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Decolonizing the Drug War:

Bolivia's Movement to Transform Coca Control



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Abstract

Coca has been a controversial concept entangled in a complex web of conflicting political rhetoric; existing simultaneously as a sacred icon to unite the Andean nations, and as a serious scourge on humanity, fraught with social and economic danger to be exterminated for the good of mankind. Labeled by the United Nations as a narcotic, it has been a principal target of the hegemonic ideology of the War on Drugs, which has in turn legitimized a brutal eradication program upon the Andean people. At the start of the millennium, protests against neoliberal imperialism coalesced into a movement united behind coca, that resulted in government resignation and the election of coca farmer Evo Morales to the presidency in 2006. Since then Bolivia has enacted the community driven *cato* program, which has allowed a set amount of coca to be grown for each registered farmer in return for their collaboration in the fight against cocaine production. Using an expanded version of Galtung's conception of violence, this project examines the results of the program. The project finds the *cato* program to be a success as it has nearly eradicated illicit coca and improved the livelihoods of the farmers and their communities. However the strict prohibitionist ideology still held by the Bolivian government threatens instability further down the commodity chain. I instead recommend that the ideology and principles that built the *cato* program be exported to other regions.

KEYWORDS: coca, cocaine, peace, War on Drugs, harm minimization, drug policy

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01 Introduction

“How do we recognize the shackles that tradition has placed upon us?

For if we can recognize them, we are also able to break them.” - Franz Boas¹

Coca has been a controversial concept entangled in a complex web of conflicting political rhetoric; existing simultaneously as a sacred icon to unite the Andean nations,² and as a serious *scourge* on humanity, fraught with social and economic danger to be exterminated for the good of mankind.³ In Western⁴ mythology, coca is recognized as both the salient ingredient in the world’s most famous brand, and as the source of the most infamous recreational *drug*, cocaine. Despite being as mild as a cup of tea,⁵ coca has been a target of aggressive rhetoric since its first encounter with colonization. Labeled by the United Nations as a *narcotic*, it has been a principal target of the hegemonic ideology of the *War on Drugs*, which has in turn legitimized a brutal eradication program upon the Andean people.

1 As quoted in Fairclough, 1989: 1

2 Chapter VII, Section II, Article 384 of the 2009 Bolivian Constitution

3 Article 26 of the 1961 UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs

4 *The West* will refer to Europe and the Anglophone States, despite Bolivia being geographically in the western hemisphere. See: Hall, 1992

5 Pope Francis reportedly drank *mate de coca* on his July, 2015 trip to Bolivia. For the physiological effects of coca compared to cocaine, refer to Page 07: “Coca.”

The binary rhetoric of the *War on Drugs* has become a construct of the Manichean battle of good and evil, a divine *crusade* between *drug lords* and *drug czars*, fighting against the *plague of narcotics* to *haplessly enslaved* consumers (Gootenberg, 2006: 321). This signifier *drug* does not denote any objective or naturalistic category, but rather politicized categorizations, designated to conform to twentieth century morals and norms. Loaded with preconceived notions; as a *drug* coca has the indeterminacy of the *pharmakon*⁶ which can simultaneously be translated as both a poison and a remedy (Derrida, 1972: 70). If coca were instead classified as a *food* or a *drink*, foreign intervention would be absurd, while the polysemous *drug* justifies the exercise of power, whether as a *medicine* to be prescribed or as a *narcotic* to be eliminated (Derrida, 1995: 230).

The ambivalent materiality of drugs... Under international law, *cocaleros* and *coqueros*⁷ are labeled as criminals, stigmatized at the state and global level for their purported moral failings, and subjugated to strict disciplinary actions. They have become the 'unworthy victims'⁸ of the deterritorialized *War on Drugs*, which has made them *deserving* of this global exercise of police power and imperial sovereignty (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 38). Alternatively, in their own local communities they are ordinary *campesinos*,⁹ and any arrest or destruction of their crops is itself seen as illegitimate and met with resistance.

In the hegemonic ideology, coca is demoted to a “green smudge on a satellite image,” a statistic to be wiped out as the perceived weakest link in the anti-drug *crusade* (Pereira, 2010: 398). The detrimental effects of this perspective culminated in Bolivia with what the government dubbed *Plan Dignidad*. Heralded as a success because it was able to nearly eliminate illegal coca cultivation, the high humanitarian costs of this illiberal program led to nationwide civil unrest, government resignation and the election of former *cocalero* Evo Morales to the presidency in

6 Classical Greek translation of “Drug”

7 Coca growers and coca chewers, respectively

8 Chomsky & Herman, 1988: 47

9 Spanish for peasants. In Bolivia referring mostly to the indigenous peoples.

2005 (Thoumi, 2005b: 196). His campaign utilized the thing-power of coca; the aliveness and vitality of the material itself, to unite the *campesinos* against the established power structures.

Cato

In response to the uprising, the government gave in to the demands of Morales and the *Sindicatos Cocaleros del Trópico de Cochabamba*,¹⁰ in 2004. These new amendments to the Bolivian coca law would increase the area of legally grown coca from 12,000 to 20,000 hectares nationally, while allowing around 7,000 hectares of coca in the Chapare. The government would allow each *cocalero* to cultivate one *cato* of coca,¹¹ which gives them a household income of around \$100 a month. The *cocaleros* were to be further allotted a loan to plant alternative crops, which could reduce their dependency on coca as the crops matured. In return, the *sindicatos* agreed to cooperate in reducing any excess coca within their jurisdiction, to collaborate in the fight against trafficking, and to allow further eradication within the boundaries of the adjacent national parks (Grisaffi, 2010: 434). The *sindicatos* are divided into six federations representing more than 40,000 families (Grisaffi & Ledebur, 2014: 3). In order to gain the authorization to grow a *cato*, each member of a *sindicato* has to acquire a land title, register for a biometric ID card and have their *cato* measured and logged by the state monitoring institution (*ibid*: 4).

The policy change has been heavily criticized by the US and Western observers, that the policy change is 'probably' a smokescreen "to justify the production of coca for cocaine,¹²" and that the policy would "lead to a *narco-state* that supports the uncontrolled cultivation of coca."¹³ In September 2015, the White House (2015) 'decertified' Bolivia for the eighth consecutive year, declaring that Bolivia has "failed demonstrably during the previous 12 months to adhere to [its] obligations under international narcotics agreements." Mary O'Grady (2013) for the Wall Street

10 Referred to in English as the "Chapare Coca Growers (*cocalero*) Union

11 A *cato* of coca is around a tenth of a hectare, or 1600² meters (Grisaffi, 2010: 433).

12 Then US Ambassador to Bolivia David Greenlee (Lifsher, 2003).

13 US General James T. Hill (Youngers & Rosin, 2005: 353)

Journal alleged that Bolivia has become a “rogue state,” saying that “President Morales has turned Bolivia into an international hub of organized crime and a safe haven for terrorists.”

Conflict Transformation

In principle, Bolivia's *cato* program fits well into the Peace Studies¹⁴ paradigm of conflict transformation, which posits that:

...contemporary conflicts require more than the reframing of positions and the identification of win-win outcomes. The very structure of parties and relationships may be embedded in a pattern of conflictual relationships that extend beyond the particular site of conflict. Conflict transformation is therefore a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict. (Miall, 2004: 70)

As there is a dearth of data at the nexus between illicit commodity control and peace research, we must theorize what it may entail. Control policies that fit within this context would not consist of blanket forced eradication and strict interdiction, but rather collaboration between those involved in the illicit market, states and international organizations to provide sufficient alternatives for both production and use of the substances.

The ideology of the *War on Drugs* leaves little hope for a non-zero sum outcome, as there will always be an *Other* unworthy of negotiation. As Franz Fanon (1961: 38) said, “the colonial world is a world cut in two,” and a transformative approach must challenge this discourse to bridge the divide. As long as there is this conception of an *evil* to be eradicated, peace will never fully be realized (Crick, 2012: 2). As long as the demand exists, supply will never be fully controlled and harsher interdiction will only lead to higher levels of violence.

The strict prohibitionist ideology of the *War on Drugs* is countered by the ideology of *harm minimization* (Ritter & Cameron, 2006). *Harm minimization* policies are built on the

14 Following the ethos of my Peace Studies program, this paper uses a multidisciplinary approach, drawing from philosophy, linguistics, pharmacology, history, economics, anthropology, sociology, law, and Neo-Marxist international politics.

assumption that psychoactive substance use is inevitable, and the rights of all stakeholders must be respected. To lower the demand for these commodities, the right social structures must be in place to dissuade abuse, while providing the right treatment opportunities to allow for integration of abusers into society.

Project Motivation

During the Fall of 2012 I was a teacher in a small Colombian town on the cocaine supply route between South and Central America. While I was there I witnessed the power the local gangs had over the population, my students, and the impotence of law enforcement. Although not given much attention in the global media, Latin America is one of the most violent regions in the world. Many Latin American cities and countries have higher [direct] violent deaths per capita than the Middle Eastern war zones.¹⁵ While the money from the cocaine market cannot be said to be the sole cause of this violence, removing the economic motivation and obstruction to development would have a profound effect on the Latin American people and improving North/South homogenization.¹⁶

In 2016, the UN will hold a special session to address the shortcomings of current international substance control policy. This session was called by a collation of Latin American states that have suffered the highest casualties from the *War on Drugs*, and demand a reform of the current strict prohibition policies. In recent years, many countries have deviated from past conventions and established licit markets for regulated commodities. While the results of these experiments have been promising, they are against international regulations and thus subject these countries to a reduction in development aid and economic sanctions.

While there has been considerable research on the immense violence associated with the global illicit substance market, the nature of strict global prohibition offers few cases to explore

15 UNODC homicide rate compared with Uppsala conflict data program

16 Although recently overtaken by terrorism fears, *trafficking* has historically been the primary rhetorical device for greater border security and tighter controls on immigration (see Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 2010).

any viable alternatives. Being one of the few countries in the world to create a licit market for a substance regulated by UN conventions, Bolivia offers a unique case study to observe the effect of further market liberalization. As it has been more than a decade since the implementation of the *cato* program, the current situation should show us an accurate representation of the effects of this more collaborative approach.

Research Overview

As an attempt to transcend the aforementioned labels and preconceptions, this project will construct a concept of coca more appropriate for post-colonial discourse. Using this framework I will analyze Bolivia's approach to their coca conflict, as to whether it is leading to a truly transformative and peaceful solution, or unilaterally legalizing *drug* production.

Research Objectives:

- 1) Develop a socio-biological understanding of both coca and cocaine.
- 3) Analyze Bolivia's *cato* program within the Peace Studies framework.

The remainder of this chapter will be to understand the psychopharmacological properties of coca and cocaine and the methods used to go from the former to the later. In Chapter 02, I will construct a genealogy of coca to understand its thing-power in the assemblage of global politics. Then, in Chapter 03 I will outline the methods used in this project. Chapter 04 will develop a framework of commodity control using the peace studies framework, using the framework of human rights and international law. In Chapter 05 I will present the data of the research and the analysis using this framework. In Chapter 06 I will conclude my research and appeal to transform the current ideology to one of harm minimization and human rights.

Pharmacology

What is it that is not poison? All things are poison and nothing is without poison. It is the dose only that makes a thing not a poison. - Paracelsus

On his study of the effects of mercury on miners in the sixteenth century, botanist Paracelsus made the observation that has since become the foundation of the field of toxicology, that “the dose makes the poison” (Frank & Ottoboni, 2011: 32-33). This section will detail the pharmacological aspects of coca and cocaine hydrochloride to explain how the pharmacokinetics¹⁷ of traditional coca consumption prevents any negative effects from cocaine ingestion. While the thing-power of coca cannot be reduced to a sum of its parts, its transience to cocaine has their fates inextricably linked.

Coca

There are between seventy-five and two hundred and fifty species of the subtropical Andean shrub *Erythroxylum* (*Erythroxylaceae*) spread throughout the lowlands of the western Amazon basin (Plowman, 2014). Early pre-Colombian civilizations noticed the psychological effect of the alkaloids present in the leaves of the shrub and over time domesticated two species in the family, *E. coca* and *E. novogranatense*. The first archeological evidence of coca leaf cultivation is dated to the Andean region in Ecuador to around 2000 BC (Plowman, 2014: 72). Coca cultivation today is focused in the Andean region of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia for both licit and illicit use. *Huánuco* or Bolivian coca (*E. coca*) is generally cultivated between 500 and 2000m elevation, although the best quality and highest yields are produced at 1000 to 1500 m (Plowman, 2014: 80). The one to two meter plant does not require fertilizer, suffers from few pest problems due to its high alkaloid content, grows well in impoverished soils, and can be harvested three or four times a year (Hellin, 2001).

¹⁷ How the substance is absorbed.

The dried, cured leaf of the plant, known as *la hoja de coca* or simply *coca*, is consumed locally throughout the Andean regions of South America. Although commonly referred to as ‘chewing’ in both English and Spanish, the *coquero* rather sucks the wad of coca leaves wedged in between their cheek and gums. Additionally, a powdered alkaline ash or lime is periodically added to flavor to the otherwise bitter wad and to enhance the perceived effects (Gootenberg, 2008: 16).

With the case of coca, the difference in toxicity between traditional consumption and illicit use is dependent completely on the route of administration. With traditional coca consumption, ingestion of the metabolites are slow. It takes five minutes for cocaine to be detectable in the blood, and two hours to reach peak concentrations in the brain (Nutt, 2012: 181). Little is known on the pharmacological effects of this route of administration as it has been difficult to obtain UN approval for a detailed long-term study on the effects of traditional coca consumption (Plowman, 2014: 100). Notwithstanding, some of the reported physiological positive effects of use are on altitude acclimatization, social cohesion, nutritional benefits, and increased energy.

A report conducted on the effects of traditional coca consumption by the *World Health Organization* (WHO) and the *United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute* (UNICRI) concluded that the “use of coca leaves appears to have no negative health effects and has positive therapeutic, sacred and social functions for indigenous Andean populations” (UNICRI/WHO, 1995, 7). Twenty years after completion, the organizations have not yet made this report available to the public.¹⁸

Early reports on coca leaf consumption alleged that the leaf was responsible for the malnutrition witnessed amongst the *coqueros* due to its hunger suppressing characteristics. However, this assumption has not held up to scientific scrutiny (Plowman, 2014: 93). The earlier studies on the negative effects of traditional coca consumption were done by equating the total

¹⁸ The report is listed as “restricted” on their website: WHO UNICRI COCAINE PROJECT <http://tinyurl.com/UNICRI-WHO1995>. The quote here was from the Briefing Kit. However the full report has been published by Wikileaks.

amount of cocaine consumed over a long period with a single dose of cocaine (UNESCO, 1950; Gutierrez-Noriega, 1952). The only measurable negative effect of prolonged traditional coca consumption is with dental pathologies relating to the vasoconstricting¹⁹ property of the cocaine alkaloid on the gums. A comparative anthropological study by Langsjoen (1996) has shown dental pathologies to be more common in populations where coca consumption is prevalent.

Cocaine

In a speech to the UN General Assembly on 19 September, 2006, Morales pleaded with the international community to disassociate their conception of coca from the common hegemonic mythology of cocaine, as coca is culturally, anthropologically and politically a very different substance from its cocaine isolate. However, in order for coca to benefit the Andean people as a legal global commodity, it is important to contextualize the ongoing stigmatization of its principal component.

Fourteen different alkaloids have been isolated from the coca leaf (Burchard, 1975). The benzoylmethylecgonine alkaloid, commonly known as cocaine, makes up around 0.1 to 0.8 percent of its weight.²⁰ In the Chapare, the cocaine alkaloid content can go much higher, as was shown in one sample of coca leaf that measured 1.2 percent (DEA, 1993). Studies on the effects of cocaine show the alkaloid to be mainly responsible for the anesthetic and stimulating effects reported by coca chewers, as research conducted using the other alkaloids present in the leaf have shown no noticeable psychoactive effect (ibid).²¹

While the pharmacokinetics²² of traditional coca consumption may prevent any negative effects of cocaine administration, the isolated alkaloid is much more prone to abuse. The cocaine

19 The narrowing or constricting of blood vessels can cause gum disease (periodontitis).

20 Comparatively, morphine and codeine together make up around fifteen percent of the opium poppy, while the THC content of the cannabis flower is around five percent.

21 Pereira, 2010: “You can never be quite sure whether you are constructing your reaction to the plant based on the effect of its alkaloids, or whether you are simply reacting to your perception of what this effect should be. As Henman states: ‘the effectiveness of the alkaloids is dependent to a greater degree on the biological and mental state of the coca chewer, than it is on the actual pharmacological properties of the leaves themselves’ (Antonil, 1978: 128)

22 Effect of the mode of consumption – Biological mechanism of absorption.

hydrochloride salt is often administered as a fine white powder and recreationally consumed through insufflation or injection. With a vaporizing temperature (smoking point) of 200°C, the salt form of cocaine HCl cannot be consumed through inhalation. In order for cocaine to be smoked, it must first be converted into a base by heating it with sodium bicarbonate and water. Known as “crack” cocaine, the base can be smoked as it has a much lower vaporizing point (100 °C). The pharmacodynamics²³ of crack and cocaine are the same, while the pharmacokinetics put the intensity of effect between insufflation and injection.

Taken in excess there are a myriad of potential medical complications associated with cocaine abuse. Its vasoconstricting properties can cause heart attacks, seizures, pulmonary edema or a ruptured aorta, while prolonged use can result in myocardial fibrosis.²⁴ As cocaine can also increase thromboxane production, users are at risk of blood clots. Abuse can also result in psychosis manifesting as paranoia, delusions, and formication.²⁵ Excessive snorting can lead to ulcers in the nasal cavity or a perforated septum. Unclean injection can lead to necrosis, which in severe cases can only be treated with amputation. Also, using cocaine while pregnant carries an eight times higher risk of *Sudden Infant Death Syndrome*. (Nutt, 2012: 184).

Although cocaine is absorbed while chewing coca, cocaine insufflation, or crack inhalation, the pharmacokinetic properties of the route of admission determine how quickly cocaine reaches the brain. Furthermore, the route of ingestion also determines the total bioavailability of cocaine. Injection has the highest bioavailability and fastest absorption, followed by smoking, insufflation, and coca chewing respectively. This is why cocaine at the minute doses ingested from coca chewing has shown no negative physiological effect on the user. One study has shown a beneficial effect of treating cocaine addiction with coca leaf chewing, as it may work in a similar mechanism as the nicotine patch (Hurtado-Gumucio, 2000). As Paracelsus observed, "every element in nature has its own poison and its antidote" (Frank & Ottoboni, 2011: 32-33)

23 Effect of the chemical – Biological mechanism of action.

24 Normal heart muscle is replaced with fibrous tissue so the heart cannot pump blood properly

25 The feeling of tiny bugs running along the surface of one's skin

Extraction

“A grape is a grape and through a long process you make wine.

Coca is coca and through a long process you make cocaine.”- Leonilda Zurita

The chemical process involved in the extraction and processing of cocaine from the coca leaf is a three-step process that increases in complexity with every step. The first of the process is conducted in crude jungle refineries littering the riverbanks in the Chapare,²⁶ whereas the second and third steps are conducted elsewhere in Bolivia or Brazil.

The extraction from coca to cocaine²⁷ (coca) paste or *pichicata* is a relatively simple, low yield extraction procedure. The *cocaleros* sell their crop of dried leaves to the *pichicateros* (paste-makers) for around \$2 per kilogram.²⁸ The dried leaves are then taken away from the towns to river beds, which allow the excess chemicals to runoff. A tarp is laid out over a large vat, filled with coca leaves, and the leaves are soaked in a diluted sulfuric acidic solution to extract the alkaline cocaine. Young men, who are known as *pisa cocas*, stomp on the acidic coca mulch for several hours to mix up the solution (CIA, 1993). The liquid coca juice is removed, filtered, and mixed with a lime or carbonate to neutralize the acid. Kerosene is then added to the now alkaline solution, and the process is repeated three to five times. Known as the Colombian method, woodchippers and cement mixers are increasingly being used instead of human labor to save time and for a more efficient extraction. The *pichicata* is then sold to a wholesaler (*rescatista*) and exported out of the Chapare (Grisaffi, 2014).

The second step is more complicated than the former and is used to extract the cocaine from the 40% *pichicata* solution. This step uses kerosene, ether, acetone, ammonium hydroxide, and potassium permanganate to further purify the solution. The resulting product is a near 100%

26 The source of this information was from mainly from my interview with UMOPAR officer Luis who gave me a step by step instruction of the extraction process using siezed equipment. CIA, 1993 details the same process.

27 It is referred to as both coca paste and cocaine paste in the literature. The difference in usage appears to be political.

28 *Cocaleros* thus make around \$200 from the \$71,000 retail price of a kilogram of cocaine sold in the United States (Caulkins, 2014: 19).

cocaine base, which is filtered, dried, packaged and sent to a crystal laboratory (CIA, 1993). Known as *basuco*,²⁹ cocaine base can either be smoked as is,³⁰ or further be converted to the cocaine hydrochloride. The conversation is a multi-step process that uses hydrochloric acid, diethyl ether and acetone; all of which are difficult to obtain in South America. According to a study conducted by the US Department of State, 75 and 110 kilograms of coca leaves yield one kilogram of coca paste, two to four kilos of coca paste yield one kilo of base and one kilo of base yields the same amount of cocaine HCL (Painter, 1994: 23).

To add to the Leonilda Zurita quote at the beginning of this section:

Sassafras is sassafras and through a long process you make MDMA.

Ephedra is ephedra and through a long process you make methamphetamine.

Yet to this day coca and cocaine are classified equally under the UN system as Schedule 1 *narcotics*, whereas sassafras and ephedra are not labeled as *drugs* nor controlled under any international convention. To understand this discrepancy, it is best to look beyond their chemical compositions and instead at the historical context of their classifications.

²⁹ Basuco means “little dirty trash” in Spanish.

³⁰ Chemically similar to the “crack” or “freebase” cocaine common in the United States, *basuco* is also smoked in low income neighborhoods of South American cities.

02 Genealogy

“If you want the present to be different from the past, study the past.”

- Baruch Spinoza

This chapter will construct a genealogy of the concept of “coca.” It will present how the *War on Drugs* became the hegemonic ideology at the global level, and show how it contributes to the same power imbalances and racism as that used during colonization. Furthermore, it will present the discourse used by the Andeans that underlines the thing-power of the coca assemblage. The vibrant history of coca will be looked at from its mythological genesis in pre-colonial Andean civilization, to its mid-nineteenth century rise as a global commodity, followed by its twentieth century descent into worldwide prohibition. It will then segue into coca's political resurgence and altermodern impetus in Bolivian politics.

Sacrament

“Indians from the Altiplano found their way over the crest of the mountains into the tropical rain forests of the Yungas. Here they found rich and fertile land, good earth for their farmsteads and a nature prodigal of vegetation. They set fire to the undergrowth in order to clear a little space for their needs, but the fire they had set blazed and spread through the forest until it was seen like a roaring inferno below. Khuno, the god of snow and storm, from his palaces on the snow-clad peaks of Illimani and Illampu, saw the smoke rise up from the valleys and pollute his pure mansions of ice. An angered Khuno hurled down hail and storm upon the valleys, wounding and rending the earth. Coming out from the caves in which they had taken refuge from the storm, the guilty Indians found nothing but desolation around them, nor was there any longer a path back to the highlands. Wandering desolate and famished they found unknown plant of bright and brilliant green, of which the wrath of the storm-god had been unable to destroy. Gathering the leaves of this plant, they placed them in their mouths to stay the pangs of hunger, and immediately they were invaded by a sense of supreme well-being. They no longer felt the hunger, the weariness, or the cold. Refreshed with new energy they returned to Tiahuanaco to reveal the secret of this marvelous plant” (Osborne, 2013: 238).

Durkheim’s (1912) sacred/profane dichotomy is a difficult moral paradigm to conceptualize to many indigenous peoples (Goody, 1961: 148). In the Quechua tradition, it is difficult to find an equivalent of the profane, as there is no easy analytical distinction between religious ritual and everyday life (Goody, 1961: 144). Every activity, thing, or relationship was thought of as sacred, worthy of the highest place on Durkheim’s totem, each possessing a unique mythology and guardian spirit. To the Quechua, the closest thing to the profane was a debt or obligation to society, which carried with it no real negative connotation (Harrison, 1994: 100). To outside observers however, coca use in all forms has been predominantly viewed as profane, a *drug*, serving as both the cause and a symptom of the social and economic problems faced by the disparate population (Allen, 1981: 158).

Coca consumption once spanned the South American continent. Fragmented by the dense Amazonian rainforest and Andean mountain range, the surviving mythologies of these Pre-Colombian coca consuming civilizations share many common characteristics. To the various

traditions, coca is feminine, associated with the mother or life-giver, usually anthropomorphized as a female god (Antonil, 1978).

Although largely eradicated throughout much of the continent, the modern resurgence of coca has largely been focused in the south Andean region,¹ where sophisticated civilizations have cultivated coca for millennia (Kohl & Farthing, 2006: 37). To the Quechua and Aymara, *Mama Coca*, the esteemed daughter of *Pachamama*, has been a symbol of the female gender and sexual indulgence, as the guardian of fertility and reproductivity (Steele, 2004: 21). The above genesis myth from the Aymara frames coca as a protector of the Andean people, brought up from the Amazonian valleys below.

From cultivation coca is revered, “The very picking of the leaves is for itself already a reflection of worship towards the plant. If done rashly or inconsiderate, the extremities of the branch can be damaged and this is considered as a bad sign out of laziness or bad technique” (Antonil, 1978: 152). Appropriate handling requires time, patience and the repetition of the same movements, to be respected throughout its consumption (Heitzeneder, 2010: 40).

The Quechua measure humanity based on the concept of reciprocity, or *Ayni* (Mannheim, 1986: 268). The Inca had no monetary system or market economy; everything was supplied by the community or in times of crisis, the State. Although today markets are commonplace, *Ayni* still has a hold over the life of the Quechua, “[human beings] live and work, eat and marry, drink and pray, think and fight in a universe governed by reciprocity,” and those who live without this concept are the “naked, uncivilized, uncultured” (Mannheim, 1986: 268). Coca plays an important role in this reciprocity, as a request for help in Andean society is never asked without first offering a handful of the leaf (Hurtado Gumucio, 1995). Coca is thus a symbol of the gift economy, of which Marcel Mauss (1954) has labeled as a total social fact of many indigenous societies, an indispensable aspect of life intertwined within its totality (see Spedding, 1997).

1 Although coca is still consumed by indigenous groups in the north of Colombia.

Vice

“The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards...” — Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

Coca has had a turbulent relationship with its Spanish colonizers. Unlike tobacco and coffee, traditional consumption of coca was never fully embraced by Europeans, as it was seen as aesthetically repulsive, possibly because it was unlike any previously known ritual of psychoactive substance ingestion (Gootenberg, 2008). Attempts at exporting coca to Europe proved challenging, as the leaf would lose its potency over the long journey and thus any mention of its *magical* properties would be dismissed by its European observers (Nutt, 2012: 182). In the colonies, the consumption of coca became a source of stigmatization and racism from its first encounter with the new world settlers. The first recorded interaction between the colonizers and *coqueros* was in the journal of the immortalized² Amerigo Vespucci:

They all keep their mouths filled with a certain green herb, which they ruminate, in almost the same manner as animals, so that they are hardly able to utter a word. Also, around their necks they all of them carry two dried calabashes, one filled with the herb which they have in their mouths, and the other with a certain white flour like powdered plaster. With a little stick, which they moisten and chew in the mouth, and frequently dip into the flour calabash, they take out enough to sprinkle on both sides of the herb, which they carry, an operation, which they repeat frequently, and very slowly.

The rhetoric of the colonizer served to dehumanize, using zoological terms to paint their portrait of the colonized as a nonhuman, *ruminating* beast (Memmi, 1965: 131).

Coca’s integration in the virulent Inca religion and culture was seen as a pertinent threat to the colonizers. Christianity was a necessary technology of the colonizers to homogenize and control the colonized population (Smith, 1999: 49). The Spanish Church thus became coca’s first and most vocal political critic, dismissing all of coca’s alleged energizing and healing powers as

² Who has had two continents named after him: the Americas

devilish witchcraft (Gootenberg, 2008: 19). Anti-coca rhetoric was often used to disparage the indigenous population, frequently taking on racial undertones:

When I asked some of the Indians why they always had their mouth full of this plant, which they don't eat, but merely keep in their mouth, they said they do not feel hunger, and it gives them great strength and vigor. I think it probably does something of the sort, *though it seems to me a disgusting habit, what might be expected of people like these Indians.*

The first colonial attempt at an eradication program began in 1569 after a decree from the diocese (Nutt, 2012: 182). However, as the natives in the mining sector were refusing to work without coca, cultivation continued. Even for the clergy, the economic motivation seemed to outweigh the ideological.³ The stimulating and hunger-suppressing characteristics of coca led to greater productivity from the malnourished and overworked population. According to writer Eduardo Galeano, “for the few coins they received for their work the Indians bought coca-leaf instead of food: chewing it, they could— at the price of shortening their lives— better endure the deadly tasks imposed on them” (1971: 47).

As coca was rare and demand was inflated, the leaves were often used in place of gold (Hurtado Gumucio, 1995). The colonizers realized the economic benefits of coca cultivation greatly outweighed the costs of a resilient population and began production on an industrialized scale. Heavily taxed and regulated, coca quickly became a valuable local commodity for the Spaniards and stayed that way throughout the colonial period (Nutt, 2012: 182). The Spanish had transformed coca, according to Galeano (1971: 47), to a tool of oppression while their owners denigrated the *campesinos* for their “maleficent vices.”

³ "The greater part of the revenue of the Bishops of and Canons of the Cathedral of Cusco is derived from the tithes of the coca leaves," Garcilaso de la Vega 1501-1536

Commodity

In the mid-nineteenth century, there was a worldwide effort to demystify coca by understanding its psychoactive properties (Gootenberg, 2008: 322). First isolated in the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, cocaine was initially lauded as a panacea. The psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud became one of its earliest proponents, publishing five papers between 1884 and 1887 detailing the effects of the isolate and its uses as a stimulant, an anesthetic, and as a virtual cure-all. Some of the diseases Freud claimed to treat with cocaine were as varied as digestive ailments, syphilis, asthma, and opiate addiction; of which none held up to later scientific scrutiny (Gootenberg, 2008: 23).

A coca revolution quickly engulfed Europe and the Americas, and as it became the principal ingredient in many popular patent medicines, beverages, and tonics, causing demand in the Andes to rise sharply (Pereira, 2010: 395). Two proprietary products dominated the international market: *Vin Mariani*, a beverage consisting of wine and coca extract, which was popular with Queen Victoria and Pope Leo XIII, and a well-known tonic consisting of coca and the kola nut of West Africa known as Coca Cola (Nutt, 2012: 182).⁴

In the medical field, the discovery of cocaine turned out to be a major advancement for its property as a local anesthetic. Through this medium cocaine helped revolutionize the practice of surgery, allowing for surgeries on delicate areas such as the eyes, throat, or genitals, and surgeries requiring patients to be conscious to be conducted painlessly (Gootenberg, 2009: 24). Cocaine was commonly used in the medical field until 1905 with the synthesis of procaine (Novocaine), which mimicked cocaine's anesthetic properties but lacked its euphoric effects.⁵

Regional instability meant that the supply could not keep up with international demand until 1885. This marked a quarter century of coca serving as a classic export commodity, which

4 Coca Cola was itself a product of prohibition as it had to remove the wine from its formula after Atlanta voted to go dry. Its prominence grew with the temperance movement, as more and more counties went dry (Cohen, 2006: 67).

5 Novocaine's successor lidocaine is one of the primary adulterants found in street cocaine because its numbing effect mirrors that of cocaine. (López-Artíguez, Cameán, & Repetto, 1995)

became an integral part of the war torn⁶ Peruvian economy (Gootenberg, 2008: 55). At its height coca was Peru's fifth most remunerative export, on which the Andean nations are completely dependent (Gootenberg, 2008: 64). However by the early twentieth century, production of cocaine began to shift to the Dutch Javanese colony. The commodity chain from the East Indies was much better developed to Europe, and thus it was easier and more economically viable to transport. As the market was unregulated, by 1907 the industrialized production of coca in the Dutch Javanese colony had supplanted the Peruvian supply as the world leader (Gootenberg, 2009: 110).

Narcotic

As his own claim to social respect and honor are diminished, the sober, abstaining citizen seeks for public acts through which he may reaffirm the dominance and prestige of his way of life. Converting the sinner to virtue is one way; law is another. Even if the law is not enforced or enforceable, the symbolic import of its passage is important to the reformer. It settles the controversies between those who represent clashing cultures. The public support of one conception of morality at the expense of another enhances the prestige and self-esteem of the victors and degrades the culture of the losers. - Joseph Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade*, 1986

The hegemonic mythological⁷ conception of coca began to form at the turn of the twentieth century in the United States. Coinciding with the temperance movement, growing hysteria over cocaine consumption by minorities⁸ led to the passing of the Harrison Tax Act in 1914 (Fukumi, 2008: 97). A social movement spearheaded by *'moral entrepreneurs*, this law banned the unregulated sale of coca and opium in the United States, and signaled the beginning

6 The Peruvians and Bolivians fought a war together (*Guerra del Pacífico*) against Chile from 1879 to 1883, and lost decisively.

7 See the entry (Barthes, 1957: 58) "Wine and Milk"

8 "In 1900, the Journal of the American Medical Association published an editorial stating, "Negroes in the South are reported as being addicted to a new form of vice – that of 'cocaine sniffing' or the 'coke habit.'" Some newspapers later claimed cocaine use caused blacks to rape white women and was improving their pistol marksmanship." (Cockburn, 1998: 176.5). For more on race and prohibition see: Cohen, 2006.

of the prohibition era (Becker, 1963).⁹ Other countries soon followed suit, while allowing the export supply from the Andean region to continue largely unabated. Throughout this time, the rhetoric of domestic cocaine interdiction was largely directed towards the Italian-American mafia, while the Andeans remained faceless suppliers (Fukumi, 2008: 97).

In 1950, the United Nations made its first official inquiry into the traditional use of coca in Andean society. The report's rhetoric reflected the colonial racism and cultural insensitivity of the early Spanish colonizers:

“Coca chewing maintains a constant state of malnutrition; it induces in the individual undesirable changes of an intellectual and moral character. It certainly hinders the chewer's chances of obtaining a higher social standard; it reduces the economic yield of productive work, and therefore maintains a low economic standard of life” (Commission of Inquiry on Coca, 1951).

The report further refers to coca chewing as a dirty vice of the uneducated, and that only through educational programs coca could be eradicated (UN, 1951). The report equated traditional coca consumption with cocaine, continuously referred to its users as *addicts* and implicated coca on the region's widespread illiteracy (UN, 1951).

The UN acted on the report in 1961 by ratifying the first international treaty to combat the cross-border illicit substance market, the *UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs*.¹⁰ Ratified by the then presidents of Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, the convention established that “the parties shall so far as possible enforce the uprooting of all coca bushes which grow wild. They shall destroy the coca bushes if illegally cultivated,” and, “coca chewing must be abolished within twenty-five years” (Grisaffi, 2010: 13). The *cocaleros* were to cease all cultivation and facilitate the complete eradication of a cultural icon their ancestors had been consuming for millennia.

9 This culture of prohibition, that if society deems a substance as *bad* it should be abstained from completely, appears to be a consequence of the Abrahamic tradition. Pleasure was not sinful to the ancient Greeks, who instead developed an ethics of moderation, or alimentary ethics to govern their indulgence in food and intoxicants (Foucault, 1984: 10). See: Duff, 2004.

10 The UN defines a “drug” as a “substance listed in Schedule I and II of the *1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs*” <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/illicit-drugs/definitions/>

The law established in Article 26 that “the parties shall so far as possible enforce the uprooting of all coca bushes which grow wild. They shall destroy the coca bushes if illegally cultivated,” and, “coca leaf chewing must be abolished within twenty-five years” (UN, 1961). However the convention made one exception in Article 27 at the behest of the Coca Cola Company, “the Parties may permit the use of coca leaves for the preparation of a flavoring agent” (UN, 1961).

Although this inclusion has been panned as an “historical error,” it has yet to be rectified (Thoumi, 2005A: 5). Peru and Bolivia together were successfully able to lobby for an amendment in paragraph 2 of Article 14 of the second convention, the 1988 *United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*:

“The measures adopted shall respect fundamental human rights and shall take due account of traditional licit uses, where there is historic evidence of such use, as well as the protection of the environment” (UN, 1988).

However, the language of the revision was, according to Francisco Thoumi (2005a: 6), “ambiguous and confusing,” and production of coca products in these countries is still prohibited, as recognized by the *International Narcotics Control Board* in a 1994 release:

Thus, mate de coca, which is considered harmless and legal in several countries in South America, is an illegal activity under the provisions of both the 1961 Convention and the 1988 Convention, though that was not the intention of the plenipotentiary conferences that adopted those conventions (International Narcotics Control Board, 1994).

In order to resolve this confusion and rectify the now widely discredited 1950 *Commission of Enquiry into the Coca Leaf*, the INCB commissioned the WHO report mentioned earlier in this chapter, which was later seen to be too controversial to publish (Bewley-Taylor, 2012: 257).

This second attempt at eradication was again thwarted by economic motivation, this time by the resurgence of cocaine use. The early 1970s witnessed a sharp rise in the demand for cocaine in the United States as it quickly entrenched itself as its biggest import market (de

Franco & Godoy, 1992: 384). Although it is unknown as to why cocaine became so popular in the United States, Waldorf (1991: 281-82) theorized that the U.S. was "a competitive, achievement-addicted, 'Type-A society,' [in which] cocaine's ability to make us feel empowered, euphoric, energetic, and ebullient fits our culture like a glove." At this time, cocaine had an image of glamour and status, the *champagne of drugs* consumed by the rich and famous.

The political rhetoric demanding an international effort to eradicate coca and fight trafficking did not occur until cocaine expanded its availability to lower-income groups with the emergence of 'crack' cocaine¹¹ in the mid-1980s (Gereffi & Korzeniewicz, 1994: 300). As the media and politicians continued to exaggerate the crack 'crisis' in underprivileged communities within the United States (Reinarman & Levine, 1989), international legislators passed the *Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs*¹² to further action against this perceived threat. George H.W. Bush's Andean Initiative in 1989 signaled an expansion of Richard Nixon's "War on Drugs" into production and transit countries, by further committing an extra 100 million dollars into the military forces in the region. A country not complying with the US demands would be met with a range of economic sanctions, from a suspension of foreign aid and trade benefits, to a curtailment of air transportation (Mejia & Restrepo, 2014: 27).

The Andean countries struggled economically throughout the 1970s and 80s, Peru and Colombia were engaged in civil wars, and the Bolivian economy was coming into one of the most rapid hyperinflation periods in world history (Sachs, 1989: 279). In the 1970s, the coca industry reached an all-time high for the Bolivian economy, totaling 15% of the country's GDP and 16% of its total labor force (Kohl & Farthing, 2006). As the coca export market was an important part of their economy, the governments were both unable and unwilling to combat the continuing rise in cocaine production and trafficking (*ibid*). In order to re-stabilize the Bolivian economy after the crash, the Bolivian government adopted the New Economic Plan (NEP),

11 See page 8

12 See Above

which along with a market crash in the tin industry, led to a marked increase in unemployment of miners and laborers¹³ (Dunkerley, 1990: 34).

The growing coca market coupled with mass unemployment in the early 1980s led to a mass migration of Andean coca farmers and laborers to the Chapare (Kohl & Farthing, 2006). Although coca was previously grown only for local consumption in the region, cultivation skyrocketed from an estimated 13,000 hectares in 1978 to 55,000 hectares a decade later (Painter, 1994: 15), while the coinciding population growth went from 24,000 in 1967 to around 350,000 in 1989 (Grisaffi, 2010: 429). Originally inhabited by South Amazonian ethnic groups, the immigration of Andean peasants into the Chapare imported the dominate culture of the highlands, with coca cultivation remaining an integral part of everyday life (Grisaffi, 2010: 425). In response, the government ratified *Ley 1008*, which fortified the position of the Yungas region as the only legal coca growing region in Bolivia. The Chapare colonizers' status as an uprooted multicultural population meant that they were unable to claim any cultural heritage as "traditional coca cultivators" (Grisaffi, 2010: 432).

According to Grandin (2007: 216), the passing of *Ley 1008* occurred under "intense pressure" from the US government. In 1983, the U.S. provided \$4 million to start the *Unidad Móvil Policial para Áreas Rurales* (UMOPAR), a military unit that deals with drug control in rural areas (Dangl, 2007, 45). In contrast to the United States' domestic policy of *Posse Comitatus*, which forbids the military from acting as law enforcement personnel, UMOPAR quickly took on the duty of local law enforcement in the Chapare (Youngers & Rosin, 2004). This coincided with a rapid militarization in all the Andean States with U.S. support (Zirnite, 1998).

Then a *sindicato* leader in the Chapare, these crimes motivated the movement of future president Morales:

13 "Official level of open unemployment stood at 11.5%, but the real level was undoubtedly several points higher - probably 15%" (Dunkerley, 1990: 34)

"I was a witness to how the gringos from the DEA fired upon us and the Villa Tunari massacre was made. Later, we recovered cadavers drowned in the river and others with bullet wounds. It was all for the defense of the coca leaf against *Ley 1008*."

Over the next two decades, there were over sixty wrongful deaths attributed to the unit and countless human rights abuses (Youngers and Rosin, 2004). The most obvious instance of US subversion was the 1984 kidnapping of then President of Bolivia, Siles Zuazo, by UMOPAR soldiers that led to an unsuccessful *coup d'état* attempt against the Bolivian government. There have been fourteen successful *coups* in Bolivia in twentieth century, thus there was little attention paid by the international community. *Cocaleros* and security forces continued to clash under an eradication program called Option Zero, from 1993 to 1997, and later the Dignity Plan from 1998 to 2004 (Dangl, 2007, 45).

The anti-coca crusade in Bolivia culminated in 1997 with the adoption of *Plan Dignidad*, or the Dignity Plan. Lauded as a success internationally for reducing the total amount of land used for coca cultivation from 458 km² in 1997 to 146 km² in 2000. General Hugo Banzer, former president of Bolivia, whose military dictatorship (1971-1978) not only engaged in serious human rights violations and the assassination of opponents in foreign countries as part of the *Plan Condor*, also contributed to Bolivia's initial specialization in cocaine production (Labrousse, 2003). He brought in the tradition of intertwining the upper echelons of the drug trade with the highest levels of the country's political and military power (Kohl & Farthing, 2010: 197).

From the mid-1980s to 1997, coca and semi-processed cocaine paste provided an estimated U.S. \$500 million a year or between 5 and 8 per cent of the Bolivian GDP, exceeding all other agricultural products both in terms of value as well as in provision of jobs. Coca income from peasant producers supported around 50,000 families, totaling between 120,000 and 500,000 *campesinos* (Kohl & Farthing, 2006: 74). Now left with no livelihood and few options, the *campesinos* took to the streets.

Icon

“Over the past two decades, Bolivian coca growers' leader Evo Morales has been beaten, tear gassed and shot with rubber bullets at the hand of security forces while fighting for changes in Bolivia's drug policy. In a stunning turnaround in January, now flanked by those same military forces, Morales was inaugurated as Bolivia's new president” (Gordon, 2006: 15).

Around the turn of the millennium, Bolivia was experiencing widespread civil unrest against what was viewed to be Western imperialism. The privatization of water, gas and an IMF-imposed income tax revitalized a renewed indigenous identity movement throughout the multitude (Hardt & Negri, 2009: 116). Evo Morales and his *Movement al Socialismo* (MAS) united these grassroots anti-imperialist organizations and effectively “replaced the state as the mechanism of government” (Olivera, 2004: 81). As according to Hard and Negri (2009: 110), “these struggles of the multitude are based in common organisational structures, that recent mass mobilisations are not spontaneous but grew out of already existing networks and well-established practices of self-government.”

The death of two *cocaleros* at the hands of government eradication forces in 2004 sparked massive social unrest in the Chapare (Grisaffi & Ledebur, 2014: 4). “Morales proclaimed the death of the “colonial state” and promised to move towards “a new plurinational, autonomy and solidarity-based state” (Fuentes, 2010). The head of the *Chapare Coca Growers Union* and the MAS political party Evo Morales, was elected president in a decisive victory in 2005.¹⁴ He ran on a platform to end the eradication programs and US imperialist influence in the country. His regime enacted policies that would allow for limited coca growth, enough so the *cocaleros* would be able to earn a living wage theoretically without having to rely on the production of cocaine.

For the next two years the United States and the Morales' administration cooperated in the fight against drug trafficking, until in 2008 when Bolivia expelled the US Ambassador and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), for allegedly “meddling in the state's internal affairs”

¹⁴ Morales received 54% of the vote in a country where no party has ever scored more than 37% (Spence & Shenkin, 2008: 344).

(Ledebur & Youngers, 2013: 2). Since the expulsion, the United States has condemned Bolivia's eradication efforts year after year.

In the Summer 2014, Bolivia was entering into an election season in which the two major presidential candidates were the 'revolutionary' leftist incumbent Evo Morales and staunchly anti-cato and US 'favored' Jorge Quiroga. This is where my research begun.

03 Methodology

*“Peace is not the 'absence of war,' it is a virtue, a state of mind,
a disposition of benevolence, confidence, justice.” - Spinoza*

A transformative approach to the *War on Drugs* cannot be measured solely by census reports and statistics, as they cannot show the relationships, memories, and context of the conflict (Miall, 2004: 8). Cultural violence and oppression do not show up on the stats sheets, while the extent of economic misery and physical violence may be misrepresented. However, by simply using a qualitative approach this project would not be able to include other stakeholders outside of the local area, nor take into account its feasibility of export into other production areas. For instance, the potential effect on the supply of the commodity is necessary for any policy analysis. Furthermore, the language used in state and global discourse allows us to further analyze the motivations of global prohibition and its exercise of power and violence.

Study Area

The Plurinational State of Bolivia is home to one of the most ethnically diverse populations in the world. As sociologist René Zavaleta captured in the 1970s, Bolivia is a “*sociedad abigarrada*,”¹ which can be translated to English as a multi-colored or 'motley' society.² Coming from over sixty different ethno-linguistic groups, over 60% of the population identifies as indigenous (CIA, 2014). The country has historically suffered from a high level of inequality between the Spanish-descendent upper class and the poorer indigenous *campesinos*. As one of the poorest countries in Latin America, cocaine has been a major player in Bolivia's export dependent economy,³ since the mid-nineteenth century (Gootenberg, 2008). Its cultural pluralism is unlike any other country in the world, and its culture of *sindicatos* and autonomous organization is perhaps unique to the plurinational state (Hardt & Negri, 2004: 108).

Coca cultivation in Bolivia predominantly takes place in two areas, the Chapare and the Yungas regions. For over twenty years both regions were subjected to eradication programs and are now managed under the *cato* program (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015: 14). However, the Bolivian government has allowed a small amount of coca to be grown for traditional consumption in the Yungas region since 1988, whereas prior to 2004 all coca grown in the Chapare was illicit. While in the Chapare the *cato program* is widely favored for ending the eradication program, the opposite is true in the Yungas where many of the *cocaleros* were permitted to grow more than a *cato* of coca under the previous policy (Grisaffi, 2010: 434).

As I wanted to immerse myself in one area, I chose which, at the time has the most influence in Bolivian politics. The Chapare, a semitropical region roughly the size of Wales in the department of Cochabamba, is located around 200 kilometers down long mountainous roads from its administrative capital (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015: 14). Nearly encircled by national

1 Hardt and Negri (2009: 109) misspelt the word “*socieda(e)d*.”

2 “Zavaleta views this social diversity in a negative light as a marker of Bolivia's “premodern” character, as if modernity were defined by homogeneous classes, identities, and social institutions” (Hardt & Negri, 2009: 108).

3 With a per capita GDP of only \$5,500, Bolivia is considered to be a very poor country, ranked by the CIA (2014) as number 156 in the world out of 228. PCE make up 48%.

parks and a mountain range, the Chapare is, like virtually all regions in Bolivia, geographically isolated. This is the region where the pre-2004 civil unrest was the most prominent and where licensing has taken its greatest effect. Coca cultivation in the Chapare today is obvious, the farms can be seen from the main road and the cut leaves are left out in the open to dry. All interviews of growers, locals, and military personnel took place in this area.⁴

I was in the Cochabamba department for the entire six weeks of my fieldwork, alternating between the department capital and the Chapare, staying mainly in dilapidated guesthouses with no internet, forcing myself to immerse myself in Spanish-language literature and the lives of my informants. Of course the relatively short amount of time I spent down there for this kind of research and my lack of comfortness, with both the language and confidence with my project and the questions I was asking, could both be seen as hindrances. Fortunately I was able to pair my research with previous anthropological studies done in the area to paint an accurate picture of the situation.

Informants

Cocalero 01 – Nicolas	Cocalero
Cocalero 02 – Jose	Cocalero
Campesino 01 – Willie	Secondary Teacher
Campesino 02 – Miguel	[Unknown]
UMOPAR01 Eduardo	From Benin
UMOPAR02 Alejandro	From La Paz
UMOPAR03 Luis	From Santa Cruz
Juan Carlos Coca	Administrator
Mergim	Professor
Luisa	Barista

4 In the cities: Villa Tunari (local vacation spot), Chimoré (UMOPAR headquarters), Eterazama (Centro de Formación Tecnológica Eterazama), Puerto Villarroel (river port with a Bolivian navy base).

While I originally planned on having a wider range of interviewees, I conducted interviews with *cocaleros*, *coqueros*, and *narcopolicias*.⁵ As I struggled locating people with other relevant professions, a gate keeper would have been particularly useful in this situation (Bryman, 2008). I reached out to the *Los sindicatos cocaleros del Trópico de Cochabamba*, local governance and the coca radio station through email, telephone, and in person without success.

I was given assistance by a local technical college funded for alternative development, the *Centro de Formación Tecnológica Eterazama* (CFTE), in the last days of my research, using my social network (see Rubin & Rubin, 2011: 89).⁶ Social network research is useful when researching a sensitive topic, as it is comforting to potential research participants who “want to identify a common person with whom they themselves and the researcher know as a way for them to check the researcher's credibility and trustworthiness” (Liamputtong, 2008: 9).

As their profession is now legal, *cocaleros* were often out in the open collecting or drying their leaves. Driving down the roads, you could see the *catos* dotted along all the main roads of the area. I met the *cocaleros* Nicolas and Jose as they were drying their leaves. I met the two *coqueros* in the Chapare, one on the bus and the other in a restaurant. After not replying to inquiries,⁷ I went to the UMOPAR headquarters in Chimore directly and talked with the *narcopolicias* around the base. I was given the name of the commander and told where it was by a photographer for the New York Times who previously worked with them in 2012 (see Neuman, 2012). I was on the base for about four hours over the course of two days, mostly just talking with the various soldiers who were coming and going. In total I held unstructured interviews with three of the soldiers. Luis gave me a tour of the barracks, whereas Eduardo and Alejandro I talked to in the office near the main gate. As it is a sensitive topic, all names have been changed.

5 I would have liked to conduct interviews with the *pichicateros* or laborers, but was unable to locate any due to the deviant nature of their profession. I would also have liked to conduct interviews with convicted traffickers arrested in the Chapare but I did not have time to gain access to the prison system.

6 One of the teachers was a friend of a friend of a friend of someone I knew from before.

7 I was starting to realize that despite all institutions and most *campesinos* having an email address, replying to them has not quite caught on yet.

Methods

Most of the available literature on the effectiveness of supply-side substance control policies have been partial equilibrium economic evaluations (Mejia & Restrepo, 2008: 4), which rarely look at the policies' effect on the local population, aside from their overall compliance with the programs.⁸ This is incongruous even with the stated goal of supply reduction, as the long-term effectiveness of control relies on community compliance (see Ibanez, 2007). The primary focus of this project was on the efforts of civil society and local communities, which was done using qualitative research on site in the Chapare. To supplement my primary research, I used a statistical evaluation of cocaine supply and homicide rates in order to analyze the effects of this policy change at the state and regional levels. Lastly, to grasp the thing-power of coca, I analyzed the discourse of political documents, media releases and historical records related to the icon.

Interviews

“There are three closely related terms,” says Sara Delamont (2007: 205), “ethnography, fieldwork and participant observation which are part of a wider term, “qualitative research.” This form of research, which included watching people, talking to people casually, and joining with their activities, is perhaps the best form of study to analyze conflict transformation (Milne, 2010: 74). Without an ethnographic study, if this had purely been a qualitative or economic evaluation, my outlook on the project would have been completely different, and I would not have been able to show an accurate portrayal the non-statistical effects of the program.

The main criticism of qualitative research is its atomistic quality and how it may not scale on the global scheme of things (Bryman, 2008). As I am analyzing a policy change, it would have been impossible to conduct an ethnographic study with all potential stakeholders. Instead I had to focus on one geographic area, and two cultural groups (the *narcopolicias* and the

⁸ There have been reports released by the *Andean Information Network* on the effectiveness of the *cato program* program which focused on the human rights of the *cocaleros*. See: (Farthing & |, 2015; Ledebur & Youngers, 2013).

campesinos). Therefore I am using previously conducted research in the area to validate my responses (Bryman, 2008). None of the data I analyzed was presented without checking its validity with previous research. I used quotations from other studies, to ensure that my personal reflexivity had little effect on the results. In order to paint an accurate picture of the situation, I tried to vary the sources of my data and the research methods as greatly as possible (Golafshani, 2003).

The interviews were all done in an unstructured manner due to the environment. Because of where the interviews took place, the research had an informal quality. This allowed me to gain the trust of the interviewees. Each interviewee was also offered a handful of coca as a sign of respect. All the proper precautions were taken to ensure that the interviewees gave their informed consent to the research. With a gate keeping organization to help with arranging interviews, they could have been conducted more structured and in a formal setting. As it was, the only way to get in contact with military personnel was to go to the base uninvited. Similarly, to get in contact with *cocaleros* it was necessary to ask them directly as they dried their crop.

I of course offered coca to all my interviewees as it was a great because of its culturally binding properties, to “decline an offer to share coca would be to reject an invitation to be social” (Grisaffi, 2010: 430). I could noticeably see people open up after I offered them a handful of coca. The field research stage was conducted over a six-week period in July and August 2014. As the research occurred two months before a major presidential election, it was not surprising that many of the organizations supporting the president’s reelection were skeptical when dealing with a researcher from a country that they allege is funding the opposition (see: page 40).

Statistics

The nature of this study makes it difficult to attribute causality to the implementation of the policy change (Garcia-Yi, 2014). Although the policies are generally favorable amongst the population most affected by them, it is important to look at crime and development data made available by the government and international organizations to understand the situation better

(Bryman, 2007). An accurate assessment of the total cocaine paste exported from the region and from Bolivia is important to take into consideration when assessing these policies from the hegemonic perspective. To minimize bias and assure coherence, the statistics used in the analysis were all obtained from the most available year from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which are primarily from the 2014 fiscal year.

Discourse Analysis

The interaction of the thing-power of coca and society is best understood using a technique known as discourse analysis, which I employ in both the genealogy (Chapter 02) and analysis (Chapter 05) to unearth the relations of power embedded in the language of political, media, and historical discourse (Machin & Mayr, 2012: 2). Discourse “constitutes our social world and the structures that define it. It also constitutes the natural world by providing us with concepts that structure that world” (Hekman, 2010: 1).

According to linguist Norman Fairclough (1989: 4), “the more practical objective [of discourse analysis] is to help increase consciousness of language and power, and particularly of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others.” This language “manufactures the consent” of the multitude, justifying the further exercise of power in the form of violence (Fairclough, 1989: 3-4). However not all discourse is coercion, as it can also be employed by social movements to ignite social change (*ibid*, 1992: 10). This project will look at both the ideology of the *War on Drugs* and the ideology of the *cato*. Discourse analysis will be used as the tertiary research objective of this project, mainly to supplement the primary and secondary research methods, and to construct a base of which they can build off of.

Reflections

The unique nature of this research presented a number of challenges unique to the study area. The following section will identify four of these challenges and reflect on their possible effect on the qualitative data collected. Reflexivity, language, and safety.

Reflexivity

On my first day in Cochabamba I went to the back of the massive central market known as La Concha to purchase some coca and meet its vendors. For 20 Bolivianos, or less than \$3, I received a pound of coca,⁹ a grocery bag of small dried green leaves, of which half ultimately lasted me throughout my fieldwork.

Over the next six weeks I was able to learn many of the nuances of the coca ritual. The fifteen year old boy working at the guesthouse I was staying at helped me refine my technique. While in Spanish one would '*masticar*' *la hoja de coca*, to masticate or to chew, in reality it's more of a light suck. After a while I noticed my cheeks were sore, sensitive area poked at by the tiny stems. "Take the stems out one by one with your hands." Fold, rip, put the *lamina* in between the cheek pouch and my jaw and repeat. Later one of my informants showed me a faster way to rip the stems out with my teeth. The leaf is always consumed with a small amount of bicarbonate ash, or *leija*, which comes in a variety of flavors; some sweet, some savory, some much tastier than others. When conducting ethnographic research we must use all our senses, smell, sight, hearing, touch and, yes even taste (Delamont, 2007). As I write this now I am sipping on a cup of coffee, while I was writing in Bolivia, I was 'chewing' on coca or drinking *mate de coca* (coca tea) with none of the tremors, headaches, sleep deprivation, or frequent urination associated with prolonged coffee use (Spedding, 2004).¹⁰

9 This pound (454 grams), would have contained less than four grams of cocaine.

10 These negative effects could be why coffee abuse is not common. If you take even a little too much, it is very unpleasant.

Throughout the data collection process I have had to be consistently aware of my positionality in relation to the local community where I was conducting my research. My relationship to the subjects may have had a noticeable effect on the quality or amount of data collected (Eaves & Kahn, 2000). As a young adult white male from the United States, I had a much more comfortable relationship with the *narcopolicias* than I had with the much older and more apprehensive *campesinos*.

Working with indigenous communities in Bolivia provides a set of challenges that are perhaps unique to this area. I had to constantly be aware of my cultural sensitivity. Prior to my fieldwork I read extensively in order to gain an understanding of the “social, familial, cultural, religious, historical and political” aspects of Quechua culture (Liamputtong, 2008: 24). As I have previously spent time in a dozen South or Central American states, I understood the broader aspects of post-colonial Latin America. The indigenous community in the Chapare is at the same time both strong supporters of the current regime and increasingly independent (Canessa, 2007). One major challenge was their concept of communal justice, which they would often impose over the state run criminal justice system (see Hammond, 2011).

I was clearly an outsider in a very different cultural setting. Although outsider research can offer benefits to the research such as analytical objectivity and emotional distance (Bryman, 2008), it also may construct a substantial barrier in the actual data collection process itself. Being specifically from a country such as the United States, which is barraged daily in Bolivian political rhetoric as a neoliberal imperialist, may have had a negative effect on my results. Insider research may have produced more honest answers from subjects without an agenda, and without fear of prosecution. In this case, being an outsider was a hurdle that proved to be difficult to overcome within a limited amount of time.

As most of the research concerning coca and its regulation has come from the perspective of Western and Spanish-descendant researchers, it is important not to reflect this bias in the research itself (Smith, 1999). In order to do this I must look at the coca leaf from the perspective of an indigenous Bolivian, and why eradication programs led to so much violence and civil

unrest. Most of all, it is important to understand that to the Bolivian population, in the words of President Morales speaking at the UN General Assembly, “coca is not cocaine.”

I undertook this project with a firm perspective on the immorality of the prohibitionist policies of the *War on Drugs*. As such I have had to be reflectively aware of my own moral positions and assumptions throughout the research (Zigon, 2010: 3). According to Stoczkowski (2008: 348–9), the researcher has the commitment “to defend the rights of the oppressed... to testify, to defend, to take care of, to lavish the benefits of its science and of its action on those in need.”¹¹ Where according to indigenous researcher Linda Tuhiwai Smith (199: 116), the purpose of research is itself to work towards “self-determination for indigenous peoples,” of which the research “involves the processes of transformation, of decolonization, of healing and of mobilization.” Was this project to be an unbiased policy evaluation or an ethnography of the indigenous struggle for self-determination?

Language

Language is one of the more important dynamics when considering the vitality of ethnographic research. Although language is always an important tool to keep in mind when conducting cross-cultural fieldwork, the unique linguistic dynamics of this particular area make it especially interesting (Hennink, 2008). The primary indigenous languages in the Chapare region are Quechua and Aymara, the pre-Colombian indigenous languages of the Incan Empire.¹² Language in Bolivia serves as a major part of the speaker's identity. Although widely understood, Spanish does not serve as the main conversational language of many of the *campesinos* in the area. All three languages are taught to children at local school, and almost all of the *campesinos* can at least partially understand all three. Alternatively, as the police and military personnel stationed in the region were not from the Chapare, Spanish serves as their primary language of communication.

¹¹ As quoted in Zigon 2010.

¹² Quechua is the more common language, whereas Aymaras were the later wave of immigrants from the highlands, which included Evo Morales.

It's important to understand the relationship between language and the cultural identity in the area. Spanish is the language of the colonizers in most of Latin America, and the only language spoken by the majority of the population. Evo Morales' public speeches are almost all done in Spanish (Howard, 2010: 180-181).¹³ Due to the high linguistic variability amongst the indigenous peoples in Bolivia, it also serves as the *lingua franca* for all of Bolivia. Although Quechua is the most widely spoken indigenous language in the Chapare, a large migration of Aymara speaking coca farmers occurred in the second half of the twentieth century after the mass closing of mineral mines in the *Altiplano* took away their livelihoods. To an outsider, it is difficult to distinguish between the various indigenous languages spoken in the area.

All of the interviews were thus conducted in Spanish.¹⁴ A translator was not used when conducting the research, either from Quechua to Spanish or Quechua to English. To ensure credibility, my questions were checked for grammatical accuracy before the interviews by a native speaker, although my mistakes in speech may have been disarming. A translator would have made the interviews more fluid and robust, but I was unable to locate one. Unsurprisingly there are very few residents in the Chapare who could speak English.¹⁵ Many of the subjects appeared wary or apprehensive when the interviews started, as the language barrier may have furthered cultural differences.¹⁶

Safety

The ongoing conflict in Latin America regarding the trafficking of *drugs* is perhaps the longest running and most violent conflict in the world (UNODC, 2013: 32). Due to the nature of the conflict and the lack of political will of the combatants, there are very few considerations

13 There is apparently doubt as to whether or not he can speak Aymara or Quechua fluently (Canessa, 2007: 199), although Morales biographer believes he uses Spanish because it allows him to *centralizar* (centralize) communication, meaning to have a broader reach (Howard, 2010 181).

14 I learned basic-level Spanish by living in Colombia for six months between 2010 and 2012.

15 In a month conducting research in the area, I did not meet anyone able to speak English, despite it being taught in schools from a young age (Interview – *campesino* Willis).

16 I learned some basic Quechua phrases, so while I didn't know which people they came from, Willis said most people could at least understand both.

taken for journalists and researchers investigating the nature of the conflict. Asking the wrong question to the wrong person, or witnessing something I should not have could have had dire consequences.¹⁷

Although not as violent as many of the countries along the *trafficking* route,¹⁸ Bolivia still encounters many of the same problems as its northern neighbors regarding the illicit substance market. In the larger cities of Santa Cruz, El Alto, and Cochabamba homicide related to the illicit market can be considered commonplace, and violence in the rural areas is not unheard of. To ensure my safety certain precautions were taken. First, knowledge acquisition allowed me to reformulate questions based on what was considered culturally acceptable and how to keep the interviewees protected from prosecution. The culture in the Chapare is very different from my home country of the United States and is subject to its own indigenous judiciary system. Second by making myself known to local law enforcement, I was advised on how to continue with the research. Throughout the research, the questions were continuously updated as to appease the interviewees and certain precautions were taken regarding taking electronic equipment into the field, mostly out of respect. I did not contact the *narcopolicias* until the end of the study to avoid a potential conflict of interest.

Other precautions were taken to ensure the safety and confidentiality of the informants and organizations. The data collected and any personal identifiers were kept on a recently formatted password-protected laptop running an updated version of the Debian operating system with an encrypted hard drive. Encryption is a way of encoding the data that makes it virtually impossible for even the most technically advanced governments to gain access without the encryption code. In field, a paper notebook was used to record the data, which was transferred to a document on the computer at the end of each day. The paper was then destroyed. Requests for files were made by UMOPAR about the nature of the project but not about the data itself. After

¹⁷ I am reminded of a story one of my students told me in Colombia. A couple they knew were walking along the beach and accidentally stumbled upon a boat being loaded with cocaine, so the traffickers shot them dead.

¹⁸ The relative safety of Bolivia compared to Colombia (of which I was much more familiar with) was in part the reason why I chose to do my fieldwork there.

checking the files for mistaken identifiers, I presented them my research proposal. They did not seem too concerned with the information collected, but rather made the request to assist with the research. The soldiers appeared to know exactly where the cocaine production was taking place and knew the process of extraction and product export as well as the traffickers, but could not keep up with production.

This chapter outlined the methodology used in my research, as well as identifying three concerns I had to be aware of during my fieldwork. The following chapter will outline a theory to analyze the data collected.

04 Theory

“Where they make a desert, they call it peace.” - Tacitus

Winning the *War on Drugs* on the terms of the United Nations' conventions would mean, according to sociologist Allison Spedding (1997), “eradicating the entire Andean population.”¹ As complete eradication is neither possible nor preferred, this chapter will outline a framework that takes into account the human rights of the local, state and global actors affected by the policy change. I will structure this chapter using an expanded version of Galtung's (1996) tripartite conception of violence. To analyze the concept of cultural violence, this chapter will explore the concept of deviance and the effects of these labels on the population. To analyze the concepts of structural violence (economic misery and oppression), it will outline the definitions of human and indigenous rights within the UN system, and how *War on Drugs* does not respect these conventions. It will then look at the cultural, structural and direct forms of violence associated with environmental destruction. For direct violence, this chapter will look at the potential motivations of civil unrest, and the systemic violence inherent in illicit markets. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a look at why the effects of any international supply fluctuation will most likely be few and difficult to measure.

¹ Matienzo's sixteenth century (1560) observation: "To do away with coca is like denying the existence of Peru." The rhetoric used in the conflicting ideologies have not changed in almost 500 years.

Violence

Peace, in the sense of absence of war, is of little value to someone who is dying of hunger or cold. It will not remove the pain of torture inflicted on a prisoner of conscience ... peace can only last where human rights are respected, where the people are fed, and where individuals and nations are free. - Dalai Lama 1989

Using the minimalist conception of peace, a peaceful solution would be attained when there would be no more direct or personal violence between actors (Bufacchi, 2005: 195). However this peace, labeled as 'negative peace' by Galtung (1969), does not address the often more destructive and pervasive forms of harm endemic to the human condition. In order for a lasting 'positive' peace to occur, survival, economic well-being, freedom and community needs must all be met (Fischer, 2007: 188). Furthermore, a truly comprehensive conception of peace takes into account the environment, which can be explored both at the nexus of the other four types, and as it's own category against an actant with inherent value (Galtung, 1996: 129; Latour, 1999).

According to Raymond Williams (1976: 329) the concept of violence in popular discourse “seems to be specialized to ‘unauthorized’ uses,” the violence of the *narco-trafficker*, rather than the *narcopolicias*, which instead use *force* (see Macfarlane, 1974). This may be the case in popular discourse, but for the purpose of analytics, all violence will be weighed equally. Max Weber made the distinction that although the state holds a monopoly over legitimized violence, it is nonetheless still conceived as violence and reacted upon as such (Bufacchi, 2005: 193). Whether or not these violations are a *necessary* consequence to reach the goal of a “drug-free world” (UNDCP, 1998) the definition of violence remains unchanged. The comprehensive conception of violence allows us to assess the destructive and pervasive forms of harm; further

broken down into exclusion, oppression, economic misery, environmental destruction and resistance.²

Exclusion

“Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language,” Williams (1976: 87) begins the entry on “culture” in *Keywords*.³ Defined in the words of E.B. Tylor (1871), as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society,” the concept of culture engulfs our entire *symbolic sphere of existence*,⁴ or the mythologies and fictions⁵ we have collectively built our society on. Internalized as facts, these myths often have harmful consequences. These harms are what Galtung (1990) calls *cultural violence*, the way in which culture legitimizes and thus renders acceptable the act of personal violence and the fact of structural violence.

Belongingness is an often overlooked need when analyzing violence, yet it has stayed as a common theme in literature, theater and film (Maslow 1954, 43-45). Exclusion is a feeling we have all experienced and can relate to, yet the *criminal* is often portrayed as being deserving of their ostracism, because they have done something we define as *bad*. Durkheim's (1895) conception of crime is that criminal behavior is not only harmless to the integrity of society, but rather it is *necessary* for a society to function. In Hardt and Negri's (2000: 37) deterritorialized Empire, the *narcotic traffickers* and *terrorists* serve the purpose of international deviants, justifying the global exercise of police power and imperial sovereignty (*ibid*: 38).

In her analysis of officially released United Nations discourse, Eva Herschinger (2012: 80-81) observed:

2 Structural violence (Galtung, 1969); cultural violence (Galtung, 1990); environmental violence (Galtung, 1996: 129). Structural violence will be further broken down into economic misery and political oppression (Galtung, 1996: 20; Fischer, 2007: 187).

3 As cited in Brown, 2006

4 Galtung, 1990: 291

5 Mythologies and fictions as used by Barthes, 1957 and Harari, 2014 respectively.

...one discerns constant attempts to dichotomise the discursive space and create enemies. 'Drugs had become a scourge of humanity' and are posing a serious threat to 'the political and economic stability of the international community as a whole'. Since drugs and drug trafficking are endangering civilisation through a 'drug holocaust', 'everything must be done ... against the evils of drugs', and 'humanity's war on drugs' is essential to survive. Building from the outset on the seldom questioned illegality of drugs, the international discourse on drug prohibition is full of such articulations, which constitute drugs, the internationally organised drug dealers or the individual dealer as antagonistic Other. The dealers are 'notorious smugglers' who should be subjected to 'severe penalties', and the international drug 'barons' – the 'kingpins of the international traffic' – are 'sophisticated gangsters who operated the drugs traffic', paying 'no attention to country, religion or flag'.

According to the *1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs*, coca is part of this *scourge*. To understand the violence of this discourse we must understand its integration with the Bolivian identity. A 1993 'manifesto' released by Morales' *Council for the Defence of Coca Producers* pleaded to the international community over the indigenous rights of the Chapare *cocaleros*:

'The eradication of the coca leaf would be, for our Andean people, the death. Because for us coca is everything: Our material survival, our myths, our cosmovision of the world, the happiness to live, the word of our ancestors, the constant dialog with the Pachamama, our reason to be in this world. In sum, the fight for the revaluation and defence of the coca leaf synthesises all of these demands that today give meaning to our lives and without which there will be no future. It is the symbol and the representation of our identity' (CAPC 1993 as quoted in Grisaffi, 2010: 15).

By defining a long held cultural tradition as a crime without representation or consultation, the implementation of the convention has justified over a half century of "institutionalized, repetitive, and ritualistic" violence against the Andean people (Galtung, 1996: 208). The classification of a cultural activity as deviance depends upon the superior power of the designators, as prohibition is a cultural system of norms and interdicts no matter how natural or universal it may seem (Derrida, 1967: 4). Deviance, as Thrasymachus defines Justice for Socrates, has always lied in the 'will of the stronger' (Gusfield, 1967: 231). These labels

according to sociologist Joseph Gusfield (1967: 231), “...become an issue of political conflict, ranging group against group and culture against culture, in the effort to determine whose morals are to be designated as deserving of public affirmation.” Deviance is thus not a quality of a *bad* person making them *deserving* of state violence, but rather simply the consequence of this designation (Becker, 1963).⁶

As the sociological theory of deviance is well developed, it becomes easier to analyze the effects of these labels on the population. These effects can be seen at the local, state, and global levels, on both human and non-human actants. On the global level, coca is labeled as a Schedule I *narcotic*, and all growers, suppliers and consumers of the leaf are labeled as criminals (Bewley-Taylor, 2012: 261). Conversely, in the local community in the Chapare, coca growing has historically been seen as a respectable profession, and any state or international intervention against growers or suppliers is met with resistance itself.

The social exclusion faced during eradication programs has been linked to to what Lemert (1951: 75) has labeled 'secondary deviance' (Ibanez, 2007: 166). The stigmatized *cocalero* is forced to engage in the often violent illicit market, increasing his psychological stress and decreasing his trust in institutions (Goffman, 1963: 151). This may cause more violent behavior from the stigmatized *campesino*, including violence against the state.

Misery

“We must (...) ensure that the sustainable development pillar contains elements combating illicit drugs and crime, while also ensuring that drug control and anti-crime strategies are sensitive to the needs of development.” United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon

⁶ “Note that the terms deviant (in cases of individuals) and deviance (in cases of behavior) are sociologically defined as involving the violation of significant social norms held by conventional society. The terms are not used in a judgmental manner, nor are the individuals judged to be immoral or “sick;” instead, the terms refer to an absence of the patterns of behavior expected by conventional society” (Drugs and Society, 2008).

The evidence shows that there is a clear link between *narcotic* production and the poor social conditions that further undermine development efforts (Hynes & Alimi, 2014: 3). However, the link appears to be associated with their status of illegality rather than the qualities of the commodities being produced (Miron, 2004).⁷ Interdiction leads to “increased violence and urban destabilization; a growing prison population overwhelmed with street dealers and addicts; the escalation of human rights violations resulting from an over-militarization of the fight and/or inadequate criminal justice provisions; and increasing levels of poverty among farmers whose fields have been destroyed” (Hynes & Alimi, 2014: 4).

In an effort to promote cohesion within the UN bodies, the UN Development Group adopted a declaration in 2003 to assure that all agencies would apply a consistent *Human Rights-Based Approach* to common programming processes at global and regional levels. The *Statement of Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation and Programming* affirmed that all programs of development, policies and technical assistance should further the realization of human rights as laid down in the *1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and other international human rights instruments. Furthermore, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution which states that “countering the world *drug* problem” must be carried out in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, “in particular” with human rights (Barrett & Nowak, 2009). The *human rights-based approach* means “empowering marginalized groups, challenging oppression and exclusion, and changing power relations” (Uvin, 2007: 604).

Conversely, the *UN Office on Drugs and Crime* (UNODC), the UN agency in charge of implementing and overseeing the conventions, views illicit commodities as mainly relating to law and order and security. Despite being part of the UN system, the body rarely looks at the implications of socioeconomic development or environmental destruction (Crofts, 2011; Barrett, 2010). However, according to Eide (1999) disallowing the socioeconomic development of the world's poorest is as clear of a violation of human rights as “executing political opponents.”

⁷ While psychotropic substances are often associated with poverty, their use can be said to be more of a symptom than a cause.

Although there has been question as to whether using the term “human rights” with regards to illicit commodities will be politically efficacious (Keane, 2003), there has nevertheless been a growing human rights movement focused on minimizing harm. In response to the high human costs associated with a strict prohibitionist policy, some countries have enacted public health policies that have shown to respect the rights of the consumers, while reducing the harm of their use. These demand-side policies have not shown to lead to an increase in drug abuse or drug demand (Ritter & Cameron, 2006) .

Supply-side harm reduction programs have not yet caught on globally. In hegemonic discourse, the people in the production countries would be what Chomsky & Herman (1988: 47) call the 'unworthy' victims of the *War on Drugs* whereas assuaging the harms to local *drug abusers* (worthy) can be seen as much more politically efficacious.⁸ Licensing programs have worked in the past at controlling the illicit opium market, but as there is no prescription demand for coca products, supply-side harm reduction goes against the prohibitionist ideology (Felbab-Brown, 2007).

These strict eradication programs leave *cocaleros* with few alternatives. Even though coca cultivation is illegal throughout the majority of the region and punishable by harsh fines, imprisonment and crop eradication, *cocaleros* are nonetheless continuing to cultivate, as there are limited options available to farmers in these regions (Ibanez, 2007). By providing no viable alternative, this policies prevent farmers from earning a much needed livelihood for their families. Left with no alternative, ignoring the severe threat of state intervention and continuing cultivation becomes the rational choice for the *campesinos* (Chomsky, 2000: 77).

There have been attempts in the past to mitigate the indirect human costs inherent with eradication programs. Known as 'alternative development,' these programs would allow the *cocaleros* a stipend or loan with the stipulation they would abandon all cultivation of coca and instead plant alternative crops on their land. However, according to Lesley Gill, they "were less about alleviating poverty than coercing [the *cocaleros*] to forsake their only viable cash crop."

⁸ It probably is not a coincidence that the switch to softer, more public health focused policies coincides with an increase in heroin-related deaths amongst the (predominately white) rich and middle class (see Seelye, 2015).

Without proper infrastructure and an established international market, alternative crops have been met with mixed results (Dangl, 2007: 48).

The problem may be more related to the improper implementation of the alternative development programs rather than the premise of the programs itself. A review of the research done in Colombia has shown alternative development programs to be effective in reducing the area of land cultivated with coca (Ibanez, 2014).⁹ Conversely, eradication programs done in the same area either increased coca supply or had no significant effect (*ibid*). According to Vanda Felbab-Brown (2014) eradication programs seem to only bankrupt the *campesinos*, as "there is not one single case over the past five decades where eradication policies succeeded in bankrupting or defeating belligerents." While it is difficult to know the full economic impact, Kohl and Farthing write that the strict eradication programs of *Plan Dignidad* cost the economy of Cochabamba between \$150 and \$500 million per year (Kohl and Farthing, 2006: 158). As Nick Crofts (2011) says, "this is a vicious cycle – poor development fuels conflict, which fuels the coca trade, which fuels conflict, which fuel poverty."

Oppression

Walking around the cities of El Alto and Cochabamba one can clearly see the symbols of *indigenous* nationalism and hear the *indigenous* languages, which Mark Goodale (2006) refers to as "indigenous cosmopolitanism." Although the term *indio* in Bolivia is considered to be derogatory,¹⁰ the concept of indigeneity is of considerable importance to the identity of many Bolivians. For most of its postcolonial history, Bolivia pursued nation-building policies that sought to eliminate or make invisible ethnic distinctions (Van & Lee, 2000: 207). Still today, the Bolivian census of 2001 records 66% of the population as identifying as indigenous, which is one of the highest percentages in the world (Canessa, 2007: 152).

⁹ See Ibanez, 2014).

¹⁰ "The 1952 revolution abolished the term "indio" as it attempted to do away with the hacienda owning class, and abolished the many semi-feudal practices which sustained them... The term indio was replaced with *campesino*." (Canessa, 2007)

In 1972, José Martínez-Cobo from the *United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations* (WGIP) gave this working definition of indigenous peoples:

“Indigenous communities, peoples, and nations are those that, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.”

The UN thus uses the concept of indigeneity defined primarily as a relationship between the colonized and colonizers, or as Wilmer (1993) put it “indigenous peoples represent the unfinished business of decolonization.” The term indigenous itself is not an accurate analytical one, but rather one drawing on broad family resemblances and contemporary political issues (Eriksen, 2010: 18), it exists for the purpose of self-determination (Smith, 1999: 116).

Without consultation this broad definition failed to include all ethnic groups in Bolivia. In mid-1988, the *Ley 1008, Ley del Regimen de la Coca y Substancias Controladas* outlawed all coca cultivation outside of the Yungas region. The law also established legal, transitional and illegal zones of cultivation and declared that 12,000 hectares of coca would be the amount grown to meet the traditional demand for coca (DEA, 1993). Under this law, which allowed limited traditional coca cultivation in the Yungas, *cocaleros* in the Chapare were unable to claim indigeneity due to their status as a displaced population from the highlands (Grisaffi, 2010: 425). However under international law, despite their geographic location, the uprooted communities are nevertheless recognized as indigenous peoples and thus qualify under international law as having the right to self-determination (Smith, 1999: 7).

In 2007, Bolivia became the first state to ratify the *The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) which guarantees that:

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines and knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora (Article 31).

In part modeled after the UNDRIP, the 2009 Bolivian constitution further protects the rights of coca:

The State protects the native and ancestral coca as cultural patrimony, as a renewable natural resource of the biodiversity of Bolivia, and as a factor of social unity. In its natural state coca is not a narcotic. The revaluation, production, sale and industrialization of coca shall be governed by law. Chapter VII, Section II, Article 384.

The government subsequently made a formal request to have coca removed from the 1961 convention. The submission argued that the convention's "restrictions on and prohibition of coca leaf chewing" violate the UNDRIP (ECOSOC, 2009: 5). The request, which is still under review, led to Bolivia leaving and subsequently rejoining the convention in 2013.

Environmental Destruction

From the culture perspective of the West, by being solely concerned with *homo-centric* economic development, what Mignolo (2009: 10) calls 'the rhetoric of modernity' has justified the destruction of non-human nature¹¹ at a resounding rate. What Weber conceptualized "modernity," as being the direction of history that had Europe as a model and a goal (Mignolo, 2009: 4), has led to climate change, a mass extinction event, and a unprecedented destruction of the world's ecosystems (Kolbert, 2014). This perspective has led to the UN bodies in charge of cocaine interdiction feigning little concern over any environmental damage caused by their *War*

¹¹ Galtung (1996: 129) makes this distinction to remind us that humanity is not inherently separate from our environment.

on Drugs. Differing greatly from the indigenous conception of the Bolivian population, this dichotomy has led to further oppression through the destruction of the sacred.

In contrast to the hegemonic conception, Mother Earth, or *Pachamama* is held as a sacred icon in the worldview of the Indigenous peoples of Bolivia. The Bolivian *Ley de Derechos de la Madre Tierra* defines Mother Earth as "...the dynamic living system formed by the indivisible community of all life systems and living beings whom are interrelated, interdependent, and complementary, which share a common destiny." Through this law humans and their communities are considered a part of Mother Earth, by being integrated in 'life systems.' The law gives nature legal rights, specifically the "rights to life and regeneration, biodiversity, water, clean air, balance, and restoration" (Buxton, 2011). While vague and not always adhered to,¹² the law demonstrates the high importance of nature in the culture of the Bolivian people.¹³

Evo Morales has been a staunch defender of the environment in his political discourse: "a colonial state which permitted the permanent sacking of natural resources from this noble earth, a colonial disciplining state" (Canessa, 2014: 14). Morales' rhetoric of anti-colonialism and environmentalism is in line with Hardt and Negri's (2009: 171) concept of the cohesiveness of altermodern movements, that they are working towards an "ecology of the common... an ecology focussed equally on nature and society, on humans and the nonhuman world in a dynamic of interdependence, care, and mutual transformation."

Environmental violence associated with illicit coca is caused locally by three mechanisms: deforestation by *cocaleros*, chemical run-off from liquid effluents by *pichicateros*, and aerial fumigation by *narcopolicias*. Deforestation and chemical run-off can occur with both eradication and alternative programs, while fumigation will only occur under an eradication policy.

As coca is grown in isolated areas it expands the agricultural frontier and contributes to significant deforestation (Grisaffi & Ledebur, 2014: 5). For example it is calculated that in Peru,

12 For instance Bolivia's controversial TIPNIS highway plan (Canessa, 2007)

13 The Bolivian constitution also refers to the environment as an actant with inherent value.

2.5 million hectares of forest have been destroyed as a result of coca cultivation (Briones *et al.*, 2013: 33). As coca's economic output per acre is high (Hellin, 2001), coca related deforestation has instead been linked to market instability¹⁴ (Bradley & Millington, 2008: 31). As interdiction efforts increase, *cocaleros* move deeper into untouched forest. As new markets and commodity chains open up, economic migrants move in from other areas.

The three main herbicides used in fumigation of coca are glyphosate, tebuthiuron, and hexazinone (ECOSOC 1989: 4), where the former being the most prevalent. Collecting data on health complaints in areas where fumigation occurs is difficult as causality is very hard to determine. However, local health workers in Colombia often report increased skin, respiratory and gastrointestinal problems following aerial spraying. Generate health problems in rural populations exposed to the herbicides used in these campaigns (Camacho & Mejia, 2014). Following a 2015 report showing the glyphosate may cause cancer (Fritschi, 2015), Colombia became the last Andean country to cease all aerial fumigation. While the scientific evidence is not yet definitive, the widespread perception among Andeans is that fumigation jeopardizes the region's water sources and rich biodiversity.

Anthropologist Maria Clemencia Ramirez (2011) studied how people who live in spray zones suffer from a variety of ailments in Colombia. She recorded health problems of the skin, respiratory and gastrointestinal problems. They also complain that spraying is indiscriminate and carried out without warning, and have affected food and cash crops, which in turn has undermined food security. In Peru and Colombia *campesinos* have held national level protests to campaign against coca eradication and in both countries armed actors (*Sendero Luminoso* and the FARC, respectively) have sided with the *cocaleros* to resist eradication, further strengthening their support in the regions (Felbab-Brown, 2009).

The final form of damage, that caused by liquid effluents used in the production of cocaine, is difficult to measure because of their variability in use (Alvarez, 2003: 135). The chemicals change based on what is available, and depending on the experience of the chemist

¹⁴ As is true with systemic violence, see below.

running the lab. Many of these chemicals used in the riverside production of cocaine such as gasoline, paraquat, sulfuric acid, are categorized as more harmful ecosystem contaminants than the aerial herbicides discussed below (Pereira, 2010: 396).

Resistance

A Human Rights Watch report on the Bolivian abuses of the *War on Drugs* from 1995 states:

“In the Chapare, the rural area in which most of Bolivia's coca is grown and cocaine base produced, the anti-narcotics police run roughshod over the population, barging into homes in the middle of the night, searching people and possessions at will, manhandling and even beating residents, stealing their goods and money. Arbitrary arrests and detentions are routine.”

This report was released two years prior to the election of Banzer and the shift towards the even more aggressive approach to eradication, *Plan Dignidad*. The report documents systematic torture and abuse alleging that “US officials dismiss or downplay abuses by the US supported Bolivian counternarcotics forces” and that “Bolivian and US public officials make excuses for or attempt to justify human rights violations in the context of the drug war” (Human Rights Watch, 1995). Furthermore, the New York Times report that according to a government source, during *Plan Dignidad* 60 people were killed and more than 700 were wounded in the Chapare in violence related to eradication (Neuman, 2012).

This interaction between violation of identity and [direct] violence is, according to Williams (1974: 330), “obvious.” The classic causal chain proposed by Ted Robert Gurr (1970: 12-13) is as follows: “first the development of discontent, second the politicization of that discontent, and finally its actualization in violent action against political objects and actors.”

However, according to a study done by Collier and Hoeffler (1998) civil unrest appears to be more common in the presence of a perceived economic gain, and this political discontent appears to be more of a narrative than a motivational cause. Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2002) find that states with a heavy reliance on the export of primary commodities (PCE) face a higher

risk of civil war because PCEs are the perceived rewards for a successful rebellion. Fearon and Laitin refute this claim using unique datasets, finding that only oil, gemstones and *narcotics* can be seen as an effective motivator for civil war (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Fearon, 2004).

Eradication has been shown to increase resentment of the government and law enforcement agencies in these areas. In Colombia, this has led to increased support for guerrilla organizations in these communities, as they were the only actors offering a means to meet their basic needs. Often a number attributed only to the ongoing civil conflict, coca eradication programs in Colombia contribute significantly to the 4.7 million internally displaced people, by destroying all crops in the targeted area and forcing the *cocaleros* off their land to the cities (Dion & Russler, 2008, pg. 399). On the conflict in Bolivia, *cocalero* activist Leonilda Zurita said: “this [was] not a war against *narcotraficantes*; it's a war against those who are working to survive.”

Cocaine

The late-modern era is popularly characterized as one of globalization, integration, and economic liberalization leading to an ever increasingly "borderless world" (Raustia, 2009). Robert Reich, former U.S. secretary of labor, contends that “as almost every factor of production—money, technology, factories, and equipment—moves effortlessly across borders, the very idea of a [national] economy is becoming meaningless.” (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 150-151). This is perhaps most apparent in the case of illicit markets, which are largely unencumbered by tariffs, regulations, and state (as opposed to geographic) borders.

In this borderless world the consequences of any significant fluctuation in coca supply have the potential to ripple through a dozen or so transit and consumer countries, affecting various stakeholders along the way. This makes the economic consequences of a localized policy change difficult to analyze on the global level. Further complicating the study is how cocaine

supply in consumer countries has historically been balanced by geographic displacement. This has become known as the *Balloon Effect*,¹⁵ where “the success of eradication in one area temporarily reduces the supply, and that translates into a price rise. Then, given that the supply function is fairly elastic, higher prices stimulate people to plant crops in other places” (Cuartas et al., 2003). Between 1987 and 2008, the total coca acreage in the Andean region as a whole remained stable at around 190,000 hectares despite a constant fluctuation between the three countries (Youngers & Walsh, 2010: 3).

Taking this into account, this project will be done as a partial equilibrium analysis, as there will be no expected effect on the global market (Mejia, 2008: 3). A truly successful program at reducing supply would be seen in cocaine retail prices and purity measures, which is a standard that has yet to be realized (Thoumi, 2005: 196).¹⁶ As the coca grown in the Chapare makes up a relatively small percentage of the global market of cocaine, the economic and systemic effects of the *cato* program will likely only be seen at the local level.

According to researcher Jaqueline Garcia-Yi (2014: 74) social control requires the four elements of Travis Hirschi's (1969: 16), social control theory: “attachment to families, commitment to social norms and institutions, involvement in activities, and the belief that these things are important.” Social control theory works independently of economic and political motivation, rather relying on changing the norms of the community.

It is difficult to compare the rights of producers in supply countries to the costs associated with the public health of substance abuse in the consumer countries. In the current political climate, an unlimited supply of cocaine cannot be seen as a viable solution for any of the Andean nations. For the United States to act unilaterally economist Jonathan P. Caulkins (2014: 21) estimates the costs of an end to prohibition would be far greater than the economic costs of the

15 When you squeeze a balloon the air distorts other parts of the balloon. There will still be the same amount of air inside, but the place where the air is will change.

16 The largest drivers of price and purity measures appear to be cultural. Cocaine use is a fad that goes in and out of fashion. See: Spach, Wyart: 2014

drug war.¹⁷ In his analysis of the costs and benefits of the Colombian equivalent of the *Plan Dignidad* labeled *Plan Colombia*, Colombian economist Daniel Mejia (2014: 27) refutes Caulkins' partial equilibrium analysis because it ignores the major costs of prohibition accrued globally. Mejia writes: “prohibitionist drug policies can be understood as a transfer of the costs of the *drugs problem* faced by consumer countries to producer and transit countries.”

Systemic Violence

The vast majority of personal violence associated with the coca commodity chain is in the form of what Paul Goldstein (1985: 5-6) calls systemic violence,¹⁸ or the violence inherent to the illicit market themselves. In this model, the type of good being transacted is not a relevant factor in determining violence, but rather rests solely on its status of illegality (Mejia & Restrepo, 2011: 2). As compensation for the controls of a licit market, systemic violence can be seen at as intraorganizational (successional and disciplinary), interorganizational (territorial or transactional), and between the organization and state or community interdiction (Reuter, 2009: 275).

Illegality cannot alone explain why some illicit markets have shown immense levels of personal violence while others have been relatively benign (Brownstein *et al.*, 2000: 868). Although inconclusive, an analysis of trends has shown a correlation between systemic violence and market instability; when an outside variable causes a market fluctuation, violence will be present as the market balances itself (Brownstein *et al.*, 2000: 868). This effect has been most notably seen with the introduction of crack cocaine to the United States in the late 1980s, and in

¹⁷ He calculates this based on the potential rise of drug use and potential costs of further drug abuse. Conversely, according to Felix Guattari (2012): “a regime of free distribution would doubtless lead to a decrease in the volume of drug use, due to the fact that it would lessen the intensity of the drug mythology, and lead to the disappearance of its principal advocates.” Whether or not drug abuse will rise in a world without prohibition is outside the realm of economic understanding.

¹⁸ The other two mechanisms identified by Goldstein, the psychopharmacological and the economically compulsive, involve the actions of the consumer.

Mexico during the crackdown on the cartels in the mid 2000s (Reuter, 2009: 275). Miron (2001) shows that this directly correlates with the intensity of law enforcement efforts.

Using the available data, systemic violence will be analyzed on the local and state levels. As personal violence in the Chapare is rare, the causes in this area will be much easier to analyze. Cultural, political and economic motivations will be looked at in relation to each other as well as the corresponding response from the state. At the state and global levels, distinguishing between the types of organizational violence will be much more difficult and thus will only be analyzed in relation to the fluctuations of supply.

Using the comprehensive conception of violence, this chapter presented a way in which a coca control program can respect the rights of those who are involved in the commodity chain without allowing an increase of cocaine on the global market. The following chapter will use this framework to analyze Bolivia's cato program.

05 Analysis

“Alegría imagined a map of the world suspended in darkness until suddenly a tiny flame blazed up, followed by others, to form a burning necklace of revolution across the two Americas.”

—Leslie Marmon Silko, *Almanac of the Dead*

The *cato* has brought the *cocalero* much more than its equivalent price in coca. Through this program they were allowed to integrate into society, free to cultivate their revered crop, collaborate with the *narcopolicías* and develop their own community space.

Belonging

According to the director of the *Community Control Support Program* in Bolivia, Pedro Ferrano, “the greatest benefit this government has brought the *cocalero* is the right to live well as a full member of our society” (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015: 38). Although never ostracized by their community, *cocaleros* are for the first time in the Chapare able to fully integrate within the Bolivian state. To gain insight in how perception from the state has changed, it was necessary to understand the perception of the interdictors as well as the *campesinos*. Alejandro told me when asked about when they go out to raid the clandestine labs:

Every morning at sunrise we go out to find the labs. We find about a dozen or so per day. We know for the most part where the labs will be located. They're mostly up along the river bed, makeshift small operations with cheap equipment.

Inside the walls of the base, the bags of coca found at these sites were piled high. According to Luis, they can burn the labs and the equipment but they cannot burn the coca as it is seen as disrespectful, and thus must transport it all back to the base where it sits and rots. They do occasionally find the larger more advanced pieces of equipment, such as large woodchippers and cement mixers, which are used to macerate the coca instead of manual stomping (interview Luis - see page: 9).

As it had been ten years, none of the interviewees had experienced working under *Plan Dignidad*. The unit had a high turnover rate, as it was made up of enlisted soldiers. All of the *narcopolicias* interviewed were happy with the results of the *cato* program and staunchly against returning to military intervention. However as they would like to reestablish ties with the DEA, both Eduardo and Alejandro told me they would not support Morales in the then upcoming election.¹ They felt as though they lack proper funding without DEA sponsorship.²

Yet while the situation has improved for the *cocaleros*, the *pichicateros*, poor uneducated migrants from other parts of Bolivia working in the makeshift labs are still stigmatized and arrested. They are not represented by a *sindicato*, they have no political voice and work for very little money. They are more often than not children or young men, with no land and few alternatives. As so they take the greatest risks and receive the smallest compensation (Grisaffi, 2014).

1 The election was held on 12 October 2014, and Morales was re-elected with 61.36% of the vote.

2 Their rundown trucks and equipment have not been replaced since the DEA expulsion in 2008. Their water bottles still had US insignia on them.

Local Perception

These interviews with the *narcopolicias* allowed me to identify another type of deviance I had not considered prior to fieldwork, how the *narcopolicias* were treated in towns referred to as *narcopueblos*.³ To the residents of these towns, the act of interdiction against the *cocaleros* or *pichicateros* is itself deviant behavior. Eduardo and Alejandro told me about how they were often mobbed by the local *campesinos*, who would throw small projectiles and firecrackers to drive them out, while allowing the *pichicateros* time to avoid arrest. The *campesinos* have essentially formed what Goffman (1963: 169) calls a 'deviant community,' located within the state but with nearly complete autonomy. Of the three *narcopolicias* interviewed, none were from the Cochabamba department, and they said they did not have any colleagues from the Chapare region. Therefore, like me they were all outsiders in the area.

Global Perception

The perception of Bolivia's deviance on the global level can have a profound effect in this “ever-increasingly” globalized world. If Bolivia is perceived by the global community as not complying with the UN treaties and allowing an unregulated of coca, this could further justify the international use of violence.⁴ A step away from his time as the leader of a movement, *president* Morales has been forced to slowly divorce coca from Bolivian identity in his domestic speeches, having to justify its continued eradication outside of the *cato* program (Grisaffi, 2010: 428).

Internationally the perception of the policy change has been mixed. Mary O'Grady's 2013 article in the Wall Street Journal labeled Bolivia a “rogue state:”

“With the opposition cowed, President Morales has turned Bolivia into an international hub of organized crime and a safe haven for *terrorists*. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency has been expelled. United

3 I did not ask the *campesinos* their current opinion of the UMOPAR division, which could be expanded upon in further research.

4 Economic sanctions and withholding aid, or for President George H.W. Bush's (1989), justification for invading Panama.

Nations data show that cocaine production is up in Bolivia since 2006⁵ and *unconfirmed reports* say that Mexican, Russian and Colombian toughs are showing up to get a piece of the action. So are militants looking to raise cash and operate in the Western Hemisphere.”

To O'Grady, a state having diplomatic relations with Muslim nations⁶ makes them “a safe haven for terrorists,” and any “black” people in Bolivia must be trafficking drugs through Africa. O'Grady says that her unnamed source said “the dying [black] man murmured the words “*al-Shabaab*,” the name of the Somali terrorist group,” despite “*al-Shabaab*” being an entire continent away from the West African drug trafficking route.

The domestic account has also been polarized. An article in the Bolivian newspaper *El Potosi* claims that cocaine production sites are growing “like mushrooms” and that the “*cocaleros* are a class of *nouveau riche* who spend their ill-gotten drug-money on luxury cars, parties and houses” (Grisaffi, 2014). Right-wing 2014 candidate and former president Jorge Quiroga called the *sindicatos* “*narcococaleros*” and accused them of protecting cocaine production (*Diputados*, 2014).

Prior to the expulsion of the US Ambassador and DEA in 2008 the US had a vested interest in keeping up diplomatic relations in Bolivia and were accepting of the policy change in the media. William Francisco III of the US Embassy's Narcotics Affairs section spoke out in support of the *cato* program, “the fight for us is not against coca, rather against cocaine,” he says, “we know that you all have used coca for millennia for its medicinal qualities, we only [want to] help in the fight against *drug trafficking*” (Gordon, 2006, 20).

However after the expulsion, their rhetoric changed. In September 2015, US President Barack Obama (2015) “decertified” Bolivia for the eighth consecutive year, declaring that Bolivia has “failed demonstrably during the previous 12 months to adhere to [its] obligations under international narcotics agreements.” Decertification allows the US to withdraw aid packages, and impose certain additional measures on a government that is deemed to not be

5 The last year the UN published data on cocaine production was in 2009. Using US data the numbers on cocaine production have declined every year since (Youngers, 2013).

6 Namely Iran and Western Sahara.

cooperating with American directives. Colorado, Washington, Oregon, and Uruguay, which have also all recently legalized a substance controlled by the *1961 Convention* were not mentioned in the presidential decree. Morales responded to the White House's decision by characteristically denouncing the US: "if we are honest, US policies are a failure in terms of the fight against drug trafficking around the world" (as quoted in Oakford, 2015).

Conversely, the UN seemingly broke away from the prohibitionist hegemony in January 2013, when Bolivia was successful in achieving a 'special dispensation' that stipulates:

The Plurinational State of Bolivia reserves the right to allow in its territory: traditional coca leaf chewing; the consumption and use of the coca leaf in its natural state for cultural and medicinal purposes, such as its use in infusions; and also the cultivation, trade and possession of the coca leaf to the extent necessary for these licit purposes. At the same time, the Plurinational State of Bolivia will continue to take all necessary measures to control the cultivation of coca in order to *prevent its abuse* and the illicit production of the narcotic drugs which may be extracted from the leaf (UN, 2013).

According to Farthing and Ledebur (2015: 32), "the UN's decision to accept Bolivia's reservation reflected its recognition that it needed to bring drug control treaties into harmony with other international standards" (see pg: 42). As prior to this decree the conventions have "implicitly accepted that coca chewing is *bad* and that Indian communities and other users have to be weaned from that habit for their own good" (Thoumi, 2005a: 302). Up until this point the INCB was particularly critical of these policies. For instance, in their 2005 Annual Report they 'reminded' the parties that "the transitional measures regarding the licit cultivation of coca bush and consumption of coca leaf under the 1961 Convention ended a long time ago" (as quoted in Bewley-Taylor, 2012: 260).

Despite the progress made in the international community, Morales (2011) is still "afraid of the United States, because they are political operators," and believes they would use a negative global perception of the program as justification to violate Bolivia's state sovereignty. The perception of Bolivia's compliance to the international treaties is something that Morales has

to be constantly wary of because, as Chapare *sindicato* leader Don Leonardo said, “thanks to coca we are in power, but *coca could* also *bring* this government down” (Grisaffi, 2010: 428; emphasis added).

Freedom

There is no doubt in denying the importance of coca in Bolivian culture. Its use permeates all Bolivian social classes and ethnicities, and is used in discourse as signifier to unite the pluri-nations behind. Eradicating coca is impossible, as Morales declared to the UN General Assembly in 2006, “...zero coca-leaf production is equivalent to zero Quechuas, zero Aymarás, zero Mojeños, zero Chiquitanos (the Bolivian indigenous groups).” In the Chapare as in all of Bolivia this is the clearly the case. Coca use is ubiquitous on the streets and in the *colectivos*; it is laid upon the sick, and offered up to *Pachamama* for her blessings. However, none of the sacred coca used in the Chapare is grown in the Chapare.

Coca in the Chapare

Chapter 02 (pg. 13) offers a descriptive history of the 'sacrament' that is coca and how all throughout its life-cycle it is revered by the *cocalero*. However, according to anthropologist Thomas Grisaffi, with coca grown in the Chapare, this is not the case (2010: 431):

“Coca cultivation in the Chapare meanwhile is not underlain by the elaborate understandings and practices... In contrast to the care with which coca is grown in the Yungas, the Chapare crop is doused with fertiliser and pesticide, and when harvested it is ripped from the branches in great handfuls. *Ayni* meanwhile is disparagingly described as ‘a thing that we did in the time of the *indígenas*,’ a reference to the Chapare peasants’ origins in the highlands. What is more, most people are unwilling to disclose the location of their coca plantations to neighbours because of the danger that they might denounce them to the police. As a result *Ayni* is an almost impossible form of labour relation in the Chapare.”

On the way from Cochabamba to Villa Tunari there's a recently constructed yet abandoned factory on the side of the road adorned by Evo's face. Willie, a teacher from

Cochabamba I met on the *colectivo* who was commuting to Villa Tunari for work, told me that it was there to produce the various coca products, but there was never enough of a demand to justify its large scale production.⁷ As I was told over and over, coca grown in the Chapare is simply not fit for chewing, as Willie says it is just too bitter and the leaves are too tough.⁸

Despite being nearly double the cost, coca from the Yungas already had an established market to produce the many different products - from coca cookies to coca liquor - that are sold around Bolivia.⁹ The *Coca Cafe* serving the *Museo de Coca* in La Paz is one of these places. Still Luisa the barista told me all of their products came from coca from the Yungas.¹⁰ All subjects asked in the Chapare were also consuming coca from the Yungas. Although according to Grisaffi (2010: 17), “the Chapare *campesinos* routinely portray coca leaf produced in other regions as being only fit for the maceration pit.”

A question I kept coming back to: “So where does all this coca go?” Mergim a foreigner I met who lives in the Chapare, told me “it’s a question that everyone knows the answer to but no one is willing to admit.” I asked my informants about the licit market for their local coca, and was unable to get a direct answer. Jose referred to the government licensed market in Sacaba,¹¹ but he was unable give me a clear answer as to what it was being used for, or how much of his coca is going there.

7 According to Karl Hoffman: “There just isn’t the local demand, and without international legalization, there won’t be” (Kohl & Farthing, 2012).

8 According to the CIA (1993) its bitterness is a consequence of its higher alkaloid content. If coqueros were truly 'addicted' to cocaine as the UN's 1951 report alleges, they would choose to consume the leaves with the higher cocaine content, which is clearly not the case. I tried the coca from the Chapare, and it was definitely a different texture but the taste was similar.

9 I had trouble finding coca products available in the local markets. Most of the coca products I tried where in the coca musuem itself. Bolivians tend to just chew the leaves or drink the tea.

10 Although this was just hearsay. Perhaps that's what they tell their because its seen as better quality.

11 Yungas coca is sold to a market in La Paz which has full distribution rights on its product.

Autonomy

However, “we must” says Marisol De La Cadena (2010: 359) “take indigenous politics in their own terms.” As Grisaffi (2010: 436) observes, “being an ‘*originario cocalero*’¹² is an identity that is actively assumed, emphasised and modified in relation to the prevailing conditions.” They are not looking to return to “the time of the *indígenas*,” but rather they are after the what Sahlins calls (1999: 410) the ‘indigenization of modernity,’ “their own cultural space in the global scheme of things.”

What is at stake in their struggle is not merely an ‘indigenous’ problem, and neither is it only a racial, cultural, or economic problem, rather it is the realization of all of these at once (Hardt & Negri, 2009: 108). Grisaffi (2010: 430) refers to coca being used as an ‘empty signifier,’¹³ as the hegemonic representative of the collection of altermodern movements, rather than a form of *unconscious nativism*; and thus cultivation can be supplemented when their economic, social and identity needs are met.

At the political level coca for the MAS signifies political autonomy.¹⁴ Like many of their global counterparts the rhetoric of Bolivia’s altermodern movement has focused on their autonomy from ‘US neoliberalism’ and ‘post-colonial’ power structures.

Discussing American involvement in Bolivia at a UN press conference in 2011, Morales said:

Do you think Obama would accept a contribution of the Bolivian Government for the Republican Party?
That is what the United States does in Bolivia. We do not accept this. It is a political interference. It is a lack of respect for the Bolivian people and its Government.

The US unabashedly supports the political opposition of leftist governments in Latin America (Chomsky, 2000). The altermodern rhetoric from Morales paints the US as an imperialist:

12 How the colonizers in the Chapare view themselves as Andean descendants.

13 See: *On Populist Reason*, Laclau, 2005: 69

14 Or “sovereignty” if it can be said to exist (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 93 ; Brown, 2010).

“[Drug trafficking] must be fought — we are convinced of that — and we are doing so more effectively and more wisely ... When the United States was in control of *counternarcotics*, the US governments used drug trafficking for purely geopolitical purposes The US uses drug trafficking and terrorism for political control We have nationalized the fight against drug trafficking.”

While Morales may not disagree with the hegemonic ideology of the *War on Drugs*, or eradicating coca aside from its legal use, he wants to “nationalize” it, for Bolivia to fight its own war under its own terms.¹⁵

Development

In the 1983, (North) American film *Scarface*, Chapare¹⁶ resident and *drug lord* Alejandro Sosa financed his lavish lifestyle with two warehouse-sized factories capable of producing 200 kilograms of cocaine every month. In reality, according to Grisaffi (2014) the *drug lords*¹⁷ in the Chapare make around \$2,000 per month, or less than an assistant manager at McDonald's. Most people involved in the drug trade are *campesinos* who are willing to risk the hazards of illicit work because of a lack of an alternative:

“a 14 year-old *pisa-coca* described wading around in a toxic mulch of coca, gasoline, and acid for several hours a day. The fumes gave him a terrible headache, and his flimsy rubber boots let in acid that turned his toenails green.” (*ibid*)

These peasant laborers are willing to risk a minimum eight years in prison and their health for \$300 per month, because the alternatives do not exist (*ibid*).

Drug production and development are inversely correlated. For the Chapare to abandon coca as an illicit commodity, it will be integral to develop the area to a point where coca

15 “Indeed, individual states can no longer cope with drugs unilaterally, because drug traffickers via their ‘tentacles now infiltrated all regions of the world’ “(United Nations, 1991 as quoted in Herschinger, 2012: 86).

16 While the term Chapare was not mentioned in the movie, he lived in the Tropics of 'Cochabamba.'

17 Hyperbole, “the top of the local production ladder”, the owners of the production sites.

cultivation is no longer the rational choice.¹⁸ Supply regulation, according to US diplomat Robert Gelbard, “can be a powerful force in advancing, rather than retarding, human rights objectives” (HRW, 1995). While, past attempts at alternative development have failed because of their strict adherence to the all-or-nothing ideology, *cocaleros* would be forced to give up their crops completely to be allowed into the program. USAID spent an estimated \$300 million between 1982 and 2008 on these programs that refused to work with the *sindicatos* and conditioned assistance on eradication (Farthing, 2004). Since 2006, the state and European Union sponsored program *Fondo Nacional de Desarrollo Alternativo* (FONADAL), has been willing to work with the *sindicatos* to 'ensure food security,' and thus has had more more success (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015: 45). The UNODC (2011: 47) has recorded a growth in alternative crops in the Chapare since 2010, a feat that was never accomplished with any of the prior programs (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015: 45).

There are many signs of continued economic development in the Chapare, where the government has invested \$350 million since 2006 (Youngers & Ledebur, 2015: 7). The nicest buildings in the area (often to the point where they looked out of place) were certainly the schools. At food science technical college I visited, *El Centro de Formación Tecnológica “Eterazama”* (CEFTE) the children of the *cocaleros*¹⁹ were given an excellent education in creating alternative food products using beautifully new equipment, and qualified teachers. The school is located in Eterazama, an area where pre-2004 illicit cultivation was its most concentrated, and where much of the violence between the *sindicatos* and *narcopolicías* took place (interview – Juan Carlos).

With the continued increase in price of domestically grown coca and the relatively stable value of cocaine, less and less coca being grown in the Chapare is going to the illicit market (see Table 02). As the Chapare settlers acknowledge, they only got into the coca business because of the lack of alternatives after the crisis in the mid-eighties, and thus the market might just price itself out (Grisaffi, 2010: 430).

18 A longer study could be conducted on the effects on earnings, education, and child labor etc., the later of which Bolivia legalized in 2014 to protect children already working with union rights (Fontana & Grugel 2015).

19 Interview: Juan Carlos Coca, Academic Director CEFTE

Ecology

Despite Morales' continued assertion of the importance of the environment in indigenous culture, in June 2015 he greenlit a highway that bisects the the *Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro Secure* (TIPNIS), an indigenous zone and national park. Advocacy groups are worried of the potential deforestation (which has been estimated up to 64% of the national park) and the further colonization of indigenous land by the highlanders (Achtenberg, 2013: 7). Nevertheless, Morales considered the economic benefits of the road, which would traverse the Chapare and connect the departments of the Benin and Cochabamba, to outweigh the potential harms (Canessa, 2014).

However, coca production in TIPNIS and the adjacent *Parque Nacional Carrasco* has nearly been eliminated. According to the UNODC, only 1% of Bolivia's coca crop is in protected areas (214 out of 20,400 hectares), which constitutes a 90% percent reduction in the past two years (UNODC, 2015: 33). This is in contrast from before the launch of the cato program, where 41% of coca cultivated in the Chapare was located in protected areas (UNODC, 2005: 49). However the production of cocaine along the banks of the Amazon tributaries is still leading to contamination from the effluents, but as there is no data available it is difficult to assess the environmental damage caused, or how it compares to the aerial fumigation of previous eradication programs.

Collaboration

A story from the New York Times offers a stark contrast from past abuses:

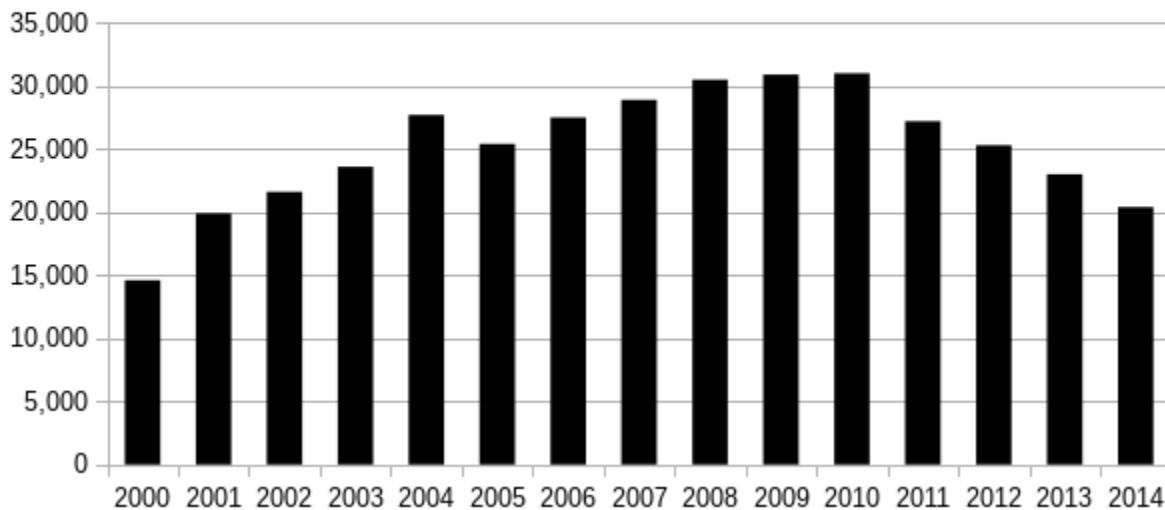
“On a recent morning just after dawn, a squad of uniformed soldiers used machetes to cut down a plot of coca plants near the town of Ivirgarzama. They had come to chop down an old coca patch that had passed its prime and measure a replacement plot planted by the farmer. The soldiers determined that the new plot was slightly over the limit and removed about two rows of plants before going on their way.” Neuman 2005

“Before, there was more tension, more conflict, more people injured.” UMOPAR Lt. Col. Willie Pozo refers to the years of forced eradication, “this is no longer a war.” With their societal cohesion, economic opportunities and autonomy needs met, *cocaleros* no longer have the incentive to rebel. According to Nicolas, while interdiction against the *cocaleros* in the Chapare has been non-existent, there is still violence down the commodity chain.

Supply

Coca Cultivated in Bolivia

2000-2014



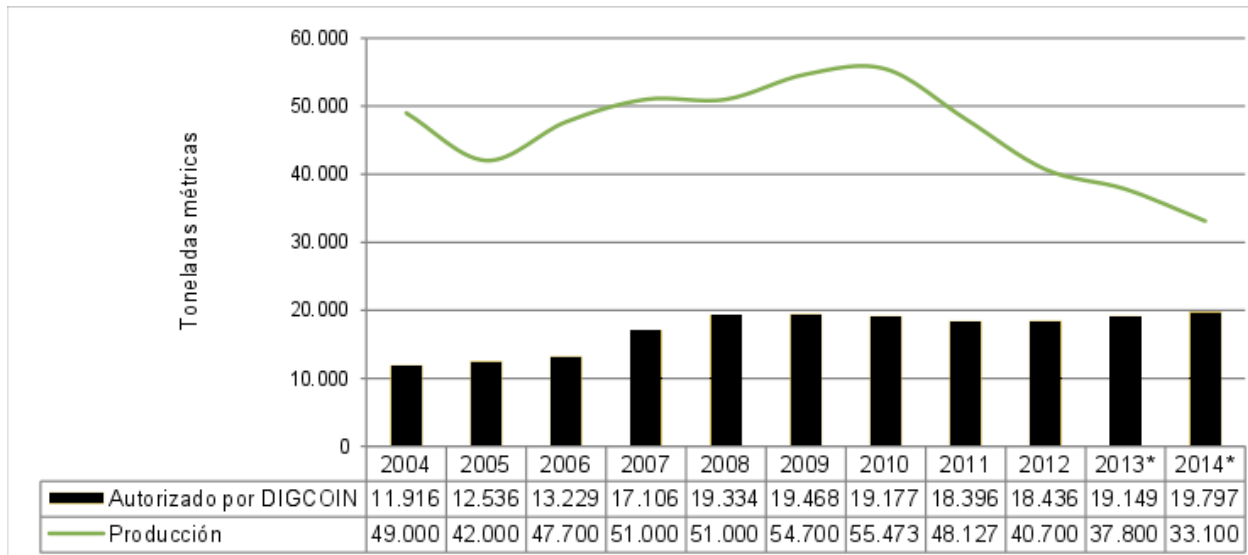
[Table 01 - UNODC, 2015]

According to the most recent UNODC report which was released in August of 2015, Bolivia has nearly eliminated illicit coca cultivation (UNODC, 2015). This study shows a mere 400 hectares more than the allowed limit of 20,000 hectares²⁰ (214 of which were in the national park). Since the country's high in 2010 of 31,000 hectares, Bolivia has returned back to pre-*cato* figures. While there are only around 400 hectares of coca cultivated outside of the program, a

²⁰ UNODC representative Antonino De Leo: the Bolivian government, “can’t go below 20,000 hectares without generating conflict.” (Youngers & Ledebur, 2015: 14).

2013 report released by the Bolivian government says that 14,705 hectares of coca are needed to supply the domestic demand (Bolivia, 2013).²¹

Production and Commercialization of Coca 2004-2014



[Table 02: Reprinted from UNODC, 2015]

According to the UN, around 20,000 metric tons of coca reached the authorized market *Dirección General de la Hoja de Coca Industrialización* (DIGCOIN), while 13,300 were still left unaccounted for. While the amount of coca in DIGCOIN has been fairly consistent since 2008, the amount of unauthorized production has been in decline.

Social Control

Aside from the economic benefits and threats of prosecution, the program utilizes the four mechanisms of Hirschi's (1969: 16) social control theory. It develops *attachment*, by bringing the once ostracized back into their communities and the state. It fosters *commitment* to the *cato* because they designed the program, they fought for the right for decades, and now they feel as if they own it. They decided that if they exceed their limit they will lose their *cato*, it was

²¹ With each hectare estimated to produce 1,475 kilos of coca leaf per year to satisfy a 20,690 ton domestic demand for coca and coca products.

not a restriction imposed by the state.²² Furthermore, the program encourages *involvement* in other activities, such as the alternative development programs, and it gives the *cocaleros* something to *believe* in; Evo Morales, the altermodern MAS movement and legalized coca.

Morales has continued this push for international legalization, as an effort to continue to fight drug trafficking and to respect their cultural and economic rights.²³ Morales' international *crusade* gives the *cocaleros* something to *believe* in “If we respect the *cato*,” says *sindicato* leader Eddie Godoy, “it is additional support for our president who is working so hard to make coca legal” (Farthing & Ledebur, 2005: 38).

Of course many *cocaleros* are not satisfied with the amount and want to increase the size of the *cato*. According to Miguel, many *cocaleros* do not consider the negative effects of increased production, and with the rising price of coca they want to be allowed to cultivate more. Local *sindicato* leader Don Jose echoed the sentiment in 2010:

"It's true, with the *cato* [the price of coca] has gone up, but still people miss it. Before... a person would have three, four or five hectares of coca and some are even complaining now! They cannot accept just one *cato* and they say Evo 'que cujodo eres!' (What an idiot you are!) Some people do not even have a *cato* just half a *cato* or none at all, others well they still have three hectares, but they hide it 'adentro' (deep in the jungle)" (Grisaffi, 2010: 430).

However as I experienced by attending a local political rally in Cochabamba in 2014, Bolivia's strong civil society gives them an open platform to express these concerns (Faguet, 2004: 870). These communal rallies are a form of *radical democracy* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), where all voices are heard and not just the majority wins.

22 According to Deputy Minister of Social Defense and Controlled Substances, Felipe Caceres, as of mid-July 2014, more than 800 *cocaleros* have lost the right to the *cato* program because of non-compliance (Opinion, 2014).

23 Decocainized products are legal internationally under the 1961 Convention after the successful lobbying efforts of Coca Cola, and Bolivia started to produce decocainized products for the international market in 2015. Coca used in Coca Cola comes from the seized Peruvian supply, so no *cocaleros* benefit from this arrangement. (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015).

Peruvian Cocaine

Cocaine is not something thought of often in Bolivia, To modern Bolivians coca has solidified its place as a cultural icon whereas cocaine is “North America's problem” (interview – Miguel). Bolivians infrequently use cocaine in its pure form, its domestic use mostly concentrated on backpacker *drug tourism*, centered around the legend of the cocaine bar *Route 36* of which I have heard much about on my earlier expeditions down the *Gringo Trail* (Busby, 2015). In contrast to Colombia where the negatives effects of *basuco*²⁴ are seen glaringly on the streets of the major cities, and cocaine use is a growing fad amongst the upper middle class as a consequence of globalization (*Americanization*).

Instead the market for the cocaine isolate largely lies outside of Bolivia's borders, in Brazil (which is now the number two consumer in the world after the US), and further down the commodity chain in the growing European market.²⁵ Despite Bolivia's progressive policies with the *cocaleros* in the Chapare, through their “coca yes, cocaine no,” policy they have continued with the tradition of harsh interdiction against cocaine producers and suppliers.

As the price of coca in Bolivia is twice as much as that in Colombia or Peru (Farthing & Ledebur, 2015: 44), much of Peruvian supply is transported into Bolivia for production and distribution. Bolivian minister Hugo Moldiz estimates that only 5% of cocaine in Bolivia was grown in Bolivia, whereas the rest is grown in Peru (*El Mundo*, 2015),²⁶ while official government sources give a more realistic figure of around 60% (Youngers, 2015: 11).

In true Sisyphean form, after the 2013 'embarrassing' news that Peru was leading the world in coca cultivation, the US government pledged a record \$100 million in 'aid,' and Peru will up its eradication efforts to try to cut in half its total crop outages (Gootenberg, 2014: 49). These efforts will take place as forced manual eradication in the *Valle de los Ríos Aprímac*, *Ene* y

24 Cocaine base; See Chapter 01, *Extraction*. I took a wrong turn into a abandoned rundown neighborhood in Bogota, where people were selling and smoking *basuco* in between heaps of rubbish. Although Santa Cruz in Bolivia may be the exception.

25 Bolivian cocaine also accounts for around 5% of the US market (UNODC).

26 "Solo un cinco por ciento de esa cantidad se produce en Bolivia, el resto es cocaína peruana", sostuvo el ministro Hugo Moldiz [My translation].

Mantara (VRAEM), an economically destitute area that has been colonized by coca to fulfill the needs of their population over the last two decades.

Systemic Violence

There is a growing homicide rate in Bolivia,²⁷ which critics have pointed to as the failure of the government to control drug trafficking.²⁸ However, cross-country evidence suggests, homicide rates do not correlate with a lack of government intervention, but rather that the opposite is true; homicide rates are positively correlated to the intensity of supply enforcement (see Miron, 2001).

In an effort to gain international recognition and legislative support for the *cato* program and further liberalization, Bolivia continues to crack down harshly on all stages of production and transportation of cocaine (Youngers & Ledebur, 2015: 14). According to a *Fuerza Especial de Lucha contra el Narcotráfico* (FELCN) commander, “we have a government mandate to focus more on micro-trafficking, and we are coordinating with parent groups, school groups, municipalities and so on ... we are engaged in a full-fledged assault on street-level drug dealing,” (Youngers & Ledebur, 2015: 10). This has resulted in an increase in poor, low-level, nonviolent offenders being criminalized and incarcerated (*ibid*). They have also stepped up interdiction along the Peruvian border, allowing the military to shoot down planes thought to be importing coca paste (*ibid*: 11). Despite the *harm minimization* concepts working well in the Chapare, Bolivia continues to adhere to the hegemonic ideology of strict prohibition elsewhere, and the cycle of violence continues.

This chapter serves as an analysis of the *cato* program, its strengths and its limitations. The following chapter will conclude the project and summarize the results.

²⁷ Although 2012 was the last year the UNODC has released data for (UNODC, 2013).

²⁸ See again, O'Grady, 2013.

06 Conclusion

*“If men were born free, they would, so long as they remained free,
form no conception of good and evil.” - Spinoza*

In her 2010 book *Vibrant Matter*, Jane Bennett asks the question, “what would happen to our thinking about nature if we experienced materialities as actants, and how would the direction of public policy shift if it attended more carefully to their trajectories and powers?” If the thing-power of coca were taken into consideration, the hegemonic metrology of using figures, tables, and charts to reduce a complex assemblage to easily digestible numbers would shift towards a framework of ethnographic understanding in an effort to fully measure the network of all bodies and their relationships.

“A war to create and maintain social order can have no end,” say Hardt and Negri (2004: 14) instead, “it must involve the continuous, uninterrupted exercise of power and violence.” This is a war that can never be won, a war that one cannot be sure is even a war at all (Gregory, 2011: 247); a war on a vague abstract concept defined by centuries of colonial racism. There is no *evil* to be eradicated in this war, there are no *haplessly enslaved* consumers in need of protection from a *scourge*;¹ its targets rather, the *drug producers* and *traffickers*² must be seen as human beings

1 But rather rational actors who make the choice between the suffering in life and the risks of use (Hart et al., 2001).

2 Hardt and Negri (2009) try to distance drug cartels and terrorists from their idea of altermodern movements, because they believe they have hierarchical structures, which appears to be more the authors' moral bias.

left with few alternatives, and their products as complex and powerful commodities that will never be eliminated as long as the need exists.

From the Inca³ we could learn that instead of ordering our laws and morals in the hierarchical binaries of good/evil and sacred/profane, we could foster a culture where all substances can be revered and respected, a shift to the alimentary ethics of moderation⁴ rather than the current hegemonic ideology of abstinence and prohibition. According to peace researcher Roger Mac Ginty (2008: 156), instead of being given the space to work within Empire, these indigenous peacebuilding and traditional approaches must be co-opted by the hegemonic ideology, as parallel movements lie outside the control of imperial sovereignty and are thus resisted.

Policy

In October 2015 a UNODC briefing paper was released which advocated for the decriminalization⁵ of all controlled substances:

The international drug control conventions do not impose on Member States obligations to criminalise drug use and possession for personal consumption. Member States should consider the implementation of measures to promote the right to health and to reduce prison-overcrowding, including by decriminalising drug use and possession for personal consumption, ... Ensuring that their existing legislation, policies and enforcement practices are up-to-date with respect to scientific evidence on drug use, drug dependence, HIV and conform to **international human rights obligations**. Investing more resources in science, evidence and human rights-based interventions, including drug use prevention, treatment of drug dependence and other **harm reduction interventions** (emphasis added).

While the UNODC later came out and said this was not an official statement, it reflects at least a partial shift in ideology from the organization. As the UNGASS summit approaches, there

3 See page 14

4 An ethics that values *enkrateia*, having control over oneself, rather than one assuming the individual has no control (see Foucault, 1985).

5 Decriminalization is the removal of criminal punishment for the user, which is not the same as legalization.

is hope for a global paradigm change, one that takes into account the rights of all parties while trying to minimize the harms of drug use and interdiction.

As discussed in Chapter 05 the *cato* program has shown that it respects the human rights of the local population in the Chapare, while also controlling the supply of coca. However, it is difficult to apply causality to the program without being able to control for outside factors (such as the price drop and wide availability of Peruvian cocaine undercutting the market). While the thing-power of coca certainly does stem from the *indígenas*, this study has shown coca production is governed more by its social controls and economic value, than by blind nativism or indigenous politics. As Bolivia makes up only a fraction of the potential coca growing regions in the Andes, analyzing the mechanisms at play as well as the deliberative processes involved in its creation will be integral in understanding how to see similar results all throughout the commodity chain. A policy such as this one will not work as a blanket imposition, but instead the civil society in other cultivation areas must be allowed autonomy to develop their own control programs.

Summary

“The results speak for themselves,” says the Bolivian *Minister of the Presidency* Carlos Romero, “we have demonstrated that you can objectively do eradication work without violating human rights, without polemicizing the topic and with clear results” (Neuman, 2012).

By engaging the hegemonic discourse and injecting their own indigenous beliefs and customs, Bolivia can be said to be undergoing a peaceful process of decolonization. The aim of this project was to develop a socio-biological understanding of coca and to analyze Bolivia's *cato* program using the Peace Studies paradigm. After a brief introduction, I explored the chemical and pharmacological properties of coca and cocaine in Chapter 01. In Chapter 02, I constructed a genealogy of the substances to further understand their place in political discourse. I detailed the methodology of data collection at both home and in the field in Chapter 03 and in Chapter 04 I outlined Galtung's conflict triangle and its relation to coca control. In Chapter 05 I

presented the results of this study, of which I found that the program has worked very well in respecting the rights of the local population, while at the same time properly controlling coca destined for the cocaine market. However, as successful coca control policies often just destabilize the market without having any noticeable effect on price or purity measures, 'winning' the war unilaterally simply shifts the violence elsewhere.

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