

MOMUN 2026

アン  
ダー  
ワールド  
大阪



*The Yakuza That Breathed Fire*

Directed by Jane Maguire

*Background Guide*

# Table of Contents

|                                         |           |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Director's Letter</b>                | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Equity Statement</b>                 | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Glossary</b>                         | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>Introduction</b>                     | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Historical Background</b>            | <b>14</b> |
| The Edo Period                          | 14        |
| Imperial Expansion & Wartime Yakuza     | 15        |
| Post Allied-Occupation                  | 15        |
| <b>Current State of Affairs</b>         | <b>19</b> |
| Map of Osaka & Kobe                     | 19        |
| <b>Topic A - Blood on the Dotonbori</b> | <b>23</b> |
| Guiding Questions                       | 26        |
| <b>Topic B - The Shadows of Osaka</b>   | <b>27</b> |
| Guiding Questions                       | 30        |
| <b>Committee Mechanics</b>              | <b>31</b> |
| Note interception                       | 31        |
| Territory map                           | 31        |
| Heat index                              | 31        |
| Altered Crisis Updates                  | 32        |
| <b>Character List</b>                   | <b>33</b> |
| <b>Research Guide</b>                   | <b>35</b> |
| <b>Works Cited</b>                      | <b>37</b> |

# Director's Letter

*34.6550° N, 135.5063° E*

*72 Years Ago. At this location. Money moved faster than law.*

*Yet Again. Tonight. It moves faster than blood.*

Greetings Delegates!

From gambling card to placard—in this committee, it's clear that it's not just one that's going up, but both. My name is Rahib Arham, and it is my absolute honour to welcome you all to OSAKA UNDERWORLD: The Yakuza That Breathed Fire. I am a grade 12 student at Monarch Park Collegiate Institute, aspiring to pursue a career in the Business-Law field and hopefully live my Harvey Specter lifestyle. My MUN journey began with a single call-out from the school announcements, inviting me to join for fun nights out across bustling downtown Toronto and the starry nights of Montreal.

Hey Delegates!

Rahib came up with this fantastic committee idea and convinced our club to run it! Then, after falling out of the ranks of directing for Harvard MUN, the exciting opportunity to write and direct this intriguing committee fell to me. My name is Jane Maguire, I'm your director and committee head. Delegates have the opportunity to reshape a Nation, to determine the fate of a group as old as the



Samurai. Where honour meets bloodshed, and loyalty meets violence, the future of Japan, and the rest of the underground world, lies in your hands.

If you have any questions about the committee, feel free to reach out to me at [343178596@tdsb.ca](mailto:343178596@tdsb.ca).





# Equity Statement

MOMUN 2026 has a zero-tolerance policy for equity violations within or outside of the committee. We acknowledge that this committee may touch on controversial issues; however, we implore delegates to maintain a high degree of respect and decorum. As a reminder, instances of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, or any other form of discrimination will not be tolerated and may lead to disqualification from awards or removal from MOMUN 2026, depending on the severity.

We recognize this committee in particular faces special equity challenges, involving drugs, prostitution, and violence. These are topics which will be discussed during the committee session. If a delegate, after reading this guide, feels they're uncomfortable with these topics/aren't able to talk about these things comfortably, please reach out to [mpcmodelun@gmail.com](mailto:mpcmodelun@gmail.com) and explain your situation. We will *attempt* to accommodate you as best as possible, unless it's within a week of the conference.

Some delegates may want to bring in props. This is encouraged; however, there will be **no** props which could be mistaken as weapons, including but not limited to knives, guns, and swords.

When discussing topics such as trafficking, violence, prostitution, and drugs, no delegate can be expressly in favour of these activities. This means delegates in the Yakuza bloc can't make speeches in which they advocate for these things, and other delegates must not put these delegates in a situation where they would be expected to advocate for these things. We ask that delegates maintain a level of respect when discussing these topics in general.

# Glossary

## *Kobun* (古文 — *Apprentis- Child Status*)

Roughly translates to ‘child’, or ‘little brother’. Under the Oyabun, guided by the Oyabun’s wisdom and aid. Must protect the Oyabun and be forever loyal<sup>1</sup>.

## *Kumicho* (組長 — *Family head*)

The Yakuza is divided into various crime families; the head of each crime family is the Kumicho and holds great power.

## *Osaka* (大阪 — *City in Japan where the Yakuza runs rampant*)

One of the two major powerhouses of Japan, second only to Tokyo, and home to various Yakuza gangs. An economic powerhouse of Japan.

## *Oyabun* (親分 — *Boss*)

The leader of the *yakuza*—regarded as the most respected individual with absolute authority over other members.<sup>2</sup>

## *Sakazuki Ceremony* (杯事 — *Subordinates drink from a shared cup with their boss*)

An initiation ritual in which the Oyabun drinks from a cup before passing it to the Kobun to drink from, tying their bond.

<sup>1</sup> “Yakuza | History, Meaning, Rituals, & Facts.” *Britannica*, 13 February 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/yakuza#ref1175498>.

<sup>2</sup> “Oyabun | Japanese Organized Crime | Britannica.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, [www.britannica.com/topic/oyabun](https://www.britannica.com/topic/oyabun).

### *The Yamaguchi Gumi (山口組 — Most Powerful Family in the Yakuza)*

The most powerful crime family in the Yakuza. Led by Kazuo Taoka, controlling massive amounts of wealth and power<sup>3</sup>

### *Wakagashira (若頭 — Second in command)*

Refers to the ‘right-hand man’ of the Oyabun.

### *Yakuza (ヤクザ — Japanese organized crime gangster)*

Originating from the term “losing hand,” used in traditional card games, the *Yakuza* are Japanese organized crime syndicates formed by members rooted in poor, marginalized communities.<sup>4</sup>

### *Yubitsume (指詰め — Finger cutting)*

A ceremony that punishes individuals by cutting a finger, typically the pinky, at a joint to weaken them and increase their reliance on their Oyabun<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> “Sohei Dojima | Yakuza Wiki | Fandom.” *Yakuza Wiki*, [https://yakuza.fandom.com/wiki/Sohei\\_Dojima](https://yakuza.fandom.com/wiki/Sohei_Dojima).

<sup>4</sup> Britannica Editors. “Yakuza | History, Meaning, Rituals, and Facts.” Encyclopedia Britannica, 20 July 1998, [www.britannica.com/topic/yakuza](https://www.britannica.com/topic/yakuza).

<sup>5</sup> “The Evolution of Yakuza: From Edo to Modern Underworld.” *Japaneo*, 19 March 2025, <https://www.japaneo.org/2025/03/yakuza.html>.



# Introduction

The Yakuza. The infamous Japanese mafia. You may spot members of this illicit gang by their expensive suits and clean-cut appearance. As an intricate organized crime group, it has entangled its roots throughout Japan's history, culture, and even political governance. A mafia so deadly it makes the New York mafia in the 70s look like a playgroup. What separates this group from other crime organizations is their acceptance and involvement in Japan, often beloved by the people and supported by the government. The term Yakuza refers to the mafia in general; they're composed of dozens of individual crime families, who may work together or go to war.

Characterized by their tattoos and cut-off fingers representing their devotion to loyalty and justice, the Yakuza are famous for their intricate tattoos, beautiful patterns across their backs and chests. However, the meaning behind these tattoos runs much deeper than the skin they're pierced into.

In the Edo period in Japan, tattoos were used to mark criminals, humiliate them and as a reminder of their failure to society. Often, they'd receive a black ring around their arm to indicate theft, and a cross on their forehead for more serious offences. These tattoos began to evolve into an art, which was meant to tell the story of those who adorned them, with the *Horishi*, tattoo artists who would use a technique called *Irezumi*, tattooing by hand with a needle and ink. It is a painful process that yields beautiful results. It was a natural progression for the Yakuza to adopt this technique, using it to initiate new members. That way, their alliance was set; there was no hiding. This practice wasn't just branding; it was, and is, true art. It would often be a lengthy process for a new member to design their tattoo; it would often be reflective of the wearer's journey throughout their life, often depicting scenes from

Japanese folklore. Commonly, they involved a dragon, tiger, phoenix, or koi<sup>6</sup>. Creatures which maintained vast importance in Japanese culture. While these tattoos once symbolized status and honour in Yakuza society, they've become increasingly frowned upon<sup>7</sup>.

In Japan, in general, tattoos are incredibly frowned upon, stigmatized, and in many public places, such as gyms and pools, they are required to be covered. In recent decades, Yakuza tattoos have faded and younger generations often opt for subtler forms of body art. Another form of body alteration within the Yakuza is known as *yubitsume*, the practice of finger-cutting. This practice is

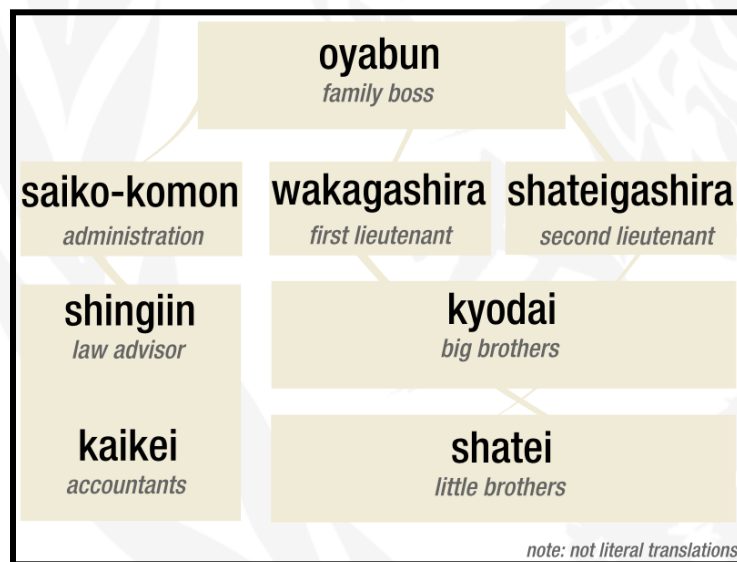


Figure one: Yakuza family structure flow chart

deeply rooted within the culture of honour systems, group accountability, and loyalty for the Yakuza, embodying penance, sacrifice, and submission. This punishment was permanent and visual; it showed the person was willing to ensure pain to resolve their wrongdoing<sup>8</sup>. It could be done multiple times,

<sup>6</sup> Filleul, Ynes Sarah. "More Than Skin Deep: The Meaning Behind Yakuza Tattoos." *Tokyo Weekender*, 7 October 2024, [https://www.tokyoweekender.com/art\\_and\\_culture/history/more-than-just-skin-deep-the-meaning-behind-japans-yakuza-tattoos/](https://www.tokyoweekender.com/art_and_culture/history/more-than-just-skin-deep-the-meaning-behind-japans-yakuza-tattoos/).

<sup>7</sup> "The Evolution of Yakuza Tattoos and Symbolism." *Yakuza Gang*, 7 November 2025, <https://yakuzagang.com/home/the-evolution-of-yakuza-tattoos-and-symbolism/>.

<sup>8</sup> "Yubitsume | 指詰め Tradition / Ritual in A Yakuza's Tale." *World Anvil*, 13 December 2024, <https://www.worldanvil.com/w/a-yakuza-s-tale-shewolfsymphony/a/yubitsume-7C-E68C87E8A9B0E38281-ritual>.

once for each wrongdoing; the finger would be cut at the joint, often starting with the pinky, as the pinky was necessary to stabilize the sword one held, meaning this practice would weaken the bearer and increase their dependence on their *Oyabun*.

The Yakuza is made up of various crime families, and within each family is an intricate hierarchical system. The Oyabun is at the top, roughly translating to ‘father’ or ‘boss’. The Oyabun is the absolute leader and holds decision-making power throughout the family. Directly underneath the Oyabun are the *Wakagashira*, the right-hand men of the Oyabun, who oversee factions of the Yakuza. They are trusted advisors who help to ensure the wishes of the Oyabun are carried out. The *Kumicho* are considered the ‘family heads’, they’re not

The boss is like the Oyabun, rather they oversee the family operations and are above the footsoldiers. The Kobun, translating roughly to ‘child’, are the foot soldiers carrying out the day-to-day activities of the Yakuza. There are other, more detailed positions overseeing certain parts of the family, as seen in the chart above. The relationship between the Oyabun and the Kobun is considered sacred, built on trust and loyalty, resembling a father-son relationship. The Oyabun provides protection, financial support, and guidance to the Kobun<sup>9</sup>. The relationship is established in a ceremony known as the *Sakazuki Ceremony*, in which the Oyabun drinks from a cup, then passes it to the *Kobun* to drink from.

One of the factors which makes the Yakuza so incredibly powerful is their close ties to the Japanese government. Members of the Yakuza have even been in the Japanese parliament. The Yakuza have been more commonly known to establish important relationships with politicians, providing manpower and financial aid during election times. Their influence extends far, as they’ve been known

<sup>9</sup>“What Is The Hierarchy Within The Yakuza?” *Yaminotantei*,  
<https://www.yaminotantei.org/post/what-is-the-hierarchy-within-the-yakuza>.

to engage in vote-buying and other forms of electoral corruption. During times of political instability, the Yakuza have been known for donating huge sums of money towards electoral campaigns, establishing positive relations with politicians on the national level. While their involvement in illegal activities has understandably absorbed the majority of the discussion, their contributions to legitimate businesses should not be overlooked. They've often been highly involved in construction, entertainment, and real estate, allowing them to establish positive relationships with local politicians and influence local policymaking. The relationship between the Yakuza and the Japanese police has been complex, to say the least. Often characterized by bribes, the Japanese police have been known to overlook Yakuza activity and leave them to their territory battles, as civilians are rarely harmed.

Despite their reputation for violence, the Yakuza have a strong code of ethics for how they treat civilians. They've even been known for their charitable nature. There are many rules one follows as part of the Yakuza:

- 1. Always treat your Oyabun with utmost respect**

Often, gangs in the West are rife with coups against higher members of the gang, with all members desiring a place above. However, this is not the case in the Yakuza, as the relationship between Oyabun and Kobun is considered father and son.

- 2. Never steal from the everyday man.**

The Yakuza is often involved in white-collar crimes and doesn't often bother with petty crimes.

- 3. Don't disrupt the harmony of the gang, or touch the partner of a fellow member.**



Loyalty is the top priority of the Yakuza; there is no infighting within families, and you'll often see members taking a bullet for each other. The wives and girlfriends of other members were not to be touched.

#### **4. Don't involve yourself in drugs.**

Technically, drug trafficking and involvement are against the code within the Yakuza; however, most groups ignore this as drugs are such strong moneymakers.

#### **5. Always act chivalrously**

This has been one of, if not the most important rule for the Yakuza, no matter the century. The Yakuza are known for being respectful and charitable to all those who don't work against them.

Because of this strict code of conduct, citizens for most of Yakuza's history have accepted the Yakuza into their culture and life. They've even appreciated the Yakuza, as they've held an important historical role in stabilizing the Japanese economy, and their charity towards Japanese citizens has been invaluable.

Both the Yakuza and the American mafia<sup>10</sup> have been powerful, influential, and dangerous organized crime groups. They're both involved in similar crimes and have somewhat similar family organizations, though the Yakuza is based significantly more on loyalty. The starkest contrast between

The Yakuza and the American mafia come in their numbers. The Yakuza absolutely dwarfs the

---

<sup>10</sup> "Mafia vs. Yakuza." *This vs That*, <https://thisvsthat.io/mafia-vs-yakuza>.

American mafia in terms of membership size, shocking considering the difference between the Japanese and American population sizes. At their peak, the Yakuza had **184,000 members**, whereas at the peak of the New York mafia, they had about 5,000 members. For a little more context, at its peak, the Russian mafia had 100,000<sup>11</sup>.

The Yakuza is known for its far-reaching international influence. Often, for example, involving themselves in American Mafia activities, Venezuelan drug trafficking, and Russian prostitution.

The Yakuza, much like the New York mafia, has managed to extend its grasp into many various criminal endeavours within Japan. Their main industry, similar to the American mafia, is extortion. Providing ‘protection’ to various businesses in exchange for a fee. This practice was the first of the Yakuza and dates back hundreds of years to the predecessor of what is now the Yakuza. They’re also known for acquiring land at shockingly low rates and reselling it at inflated prices. Gambling and underground casinos have maintained an important part of the Yakuza’s endeavours; however, gambling is illegal in Japan (aside from government-sanctioned lotteries, horse racing, cycling, and boat racing). The Yakuza maintains highly illegal underground gambling rooms and casinos for high-stakes clients. Much like the American mafia, the Yakuza does its fair share of loan sharking, smuggling, drug and human trafficking, day labour contracting, and prostitution. They also control many restaurants, bars, taxi services, and dozens of other institutions throughout various industries<sup>12</sup>.

It’s important to note the heavy influence of the Yamaguchi-Gumi, the most powerful crime family within the entirety of the Yakuza. They will be an important family throughout this committee.

---

<sup>11</sup> “Inside the Yakuza: How Japan’s Most Infamous Crime Syndicate Operate.” *News Nest*, 1 March 2025, <https://news-nest.com/2025/03/01/inside-the-yakuza-how-japans-most-infamous-crime-syndicate-operates/>

<sup>12</sup> Myers, Christopher. “18 Reasons That The Yakuza Is More Than Just A Japanese Mafia.” *Ranker*, <https://www.ranker.com/list/yakuza-facts/christopher-myers>

# Historical Background

## *The Edo Period*

The **Edo period** in Japan took place in the 17th century, and was a period of peace. The samurai wars were over, meaning the ex-samurai were without masters. They didn't know what to do with themselves without the conflict, and what to do with their training. Some of these people ended up forming groups called **Kabukimono**. They would use their training to extort and form gangs. These groups were characterized by flashy, flamboyant clothing and oversized swords. In response to this violent group terrorizing townspeople, a group called **Machi-yakko** formed. They were made up of mostly townsfolk, but also sometimes other ex-samurai, who protected the people against the Kabukimono. Many Yakuza members often believe the Yakuza originated from the Machi-yakko, an honourable group. However, it's more likely they originated from two groups called the **Bakuto** and **Tekiya**<sup>13</sup>. The Bakuto were a group of many people, including ex-samurai, who ran gambling operations and developed rituals and traditions seen in the present-day Yakuza. The Tekiya was a group of peddlers who controlled stalls at markets and festivals, and offered protection systems. The organization of these two groups much more closely resembles the present-day Yakuza; however, it's impossible to say with certainty where they really came from<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>13</sup>“Bakuto.” *Wikipedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bakuto>.

<sup>14</sup>“Yakuza: From Samurai Roots to Modern Crime Syndicates.” *Moran Alytics*, 3 December 2025, <https://moranalytics.com/yakuza-from-samurai-roots-to-modern-crime-syndicates/>.

## *Imperial Expansion & Wartime Yakuza*

In the late 1800s-early 1900s, Japan began wanting to expand overseas. This, of course, included China and a high degree of Yakuza involvement. The Japanese attack on China began on September 18th, 1931 and ended with the surrender of Japan in 1945<sup>15</sup>. Given the high degree of Yakuza involvement in the Japanese government, it's no surprise that they were in this war. The Yakuza provided smuggling, protection, and distribution networks for goods for the Japanese troops. The Japanese government also encouraged the opium trade to China during this time. By essentially supplying China with opium, the Yakuza were able to generate massive amounts of revenue for the Japanese economy and weaken the Chinese resistance by getting the Chinese citizens hooked on Opium. They played a similar important role in WW2, involved in the narcotics trade, and Yakuza members sometimes acted as spies, enforcers, and guides for the Japanese army in occupied areas.

## *Post Allied-Occupation*

Post-WW2 was an important and influential time for the Yakuza, as they were able to exert more power over the government and citizens of Japan than ever before. Japan was thrust into a time of opportunity and depression, the breeding grounds for gang violence. When the wartime government collapsed, a power vacuum was created, and American occupational authorities struggled to restore order. Organized crime quickly filled the void left by the disorganized government. They gained loyalty and power, and the black market goods they provided supported Japan through its economic and political instability. This set the stage; they got the Japanese people through with goods and food, and in turn, the Japanese people respected them somewhat more than their own government. This is where the **Yamaguchi-Gumi** gained its foothold and began to become the most powerful crime family

---

<sup>15</sup> "HyperWar: International Military Tribunal for the Far East." <https://ibiblio.org/hyperwar/PTO/IMTFE/IMTFE-5.html>.



within the Yakuza. In the post war period, they became the single most powerful family, with close to a monopoly on the real estate and entertainment business. The American occupation post WW2 (1945-1952), attempted to dismantle militaristic and ultranationalist values within Japanese society, which were best represented by no one but the Yakuza. However, they relied heavily on the Yakuza to help maintain order, with the Yakuza's influence extending into **American-run black markets**. With the American forces turning a blind eye to the Yakuza's activities, they were able to flourish and extend their reach. With Yakuza control over construction companies and Unions, they managed to steer massive profits from the rebuilding of Japan. Throughout this time, it became all but impossible to hide the Yakuza influence in Japanese governance; the governance had officially denounced them, but they continued to maintain relationships with politicians and would even enforce political deals<sup>16</sup>.

**The Dark Ocean Society, or Gen'yōsha**, was considered the foundation leading up to the modern-day Yakuza. The Dark Ocean Society was named based on the ocean between Japan and China, the East China Sea. It would be a mistake to discuss the Yakuza without talking about the ultra nationalism which drove many of their goals and motivations. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Japan went through a period of unprecedented economic growth, spurring this period of ultranationalism. The Dark Ocean society perfectly embodies this ultranationalism, going beyond pride for their nation and venturing into believing that Japan is superior to all other nations. They envisioned their nation expanding, taking over China and eventually having all 8 corners of the world under a Japanese roof. Another cornerstone of this group was their hatred of Western society. They were made up in part by ex-Samurai, who were the ultimate embodiment of traditional Japanese culture, so during this time period, Japan was taking on a Western culture. This group, spurred by ultranationalism, became somewhat enraged. This led to the last of the Samurai uprisings in the late 1800s. Toyama Mitsuru was

<sup>16</sup> Fujiwara, Rionne “. “The Yakuza and Post-War Japan - by Rionne “Fujiwara” McAvoy.” *Rionne's Writings*, 26 September 2024, <https://rionne.substack.com/p/the-yakuza-and-post-war-japan>.

born in 1855 to a family of ex-Samurai and participated in this uprising. After getting out of prison, he went on to join an ultranationalist society (Pride and Patriotism Society). He eventually hired the toughest guys his region had to offer and formed the Dark Ocean Society in 1881 at the age of 26. He was known locally as "**Emperor of the slums**" for handing out money. The group was rarely out of work; among other things, they kept control of labourers by acting as strike breakers and gained connections with politicians by working as bodyguards for high-ranking members of parliament. Some members went so far as to help politicians 'get what they wanted'. They ran their own ultranationalist schools, where foreign languages, spy techniques, and martial arts were taught. These people would be crucial to Japan's foreign intelligence network during times of war. This ultranationalist group was not a crime syndicate like the Yakuza, but began quickly collaborating, as they shared membership and values. After their involvement in the 1892 elections, known as the most violent election in Japanese history, with 25 people losing their lives, the relationship between the government and this group was set. The Dark Ocean Societies' influence can be demonstrated by a request from the minister of war in 1885. This request includes starting a fire in South Korea... assassinating the queen of Korea. Men trained in the ninja arts in the Dark Ocean Society quickly completed this task, leading to the Japanese invasion and annexation of South Korea in 1910.

The attitudes towards foreigners and ultranationalism were very similar between the Yakuza and the Dark Ocean Society, with similar initiation rituals, though their incentives were different. Ideological for one, economic for the other.

The **black dragon society** was founded in 1901 and can be seen as a successor to the Dark Ocean Society. The annexation of Korea was not enough; they wanted the entire world to be under Japanese control<sup>17</sup>.

---

<sup>17</sup>“A plan of world domination – The story behind Japan’s ‘Dark Ocean Society.’” *Aniki*, 29 March 2023, <https://anikihistory.wordpress.com/tag/japan/>.



# Current State of Affairs

## MAP OF KOBE & OSAKA - C. 1954

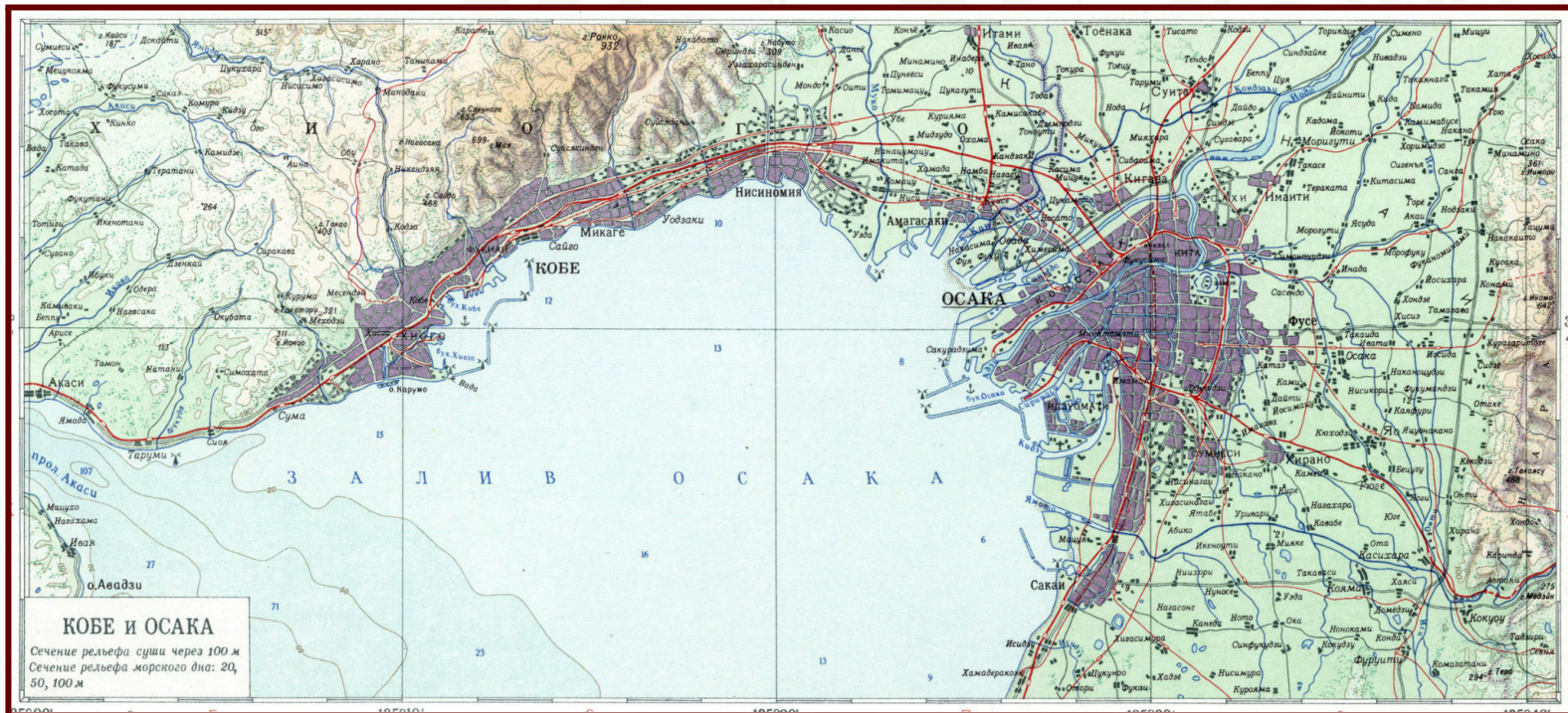


Figure 2: Kobe (left) and Osaka (right) harbours, 1954<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>18</sup> Tokyo, Old, and Old Tokyo. “Great Kobe Harbour”, C. 1960. | Old Tokyo.” Old Tokyo | Vintage Japanese Postcard Museum, 3 July 2023, [www.oldtokyo.com/great-kobe-harbour-c-1960People](http://www.oldtokyo.com/great-kobe-harbour-c-1960People)

That brings us to the present. The year is 1954, the American occupying forces have recently left Japan, the Yakuza have been thriving, and it's still legal to hold Yakuza membership. The only thing illegal about the Yakuza is the crimes they commit, such as extortion, assault, fraud, etc.

The citizens of Japan still view the Yakuza as dangerous but positive. They remember the contributions of the Yakuza during the Japanese occupation. Many people considered them somewhat of a 'necessary evil'; they provided many positive services. They kept petty crime down and handed out informal loans. This is especially true in Tokyo and Osaka, where the Yakuza helped to organize governance and mitigate crises like food shortages. This said, they were still generally feared and avoided by the average Japanese citizen.

The occupation ended in 1952, so the goal now is economic and political stability, and anti communism. This means authorities are now beginning to hold the nation, particularly the cities of Osaka and Tokyo, under a tighter leash- in theory. In reality, most police actually took more of a co-exist approach. They managed violence when it spilled out into public areas and were familiar with gang leaders and offices. As previously mentioned, having this centralized crime group kept petty crime under control, so the police at this time weren't hugely opposed.

The single most powerful group within the Yakuza is the Yamaguchi-Gumi<sup>19</sup>. 1954 was a pivotal period of their growth and expansion. The group was led by Kazuo Taoka, nicknamed "The bear of Kobe". Originally, the Yamaguchi-Gumi was a union for dock workers in Kobe. Kobe is a major port west of Osaka. Kazuo was busy turning the Yamaguchi-Gumi from a doc worker gang into an intricate crime syndicate. They aren't interested in crushing rival gangs with street violence; instead,

---

<sup>19</sup> "the daimon of the Yamaguchi-gumi." *Wikipedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yamaguchi-gumi>



they structured control, and smaller gangs are being absorbed, driven out, or forced into subordination. This has started to create a shift from local street gangs to the crime syndicates we've seen in the Yakuza. Other gangs are joining larger crime organizations or forming alliances. There were other important gangs in or near Osaka rising at the same time, each wanting control over the lucrative underground of Japan. Notable ones include;

- Honda-kai
- Yanagawa-gumi
- Oda-gumi

These gangs may be at odds, rivals, or allies, if only temporarily.

The crux of our crisis, spurring this period of chaos, is the assassination of Fukushima Masaru. Masaru was a senior leader of the Honda-kai gang. Another major gang that's been in Osaka longer than the Yamaguchi-Gumi, and has been controlling a large part of Osaka's dock labour, and runs gambling and protection rackets. Being a major power broker, stabilizing authority in Osaka, and negotiating between gangs, his assassination marked a turning point for Osaka's underworld. His assassination created a regional power vacuum within Osaka and Kobe, and the Honda-Kai was weakened, leading rival factions to compete for control and outside groups to spot an opportunity. This also led to the expansion of the Yamaguchi-Gumi. This has been leading to turf fights, violence, and competition for dock and resource control. This is where we are now, room for expansion, tension between gangs.

It's worth noting that the previously mentioned government crackdown was still relevant despite not banning Yakuza membership. Everything is more dangerous. In the past, the Yakuza has

been able to flaunt their illegal activities, going so far as to hand out business cards. Now, everyone has to be a bit more careful. Go a bit more underground.



## Topic A - *Blood on the Dotonbori*

Dotonbori is a famous and exciting district in Osaka, vibrant with nightlife and entertainment. Due to the nature of this region, the Yakuza have always had strong connections with this area.

Currently, the Yamaguchi-Gumi is in control of this lucrative region. But, they're still working on consolidating power. This opens up the opportunity for rival gangs or groups to take over. All this to say, whoever controls the Dotonbori has control over gambling, prostitution, nightclubs, theatre unions, and more.

Establishing control means owning the businesses in the region. No one can own this region in the sense of buying the area; the more businesses that are established, the higher the degree of influence one faction has. A group doesn't necessarily have to "own" the business, but selling "protection" to preexisting businesses grants just as much control and influence. If a rival gang is interested in establishing control within the Dotonbori, this is how they go about it. This presents opportunities for all parties involved.

### **Syndicate Leadership & Organized Crime Actors**

As mentioned, this region is essentially the heart and soul of Osaka's entertainment industry. This is where the primary power vacuum takes place. Whoever controls this region will be the dominant organized crime group in Japan. Delegates representing members of organized crime will want to focus on how they can protect their influence over businesses in this region and how they can increase the number of businesses they control. They'll want to keep a close eye

on the territory map and be careful of encroaching on another gang's territory; doing so could raise tensions even further and potentially ignite a conflict. If this occurs, it may trigger a timed crisis in which either the territory dispute will be settled peacefully, or one side will emerge victorious with their claim to the area intact.

### **Police and Law Enforcement Figures**

Given the strong gang influence in this area, law enforcement may see it as a useful tool in targeting organized crime. If they're looking to crack down on organized crime (remembering that at this point it's not illegal to be a Yakuza member, so law enforcement would have to get members on actual crimes rather than proving they're involved in a gang), this area is a pivotal resource. They may set up sting operations to target loan sharking, prostitution, and illegal gambling. This area may also be used for personal gain by law enforcement officials to collect bribes.

### **Political Figures and Brokers**

These delegates will have similar perspectives as the police and law enforcement, but different ways of carrying them out. Delegates of this bloc may want to look into the legality of selling protection and target that as a way to bring down organized crime. This group will focus on the importance of the Dontonbori in respect to the culture and economics of the city, and focus on how to make the region safer while maintaining the legitimacy of the region.

### **Economic and Labor Figures**

This group will focus on the protection of the people who work in this region, both by maintaining its significance and ensuring fair working conditions. Their priorities lie less in



surrounding the legal aspect, and may or may not be supportive of selling protection and other illegal endeavours. They're interested in maintaining the stable economic atmosphere this region has enjoyed for so long. They may be inherently pro-Yakuza in nature, as the Yakuza has been heavily focused on unionization.

### **Transnational Underworld Influences**

The Dotonbori is an important place for international business and tourism, making it a key focus of this bloc. This bloc has similar interests to the Economic and Labour Figures, wanting to ensure it remains the great power of Osaka. However, they're also interested in making this region safer, to attract more positive outside attention and support, and to stabilize the region.

### **Law and Media**

Where excitement regions, the media follows. These delegates are interested in making light of the dark backrooms of government interference. Whatever happens must be for the people, and if it's not, the citizens of Japan deserve to know.

Delegates must discuss what should happen with the Dotonbori. Should the government try to take back control over the region, kicking out all organized crime? Can the police utilize this region to catch criminals?

This region is a breeding ground for violence and territorial struggle. Delegates must consider how to protect the citizens in the region from being caught up in the violence.

## Guiding Questions

1. How can delegates benefit from the Dotonbori?
2. How can delegates make this region safe for citizens?
3. If delegates currently hold control of the region, how can they maintain and protect that control?
4. If delegates don't currently hold power in the Dotonbori, should they? If so, how can they make that happen?
5. Should the Japanese government be leaving this region to be protected, governed, and safeguarded by the Yakuza?
6. How can delegates protect this region without compromising the economic leverage the Dotonbori holds?
7. How can crime be managed? How can delegates reduce prostitution, extortion, and other white-collar crimes?

## Topic B - *The Shadows of Osaka*

After the occupation of American forces, it's safe to say Japan's economy is in shambles, a shadow of its former self, just getting by with the support of the Yakuza. Japan is weakened; it's up to the delegates of this room to help Osaka, and by extension, Japan, to get back on its feet if the nation wishes to become a powerhouse once again.

### **Organized Crime:**

- Promotes the government to continue to allow and increase leniency for organized crime, under the argument that they have been and will continue to play a pivotal role in stabilizing the economy in Osaka. They will also argue they're a valuable resource in rebuilding the city.

### **Police and Law Enforcement:**

- Delegates in this committee room have some leeway in the stance they wish to take; they may argue for the disintegration of the Yakuza and making membership illegal in the interest of making Osaka safer and beginning to rely economically elsewhere. They may also argue that the Yakuza keeps petty crime down, and their violent crimes rarely involve citizens. Therefore, they can be left alone. Delegates may also argue for something in the middle

### **Political Figures:**

- Delegates in this bloc may argue similar points as the law enforcement bloc; they may also make deals (underground) with the organized crime delegates for more power. They will also

focus on introducing new economic plans and promoting diversification. The delegates in this bloc will most likely focus on the economics of a city that doesn't rely on organized crime.

**Economic and Labour Figures:**

- This bloc will especially focus on the economy of a city without organized crime. They may, in addition, argue the short-term necessity of the Yakuza for managing labourers and rebuilding/stabilizing the economy

**Law and Media:**

- This bloc is focused on ensuring transparency and accountability between the government and the people. They will focus on dismantling the system which promotes underground and secret deals between various groups. They're focused on rebuilding the economy with the best interests of the individual people in mind
  - The future of the relationship between the Yakuza, the police, and political figures

A new Osaka means new rules of the game. In this future Osaka, how will the Yakuza fit in? Delegates may advocate for or against continued cooperation between the government, police, and Yakuza, or may argue for the elimination of the Yakuza altogether. They may advocate for a stronger crackdown or for a relaxed grip on the law until the economy is able to recover.

Delegates in this room are tasked with building the future of Osaka. They must consider this from an economic, civic, and political perspective.

Delegates of the police and governance bloc must consider how they will curb the widespread violence in Osaka. They may increase patrol of the city, work with gangsters, or choose to crack down even harder.

Delegates must think about the role major crime syndicates, such as the Yamaguchi-Gumi, will play in rebuilding. Will they still dominate the shadows of Osaka? Must their power be destroyed? Police, governance, and other crime bosses may have differing opinions on the Yamaguchi-Gumi than the Yakuza in general.

Delegates also must consider what will happen to the black market. Will the government crack down and destroy it? Will they revitalize it?



## Guiding Questions

1. Do delegates benefit from the corruption between the Yakuza, the police, and political figures?
2. How can delegates aid in the reconstruction of the economy in Osaka?
3. Do delegates wish to take advantage of the shadowy situation to exert more power and control?
4. How can delegates keep the citizens safe in the shadowy Osaka?
5. Do delegates think major crime syndicates can help rebuild Osaka? And more importantly, the nation as a whole? Do delegates even want them to?
6. What do delegates want the future of Japan to look like? Westernized? Traditional? Are they in favour of Nationalism?
7. Are they interested in dismantling the Yakuza and their power, and if so, how would they be able to execute this?

# Committee Mechanics

## Note interception

When multiple characters of the newis bloc suspect another delegate of foul play, they may write a joint private directive (2 or more delegates), to initiate a 'bust', where the crisis team will allow them to privately view 2 notes (sent from the delegate in question to the crisis team), of the crisis team's choice. This can only happen twice per committee session, by any delegate (so if a group of 3 delegates uses this once in the committee session, and a team of 4 different delegates uses it again later in the committee session, no one else can use this mechanic until the next committee session). If delegates want to avoid their notes being intercepted, I suggest they avoid giving anyone a reason to suspect them.

## Territory map

A map of Osaka and the surrounding regions will be available at the front of the room. As various groups gain control over those regions, the crisis team will update it accordingly.

## Heat index

This will be available as a drawn thermometer at the front of the room. Heat will rise as factors such as political instability, civil unrest, and rising murder rates begin to affect the committee. Allowing this thermometer to rise too high will automatically trigger a timed crisis for delegates.

## **Altered Crisis Updates**

At the end of each crisis update, the crisis team will allow the news bloc to come up together for two minutes and add anything they wish delegates to know about the current situation.



# Character List

## *Syndicate Leadership & Organized Crime Actors*

1. **Taoka Kazuo** - Third kumicho (boss) of Yamaguchi-gumi
2. **Oda Hideomi** (“Joji Oda”) - Founder of the Oda-gumi
3. **Yanagawa Jiro** - Leader of Yanagawa-gumi
4. **Yamaguchi Harukichi** - Founding figure of the Yamaguchi-gumi
5. **Honda Jinsuke** - Leader of the Honda-kai
6. **Sugawara Michitsugu** - Post-war ultranationalist

## *Police and Law Enforcement Figures*

7. **Kusumi Yoshio** - Senior official in Osaka Prefectural Police
8. **Sato Eiichi** - National Police Agency liaison for Kansai
9. **Matsuda Ichiro** - Osaka District Public Prosecutor
10. **Yamada Takeshi** - Local vice division commander (Osaka)

## *Political Figures and Brokers*

11. **Kishi Nobusuke** - Prime Minister and LDP power broker
12. **Tanaka Kakuei** - Influential LDP construction and economic policy leader
13. **Shiina Etsusaburo** - LDP strategist
14. **Sakai Toshio** - Osaka municipal assembly member

## *Economic and Labor Figures*

15. **Yamane Koji** - Dockworkers’ union intermediary

- 16. **Nakamura Shigeo** - Consortium leader of entertainment districts in Osaka
- 17. **Kobayashi Ichizo** - Head of Hankyu Group (Construction Group)
- 18. **Matsumoto Goro** - Construction subcontractor

### ***Transnational Underworld Influences***

- 19. **Hisayuki Machii** - Korean-Japanese underworld figure
- 20. **Kodama Yoshio** - Right-wing financier and broker

### ***Law and Media***

- 21. **Shoriki Matsutaro** - Media tycoon
- 22. **Kuroda Kiyotaka** - Investigative journalist
- 23. **Seigen Tanaka** - Political activist



# Research Guide

For historical committees, in my opinion, documentaries are absolutely the way to go. Usually, I'm Wikipedia's biggest advocate; however, in this case, I suggest avoiding it, as there's a popular TV show about the Yakuza, and the Wikipedia page cites many sources about the Yakuza gang from the show, which is fictional.

When researching your character, it's important to note that, although this committee is based on real-life historical events of the Yakuza, many of the characters cannot be researched due to anonymity. Though some characters are near-identical replicas of real-life figures, everything they need to know about their characters can be found in the character guide. I recommend not researching characters beyond that, as it will not be helpful and may not be possible. This is where the committee also takes a bit of a conceptual turn, as some of the real-life characters this committee is based on have died before the events of this committee, so for this committee, we're assuming the characters are still alive. On a similar note, it's important to mention that Fukushima Masru's assassination is mainly included as a method for initiating this crisis. In real life, his character is incredibly niche, and the situation regarding his death is not relevant beyond the information in the background guide. As such, delegates are discouraged from researching him further.

Start by reading the background guide. I personally love to annotate the background guide to absorb the information. Then, move on to watching videos and reading articles about the topic, especially questions you may have. I would recommend researching based on your bloc, rather than your individual characters. This may mean looking into what your bloc has done in real life in the past to get an idea of what they may do in the future. Use the guiding questions to think about what each

topic means for your bloc, and what your goals are/what you want to see out of the committee. You can use this as a jumping-off point to begin brainstorming solutions.

**YouTube documentaries:**

[https://youtu.be/fBJNqwQ9W\\_Q?si=PMvX\\_2SzxQBu6Rzz](https://youtu.be/fBJNqwQ9W_Q?si=PMvX_2SzxQBu6Rzz)

<https://youtu.be/u9EdVbQnvH8?si=Guh7YGTnpJMHFJRu>

[The YAKUZA gang that CONQUERED Japan - History of the Yamaguchi-gumi](#)

**Other Sources:**

Britannica: [Yakuza | History, Meaning, Rituals, & Facts | Britannica](#)

Historyen: [The Yakuza: Japan's Infamous Crime Syndicate Explained - Historyen](#)

## Works Cited

Britannica Editors. "Yakuza | History, Meaning, Rituals, and Facts." Encyclopedia Britannica, 20 July

1998, [www.britannica.com/topic/yakuza](https://www.britannica.com/topic/yakuza).

"Oyabun | Japanese Organized Crime | Britannica." Encyclopedia Britannica.

"Bakuto." *Wikipedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bakuto>. Accessed 18 March 2026.

"The Evolution of Yakuza: From Edo to Modern Underworld." *Japaneo*, 19 March 2025,

<https://www.japaneo.org/2025/03/yakuza.html>.

"The Evolution of Yakuza Tattoos and Symbolism." *Yakuza Gang*, 7 November 2025,

<https://yakuzagang.com/home/the-evolution-of-yakuza-tattoos-and-symbolism/>.

Filleul, Ynes Sarah. "More Than Skin Deep: The Meaning Behind Yakuza Tattoos." *Tokyo Weekender*,

7 October 2024,

[https://www.tokyoweekender.com/art\\_and\\_culture/history/more-than-just-skin-deep-the-meaning-behind-japans-yakuza-tattoos/](https://www.tokyoweekender.com/art_and_culture/history/more-than-just-skin-deep-the-meaning-behind-japans-yakuza-tattoos/). Accessed 18 March 2026.

Fujiwara, Rionne. "The Yakuza and Post-War Japan - by Rionne 'Fujiwara' McAvoy." *Rionne's*

*Writings*, 26 September 2024, <https://rionne.substack.com/p/the-yakuza-and-post-war-japan>.

Accessed 18 March 2026.

"How Has The Yakuza Influenced Japanese Politics?" *Yaminotantei*,

<https://www.yaminotantei.org/post/how-has-the-yakuza-influenced-japanese-politics>.

“Mafia vs. Yakuza.” *This vs That*, <https://thisvsthat.io/mafia-vs-yakuza>.

Myers, Christopher. “18 Reasons That The Yakuza Is More Than Just A Japanese Mafia.” *Ranker*, <https://www.ranker.com/list/yakuza-facts/christopher-myers>. Accessed 18 March 2026.

“A plan of world domination – The story behind Japan’s ‘Dark Ocean Society.’” *Aniki*, 29 March 2023, <https://anikihistory.wordpress.com/tag/japan/>.

“Sohei Dojima | Yakuza Wiki | Fandom.” *Yakuza Wiki*, [https://yakuza.fandom.com/wiki/Sohei\\_Dojima](https://yakuza.fandom.com/wiki/Sohei_Dojima). Accessed 18 March 2026.

“What Is The Hierarchy Within The Yakuza?” *Yaminotantei*, <https://www.yaminotantei.org/post/what-is-the-hierarchy-within-the-yakuza>.

“Yakuza: From Samurai Roots to Modern Crime Syndicates.” *Moran Alytics*, 3 December 2025, <https://moranalytics.com/yakuza-from-samurai-roots-to-modern-crime-syndicates/>.

“Yakuza | History, Meaning, Rituals, & Facts.” *Britannica*, 13 February 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/yakuza#ref1175498>. Accessed 18 March 2026.

“Your Five-Point Guide to the Yakuza Code of Ethics.” *Another Man*, 22 August 2017, <https://www.anothermanmag.com/life-culture/9982/your-five-point-guide-to-the-yakuza-code-of-ethics>. Accessed 18 March 2026.

“Yubitsume | 指詰め Tradition / Ritual in A Yakuza's Tale.” *World Anvil*, 13 December 2024, <https://www.worldanvil.com/w/a-yakuza-s-tale-shewolfsymphony/a/yubitsume-7C-E68C87E8A9B0E38281-ritual>. Accessed 18 March 2026.