

1 Introduction

1.1 Enter the Big Circle Boys

In Volume I, the Big Circle Boys (BCB) are qualified as a network of mono-ethnic professional criminal entrepreneurs. To recap, the working definition of a BCB is stated as the following: a career criminal and a native of Guangzhou, China, who at one point migrated overseas and was an illegal immigrant upon entering the destination region or country.¹ The breadth of the criminal activities in which the BCB have been engaged is illustrated, as is the organisational and sub-cultural dimensions of their criminal network. However, the granular aspects of their drug trafficking operations have not been explored, particularly with reference to the main BCB actors who have been implicated in major narcotics importation schemes.

On the one hand, Volume I illustrated that a paradigm change indeed had occurred and that the BCB, as the oft-cited archetypal representation of new criminal entrepreneurs, were able to dominate the heroin market during the 1990s. Chapter 6 of Volume I produced evidence to validate the claim that the BCB supplied the majority of the heroin that was available on the Canadian market.² On the other hand, non-criminological scientific research by Wood *et al.* (2006a, 2006b), to be presented in this volume, highlights the little-known fact that a Canadian heroin drought which began in 2001 and lasted for around three years.

In light of the heroin drought, several pertinent research questions follow with regards to the extent to which the BCB were organised from a network perspective and from a market perspective. What were the individual and collective features that enabled them to carry out trafficking activities? At the intra- and inter- cellular network levels, which operational and structural attributes gave rise to the BCB's success in the heroin market within the context of

1 See Appendix B for a list of individuals whose BCB status were confirmed through documented informant information and police testimonies as well as through interviews with police respondents.

2 The mainstay of their activities was drug trafficking. They were also very active in the credit card counterfeiting business during the 1990s, where they produced virtually all of the bogus credit cards in circulation. In addition, the BCB were involved in an array of other types of criminality, such as extortion, prostitution, gaming offences, automobile theft, counterfeit documents, and many more (CISC 2001: 24).

the police investigations? From a network perspective, how does the heroin market crash proposition reconcile with the BCB's ability to thrive in the 1990s and failure to sustain it beyond the year 2000? What implications did the market collapse have on the functioning and survival of the BCB as individuals, as cells, and as a network? Relatedly, did they adjust to the drastic change of circumstances?

BCB Volume II sets out to answer these questions and to understand what made the BCB a formidable force in the Canadian and international drugs trade, based on a close scrutiny of BCB cases studies. As part of the narrative, this monograph makes the proposition that not only did the Canadian and the Australian heroin droughts coincide – which contests previous claims in the literature – but more crucially that it was due to the conscious decision by the drug traffickers to cease trading in heroin in response to the police attacks. Supported by evidence centred on specific BCB actors, this proposition leads to an entirely novel interpretation of the sequence of events leading up to the collapse of the heroin markets in the respective countries; it prompts new thinking around the theoretical implications this yields for the illicit drug market resilience framework and the criminal network resilience framework.

It is important to note early on that in contrast to Volume I, this monograph takes a different approach to framing the subsequent analyses of the BCB. Rather than proceeding to treat the BCB as a collective criminal network based on Volume I's finding that the BCB satisfy the organisational criteria of a cellular network of ethnic-Chinese criminal entrepreneurs comprised of a cohesive but decentralised core of cell leaders, this Volume replaces this premise with a rather agnostic stance with respect to their criminal collectivity. Instead, the BCB are presented at the outset as individual criminal entrepreneurs without presumption about their criminal affiliations and socio-cultural ties unless specified otherwise. The intention here is, in part, to allow the criminal connections to emerge chronologically parallel to the BCB criminal community developmental timeline and let the intersecting partnerships between the BCB individuals speak for themselves, as the book progresses, as to why they were perceived,

and how they functioned, as a criminal network.

By setting this assumption aside initially, it also allows for the clearing of this thought space conceptually in order to set the scene for another theoretical framework – the illegal drug market resilience framework by Martin Bouchard (2007) – in the subsequent formulation of a subset of working hypotheses. The purpose is to conduct an objective, separate analysis in order to verify the findings from Volume I and, in the process, to test the applicability of the resilience framework to a situation where an ethnically homogeneous criminal entrepreneurs are dominant in the higher levels of drugs markets.

The reasoning behind the selected framework and approach is three-fold. First, although Volume I presented an ample amount of evidence to illustrate how the BCB operate as a closed and decentralised network of criminals with homogeneous ethnic background, the evidence mostly relied on testimonies from law enforcement officers or BCB who were not directly involved in the drug operations in question. Therefore, an independent set of evidence derived from those BCB directly implicated in the said cases within the context of drugs trafficking would make the overarching argument that the BCB operated as a criminal network much more robust empirically. Secondly, the data content available in the form of transcripts from court testimonies by the relevant BCB used in Volume II is most suitable for the construction of BCB drug investigations in a chronological order, which may not show all of the network actors at all points in time but in a more temporally fragmented way. As such, the market resilience framework is deemed to be capable of capturing much more aptly the evolution and interaction of different BCB players and cells in successive phases, which allows more insight into partial networks at any given point in time rather than the whole network which is not visible for the most of the 1990s. Thirdly, as documented by separate bodies of academic literature, illicit drug market resilience is different to criminal organisational resilience (which also includes closed criminal network but not open or macro criminal network – to be explained in the Sources and Methodology section) on a conceptual level and

as empirical objects of study.³ As this volume aims to test the former – given that the BCB does not belong to traditional organised crime (TOC) nor is it a criminal organisation *sensu stricto* – it is sensible methodologically to demarcate the frameworks artificially, at least initially, in order to isolate the observation of market resilience properties only. Following this, any deviations from the market resilience framework can then be understood by considering the dimensions and properties of the emergent network of BCB actors, including its ethnically homogeneous composition, structural closure, collective actions, competitive cooperation, and so on.

Indeed, it is anticipated that the market resilience framework will be insufficient at capturing and explaining the BCB's successful transition and entry into the ecstasy market from the heroin trade, at which point in the book (Chapter 7) the market resilience framework is to be re-evaluated. This includes an assessment of the combined effect of the network features as discussed above, but also the dominant position the BCB held in the drugs markets and the higher market levels which they occupied, as well as the exogenous factors and macro-economic and legal circumstances which they faced.

1.2 A research gap: ethnic-Chinese drug traffickers in Western countries

Among various types of transnational crime, criminal entrepreneurs have been reportedly found to be most heavily involved in drug trafficking and human smuggling.⁴ Between these two illicit activities, Zhang and Chin's (2008) review of studies on Chinese organised crime from 1990 to 2008 revealed that the latter has garnered the most scholarly attention. Only four out of twenty-seven studies have broadly touched on the subject of drug trafficking in foreign countries by Chinese nationals; of those four, two used primary data in their analyses. It is clear that a thorough study of ethnic-Chinese drug traffickers based outside of China is lacking

3 For examples of studies centred on criminal organisational resilience and criminal network resilience, see Ayling (2009) and Slade (2013), respectively.

4 Unless otherwise specified, 'drug(s)' is used in place of 'illegal drug(s)' or 'narcotic(s)' hereafter for brevity.

and long overdue, as Zhang and Chin (2008) note in their recommendation for future research for such studies:

Few empirical studies are available at this time to make definitive conclusions about the extent to which those involved in drug trafficking activities are organised. Much more research is needed to improve our understanding of the extent to which organised crime groups are involved in drug trafficking or that groups of individuals engage in coordinated activities but share little in common other than their collective desire to make money.

Having researched extensively the subject of Chinese organised crime for over twenty years, Chin (1990: 153) notes that in the past few decades, a drug trafficking subculture has been developing among the Chinese in Hong Kong (HK), the United States (US), Canada, Australia, and Europe.⁵ He maintains that in the US, there is no evidence that the triads, tongs, and gangs have masterminded the heroin trade (Chin 1990: 152-153). Chu (2000: 110) takes a similar stance in expressing that although it has been learned from the past that triad members were clearly involved in international heroin trafficking, they have not dominated the trade as organisational entities. Quoting an excerpt from a 1995 interview with a HK Police officer, Chu (*ibid.*) explains that: 'Unlike the operation of street-level drug dealing where triad membership is essential for operators to establish their "selling rights" in a particular area, there is less of a barrier against entering the international drugs market.' The Chief Superintendent of the Royal Hong Kong Police (RHKP) elaborates (Main 1991, cited in *ibid.*):

The popular belief is that all drug trafficking is run by Triads. That is not so... Triad membership is neither a prerequisite nor an advantage. It is experience, expertise, contacts and money that count, and once involved there are no Triad boundaries. A Sun Yee On will happily join a 14K member working for a ringleader with no Triad affiliation whatever.

5 Drugs trafficking by Chinese immigrants is not a new phenomenon. As far back as the late 1800s, the US Senate hearings on Chinese immigration addressed the issue of opium use and trafficking in San Francisco's Chinatown. Since the liberalisation of immigration laws in 1965, Chinese criminals were known to have imported heroin whilst working as sailors and seamen (Zhang and Chin 2003). For case studies on opium smuggling by early settlers of Chinese (and Mexican) descent, see McIlwain (1998).

In a paper by Dobinson (1993: 382) which examined case studies of Chinese heroin traffickers, a similar sentiment is shared in its conclusion:

Individuals were also triad members or had triad connections. One was known to be a 14K Triad, and another had very close ties to the Sun Yee On. There is no evidence, however, that suggests any role played by either of these triads in the operations of the group. As already mentioned, membership appears important in relation to experience, expertise, and trust. Thus, an individual's "criminal credentials" can be communicated, facilitating the organisation of distributing activities.

Thus, a sizable portion of academics currently subscribe to the view that in Western Countries, the Triads from Asia and local Asian gangs are not involved in the drugs trade at the importation and wholesale levels.⁶ Instead, they believe that a new generation of drug traffickers began to emerge as early as the mid-1980s, and until recent years, the heroin market terrains are believed to have been entirely within the purview of such networks comprised of independent ethnic-Chinese criminal entrepreneurs, while the marketing and retailing ends are mainly left for pursuit by non-Chinese distributors (Chin 1990: 153, 1996: 156, 1998, 2009: 228; Chin, Zhang, and Kelly 1998; Chu 2000: 110-114; Dobinson 1993; Joe 1994; Zhang and Chin 2003: 475).⁷ Nevertheless, there is hardly any empirical research to substantiate these claims. In view of this long overdue and major knowledge gap, the BCB Volume II aims to use evidence to shed light on this area of transnational crime studies.

1.3 Aim and objectives

6 Nor has anyone attempted to show empirically how Triad membership is not beneficial to Asian traffickers in the drugs business, as Morselli (2017) did in his network analysis where he revealed how core-periphery network structure is more profitable for Hells Angels members than organisational membership in respect of their cocaine trafficking activities.

7 Henceforth, Chinese criminal entrepreneurs, which include those based out of Asian countries, are distinguished from ethnic-Chinese criminal entrepreneurs which refer specifically to criminals of Chinese descent who operate in Western countries.

While Volume I presented evidence as to what qualifies the BCB as new criminal entrepreneurs about which criminologists have so far only been able to speculate, the discussion is not placed within the context of their specific criminal undertakings. Therefore, against the backdrop that a paradigm shift has occurred in Chinese transnational crime where TOC has been replaced by a new generation of criminal entrepreneurs including the BCB, the theoretical premise of BCB Volume II is the following: informally organised criminal entrepreneurs and collectives are able to perform well in illicit international markets where external security challenges and internal competitive and cooperative issues are constant.

The aim here is to examine the limited success (and eventual failure) of this set of ethnic-Chinese criminal entrepreneurs in the Canadian drug trade based on the framework of market resilience as proposed by Bouchard (2007). According to Bouchard (2007), an illicit drug market can be resilient to external shocks depending on the varying levels of resistance the market provides. Therefore, the main hypothesis (to be elaborated upon in Chapter 2) is that evidence of such resilient properties should be found within the period of Canadian heroin market flourish – which also happened to correspond to the period during which BCB players thrived. Specifically, the following properties are to be sought, based on Bouchard's (2007) framework: low vulnerability (high resistance) to law enforcement detection and penetration, high elasticity to absorb shocks and rebound post attack (both human and environmental), and high adaptive capacity to change methods and/or replace personnel and commodity when the market is unrecoverable.

A crucial question follows the findings from the first half of Volume II, which is derived from the central hypothesis and relates to the idea of distinguishing between market resilience and network resilience. Bouchard's (2007) theory is based on the assumption of a decentralised network of actors involved in the drug markets but mentions nothing about how collectivity of the bond and relations between the actors may affect market resilience. Seeing as the BCB were closely associated with one another in a decentralized way and had dominated the heroin

trade in a competitive manner, as BCB Volume I revealed, how should one distinguish between market resilience and network resilience in this particular context? That is, under what circumstances should one regard the rebound after attacks to as market resilience – especially if the players are from the same background – versus a resilience response that should be attributed to a collective value of the players within a network that transcends the entire top level of the supply chain?

Taking this line of questioning further, a central objective attached to the main hypothesis is to be explored: the value of ethnic-regional homogeneity (Guangzhou background and dialect) and network closure (dense, highly connected) of the BCB. With reference to various hypotheses from Burt (2000), Morselli (2005, 2009), and others, network properties are to be identified and network structure established to determine how the characteristics particular to the BCB contributed to its survival in the heroin market. Networking processes are also to be scrutinised to look for ways in which social capital and human capital have been used to maintain their social and criminal livelihood, and how these assets are essential to the internal competition and cooperation within the BCB network.

The focus then shifts to the alleged heroin market collapse to examine its cause and the transition by market players into the ecstasy trade. The objective is to assess whether the drug market resilience framework can capture adequately the effect of the circumstances surrounding the collapse, with special consideration again placed upon the value of network closure and ethnic homogeneity. The external factors include the economics of supply and demand in destination and source countries, as well as the changing context of legislation targeting different types of drugs. In the case that the drug market resilience framework is inapplicable, an improved framework is to be recommended based on the demonstrable value of BCB's mono-ethnicity.

1.4 Sources and methodology

This section only focuses on network-related methodological and data source issues. It does not reiterate topics and content already covered in Chapter 1, Volume I, such as the data collection process, fieldwork considerations, ethics issues, and limitations of non-network-related theoretical perspectives.

After the qualitative data was extracted and coded thematically as discussed in Volume I, the next phase targeted data on drug markets where attributes of heroin, ecstasy, and cocaine markets were extracted. These comprised of dates by year and by month, wholesale prices in Asian source countries, wholesale and retail prices in destination countries, quantity for each price category, prices in different currencies, and the quality and purity of various trafficked batches. Chapter 3, for example, shows the longitudinal fluctuating trends of the heroin market.

Subsequent readings were then carried out to focus exclusively on the relational aspects between BCB individuals and their associates for the purpose of constructing drug trafficking network representations and conducting network analysis. Relational data and associated attributes were firstly extracted. Then, the data was entered into the software programme UCINET as coded numbers. The goal was to compile relational data matrices and use it to generate visual representation of snapshots of networks which existed during different periods of police investigations. The method is known as social network analysis, and the network representation is referred to as sociograms. Despite the name of the analytical tool, the sociograms in this study attempts to capture the criminal associations and not just the social context within which the actors were embedded. The reason is, as mentioned in Volume I, qualitative data on the social relations between actors was examined separately to show the circumstances under which BCB came to know, work with, and trust one another, to be discussed mainly in Chapters 10 and 11.

The extraction of relational data involved three steps. In the first reading, every individual that was named as a BCB in the cases was recorded using their real names. This list included their BCB status, gender, and their aliases, the latter of which was used to cross-check

for their involvement in other cases with associates (and to streamline duplicate records as some of them were identified by their aliases on some occasions but by their real name elsewhere). A second reading was performed to record the personal relationship such as schoolmate friendship or kinships. Criminal and semi-legitimate activities mentioned were also recorded, as well as the associational relations based on mutual criminal undertakings. In respect of drug trafficking activities, the relationships were broken down into buyer, seller, equal partner, importer, wholesaler, and local distributor. Some of these trafficking attributes are selectively shown in sociograms such as Figure 4.1 which illustrates the network BCB importers; others are discussed narratively throughout the qualitative analyses in various chapters including Chapter 4.⁸ To create the relational matrices and sociograms, apart from the case of Project Okapi involving the Wong group which traded in ecstasy, the actors are generally separated into two categories: heroin traffickers and pawns and non-heroin trafficking actors. The latter were usually eliminated from the network analysis so as not to skew the results. The details of the total number of actors, the number of heroin traffickers, and the number of non-trafficking facilitators are specified within each case analysis. Depending on each case, other attributes of the actors mentioned above may also be noted. These include BCB status identifier, involvement in other types of drugs, and the strength of kinship bond.

The above data extraction process was conducted using hard and soft datasets, a method

8 These two steps of the extraction process – the first and second readings to record names, relations, and associative attributes – probably involved some of the most challenging tasks in the analysis process. This partially relates to the previous discussion on the difficulty of comprehending and interpreting data from official documents, and in particular, trial transcripts. In addition, the complexity of data extraction was compounded by the fact that the BCB cases were a series of trafficking operations and police investigative projects that involved many of the same, as well as new, individuals over different periods of time. Therefore, as multiple cases were involved in overlapping trials over the same timeframe, the court documents were filed in a very disorganised way. For instance, evidence of the actors, activities, and associations from various informant information in one case file would appear, with slight or major variations, in the case files of several other investigations or trials. The problem is that this often occurred without any clear indication of the date, source, or context of the information being presented. This was particularly evident in three of the largest investigations (Projects Eider, E-Congee, and E-Page) that took place consecutively between 1997 and 2000. Thus, many of the documents were read simultaneously in a session and repeatedly in each reading session to triangulate the details so as to eliminate any ambiguous information and ensure accuracy of the extracted data for network analysis.

employed by Duijn *et al.* (2014).⁹ Each of the sociograms illustrated is based on both datasets derived from various court documents pertaining to one or more closed police investigations. The court and official declassified documents contained a wide range of information on the criminal activities undertaken between individuals and their criminal relations, which included the following types of data: a) informant information (criminal, police undercover, and civilian agent), b) police surveillance and telephone interception data, c) police intelligence analysis and report, d) police arrest records, e) judicial wiretap authorisation information, f) judicial records of criminal prosecution, g) testimonies during trial proceedings. The soft datasets include intelligence-related information in a), b), and c) above, whereas the hard datasets include formal written police and court records as shown in d), e), f), and g) above. Therefore, the links between the actors or nodes in the sociograms represent either a minimum level of criminal relationship or activities that were shown, for example, through co-offending observed during police intelligence gathering (soft data); or that two or more people were implicated in the same drug trafficking investigation as formally named co-offenders in the criminal justice database (hard data). In the case of soft data, three broad categories of activities were coded to distinguish trafficking collaboration from other criminal activities for the purpose of recreating trafficking-only value chain networks (for example, Figures 3.3 to 3.7, 4.1, and 10.3): sourcing and arranging drugs, distributing drugs, and laundering proceeds.¹⁰

Apart from the sociogram's title and notes which explain the nature of the criminality and the relational ties that bind the nodes, much of qualitative aspects of the actors' criminal and social relations are appraised qualitatively in the text. As Grund and Morselli (2017) showed in their study, there are many different types and qualities of criminal ties in criminal relationships. In particular, they illustrated the importance of capturing within criminal

⁹ For a detailed explanation of the benefits and the limitations of using hard and soft datasets to construct and analyse criminal networks, see Duijn *et al.*'s (2014).

¹⁰ Varied but similar coding methods have been employed in other network studies; see Wood (2017) section 3.2 for details.

relationships evidence of repeat co-offending, specialisation in co-offending, and co-offending within criminal careers. By providing the context of such network content rather than solely examining network topology, one can shed light on the meaning of criminal relationships within social structures over time. It should be noted that while a glimpse of the criminal careers of a few BCB is offered descriptively in the latter part of this book volume, limited data was collected on BCB social connections which made it infeasible to construct complex layers of juxtaposing networks as Smith and Papachristos (2016) did with their multiplex social and criminal network representation of the historical Chicago organised crime neighbourhood.

After data extraction, the next step involved creating network matrices. In a network matrix, both the row and the column are comprised of the synchronised names of the individual actors, which is very different to the usual asymmetrical attribute column and row matrix used in social sciences. The connections in a matrix can be coded in a binary format or coded in values. In binary format, the connection is coded by either its presence (1) or absence (0) in a matrix. Asymmetry in relationships can also be coded, which is shown as directional arrows when visualised. For instance, if trafficker A supplies trafficker B, but B does not sell to A, then only one of the two boxes where A and B intersect in the matrix would be coded with 1, and the other with 0. When coded in values, numbers are used as ordinal representation attributes or the varying degree of continuous association within the dyadic relationship. Once a matrix is created, a sociogram is generated to visualise the connections.

Where possible, the power asymmetry or trafficking hierarchies (trafficker B as described above would be subordinate to trafficker A since he is further down the supply chain) were recorded and shown in the sociograms using unidirectional arrows at the end of the links between nodes; these are present in Figures 3.3 to 3.8, 6.1, and 10.3. The sociograms elsewhere in Chapters 3 and 4 display bidirectional arrows by default and do not indicate any relational hierarchies. Explanations of the directional arrows in both cases are noted below every sociogram. Also, as mentioned above, BCB status identifier and the strength of kinship bond

are also shown in the sociograms and indicated in the notes below them.

After the sociograms were created, initial assessments were made, following which they were re-shaped manually to tailor to the research angle. As one of the central questions relates to BCB network closure, some of the networks were re-arranged to show how a core network stands out amongst non-BCB associates and peripheral actors (see Figure 3.8), and also the evenly distributed dense connections that are indicative of the repeat partnerships between BCB individuals (see Figure 4.1).

The analyses of various network dimensions of the sociograms involve the principled concepts of network measures.¹¹ A few of them are selectively applied, including degree centrality, betweenness centrality, eigenvector centrality, and clustering coefficient. Degree centrality is a measure of the number of direct contacts connected to a node. It determines how concentrated a network is and expresses the degree of concentration as a percentage score ranging from 0 to 100%. For instance, if every node is connected to every other node, then the score is 0%. Conversely, if the score is 100%, then it means all nodes are connected to only one node. Betweenness centrality differs from degree centrality in that it measures the indirect number of contacts surrounding a node. In other words, it measures the geodesic (shortest-path) distance between every dyad (a pair of nodes) in the network. and measures the extent to which a node appears on those paths. This network measure determines how important an actor is by their ability to control and influence the flow of connectivity and information within a network. Another form of centrality measure which extends from degree centrality is eigenvector centrality. This measure adds an additional dimension to degree centrality by determining who among those nodes with the same degree centrality is more central in a network. It takes into account the degree to which the direct contacts of a central node are directly connected themselves. High eigenvector centrality is not assumed to be directly

¹¹ This paragraph and the one preceding it are based on the methodology sections from Morselli (2009) and Lauchs *et al.* (2012). For more background to the principles of network measures and dimensions, see Chapter 2.

equated with an increase in one's influence and control, since the high connectivity surrounding the central actor makes them more redundant. Clustering coefficient expresses personal network density within a network by measuring the extent to which a node's direct contacts are clustered. It determines the position of a node within the whole network by establishing whether a node is part of a localised cluster. Such cliques are high in connectivity and, thus, network density. As a non-conventional addition to the three network measures mentioned above, the clustering coefficient is useful in determining patterns of localised clustering within large, sparse network that may not be immediately obvious.

There are two caveats to the network analysis which are manifested in some of the sociograms. First, in some cases there is either insufficient data or it is found not meaningful enough for the purpose of conducting further network analysis (data unavailable or incomplete) than to provide a basic glimpse of the network in its least connected form; in other situations, even when it is quite evident that some actors have known others for a long time, or by obvious inference would know or have worked with one another, direct evidence from the case files used to compile the network data can be absent and therefore does not show the true extent of the connections. This is partly because, as mentioned before, some BCB cases occur consecutively one after another or overlap during the same period, and the police investigations are similar to time-line boundaries deliberately drawn to separate the cases. However, many of the connections among BCB were never severed because these investigation limits were artificially created. So, for instance, when actor A appears with actor B in case one, disappears entirely in case two, only to reappear in case three associating with B, and all the while there is insufficient information about whether the disappearance was by choice or due to external factors, it can be difficult to presume that a sociogram of case two compiled from such data would be accurate (even though A should be excluded from the sociogram, it would not be a true representation of the actual network). Or simpler yet, when, for example, case four and five occurred during an overlapping period, and actor C is observed to be associating with actor

D in case four, while only D is present in case five and no mentioning of C is made at all, should all those missing such as C be included in the sociogram of case five? In the reality of the BCB cases, such examples are complicated even further by a much higher number of intersecting missing and present relations, as well as a number of different ongoing criminal and social relations. That is why for investigative cases such as Projects Dragon and E-Page, familiarity with the cases after multiple readings prompted the decision that any further network analyses would not have generated representative or meaningful results.

Secondly, and as an extension to the point above, there is the general problem of missing data which faces all network designs (Morselli 2009: 41). Not only was the relational data not extracted entirely from less biased sources such as telephone intercepts, but many of the BCB cases only contained information from informant reports or physical police surveillance. Thus, segments of relations were bound to be missed owing to the purpose and presentation of the original source of information. Even if complete communication intercept records were available, it would still not be realistic to expect a completely accurate and comprehensive representation of network actors from such data in general due to several reasons: the police only had partial visibility into the a segment of the network, which was dependent upon their time and resource constraints and also upon the investigative mandate; there were always those who could not be identified on the telephone, who were missing during parts of the investigation, or who were so cautious as to always meet in person to avoid detection. Therefore, the network analyses conducted on the case studies necessarily provides only a partial approximation of the full range of the BCB criminal associations. The network scope, in reality, was much larger and the connections were much denser. Nonetheless, during the data extraction and analysis stages, best efforts were made to keep these limitations in check by proceeding only when data were determined to be fit for purpose, and any uncertainties and anomalies were noted accordingly.

1.5 The organisation of Volume II

The inadequacies in research on criminal entrepreneurs involved in the drugs markets in Western countries are outlined in this chapter. The central themes of this Volume are introduced, which included an overview of the problems to be addressed and the intended approach. The sources, evidence, and methods used are also discussed. Chapter 2 reviews the theoretical frameworks that are relevant to the themes of this book. It details the working assumptions and hypotheses which guide the remainder of this study, including the drug market resilience framework, collective action theory, concepts of social capital and trust, and network perspective and analysis. It also examines how they cooperate with one another using examples of relationship management based on culture-specific behaviours.

Chapters 3 to 6 focus on the heroin market and activities in Canada from 1990 to 2000. These are based on case studies, through which most of the BCB traffickers are introduced. Chapter 3 contains two sections, the first of which shows the BCB's dominance in the heroin market and examines several smaller cases where the police have attempted to directly infiltrate and attack the BCB network. Section two carries out network analyses on two major cases that took place in the late 1990s. Chapter 4 continues to investigate the heroin trade, looking at the dynamics of repeat trafficking partnerships through cooperation and competition among individuals and cliques within the decentralised network of traffickers; market and network positioning strategies and techniques of trafficking are discussed. Chapter 5 narrows in on the heroin importation shipping process via a case study of a prominent BCB (Ho) and his collaborator (Sa) based in China. The role social and human capitals play in a successful joint venture is discussed, as well as the potential risks involved at various stages of the process and ways to manage them. Chapter 6 shifts the angle to examine how the BCB responded to indirect police investigative approaches and subsequent attacks. Several incidents from individual cliques and one major case (different from cases in Chapter 3, section two) from the late 1990s are used as examples.

Chapter 7 explores the circumstances surrounding the alleged Canadian heroin shortage that commenced in 2001 and how it relates to the Australian heroin drought. It verifies the Canadian claim by piecing together what preceded it and suggests possible causes. Chapter 8 examines the external factors which contributed to transition to and popularisation of ecstasy as the dominant market; the BCB network's endogenous capabilities to diversify into and capture the ecstasy market is also addressed using a case study. Chapter 9 examines how they cooperate with one another and handle disputes internally using examples of relationship management based on culture-specific behaviours. Chapter 10 analyses a major ecstasy case operated by a BCB group (headed by a significant BCB player, Wong) between 2001 and 2004, as an example of the BCB's successful adaptation to the heroin market collapse. Lastly, Chapter 11 concludes Volume II with some final thoughts.