicilian, Chinese and Irish culture in which the family unit is of central importance to the cultural norm. Consequently, secret societies that evolve from these sub-cultures reflect the social norms of their communities. Therefore, Jamaican Yardie gangs are characterised by loosely tied opportunistic networks and uninhibited use of violence. Conversely, Japanese Yakuza groups based their organisation around the dyadic mentor/student relationship[45]. This ensured control, emphasised ritual and maintained ethic allowing a secret society to evolve.

Although Yardie gangs maintained a symbiotic relationship with legitimate authority based around a mutual benefit paradigm, it was a temporary relationship that dissolved in the pursuit of profit. Consequently, their political power-base was never consolidated and their spheres of influence never expanded. Equally, the failure to diversify and refine their criminal activities has confined them to one small aspect of the illicit markets in which they are relatively small players (NCIS 2002). Conversely, Yakuza groups maintained a symbiotic relationship with formal authority that did not dissolve in the pursuit of profit, therefore ensuring a certain

[45] See Appendix 4, p.61

political harmony. This allowed Yakuza groups to move between the legitimate and illegitimate markets with ease and relative impunity. This trend is reflected within the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA symbiotic relationships with authority. Furthermore, all three have been persecuted at times when this informal harmony with legitimate authority has been broken or temporarily unbalanced[46].

Yakuza groups have exploited the power vacuums of illicit markets by the monopolization of violence, maintained a secret sub-culture through fictive kinship, nurtured and consolidated a symbiotic relationship with formal authority and diversified their legitimate and illegitimate activities. Yardie gangs have failed to monopolise the international crack-cocaine and arms trades due to their inability to maintain a fluid and symbiotic relationship with formal authority. Their inability to regulate violence is counter-productive as it places them in positions of high visibility from law enforcement agencies. The evolution of Yardie gangs does not follow the evolutionary pattern of the Mafia, the Triads or the IRA and consequently they have not evolved into a secret society that could be described by a 'Blueprint of Circumstance'. Although Yakuza groups differ slightly in their creation evolving from noble outlaws and gamblers, the essential ingredients for the evolution of a secret society are inherent and therefore comparable to the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA.

[46] See Appendices 1,2 and 3, p.54-58

Conclusions: The Mafia, the Triads and the IRA: A 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' For The Evolution Of Criminal and Political Secret Societies

Fig 1: The Evolution Of Secret Societies (Fig 2 Overleaf)

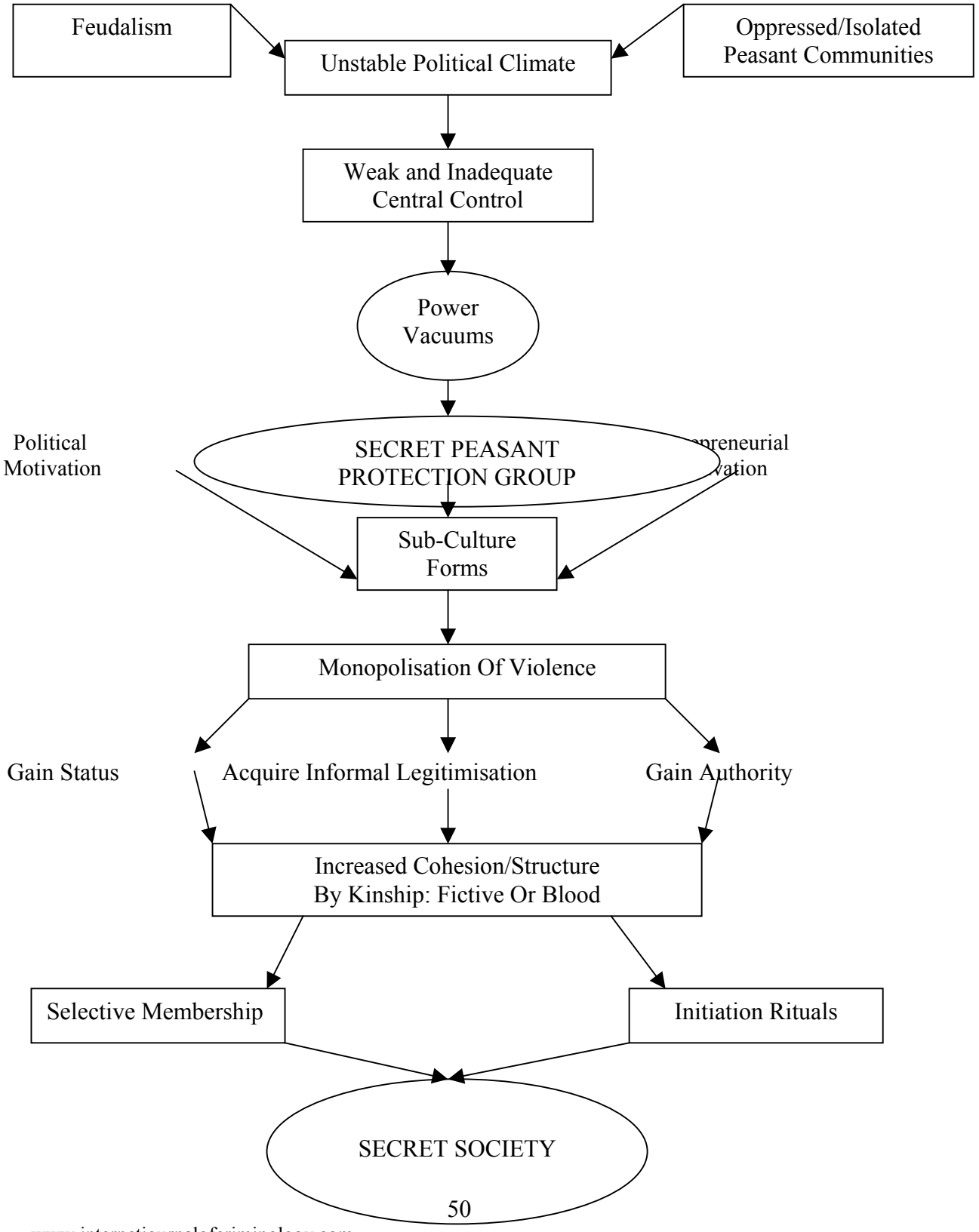
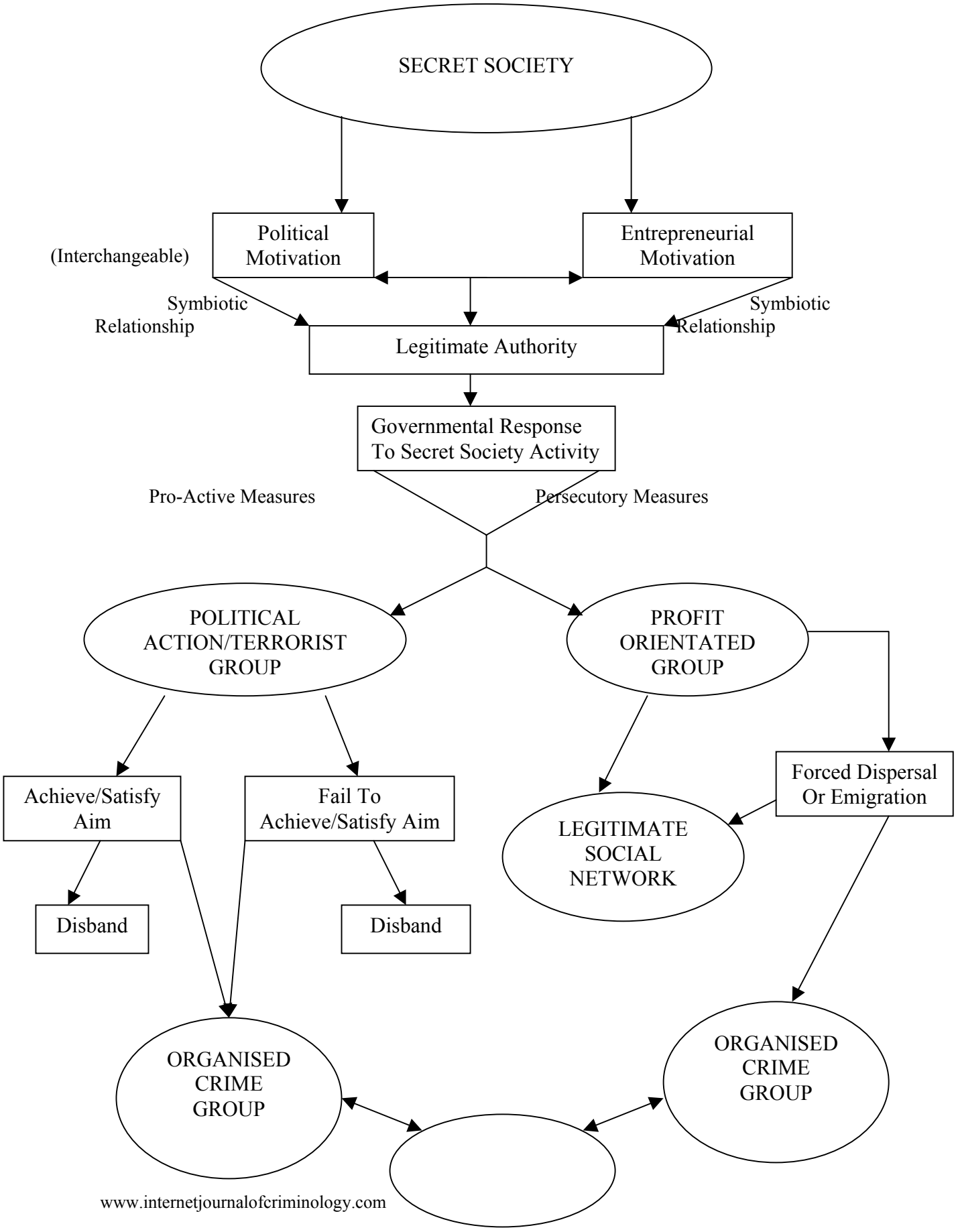


Fig 2: Dynamics Of Criminal and Political Secret Societies



Conclusions: How Feasible Is A 'Blueprint Of Circumstance'?

The inherent problem of attempting to create a predictive method for any kind of social action is that essentially it is more of an art than a science. There is no 'fool proof' way of accurately predicting human behaviour that is highly context specific and is affected by the wider societal and political climates in which it occurs. However, this study has attempted to highlight the benefits to be gained by approaching this dilemma from a holistic perspective. It is imperative to consider the multi-faceted causes of collective action.

Political and criminally motivated secret societies evolve due to a multitude of political, economic and societal factors. By considering the historical foundations and evolutionary patterns of each group, it is possible to compare and correlate patterns and trends. These patterns and trends can be used to draw inference with a view to predicting continued evolutionary directions. The three secret societies of primary focus in this study evolved from different parts of the world at different periods of time, yet they all share distinct characteristics. It is these re-occurring characteristics that form the basis of any predictive method, and this is so with the 'Blueprint Of Circumstance'.

This study has considered the validity of creating a 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' as a descriptive and predictive method for secret society evolution, to be ultimately utilised as a risk assessment tool. By comparing and contrasting the evolutions and dynamics of the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA it has been possible to create a 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' from which one can draw certain logical conclusions. Although the Mafia, the Triads and the IRA evolved from secret peasant protection groups, as secret societies their primary motivations became the basis for theoretical and political divisions; 'entrepreneurial criminals' and 'political terrorists'. However, by deconstructing these dichotomies the study highlights the fluid nature of each

group's evolutionary path. If one follows the patterns suggested by the 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' the conclusion is drawn that members of the IRA may collectively move towards an entrepreneurial motivation in response to the changing political, social and economic climate of Ireland.

The accuracy of this 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' is something that the future will make apparent. The probability of creating any predictive tool that would accurately account for an infinite number of factors, in a historical and context specific way is highly questionable. It is acknowledged that the evolutions of other political and criminal secret societies may highlight inherent flaws in the 'Blueprint Of Circumstance' and as such would form an interesting and informative basis from which to conduct future study. However, the need for alternative approaches to the well-explored areas of political and criminal secret societies is apparent. The more we understand why these collectives are formed, the more we as a society become increasingly aware of how to prevent their creation. Without this understanding we may only ever hope to treat the symptoms at the neglect of the cause.

The Sicilian Mafia, The Chinese Triads and The IRA: A Study of Secret Societies

In order to explore the evolution of these three groups it is necessary to provide a basic historical timeline, for both reference and to place into context any patterns and consequent inferences made. It is noted that each chronology does not represent a definitive version of the specific historical events. The histories and evolutions of all three groups are complex, varied and often disputed. The chronologies only attempt to draw out some of the major historical events, which may have contributed to subsequent evolutionary direction

Appendix 1

Chronology of the Sicilian Mafia's Evolution.

- 1812- Feudalism is abolished in Sicily by the Bourbons who had fled from Naples due to its occupation by Napoleonic forces. Sicily is protected from invasion by British fleets led by Lord Nelson. Under influence from Lord Bentinck (practically a viceroy in Sicily at this time), the Sicilian government decides to follow other European countries and abolish Feudalism.
- 1816- Bourbon government restored in Naples. The new government attempts to restrict the power of local landlords ('Gabelloti') by encouraging the emancipation of the landless peasants believing the abolition of the feudal system would create a more stable social base. This created tensions between the government, landowners and the peasantry. However, the Bourbon state soon realises the problems of superimposing new legislation upon a traditionally feudal society.
- 1817- Bourbon legislation attempts to merge new-landed gentry in Sicily to create a more stable social base for the peasant class.
- Mid 1800's and onwards- Due to the government's inability to enforce legislation in inland areas, local landlords continue to exploit and suppress peasant populations by refusing them their given land rights.
- Some peasants seize the opportunity to offer their services as security and protection for landowners and absentee landlords in an attempt to escape the bleak life of the peasantry. This is in exchange for honour and status.
- These peasant protectors monopolize the use of violence due to inadequate central control despite the unification of Italy.
- These peasant protectors begin to be known as 'men of respect' (uomini rispetto). These individuals steadily increase their power-bases through kinship ties based upon honour, and friendship ties based upon the patron-client dyad. They become known as Mafia, a secret society that relies upon kinship and maintains distrust for legitimate authority. Mafia 'families' become the informal rule of law, policing and protecting peasant population in return for acquiescence to this authority.
- Mid 1800's- The government hires 'Companies at Arms' to police inland areas of Sicily. However, the entrenched position of Mafia groups, maintained through a strict code of secrecy known as 'Omerta' ('manliness'), disables any attempt made by the companies at arms in eradicating Mafia existence. Instead Mafia groups mix and exist in conjunction with, and parallel to these 'Companies at Arms' to ensure the peasant populations are protected. Moreover, bandit groups do not enter Mafia controlled land and often seek the protection of the Mafia in return for favour. The Mafia increasingly become regulators of violence and mediators of disputes.
- Mayors appointed by the government wield large amounts of power and continue to suppress the peasantry through corrupt practices and refusal of peasant land rights.

- 1860- Garibaldi and his 'Redshirts' invade Sicily. Mafia families agree to move their support from the Bourbons to Garibaldi. A Republic is formed.
- 1893- An organised peasant protest group known as the 'Fasci' is created and supported by Mafiosi and frustrated peasants to gain increased land rights.
- 1894- Landowners and gabelloti in Sicily yield to the demands of the 'Fasci' groups and many of the large estates are sold to Mafia families.
- Mafiosi began to move into positions of power via local government infrastructures. Their social capital is that of violence and intimidation which afforded them power, honour and status. The state had no choice but to submit to the Mafia's informal legitimacy and to peasant populations 'Mafia law' is more effective than legitimate authority.
- 1920's-Despite an effort by Mussolini's fascist regime to eradicate the Mafia, the strong informal structure, connections with formal authority, continued codes of secrecy ('Omerta') and kinship bonds allow some Mafiosi to survive. The fascist regime had mistakenly written off the Mafia's influence as rural delinquency. Many emigrate to North America.
- 1940- Gradual disintegration of large estates in Sicily reduces Mafia opportunities. Consequently an exodus of peasant populations to the industrial North and the US weakens their position further.
- 1943- Allied forces force the fascist regime out of Sicily with the help of the remaining Sicilian Mafia via emigrated Sicilian Mafiosi in the US who pass on intelligence.
- 1948- Mafia groups then aid the state to ward off incursions from the far political left which re-affirms their position as powerbrokers.
- 1950- The Kefauver Committee of the US senate uncovered evidence of a secret society known as the Mafia. The Committee claimed it was a centrally controlled, monolithic group that was operating in dozens of US cities.
- 1960- Descendants of the Sicilian Mafia in America who are commonly known as 'The Mafia' are severely disabled by the Racketeer influenced and Corrupt Organisations legislation. RICO legislation is successful in incarcerating many leading Mafia figures.
- 1963- Joseph Valachi becomes the first ex Mafiosi to testify in front of the US Senate and admit to the existence of the Mafia ('La Cosa Nostra') and the 'Commission' that controlled it.
- 1972- Anti-Mafia commission in Palermo concludes there is no remedy for the problem of the Sicilian/Italian Mafia due to their influence in government and accumulated wealth.
- It is currently believed by many commentators that much of the what is perceived as the American Mafia is based upon loose knit groups that operate in primarily low visibility vice crimes relying upon legitimately owned businesses for income.

Appendix 2

Chronology of the IRA's Evolution

- 1170- Earl of Pembroke (aka 'Strongbow') lands in Ireland and defeats Irish Gaelic defenders.
- 1171- Henry II installs feudal system and declares himself ruler of Ireland.
- 1250- Normans conquer and rule most of Ireland.
- 1297- Gaelic defenders manage to regain territory and push back Anglo-Norman planters to a small area around Dublin known as the 'Pale'.
- 1366- Anglo-Norman rule enacts the statues of Kilkenny to forbid planters and Irish living in the Pale from speaking Gaelic (using English instead), prevent intermarriage and stop the wearing of Gaelic dress and adoption of Gaelic names.
- 1580- An attempted Spanish invasion of Ireland aided by the Gaels (who provide intelligence to the Spanish) is crushed by the English. The Spanish army retreats.
- 1608- Majority of Ulster's counties are saturated with English and Scottish settlers.
- 1649- Oliver Cromwell lands in Ireland to curb Catholic Gaelic resistance. Many Catholics are killed and deported. Survivors are forced back to Southern Ireland.
- 1685- After the restoration of the monarchy in England the Catholic King James II is overthrown by the Protestant William Of Orange.
- 1690- James is defeated by King William Of Orange at the Boyne. Protestant dominance of Ireland maintains control over Catholic populations.
- 1700- Penal laws remove rights of property for Irish Catholics.
- 1760- Catholic peasant secret societies, the 'Whiteboys' and the 'Oakboys' are formed for protection and the fight for equality.
- 1785- Another Catholic protection group is formed known as the 'Defenders'.
- 1800- Act of Union is passed by Westminster and creates the United Kingdom, binding Ireland and removing Irish autonomy.
- 1823- Another peasant protection group the 'Catholic Association' is formed by Daniel O'Connoll. The 'Catholic Association' manages to gain back certain rights for Catholics, such as the right to join the judiciary and civil service.
- 1845- The potato famine kills thousands of Catholics due to the "skewed exportation and distribution of agricultural patterns in favour of English Settlers" (Kelley 1990, p16) This causes many survivors to emigrate to America.
- 1856- Catholics form secret protection society named 'Phoenix'. Phoenix forges a link with Irish settlers in America who have formed their own support group for Catholic rights in Ireland known as 'The Fenians'. The Fenians also have an armed wing of Irish exiles based in NY ready to fight in Ireland known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood (I.R.B). (The Fenians were an early form of what is now known as 'NORAID' (Irish Northern Aid), a US fund raising group for the IRA and Sinn Fein movement. Several members of NORAID have been charged with gun smuggling into Ireland).
- I.R.B begins uprisings in Ireland but they eventually begin to fragment although continue murdering English landowners and ostracising anyone evicting Catholics off the land (The first case being Captain Charles Boycott hence the derivation of this term).
- 1905- After two failed attempts to gain home rule for Ireland, Arthur Griffin forms 'Sinn Fein' to voice Catholic views, promote Republicanism and fight for home rule. Following several executions of I.R.B members for a failed attempt to seize Dublin's central Post Office, the London press labels all Irish rebels as 'Sinn Feiners'. The label sticks and Republicans give

their support to the party. Sinn Fein declare themselves the representatives of the Irish Republic, thus creating an informal alternative to legitimate authority.

- 1912- Ulster Volunteer Force is formed (consisting mainly Protestants) to resist the attempts of Catholics to gain home rule. This U.V.F would later become an organised group in the mid 1960's to fight for Northern Ireland to continue to be a part of the UK.
- 1918-Sinn Fein wins 73 out of 105 Irish seats at Westminster. The Dail Eireann is formed (Republican *de facto* parliament of Ireland).
- 1919- Now regarding itself a Republic, various secret groups merge and form 'Oglaigh na hEireann' or the 'Irish Republican Army' under the leadership of Michael Collins to fight for an official Irish Republic. The I.R.A soon forge links with Sinn Fein.
- 1920- British army moves into Northern Ireland as conflict increases. Government of Ireland Act passed by Westminster provides for the division of Northern and Southern Ireland.
- 1925- Agreement between Northern and Southern Ireland and Britain consolidates partition.
- 1939-Under the leadership of Sean Russell, the IRA declares war on Britain and begins bombing campaign.
- 1949- Westminster passes Ireland Act preventing reunification of Ireland except with consent of Northern majority.
- 1970- The Ulster Defence Regiment is created in Northern Ireland. Essentially this is a locally raised militia of full and part time members (primarily Protestant) that function as an official wing of the British Army.
- 1970- a disagreement over Sinn Fein/ I.R.A policy on agreeing to recognise and take part in the three parliaments (Dublin, Stormont, and Britain) led some Catholics to form the 'Provisional I.R.A' and the 'Real Sinn Fein' (The 'real' would later be dropped). These groups still held to the traditional principles of absenteeism from any parliament in Ireland that legitimised British occupation of Northern Ireland. Eventually the former I.R.A Commandant-General passed over command to the newly formed P.I.R.A thus legitimising the group that became known again as the I.R.A. Over the next 30 years the I.R.A again waged war against the British government and its agents through murders and bombings with many innocent people being caught in the cross fire (from the I.R.A and Protestant Para-military groups such as the U.V.F, the U.F.F and the U.D.A)
- 1998- The 'Good Friday Agreement' establishes a power sharing legislative body in Northern Ireland at Stormont. I.R.A announces cease-fire. I.R.A splinter groups are formed from those against the 'Good Friday Agreement' to continue campaigns. These include 'The Real I.R.A', the 'Continuity I.R.A' and the 'Irish National Liberation Army'. The Real I.R.A were linked to the Omargh bombing which killed 29 people (Protestants and Catholics).
- 2002- The power sharing government is suspended due to an ongoing investigation into allegations of an I.R.A spy ring infiltrating Stormont.

Appendix 3

Chronology of the Chinese Triads Evolution

- 206 B.C- The 'Red Eyebrows' are formed as a secret peasant brotherhood of patriots dedicated to overthrowing the usurper of the Han Dynasty Wang Mang. Once this is achieved the group turns to banditry in absence of a specific focus.
- 1279 A.D- The Mongols invade China.
- 1644- The Manchus or Qing Dynasty is established.
- 1674- Although accounts vary, the 'foundation account' supports the belief that peasant monks from the Shaolin Monastery (dedicated to Zen Buddhism and the art of Kung Fu) aid the Qing emperor by defeating invading barbarians in the North-West of China. He repays them by offering a triangular seal, which is a symbol of legitimisation and status (representing the bond between 'Heaven', 'Earth' and 'Man'.)
- 1675- Court officials become jealous and burn down the monastery. Five monks survive ('The Five Ancestors') and vow (through a blood covenant) to fight the Qing and restore the Ming dynasty. They scatter throughout China and establish Triad, 'Heaven and Earth' secret societies, the first of which resides in the Fukien province (named 'Triad' due to the triangular seal given by the emperor).
- Late 1600's- The 'White Lotus Society' is instrumental in re-establishing the Ming dynasty.
- During times of weak political control Triad societies increase in numbers to protect the peasantry, provide social support networks and allow the expression of "social and political grievances for millions of frustrated peasants" (Posner 1988, p30). The Triads relied upon inter-personal relations and connections with officials in government (known as "Guan Hsi") (Huston 1995, p15).
- 1700's- An increasing influx of Europeans to China in an attempt to control the Opium trade is attributed to inadequate centralised control. The government is unable to control and regulate this influx and consequently Triad groups take it upon themselves to fill this power vacuum.
- Early 1800's- The 'God Worshippers' are formed as a secret society that eventually grow into an armed protection group dedicated to protecting peasant populations from roaming bandits. Eventually the group assumed the name 'the Taipings' and began to openly revolt against the government in response to the poor conditions of the peasant population.
- 1839- 'Opium Wars' erupt following continued importation of Opium via India into Chinese ports by the British Colonial government despite being against Confucian philosophy. British forces crush Chinese opposition. Powerless to stop British Opium importation China hands over control of Hong Kong in 1856 to the British Colonial government.
- 1850-1864- The 'Taiping' uprising resulted in great losses on both sides. Some estimated numbers of deaths are in the 20 million region. Ultimately the Taipings are suppressed and many surviving members flee to Britain and America but members in China turn to piracy, protection rackets and smuggling in the absence of a specific focus and for survival.
- 1899- A peasant secret society known as the 'Boxers' is formed to protect peasant interests by fighting against increasing foreign incursions.
- 1900- The 'Boxers' attack and lay siege to foreign embassies in Peking. European, US and Japanese forces respond to rescue personnel. The Dowager empress (de facto ruler of China who dislikes the foreign incursions) orders the Chinese military to resist efforts to enter Chinese territory. The multi-national force defeats the Chinese army, occupies Peking and scatters the Boxers.

- 1911- Many intellectuals in China sought to establish a way of government that would incorporate foreign ideals and technology whilst retaining Chinese culture and moral values. A revolution resulted in southern China and the majority of provincial governments seceded from their positions in Peking, which led to the collapse of the dynasty, and a Republic of China being established.
- 1912-Triad groups (related by the initiation ceremonies, oaths, rules and honour codes), continue to protect the peasantry during this chaotic time. Gen.Yuan Shi-Kai was appointed president, but later attempted to appoint himself emperor of China. This was ignored and the government ceased to exist. Secret societies again protected peasant populations, the largest being 'The Red Spears'.
- 1920's- In major urban areas such as Shanghai, Triad groups increasingly turn to crime, the largest of such groups being the 'Green Gang', whose leading member Chiang Kai-Shek later became president and used the Triad gangs as unofficial strong arms of the government.
- 1937- Japanese forces invade China. Some Triad groups allied with Japanese forces and provide intelligence. Other Triad groups, such as the 'Green Gang', did what they could to hinder Japanese occupation forces and provide intelligence to Communist and Republican guerrillas. In Hong Kong Triad groups offer the Japanese forces intelligence in return for the burning of police files about Triad activities! This allowed for a clean slate when Britain regained control of Hong Kong in1945.
- 1940- In China the Communist guerrillas proved themselves more willing to fight and subsequently defeated the Japanese rule.
- 1945-Civil war broke out in China between Nationalists (including Chiang Khi Shek) and the Communist guerrillas. With the Communist forces winning, Nationalist groups managed to unite many secret society Triad groups in China (often initiating large numbers in massive rushed ceremonies). Many new members had little understanding of Chinese history, myth and lore and referred to the new group as '14' after the address of the HQ in Canton (later to be renamed '14K', the K standing for the measure of gold 'karat'). This attempt failed and approximately 3 million Chinese (including Triad groups) fled to Taiwan and Hong Kong where an open door policy was adopted for Chinese refugees.
- 1946- British government bans Opium use in Hong Kong, although millions of addicts continue to use via Triad importation and control of Opium and Heroin cultivation in the 'Golden triangle'.
- 1950 onwards- Many of the Triad members who fled to Taiwan begin to set up a new Triad group named 'The United Bamboo' which remains active to this day. The new Chinese communities in Hong Kong re-establish Triad groups and also remain active to this day. The 14K are believed to be one of the largest, also having branches in the US.
- 1997- British rule of Hong Kong is handed over to China. The influence of the Triads in Hong Kong is still thought to be significant. However, in the US it is believed many groups are assuming the label of being a 'Triad' group without connection with, or knowledge of, the complex history, tradition, myth and lore of the original Triad organisations. This is done due to the respect or fear the label often affords. The respect is thought to originate from the many attempts by the original Triad groups to usurp unpopular governments.

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APPENDIX 4
Lim's 'Patterns Of Solidarity' Scale

Mechanical Solidarity — Organic Solidarity

1= KINSHIP BASED: La Cosa Nostra, Sicilian Mafia

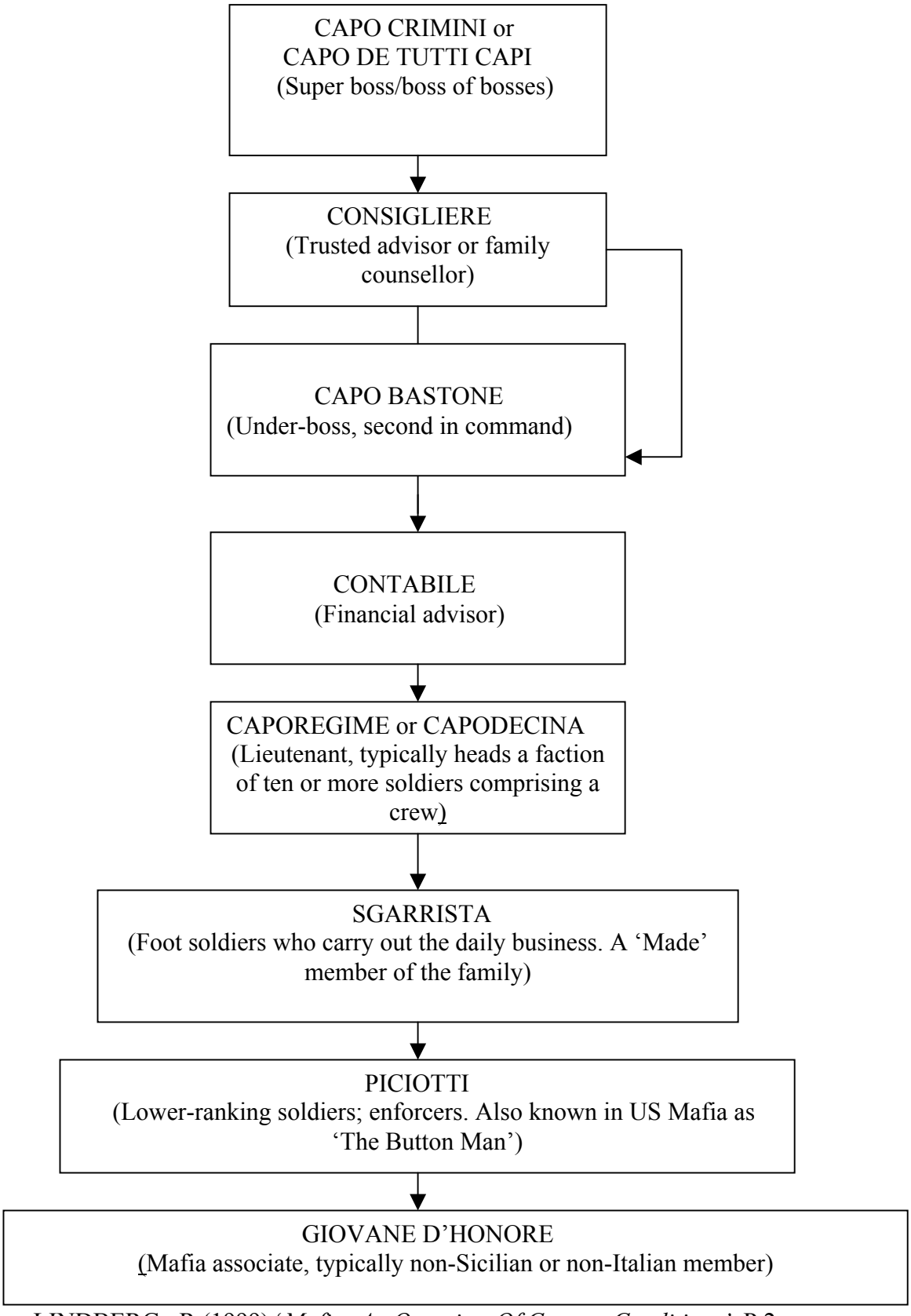
2= TRIBAL/ TERRITORIAL: IRA, Ku Klux Klan

3= FICTIVE KINSHIP
a- FATHER/ SON: Yakuza
b- SWORN SIBLINGS: Triads

4= CORPORATE: Intelligence Agencies

Taken from LIM, I. (2000) '*Chinese Triads: Perspectives On Histories, Identities and Spheres Of Impact'*. Singapore: Singapore History Museum, National Heritage Board, p.36

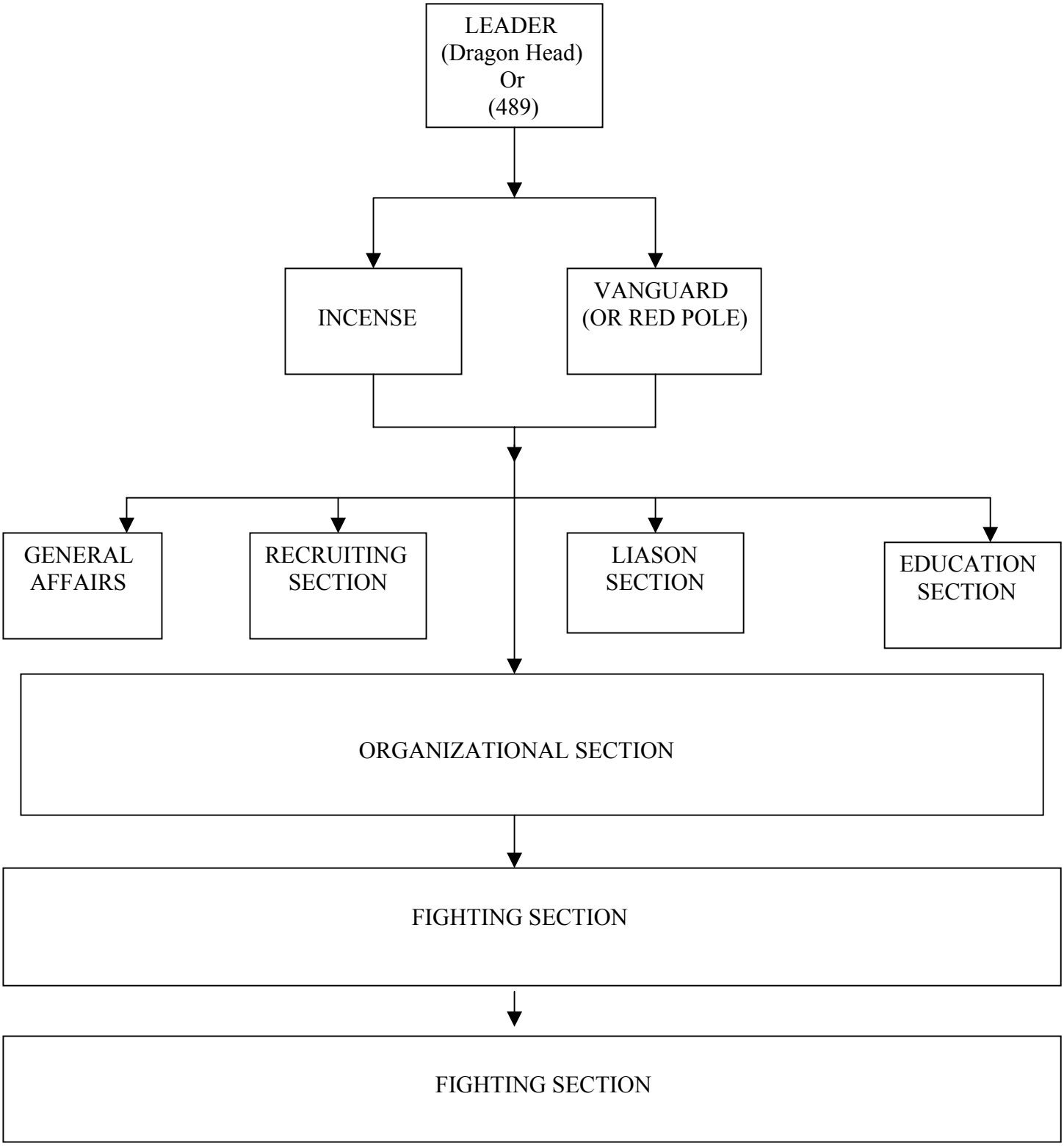
APPENDIX 5
Typical Structure Of A Mafia Crime Family



Taken from LINDBERG., R (1999) '*Mafia: An Overview Of Current Conditions'*. P.2

APPENDIX 6

Typical Structure of a Traditional Triad Group



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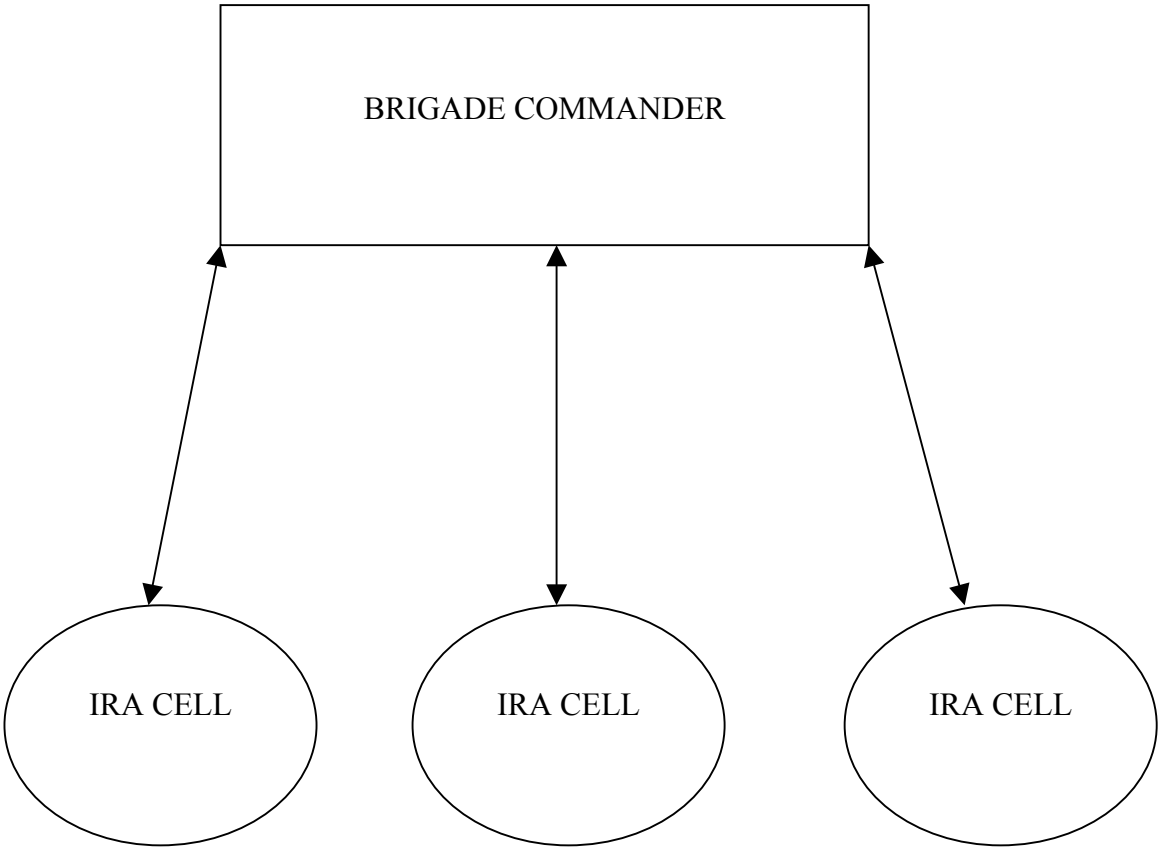
APPENDIX 7
Typical Structure Of An IRA Brigade



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