Shadow orders: clandestine non-state power in the international system

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CHAPTER 4 – Organisational structure

This second framework chapter focuses on the organisational and structural morphology of clandestine non-state actors – in effect the specific ways in which these protagonists configure themselves to project power, sometimes at scale. In doing so, it offers a means of further investigating this thesis' second hypothesis, which posits that clandestine non-state actors' organisational structures are both adaptive and shaped by similar considerations and factors, including the need to mitigate threats, such as disruption by state actors; the desire to exploit political and economic opportunities and relationships; and their individual ideology and strategic culture. To that end, the chapter starts by providing a synthesis of the various classifications, typologies and conceptual models that have been employed to describe clandestine non-state actors of different denominations before proposing an alternative ontology for categorizing groups. The chapter also explores the applicability of network theories, which have increased in popularity in the last two decades, to the object study and outlines how groups are prone to adaptation, sometimes growing into polymorphous entities. Finally, it describes how factors such as identity, membership and recruitment influence organisational design and composition.

The organisational structures and operating models of different clandestine non-state actors have been the subject of considerable academic research and discussion, both within the fields of criminology and security studies.[298] Unsurprisingly, structural comparisons between illicit and licit enterprises featured heavily in the early theoretical debate on organised crime. Thus, whilst Alfred L. Lindesmith suggested in the early 1940s that the criminal underworld was governed by its own set of rules that "set them apart from the rest of society" and broadly amounted to a system with its "own its own laws, […] methods and techniques, and specialized machinery," [299] other thinkers have instead suggested that its characteristics reflected the traditions of legitimate (i.e., licit) commerce.[300] For example, Thomas Schelling posited that like traditional businesses, organised crime existed because it met public demand for goods and services and relied on a customer base.[301] Similarly, Dwight C. Smith's 1980 illegal enterprise theory viewed criminal organisations through the lens of economic markets as "normal, rational, profit-oriented entrepreneurs," while echoing Schelling's description of a tendency for criminal businesses to seek monopolistic control over specific sectors such as production and distribution. [302] Although the debate endures, observers appear to at least broadly agree on the fact that the illicit and clandestine nature of criminal business introduces a requirement for specific structures and functions, including the ability to engage in acts of violence, that do not neatly fit into licit business models.[303]

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[298] Here, one cannot omit recognising the contributions of Carl von Clausewitz, the 19th century *doyen* of modern military strategic theory, who provided a model for understanding the main characteristics of *all* actors engaged in war by way of his 'trinity', comprising *reason*, *chance* and *passion*. Whilst primarily state-focused, the concept does allow for wider applicability by hinting at the need for specific attributes as a requirement for reaching political objectives such as leadership (effectively the application of *reason*); capabilities (the translation of opportunity, or *chance,* into gains); and popular support (in other words, mobilising *passion*). See C. von Clausewitz, *On War* (Translated by J.J. Graham), Chatham: Wordsworth Classics, 1997, p.24.

[299] A. L. Lindesmith, *Crime in the United States*, The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 217, September 1941, p.1-19.

[300] See for example G. A. Antonopoulos and G. Papanicolaou, *Organized crime structures around the globe*, in *Organized Crime: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford Academic (online edition), February 2018.

[301] T. C. Schelling, *What is the Business of Organized Crime*?, The American Scholar, Vol. 40, No. 4, Autumn 1971, pp. 643-652.

[302] E. R. Kleemans in L. Paoli (ed.), p.35. See also D. C. Smith, *Paragons, Pariahs, and Pirates: A Spectrum-Based Theory of Enterprise*, Crime & Delinquency, Vol. 26, Issue 3, July 1980, pp.358-386.

[303] See for example P. Andreas and J. Wallman, *Illicit markets and violence: what is the relationship?*, Crime Law and Social Change, Vol. 52, March 2009, p.225.

Accordingly, analyses of criminal structures have therefore increasingly turned to conceptual frameworks that are more specific to illicit economic activity. In his classic book *Theft of the Nation* (1969), Donald Cressey thus spoke of clear hierarchies and divisions of labour within organised criminal groups,[304] shaping law enforcement's subsequent perception of the phenomenon.[305] More recent accounts offer greater flexibility and nuance, allowing for variation in structural configuration.[306] For example, thinkers such as Vy Le have attempted typologies of criminal organisations, distinguishing between hierarchical and horizontal groups as well as between organisations founded on cultural or ethnic connections and those that were a product of economic and market forces.[307] The likes of Dick Hobbs as well as Phil Williams and Roy Godson further highlighted what they perceived as the increasing characterisation of organised crime as a *social* system within the existing literature.[308] For Niles Breuer and Federico Varese, however, the structures and governance models of criminal groups varied primarily according to their aims and, more specifically, between financially and politically motivated groups.[309] Meanwhile, Paolo Campana points to a difference between substantive approaches that view criminal networks as a distinct form of organisation and instrumental methods emphasising networks and collections of nodes and attributes.[310] One example of a substantive model, protection theory – a strand heavily influenced by the historical study of the Mafia – describes the ways in which organised crime groups develop the capacity to provide a form of governance by taking over two traditional functions of the state: taxation and the monopoly over violence.[311] Taking more of a macro view, Klaus van Lampe therefore explains that on the whole, analyses of criminal groups tend to draw on five different levels of analysis: individuals, patterns of association, activities, overarching power structures and the legal/illegal nexus.[312]

Similar attempts at classifications can be found within the insurgency, militancy and terrorism literature. Illustratively, researchers such as Boaz Ganor,[313] Ariel Merari,[314] Alex Schmid[315] and Marc Sageman, [316] have commented to varying degrees on the operating models, internal processes and structural cohesion of these groups. Taken together, their analysis injects an

[304] M.E. Beare (ed.), p. xviii
[305] See for example J.S. McIllwain, *On the history, theory, and practice of organized crime: The life and work of criminology's revisionist "Godfather," Joseph L. Albini (1930-2013)*, Trends Organ Crim (2015) 18:12–40, 2015, pp.12-36.
[306] K. van Lampe, *'The interdisciplinary Dimensions of the Study of Organized Crime'*, in M.E. Bere (ed.), p. 81. See also M. D. Lyman *et al.* (eds), *Organized Crime (Fourth Edition)*, Upper Saddle River (NJ): Prentice Hall, 2007, p. 71.
[307] V. Le, *Organised Crime Typologies: Structure, Activities and Conditions*, International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, 2012 Vol. 1, pp. 121-131.
[308] D. Hobbs, *The Firm: Organisational Logic and Criminal Culture on a Shifting Terrain*, The British Journal of Criminology, Vol. 41, No. 4, Autumn 2001, pp.549-560; and P. Williams and R. Godson, Roy, *Anticipating organized and transnational crime, Crime*, Law and Social Change, Vol. 37, Issue 4, June 2002, pp.311-355.
[309] N. Breuer and F. Varese, *The Structure of Trade-type and Governance-type Organized Crime Groups: A Network Study*, *The British Journal of Criminology,* August 2022, pp.1-22.
[310] P. Campana, *Explaining criminal networks: Strategies and potential pitfalls*, Methodological Innovations, Vol. 9, 2016, pp.1-10.
[311] E. R. Kleemans in L. Paoli (ed.), p.36
[312] Van Lampe subsequently makes the case for considering an additional category – that of social construction. See K. van Lampe in M.E. Bere (ed.), p.85.
[313] B. Ganor, *Terrorist Organization Typologies and the Probability of a Boomerang Effect*, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Vol. 31, Issue 4, April 2008, pp.269-283.
[314] A. Merari, *Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency*, Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter 1993, pp.213-251.
[315] A. Schmid, *Frameworks for Conceptualising Terrorism*, Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 16, No. 2, Summer 2004, pp.195-221.
[316] M. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

element of nuance into the commonly held assumption that groups will deliberately aim for flexible and devolved structural configurations from the outset. In a similar vein, Walter Enders and Todd Sandler argue that the organisational structures of groups tend to evolve over time, gradually morphing from hierarchical organisations featuring clear chains of command to more diffused models in an attempt to plug vulnerabilities and avoiding compromise.[317] According to Bruce Hoffman, internal structures and decision-making processes are shaped by the attitudes of a group's leadership, with these same attitudes also determining the allocation and application of capabilities and resources within an organisation.[318] Drawing on rational choice theory, Scott Helfstein suggests that the structures of terrorist groups are prone to the kind of cost-benefit considerations and bureaucratic forces "that impact all purposeful organisations."[319] In a variation on this theme, Ayse Zarakol provides a broad distinction between terrorist organisations that are 'system affirming' (supporting an established order or paradigm) and those that are 'system-threatening' (challenging existing paradigms), with the implication being that a group's overall strategic positioning is also likely to influence its internal and structural mechanics.[320] According to Victor Asal and Karl Rethemeyer, the potency and structural characteristics of these groups are instead largely dependent on a number of key and recurring conditions, such as the extent to which these benefit from strategic backing from states, territorial control and a permissive political and operating environment.[321]

Beyond the theoretical debate, analysis of clandestine organisations throughout the ages highlights the ways in which organisational structures reflect a combination of both a group's strategic goals *and* the political environment (or, indeed, the social and cultural 'ecosystem' from which they emerge and in which they operate). Illustratively, the structure of subversive or insurgent movements seeking to replace existing governments will typically include clearly delineated functions such as social services, the provision of justice, armed activity and economic policy as the means of bringing coherence and specialism to their application of force.[322] This pattern is observable in groups spanning from traditional anti-colonial and national liberation movements to contemporary organisations such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and Boko Haram. Organised criminal groups, meanwhile, tend to adopt structures that are more akin to those of financial markets, with different sectors of activities focused on functions such as commodity production, transport, protection and money laundering. Perhaps for this reason, criminal kingpins may at times bear a closer resemblance to business executives than to statesmen. Naturally, groups may also adopt hybrid structures configured around multiple (and even competing) objectives as was the case with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) when it deepened its involvement in the cocaine trade at the same time as pursuing its revolutionary aims, or with the Taliban, which drew significant financial resources from the opiate economy during its twenty-year war against NATO and the Afghan state.

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[317] W. Enders and T. Sandler, *The Political Economy of Terrorism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp.238-268.
[318] B. Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (Revised Edition), New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.
[319] S. Helfstein, *Governance of Terror: New Institutionalism and the Evolution of Terrorist Organizations*, Public Administration Review, Vol. 69, No. 4, July-August 2009, pp.727.
[320] See A. Zarakol, *What makes terrorism modern? Terrorism, legitimacy, and the international system*, Review of International Studies, Vol. 37, Issue 5, December 2011, pp.2311-2336.
[321] V. Asal and R. K. Rethemeyer, *The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and Lethality of Terrorist Attacks*, The journal of Politics, Vol. 70, No. 2, University of Chicago Press, April 2008, pp. 437-449.
[322] For example, the 'Office of Services' (Maktab al-Khidmat, or 'MAK') that acted as the incubator for al Qaeda (headquartered in Peshawar during the 1980s) had clear structures in place for both recruiting new members and for collecting far-ranging donations from wealthy Gulf-based individuals, Islamic charities and the Saudi Intelligence Services. See A. McGregor, *Jihad and the Rifle Alone: 'Abdullah' Azzam and the Islamist Revolution*, Journal of Conflict Studies, Vol. 23, No. 2, February 2006.

The structures of clandestine organisations are often (once again) heavily determined by whether they are able to control territory, at which point they will inevitably need to erect formalised governance structures that may not have been previously required in, for example, the conduct of guerrilla warfare.[323] Thus, ISIS established a structure comprising of *Wilayat* ('provinces' or 'states'), each with their own governor as well as local, and at-times-cumbersome, bureaucracy.[324] The organisation also developed a relatively complex system of administrative departments and councils responsible for activities such as religious outreach (*Da'wa*), military affairs and public information as well as courts and law enforcement arms such as the infamous *Hisba* religious police.[325] This approach resembled Al Shabaab's system of Islamic governance in which controlled regions were administered by local governors under the authority of the organisation's executive *shura* (governing council) and where justice was provided through district level courts overseen by a cadre of judges (*Qaali*).[326] Conversely, organisations who do not have the ability to directly control the ground or territory may need to conduct their political, armed or criminal business activities whilst retaining a high degree of secrecy, or at least concealment from stronger or competing actors such as government actors, external interveners and rival factions. Formal and hierarchical structures in such contexts are often avoided, with more discreet, fluid (such as cell-type) structures being favoured instead. These organisations therefore tend to be more devolved and self-sufficient, with a greater ability to take decisions locally. Such structures offer both advantages and disadvantages: on the one hand they can offer greater agility and reduce vulnerability to disruption; on the other, they also make strategic campaigns more difficult to control and deliver. This latest challenge, in turn, further explains why organisations that are able to make consistent political, territorial or economic gains ultimately veer towards more consolidated and integrated structures.[327]

At the same time however, the idea that the structural and ontological properties of organisations automatically correspond to a fixed pattern or typology has been disputed. For example, speaking about organised crime groups, Petrus van Duyne argues that "networks appear to be too heterogeneous to allow a single theoretical umbrella" and that therefore, "proper, valid operationalisation from which also a typology must be deduced, is in principle impossible."[328] Van Lampe agrees, adding that measurements of organised crime differ depending on whether these are conducted through the lens of illegal markets (specifically, the provisions of goods and services), criminal structures (considering factors such as the composition and size of criminal groups) or systemic conditions such as power structures,

[323] Examples include ISIS during the height of its rule, al Shabaab, Hamas, Hezbollah and the Taliban following the recapture of Kabul in August 2021 as well as historic guerrilla groups such as the Viet Cong and Cuban revolutionaries.
[324] One of the advantages of this governance model was that it could also be applied to geographically dislocated wilayas as far away as Libya, Algeria and Afghanistan. See J. Stern and J.M Berger, p. 51. See also K. Bauer (ed.), *Beyond Syria and Iraq: Examining Islamic State Provinces*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Washington DC, 2016, pp.15-40.
[325] See for example C. C. Caris and S. Reynolds, *ISIS Governance in Syria*, Institute for the Study of War, Washington DC, 2014, pp.15-17.
[326] S. J. Hansen, *Al-Shabaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group*, 2005-2012, London: Hurst & Company, 2013, pp.83-90.
[327] See for example E. Frisch, *Insurgencies are Organizations Too: Organizational Structure and the Effectiveness of Insurgent Strategy*, Peace & Conflict Review, Vol. 6, Issue 1, 2011, p.3. A variation on this theme can be observed within the context of criminal organisations in Colombia throughout the 1980s and 1980s and Mexico in the early 2000s. Here, the ability to control ground and markets as well as co-opt legitimate institutions has historically resulted in the 'cartelisation' of organisations – or a propensity towards more hierarchical and vertically integrated structures. Arguably however, it has also increased the profile of individual leaders and kingpins, making them more vulnerable to law enforcement operations.
[328] P. C. van Duyne *et al.*, p.8.

including corrupt relationships between criminals and public officials.[329] Similarly, agreement (still) has not been reached on the extent to which terrorism largely amounts to an overarching strategic label under which different types of organisational structures can be placed or whether it merely constitutes a tactic that can therefore be harnessed by a myriad of actors – insurgent, guerrilla or criminal – regardless of their structural composition. [330] On a similar tack, Arquilla and Ronfeldt discuss the increasing coalescence of different types of groups as "blended, [...] sprawling multi-hub and spider's-web networks,"[331] whilst Makarenko speaks of a "crime-terror continuum" or "nexus" in which terrorist groups may embark on or associate with criminal enterprises (and vice versa), at times leading to convergence and/or the adoption of new functions and objectives.[332]

4.1 Flexible paradigms and network theory

Given these typological and structural categorisation challenges, there is value in exploring the applicability of wider (and more flexible) theoretical concepts and paradigms of relevance to the object of study, allowing the observer to veer away from templated and pre-packaged descriptions of organisational characteristics. Illustratively, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *assemblage* theory suggests that there is no fixed ontology for the social world but that instead, social formations constitute assemblages (effectively patchworks) made up of a multitude of overlapping configurations. Social entities, according to the theory, are therefore both fluid and heterogeneous, as well as in a state of continuous transition and movement.[333] Such a paradigm is helpful in terms of accounting for the polymorphous nature of clandestine groups, ever adapting in the face of new opportunities and constraints. Of course, whilst the theory provides a significant degree of relativist flexibility, its strength is also its weakness insofar as it is both indefinite and overly *sui generis*, complicating the task of comparing the properties and behaviour of different entities.[334] Perhaps more helpful, therefore, is *network theory*, which offers the dual advantage of describing the structural dynamics of social groupings whilst at the same allowing for a significant of degree of flexibility.

Network theory provides a useful tool for the observer of social groupings by offering a means of representing the relations that exist within – as well as between – different entities. The sociologist Manuel Castells famously introduced the notion of a 'networked society' in which social networks enabled by communication technologies constituted "the new social morphology of our societies," fundamentally modifying "processes of production, experience, power and culture."[335] Other scholars further expanded on this thinking, pointing to the propensity for clandestine networks to develop external partnerships – not least, as Carlo

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[329] K. von Lampe in P. C. van Duyne *et al*., p.86.

[330] This complexity already became apparent during the early 1970s when Illich Ramirez Sanchez – Aka 'Carlos the Jackal' – carried out a series of terrorist attacks as a sole entrepreneur on behalf of Palestinian organisations. See J. Burke, *How cold war spymasters found arrogance of Carlos the Jackal too hot to handle*, The Guardian, September 6, 2020.

[331] J. Arquilla and D. Ronfeldt (eds.), p.xi.

[332] This, she suggests, explains why terrorist organisations may 'drift' into criminality, even whilst retaining a political facade. See *The Crime-Terror Continuum: The case of the Andean region***,** Global Affairs and Strategic Studies, University of Navarra, July 13, 2020**,** https://www.unav.edu/web/global-affairs/detalle/-/blogs/the-crime-terror-continuum-the-case-of-the-andean-region**.**

[333] M. DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*, London: Continuum, 2006, p.142.

[334] See D. Little, '*Assemblage Theory'*, Understanding Society, November 15, 2012, https://understandingsociety.blogspot.com/2012/11/assemblage-theory.html.

[335] According to Castells, such a networked society also provided the backbone for the global criminal economy, allowing criminal organisations to collaborate and access new markets in unprecedented ways. See M. Castells, *An Introduction to the Information Age*, in S. Thornham *et al*. (eds), *Media Studies: A reader (3rd Edition)*, New York, New York University Press, p.151. See also S. Lindgren, *Digital Media and Society*, London: Sage Publications, 2017, p.98.

Morselli explains, because "the covert settings that surround [them] call for specific interactions and relational features within and beyond the network."[336] Reminiscent of *assemblage theory*, network-based paradigms reintroduce the idea that specific social groupings (such as expertise or specialist know-how contained within tightly clustered pockets of activity) may in fact act as the constituent parts of *multiple* organisations or networks. Observers have also highlighted the fundamental adaptability and resilience of social networks born out of their ability to make different connections, absorb new information and cope with change as complex (social) systems.[337]

The logic of distributed, interconnecting networks introduces an additional concept in the form of *systems theory*, a body of thinking that examines the way in which different spatially delimited components interact with one another as part of a complex – and, typically, continuously adapting – 'system of systems.'[338] Such thinking offers distinct benefits when applied to the study of social entities, including the possibility of viewing organisations as the product of, as well as operating in, different socio-political, informational and economic environments and ecosystems. Interactions can also occur *between* environments, with knowledge, ideas, capital, and goods flowing between them. The ability to view social organisations as political and social ecosystems is helpful to the study of clandestine non-state actor organisations as it offers and alternative framework for conceptualising forms of political organisation; one that does not automatically revolve around the notion of the (nation) state but instead allows for the existence of smaller political entities that engage in relations with one another, including across geographical divides. Such theories also introduce the closely related notion of diffused 'networks of networks,' where different organisations, geographical hubs, centres of expertise and specialist functions are all once again interconnected in a wider system comprising a myriad of dynamic transactions and relationships. These same interactions are in turn increasingly global in nature, facilitated by modern day technology and hyper-connectivity. Critically, such an idea therefore also allows for conceptualising an alternative (non-state) international 'system' based on these different non-state structural configurations and relationships.

4.2 Operating models

Beyond the broad conceptual models outlined above, and whilst reemphasising some of the inherent risks and challenges associated with typologies, the examination of case study data relating to the structural design of different clandestine groups nevertheless points to at least four broad categories of operating models employed by organisations around the world. These can be broadly categorised as 'hub and spoke'; 'franchise'; 'clan'; and 'market-based' (hybrid variations between these are also possible). This classification, as well as corresponding characteristics, strengths and weaknesses is briefly summarised in Table 1 (below) before being described in more detail, drawing on illustrative examples.

[336] G. Bichler, A. Malm, & T. Cooper, *Drug supply networks: a systematic review of the organizational structure of illicit drug trade*, Crime Sci, 6:2, January 2017, p.3.
[337] See for example W. W. Powell, *Neither Market nor Hierarchy: Network Forms of Organization*, Research in Organizational Behaviour (12), January 1990, pp.295-336; and T. Carmichael and M. Hadzikadic, *The Fundamentals of Complex Adaptive Systems*, June 2019, pp.1-16.
[338] See for example C. Fuchs, *Transnational space and the 'network society'*, Twenty-First Century Society, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2007, pp.49-78.

Structural category	Characteristics	Strengths	Weaknesses
Hub and spoke	Overall control and coordination function exercised by central entity, node or actor with clear authority over different branches or sections of the organisation.	Strong cohesion, high level of efficiency and ability to vertically integrate multiple sectors and functions under one organisation. Generally effective at generating profit or raising funds.	Reliance on central command and control and overall authority makes such organisations vulnerable to disruption and leadership targeting.
Franchise	Delegated authority, with devolved cells or members operating under the broad banner of pre-packaged brands, ideas, and structures that can be readily applied in different contexts.	Ability to rapidly establish presence in new geographic areas through new partnerships and projecting the perception of significant strategic influence. Means of securing new financial resources.	Difficult to control different franchise subsidiaries, who may have competing objectives or join out of opportunism. Members may be associated with losses or splintering elsewhere.
Clan	Built around family, ethnic, nationality or tribal linkages. Local and/or cultural norms and codes shaping organisational structure and operating model.	Typically benefit from high levels of secrecy and loyalty, reducing the risk of infiltration. Tend to benefit from a reputation for trust and efficiency.	Harder to secure cutting-edge expertise and expand into new strategic locations that do not benefit from existing diaspora links.
Market-based	Typically smaller, specialised groups organised around specific services or functions that fit within a wider system or supply chain, such as smuggling, manufacturing, logistics or finance.	Can maximise operating efficiency and profit by providing services to multiple 'customers' including some of the other categories of clandestine non-state actors.	Often limited in their ability to grow beyond their immediate area of expertise or 'added value,' although some groups have successfully evolved into larger multi-function organisations.

Table 3: Broad classification of clandestine non-state actor organisations.

'**Hub and spoke'** operating models are characterised by a direct control and coordination function exercised by a central node or actor over periphery groups or cells located in separate geographical locations. Examples of groups that fall within this category are varied but tend to be either historical or those that emerged in (and have in turn survived since) the mid to late twentieth century. World War II clandestine agents who worked in occupied Europe and reported to Special Operations Executive (SOE) controllers in London and elsewhere set a strong precedent for this operating model, which was employed at scale within the context of proxy-warfare during the Cold War. Terrorist and subversive networks have also at different times resorted to such models, as in the case of the European leftist groups of the 1970s and 1980s or that of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA).[339] Perhaps because of its four decade-long lifespan, Hezbollah also fits within this category – one of the clearest current examples of such an organisational model. Despite being headquartered in and conducting planning from Lebanon, the organisation directly oversees cells (including sleeper operatives), training teams and fundraising missions globally, demonstrating the ability to direct and deploy resources at scale in key political theatres such as Syria.[340]

[339] See for example: J. Horgan and M. Taylor, *The provisional Irish republican army: Command and functional structure*, Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1997, pp.1-32
[340] *'Hezbollah'*, Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), Stanford, August 2016, available online at: https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/hezbollah

Organised crime examples of hub and spoke organisations include some of the more traditional, vertically integrated cartels of the Colombian cocaine-trafficking 'golden era' which directly 'owned' and oversaw the activities of multiple sectors (production, wholesale distribution and transport) from 'headquarter' locations such as Medellin. Similarly, the various branches of the Thieves in Law (or *vory-v-zakone)*, a syndicate harking back to Stalin-era Gulags, are run by supervising groups of powerful *Pakhan* bosses with close links to large businesses leaders and the political elite in Russia and Central Asia.[341] It is perhaps unsurprising that modern 'hub and spoke' organisations – including both Hezbollah and Russian organised crime syndicates – often benefit from the protection of state actors or the elite, reducing what would otherwise be a clear vulnerability in the form of their central nodes. Illustratively, Hezbollah's ability to directly coordinate and fund overseas cells as well as retain fighters 'on the books' over long periods of time is in no small part a product of its close relationship with and significant support from Iran. Russian organised crime, meanwhile, has effectively percolated through the higher echelons of the state, a phenomenon that took place within the context of post-Soviet Union privatisation, shielding criminal enterprises by way of patronage and protective *Krysha* (roofs).[342]

'Franchises', meanwhile, have emerged as a highly popular and effective mechanism for developing a wide international footprint via delegated authority. This category typically consists of pre-packaged brands, ideas and structures that can be readily introduced into a range of new contexts. Even here, the rigidity of the guidance provided to affiliates across the international network will vary. On the more stringent end of the spectrum are organisations that articulate clear expectations on the laydown of the organisations within the franchise. The Hells Angels Motorcycle Club (HAMC), for example, combines a culture of empowering local branches – so-called 'chapters' – with a standard, almost constitutional, carbon copy template for administration set out in its manifesto: the HAMC World Rules.[343] Specifically, local chapters each have their own president, vice president and administrative positions, emulating the club's founding chapter in San Bernardino, California.[344] The chapters – which cover 59 countries worldwide – are also expected to follow a form of direct democracy where members can vote both on group decisions and to elect leadership figures.[345] In addition to the president (who nevertheless holds the power of veto over group decisions) and vice-president, key positions also include a treasurer overseeing finances, a sergeant-at-arms responsible for enforcing discipline and a road captain in charge of organising motorcycle runs and group events. Furthermore, the biker gang demonstrates the way in which franchise organisations may still retain the ability to establish higher-level (or supra) governance mechanisms: different chapters are grouped into regions represented by their own executive body and whose representatives are elected from individual chapters.[346]

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[341] The notion of central leadership has more commonly evolved into the term *avtoritet* (authority) within the context of modern Russian organised crime. See also T*reasury Targets the "Thieves-in-Law" Eurasian Transnational Criminal Organization, Office*, U.S. Department of the Treasury Press Release, December 22, 2017, https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm0244.

[342] S. Cheloukhine, *The roots of Russian organized crime: from old-fashioned professionals to the organized criminal groups of today*, *Crime Law Soc Change* 50, 2008, pp. 353–374.

[343] '*Three Members Of Modesto Hells Angels, Including Vice President And Secretary, Indicted For Firearm And Drug Offenses'*, U.S. Attorney's Office, Department of Justice, Eastern District of California, https://www.justice.gov/usao-edca/pr/three-members-modesto-hells-angels-including-vice-president-and-secretary-indicted-0.

[344] See for example R.S. Barger with K. Zimmerman, *Hell's angel: The life and times of Sonny Barger and the Hell' Angels Motorcycle Club*, Harper Collins Publishers Inc., New York, 2000.

[345] A. De Amicis, *Hell's Angels Criminal Enterprise*, Pittsburgh, NCJ 228801, August 2009, p. 20, accessed via the National Criminal Justice Reference System (NCJRS), https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/Publications/abstract.aspx?ID=250828. See also According to the Hells Angels website: http://hells-angels.com/.

[346] J. Carasiti, *Hell's Angels Organisation Attributes Review*, Ridgway Research, May 2011, pp. 2-4.

Franchises can also take on a much less templated form, including loose constellations of 'start-up' groups who may bear little resemblance to one another or to the original parent movement. This category includes many of the organisations who over the last two decades have rebranded themselves or declared allegiance to al Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Such groups may rename themselves in a relatively *ad hoc* manner and without necessarily obtaining the direct consent of the original leadership. Reasons for doing so are varied: to increase publicity; to draw in new recruits; as a result of splintering; or as a means of drawing resources (such as material and training) from the parent organisation. In the case of a number of groups in North Africa, the Sahel and West Africa, rebranding from previous, more localised names to al Qaeda and ISIS-variants offered a means of 'jumping on the bandwagon' and being associated with what was proving to be two popular brands. Thus, the Algerian Group Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (GSPC) rebranded itself as al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2006, adopting a localised structure organised around *katiba* (brigades) and *sariya* (companies) that enabled it to better infiltrate communities in northern Mali, Niger, and southern Algeria.[347] Similarly, a faction of the Nigerian Boko Haram insurgency adopted the new name of Islamic State in West Africa (ISWA) in 2015 [348] – a decision that sparked some surprise amongst commenters given the organisation's previous efforts to receive financial support, weapons and training from al Qaeda (and therefore demonstrating a propensity towards opportunism).[349]

Once again, the decision to join a franchise carries both strategic benefits and drawbacks. For starter-cells, lone wolves and local armed groups, renaming or rebranding oneself as a member an existing transnational franchise can project an image of success and influence that strengthens the overall brand of an organisation. At the same time, they may also be associated with defeats or losses suffered elsewhere. Moreover, franchise structures can complicate the decision-making process of the original parent organisation, who may at times disapprove of the creation and/or activities of new branches. For example, al Qaeda core, disapproved of al Qaeda in Iraq's (AQI) tactics and blanket use of violence against civilians. Even here, however, certain strategic principles relating to organisational culture can still be articulated by the parent organisation in a way that can be applied by different parts of the franchise, such as al Qaeda's a 'general policy' guidance available to new branches[350] and universally applicable advice such as "abundance in consultation followed by determination without hesitation" when acting.[351]

'Clan'-type operating models are those that revolve around family, ethnic, nationality or tribal networks. Specific to these is an adherence to local or cultural norms and codes that are, in turn, woven into the fabric of their structure and operating model. Such organisations can be found across the spectrum of organisations but are particularly favoured by criminal groups such as ethnic Albanians and Nigerian groups and, perhaps above all, by the Italian Mafia. The latter's Calabrian 'Ndrangheta branch, for example, is composed of closely knit sub-groups specific, called *ndrine*, that are specific to a local territory, and which consist primarily of members of the same family.[352] Japanese Yakuza crime syndicates, meanwhile, follow a

[347] K. Zimmerman, *Salafi-Jihadi Ecosystem in the Sahel*, American Enterprise Institute, April 2020, p. 2.
[348] See for example J. Schanzer, *Al-Qaeda's Armies, Middle East Affiliate Groups & Next Generation of Terror*, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2005. pp. 99-105.
[349] *Letter from Abdallah Abu Zayd Abd-al-Hamid to Abu Musab Abd-al-Wadud*, Bin Laden's Bookshelf, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Declassified January 19, 2017, https://www.dni.gov/index.php/features/bin-laden-s-bookshelf?start=1.
[350] *Gist of Conversation - October 2011*, Bin Laden's Bookshelf, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Declassified May 20, 2015, p. 3.
[351] *Letter on Shura*, Bin Laden's Bookshelf, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Declassified January 19, 2017.
[352] F. Calderoni, *The Structure of Trafficking Mafias: the 'Ndrangheta and cocaine*, Crime Law Soc Change (58), September 2012, pp. 321–349.

model where localised and tightly controlled clan-like groups effectively take over the mantel of the family, expecting full loyalty from their members. Variations of this example within the context of terrorist and insurgent organisations include al Shabaab (which is literally configured around the Somali clan system) and the Haqqani network – a movement that has drawn heavily on family and tribal affiliations in northwest Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan.[353] Clan-based models offer a range of organisational structural advantages. They are geared towards maximising loyalty and secrecy, and their highly devolved, almost cellular-like characteristics offer opportunities for exporting their operating model into new territories. At the same time of course, their insular (and often traditional) character may stifle innovation as well as their ability to bring in external knowledge and recruits.

'**Market-based'** networks tend to be organised around – or connected by – specific services or functions within a wider system, network or supply chain. These include organisations focused on professional, 'value added' activities, products and solutions within illicit economies: drug producers (including laboratory technicians), precursor chemical importers, money launderers and so on. Some of these organisations may specialise in individual services – as may be the case with highly potent methamphetamine produced in Dutch processing laboratories – whereas others may combine multiple functions within a more vertically integrated structure. Moreover, some actors will offer logistical or other services to a range of clients as may be the case with cross-border smugglers (in the Sahel, for example) who may at different times carry contraband for criminal organisations or weapons for insurgent and terrorist groups.[354] A variation on this 'multiple customer' theme are some of the so-called financial controllers (essentially high turn-over money launders) operating in Dubai on behalf of a wide pool of clandestine clients.[355] Taken together, the plethora of actors engaging in market-determined systems and (illicit) economies arguably amount to diffused as well as distributed networks whose connections are predicated primarily on trade, mutual benefit and financial interactions. Even though trust can and does play an important role in such relationships, these therefore remain primarily transactional in nature.

4.3 Identity, membership and recruitment

Revisiting a now familiar theme, Galula once commented that "the insurgent cannot seriously embark on an insurgency unless he has a well-grounded cause with which to attract supporters," adding that "a cause [...] is his sole asset at the beginning, and it must be a powerful one if the insurgent is to overcome his weakness.[356] To be sure, traditional analyses of non-state actor movements typically placed a heavy emphasis on the 'cause', which, in turn, was largely treated as synonymous with group ideology and identity. However, such terminology has also proven problematic. For example, John Gerring's study of different definitions of ideology highlights the existence of contradictory premises: "to some ideology is dogmatic, while to others it carries connotations of political sophistication; to some it refers to dominant modes of thought and to others it refers primarily to those most alienated by the status quo."[357] Willard A. Mullins similarly argued as early as the 1970s that the term's ambiguity limited its value as an analytical concept.[358] Moreover, a growing body of evidence

[353] See for example: *Haqqani Network*, Mapping Militant Organisations, Centre for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University, 2018, https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/haqqani-network.
[354] S.B. Gaye, *Connections between Jihadist groups and smuggling and illegal trafficking rings in the Sahel,* Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Peace and Security Series No. 29, Centre of Competence Sub-Saharan Africa, 2018.
[355] See also section on clandestine finance.
[356] D. Galula, p. 10.
[357] J. Gerring, *Ideology: A Definitional Analysis*, Political Research Quarterly (University of Utah), Vol. 50, No. 4, December 1997, pp. 957-994.
[358] W. A. Mullins, *On the Concept of Ideology in Political Science*, American Political Science Review, Vol.66, Issue 2, June 1972, pp. 498-510.

produced over the last three decades highlights the extent to which both 'causes' and ideologies may fluctuate over time or give way to more pragmatic or opportunistic considerations.[359] There also appears to be a broad consensus on the fact that motivations for joining clandestine organisations vary significantly between individuals and micro-contexts, going beyond a single unifying ideological cause.[360]

Perhaps for these reasons, scholars have, over the years, turned increasingly to the concepts of *discourse* (as proposed by Foucault) and *narrative* to describe the process of constructing a system of knowledge as well as framing, interpreting and attributing meaning to lived experience in a way that resonates with different audiences.[361] Unsurprisingly, narratives often tend to draw on and highlight a combination of underlying grievances, basic individual needs and common vulnerabilities such as political, religious or ethnic exclusion; a lack of access to economic opportunities; or the absence of social justice more broadly.[362] Only then will they typically (as we have already seen) formulate 'policy positions' on key issues such as the legitimacy of violence in a way that builds on the initial diagnosis.[363] The interpretive process through which narratives are constructed is important as indeed, it assigns negative, positive, or neutral values to specific issues, thus producing a system or framework of belief.[364] Having explained 'why things are the way they are' (the problem) alongside broader aims (the solution), ideological narratives also often provide an 'offer' or manifesto, which clarifies how those who subscribe to the rules and tenets of that same ideology stand to gain: the *quid pro quo* of what essentially amounts to a social contract.

Manifestos and their underlying ideological premises are often (although not always) anchored in and legitimised by existing, 'off the shelf' scriptures and manuscripts as well as theological

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[359] See for example J. E. Ugarriza and M. J. Craig, *The relevance of Ideology to Contemporary Armed Conflicts, A Quantitative Analysis of Former Combatants in Colombia*, Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.57, No.3, June 2013, pp. 445-477.

[360] See for example F. Calderoni *et al*., *Recruitment into organised criminal groups: a systematic overview*, Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice, No. 583, Australian Institute of Criminology, January 2020, pp. 1-27.

[361] See S. Miller, *Foucault on Discourse and Power*, Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory, No.76, October 1990, pp.115-125; T. Purvis and A. Hunt, *Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology, Discourse, Ideology...*, The British Journal of Sociology 44, No. 3, September 1993, pp. 473-499; and S. R. Shenhav, *Political Narratives and Political Reality*, International Political Science Review, Vol. 27, No. 3, July 2006, pp. 245-262.
James Smith takes this notion one step further through his exploration of non-state actor 'strategic cultures,' or the "shared beliefs, assumptions, and modes of behaviour, derived from common experiences and common narratives that shape collective identity and relationships [...]." See J. Smith, J. Long *et al*., *Strategic Culture and Violent Non-State Actors: Weapons of Mass Destruction and Asymmetrical Operations Concepts and Cases*, INSS Occasional Paper No.64, USAF Institute for National Security Studies, USAF Academy, Colorado, February 2008, p. 3.

[362] S. Gibbs, T*he terrorist mind: A psychological and political analysis*, International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology April 1, 2006, pp. 121-138 and M. Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*, Comparative Studies in Religion & Society, Aug. 2003.

[363] The field of social psychology, in turn, offers useful insights into how these vulnerabilities are inherently related to – and exacerbated by – unmet basic human needs. These may be *status-related* (such as a need for esteem, position and fairness); *existential* (a need for meaning); *relational* (the need to belong); *safety-related* (such as a need for protection); or *epistemic* (a need for understanding). See for example A. Silke, *Holy Warriors: Exploring the Psychological Processes of Jihadi Radicalization*, European Journal of Criminology, January 2008, pp. 99-123.

[364] There are noteworthy parallels with gang-related membership. See for example: *A New Approach to Countering Violent Extremism: Sharing Expertise and Empowering Local Communities*, FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, October 2014, https://leb.fbi.gov/2014/october/a-new-approach-to-countering-violent-extremism-sharing-expertise-and-empowering-local-communities. See also W. Kruglanski, M. J. Gelfand *et al.* pp. 69-93.

treatises. Prominent examples of these have ranged from Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* and Hitler's *Mein Kampf* to the works used and cited within the context of radical Islamic narratives, such as Ayman al-Zawahiri's *Knights Under the Prophet's Banner* or Sayyid Qutb's *Milestones*.[365] Such manifestos are also not solely the prerogative of political parties, terrorist groups and violent insurgencies. For example, the Japanese Yakuza – an organisation with over twenty branches across the country – advocates a code of honour with tenets that include chivalry and a no drug-taking policy.[366] Even then, theorists have increasingly argued that narratives are only really effective in driving as well as shaping recruitment, identity, and mobilisation when these are socialised within collective environments.[367] Indeed, a body of evidence highlights the galvanising role of social ecosystems ranging from universities and places of worship to prisons and inner-city projects in both spreading ideas and identifying potential followers.[368] A powerful example of this dynamic is that of the connections forged between al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) fighters and former Ba'athist senior party members in Camp Bucca, a large US prison complex near Umm Qasr in Southern Iraq that held close to 24,000 inmates. Here, jihadis, including future ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi who served five years in the camp, could congregate with likeminded individuals, identify new recruits with potential and discuss ideas for the future direction of the movement. As one set of expert commentators noted, the jihadis' "time in prison deepened their extremism and gave them opportunities to broaden their following. [...] The prisons became virtual terrorist universities: the hardened radicals were the professors; the other detainees were the students."[369] Furthermore, jihadi ideas and political ambitions now met the secularist, real-world technocratic expertise, organisational skills and knowledge of statecraft of disillusioned former senior members of Saddam Hussein's government who were also incarcerated at the camp.[370]

Separately, the Russian Thieves in Law, the aforementioned crime syndicate forged in Soviet-era Gulags, developed a strict day to day code which, quite fittingly, required members to have served prison sentences.[371] The relevance of collective environments is also clearly illustrated by the case of the Maras criminal gangs of Central America, a phenomenon which evolved out of Guatemala and El Salvador's lengthy civil wars.[372] Indeed, prisons flooded with Maras

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[365] See for example *Studies into Violent Radicalisation; Lot 2: The beliefs ideologies and narratives,* The Change Institute for the European Commission, February 2008, p. 34, http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/doc_centre/terrorism/docs/ec_radicalisation_study_on_ideology_and_narrative_en.pdf.

[366] See also B. E. Hill, *The Modern* Yakuza*: Structure and Organisation*, The Japanese Mafia: Yakuza, Law, and the State, Oxford Academic, 7 April 2004, pp. 65-91. A similar code is also observable with the context of outlaw motorcycle gangs such as the Hells Angels.

[367] See for example A. Strindberg, *Social Identify Theory and the Study of Terrorism and Violent Extremism*, FOI-R--5062—SE, Swedish Defence Agency (FOI), December 2020, https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI-R--5062--SE.

[368] See C. Tognato, *Violent Extremist Influence on University Campuses*, American Intelligence Journal, Vol. 37, No.2, 2020, pp.72-81; C. R, McCauley and M. E. Segal, *Social psychology of terrorist groups*, In J. Victoroff & A. W. Kruglanski (eds.), *Psychology of terrorism: Classic and contemporary insights,* Psychology Press, 2009, *pp*. 331–346; K. Barbara, *The social psychology of aggression* (3rd ed.), New York (NY): Routledge, 2021; and C. Sia, B. Tan and K. Wei, *Group Polarization and Computer-Mediated Communication: Effects of Communication Cues*, Social Presence, and Anonymity, Information Systems Research, vol. 13, no. 1, 2002, pp. 70–90.

[369] T. McCoy, *How the Islamic State evolved in an American prison*, The Washington Post, November 4, 2014.

[370] Moreover, jihadis with an eye on the next phase of the armed campaign could now meet openly in a way that would have previously been close to impossible given the risk of attracting the attention of American intelligence. See M. Chulov, *Isis: the inside story*, The Guardian, Dec 11, 2014.

[371] F. Varese, *The Society of the Vory-v-Zakone, 1930s-1950s*, *Cahiers Du Monde Russe*, vol. 39, no. 4, 1998, pp. 515–538; and M. Schwirtz, *Vory v Zakone has hallowed place in Russian criminal lore*, The New York Times, July 29, 2008.

[372] More specifically, the modern Maras emerged out of a combination of Central American *Pandillas* – or localised, homegrown youth gangs of the 1960s and 1970s – and the more transnational *Maras*, which emerged out of the migration and displacement caused by the civil wars.

members in the Northern Triangle (i.e. El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua) continue to offer a conduit for recruitment, mobilisation and "confirmation of Maras identity as [one of] social outcasts."[373] In Jamaica meanwhile, local 'crews', a number of whom were formed in the country's schools, have long provided a social function, offering members a sense of belonging, status, membership and identity. They also offer a fertile recruitment ground for high-end trafficking organisations, with youngsters employed as a low risk and low-cost labour force – not least given the fact that they tend to receive more lenient penalties.[374]

Still, other observers have adopted more structural and utilitarian lenses when explaining recruitment dynamics, pointing to an active 'head hunting' process in which organisations look for specific skills and knowledge in their recruitment processes.[375] Theorists have also argued that it is possible to distinguish between the recruitment incentives of senior individuals and those of more junior members. For example, Luke Kemp *et al* argue that founding members of criminal groups tended to be more motivated by economic gain, whilst junior 'joiners' were instead driven primarily by long-term social dynamics and influences, including 'contagion' resulting from exposure to organised crime.[376] However, this analysis perhaps fails to recognise the full extent to which senior individuals have often risen through the ranks of organisations (and, as logic would have it, therefore started out in more junior positions). Moreover, even highly appealing brands and narratives cannot on their own meet the basic living needs and costs of prospective members. Thus, even small wages that remain comparatively larger than existing salaries can prove to be a significant draw for individuals, as observed in the case of, for example, Brazilian Favela gangs.[377] Moreover, although the reasons for joining ISIS were varied and complex, the wages paid by the organisation to foreign fighters were five times higher than the average salary in Syrian-controlled territory.[378]

4.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to highlight overarching patterns relating to the organisational morphology of clandestine non-state groups of different denominations, thus informing the design of this thesis' central analytical framework. In so doing, it also sought to test the thesis' second hypothesis, which posited that the organisational structure of groups was both adaptive and predicated around key considerations, such as the need to mitigate disruption and maximise new (political and economic) opportunities. The chapter began by highlighting prevailing concepts within the theoretical literature, including some of the characteristics that distinguish the operating models of clandestine non-state groups from other wider non-state

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[373] *Mafia of the Poor: Gang Violence and Extortion in Central America*, International Crisis Group, Report No.62, April 6, 2017, https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/central-america/62-mafia-poor-gang-violence-and-extortion-central-america.
Maras members who spent time interacting (and indeed competing) with other gangs in North America also brought back new practices, including the use of community-level cliques which *inter alia* allowed highly targeted recruitment in urban neighbourhoods. See A. Does, *The Construction of the Maras: Between Politicization and Securitization*, New edition (online), Graduate Institute Publications, Geneva, 2013, http://books.openedition.org/iheid/716.
[374] L. Goi, Jamaica Gangs Follow Regional Pattern of Recruiting From Schools, Insight Crime, April 2017, available online at: https://www.insightcrime.org/news/brief/jamaican-gangs-follow-regional-patter-recruiting-schools/.
[375] S. Windisch, M. K. Logan et al., *Headhunting Among Extremist Organizations: An Empirical Assessment of Talent Spotting*, Perspectives on Terrorism, Vol. 12, No. 2, April 2018, pp. 44-62.
[376] L. Kemp, S. Zolghadriha and P. Gill, *Pathways into organized crime: comparing founders and joiners*, Trends in Organized Crime (23), September 2020, pp. 203-226.
[377] See for example: C. Ramos da Cruz & D. H. Ucko, *Beyond the Unidades de Polícia Pacificadora: Countering Commando Vermelho's Criminal Insurgency*, Small Wars & Insurgencies, 29:1, 2018, pp. 38-67.
[378] E. Solomon, *The Isis economy: meet the new boss*, The Financial Times, January 5, 2015.[379] I. Primoratz*, What is Terrorism*?, Journal of Applied Philosophy, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1990, pp.129-138.

actor entities. Subsequently, and in line with the above hypothesis, the analysis demonstrated the extent to which the organisational structures of groups could be situated within their overall political-economic strategy. Group structures are therefore usually tailored to reflect varying goals, ranging from supplanting state governance systems (which, typically, requires the creation of functions and organs geared towards the provision of social service and justice) to expanding within new overseas territories as part of criminal business ventures. This also implies a highly adaptive logic in which group morphologies evolve in light of their strategic circumstances, including whether or not they are able to control territory.

The fact that groups reveal a propensity towards adopting polymorphism, such as when these configure themselves to engage in a combination of violent-political and criminal activity, complicates the task of formulating ridged typologies, even if (as we have seen) broad categorizations are possible. The analysis also showed how different structural configurations carried advantages and disadvantages and how the need to minimize disruption and maximize the pursuit of opportunities might require balancing trade-offs. For example, highly cellular and devolved network configurations tend to increase security and resilience but are not particularly effective when trying to govern territory. At the same time, any structural analysis also needs to account for strategic culture as well as ideological and organisational manifestos, including with respect to how these might influence the character and membership of groups as well as their approach to recruitment. Furthermore, one might reasonably assume that operational design is (at least partly) guided by the range of levers and capabilities available to groups, the latter of which explored in the next chapter.