'Coca Live, Yankee Die' A study on the mediation of discourse around the coca leaf

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Coca farmers picking coca leaves in the hills of Chicaloma, Bolivia

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A study on the mediation of discourse around the coca leaf

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Abstract

This thesis studies the mediation of discourse around the coca leaf in Bolivia. In the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the coca leaf became classified as a narcotic drug. Indigenous groups in Bolivia ascribe great value to the coca leaf and call it a cultural practice. Thus, a political and cultural dichotomy exists with regard to the signification of the coca leaf. While the academic record has confirmed the existence of different types of discourse, it remains unclear how those have been constructed. Through carrying out a Foucauldian discourse analysis, and with Foucault's 'regime of truth' in mind, this thesis deconstructs the discourse around the coca leaf. It concludes that the prohibitionist discourse is based on racial premises and the metaphor that perceives drugs as a diabolical force. Secondly, the discourses articulated by the MAS-government is based on a cultural argument, on indigenous knowledge and decolonisation.

Key words: coca leaf, Bolivia, international drug control regime, Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), United States, Evo Morales, regime of truth, Foucauldian discourse analysis

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Introduction

'Here in the United States when people meet, they share coffee; at home in the Andes highlands is coca tea.'[1] This is a quote by Evo Morales, former president of the Republic of Bolivia (2005-2019), in a United Nations General Assembly Meeting in September 2006. The president was advocating for a change in the internationally recognised 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (hereafter referred to as 1961 Single Convention), a cornerstone in the international drug control regime. In the 1961 Single Convention, article 49 1C established restrictions on the chewing of coca, complemented by article 49 2E, determining that coca chewing had to be abolished within 25 years after ratification.[2] The coca leaf was placed in category I, the strictest category in the classification of narcotic drugs, which treated it as severely as alkaloid cocaine and heroin.[3] The decision to include the coca leaf was partially based on a 1950 report, that deemed the coca leaf to be responsible for the malnutrition and the supposed 'backwardness' of the 'Andean man.'[4]

On 23 September 1976, the Republic of Bolivia ratified the Convention. The 1961 Single Convention, the 1972 Protocol Amending the Convention, and the 1988 United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, are the very fundament of today's international drug control regime.

Yet, the cultural identity Bolivia is closely tied to consumption of the coca leaf. The leaf is considered as a sacred plant and is inherited from the Incan realm: peoples of Quechuas and Aymaras have chewed coca leaves since 12.000 B.C.[5] This practice of chewing did not pose any legal problems until the 1961 Single Convention. In comparison to other countries in the Andean region, such as Peru and Colombia, Bolivia has a particularly strong coca culture. Coca chewing is widespread in all regions, especially the Yungas and Cochabamba regions. Also, the practice is present in all social classes and ethnicities. Additionally, the prohibition of coca chewing is irreconcilable with the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, composed in 2007. This declaration constituted the framework for the inclusion of the rights of

[1] ''Coca leaves made me president'' Morales tells UN,'' *MercoPress* 21 September 2006. Retrieved from: https://en.mercopress.com/2006/09/21/coca-leaves-made-me-president-morales-tells-un. Last accessed 5-6-2021.
[2] United Nations, ''Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961,'' (1961). Retrieved from: https://www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1961_en.pdf.
[3] United Nations, ''Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961,'' 23.
[4] United Nations, ''Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf,'' (July 1950). Retrieved from: https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/coca-inquiry-1950e_0.pdf.
[5] WHO, ''The Cocaine Project,'' (1995) Retrieved from: https://www.tni.org/files/article-downloads/200703081409275046.pdf

indigenous peoples. Article 11.1 states that 'Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs.'[6]

Following the 1961 Single Convention, between the mid-1980s and 2004, Bolivia's relationship with the international society has largely been defined by the United States' focus on eliminating the coca crop.[7] The US dominated drug control policy in Bolivia, which created resistance among the peasantry class in Bolivia.[8] During the 1990s, protests against US repression erupted, with coca growers leading the protests.[9] These coca growers, named *cocaleros*, became part of a new left-wing political movement, the Movement towards Socialism (Movimiento al Socialismo, MAS). In addition to being part of Bolivia's cultural identity, the coca leaf constituted an integral part of the MAS' identification, a symbol against neoliberalism and hegemonic powers. After the MAS won municipal elections in both 1999 and 2004, Morales became the first indigenous president in Bolivia in January 2006.[10] The MAS-government, led by Morales, marks a radical break with the past of coca control in Bolivia, instituting a 'coca sí, cocaína no'-policy.[11] In 2011, Bolivia withdrew from the 1961 Single Convention and in 2013, after a long period of pressuring the UN, the country received an exemption, which legalised coca chewing as a cultural practice again.[12]

The MAS-perspective on coca is diametrically opposed to the 1961 Single Convention and its foundational reports. This change marks the twentieth century: despite that fact that, at the start of the 1900s, the coca leaf was considered American and an important ingredient in the soft drink called Coca Cola, sixty years later this perception drastically changed: coca became considered as an illicit and narcotic drug. Paul Gootenberg calls this an 'orientalism' on drugs.[13] The construction of the coca leaf as a diabolical force on the one side, and as an integral part of the Bolivian cultural identity on the other, is illuminating. It is argued that categories of race and class have been determining both the construction of coca as a threat and

[6] United Nations, ''United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,'' (September 2007). Retrieved from: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf.
[7] Linda Farthing and Benjamin Kohl, ''Social control: Bolivia's new approach to coca reduction,'' *Latin American Perspectives* 37.4 (2010): 197.
[8] Farthing and Kohl, ''Social control,'' 200.
[9] Ibid., 198.
[10] Ibidem.
[11] Ibidem.
[12] ''Bolivia to re-accede to UN drug convention, while making exception on coca leaf chewing,'' *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.* Retrieved from: https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2013/January/bolivia-to-re-accede-to-un-drug-convention-while-making-exception-on-coca-leaf-chewing.html. Last accessed 14-06-2021.
[13] Paul Gootenberg, ''Talking about the flow: drugs, borders, and the discourse of drug control,'' *Cultural Critique* 71 (2009): 36.

as coca as a counter-hegemonic instrument.[14] That is to say, the discursive meaning of coca has been mediated by different parties. To place this in a broader perspective, one can observe a development from the coca leaf being a commodity in the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, to it being criminalised through the 1961 Single Convention, and yet again receiving an exemption in 2013 for the chewing of coca. This particular development, the making and un-making of the coca leaf into a drug, provides a fruitful ground for research. Hence, in this thesis the following question will be addressed: *How has the discourse around the (Bolivian) coca leaf been mediated by the international drug control regime, and the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) in Bolivia?* Through performing a discourse analysis on both sources that have formed the foundation for the 1961 Single Convention, the Convention itself, and statements made by Evo Morales, this thesis will investigate the construction of different discourses concerning the coca leaf.

Research design

This study builds on a discourse analysis. Before engaging in the analysis, the literature review highlights the debates that dominate the academic field. Thereafter, the methodological chapter clarifies the value of discourse analysis for this thesis. Moreover, the selected sources deserve justification, which is provided by this chapter as well. The thesis is divided in a contextualizing chapter and two analytical chapters. The first chapter provides historical context on the importance of race and class in reference to coca. The first sub-question is: *Which types of discourse are related to the prohibition on coca?* Within this question, there will be a focus on historical sources that have defined the coca leaf as a narcotic substance. The second chapter revolves around the question: *Which types of discourse have been articulated by, Evo Morales, the leader of the MAS?* Morales is the leader of the counter-hegemonic left and, therefore, considered to be representative of the movement. The conclusion reflects on the thesis as a whole, in order to come to a satisfying and coherent answer to the question on how the definition of coca has been mediated by different types of knowledge.

[14] Michael M. Cohen, ‘’Jim Crow’s drug war: Race, Coca Cola, and the southern origins of drug prohibition,’’ *Southern Cultures* 12.3 (2006): 55-79; Andrew B. Ehrinpreis, *Coca, Nation: Labor, Indigeneity, and the Politics of the Coca Leaf in Bolivia, 1900-1962* (Diss. State University of New York at Stony Brook, 2018).

Literature review

Three overarching debates on the relationship between discourse and the coca leaf dominate the literature. The first debate entails the question on how drugs have become classified as either 'good' or 'bad,' that is to say, the construction of drugs as commodities or dangerous substances. Others look into the discourse concerning coca as the outcome of the racialisation of indigenous groups, which is characterised by a cultural hostility towards the coca user. Thirdly, it is argued that the counter-hegemonic left in Bolivia has used the coca leaf for an entirely different purpose: the coca leaf has been crucial in the formation of indigenous identity in the Bolivian Republic and has provided a new way to understand the coca leaf.

Ontological question on drugs

An interesting study to start with, is the study of Kenneth Tupper, who discusses the ontological question on what 'drugs' is. Tupper studies how the meaning of the word 'drug' has become increasingly ambivalent in public as well as political discourse.[15] The author differentiates two dominant metaphors on psychoactive substances: drugs as pathogens and drugs as malevolent agents.[16] In the drugs as pathogens-metaphor, the substance is equated with a virus or bacterium, having the potential to harm a population.[17] On the other hand, drugs as malevolent agent implies the demonization of drugs, whereby users are depicted as weak or wicked and use of the psychoactive substance is seen as moral transgression. In other words, the drug itself depicted as a diabolical force. This metaphor has formed the basis for punitive policies.[18] The author notes how the nutritional value of coca is overlooked by the international drug control regime, as it has been categorised as a drug.[19] The questions then are, what is the motivation to overlook this nutritional value? How has it become legitimate to deny the cultural value of the coca leaf? How have the moral panics concerning the use of the coca leaf been prompted? An answer to these questions is, according to Paul Gootenberg, to be found in prohibitionist regimes.

[15] Kenneth W. Tupper, ''Psychoactive substances and the English language: "Drugs," discourses, and public policy,'' *Contemporary Drug Problems* 39.3 (2012): 464.
[16] Tupper, ''Psychoactive substances and the English language,'' 475.
[17] Ibid., 477.
[18] Ibid., 477.
[19] Ibid., 470.

Drugs as a commodity

Gootenberg observes that drug prohibitionists played a major role in stimulating drug-related panic and argues that this panic has been used to divert attention away from root causes of social inequality and civil unrest.[20] He investigates the discourse on drug flows, with an analysis that consists of three elements: a historical perspective, a theory on state-building and border making, and the discourses that have existed. In doing so, he questions the construction of certain commodities being viewed as drugs and observes how statist vocabulary has been crucial in the construction of illicit and criminalised drug flows.[21] How were these drugs made illicit?[22] Gootenberg argues that the answer lies in viewing drugs as commodities, in order to understand why the substances became classified as 'good' or 'bad' in the first place. The discursive borders of the commodity should be questioned in order to understand how the drug has been 'made.'[23] In this manner, the study of discourse can help to answer the question of why certain substances lost their classification as commodities and have become seen as narcotic drugs.[24] Gootenberg notes that both Left- and Right-wing parties propagate an antidrug moralism, rather than holding the institutions that are responsible for the drug trafficking accountable. In doing so, these theories ignore the structural problems of drug prohibition and the global nature of the issue of drug use.[25]

Rather than looking into these greater structures such as Gootenberg has done, Suzanne Reiss argues that the US, and its pharmaceutical industry in particular, has been fundamental in the construction of the coca leaf as a threat to public health and humanity. The UN became instrumental in the emergence of a US National Security Policy in which the policing of drug flows on the continent became a prominent feature.[26] Reiss illustrates that coca is used as an instrument to institutionalise an economic order that enabled the US to extend its power over the South American continent, which was also advantageous for the pharmaceutical industry in the US.[27] The author notes that the image of drugs has been mediated by 'cultural politics, economic regulations, and the power of pharmaceutical laboratories.'[28] Reiss' study of drug control not only aims 'to reveal the evolution of unequal integration into a global capitalist system,' but also to investigate how the social danger associated with drugs became

[20] Gootenberg, ''Talking about the flow,'' 27.
[21] Ibid., 13.
[22] Ibidem.
[23] Ibid., 16.
[24] Ibidem.
[25] Ibid., 27.
[26] Suzanna Reiss, *We sell drugs: The alchemy of US empire* (Univ of California Press, 2014), 101.
[27] Reiss, *We sell drugs,* 6.
[28] Ibid., 10.

constructed.[29] However, while Reiss attributes agency to the US and its influence in the Andean region, she frames Bolivia in a victim role, whereby the story remains one-sided. Gootenberg makes note of the 'blame the victim' mechanism and rejects this.[30]

Coca in a prohibitionist regime

David Bewley-Taylor and Martin Jelsma pinpoint the 1961 Single Convention as the 'watershed' event that unleashed the prohibitionist international drug control regime. Their study focuses on the foundational treaties prior to the Single Convention and the authors point to the instrumental role of the Single Convention in the prohibition of the coca leaf. The 1961 Single Convention was the first instance in which the use of drugs was proclaimed as being 'evil.'[31] Hence, the 'malevolent agents'-metaphor that Tupper proposed can be applied.[32] Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma make note of the normative tone of the 1961 Single Convention; it involved the alteration of norms necessary for a change of regime and marks a significant shift away from the predominant commodity focus.[33] The authors argue that the 1961 Single Convention is a break with the past. In accordance with Reiss, Bewley-Taylor describes the Convention as an example of US narco-culture imperialism.[34] Likewise, the author attributes a great deal of the responsibility of including the coca leaf in the 1961 Single Convention to the United States, but also to the United Nations: 'The UN, therefore, can be seen to promote, perpetuate and legitimise the current US-style prohibitionist-based approach to drug use – an approach that […] is based more on moralism, racism and pseudo-scientific evidence than reasoned debate on the most appropriate response to drug use.'[35] Bewley-Taylor notes that within the prohibitionist discourse on coca, the word 'abuse' often is mentioned. Moreover, he observes that the UN struggles to make a distinction between cocaine and the coca leaf.[36]

While Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma do not leave out the importance of race in the case of coca, a more elaborate historical account is given by Michael M. Cohen. He argues that race forms the root of the drug prohibition movement, with its foundation already established

[29] Reiss, *We sell drugs*, 9.
[30] Gootenberg, ''Talking about the flow,'' 27.
[31] David R. Bewley-Taylor and Martin Jelsma, ''Regime change: re-visiting the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,'' *International Journal of Drug Policy* 23.1 (2012): 75.
[32] Tupper, ''Psychoactive substances and the English language,'' 475.
[33] Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma, ''Regime change,'' 76
[34] David R. Bewley-Taylor, ''Coca and cocaine: The Evolution of International Control,'' *Roadmaps to regulation coca, cocaine, and derivatives* (2016): 2.
[35] David R. Bewley-Taylor, *United States and international drug control, 1909-1997* (A&C Black, 2002), 174.
[36] Bewley-Taylor, *United States and international drug control*, 177.

in 1870.[37] This observation is supported by Andrew. B. Ehrinpreis, who also emphasises the importance of the roots of the current international drug control regime: 'It is important to recall that our current global drug regime emerged in an era (1909-1961) marked by a global eugenics style of civilizing racism against indigenous peoples, long before the emergence of any modern global conceptions of indigenous cultural rights.'[38]

Coca as an instrument of the counter-hegemonic left

On the other side of the academic spectrum, is the notion that coca has served as an instrument for the counter-hegemonic left, as an instrument to shape a common identity. Thomas Griffasi, ethnographer of Bolivian coca, notes that the coca leaf has undergone a certain politicization, how the crop developed into an integral part of the self-identification of the Andean People.[39] Griffasi ascribes this effect to Morales and argues that former president has taken the ethnic dimension of the coca plant and used it to reinforce his position as president and create unity among the Bolivian population. In this regard, the coca leaf has become an instrument for the counter-hegemonic left, as the indigenous communities in Bolivia have been known for their resistance to globalisation and neoliberalism.[40] Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, a Bolivian intellectual, argues that the coca growers in Bolivia have been subject to life-long repression, but have used this subject position in the articulation of their identity: 'The coca growers, along with the distributors and consumers, are the protagonists of Bolivian indigenous modernity that functions on the internal market and is the result of empowerment processes, agency and decolonization.'[41] Jonas van Hoffmann agrees with Rivera Cusicanqui in ''Breaking Ranks: Pioneering Drug Policy Protagonism in Uruguay and Bolivia,'' and similarly argues that the efforts made by Morales were an attempt to seize control over the country's drugs policies, and part of the endeavour to nationalise and decolonise Bolivian politics.[42] Consequently, Bolivia was no longer a passive player in the coca politics, but became an active player in international society in an attempt to change the perception on the coca leaf. Ehrinpreis also makes note of the existence and narrative of coca-nationalism. According to him, the MAS combined an anti-

[37] Michael M. Cohen, ''Jim Crow's drug war: Race, Coca Cola, and the southern origins of drug prohibition,'' *Southern Cultures* 12.3 (2006): 56.
[38] Ehrinpreis, *Coca, Nation*, 2.
[39] Thomas Grisaffi, ''We are originarios…'We just aren't from here': Coca leaf and identity politics in the Chapare, Bolivia,'' *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 29.4 (2010): 432.
[40] Grisaffi, ''We are originarios,'' 428.
[41] Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui, ''Coca: An indigenous commodity and its paradoxes,'' *ReVista Harvard Review of Latin America* (Fall 2011): 22.
[42] Jonas Von Hoffmann, ''Breaking Ranks: Pioneering Drug Policy Protagonism in Uruguay and Bolivia,'' *Collapse of the Global Order on Drugs: From UNGASS 2016 to Review 2019* (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018): 193.

imperialist narrative and *indigenismo* in order to create the leaf as a symbol for the Bolivian cultural identity.[43] Additionally, he claims that the coca leaf has become a symbol 'that both celebrates and transcends ethnicity while serving as a symbol of working class and peasant solidarity.'[44] That is to say, the entanglement of race, class and the coca leaf is beyond doubt.

Normative conflict

In the middle of this debate, both taking into account the prohibitionist character of the policy as well as indigenous rights, Sven Pfeiffer participates in the debate by asking whether there is a normative conflict between the 1961 Single Convention and the rights of indigenous people.[45] Pfeiffer questions how states are able to fulfil their human rights-obligations, while simultaneously keeping the international drug control regime intact, if these two do not correspond with each other. Pfeiffer's legal approach in the matter of coca demonstrates the tension between the international drug control regime and the human rights obligations of the international community. The legal perspective is being constructed by the perception on coca, which indicates the importance of how to view the particular leaf. The notion of the coca leaf being an addictive substance or being a habit with cultural value, is of importance in this regard.

Concluding remarks

While the mediation of discourse concerning coca has been covered abundantly in the literature, the structures and power relations that underlie this discourse remain under debate. This thesis is positioned in the debate through asking how the discourse of coca has been mediated by both the prohibitionist regime and the counterhegemonic movement (MAS). The productive tension between power and knowledge is fundamental in the constitution of the discourse about the coca leaf.

[43] Ehrinpreis, *Coca, Nation,* 2.
[44] Ibidem.
[45] Sven Pfeiffer, ''Rights of indigenous peoples and the international drug control regime: the case of traditional coca leaf chewing,'' *Goettingen J. Int'l L.* 5 (2013): 288.

Methodological approach

In order to perform a discourse analysis, it is important to understand the relevance of the method within the field of international relations (IR). Discourse analysis is immensely relevant in this field. As discourse on specific subjects – such as coca – change over time, the value ascribed to these subjects is bound to change as well. How has the articulation of discourse led to the incorporation of the coca leaf in the 1961 Single Convention? What new discourse was articulated over time? How can these changes be included in an IR perspective? The interplay between those factors provides a fruitful ground for a research design. As the Bolivian cultural identity is closely tied to the symbolic value of the coca leaf, the Bolivian case is highly relevant when it comes to the articulation and re-articulation of certain types of discourse. In the case of the coca leaf, relations of power and knowledge are influential. Which parties have had the power to determine whether to include the coca leaf in the 1961 Convention? On what grounds has this decision been made? In order to investigate the constant production and re-production of knowledge in relation to the coca leaf, this chapter explains the value of discourse analysis for this thesis.

The construction of discourse

Discourse analysis examines which goals can be achieved through certain use of language, for example: which dimensions or groups are in- or excluded through representations of reality. A reality is to be represented, but this reality is dependent on the discourse that is being used. On this idea of the construction of reality, Anna Holzscheiter writes that 'it is assumed that facts have to be represented [...] in order to become socially real.'[46] Thus, facts need recognition and representation to exist in the social world. The social context in discourse analysis is decisive in the interpretation of its meaning, and social or political processes are crucial for the existence of meaning. Drawing on the research of Michael Foucault, his research primarily focused on the idea that discourse allows for the critical re-examination of the production of knowledge under specific circumstances.[47] Fundamental here, is that the construction of discourse revolves around the relationship between the production of knowledge and power. Discourse analysis allows a researcher to critically rethink this production of knowledge. Stuart Hall describes discourse as 'a particular way of representing 'the West,' 'the Rest' and the relations between

[46] Anna Holzscheiter, ''Between communicative interaction and structures of signification: Discourse theory and analysis in international relations,'' *International Studies Perspectives* 15.2 (2014): 144.
[47] Holzscheiter, ''Between communicative interaction and structures of signification,'' 149.

them.'[48] That is to say, the relations of power which play a role in discourse analysis are useful to attain insight into power relations within the international community.

Discourse analysis and the regime of truth

Within International Relations, there is disagreement on what importance to attribute to discourse analysis, as a more scientific approach would be preferable according to some.[49] This claim is refuted by Jennifer Milliken, a scholar who is an expert on discourse analysis in international relations. She argues that the dominant discourse and its structuring of meaning are able to make implemented practices in international society seen as 'intelligible and legitimate.'[50] Since discourse is not a stable entity, it is possible to re-articulate certain discourse and to re-assess their regime of truth. Milliken has coined this the fixing of discourse, or 'to fix the 'regime of truth.''[51] One discourse can be replaced by another. The importance of discourse analysis resides in the ability to fix hegemonic meanings that silence subjugated knowledge or alternative discourse.[52] Michael Arrribas-Aylon and Valerie Walkerdine observe that when referring to discourse, Michael Foucault does not refer to particular language or use of words, but rather to 'rules, divisions and systems of a particular body of knowledge.'[53] That is to say, the relationship between power and knowledge is crucial in the formation of a certain discourse: what one identifies as the truth is crucial in discourse analysis.

However, as Tim Richardson notes, the theorization of the truth is rarely examined in policy analysis.[54] The first question that arises is how to define 'the truth.' Richardson argues that the truth centres 'on the form of scientific discourse and the institutions which produce it.'[55] Accordingly, the institutions that are able to construct the scientific discourse have a certain power, as they have the ability to create a 'truth.' Foucault argues that the truth is a social product, with each society possessing its own regime of truth. Hereby, Foucault means that 1) 'the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true and false statements,' 2) 'the means by which each is sanctioned,' 3) 'the techniques and procedures accorded value in

[48] Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben, ''The West and the rest: Discourse and power,'' *Race and Racialization, 2E: Essential Readings* (1992): 85.
[49] Jennifer Milliken, ''The study of discourse in international relations: A critique of research and methods,'' *European journal of international relations* 5.2 (1999): 226.
[50] Ibid., 230.
[51] Ibidem.
[52] Ibidem.
[53] Michael Arribas-Ayllon and Valerie Walkerdine, ''Foucauldian discourse analysis,'' *The Sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (2008): 114.
[54] Tim Richardson, ''Foucauldian discourse: Power and truth in urban and regional policy making,'' *European Planning Studies* 4.3 (1996).
[55] Ibidem.

the acquisition of truth,' 4) 'the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true,' and 5) 'the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements.'[56] These characteristics are foundational for the regime of truth, which is a central concept in this thesis.

International relations theory studies

International Relations Theory Studies entails the analysis of theory that is produced through a fusion of knowledge produced by scientific institutions, and consequently, has been reinterpreted by policymakers, who are the ones in charge to construct the 'dominant intellectual/policy perspective.'[57] The scientific truth as it has been presented in the middle of the twentieth century helped to legitimise the policy regarding the coca leaf, and consequently, Western dominance over post-colonial states could be maintained.[58] Therefore, this perspective is highly relevant for the purpose of this thesis.

In this thesis, a method is used that combines the deconstruction of a certain discourse and a juxtapositional method. Within the thesis, there will be focused on the deconstruction of the nature of a discourse, and the exploration of alternative truths, that is to say: the perceived 'truth' will be paired with differing representations of the coca leaf. [59] Concretely, in this thesis, the different 'truths' that underly the produced discourse will be examined. What kind of knowledge has allowed for the construction of a specific type of discourse? Moreover, the method focusing on subjugated knowledge is of importance, as the Latin American knowledge of the coca leaf has been subjugated to the dominant, 'Western' knowledge. The symbolic value that the coca leaf acquired in the Andean region, produced a counter-hegemonic discourse that entails various strands of cultural, ethnic and race related struggles in Bolivia. Subjugated discourses have received little scholarly attention.[60] However, in Bolivia, counter-hegemonic discourses were produced among peasant and indigenous communities. The concepts of class and race played a fundamental role here. In conclusion, discourse analysis can serve as political and ethical criticism, which is what this thesis aims to provide.[61]

[56] A. Fontana and P. Pasoquino, ''Truth and power,'' an interview with Foucault, in P. RABINOW (Ed.) The Foucault Reader. London: Penguin. (1991), 72-73 in: Tim Richardson, ''Foucauldian discourse: Power and truth in urban and regional policy making,'' *European Planning Studies* 4.3 (1996).
[57] Milliken, ''The study of discourse in international relations,'' 236.
[58] Ibid., 237.
[59] Ibid., 243.
[60] Ibid., 244
[61] Ibid., 248

Corpus of statements

For historical accuracy, a corpus of statements should include examples of how the construction of objects varies over time.[62] This thesis is chiefly dependent on primary sources and will draw on various sources that have been collected in the archives of the United Nations and the database of the Transnational Institute (TNI). These sources consist of a variety of policy documents from the UN archive, official US-government statements, official speeches at a UN meeting and unofficial WHO documents. The first chapter includes sources from 1950, 1961 and 1995, while the second part focuses on sources from 2008 and 2009. While this difference is considerable, this choice is made, because both instances mark a dramatic break with the past. Firstly, the 1961 Single Convention and the foundational report for its prohibitionist character and, secondly, the MAS-government and its pro-coca policy. The election of Evo Morales has been the culmination of years of fighting for the exemption of the coca leaf from the 1961 Single Convention. Besides, the time-gap facilitates reviewing the mediation of the signification attached to the coca leaf.

The first analytical chapter includes a discourse analysis of the United Nations Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf (1950).[63] This document is of great importance, as it has formed the empirical grounds on which the use of the coca leaf the Andean region has been rejected. During the 1950s, the US had pinpointed Bolivia as main source of illegal drug trafficking towards the US, which was largely based on the findings of this report.[64] Bewley-Taylor argues, however, that this report, and the commission that composed it, are 'highly Americanized,' but nevertheless provided the ground on which the prohibitive measures on the chewing of coca were built.[65] The report has been retrieved from the database of the Transnational Institute. Moreover, the 1961 Single Convention is an integral source for this thesis, as it is considered the cornerstone of the prohibitionist international drug control regime. The summary records of the conference allow for investigation to have a look into the influence of specific actors or states and into the maintained political discourse. Therefore, within this source, there is a focus on the agency of countries such as the United States. The use of these sources allows for a closer insight into the relationship between knowledge and power.

[62] Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine, ''Foucauldian discourse analysis,'' 115.
[63] United Nations, ''Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf,'' July 1950. Retrieved from: https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/coca-inquiry-1950e_0.pdf
[64] Paul Gootenberg, *Andean Cocaine: The Making of a Global Drug*, The University of North Carolina Press (2008), 277.
[65] Bewley-Taylor, *United States and international drug control, 1909-1997*, 89.

Additionally, the Single Convention itself is examined. The official sources have been found on the website of the UN archive.

In order to demonstrate the attempt to challenge the dominant discourse, this thesis makes use of one unofficial document, namely 'The Cocaine Project,' which has been composed by the WHO, but was never officially published, due to external pressure from US officials. It has been published by the Transnational Institute, an institute that has played a leading role in the investigation of the inclusion of the coca leaf in the 1961 Convention.

Regarding the second analytical chapter of this thesis, the research moves to 2008-2009, where Evo Morales asks to make an exception in the treaty for the traditional use of coca. Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma argue that the move to lift the international ban on the chewing of coca was 'the first truly open attempt to institute a change of the contemporary regime.'[66] In doing so, several letters from Morales to the Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon have been published, in which Morales makes several cultural arguments for the exemption of the coca leaf. The letters have been retrieved from the TNI. Moreover, at a high-level UN meeting on 11 March 2009, Morales was present and asked the General Assembly to restore their 'historical error' to include the coca leaf in the Convention. The speech is interesting, as Morales starts to chew actual coca leaves. The Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU) filmed the speech, and it will form an essential source for the second chapter.[67]

[66] Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma, ''Regime change,'' 73.
[67] ''Chewing coca at the UN,'' *Drug reporter*. Retrieved from: https://drogriporter.hu/en/chewing-coca-at-the-un/. Last accessed on 21-05-2021.

Historical context of race, class and coca in the Andean region

In order to understand the significance of race and class and its influence on the production of meaning concerning coca in the Andean region, its colonial history must be taken into consideration. With the arrival of the Spanish colonisers in the sixteenth century, indigenous inhabitants of the 'New World' were subhumanised and believed to represent a primal innocence.[68] Christopher Columbus manifested a bifurcated image that would resonate in the European perception of indigenous people for centuries to come.[69] The Spaniards imposed a coercive labour system on the Latin American lands, based on ethnic caste distinctions. Indigenous inhabitants were defined by their class and subjected by the Spanish colonisers. In doing so, the regime refused to recognise the rights of self-determination of the indigenous inhabitants. Through the entangled structures of race and class, any kind of sovereignty was denied to the indigenous population.[70] Teun van Dijk describes 'euro-racism' as a historical consequence of the colonial era. In this system, non-European 'Others' were systematically perceived and treated as different and inferior.[71]

During the colonial period, coca was under Spanish control, which caused the transformation of coca into one of the earliest colonial drugs. Ehrinpreis observes that the chewing of coca and its connection with ethnic or caste identities developed as the colonial period went on. The chewing of coca became regarded as a cultural signifier of 'Indianness.'[72] While in Peru, chewing coca was perceived as socially transgressive and the US was known for its segregationist policies with regard to coca, contrarily, in Bolivia a unique pro-coca nationalism emerged in elite circles.[73] This does not mean that coca nationalism was the only sentiment in Bolivia: the Bolivian (Creole) elites were influenced by euro-racism, and the structure that connected race and class identities, originating in the US and Europe. This resulted in the emergence of a subordinated working class.[74]

Race in Latin America

In Nancy Applebaum's *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, racialisation is described as a process of the marking of human differences in order to establish a hierarchical discourse

[68] George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2015), 35.
[69] Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History*, 36.
[70] Robert A. Williams Jr, ''Columbus's Legacy: Law as an Instrument of Racial Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples' Rights of Self-Determination,'' *Arizona Journal of International and Comparative Law* 51 (1991): 53.
[71] Teun A. van Dijk, ed. *Racism and discourse in Latin America* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 1.
[72] Ehrinpreis, *Coca, Nation*, 12.
[73] Ibid., 41.
[74] Ibid., 50.

that is grounded on colonial thinking. Applebaum observes that in Latin American elite circles, consisting of mostly members of the white Creole upper class, proper citizenship was associated with whiteness and masculinity.[75] The author notes how elites in Latin America had control over the social milieu, with campaigns on hygiene and sanitation.[76] That is to say, notions of race were strongly associated with social milieu and hygiene. In the 1950s and 1960s, a civilisational discourse was replicated by modern doctrines.[77]

Conversely, according to Applebaum, *indigenismo* celebrated indigenous identity*:* 'indigenistas […] trumpeted the purity and beauty of native peoples, positing indigenous civilisations as the basis of national cultures and arguing that *indigenas'* advancement was crucial to national progress.'[78] This movement appeared at the same time as the *mestizaje* cult, in which discourses of mestizaje were stressing the benefits from racial mixing. The author describes how indigenous groups could exploit their differences, also to project or reinforce their identity as part of the national character. All in all, subaltern groups could use 'racial' discourse to consolidate their identity in relation to the nation-state.[79]

Drug prohibition and race

During the end of the nineteenth century, the US was an active promoter of Andean coca trade and the primary consumer of various types of drugs. Coca was a popular remedy and tonic in the US, prescribed for a vast range of conditions and illnesses.[80] In the 1880s, there was a certain mania for coca and cocaine in the US. During this time, the US adopted an informal coca diplomacy, which resulted in tightening trade relations with Peru and Bolivia, which were already economically and militarily weak nations that would become subjected to the US' sphere of influence.[81] In the 1890s, awareness of the potential addictive quality of cocaine emerged, and scientists called for additional regulation.[82] While, initially, the US government and its citizens were fascinated by the coca leaf, by 1915, opposition to coca ensued in the US, laying the basis for the drug-prohibition movement.[83] An anti-coca sentiment emerged, aiming to limit cocaine at the source.[84] The social crusade against cocaine was motivated by the effort

[75] Nancy P. Applebaum, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 2.
[76] Applebaum, *Race and Nation in Modern Latin America*, 6.
[77] Ibid., 8.
[78] Ibid., 7.
[79] Ibid., 18.
[80] Ibid., 119.
[81] Ibid., 30.
[82] Cohen, ''Jim Crow's drug war: Race, Coca Cola, and the southern origins of drug prohibition,'' 68.
[83] Gootenberg, *Andean cocaine: The making of a global drug*, 30.
[84] Ibid., 139.

to combat narcotic behaviour, as well as by racial premises. In the South of the US, cocaine was associated with African Americans, who were blamed for any kind of disruption that was caused, also known as the 'Negro cocaine fiends.'[85] Michael Cohen states that it was this racially charged environment in which 'the war drugs became a unifying element in the crusade for racial, moral and national purity.'[86] In other words, race, class and drugs were intertwined, which influenced the political discourse as well.

[85] Cohen, ''Jim Crow's drug war: Race, Coca Cola, and the southern origins of drug prohibition,'' 57.
[86] Ibid., 74.

Analysis: Which types of discourse are related to the prohibition on coca?

A key figure in the construction of the discursive meaning of the coca leaf in the 1950s and 1960s, is Antonio Gutierrez-Noriega. This Peruvian medical researcher was strongly influenced by social Darwinism and provided the basis for the medical implications regarding addiction to coca in the Report on the Coca Leaf, written by the Commission of Enquiry in 1950.[87] In 1947, Gutierrez-Noriega released one of the first books to contain a systematic overview of the test results concerning the (addictive properties of the) coca leaf and expressed his vision on the relationship between a 'pharmaceutic phenomenon' and social life in Peru.

The book discerns three premises that mark Gutierrez-Noriega's position on the matter. Firstly, it notes that historically, the consumption of the coca leaf was limited to religious spheres.[88] With the Spanish conquest, coca-use spread mostly among miners and in the agricultural sector. Secondly, the author notes that, demographically speaking, the consumption of coca was higher in regions where analphabetism was high, and the population less socially developed.[89] Illiteracy was linked to the chewing of coca, as was the IQ of the test subjects – concluding that lower IQs were more frequently seen with coca addicts than with non-addicts. Besides, coca chewers were said to have become unsociable and mistrustful. Thirdly, the author describes that coca consumption had a severe impact on the mental capacity of the ones chewing, and chronic and acute impact on the user's organs.[90] In his studies, Gutierrez-Noriega observed a relationship between mental activity and coca chewing and argues that the mental capacity of addicted coca-chewers decreased. Additionally, the coca chewers 'present emotional dullness or apathy, indifference, lack of will power, and low capacity for attention.'[91] According to Gutierrez Noriega, the assumption that coca would not be harmful for a person's health, was simply absurd.[92]

Gutierrez-Noriega's knowledge of the effect of the coca leaf has been crucial in the set-up of the 1950 report. Taking this into account, it is apparent that Gutierrez-Noriega's knowledge was perceived legitimate and 'true.' The racial premises, which will be elaborated

[87] Salomón Ayala Pío and Juan Pablo Murillo Peña, ''Gutiérrez-Noriega y el debate en torno al consumo de las hojas de coca: 1937-1952,'' *Anales de la Facultad de Medicina* 79.2 (2018): 163.
[88] Carlos Gutiérrez Noriega and Vicente Zapata Ortiz, *Estudios sobre la coca y la cocaína en el Perú* (1947), 24. Retrieved from: http://repositorio.cultura.gob.pe/handle/CULTURA/1059.
[89] Gutierrez-Noriega, *Estudios sobre la coca y la cocaína en el Perú,* 74-75.
[90] Ibid., 33, 61.
[91] Carlos Gutierrez-Noriega and Victor Wolfgang Von Hagen, ''The strange case of the coca leaf,'' *The Scientific Monthly* 70.2 (1950): 87.
[92] Gutierrez-Noriega and Von Hagen, ''The strange case of the coca leaf,'' 89.

in the subsequent chapter, were deeply ingrained into public perception and, therefore, able to shape medical policy in a certain way. With this in mind, the next paragraph will analyse the Report of Enquiry dealing with the coca leaf.

Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca leaf, 1950

On 22 April 1947, UN Representative Holgún de Lavalle of Peru made a request to organise a group of experts to carry out a field survey, in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO). The Economic and Social Council of the UN asked to mobilise this team in order to determine 'the harmful or harmless effects of the coca leaf chewing habit upon the human body in general or upon some specific organ in particular,' and 'the social and economic implications of this aforesaid habit,' as they had observed the indigenous population of the Andean region indulging in the 'habit' of coca chewing.[93] The commission was recruited by the UN and carried out investigations in the Andean region from 10 September 1949 until 4 December of that same year. Thereafter, they returned to the secretariat in New York. From the outset it was deemed unnecessary to visit all regions where the coca leaf was produced or chewed.[94] In this period, the commission resided in different places in Peru and Bolivia.

The third chapter of the report, named 'Environment,' describes the indigenous people of Peru and Bolivia, starting with distinguishing between three separate groups: 'Whites,' 'Mestizos,' and 'Indians.'[95] The distinction between indigenous groups, labelled 'Indians,' and 'Mestizos' is made on the basis of social, cultural and linguistic considerations. While the chewing of coca is observed in all of these groups, mestizos are supposed to chew less than 'Indians.' The white population chewing coca are not given any further attention aside from the following mention: 'The very few whites who chew a leaf must be regarded as isolated cases, and not a social problem.'[96] This isolation of the white population is striking: neither is the 'white' group defined as mestizo and 'Indians' are, nor observed or taken into account in the study while chewing coca. The categorisation of these groups and the selectivity in the investigation implies a certain hierarchy between the supposed categories.

Various doctors are cited in the report, among others a doctor from Cuzco, who argues that chewing of the coca leaf has disastrous consequences: 'The Indian is racially an oligophrenic, perhaps as the result of centuries of oppression. Coca leaf makes him forget his

[93] United Nations, ''Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf,'' 3.
[94] Ibid., 11.
[95] Ibid., 9.
[96] Ibidem.

difficulties: he becomes dirty, smelly, negligent. This closes him out from society, and he is looked down upon by mestizos and whites.'[97] In this statement, the 'Indian' is racialised through actively distinguishing him as a category. Coca chewing and the notions 'dirty, smelly and negligent' become entangled. In doing so, this type of discourse connects notions of race and hygiene with the coca leaf.

A separate chapter is dedicated to the concept of 'race degeneration,' which looks into the question if coca chewing leads to racial degeneration and backwardness. In this chapter, the educability of the 'Indian' is taken into account as the commission observed the well-mannered indigenous children: 'In contrast to what one would expect, school children are relatively clean, brush their hair, are neatly clothed and often in their uniforms.'[98] The commission is surprised, but calls to the reader's mind that 'it should be remembered […] that the economic status and living conditions of the chewers are exceedingly poor.'[99] According to the commission, the rural homes are poor and its population's hygienic standards low. The mention of hygiene in relation to the 'Indian race' is emblematic. One can observe a civilisational discourse: the commission carrying out the investigation is used to other living standards and is projecting its ideas of civilisation on the villages it is visiting. While the report's assumption is that the Andean man is racially different, it also acknowledges that this has no relation with the chewing of the coca leaf. 'If the coca leaf is also to be mentioned as a cause [of being socially backward], it has first to be proved that: (1) race degeneration actually exists; and (2) that coca leaf takes more part in it than the above-mentioned factors.'[100]

In continuation, the sixth chapter contains a section called 'General Physiological Conditions of the High Andean Man compared with the Acclimatized White Man,' stating that the fertility of the 'Andean man' is higher than the fertility of the white man.[101] In this chapter, the question whether the 'Andean man' is truly racially different from the white man, is posed.[102] Here, the 'Andean man' is reduced to a primal being of reproduction and depicted as extremely fertile and unintelligent, which characteristics are attributed to coca chewing. It is not only the coca leaf that is constructed as an evil substance, but even more emphasis is placed on the 'Indian' supposedly being backward, unintelligent, dirty and extremely fertile, which is partly due to the chewing of coca according to this source. This combination is crucial for the

[97] United Nations, ''Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf,'' 29.
[98] Ibidem.
[99] Ibidem.
[100] Ibid., 30.
[101] Ibid., 34.
[102] Ibid., 36.

discourse that has been constructed around the coca leaf. In the chapter called 'Factors which may be considered as determining the habit of chewing the coca leaf,' the living conditions of the indigenous population was monitored: 'The backward economic and social conditions of the coca-leaf chewing Indians are reflected in his home and manner of life,' referring to their jobs in agricultural labour, living conditions, sanitary arrangements and clothing.[103] The chapter depicts the indigenous population as uncivilised, which becomes entangled with the discourse around the coca leaf: 'The most prevalent and important belief held at present is that coca-leaf chewing dispels or relieves hunger, thirst, fatigue, weariness and even desire to sleep. This belief is largely due to 1) the Indian's poor living conditions, 2) his lack of education.'[104]

Concluding remarks on the 1950 Enquiry on the Coca Leaf

Which elements have been key in constructing the discourse on the coca leaf in this report? First of all, race has had an undeniable influence on the perception concerning the indigenous population. The 'Andean man' or 'Indian' has been depicted as a backward, not intelligent and dirty being that chews coca. The scientific discourse present in this report, is entangled with notions of race. The results of the report show that indigenous people experience a different reaction than white people, which implies that racial assumptions are made. While there is mention of white people chewing coca, no elaboration is made on this observation. The mixture of scientific knowledge with racial assumptions results in conclusions that tie these notions to the signification of the coca leaf. Regarding the regime of truth, much weight has been given to this report and to the commissions' capability to assess practice of coca chewing in the Andean region. Their expertise, in combination with the expertise of the researchers mentioned in the report, has been granted a credible status. With their assumptions relating the poor living conditions and lack of education, the 'Andean man' and his practices are depicted as unintelligent and unhealthy, which has had implications for the discursive meaning of the coca leaf itself, especially in terms of hygiene. In sum, because of the connection between race, coca and hygiene, a civilisational discourse has developed.

UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs: Summary Records

From 24 January until 25 March 1961, the United Nations Single Convention on the use of Narcotic Drugs took place in New York. The 1961 Single Convention intended to achieve three

[103] United Nations, ''Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf,'' 49.
[104] Ibid., 53.

main purposes: to limit the production of raw materials, to codify/arrange the existing conventions into one convention (the Shanghai and the The Hague Convention), and to oversee the simplification of existing drug control.[105] During the twelfth meeting, on 7 February, Article 35 on the restrictions of cultivation or growth of the coca bush was first discussed. Mister L. Mendizabal was present as representative of Bolivia. Commissioner H.J. Anslinger of Narcotics and the Department of the Treasury was present on behalf of the United States. He was accompanied by the alternate representative, Mr. H.L Giordano, from the Bureau of Narcotics, department of Treasury.[106]

General remarks on the Convention

In the opening statement, Giordano recalled that the idea for the Single Convention was a United States initiative.[107] That is to say, the US enjoyed a great deal of power within the UN, but also within the Convention and its composition. From the perspective of the US representatives much progress remained to be achieved in the field of international drug control and in the control of the coca leaf.[108] The US had a significant influence in the construction of the regime of truth on narcotic drugs; in the conference no debate took place on the question how to view these substances, the participating countries merely looked at the of question of how to regulate the substances. Hence, the debate was already one step ahead of the definitional question on what 'narcotic drugs' constituted. There was agreement on the idea to replace the existing drug control regime by a single working system. The need for a universal declaration was stressed by several delegates, from Ukraine and Afghanistan for example, as they called the Convention a milestone in international law.[109]

During the consideration of Article 30, concerning medicine and scientific purposes, Deputy Executive Secretary Lande discussed the meaning of raw materials: 'Raw materials meant dangerous substances such as opium, and non-dangerous substances used in synthetic drugs. The expression had been used in the 1931 Convention: at the time, all raw materials had been considered to be dangerous, being themselves generally narcotic drugs.'[110] Looking into

[105] Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma, ''Regime change,'' 74.
[106] United Nations, ''United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, Volume I: Summary Records of Plenary Meetings,'' (1961): xii. Retrieved from: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/720279.
[107] United Nations, ''United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,'' 6.
[108] Ibid., 6.
[109] Ibid., 12.
[110] United Nations, ''United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,'' 27.

this definition, one can observe Lande not actively distinguishing narcotic drugs from raw materials. The representative both mentioned dangerous substances and non-dangerous substances. However, non-dangerous substances in synthetic drugs similarly were considered as dangerous, making it a pseudo-distinction. This reflects the existing US' sentiment regarding drug, not tolerating any substances that could be related to narcotic drugs.

The Single Convention was the first official document to explicitly denounce the addiction to narcotic drugs as being 'evil.'[111] This is visible in the summarised records when the articles on opium and poppy straw are discussed, as representative Cha of China stated that: 'The Conference should not lose sight of the fact that it has met to achieve a noble purpose, the adoption of a Single Convention which would help to banish narcotic evils from the world. Individual interests must take second place if that purpose was to be achieved.'[112] Cha's statement was welcomed by Anslinger, who also stressed the need for regulations for opium and poppy straw.[113] The equation of drugs with 'narcotic evils' corresponds with the metaphor of malevolent agents that Tupper proposed: it establishes the substance as an evil from which the world needs to be saved. 'Individual interests' could also be interpreted as cultural interests with respect to opium or poppy straw. Thus, cultural interests or arguments were not considered to be legitimate arguments in the 1961 Single Convention, as the eradication of drug use was the ultimate goal. Lastly, the 'noble purpose' that Cha ascribed to the Convention attributes great power to the 1961 Single Convention. Regarding the mechanism of the regime of truth, the Convention is presented as a mechanism that enables one to distinguish false from true and, therefore, instrumental in the composition of the regime of truth.

Discussion of Articles 35-38

In the twelfth plenary meeting, articles 35 (Restriction on the cultivation or growth of the coca bush), 36 (National coca leaf agencies), 37 (Restrictions on the international trade in coca leaves and crude cocaine) and 38 (Special provisions relating to coca leaves in general) were discussed.[114] The drafting committee of this twelfth meeting consisted of representatives from Afghanistan, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Mexico, Poland, Turkey, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States and Yugoslavia. In the meeting, Anslinger petitioned to adopt regulations for the control of coca bush cultivations, rather than establishing

[111] Bewley-Taylor and Jelsma, ''Regime change,'' 75.
[112] United Nations, ''United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,'' 52.
[113] Ibidem.
[114] Ibid., 53.

national coca leaf agencies. Arguing that these agencies were not useful for the control of the production of coca, he called for the UN to play a more direct role in the restrictions on the cultivation of the coca leaf. Anslinger demanded the prohibition on trade in coca leaves and crude cocaine. In order to avert the possibility that Bolivia would not ratify the Convention, he suggested that the countries that had yet ratified the Geneva Convention in 1931 would be bound by the Single Convention.[115]

The US acknowledged it had imported coca leaves from Peru for the preparation of flavouring agents (in the soft drink Coca Cola) as well. However, '[…] there never had been diversion into the illicit traffic.'[116] This is interesting, as the population of the US had the largest total consumption of cocaine in the last century. By presenting themselves in this manner, the US representatives did not take any responsibility for their country's share in the drug problem. After Anslinger, representative Rodionox of the Soviet Socialist Republic, stressed the importance of the integrity of the sovereign right of states to be able to choose whether or not to cultivate the coca leaf. The Soviet Union thereby opposed the inclusion of the coca leaf in the Single Convention.[117] Contrarily, delegate Kruysse of the Netherlands, argued that the same regulations which exist for opium should be applied to coca leaves and crude cocaine.[118] Moreover, Kruysse supported the US representative and similarly stated that the control in the US was so strict, that no narcotic-related problems had arisen.[119] Through confirming Anslinger's argument, the US representatives gained legitimacy in their argument.

Anslinger stated that the coca bush 'was not a harmless agricultural crop, but a plant which contained a dangerous narcotic substance.' [120] That is to say, Anslinger argued that the coca leaf and cocaine are one and the same thing, rather than actively distinguishing the raw material from the narcotic drug. Striking here, is that the US had received an exemption for the flavouring of Coca Cola, and apparently the distinction between coca and cocaine was made explicit in this particular case.[121] A tension is discernible between knowledge and power in the policy making process. The US representatives position themselves as an authority that had the right to determine which use of coca was legitimate and which use illegitimate.

[115] United Nations, ''United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,'' 54.
[116] Ibidem.
[117] Ibidem.
[118] Ibid., 55.
[119] Ibidem.
[120] Ibidem.
[121] Ibid., 54.

Representative Mendizabal of Bolivia stated that coca leaves presented a huge social problem since the beginning of the Bolivian Republic's existence, with more than 80% of the population (regularly) chewing coca leaves, by which he showed support for the restrictions on coca. Peru's representative agreed that the chewing of coca represented a huge social problem. Anslinger concluded, by saying that the interests of humanity should be paramount: narcotics had taken more lives than hydrogen bombs.[122]

Concluding remarks on the 1961 Convention

Analysing the UN Convention, the influence of the US on the inclusion of the coca leaf is evident. Harry Anslinger utilises a type of discourse that is focused on the protection of the world from 'narcotic evils' and one that ascribes great value to the Convention as a sanctioning mechanism. Words and phrases that prevail in the descriptions on coca are 'dangerous narcotic substance,' and 'abuse,' which are mostly used by US representatives. Moreover, the representatives of Peru and Bolivia do not attempt to restore this description of coca being dangerous. Consequently, the depiction of the coca leaf as a dangerous substance does not receive resistance.

Regarding the regime of truth, and the second point Foucault makes on the regime of truth, namely 'the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements,' the UN 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs is an example of such an instance in which 'good' has been distinguished from 'bad.' Consequently, the Convention has come to serve as an ever-legitimate institution and truth-mechanism. Moreover, the representatives who had the power to speak in this conference, were not representing the countries which were directly involved, such as Peru and Bolivia, but the US. This gives an indication of the place where knowledges that are deemed legitimate and which are able to determine policy, are often produced.

The Cocaine Project

In 1995, the report 'The Cocaine Project' was unofficially launched. The World Health Organisation Program on Substance Abuse (WHO/PSA), in co-operation with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) carried out a study investigating cocaine-related substances between 1992 and 1994. This was the largest study

[122] United Nations, ''United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs,'' 57.

that had been undertaken on substances of coca and cocaine so far.[123] However, US officials hindered the release of this report in 1995, their objections being crucial to the WHO's attitude in the global drugs debate. Consequently, the study was not published due to the resistance it received. According to a recent briefing from the Transnational Institute, US officials threatened to cut all its funding of the WHO.[124] US representative Boyer expressed his concern about the study in a press statement: 'The United States Government had been surprised to note that the package seemed to make a case for the positive uses of cocaine, claiming that use of the coca leaf did not lead to noticeable damage to mental or physical health, that the positive health effects of coca leaf chewing might be transferable from traditional settings to other countries and cultures, and that coca production provided financial benefits to peasants.'[125] The US statement signals a belief that the report was undermining the efforts of the international community to restrict the cultivation of illegal coca, and consequently, was undermining the 1961 Single Convention.

Analysis of the 'Cocaine project'

More than 40 different researchers were involved in the composition of the report, which concluded that the influence of 'occasional cocaine use does not typically lead to severe or even minor physical or social problems.'[126] Researchers of the WHO project collected information about the use of coca in 22 key sites in 19 countries, for example: Cochabamba in Bolivia, Lima in Peru, and Medellín in Colombia. The project had been executed on a considerably larger scale than the 1950 Report of the Commission of Enquiry on the Coca Leaf. One of findings of the report was that '[..] use of coca leaves appears to have no negative health effects and has positive therapeutic, sacred and social functions for indigenous Andean populations.'[127] The study divided the countries under investigation in four categories while perceiving Bolivia to be in the first category – which concerned countries that grow coca products that do now have cocaine-related problems.

The report mentions the diversity of coca and cocaine use around the world, that is, it makes an active distinction '[…] between coca leaf chewing in Bolivia and crack use in New

[123] WHO, ''The Cocaine Project.''
[124] Martin Jelsma, ''UN Common Position on drug policy–Consolidating system-wide coherence,'' *London: International Drug Policy Consortium* (2019): 10.
[125] World Health Organization, ''Forty-Eight World Health Assembly,'' *The Lancet 261* no. WHA48/1995/REC/3 (1995): 986-987.
[126] WHO, ''Cocaine Project.''
[127] WHO, ''Cocaine Project.''

York.'[128] In the chapter that deals with the fieldwork in Bolivia, the research group expresses its concerns about cocaine use, and how this use would likely increase in the future. However, this concern only reflected the use of cocaine, as coca chewing was not perceived as a dangerous practice. In the report, the distinction is clearly made, as cocaine and the coca leaf are two separate elements.

Furthermore, the economic importance of coca cultivation for local farmers is emphasised in the report: 'Coca cultivation is the basis of the subsistence economy of many peasant communities in Bolivia and Peru.' It is acknowledged that the chewing of coca is fully integrated into Andean cultural tradition and worldview and that it has retained its sacred character.[129] Here, a multi-faceted picture of the coca leaf is drawn: a picture in which the economic aspect, the cultural aspect and also medical aspect are given attention.

Chapter 4 concerns the consequences of coca- and cocaine use and stresses the beneficial effects of therapeutic use and the symbolic importance of the coca leaf. The informants of Cochabamba address the financial benefits of growing coca for the peasant class and the physical benefits they experience from chewing during intense activities such as farming, fishing and mining. In section 7.4, it is recommended to do research on the therapeutic benefits of the coca leaf. In essence, the tone of the report is welcoming to different interpretations of the effect of the coca leaf, and willing to understand its specific meaning to the indigenous population in the Andean region.

Concluding remarks on the 'Cocaine project'

The discourse on the coca leaf in the Cocaine Project is a significant departure from the consensus that was reached in the 1961 Single Convention. It pays more attention to the cultural value and traditional roots of coca chewing, which places into a broader historical perspective. In comparison to earlier studies, the Cocaine Project is actively trying to demonstrate the enormous variety that exists among drug and coca uses. The WHO study made an active distinction between the chewing of coca and the different types of uses of cocaine. However, the lack of US support has obstructed the WHO in publishing the study: it blocked the WHO in spreading different information on the coca leaf. The lack of (US) support has influenced the possibility for the Cocaine Project to obtain the same status as the 1961 Single Convention.

The Cocaine Project and the response that it received are useful when examining the power relations that come at play, and the ability to change an established regime of truth.

[128] WHO, ''Cocaine Project.''
[129] WHO, ''Cocaine Project.''

While the WHO tried to establish a different medical discourse, financial threats blocked the organisation to release its findings. That is to say, it is possible to influence the regime of truth, by deeming tactics used in investigations that challenge the hegemonic discourse illegitimate. Looking at the mediation of the discourse around coca, it leads to the conclusion that even though attempts have been undertaken, power relations can block the publication of knowledge that challenges the hegemonic discourse.

Analysis: Which types of discourses have been articulated by Evo Morales, the leader of the MAS?

The MAS-government, led by Morales, broadcasted a strong pro-coca discourse. The construction of this discourse has contributed to the formation of the MAS as an indigenous movement, which is strongly in favour of the chewing of coca and has exploited the leaf as part of its identity. Discursive and political processes can contribute to the formations of indigenous movements. Therefore, it is considered important by Thomas Griffasi, ethnographer of Bolivian coca, to question the discourses and the processes that underly the formation of indigenous groups.[130] While race has been a theme in in the 1950 Enquiry on the Coca Leaf, the ethnic dimension of the coca leaf has been used to defend the cultural rights of Bolivian coca growers.[131] As discussed in the literature review, counterhegemonic discourse has been emblematic for the Bolivian attitude towards the coca issue and key in the construction of identity within the indigenous groups in Bolivia.

In 2008, the Bolivian Republic officially declared the coca leaf cultural patrimony, which provoked a reaction from the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). The INCB has been established by the 1961 Single Convention and consists out of members from the Economic and Social Council, national governments and the WHO. The INCB is considered to be a 'quasi-judicial expert body.'[132] While earlier reports drew attention to the inconsistencies between the traditional coca use and its use as it is described in the 1961 Single Convention, the INCB report once again denounced the coca leaf as a dangerous narcotic substance.[133] The report caused outrage among the counter-hegemonic left in Bolivia and provoked a reaction of Morales' government. The letters Morales wrote to Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in 2008 provide an insight in the arguments and discourse used by the counterhegemonic left to defend the chewing of the coca leaf, which is analysed in this chapter. Besides, this chapter analyses a speech during which Morales is chewing coca leaves. This act of resistance, and the accompanying discourse, are enlightening to analyse, as Morales deliberately and openly violated the 1961 Single Convention. In order to come to a better understanding of the mediation of the discursive meaning around coca, this chapter looks examines the following question: Which types of discourses have been articulated by Evo Morales, leader of the MAS?

[130] Griffasi, ''We are originarios,'' 427.
[131] Ibid., 428.
[132] ''The International Narcotics Control Board,'' Retrieved from: https://www.incb.org/incb/en/about.html. Last accessed on 21-05-2021.
[133] ''INCB: Controversial Statements on Coca Leaf,'' *Transnational Institute* 5 March 2008. Retrieved from: https://www.tni.org/en/article/incb-controversial-statements-on-coca-leaf. Last accessed on 21-05-2021.

Protest vice-president Hugo Fernandez

On March 10 2008, vice-president Hugo Fernandez of the Bolivian Republic issued an interventionist speech confronting the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in which he addressed the 'erroneous policies to repress the cultivation of coca leaf.'[134] Fernandez is offended by the report of the INCB: 'all the inhabitants of my country […] were aggrieved and extremely offended by the unscrupulous and prejudicial expressions used by the International Narcotics Control Board.'[135] In his statement, Fernandez claims to speak for the whole country, in an effort to emphasise the collectivity and universality of the issue. Fernandez read a letter that Morales addressed to secretary-general, Ban Ki-Moon, composed on 8 March 2008. The cultural sphere is omnipresent in his argumentation: 'In Bolivia it is understood that eradicating this ancestral practice would be like eliminating our culture. This would aggrieve the millions of Bolivians who have maintained this valuable tradition throughout history.'[136] Here, 'this ancestral practice,' 'our culture,' and 'valuable tradition' refer to coca chewing. These descriptions exemplify the cultural value attached to coca by the indigenous communities in Bolivia. Hence, a cultural turn is discernible in the discourse in comparison to the discourse articulated in the 1961 Single Convention. Morales writes that 'Any attempt to prohibit it [the chewing of coca] would be a direct affront to the Bolivian people.'[137] He posed the values of the Bolivian population in diametrical opposition to the values articulated in the 1961 Single Convention. In this manner, he questioned the legitimacy and status of the Convention as a mechanism of 'truth.'

Morales expressed his concern over the INCB report, 'in which they urge my country to adopt measures to abolish or prohibit the use of coca leaf in its traditional, ancestral and medicinal forms, ignoring the observations already presented by Bolivia on the subject.' Two elements are noteworthy here. Firstly, Morales highlighted how the observations of Bolivia have been ignored. This could mean that the knowledge of the Bolivian population on the subject is not ought to be legitimate, and the population not valued in its status as 'truth holder.' Secondly, Morales referred to the 'traditional, ancestral and medicinal forms' of the coca leaf, with which he covers both a cultural discourse and a scientific discourse, hereby challenging the discourse of coca merely being a dangerous drug. In addition to blaming the INCB members for their ignorance, Morales argued that 'they [the INCB] also denote a colonialist and

[134] ''Long life to coca leaf!'' *Transnational Institute* 13 March 2008. Retrieved from: http://www.undrugcontrol.info/images/stories/documents/fernandez-en.pdf. Last accessed on 22-05-2021.
[135] ''Long life to coca leaf!'' *Transnational Institute.*
[136] Ibidem.
[137] Ibidem.

segregationist attitude lacking in scientific basis […]. Bolivian cultural practice and legal system recognise the ancestral nature of the lawful use of coca leaf.' The Bolivian president expressed his critique on the INCB as a colonialist institution. By implying that the INCB had a 'colonialist attitude,' Morales depicted the Bolivian population as the colonised party. Thus, the discourse Morales articulates is focusing on the cultural value of the coca leaf, while emphasising the ignorance and colonial attitude of the INCB. In fact, Morales was using a 'decolonialist' discourse and focusing on the position of Bolivia as anti-hegemonic. In this anti-hegemonic discourse, Morales denounced the unilateral certifications or impositions from foreign governments.[138] He announced Bolivia's rejection of the INCB report. In a way, Morales politically isolated himself from the hegemonic powers, viewing the national and cultural interests of the Bolivian population as the most important issue.

Speech Morales in Vienna, 2009

Morales was present at the 52nd high-level Segment Conference of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations, in Vienna. During his speech, Morales chewed on coca leaves. Holding a coca leaf in his hand, he proclaimed the following 'I want to tell you that this is the coca leaf. That this is no cocaine. This coca leaf is part of a culture. This is the coca leaf, not a narcotic.'[139] The active distinction between the coca leaf and the drug cocaine was quintessential to the nature of the speech. Morales stressed that the Bolivian population was not taking part in the culture of cocaine: 'We are not the culture of cocaine.'[140]

The cultural aspect of the coca leaf was emphasised in various instances. Firstly, Morales collectivised the phenomenon of coca chewing through addressing other countries in the Andean region chewing coca and devoted attention to the indigenous names of coca chewing, hereby highlighting the practice and its importance for other nations. During his speech, he was speaking in terms of 'we,' when referring to cocaine culture for example: 'We do not take part, we repudiate.'[141] Moreover, Morales mentioned the declaration of the coca leaf being cultural patrimony, which protected ancestral coca. Due to the fact that this was included in the constitution, a constant violation of the 1961 Single Convention was taking

[138] ''Long life to coca leaf!'' *Transnational Institute.*
[139] ''Chewing coca at the UN,'' *Drug reporter*. Retrieved from: https://drogriporter.hu/en/chewing-coca-at-the-un/. Last accessed on 21-05-2021.
Author's own translation. Original: 'Quiero decirles que esta es la hoja de coca. Que esto no es cocaína. Esta hoja de coca es parte de una cultura. Esto es hoja de coca, que no es estupefaciente,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN.''
[140] Author's own translation. Original: 'No somos la cultura de la cocaína,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN.''
[141] Author's own translation. Original: 'No compartimos, repudiamos,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN.''

place: 'If this mistake is not corrected, we will be criminals in the eyes of international law.'[142] The legal challenge signalled a direct confrontation between the Bolivian Constitution and the 1961 Single Convention. Regarding the discourse and regime of truth, two conflicting 'mechanisms' are of importance, which enable one to distinguish true from false statements. While, on the one hand, the coca leaf was criminalised by the UN, on the other hand, it is regarded as cultural patrimony by the Bolivian constitution. These conflicting mechanisms result in conflicting regimes of truth. Additionally, the president recalled the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the UNESCO Declaration on the Andean Cosmovision of the Kallawaya People as mechanisms that were valued in the acquisition of truth. Morales' regime of truth on the coca leaf relied on different institutions that were able to shape certain beliefs.

In the speech a counter-hegemonic discourse was articulated on behalf of the peasantry class and indigenous communities. Morales identified himself as a coca farmer as he proclaimed: 'I am the producer of this coca leaf. Being its producer, does not make me a drugs dealer.'[143] By stating with the phrase 'I am the producer of this coca leaf,' Morales was taking responsibility over his act and challenging the implemented practice of the 1961 Single Convention, which the international society perceived as legitimate. A mixture of popular and political discourse is typifying Morales' speech: on the one hand he is positioning himself as a coca farmer. On the other hand, he was the Bolivian president and posed a legal challenge to the 1961 Single Convention. The exploitation of the coca leaf as a means to serve and unite the Bolivian population is also clear when he says 'I have the responsibility to defend an identity, a coca leaf, a plant.'[144]

Morales attacked the 1950 Report of Enquiry on the Coca leaf, arguing that cultural prejudices in this report had the upper hand in the formation of the 1961 Single Convention. Moreover, he articulated an alternative medical scientific discourse when treating the question of whether coca causes malnutrition: '[...]it is not harming human health. The coca leaf does not do any harm to human health in its natural state' and 'In its natural state, it is a medicine.'[145]

[142] Original: 'Si no se corrige este error, seamos criminales en los ojos del derecho internacional,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN,'' *Drug reporter*. Retrieved from: https://drogriporter.hu/en/chewing-coca-at-the-un/. Last accessed on 21-05-2021.
[143] Author's own translation. Original: 'Yo soy productor de esta hoja de coca. No por productor, soy narcotraficante,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN.'' .
[144] Author's own translation. Original: 'Tengo una responsabilidad defender una identidad, una hoja de coca, una planta,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN.''
[145] Author's own translation. Original: 'Que no es dañado por la salud humana, No causa ningún daño a la salud humana, la hoja de coca, en su estado natural.' And 'En su estado natural es medicina,' in: ''Chewing coca at the UN.''

Thus, the scientific information as it was presented in 1950 was not true and should be rejected according to Morales. Instead, Morales proposed an alternative scientific discourse in which coca should be seen as a medicine.

Concluding remarks

In his speech, Morales was challenging the very foundation of international drug control, the 1961 Single Convention, through carrying out an illegal act, namely coca chewing. Additionally, he articulated a type of discourse that opposed the beliefs that were displayed in the 1961 Single Convention. The focus of Morales' speech was placed on the right to express cultural beliefs and values, rather than on a critique of the international drug control regime. He stressed the cultural aspects of the coca leaf and how this leaf created social cohesion among the Bolivian population. Morales emphasised his own participation in this cultural tradition. Through the use of personal examples, Morales intended to bridge the dominant political discourse on coca and to create a different truth about the leaf. In doing so, he rejected the mechanisms that were seen as credible by the international society, but rather proposed the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the UNESCO Declaration on the Andean Cosmovision of the Kallawaya. Hence, different knowledge and different institutions are fundamental to Morales' attempt to challenge the hegemonic discourse on the coca leaf.

Letter to secretary general Ban-Ki Moon

On March 12, 2009, one day after the 2009 speech discussed previously, Evo Morales asked the secretary general of the UN in a letter to revise the inclusion of the coca leaf in category I of the 1961 Single Convention. Whilst doing so, he referred to the importance of the coca leaf in Bolivian culture and identity: 'The chewing of coca is an ancestral and ancient practice of the indigenous peoples in the Andean region that cannot nor should be prohibited.[146] […] The chewing is part of socio-cultural practices and rituals of the Andean indigenous communities. It is intimately connected to our history and cultural identity.'[147] The coca leaf was described as an ancestral practice that is integral to the identity of indigenous Andean people, which challenges the definition of the coca leaf as a narcotic drug. By using the phrase 'our history'

[146] Author's own translation. Original: 'La masticación de la hoja de coca es una práctica ancestral y milenaria de los pueblos indígenas andinos que no puede ni debe ser prohibida,' in: ''Letter Evo Morales to Ban-Ki Moon,'' March 12, 2009. Retrieved from: https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/carta-evo.pdf.
[147] Author's own translation. Original: 'El masticado […] es parte de las practicas socio-culturales y rituales de los pueblos indígenas andinos. Esta íntimamente ligado con nuestra historia e identidad cultural,' in: ''Letter Evo Morales to Ban-Ki Moon.''

Morales constructed the coca leaf as an inherent part of the Bolivian population and their identity.

The 1961 Single Convention and its premises on coca being an addiction were confronted: 'The objective regarding narcotics of the 1961 [Convention] is to control the use of illicit narcotics, not to prohibit 'habits,' nor socio-cultural practices that do not harm human health.'[148] Morales underscores that coca chewing is a habit, and that the purpose of the 1961 Single Convention was not to prohibit cultural habits, but to reduce the use of narcotic drugs. The cultural aspect of this argument tried to actively make a distinction between the chewing of the coca leaf and the use of drugs: 'The chewing of coca is not equal to the consumption of cocaine.'[149] By constantly making this distinction and by stressing the ancestral and sacred value of the coca leaf, Morales intended to 'fix' the discourse on coca.

Concluding remarks

Similar to Morales' speech in Vienna, this letter mostly focused on the construction of coca being cultural property rather than a narcotic drug. Through the emphasis on the cultural value, social practice and indigenous rituals, Morales aimed to change the discourse that was regarded as 'true' around the coca leaf. Moreover, he used his position as president of the Bolivian Republic and the status that came along with this position as an argument for the validity of his claims. Morales was building on indigenous knowledge and challenged the supposed scientific truth on the leaf. As has been discussed in the methodology, this is with the intention of challenging the hegemonic discourse about the coca leaf, and, subsequently, the relations of power that institutionalised this prohibition. The dichotomy between these two perceptions constantly causes a normative conflict.

[148] Author's own translation. Original: 'El objetivo […] sobre Estupefacientes de 1961 es el de fiscalizar el uso indebido de estupefacientes y no de prohibir ''hábitos'', ni practicas socio culturales que no hacen daño a la salud humana,' in: ''Letter Evo Morales to Ban-Ki Moon.''

[149] Author's own translation. Original: 'Mascar coca no significa consumir cocaína,' in: ''Letter Evo Morales to Ban-Ki Moon.''

Conclusion

How has the discourse around the (Bolivian) coca leaf been mediated by the international drug control regime and the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) in Bolivia?

This thesis has contributed to the academic debate by investigating what knowledge and which power relations have shaped the meaning attached to the coca leaf. While the existing literature focuses on explaining how coca became classified as 'good' or 'bad' in the first place, this thesis aimed to provide insight into the different kinds of knowledge that have shaped the meaning of the coca leaf and, additionally, insight into the making and un-making of the perception of coca leaf as being a 'drug.'

In the first chapter, this study has presented a number of findings. Most importantly, racial premises that were common in 1947, have heavily influenced scientific discourse. Influenced by the work of Gutierrez-Noriega, social Darwinism has had a significant impact on the outcome of the 1950 Enquiry on the Coca Leaf, as Gutierrez-Noriega was considered an authority in the field. Connecting this to the concepts of race, modern doctrines indeed replicated certain civilisational discourse, which subsequently influenced the discourse around coca and the people chewing it. Consequently, these ideas have been the basis for the 1961 Single Convention. However, the Convention did not solely rely on racial premises; power politics and US influence have been significant as well. The 1961 Single Convention had the chance to serve as a truth-mechanism, because of the value that was attributed to the Convention by the US. The influence of large institutions on the possibility to construct the truth is also visible in the US influence on the WHO in 1995: the very fact national representatives can influence international institutions such as the WHO not to publish a new 'truth' affirms the constructed nature social reality. Thus, while racial premises have influenced scientific discourse, representatives of the US using the 'malevolent substances' metaphor influenced political discourse about the coca leaf in the UN. Nonetheless, the MAS' discourse about the coca leaf has been mediated by cultural and identity politics and has transformed the leaf to a celebrated (national) substance. In an attempt to nationalise Bolivian politics based on notions of *indigenismo,* Morales has used a discourse that focused on uniting the population. This is exemplified by the condemnation of impositions from foreign governments and by the constant emphasis on the importance of the coca leaf for the Bolivian people.

This thesis has sought to emphasise these subjugated discourses and, subsequently, give agency to the national governments of countries that generally enjoy less discursive power in the international community. However, a weakness in this investigation is the deficit of sources between 1961 and 1995. For a more profound understanding of the mediation of discourse concerning coca, it would be recommendable to use sources that cover the period between 1961 and 2008, in order to attain broader understanding of the complexity of the issue. Ultimately, the depth of the issue and the cultural sensitivity of the coca leaf in Bolivia are difficult to capture. Investigating the sentiments toward the coca leaf in Bolivia provides a fertile ground for a follow-up investigation, in order to better understand the impact of the coca leaf on Bolivian culture and the importance of this cultural issue within the international community.

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