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**OPIUM EVIL OR OPIUM ESSENTIAL? THE GEOPOLITICS OF  
DRUG CONTROL FROM 1909-1961**

JOE THOROGOOD

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT,  
UCL

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## Declaration

I, Joe Thorogood, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own.

Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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## Abstract

This thesis examines the international narcotics trade from 1909-1961. The focus is on the United States' role in shaping the international drug machinery at both the League of Nations and United Nations.

Its original contribution is threefold. First, it uses critical geopolitical theory to provide a diplomatic history that does not solely rely on the accounts of important diplomats. It expands the focus to include American discourses about narcotics, and how these helped the US develop a geonarcotic subjectivity of a victim of, and warrior against, the opium evil. Second, it supplements this traditional geopolitical analysis with a materialist analysis of the narcotics themselves. It uses assemblage theory to circumvent the problematic conceptualisation of narcotics as either legal or illegal and highlight the capacities of narcotics, specifically their diplomatic uses. Third, it offers an original empirical account of the heretofore unexamined Opium Determination Programme that the United Nations and the US ran from the mid-1940s to 1960s. Finally, it provides a novel methodological way of studying historical, geopolitical objects by focussing on the technical documents that were produced about them.

Ultimately, it provides geographers with conceptual and methodological tools that shift the focus from studying high ranking, plenipotentiary delegates to the objects that they try to regulate. By defining objects by their capacities and interactions in assemblages, rather than as legal or illegal commodities, we can appreciate the multiple ways they help or hinder diplomatic progress.

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## Key measurements

Opium measurement	Equal to weight in grains	Equal to weight in Kg
1 grain	1	0.00006479891
1 tael <sup>1</sup>	0.00171429	0.0377994
1-pound avoirdupois <sup>2</sup>	7,000	0.4535924
1 chest of raw opium	1120000	72.57478

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<sup>1</sup> The tael was a measurement of silver (from the Hindu word *tola*). The problem with the tael was its inability to be applied uniformly across China. There were 43 different exchange rates listed for the tael by 1923.

<sup>2</sup> Since 1959, the avoirdupois pound has been officially defined in most English-speaking countries as 0.45359237 kg.

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## Acronyms

AOB: Anti-Opium Information Bureau, LoN

CND: Commission on Narcotic Drugs, UN

DND: Division of Narcotic Drugs, UN

DSB: Drugs Supervisory Body, LoN/UN

FBN: Federal Bureau of Narcotics, US

FPA: Foreign Policy Association, US

GDTR: Global Drugs Treaty Regime, UN

INCB: International Narcotics Central Board, UN

IOM: International Opium Monopoly, UN

LoC: Library of Congress

LoN: League of Nations

NARA: National Archives and Records Administration, US

OAC: Opium Advisory Committee, LoN

ODP: Opium Determination Program, UN/US

PCOB: Permanent Central Opium Board, LoN

RG: Record Group, US

UN: United Nations

WNDA: World Narcotic Defence Association, US

## Introduction

The United States Bullion Depository, or Fort Knox, did not just hold gold bullion. Built in 1936, Fort Knox was also a sanctuary for precious items during wartime. It was home to the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, the Magna Carta, and the Crown of Saint Stephen, part of the Hungarian Crown Jewels, during the Second World War. Apart from one group of journalists in 1974, no member of the public has ever entered the vaults. Nor would they be able to without permission; Apache helicopters and the United States Army and Mint Police are just two of the obstacles awaiting trespassers.

If one were to somehow slip into Fort Knox, prior to 1993, among the racks of glinting gold bars they would stumble across treasures of a chemical nature: narcotics. Narcotics were so vital to the security of the United States that they were stored with some of the most hallowed treasures of the Western World, in the world's most secure vault. While no official figure has even been disclosed,<sup>1</sup> chests of processed opium and morphine were held in the vaults throughout the Second World War and Cold War. There were also supplies in the Treasury Department's vaults in Washington DC. These narcotics safeguarded the United States lest it was cut off from the international legal market.<sup>2</sup>

What made these chemicals so important that they were kept alongside bullion and the world's most important artefacts? A traditional answer is that these narcotics ensured that American civilians and troops could access pain relief when they needed it. During wartime, these medicaments were of vital value because of their palliative properties: they dulled pain and saved lives.

But therein lies a problem. In Fort Knox, there were far too many narcotics for the needs of American troops and citizens. Even more perplexing is that officials knew of this surplus and actively encouraged it. At the start of World War Two, the US Commissioner of Narcotics was boasting that the US could supply Canada, Mexico, and many European nations with the narcotics they held.

To understand why the Commissioner celebrated this surplus we cannot just think of narcotics in terms of their analgesic properties, but also their capacities as commodities. By this, I refer to their ability to become more than simple painkillers. As they sat in Fort Knox, inert and unused, they influenced the diplomatic relations between the US and its allies. By stockpiling most of the world's legal narcotics, the US became the world's biggest legal drug dealer. It used narcotics to leverage other nations towards stricter policies that tackled the illicit – at least by American standards – trade in opium.<sup>3</sup>

### Context of study

This vignette demonstrates a critical point for this thesis: narcotics are complex and varied substances that can be used for a variety of purposes. Coole and Frost contend that 'thinking anew about the fundamental structure of matter has far-reaching normative and existential implications'.<sup>4</sup> What might these far-reaching implications be for critical geopolitics and drug diplomacy?

In this thesis, I elucidate the variety of ways that narcotics became 'geopolitical', whether through their value as material bargaining chips around the conference table in Geneva, or as discursive weapons of war used by enemies of the US. I also show how the materiality of opium and its derivatives contributed to the geopolitical subjectivity of the United States as both a champion of prohibition

and deft international procurer of medicines. I pay more attention to the substances themselves rather than those who policed and legislated them. The few studies linking narcotics to diplomacy have focussed on the negotiations between high ranking diplomats involved in establishing twentieth-century legislation.<sup>5</sup> Other studies have been directed entirely towards these individuals and their egos.<sup>6</sup> We know much about the 'grand old men' of drug control and how they squabbled and connived their way to sit atop the Poppy Throne (the head of the League of Nations' Permanent Central Opium Board/ United Nations Drug Supervisory Body), but less about the role of the substances.

Anyone who has been hospitalised for severe pain knows that opioids are the most effective treatment against intense, short-term suffering. But they can do much more than this, depending on who is using them and for what purpose. Much of the geographical literature on narcotics is on their illicit and illegal uses. In the discipline of political geography, critical work on drugs has tended towards the geography and agriculture of illegal drug crops.<sup>7</sup> This is also true of historical geography; most research has focussed on times after the watershed date of 1971 when Richard Nixon famously declared a 'War on Drugs'. Most of our understanding of the history of narcotics and international relations comes from the battles diplomats waged against drug abuse and illegal drug production.

For historians studying the early twentieth-century, however, it proves impossible to distinguish between licit and illicit substances, defined here as what is culturally, morally and in this case, geopolitically acceptable. In the first half of the twentieth-century, the proponents of drug prohibition had to establish cultural taboos around certain types of drug use before they could be formally designated as illegal under American or international law.

These laws worked well. Historians have shown that global narcotic production decreased from 1909-1961.<sup>8</sup> But early diplomats did not wish for a 'drug-free world', to use the language of the 1998 United Nations Special Session on Narcotic Drugs. While reduction was the over-arching goal, the legal production and trade in opium, opiates and opioids was invaluable and often in jeopardy during wartime. Because of their value, narcotics travelled. They had geographies that spanned international borders. As vital war materials, nations tried to rigorously control their production. In the early years of drug diplomacy, delegations wrestled for control of the legal market, as this was often more important than suppressing the illegal market.

This geographical component, particularly the source nation of the narcotic and the country which it was consumed or seized within, contributed to the geopolitical subjectivity of the nations that grew, traded, manufactured, seized, stockpiled, and consumed narcotics. It is only recently that scholars have developed theoretical and analytical tools that allow us to scrutinise the role that materials – the narcotics themselves – play in making a country a producer, consumer, or manufacturing nation.

Today, geopolitical subjectivities based on drugs matter just as much as they did in the early twentieth-century. In 2008, *The Guardian* newspaper declared Guinea-Bissau Africa's first narco-state due to its role in the trafficking of cocaine into Europe.<sup>9</sup> While we know much about how the press characterises countries through their illegal drug trades, we know much less about how countries develop geopolitical subjectivities based on their role in the legal trade.

## Statement of problem

Consider for a moment why the Commissioner of Narcotics kept those chests of morphine in Fort Knox rather than drugstore safes across the United States.

One reason resides in the capacities of these medicines to *become* illegal if placed in the wrong hands. During the first half of the twentieth-century, those pushing for drug prohibition worried just as much about companies who might divert medicines into the black-market as farmers who grew narcotics specifically for it. Another reason for strict security is the economic value of narcotics. The value of the stored opium in Fort Knox rose from \$5 million in 1960 to \$17 million in 1978.<sup>10</sup> But they also had geopolitical value: narcotics were tools of diplomacy, particularly during conflict, and the US government did much to maintain a firm grasp on their supply.

Ultimately, I suggest that the problem with current histories of drug control is that they conceptualise narcotics as inert substances. When we think about what narcotics could *do*, as opposed to what they *were*, a whole new approach to the history of drug diplomacy emerges. The few studies of the history of drug control before 1961 have shown that narcotics were valuable, but they have not adequately theorised how their value affected and altered the decisions of delegates and diplomats. Much of our understanding of drug diplomacy rests on the people who brought about the laws that controlled them, rather than the geography and materiality of these substances as both contraband and commodities. The trouble with this approach is that it focuses on individual moments of policy change rather than gradual shifts towards new configurations of public attitude, legislation, and material changes in substances. My contribution is to use assemblage theory and critical geopolitics to think through narcotics as becoming and relational.

When using the term theory to describe assemblage, I do not refer to a well-defined, coherent body of work, nor a sound set of methodological principles for those looking to apply assemblage. I use the term to describe the variety of approaches – the toolbox of concepts – that scholars who are inspired by Deleuze and Guattari’s work have adopted.<sup>11</sup> In combining these two theories, I argue the legal trade in narcotics was equally, if not more, important to the American diplomats than their efforts to stamp out illegal smuggling and trafficking.

Studies in critical geopolitics are concerned with the ways that nations come to understand one another through popular culture (popular geopolitics), their statecraft (practical geopolitics), and academic and professional tracts (formal geopolitics). Recently, feminist scholars have sought to shift geopolitics away from the study of high-ranking (predominantly male) diplomats and world leaders who have shaped the course of history. In doing so, they have focussed on other actors who contribute to geopolitical discourse, problematising the idea of the ‘national interest’. This is an emergent, changing set of values rather than an ideal articulated and pursued by a president, diplomat, or department charged with foreign affairs. What’s more, this national interest emerges from the circulation of objects, practices, and affects. The number of actors involved in geopolitics can be expanded further to include non-human actants. Scholars have started to interrogate the role that seemingly inert and benign materials play in international events.<sup>12</sup> They conceptualise materials as multiple and characterised by their capacities to be ‘plugged into’ new situations that lead to new configurations of diplomacy. These approaches have not yet made their way into the history of drug control, which is still dominated by ‘diplomatic

heavies' who clashed at the League of Nations and United Nations headquarters in Geneva and New York.

I focus on two under-examined areas of drug control to explore how the American push for prohibition can be reconceptualised as emergent. These areas are the discourses concerning the geography of narcotic markets, and the technical governance of narcotics in international settings. These areas yield new insights into diplomatic practice and wider geopolitics. For example, regulating the medicinal capacities of narcotics was far more successful enterprise and an example of international coordination than any attempt to stifle their illicit uses. Today, ensuring hospitals are fully stocked with morphine (at least in the Western World is a principle that is so readily agreed upon that it is barely worth comment. Progress has, however, faltered miserably in the developing world where a 'tragedy of needless pain' persists.<sup>13</sup> Excruciating and needless pain is, as Taylor suggests, an area where there has been no scholarly consideration of how 'the global drug regulatory environment, ... international law and international institutions either interfere with or can contribute to national efforts to strengthen pain management'.<sup>14</sup> Legal drugs, particularly analgesics, have been neglected by geographers and historians in favour of their sexier, illegal counterparts.

### Research questions: aim and scope

My project consists of three research questions.

- A. What is the relationship between geonarcotic discourses and geopolitical agendas from 1909-1961?
- B. How did the materiality of narcotics shape American attempts to create international narcotic legislation?



C. How did the same materiality confound attempts to know and determine narcotics?

The first question analyses how a division between licit and illicit drugs was crafted and popularised. From 1909, it took the world 52 years to agree on the simple principle that the legitimate and legal uses of narcotics should be for scientific research and genuine pain only. The US pushed for the prohibition of every type of drug use that was not for medical or scientific purposes. Narcotics had to become illicit before the United Nations could enshrine this principle in international law. Wider geopolitical concerns, particularly the Second World War and the Cold War, enhanced this desire. By examining the geographical dimensions of the discourse of the opium evil, I show how certain uses of drugs became illicit and then illegal.

The second question examines the American attempts to repress the international flows of illicit drugs (prohibition) *while* ensuring the adequate circulation of narcotics like those stored in Fort Knox (provision). My aim is to show how American drug diplomacy was also shaped by legal narcotics as well as by discourses about foreign dope and domestic drug abuse. I show that narcotics, through their changing chemistry (opium to opiates to opioids), played significant roles at the League of Nations and UN.

The third question explores how the biogeographical chemistry of narcotics hampered the desires of American diplomats who pushed for international drug law that promoted deterrence and supply control at the source of production. The three examples used to tell this story are the international schedules of drug control, the so-called 'Poppy Rebellion' of 1942, and the scientific tests

designed by chemists in US and UN to prove the geographic origin of illegal narcotics.

At the heart of this study are two presuppositions. First is that geopolitics played a central role in the development of illicit/licit narcotic discourse. When using the term 'geopolitical', I refer traditional understandings of geopolitics in an international arena where nations are sovereign, alliances are contingent and dissolvable, and enemies are shifting and emergent. I then subject this to a critical understanding, exploring how geopolitical subjectivities developed in relation to foreign policy, political agendas, international relations, and technological changes in the production of narcotics. Drawing on other scholars, I describe the discourses that are based on the origin of narcotics as geonarcotic.

Second, is that studying the relations between human and non-human actors helps scholars understand how geopolitical 'subjects' emerge. This moves away from explaining the US' diplomatic actions by recourse to structural forces or individual agency. Of course, in international fora, countries send delegates with powers plenipotentiary to represent their country, but it is from the assemblage of both human and non-human elements that the twentieth-century identities emerged: producer, manufacturing, and consumer nations. In drug diplomacy, geopolitical subjectivities are the performative identities that a nation adopts. They are constituted by the relationship a nation has with other nations, but also the drug crops it cultivates, or drugs it manufactures and consumes. Most importantly, geopolitical subjectivities are not fixed. My focus is on how changes in the drugs, or technologies of drug production lead to changes in the geopolitical subjectivity, and diplomatic decisions, of a particular country.

An analogy from the medical sciences will demonstrate the point. Research into the science of addiction has shown that the way a drug affects an individual is often dependent upon the 'set and setting' within which drugs are consumed.<sup>15</sup> A substance will tend to cause a predictable, pharmacological effect, but this effect is enhanced or diminished by set and setting. Set refers to the immediate environment of the user: a nightclub, an alleyway, or a hospital. Setting refers to the wider contextual factors: an individual's happiness, previous history of addiction, and outlook on life. This research states that an individual's unique set and setting influence the experience and effects of consuming drugs just as much as the substance itself. A pre-determined subjectivity of an addict, recreational user, or patient cannot capture this nuance. An individual can be all three.

I examine the geopolitical 'set and setting' of narcotic drugs and how they affected the international system and US. The geopolitical set is the immediate international relations at a specific point in time, and the wider foreign policy agendas are the geopolitical setting. Changes in these variables affected the geopolitical subjectivity of a nation. I use the framework of assemblage theory to conceptualise this ability to be affected. Assemblages are open, dynamic systems that are only ever provisionally stable. They are defined not by the things (people, ideas, materials, and affects) that make (or assemble) them, but rather by the relationships, or capacities that elements have with one another. New elements may come and go, giving the assemblage more stability (territorialisation) or less stability that leads to an entirely new configuration or set of behaviours (deterritorialisation). Changes to an assemblage may also make it more coherent (coded) and less coherent (decoded). Most importantly, assemblages are never fixed, but continually becoming. The geopolitical

subjectivity in question, (the United States and its vision of strict, supply-based drug control) is conceptualised as an assemblage to reveal the many forces (both human and non-human) that constituted it. I conceive of the international system in the same way, and the relationship between these two assemblages is of critical interest. While my project does not dispense with the ‘grand old men’ (and occasionally, women) of drug control, it avoids inscribing them with too much agency or construing them as the ultimate arbiters of drug diplomacy. Where I do focus on individuals, it is on a small cadre of individuals who engaged with narcotics in creative ways to further their vision of drug control. At times, this was at odds with the international system, or even their own government.

In Dittmer’s study of geopolitical assemblages, diplomats are multivalent; they work between their government position and the international system.<sup>16</sup> I extend this idea to the narcotics. Narcotics were also multivalent. They were *simultaneously* vices to be eradicated and vital commodities to be stockpiled. Attending to these multiple materialities requires a supplementary approach that is sensitive to the connections narcotics make with the policies, chemists, and diplomats that regulated them. I do not view narcotics as functioning parts of a larger whole of drug development, but instead, see them as ‘particulars’ involved with partial totalities.<sup>17</sup> To do this, I nuance assemblage theory with insights from Andrew Barry’s work on informed materials and technological zones. His work focuses on processes that try to close down debates and manage disputes about materials. This is useful for thinking through the technical governance of narcotics.

## Significance of study

Putting narcotics at the centre of my study yields empirical and theoretical significance for geographers in four different ways. First, I undertake a traditional 'critical geopolitical' analysis of American diplomats and portrayal of the international system and trade. This has not yet been undertaken by scholars of critical geopolitics. The geography of early-mid twentieth-century drug control remains underexamined, as does the conceptualisation of narcotics. I show how US print media portrayed narcotics as biochemical weapons of war that were thrust upon hapless populations by foreign foes that rendered them vulnerable to imperial conquest. I argue that the opium evil discourse discursively shaped the geopolitical subjectivities of producer, consumer, and manufacturing nations. In this way, narcotics became geopolitical, and their addictive tendencies overshadowed their uses as critical medicines in the popular press.

Second, I introduce the term 'diplomatic opium'. This term defines licit opium and morphine as critical war materials that were stockpiled and traded in exchange for support for American-style drug policies; it shows how geopolitics became narcoticised. By showing how the US developed a geopolitical subjectivity that was plural – as stockpilers of medicines and as champions of prohibition, I demonstrate how assemblage theory can be used to explain how the US orientated itself *vis-à-vis* the international system. As the century progressed, more nations agreed to the US-authored approach to control at the source of crop production rather than on high demand and consumption. Diplomatic opium was central to this task, yet the role of substances, technologies, and advances in the new science of chemistry remain under-

theorised. The concept is useful for geographers who study drugs but struggle to theorise substances beyond their legality.

Third, I show how chemists, politicians, and United Nations staff placed their faith in chemical analyses of seized opium. By the 1950s, a range of scientists were working on what I term the 'Opium Determination Program (ODP).<sup>18</sup> They developed a set of tests to determine the origin of seized narcotics. While American chemists, scientists, and bureaucrats never indicated that these experiments would be used to accuse other nations falling afoul of their international obligations,<sup>19</sup> there was an unspoken hope they might provide concrete proof for this purpose. For American diplomats and prohibition mavens, the ODP represented the quest for the ultimate control at the source of drug production: irrefutable chemical evidence of a nation's failure to block leakages from its borders. I show how a misunderstanding of the materiality of narcotics caused this programme to fail. The technical governance of objects is often overlooked in political and historical geography. This contribution is both theoretical and empirical. To my knowledge, this part of drug control has never been written about before.

Fourth, I show how assemblage theory can be applied to archival research to better understand geopolitical commodities and subjectivities. This framework leads to an alternative methodological approach to archival data. I argue technical documents and obscure diplomatic debates about the chemistry of narcotics reveal much about the actual practice of drug diplomacy.

Ultimately, I hope to open drug diplomacy to scholars in critical geopolitics, encouraging researchers to forgo a narrow focus on the illegality of substances and instead use materialist approaches to analyse how substances are

controlled, regulated, and tested for specific diplomatic purposes. As Dittmer reminds us, 'it remains for future researchers to look at completely deterritorialised geopolitical assemblages of the past'.<sup>20</sup> It is this challenge I take up in this thesis.

## Chapter structure

The literature review begins by examining geographical work on illegal substances. It highlights shortcomings, specifically the predominant focus on illegal drug use and production. It then outlines how critical geopolitics and assemblage theory help conceptualise the history of drug diplomacy.

The first empirical chapter provides a traditional history of drug diplomacy from 1900-1961. It documents the historical progression of drug diplomacy and the actions of key players. This can be read as a contextual control chapter. Each subsequent chapter adds a theoretical contribution that goes beyond the actions of diplomats wielding plenipotentiary powers.

The second chapter, drawing on the work of Kyle Grayson, develops the term 'geonarcotic discourse' to better understand how the opium evil influenced and shaped the geopolitical subjectivity of the US. It subjects drug diplomacy to a critical geopolitical perspective that emphasises the importance of popular geopolitics to diplomacy, and the US as a champion of prohibition.

Chapter three focuses on the narcotics and technologies of narcotic production, namely the invention of synthetic narcotic substances and the tactic of stockpiling narcotics (diplomatic opium). I show how diplomatic opium influenced both the decisions and strategies of diplomats, as well as international legislation. I also show the geopolitical subjectivity the US developed: that of a nation concerned with narcotic provision.

Finally, chapter four discusses American attempts to geographically determine the origin of opium seized at the US border through advances in organic chemistry. I also examine how the political technologies of drug scheduling and the US 1942 Opium Poppy Control Act tried to regulate the properties of narcotics. I pay attention to the way that uncertainty over what a narcotic 'was' influenced legislation and attempts to define and determine narcotics in the US.

Taken together, chapters two, three, and four include a broad range of actors and events that are not usually considered in international drug control (the pharmaceutical industry, Californian farmers, and various global conflicts).

These chapters present agency as distributed, not limited to individual human actors, but achieved by the connections made by different actants (human and non-human) in specific places and times. Each takes a different set of actants as its focus, showing how they deterritorialised and influenced the American and international drug control assemblages. The term actant stems from Aristotle, who, in his *Poetics*, tried to foreground events rather than the actions of individual characters.<sup>21</sup> The corollary of this approach is that I conceptualise drug control as a provisional and emergent achievement. This is as true today as it was one hundred years ago. Recent changes in efforts to decriminalise and legalise marijuana (now itself a material multiplicity that includes joints, edibles, medicines, and even beef-jerky) in the US show drug control is vulnerable to deterritorialisation when new ideas, objects, and humans assemble.

To surmise, my study is the material history of narcotic regulation, referring to opium and its derivatives in both semi-synthetic and synthetic forms, from 1909-1961. My country of focus is the United States, where much of the drive towards prohibitory drug policy began, and where I undertook most of my fieldwork. I



examine international legislation rather than domestic US law, only mentioning this where relevant. My assessment is not limited to the national or international sphere, but instead examines the interplay between the US and the League of Nations and the UN. This means focusing on the discursive and material elements of drug control as they emerged in the US and then influenced international proceedings. This leads me to areas of diplomacy that have been neglected by others, what Dittmer calls the 'small, the irregular, and the baroque'.<sup>22</sup> In my study, these are the new cultivation techniques, technological advances in the chemical sciences, and efforts to unlock the chemical codes that might divulge the geographical origin of smuggled opium.

I re-tell the history of drug diplomacy by adding a much needed 'flat ontology' to the topic. Sometimes changes in the assemblage led to the creation of unique events and entities, but more often than not, they regressed to relatively 'redundant orders and practices'.<sup>23</sup> I show how narcotics helped concretise the desires of American drug diplomats at the League of Nations and United Nations. Occasionally, I show how they hindered them. I do not examine how diplomats and politicians hammered out new paths for drug regulation, but rather how medicines, through their capacities and potentials to enrol new actors and organisations, territorialised and, infrequently, deterritorialised the world drug system towards new configurations.

Unlike Herbert May, the President of the League of Nation's Permanent Central Opium Board, I do not view narcotic control as an exemplary model of international cooperation. Nor do I view it as American drug diplomats in the 1930s did: as a sluggish puppet show run by the colonial powers. Each label is far too certain of the stability of the international system. Instead, I see it as

contingent, messy, and becoming. In other words, I show how geopolitics became narcoticised, and narcotics became geopolitical.

I conclude that thinking through the geopolitics of international drug control with assemblage theory helps to foreground a dynamic, emergent, and relational understanding of diplomatic progress. It also helps us think of narcotics as multiple, defined by their capacities rather than their properties. Narcotics were simultaneously medical, criminal, diplomatic, and scientific, depending upon who is interacting with them. Those who ordered the stockpiling at Fort Knox knew this.

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<sup>1</sup> John Collins puts the figure at 600,000 pounds. See Collins, J. (2015). *Regulations and prohibitions: Anglo-American relations and international drug control, 1939-1964*. PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

<sup>2</sup> The term narcotic is used throughout this thesis to refer to opium in all its forms, along with its semi-synthetic and synthetic derivatives.

<sup>3</sup> In this thesis I depart from traditional parlance that uses legal/licit and illegal/illicit interchangeably. From the US perspective, legality was clearly defined by medical and scientific usage only. I thus use legal to refer to a formal, legislative description of a commodity, and illicitness to refer to how accepted a type of narcotic use was.

<sup>4</sup> Coole, D.H. & Frost, S. (eds.). (2010). *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. Duke University Press, Durham NC.

<sup>5</sup> Studies that scrutinise narcotic legislation include Bewley-Taylor, D.R. (2012). *International drug control: Consensus fractured*. Cambridge University Press; McAllister, W.B. (2000). *Drug diplomacy in the twentieth-century: an international history*. Routledge, London; and Musto, D.F. (1999). *The American disease: Origins of narcotic control*. Oxford University Press. Oxford.

<sup>6</sup> Examples includes the well-known figure of Harry Anslinger. See for example, Kinder, D.C. (1981). Bureaucratic Cold Warrior: Harry J. Anslinger and Illicit Narcotics Traffic. *Pacific Historical Review* 50(2): 169–191.

<sup>7</sup> McCoy's (2003) *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade, Afghanistan, Southeast Asia, Central America*, Harper and Row, NY was an explosive book of geographical scholarship that made headlines on CIA action in Asia. Another key text is Steinberg, M.K., Hobbs, J.J. & Mathewson, K. (eds.). (2004). *Dangerous Harvest: Drug Plants and the Transformation of Indigenous Landscapes*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> From 1909-1937 the word consumption dropped from 30,000 tons to 16,600 tones. See UNODC. (2010). *A Century of International Drug Control* (Vol. 59). United Nations Publications, NY.

<sup>9</sup> Vulliamy, E. (2008) 'How a tiny West African country became the World's First Narco State, *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/mar/09/drugstrade>.

<sup>10</sup> 'US Strategic Stockpile goose feathers', June 9<sup>th</sup> 1980, *Washington Post*, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1980/06/09/us-strategic-stockpile-opium-goose-feathers/9cc9319d-49ef-4989-ab4c-b32fd1828566/?utm\\_term=.55c80a8aa1e5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1980/06/09/us-strategic-stockpile-opium-goose-feathers/9cc9319d-49ef-4989-ab4c-b32fd1828566/?utm_term=.55c80a8aa1e5).

<sup>11</sup> Many scholars have interpreted Deleuze and Guattari's work as a toolbox of concepts to be reinterpreted and reworked. See Colombat, A. P. (1991). A thousand trails to work with Deleuze. *SubStance*, 20(3): 10-23.

<sup>12</sup> For recent work on the use of materiality in political geography see Dittmer, J. (2014). Geopolitical assemblages and complexity. *Progress in Human Geography* 38(3): 385–401; Müller, M. (2015). Assemblages and Actor-networks: Rethinking Socio-material Power, Politics and Space. *Geography*

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*Compass* 9(1): 27–41; and Squire, V. (2014). Desert ‘trash’: Posthumanism, border struggles, and humanitarian politics. *Political Geography* 39: 11–21.

<sup>13</sup> Taylor, A.L. (2007). Addressing the global tragedy of needless pain: rethinking the United Nations single convention on narcotic drugs. *The Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics* 35(4): 556–570.

<sup>14</sup> Taylor, A.L. (2007). ‘Addressing the global tragedy of needless pain: rethinking the United Nations single convention on narcotic drugs’ p.556.

<sup>15</sup> For differing accounts and interpretations of set and setting see Peele, S. (2014). *Truth about addiction and recovery*. Simon and Schuster, NY; Zinberg, N.E. (1986). *Drug, set, and setting: The basis for controlled intoxicant use*. Yale University Press, CT.

<sup>16</sup> Dittmer, J. (2017). ‘Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage, and Foreign Policy’. Duke University Press, NC.

<sup>17</sup> Latour, B., Jensen, P., Venturini, T., Grauwin, S. & Boullier, D. (2012). ‘The whole is always smaller than its parts’—a digital test of Gabriel Tarde’s monads. *The British Journal of Sociology* 63(4): 590–615.

<sup>18</sup> Memorandum from Harry Anslinger, Commissioner of Narcotics, May 15<sup>th</sup> 1944, Record Group (hereafter RG) 170, National Archives Records Administration, College Park, Baltimore, MD (hereafter NARA) Box 63 Acc 170-74-4: Fulton Files (hereafter Fulton Files).

<sup>19</sup> Letter from Fulton to M.L Harney and Mr L. Steining, April 16<sup>th</sup> 1949, NARA RG 170 Box 63: Fulton Files

<sup>20</sup> Dittmer, J. (2017). ‘Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage, and Foreign Policy’ p.125.

<sup>21</sup> Peter Schouten discusses the term actant in more depth. See Schouten, P. (2014). Security as controversy: Reassembling security at Amsterdam Airport. *Security Dialogue* 45(1): 23–42.

<sup>22</sup> Dittmer, J. (2017). *Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage, and Foreign Policy*. Duke University Press, NC, p.5.

<sup>23</sup> Marston et al., (2005).have made a provocative critique of scale in human geography that has drawn on the ideas of a flat ontology. See Marston, S.A., Jones, J.P. & Woodward, K. (2005). Human geography without scale. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30(4): p.422.

## Literature Review

In this literature review, I do three things. First, I examine the relationship between geography and psychoactive substances, showing how geographers have provided useful but limited contributions that tend towards illegal substances. Second, I outline the theoretical blind spots in the literature on the history of narcotics, showing where it is anthropocentric. Third, I show how work already undertaken in critical geopolitics that draws on new materialism has built a new theoretical approach to diplomatic affairs. This approach is particularly useful for thinking through the importance of objects.

For each section, I provide a short summary paragraph (see below paragraph).

### Geographers on drugs: an overview

Geographers have made contributions to the field of drug studies, but they almost exclusively view substances through a narrow lens of legality. This has led to a disproportionate number of studies that focus on prohibition, trafficking, and the 'War on Drugs'. This ignores the importance of legal substances and has led to a focus on narcotic prohibition over the equally important issue of narcotic provision. When focusing on narcotic provision, we gain theoretical and empirical insights into the geopolitics of drug control.

A researcher taking a cursory glance at the field of drug studies could not help but feel intimidated. The literature on drugs abounds. Theories of addiction are endlessly debated<sup>1</sup> as are the changing public attitudes towards illegal substances.<sup>2</sup> Ethnographic insights range from the rank-and-

file conscripts of the drug war<sup>3</sup> to the corridors of the UN.<sup>4</sup> The field tracks some of the momentous changes occurring globally: the legalisation of coca leaves and marijuana in parts of North and South America and seismic changes in how drugs are researched and manufactured. The promise of new synthetic substances enthralls researchers<sup>5</sup> while simultaneously panicking law enforcement establishments. Activists, scientists, and medics alike discuss new policy approaches and the political opposition to them.<sup>6</sup>

Paul Gootenberg, in two review articles on different approaches to drug studies, brilliantly captured the interdisciplinary contributions made by the social sciences.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, he lamented the geographer as an 'endangered university species'.<sup>8</sup> While noting our limited contributions, Gootenberg did credit an explicitly geographical text, the edited collection *Dangerous Harvest*.<sup>9</sup> This book discusses why drug trafficking and cultivation happens in the interstices of the global capitalist system. It analyses the hinterlands, mountainous and remote regions of drug production, and links them to economic and social deprivation and the opium poppy and coca leaf's abilities to flourish in difficult geographical environments. It is classically geographical, combining human and physical interactions, to render a picture of why drug production occurs where it does.

Notwithstanding Gootenberg's warning about our meagre offerings, geographers have made other inroads into the study of drugs. Like Steinberg's volume and Gootenberg's reviews, their focus is almost exclusively on illegal substances. Recent tomes apply spatial models derived from studying multinational firms to drug cartels and street-level crime.<sup>10</sup>

Others use GIS to map addiction, mental health and care provision for those

abusing illegal drugs.<sup>11</sup> For example, Punch examines the problems of heroin consumption in Dublin in an era of urban change. He looks at how drug use influences housing, urban development, and stigmatisation.<sup>12</sup> Marcia England looks at drug using populations in Seattle and how they are segregated through city ordinance.<sup>13</sup>

Work on illegal supply and production is widespread, ranging from the role of narcotics in connecting Afghanistan to the globalised world to the relationship between drugs and communities in Brazil.<sup>14</sup> Pierre Chouvy's *'Opium'* documents opium markets in China (1949-1960), Iran (1955-1979), Turkey (1972), Pakistan (1979), and Afghanistan, Burma, and Laos in the late 1990s.<sup>15</sup> His sophisticated appraisal of supply reduction methods, from crop bans, crop spraying, and funding for alternative livelihoods highlights their mixed successes. Chouvy emphasises a geographical and historical fluidity to the production of illegal drug crops, explained by the subsistence lifestyles of growers and the lucrative crops they sell. Cohen develops this argument, citing the patchwork implementation of crop suppression policies and their limited funding. For Cohen, supply reduction results in a temporary reduction in one area, only to increase elsewhere, resulting in the mobile opium geographies of the last 50 years.<sup>16</sup> Gootenberg terms this the balloon effect, showing how it has forced cocaine north through South America.<sup>17</sup> Other geographers have concentrated on the failures of supply reduction chemicals in combatting cocaine's march north. Vargas explores how policymakers support the continued usage of Roundup™ to poison coca leaf.<sup>18</sup>

Within political geography, illegal drugs are factors in studies of borderlands,<sup>19</sup> migrant crossings at the Mexican-American border,<sup>20</sup> and

conflict resources.<sup>21</sup> Dominic Corva shows how policing drugs was militarised during the Reagan administration. Drawing on Foucault's notion of biopolitics, he explains how the police and military roles have been blurred by drug law. Corva argues neoliberal governance and bi-lateral aid has 'expanded police power and firepower' in Latin America.<sup>22</sup> The militarised police, funded by the American-led 'Plan Colombia', seeks to eradicate drug crops in Colombia. In doing so, police forces blur their domestic remit with wider, international goals of stopping transnational narcotic flows. Kyle Evered also links international relations to the domestic sphere via drug policy. He notes the American influence on Turkish drug prohibition in the 1970s. He describes the perspective of Anatolian poppy farmers and their response to a poppy crop ban that the Nixon administration encouraged in Turkey in the early 1970s.<sup>23</sup> Kyle Grayson uses the TV show *Breaking Bad* (a show about a chemistry teacher turned crystal methamphetamine dealer) to explore the aesthetic subject of *homo resilio*, or the resilient American who does not make demands upon the state.<sup>24</sup>

These studies demonstrate the value of geographical insights that explain how drugs (and the policies that suppress them) impact the trade. I argue that despite this work, there are two broad problem areas, one theoretical and one empirical, which continue to hamper the depth and breadth of research geographers undertake.

### The theoretical problems

The illegal trade dominates geographical work on drugs in geography. In a 2013 review piece, Taylor et al., concluded that geography's contributions to the trade in psychoactive substances were scattershot.<sup>25</sup> They suggested

that researchers from across the discipline with diverse agendas worked past one another on similar topics. I agree with Taylor et al., but cite different reasons for lack of cohesion. Taylor et al., exclude legal psychoactive substances from their review. They justify this by defining drugs as illicit, 'neither socially nor legally sanctioned by societies'.<sup>26</sup> They believe this is helpful for scholars studying drugs, as it brings their scope of study in line with popular understandings.

I do not believe this is true. In the United States, where I conducted my research, a citizen with a headache will not visit a pharmacy. They will visit a drug store. In that same country, legal drug abuse is itself a massive public health problem, often inextricably intertwined with the black-market. Taylor et al., are right to point to cultural forces that conflate illicitness with illegality, but by focussing on drugs as illicit and illegal, our understanding of what a substance can do is limited. The regulation of narcotics for medicinal purposes, as well as their wider diplomatic uses, remains woefully under-theorised. We do not yet have a conceptual framework that can adequately account for the ways drugs become licit, illicit, medical, dangerous, and, for my purposes, diplomatically useful.

For Reinerman, dividing drugs by their legality leads to pharmacological determinism.<sup>27</sup> This term explains how illegal substances become a common denominator for all things unsavoury and dangerous to normal, 'drug-free' individuals. His case study is the crack epidemic in the 1980's, and others have done the same with marijuana in the 1930s.<sup>28</sup> In both cases, the illegality of the substances was tied to their use in specific ethnic populations, leading to racist drug discourse. Others have shown how fear of the illegality



of a substance may obscure its health benefits. The 'English System' was a government-sanctioned policy of prescribing medical heroin to habitual users in the 1920s. While the UK no longer prescribes medical heroin for drug users, it prescribes diacetylmorphine, the active ingredient in heroin, to those in pain. In the United States, recreational and medical uses of heroin were banned in 1924. The substance was deemed too dangerous. Today, researchers use randomised control trials to compare diacetylmorphine with methadone treatments for opioid addiction.<sup>29</sup> In the UK, health professionals rightly panic when the supply of diacetylmorphine is threatened by shortages.<sup>30</sup>

A substance is therefore more flexible than the legal or illegal uses than researchers study. Forgetting the materiality of substances in favour of cultural definitions of legality or illicitness can encourage an unswerving faith in the infallibility of legal drugs, itself deemed a huge factor in the American opioid crisis.<sup>31</sup> 'When Good Drugs Go Bad' is the title of a recent exhibit at the Drug Enforcement Agency's museum headquarters in Virginia. It demonstrates this problem precisely. Historian Dan Malleck's book of the same name makes a similar, compelling argument. 'Opium is awesome ... opium is awe-inspiring...opium is terrifying' are the first three sentences of the first three paragraphs of his book.<sup>32</sup> In 2012 the USA prescribed enough legal opioids for every adult in the country to have a full bottle.<sup>33</sup> As the legal opioid epidemic and subsequent legislation cracked down on availability, there was a resurgence in the illegal opioids such as fentanyl and heroin being imported from Mexico. By focussing on illegality, geographers have neglected this issue. Outside of geography, examining where legal and

illegal substance abuse overlaps has become a critical area of research.

Researchers in the health sciences undertake spatial analyses of the opioid epidemic that do not discriminate by legality.<sup>34</sup>

The problem, as I see it, is that substances are defined by legality rather than their pharmacology and capacity to enter into new associations with different actors. As the definition of the term 'drug' tends to conjure up specific illegal substances rather than those that cause harm, substances that may qualify as a dangerous drug (for example, sugar) often escape regulation and scholarly focus the same way traditional drugs do. Since considering sugar as a dangerous, addictive substance that has a neurochemical impact on the brain, we have gained new insights into the substance's impact on public health.<sup>35</sup> For Malleck, a lack of nuance on the multiple registers within which opium is encountered leads to simplistic conclusions about current and historical drug control. He wrote *When Good Drugs go Bad* in response to activists who used historical arguments to argue early Canadian drug laws were racist from their inception. His study examines opium through racialised use and threats to the nation, through addiction in asylums, and most importantly for my project, through the proprietary use of narcotics. As he shows, there are many 'realms of understanding in which opium existed' during the 1800s.<sup>36</sup> This means he broadens his scope beyond traditional drug histories. He focuses on the changes in medicines themselves, but also the role of the pharmaceutical companies and local pharmacists. I transpose his approach into the US in the twentieth-century, but add two new realms: the laboratory and debating chambers in Geneva and New York.

A focus on central political figures at the expense of other (non)human actors

Histories of drug diplomacy deal with the international wrangling, big egos, and attitudes of key diplomats. *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth-century*, by historian William McAllister, is an exhaustive history of the squabbles, synergies, and sabre-rattling of various nations from the earliest days of international drug control from 1912 to 2000.<sup>37</sup> He draws attention to the cunning and deftness of American diplomats and their desire to regulate the licit drug trade at the source. He notes that disagreement between the Department of State and Federal Bureau of Narcotics revealed uncertainty over the extent to which complete prohibition was desirable among the US foreign policy community. He expertly navigates the archives to reveal corridor deals, secret cables, and telegrams that contributed to the American quest for global regulation of the legal trade and total repression of its illegal counterpart. In doing so, McAllister highlights the importance of diplomatic minutiae that geographers have only recently attended.<sup>38</sup> He also references global events, crediting both World Wars and the Cold War as having a substantial influence on drug diplomacy. Most usefully, he establishes a typology for the geopolitical subjectivities of countries. These subjectivities are based on the way drugs are used or made in in the international system. Producer nations cultivated raw opium, manufacturing nations who turned these into opiates (semi-synthetic), and opioids (synthetic), and consumer nations that imported them.

McAllister rightly argues that 'studying the history of drug regulation in the global arena provides a frame through which one catches an illuminating glimpse of the modern world'.<sup>39</sup> His nod to the importance of these different

geopolitical subjectivities, however, pays little attention to the substances themselves, nor does he examine how the geopolitical subjectivities he identifies were created and performed. He refers to the role of public opinion, but does not expound upon how the US press decried narcotics as terrible chemical weapons of war visited upon the Chinese by the imperial Japanese army. Nor does he explore how supply-focussed policies enjoyed public support from the Hearst newspapers, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and lobbying organisations located in Vienna at the League of Nations. Such factors, I believe, are critical in understanding how drugs became foreign threats and how countries performed their geopolitical subjectivities.

David Musto provides more detail on the American context in which drug prohibition was encouraged in *the American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*.<sup>40</sup> Here, Musto offers a substantive history of domestic narcotic legislation. While Musto devotes some pages to the threat of foreign narcotics, his focus on an *American* disease means he omits overseas and international developments at the League of Nations and United Nations. Like McAllister, his focus is on the heavyweight political players such as Congressman Hale Boggs and America's drug czar Harry Anslinger. He does mention people who are commonly considered fringe figures of drug control. An example of the latter is Richmond Pearson Hobson, an anti-narcotics campaigner. Musto is not the only scholar to note the role of these people.<sup>41</sup> Academics are right to mention these individuals, but fringe figures are often considered as unimportant in the formal, diplomatic processes of drug control. While they made a lot of noise and whipped up anti-narcotic

hysteria, they are not treated as important players in the formal world of diplomacy, perhaps because they lacked plenipotentiary powers. I argue they did much to shape public attitude towards foreign narcotics and provide support for the American diplomats at the League of Nations and United Nations.

I believe examining how foreign drugs were reported in the domestic American press – especially when compared with the knowledge diplomats had of their medicinal value – is essential for understanding their geopolitical significance. The importance of wider contexts within which these individuals operate has been touched on by Kyle Grayson. He draws on the work of Foucault and suggests there is little to be gained from analysing the actions of drugs czars. Instead, he recommends looking at the ‘grid of intelligibility’ that not only made possible certain understandings, problematiques and policies possible but also legitimated them.<sup>42</sup> Grayson has examined the emergence of drugs as a security threat in the US post-1960,<sup>43</sup> but there is little work that examines the American geonarcotic discourses that supported narcotic regulation before 1961. By examining the domestic discourses of prohibition, I show how American hostility to foreign drugs galvanised the regulatory, prohibition-based models at the League of Nations and United Nations.

### Materiality

The development of drug policy from 1909 onwards did not smoothly glide towards consensual prohibition. It was characterised by bitter struggles over the value and danger of opium and its derivatives. These struggles form the basis of the second problem. The term prohibition, if used carelessly, masks

a complex and disputed set of approaches to supply-based regulation. Regulation is thus better for capturing the nuances of early drug diplomacy. For the US, prohibition meant an unswerving commitment to tightly regulated international markets where medicinal and scientific uses were permitted, but all others were prohibited. Grayson has outlined the values of US prohibition into a useful typology. These are

- Drug use is inherently bad as it is medically unsafe and morally corrupt.
- Real Americans do not use drugs.
- Foreigners and other deviants use, traffic in, and produce drugs.
- Prohibition is the natural condition for drugs.
- Drugs are the major source of criminal activity.
- Drugs are a major killer of Americans.
- Drugs have the potential to destroy the current international system.<sup>44</sup>

The third point is key. John Collins argues the US faith in prohibition, and its unwavering advocacy for it at both the League of Nations and UN, stemmed from a belief 'that the cause of drug 'abuse' was excess and unregulated supplies of addictive drugs', rather than the demand for drugs stimulating supply.<sup>45</sup> For the US, the geography of the world drug problem did not include its own demand for narcotics.

When we factor out a strict definition of drugs based on legality, we appreciate the history of narcotic control in more detail. Other nations were

unwilling to end the lucrative trade in narcotics and argued for milder regimes of regulation. In 1924, the Permanent Central Opium Board, the body charged with regulating world production, developed a system for estimating the global requirements for raw poppy crops and opiates. When an estimate of the world's total narcotic budget was created, diplomats struggled to slice up the narcotic pie. They argued about who would produce raw poppy crops, who would manufacture them into opioids or smoking opium, and who would be able to sell them.

The world eventually agreed upon a US-style model of prohibition with the passage of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 1961, yet this control was not as stringent as the United States would have liked. Collins suggests that the '1961 Single Convention ultimately represented a victory for the UK and the regulatory strand over the US and the prohibitionist strand'<sup>46</sup> due to its gentler focus on suppression rather than outright abolition of the illegal trade and growth of opium and opiates.

We can, as Collins has, trace the history of supply-based regulation back through time. I depart from Collins by suggesting the materiality of narcotics heavily impacted decisions about the international regulatory system. Raw opium, smoking opium, and the various alkaloid derivatives of opium (including morphine, papaverine and codeine), were geographically and culturally striated in their uses. New technologies for cultivating, synthesising, and identifying narcotics influenced international proceedings and national policy positions. Diplomats disagreed about which drugs should be prescribed by doctors and pharmacists, which should remain uncontrolled, and which should be banned altogether. For Japan, Hong Kong, and Iran,

regulation meant adopting opium monopolies, with varying degrees of state regulation. In British India, many quasi-medical and traditional uses of opium were etched into the national cultures and openly accepted as licit cultural activities. British India also produced legal opium for the manufacturing market and looked to protect this industry.

Narcotics were clearly more than just illegal substances to be suppressed on the path to prohibition: they were a vital part of the diplomatic process. As synthetic narcotics, substances created from materials which did not rely on raw opium, became popular, the balance of power shifted as manufacturing nations grew in clout and producing nations (those that grew raw opium) found their revenues decreasing. I argue that these materials were just as important to drug diplomacy as the decisions made by the League of Nations and the United Nations.

We need more research into legal and illegal definitions of drugs, and how these definitions aided those advocating specific drug agendas. Departing from the studies of Collins, Musto and McAllister, I believe that considering narcotics as multiple, both legal and illegal (depending on who was using them and for what purpose), allows us to conceptualise their geopolitical value. We can conceptualise them as referential objects for narcotic discourses, as diplomatic bargaining chips, and as objects of scientific analysis. Before 1961, legality was a contested term that was tactically deployed by different nations to influence the trade of narcotics.

To find work that is primed to deal with this fuzziness, we must look outside of political geography. Germany has shown how illegal drugs alter both



bodies and urban socio-spatial dynamics in Brazil.<sup>47</sup> His work deftly repositions drugs as actors in the way people experience space, sometimes binding communities as well as destroying them. Other materialist approaches to narcotics from outside of geography focus on what the drug-using body can do. Malins et al., discuss a drug user who enters an assemblage of drugs, their immediate environment and wider prevention policies.<sup>48</sup> Bourne's actor-network theory-inspired approach shows the many ways that crack, powder, and mixed cocaine were legislated differentially and unequally through various prohibitory and punitive networks.<sup>49</sup> A relational approach to a substance appreciates their capacities to engender wider change.

So far, I have argued that the legal/illegal division leads to a focus on political figures and a simplistic account of the materiality of narcotics. Where Taylor et al., disavow pharmacological definitions of narcotics in favour of neatly demarcated legality,<sup>50</sup> I embrace them. But there is a second, equally important division that accompanies the legal/illegal schism: an abundance of studies on prohibition at the expense of provision.

### The empirical problems

The focus on illegal substances has meant that geopolitical studies on licit and legal drug consumption/production are sparse. Most are undertaken in medical geography. For example, Rapport et al., examined the pharmacy as a place of professional practice that divides customers and pharmacists.<sup>51</sup> Work in medical geography has often drawn on Foucauldian approaches to the body and its hidden spaces.<sup>52</sup> While useful, these studies do not analyse the relations substances make with various actors.

Unlike their illegal counterparts, legal psycho-active substances are understood to be reliable, safe (when used appropriately), inert and most problematically, chemically homogenous. That is, a legally produced narcotic is standardised and uniform. The obvious exception is alcohol, a dangerous psycho-active substance that has a cadre of devoted geographers. This work focuses on the circulation of branding<sup>53</sup> and the contemporary<sup>54</sup> and historical<sup>55</sup> consumption and production of beer.<sup>56</sup> Tim Unwin's study of wine and viticulture traces its historical geographies, whereas Wilton & Moreno show how rural and urban spaces are demarcated by alcohol consumption.<sup>57</sup> Others analyse how policies are designed to manage the practices and prosaic spaces of drinking,<sup>58</sup> or document the relationship between embodiment and affect while drinking.<sup>59</sup> There is plenty of research on the production of alcohol<sup>60</sup> and alcohol consumption before the alcohol unit was created. Kneale and French provide a fascinating insight into historical regulation through physician Francis Anstie's efforts to establish limits for moderate drinking.<sup>61</sup> When it comes to the historical geographies of legal drug production, the literature is almost non-existent. If geographers do not give licit narcotics their due focus, they will remain conceptually unproblematic and uninteresting. While studies abound on the production of opium destined for the heroin trade in Afghanistan, Laos, and Burma,<sup>62</sup> there are no studies on the Oxfordshire poppies grown for the UK codeine market.

A lack of focus on historical drug geographies is not always the fault of scholars. Archives of production are sparse, particularly in the unregulated (and thus undocumented) nineteenth century. This is not the case with twentieth and twenty-first-century narcotic medicine. The few studies

undertaken on early narcotics convincingly demonstrate that legal narcotic regulation was just as crucial as illegal regulation.<sup>63</sup>

This problem is not just limited academic geography. Today, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the INCB (The International Narcotics Control Board), and the CND (Commission on Narcotic Drugs) comprise the international organs of drug control. The UNODC is the administrative office that runs, researches and manages UN projects on drug control. The INCB is a twelve-member expert panel based at the UN, monitors the extent to which signatory nations are conforming with the international treaties. The INCB is the successor to the Permanent Central Opium Board (PCOB) and Drug Supervisory Body (DSB) of the League of Nations (LoN). The CND is the political arm of the UN that deals with debates and legislation. Together, these organisations have two mandates. The first is to repress the illegal international trade by coordinating national efforts. Many people know this. Less well-known is their other mandate of regulating the legal market for controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

These two mandates are clearly defined by three international drug control treaties. The 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs became the first treaty to regulate the trade in cannabis and other drugs such as methadone and peptides. This treaty simplified nine previous international agreements into one coherent document. The 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances was created to accommodate a range of new synthetic drugs which entered the global traffic. Finally, the 1998 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had a

strong focus on the trade in precursor substances for synthetic drugs.

Forthwith, I will refer to these treaties as the Global Drugs Treaty Regime (GDTR).

Much like Taylor et al's., review of the geographical literature, the scholarly focus on the GDTR's work on prohibition blinkers public knowledge of the actual scope of the global treaties in academic work. Internationally, diplomats are acutely aware that the prohibitory model of drug control does not refer to absolute eradication; it will always entail a degree of provision for medical and scientific needs. Prohibition and provision are two sides of the same coin, but in popular parlance, prohibition is often understood to mean the eradication of all drugs, since the term 'drug' is equated with illegal and illicit uses of substances. This confusion over a substance and its uses is understandable. The slogan for the 1997 Special Session of the UN General Assembly was 'a drug-free world; we can do it!'.

Forgetting the provision-based principles in the GDTR has cost us dearly in both theory and humanitarian efforts. The global shortage of legal opioids in the developing world has only recently become academically significant.<sup>64</sup>

Jelsma and Metaal suggest 'while most countries have established drug policy coordinating structures that carefully balance responsibilities between the health, justice, internal and foreign affairs departments, attention to drug-related issues within the UN system threatens to become more unbalanced'.<sup>65</sup> For some, this imbalance is the fault of the policy-making arm of the GDTR, the CND. They argue it encourages bureaucratic prescriptive practices that make painkillers too difficult to access.<sup>66</sup> For Taylor, the problem is systemic. She identifies three reasons for the woeful access to

opiate-based painkillers in the developing world: cultural factors, where individuals are not encouraged to share their pain; economic factors, such as the profit incentive which encourages companies to sell expensive synthetic painkillers rather than cheap morphine, and a widespread fear of opioid addiction, even if used for legitimate purposes (known as opiophobia).<sup>67</sup>

I would like to deepen our understanding of these shortages by focusing on the issue of opiophobia in two ways. First, by explaining its geopolitical roots. As Rhodin suggests ‘the fear of inducing addiction and for causing severe side effects, such as respiratory depression, has inhibited physicians’ opioid-prescribing for a substantial part of the twentieth-century’.<sup>68</sup> I suggest that suspicions of opioid addiction, from both doctors and the populace, can be traced back to bombastic geopolitical discourse that transformed opiates from medicines into weapons and from a public health crisis into a consequence of war. This caused drug policy to merge with foreign policy and national security at the expense of public health policy. It meant that the foreign supply, rather than the domestic demand of drug control, dominated the American agenda.

Second, I explore how historical geopolitics contributed towards the prohibition/provision imbalance. It is well-known that foreign and narcotic policy overlap. In 1999, Antonio Maria Costa, head of the UNODC, outlined the links between terrorism, drugs, and crime as the ‘evils of our time’.<sup>69</sup> In drawing attention to the role of drugs as a means of funding terrorism, Costa was echoing a prevailing sentiment from the first days of drug control: drugs can become weapons or malevolent tools when placed in the wrong hands. The issue of narco-terrorism has been scrutinised in the literature,

particularly the extent to which terrorists and drug dealers are integrated around the world.<sup>70</sup> I do not contribute to these debates directly. Instead, I trace the history of conflict, war, and using drugs as a weapon back to the mid-1930s. In doing so, I show how prohibition, in popular discourse, came to overshadow provision.

Other scholars have examined the historical relationship between narcotics and warfare.<sup>71</sup> Where they focused on how narcotics have aided those in the front lines of conflict, I look at how they were ostensibly used to weaken enemies. There has been no research that traces the link between opiophobia (or a fear of the addictive capacities of narcotics) and narcotisation (using narcotics as a weapon of war). I contend that in the early twentieth-century United States, this geopolitical focus diverted the public's attention from narcotic provision to prohibition.

I also explore the flipside of opiophobia to introduce a new term: opiophilia. Whereas the term opiophile usually refers to a narcotic user, we can transpose it into diplomatic settings. This helps conceptualise the importance of the licit trade; something geographers have not yet done. Geopolitical opiophiles knew that narcotics had strategic uses and hoarded them accordingly. There were times when powerful policymakers worried about a lack of narcotics, rather than their abundance. Perhaps naively, some experts believed that a perfectly regulated market (one that was entirely devoid of diversion into the illegal trade) would simultaneously end drug smuggling around the world while providing access to critical medicines. Even as drug addiction rose and the illegal trade in narcotics flourished,

there were shortages of legal opiates. Throughout the first half of the twentieth-century, procuring painkillers was a critical geopolitical strategy.

### The Opium Determination Programme

The final gap in the literature I identify is empirical. There is a lack of work on a crucial aspect of drug control: identification. What I am calling the Opium Determination Programme (ODP) – a series of experiments and methods designed to determine the origin of seized opium from 1945-1961 – has not yet been examined by any scholar of international drug law, yet it is central in thinking through the relationship between materiality and geopolitics.

The origins of the ODP run back to the beginning of the twentieth-century. As soon as Congress introduced laws that required checks, licenses, and bans on certain substances, a veritable smuggling industry arose to thwart this system. By the end of World War One, US officials were regularly seizing large quantities of opium at the border. The US developed a kind of siege mentality; it had to protect itself from criminals and the recalcitrant nations that refused to make opium smoking illegal. Those in charge of regulating and policing narcotics extended their search beyond US borders to the source of the seizure. This supply-orientated prohibition is outward looking, and blurred the boundary between domestic (police) and foreign (military) roles.<sup>72</sup>

Initially, the origins of seizures were inferred from proxies (ship registration, departure port, the nationality of smugglers, and branding of seized product). Methods of determining opium became more sophisticated with advances in the science of organic chemistry. It was believed that determining and

cataloguing the chemical signatures of opium from around the world would allow the US to apportion irrefutable, evidence-backed blame to source countries. In my research, I found nothing but passing references to the ODP in the literature, despite a wealth of archival material that attests to its importance. I contribute to the literature by describing and situating the ODP in a wider geopolitical context. I also show how the ODP failed to provide the incontrovertible evidence desired. The varying chemistry of opium seizures complicated attempts to conclusively pinpoint an origin.

In summary, the geopolitical story I tell seeks to plug two gaps in the literature: a lack of focus on legal narcotics and a lack of focus on their materiality. Experts and diplomats worried about provision as much as prohibition, whereas the public and press, goaded by anti-narcotic campaigners, were concerned about smuggling, foreign dope, and narcotic warfare. This alternative geopolitical history of narcotic control remains under-researched. I do not re-tell the story of the American-led 'War on Drugs', and only make passing reference to domestic laws about opioid subscription and treatment of drug addicts. These topics keep many academics, from across the social and physical sciences, united in their quest for progressive drug policies for illicit drug users and abusers.<sup>73</sup> My task requires that I examine how countries battled over what types of drugs and drug use were allowable under the League of Nations and United Nation's legislation. This meant defining drugs not just by their legality, but by how accepted, or licit, they were. While this project's scope is historical, its theoretical contributions are almost exclusively to the disciplines of political



geography and drug studies. Fortunately, political geography has developed multiple conceptual tools for re-telling the history of drug diplomacy.

### The relevance of political geography: re-telling the history of drug diplomacy

Critical geopolitics is concerned with how declarative and imperative statements about the international order are made real and 'objective'.<sup>74</sup>

Scholars have not yet used its insights to explore the history of drug control. It is possible to examine the first sixty years of drug diplomacy by bringing together geonarcotic discourse and materiality through an assemblage analysis. The theoretical turn towards materials in critical geopolitics and political geography sidesteps the trap of a provision/prohibition and legal/illegal framework. While assemblage studies are growing, they are almost non-existent when it comes to drugs.

This next section uses different theories to build a framework for my research questions that address the shortcomings in the established literature. The first research question seeks to scrutinise the geopolitical concerns that prohibitionists invoked in support of drug prohibition in the early-mid twentieth-century. It is apt to use critical geopolitics to analyse this question.

The earliest scholars of critical geopolitics divided the field into formal, practical, and popular geopolitics.<sup>75</sup> Formal geopolitics pertained to the formal interventions on international relations by expert sources (including academics). Practical geopolitics referred to the actual process of doing geopolitics, or the actions of generals, statesmen and women, terrorists, and troops. The final branch is popular geopolitics. This describes how global space and international relations are reproduced in popular media.

Those working in critical geopolitics focused on individual branches and did so, as Martin Müller has pointed out, by focussing on the grand, global scale of analysis and actions of statesmen.<sup>76</sup> Many studies were informed by discourse analysis, the deconstruction of early geopolitical texts, and post-structuralist theories of knowledge, showing how and where geopolitical agendas became important in society at large.<sup>77</sup> This meant focussing on speeches, policy documents, and the thoughts and plans of those in charge. Recent scholars have departed from this analytical framework.

Contemporary work in critical geopolitics has sought to show how these three branches interact with each other. Discourses are analysed in newspapers, magazines and television.<sup>78</sup> Work on video games shows how digitised representations of our world are re-appropriated. The is the case with *America's Army*, a computer game that the US military uses to recruit excellent players into the military.<sup>79</sup> Cultural media are thus seen as important in conveying dominant geopolitical agendas to the wider public.

By placing my project astride all three branches, I do not seek to do away with O 'Tuathail's conceptual framework. I use contemporary geopolitical theory to assess how narcotic discourse emerges from the interplay of the popular, practical, and formal elements of historical drug control. Publics, politicians, and expert knowledge enhanced the drive towards punitive narcotic control. While there is plenty of literature on the link between opium and narcotic policy,<sup>80</sup> I examine expert reports, diplomatic decisions, newspapers, pamphlets, books, telegrams, diplomatic faux pas, and radio addresses to conceptualise the discourse of the opium evil. I draw inspiration from the work of Matthew Pembleton, who explores how the FBN provided

journalist Frederic Sondheim with exclusive access to their files. In return, Sondheim helped craft a tale of a drug war in the 1940s where the enemy was the shadowy, international mafia through his New York Times best-selling *Brotherhood of Evil*.<sup>81</sup> Pembleton's focus on specific FBN agents, traffickers, and the mafia (what he terms 'Kingpin imagery') neglects how the narcotic trade was spatialised as foreign-born. He also does not mention how the US constructed its position as a victim of the international trade. My study turns back the clock further than 1940. Here, we find discourses of foreign nations that used narcotics as weapons in geopolitical struggle. A more appropriate term for this type of discourse is geonarcotics.

#### Geonarcotic discourse

Kyle Grayson, in his 2008 *Chasing Dragons: Security, Identity and Illicit Drugs in Canada*, suggests 'civilisation, gender, sexuality, race, and moral superiority are inscribed into Canadian national identity via discourses on illicit drugs'.<sup>82</sup> He explores how Canadians came to understand drugs as dangerous, but he also shows how Canadian drug policy was portrayed as superior to American policy due to their more liberal approach to drug users. Grayson introduces the term 'geonarcotic discourse' to show how a country identified itself by reference to other nations and the flows and consumption of drugs. Drug use was not just located in specific ethnic identities, but specific geographical places and had imagined geographies. His work examines the management of rave culture, khat use, and medical marijuana in Canada.

Grayson defines geonarcotics as emergent from the US 'War on Drugs'.<sup>83</sup> He notes that Canadian geonarcotics can be dated to 1982 when the

securitisation of illegal drugs was reflected in American security doctrines. A second, broader definition from Griffith states that geonarcotics 'captures three factors besides drugs: geography, power, and politics'.<sup>84</sup> For both authors, geonarcotics is born in the late twentieth-century, where the world order was threatened by the foreign drug flows from transnational criminals. It is a discourse that justifies the US attempt to stem drug control by taking extra-territorial and extra-legal action. The 1878 Posse Comitatus Act was overridden by the Reagan administration in 1983, allowing military powers to operate inside of the USA, militarising the domestic war on drugs. The US currently certifies countries for foreign aid based on their adherence to international drug law. There has been no study which applies the term to the first half of the twentieth-century, a challenge which this thesis undertakes.

I develop Grayson's work by showing how the popular American press created a geonarcotic discourse that was superior (based on a moral repugnance of, and ability to resist, narcotics). The flip side of this is that the US, due to its policies of domestic prohibition and a ban on the growth of narcotics, also developed a geopolitical subjectivity as a victim. In American geonarcotics, the end-user was much less important than in Canadian geonarcotics. The US approach to managing drug use was focussed on stopping flows entering the country. This victim status legitimised American intervention in the form of military aid, and provided countries that trafficked and produced illegal drugs with specific types of American assistance that focused on control at the source. I also differ from Grayson by exploring how the geonarcotic discourse of the opium evil contributed to an emergent, American geopolitical subjectivity that was both material and discursive.

## Conceptualising geonarcotic discourse

I suggest we can trace geonarcotic discourse back to 1909. It is essential that we understand how security and narcotic legitimacy blended in earlier years. By this time, narcotics had already become part of colonial power dynamics due to the Opium Wars of 1839-1842 and 1856-1860.<sup>85</sup> Grayson argues that 'the security discourse surrounding illicit drugs defines what can be considered legitimate approaches to illicit drugs and drug users'.<sup>86</sup>

Geonarcotics underpinned the American argument for stricter controls at the League of Nations and came to fruition as geopolitics became an academic discipline. When Halford Mackinder gave his 1904 address on the 'geographical pivot of history' to the Royal Geographical Society, he urged the British Empire to expand into Eurasia. At the same time, a 27-year struggle to create the 1906 US Pure Food and Drug Act was nearing its resolution. For the first time in history, the Act mandated that medicines and foods should have their ingredients included on the labels for public consumption. Although initially unrelated, drug control and classical geopolitics would become increasingly intertwined as the century progressed and the definition of a 'drug' developed.

As Grayson suggests, it is insufficient to reduce the history of drug control to a series of moral panics.<sup>87</sup> Such a move presupposes a morality that was accepted by politicians and the populous alike. Rather, we must understand how morality, race, and notions of good and evil were imbued into narcotic discourse. For Grayson, the genealogy of geonarcotics can be traced to the Canadian Opium and Drug Act of 1911, a law that was enacted due to the dire influence narcotics had on white Canadians. His argument is that

geonarcotics should bring our attention to more than the practical posturing of diplomats; it should include the way a country understood its role in the international system, through its stance on, and use of, narcotics.<sup>88</sup> It should also show how narcotic use was reflected understandings of Self and Other. I focus on specific geographical regions where the opium evil was located – particularly Northern China and Japan – as areas that were repeatedly discussed at the League of Nations and in American media. I trace the concept of geonarcotics back to that event that catalysed international drug control: the US annexation of the Philippines in 1898. The US was forced to confront the opium smoking epidemic that pervaded the markets, houses, and even schools in the Philippines.<sup>89</sup> Ridding the island of narcotics became tied to the argument that the US was a liberator, rather than following in the imperial footsteps of its Spanish predecessors. Drug discourse became part of American identity. The geopolitical subjectivity the US adopted was partially defined by what it was not: a colonial power that supported the legal trade.

In examining how these geographies of drug production became geopolitical, I outline two interrelated approaches that characterised opium evil discourse. First, the weaponisation of opium, and second, the weaving of foreign and narcotic policy.

### WEAPONISED OPIUM

There is a diverse literature on drugs as supplements, stimulants, and experimental tools in warfare. The famous MK-ULTRA experiments of the 1950s or the Third Reich's trials with methamphetamine are two examples.<sup>90</sup> Recent work has also examined where contemporary conflict is fueled by

performance-enhancing drugs that allow contemporary combatants to face their foes with less fear and more energy.<sup>91</sup> During the 1930s and 1940s, some US officials believed opium, morphine, and particularly heroin were used as weapons of war in Asia. Evidence of these claims have been unearthed by historians, who examine where US officials at the FBN and Anti-Opium Bureau argued that Japan was pedalling narcotics to Chinese territories to make the population docile and amenable for conquest.<sup>92</sup> Similar accusations were then levelled at 'Red China' during the Cold War.<sup>93</sup> While historians are divided on the truth of these claims, it is worth noting that there is no literature discussing how these ideas were promulgated in the US. I develop these approaches by examining where narcotics have been explicitly portrayed as weapons of war inflicted in the quest for imperial conquest. I call this 'weaponised opium'.

#### NARCO-GEOGRAPHIES AND THE USA AS A VICTIM

From the 1900s to the Second World War, narcotic control became increasingly synonymous with imperialism.<sup>94</sup> The French, British, and Dutch empires dominated the trade in narcotics. As one of the first countries to develop punitive national narcotics legislation, the USA was also one of the first nations to contend with the illicit flow of contraband opiates. In this project, I build on the work of Susan Speaker who has examined the intersection between newspapers (particularly the Hearst Empire), popular anti-narcotic campaigners, and the relevance of these discourses to the US diplomatic position.<sup>95</sup> She shows how morality blended with foreign policy as supply-orientated control circumnavigated tough questions about demand and the American appetite for narcotics on the world stage.

After the Second World War and with decolonisation on the horizon, Haq notes that narcotics were tied into efforts to maintain or repeal colonial control. This link between broader power struggles and narcotic discourse has not been examined. In the American press, drug diplomats became freedom fighters looking to liberate chemically oppressed populations. Weaponised opium could be used to further colonial conquests, or it could simply be portrayed as a lucrative revenue from which imperial powers were reluctant to withdraw. The US could lure allies to its cause by championing its anti-colonial credentials.

One important reason why this geonarcotic discourse was not wholly successful is that it was not the only element acting upon the drug control assemblage. Grayson's study of geonarcotics in Canada pays 'greater attention to the discursive formation that established the parameters of legitimate discussion regarding drugs'.<sup>96</sup> I depart from this approach to better understand the role of materiality, chemistry, and capacities of opium. To do this, I draw on the theories of new materialism that have become popular in political geography. These offer different ways of conceptualising objects in the world around us. As the opium evil made its way across US newspapers, the conference rooms of Vienna, New York, and Geneva revealed a much more complicated debate regarding the materiality of opium and its derivatives.

#### Drugs, science and modernity: new materialism and narcotics

Geonarcotic discourse does much to help us understand the role of the US in the international sphere, but alone it is not sufficient. Geonarcotic discourse does not account for technological and chemical changes to narcotics that



influenced production and manufacturing geographies. For one thing, these changes did not always feature formal diplomatic debate at the CND: though they were in the purview of the technical organisations of the LoN and UN. Advances in the sciences of medicine and chemistry promised answers to the problems of addiction, of trafficking, and of legal narcotic shortages. The chemical composition of drugs became a knowable and testable entity and combined with the American desire to curtail legal trades and monopolies. By the 1950s, narcotic expertise and diplomatic practice were linked to organic chemistry and the different alkaloids within opium.

Narcotics were exhaustively studied, regulated, and experimented with, with varying results. They refused to yield a geographic origin and impeded legislation designed to control them (such as the Poppy Rebellion that is discussed in chapter four). At the same time, they gave diplomats chances to influence geopolitical proceedings. My material analysis of narcotic drug control is not just about powders, pills, and poppies. It is also a history of scientific equipment, ideas, routines, procedures, along with political regulations, stipulations, debates, and disagreements.

As it stands, the literature on the history of drugs has been unable to conceptualise this complexity. My project addresses this lacuna through the idea of assemblage and writings of Andrew Barry. Drawing upon a philosophical tradition from Baruch Spinoza, Alfred North Whitehead, and Gilles Deleuze, assemblage thinking falls under the moniker of new materialism, an umbrella term for describing the role of things and matter in social and political life.

Before outlining how I use an assemblage approach in this study, I discuss theories of new materialism that inspired my use of assemblage theory. New materialism is useful for my project because it tackles an implicit anthropocentrism that pervades the social sciences.<sup>97</sup> It also critiques social constructionism and discourse analysis for placing too much attention on the textual. Discourse is often associated with the work of Michel Foucault and his concern with how power is exercised through institutions, people, and ideas. It can be understood as the way ideas become real, through repetition and representations. Discourse analysis was a powerful motivator for early critical geopolitics but left the discipline bereft of tools for conceptualising the material world.

Dissatisfaction with this dominance of discourse grew from feminist geopolitics and feminism more broadly, which argued for an analysis of gender in capitalist systems and their embodied impacts upon women.<sup>98</sup> With these theoretical insights came a new branch of emotional geography.<sup>99</sup> Others drew on the thoughts, feelings, bodies, and emotions as sites of geopolitics. Many geographers found solace in the call for non-representational geographies, spearheaded by Nigel Thrift.<sup>100</sup> These broad efforts were made to better conceptualise the hard-to-grasp aspects of existence.<sup>101</sup> In this way, the body, emotions and affect shared what Pile terms a 'relational ontology'<sup>102</sup> or a flattening of traditional divisions between mind/body and matter/thought.

Proponents of new materialism charge that the social sciences have long ignored the agency that objects exert upon human beings and their discourses. Bennett provides a materialist analysis of political events where

she ascribes agency to non-humans. She terms this a 'green materialist ecophilosophy' or 'vibrant materiality'.<sup>103</sup> Her aim is to disrupt the most Cartesian of notions, the mind as separate from the body (her example is of omega acids acting on the brain). Her work does not reduce or remove the idea of human agency, but positions materials as active agents in the political world. Others use different metaphors that do not give materials so much power. The enrolment of materials in actor networks,<sup>104</sup> or a kind of 'geopower' as elaborated by Elizabeth Grosz, where materials, objects, bodies, and things help construct a geopolitical stage upon which discourses play out.<sup>105</sup> For Grosz 'nonhuman forces – from the smallest sub-atomic forces to the operation of solar systems ... connect the human to all that is both human and non-human'.<sup>106</sup> For Karen Barad, post-humanist performativity makes matter, 'matter' once more. Barad states that materials enact their roles depending on the situation they are within, much the same way humans behave differently depending on the company they keep.<sup>107</sup> Isabelle Stengers draws on her career as a physicist and uses complexity theory to examine the scientific process from a materialist perspective. She suggests an 'ecology of practices' can question scientific truths about the material world.<sup>108</sup> Pushing new materialism to its limits, Harman suggests that materialism is better thought of as immaterialism, where forces in the world are not reducible to representation via discourse, objects, and agency, but are defined by both. His study of the Dutch East India company settles on portraying that company as a symbiosis of ideas, objects, and thoughts.<sup>109</sup>

Each author is concerned to re-position the material world as a serious agent of change in contemporary social life. The danger of new materialist theories is that they paint materials with a simplistic gloss of agency. As Connolly suggests, objects are not sentient, but the Cartesian dualism of mind/matter is a careless characterisation of our relationship to the material world.<sup>110</sup>

Connolly reminds us that the two pounds of bacteria a human body carries daily are central to its survival and to the functioning of the brain, the spongy materialisation of the Cartesian mind. As work in neuroscience has recently suggested, the relations between the body and environment are critical to a brain's development. The circuitry of the brain may change depending on what environments a body operates in (brains are said to exhibit neuroplasticity).<sup>111</sup>

In a review essay, Dittmer noted how these sophisticated treatments of materiality were absent from the earliest studies of critical geopolitics.<sup>112</sup> Materiality, practices, and embodiment are common in the field today, whereas the geopolitics of the 1990s and 2000s were characterised by words, ideas, and discourse. Currently, the most influential materialist theory in critical geopolitics is that of the Deleuzian assemblage. Assemblage is a clumsy translation of the French verb *agencement*, denoting a process where things constantly come together. Often taken as a noun, assemblages describe an ensemble of heterogeneous things, ideas, affects and objects that are in a state of flux. They are not defined by the properties of their component parts (the narcotics themselves), but the relations between these parts (the relations between narcotics and diplomats). Manuel DeLanda gives the example of the body as described by Hegel.<sup>113</sup> In Hegel's day, a

body was a totality that could not be disassembled into individual parts. If you cut out a beating heart, both the body and heart would die. For Deleuze and Guattari, an assemblage better describes the body today, as organs are regularly disconnected and reconnected from bodies and placed into different bodies. Likewise, artificial machines (kidney dialysis machines and respirators) can perform the body's functions. DeLanda suggests that an assemblage can be defined by its expressive components (the skills required to sustain a heart and perform the surgery) and its material components (the tools and technologies required to do the surgery). Together, these components refer to the social and embodied components that territorialise an assemblage towards an identity that is always provisional.

Assemblages open our eyes to connections that Hegel's totality precludes. For Freeman, it re-conceptualises disparate things which were previously thought to exist in separate domains.<sup>114</sup> While they acquire a degree of fixity, Dittmer tells us it only takes a single new or old component to deterritorialise the assemblage and change its outcome entirely.<sup>115</sup> This is what is novel about assemblages. Stivale summarises this situation pithily, suggesting assemblages, unlike Foucault's *dispositifs*, 'are always coming together and moving apart'.<sup>116</sup> In the specific case of narcotics, further differences between assemblages and Foucault's work are notable. Scholars using Foucault's work stress biopolitics and the management of populations,<sup>117</sup> and that the 'ordering, security and stratifications, and [that] these powerful processes need not be negative'.<sup>118</sup> Foucauldian approaches to drug studies thus focus on the management of addiction and the bodies of addicts.<sup>119</sup> In other words, we know much about the biopolitics of managing addiction in

contemporary and historical populations, but less about the biopolitics of managing the flows of legal medicaments.

An exception comes from Eva Hershinger.<sup>120</sup> Her account of the GDTR uses the *dispositif* to show the lists of controlled substances that constitute the targets of international drug laws often struggle to accommodate the constantly changing innovations of chemical engineering. Hershinger concludes the GDTR 'is one – if not the – major place where the ambivalence of drugs is negotiated, where the need to govern and supervise drugs is cemented, and where accordant power relations are established'.<sup>121</sup> Hershinger shows there are many crossovers between assemblages and *dispositifs*, something Deleuze himself noted.<sup>122</sup> Like *dispositifs*, assemblages can be well identified and defined.

In response to Herschinger, I argue that while Foucault helps us understand drugs and the national body politic, an assemblage analysis steers us away from circulation and points us towards the emergent geopolitical subjectivity of the state rather than the health of the nation. For example, geonarcotic discourse played a role in stabilising international drug control as a fight against foreign flows. DeLanda describes this as a process of coding and decoding the assemblage. A coded assemblage has a singular identity, whereas a decoded one is less cohesive. Different elements can be working at cross-purposes to make the assemblage more *and* less stable at any one time.<sup>123</sup> An example from my study is the ODP. Just as diplomats put their faith in geographically determining a seizure by its chemical signature, the material methods of assaying and measuring samples revealed just how complex opium's chemistry could be. This does not mean that we should

erase the differential degrees of influence between the agency of human and non-human actors. Opium was not more powerful than those working with it, and it certainly did not defeat the scientists at the ODP. Instead, we should strive for 'a distributive image of agency' that pairs human action with the material world.<sup>124</sup> In my case of the ODP, this means analysing the chemicals, materials, packaging, and labels that adorned seizures of narcotics.

The advantages of conceptualising geopolitical phenomena as an assemblage stem from recognising how things, ideas, bodies, and affect have capacities to connect and give rise to geopolitical subjectivities. For Dittmer, this allows us to avoid dangerous materialist thinking of classical geopolitics.<sup>125</sup> Unlike the racism in the Nazi claims for *Lebensraum* or determinative claims of Halford Mackinder's Heartland thesis, assemblage theory does not grant the material environment decisive power over human behaviour, just as humans do not master the planet. It also points to the diplomatic system 'itself as a type of body politic, the existence of which shapes the first [individuals] and second order [states] bodies politic embedded within it'.<sup>126</sup> We can think of multiple, second-order body politics, the (US drug diplomatic core) connecting to other bodies' politic through the larger diplomatic system. Protevi's notion of bodies politic points towards affective, somatic, and political crossovers that have been neglected in diplomatic histories.<sup>127</sup> His study of the racialised response of the US State to Hurricane Katrina is a study of the governmental Body Politic. He considers how exaggerated reports of looting, rape, and murder in the aftermath of the hurricane contributed to the militarised response. I use his work to add an

affective dimension to the drug control assemblage. This considers how narcotics were painted as terrifying weapons that turned the body into a geopolitical battlefield.

### Applying assemblage theory

For Connolly, adopting a new materialist approach means adopting a 'problem orientation, pursuing the contours of an issue up and down these interacting scales, as the issue requires'.<sup>128</sup> I conceptualise the international drug system as an assemblage, one that is characterised by multiple instances of coding, decoding, territorialisation, and deterritorialisation. I also consider the American system as a separate assemblage that interacts with the international system. While assemblages permit and encourage researchers to find connections between diverse objects, individuals, thoughts, and ideas, they do not allow a researcher to find connections anywhere and everywhere. As Graham Harman reminds us, 'we would not claim there is a real assemblage formed by the Pacific Ocean, Angela Merkel and the set of all coins and beans that have ever existed or will exist'.<sup>129</sup> Assemblage theory treads a tightrope by preserving the internal of the properties of things without portraying these properties as unchanging essences. It is open enough to appreciate dynamism and emergence but is not so open that it evacuates structure. Assemblages are often extremely structured, but that structure is only ever provisional.

Furthermore, thinking through materials and discourses as parts of an assemblage does not mean we must consider opium as a thinking, active agent. In urban studies, assemblages lead to a focus on micro and macro conditions that moderate systems. Energetic material systems share their



environments with many other processes.<sup>130</sup> Following William Connolly, and his reading of philosopher Alfred North Whitehead and physicist/complexity theorist Ilya Prigogine,<sup>131</sup> I consider agency as distributed throughout the assemblage. A narcotic's role in drug politics was contingent upon the other elements within the assemblage.

What does it mean to think of a narcotic materially? Most importantly is to note that narcotics are not single, individual chemicals. They are multiple. They are a family of drugs that share similar qualities: they deaden pain, depress respiration, and induce constipation and sleep. Thus, I define a narcotic by its capacities rather than its properties: what it can do rather than what it is. This is because its capacities (effects) vary widely and pinning down its properties is pharmacologically complex. Within raw opium, we find many other narcotics. There are many derivatives of opium. In this thesis, the most commonly mentioned are the alkaloid phenanthrenes of morphine, codeine, and thebaine, but there are also non-narcotic isoquinolines of papaverine and noscapine. Synthetic narcotics such as fentanyl and hydrocodone are those that are not derived from raw opium, but are either semi-synthesised from narcotics such as morphine or created from entirely different chemicals while still mimicking the effects of opium. Socially, the term narcotic is also imprecise. Like the term drug, it has an unclear legal definition in the US and is often used to refer to *any* illegal psychoactive substances.

The complexity develops when we consider the forms a narcotic may take. Throughout history, narcotics have been made into pills, powders, gum, paste, liquid tinctures, injectables, oral medicines, and suppositories. This

influences how they interact with the body, but also how easily they can be transferred, stored and smuggled. General pharmacological principles that govern their behaviours are useful, but they will differ from situation to situation. One body may react very differently to a specific narcotic. The presence of other chemicals such as alcohol or naloxone will change how a narcotic behaves (naloxone is an opioid antagonist, meaning it can instantly reverse the effects of a heroin overdose).

Even if they are isolated, the relative proportion of organic material influences their form. When referring to morphine, heroin, codeine, or even opium, we gloss over thousands of minute variations that can exist between two different substances. For example, the relative proportions of atoms that make up a narcotic that is sourced from raw opium vary depending on geography. The morphine content of Indian opium is generally higher than opium grown in China. A narcotic is therefore emergent from the relation between chemistry and geography. The same is true in diplomatic contexts.

Of course, some degree of generalisation is pragmatic. However, by using assemblage theory, we can apply a more nuanced framework of material vitalism to narcotics in geopolitical settings that helps understand how to 'decentre, or better, to embed, military and political subjects by looking to emergent processes above, below, and alongside subjects'.<sup>132</sup> For Protevi 'the hydrosphere is not just chemically pure H<sub>2</sub>O but is "water," which has plenty of organisms, air, and minerals in it'.<sup>133</sup> Following Protevi, it is the structure of 'the process of production of substances rather than the properties of those substances, once formed', that is of interest.<sup>134</sup> It makes no sense to think of a narcotic as a pure, pre-arranged mix of chemicals, but

instead as comprised of a varied mix of organic and inorganic materials that change in time and space.

Narcotics vary, and their geopolitical capacities depend on the specific geopolitical situation within which they were encountered. Narcotics are material and discursive. We can add these into our new formation of a narcotic. A narcotic could be a dangerous drug in China peddled by the Japanese, a chemical signature for geographic determination, and a strategic war material for the Allied forces.

Finally, changes, additions, or removals of elements in an assemblage lead to a lead to predictable patterns of behaviour or stable, actualised states, or entirely new, deterritorialised, and repatterned outcomes that change the assemblage entirely. For Protevi, Deleuze defines the actual as 'the set of stable substances endowed with sets of extensive properties [that are] locked into stereotypical behaviour patterns'.<sup>135</sup> The virtual is potential change. It is not undifferentiated chaos, but a set of ideas that could be actualised. They are actualised when an assemblage is deterritorialised, leading to an entirely new system or type of behaviour. The same applies to international systems when they are conceptualised as assemblages. As Dittmer suggests

When foreign policy apparatuses of the state enter into assemblage with one another, whether through traditional diplomacy or in more bureaucratic encounters associated with the international relations of the late twentieth-century, they open themselves up to transnational

affects that rework the basis on which national interest is calculated.<sup>136</sup>

The Deleuzian event causes an assemblage to deterritorialise and change into an entirely new configuration. Events led to new ways of interacting and of exercising power. The researcher's job is to examine how these events change the system. I focus on different elements that led to events and changes in the system.

I now outline the theoretical concept I developed when applying assemblage theory to the history of drug control, followed by supplementary approaches that enhance my use of assemblage theory.

#### DIPLOMATIC OPIUM

This concept helps conceptualise how US drug diplomats strengthened their diplomatic positions through legal narcotics, digging deep foundations for more stringent prohibition in later years.

Diplomatic opium refers to the ways opium helped persuade other nations to adhere to the American approach to drug control. It circumvents the problems of demarcating between medical/recreational and licit/illicit uses. It involves thinking through the value of a narcotic's analgesic properties in securing geopolitical agendas. A similar strategy was adopted by Glassman & Choi, in their paper on American procurement of South Korean and Japanese commodities and services for Hyundai and other Korean *Chaebols* (family owned business conglomerates) during the Cold War.<sup>137</sup> By focusing on Hyundai's role in the Vietnam War, they illuminate the role of commodities and construction in East Asia's industrial and geopolitical development, thus

showing how non-military forces played a key role in diplomatic development. I look to do the same with legally sourced narcotics.

The US sourced and stockpiled morphine on at least two separate occasions, once during World War Two and again during the Cold War. Ensuring narcotic provision was a critical goal for both Allied and Axis powers and indeed for armies well before the Second World War.<sup>138</sup>

Shortages of morphine, codeine, and other opioids during and after the war were heavily exploited by the US, who doled out their surpluses to other allied powers. This story has not been explored adequately for narcotics, but Susan Reiss has analysed cocaine and its place in the American war chest.<sup>139</sup> By showing how and where legal cocaine was sourced, produced, and traded, she reveals how distinctions between illicit/licit and medical/recreational use are insufficient for explaining coca's diplomatic value. She suggests coca leaf stockpiles 'were a reserve supply not only of critical and strategic commodities, but also of the international labour power, energy, supply networks, and other resources that had gone into their production'.<sup>140</sup> No such analysis has been taken for narcotics.

Diplomatic opium is an important concept because, as Dittmer suggests, it avoids a traditional analysis of traditional players, what he calls 'directors or political masters'.<sup>141</sup> In my project, I use diplomatic opium to place these figures in a context of distributed agency with the narcotics in the assemblage.

## The limits of assemblage theory

The speed with which the disparate theories of new materialism have spread across human geography is astounding. Examples include material cultures,<sup>142</sup> urban studies,<sup>143</sup> and infrastructure<sup>144</sup> and agricultural practices.<sup>145</sup> A shared frustration with the centrality of words, representation and ideas at the expense of things, stuff, and matter has bubbled up through the geographical journals. This turn towards matter has been welcomed cautiously,<sup>146</sup> but it is not without criticism. Such unquestioning enthusiasm has alarmed some who worry that the solid 'thing' risks becoming more important than other states of matter such as gas and water.<sup>147</sup> As Rose & Tolia-Kelly suggest, we cannot make do with a superficial acknowledgement that matter 'matters'.<sup>148</sup>

At this point, I introduce some criticisms of assemblage theory to explain why I supplement it with other theoretical insights. First, Martin Müller has reconciled ANT with assemblage theory to create a sophisticated theory for understanding how geopolitical knowledge emerges from the 'black box' of singular entities such as the League of Nations or UN.<sup>149</sup> Actor-Network Theory (ANT) has had widespread influence in geopolitics and critical security studies and I draw on Müller's 'cross-fertilisations' between ANT and assemblage theory to navigate the division between discourse and materiality. ANT provides assemblage theory with an explicitly spatial account of how relations are created. Along with his work on the concept of discourse as practice as well as textual or spoken,<sup>150</sup> Müller suggests there is no ontological reason why a discursive analysis need be opposed to a materialist analysis.<sup>151</sup> This simple and powerful observation is worth

stressing. New materialist approaches must be sensitive to the material and discursive approaches to both data collection and analysis in human geography.

Second, assemblages are concerned with flux, change, and becoming. This is one of their strengths. This should not, however, mean that order and stability are neglected. For Stephen Legg, order can be productive as well as negative. The trafficking of children in the interwar years was an assemblage 'of actual movements, policies, novels, rumours, myths, desires, and places of disembarkation, slavery, purchase and policy'.<sup>152</sup> Legg suggests it is better to think of assemblage theory and Foucauldian theories dialectically. Both are extremely useful when studying the international system.

With these two critiques in mind, I argue that assemblage theory can be adapted for my specific case study with the aid of other theory. Müller has argued that the concept could do more to explain how power emerges from assemblages. He feels it could benefit from a crossover with other social theories, specifically Foucauldian approaches to language and meaning.<sup>153</sup> It is for this reason I offer a more traditional, geopolitical analysis that focuses on the territorialising role of geonarcotic discourse in the second empirical chapter.

Narcotics were, as the Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics described, entirely 'Janus-faced'. They had multiple capacities to 'plug into other assemblages'.<sup>154</sup> Narcotics are multiplicities, defined by Deleuze as an entity that originated from the contorting of other elements.<sup>155</sup> They are provisionally stable, but always becoming. They are quantitative multiplicities

in that they can be counted, recorded, and analysed. They are also qualitative multiplicities in that they enfold social and cultural attitudes. These multiplicities were only appreciated by a minor group of chemists and diplomats. They understood what opium, if placed into a new set of economic or geopolitical relations, could *become*. In public discourse, understandings of narcotics were not so nuanced. The wider sentiments and affects of the opium evil spread by newspapers, domestic lobbying groups, and the FBN made the identity of narcotics provisionally stable. Foreign dope was terrifying, colonial, and ever-present in society. The narcotics prescribed by a doctor were not. While the FBN scrambled to stockpile much of the world's morphine during World War Two, the Commissioner of Narcotics continued to publicly paint a terrifying picture of foreign narcotics entering the country illicitly, a story greedily seized upon by newspapers across the states. It is this tension between the popular geopolitics of drugs and their uses as diplomatic bargaining chips that are of critical interest in this project.

The second critique is that international system cannot be considered without mention of advances in technology and organic chemistry. While assemblage theory alerts us to the role of materials and relations, it does not provide specific enough tools to conceptualise the role of scientific progress in diplomacy. Fortunately, there are other scholars who combine new materialist ideas with governmentality and scientific progress, international politics, and chemical and pharmaceutical practice. I turn to this work now.

#### TECHNOLOGICAL ZONES AND INFORMED MATERIALS

I supplement my assemblage analysis with Andrew Barry's notion of the technological zone<sup>156</sup> and informed materials.<sup>157</sup> The technological zone is a



corrective to thinking through technology as networked, smooth, and immaterial (analysed without reference to its materiality). By thinking through zones rather than networks, the scholar is not limited to bounded understandings of technology that are separate, or a solution to, political debate. The zone opens up technical aspects of scientific progress to political analysis. Examples such as standardisation, troubleshooting, expertise, and tacit knowledge can be interrogated for their role in political life. Barry's case study of air quality monitoring via remote sensing in the London borough of Southwark is useful insofar as it deals with a theme congruent with my work: the use of remote sensing technology to 'catch' motorists with highly polluting cars. Like remote sensing technology, opium determination was politically palatable because it was deemed apolitical; it was indifferent to questions of who smuggled the opium. It simply pointed to a geographical region. I use Barry's work to highlight the geopolitical importance of changes in organic chemistry, agricultural practice, and laboratory work in the quest for stricter drug control that tried to pinpoint the nations from which seizures emerged. This necessitates a focus on the failure of the ODP due to the problematic conceptualisation of opium as predictable and malleable. As Barry rightly argues, 'a material analysis of politics is one which must attend to the resistance of matter to political control'.<sup>158</sup>

Barry's interpretation Bensaude-Vincent and Stenger's notion of informed materials provides nuance for a recurring theme in this thesis. For Barry, an oxygen molecule in the laboratory is not the same as an oxygen molecule in the atmosphere. He instead uses definitions from Gabriel Tarde<sup>159</sup> and Alfred

North Whitehead to think about how the 'molecule that is isolated and purified in the laboratory will not have the same properties as it has in the field, the city street or the body'.<sup>160</sup> Barry's focus is on contemporary pharmaceutical production which includes 'data about potency, metabolism and toxicity and information regarding the intellectual property rights associated with different molecules'.<sup>161</sup> These contribute to a medical drug being marked as safe for consumption today.

The informed material, Barry tells us, is a molecule that is already invested with information. How it is perceived, and the environment within which it is encountered, matter greatly. Today, molecules are understood as invariant and unchanging, providing a wide range of possible combinations for new composites that can be digitally mapped and then synthesised. Drawing on Timothy Mitchell, Barry argues that much of the public interest in the Baku-Ceyhan-Tbilisi pipeline was due to geopolitical concerns.<sup>162</sup> Technical matters were somewhat invisible and left to BP and other corporations. The invisibility of technical matters in political histories of drug control is another area where research is lacking, and Barry's formulation nuances the assemblage framework I used to expose these technical matters.

I argue that combining Barry's work with assemblage theory brings the technical aspects of drug control into the limelight. My study traces the science of opium determination back to the early days of organic chemistry in the 1940s. Where a Foucauldian analysis would point towards the attempts to standardise and bio-politically govern traffickers and users, my approach emphasises how and why these efforts to bring the various chemicals into order were fallible; the narcotic in the laboratory was never the same as the

seizure at a US port. What they missed were how matter and politics were imbricated. Seized opium was more just the gum, paste or power that scientists analysed. Seizures were accompanied by information on their potential origin. This attendant information was crucial to technical experiments but also became politically controversial when offered as evidence for a seizure's origin. Efforts to isolate and identify a geographical location were heavily influenced by the information that came with samples of opium. The isolated laboratory sample did not account for the wider contexts in which narcotics were encountered.

Barry's ideas lead me to emphasise the ways molecules take specific historical forms. Much of the attendant information that was generated in the ODP was designed to provide standards that would make the UN identification programme reliable, allowing different chemists to replicate findings on opium samples.

#### SCALE AND THE GEOPOLITICS OF NARCOTICS POLICY

Another aspect of my study is to use assemblage theory to rethink through scale. Scholars and lawmakers recognise that international drug law does not always trump national policy.<sup>163</sup> Some nations flagrantly breach the GDTR treaty parameters with legalised marijuana markets. The INCB can do little but offer the occasional rebuke,<sup>164</sup> a move which some see as overstepping its mandate.<sup>165</sup> Today, an increasingly loud NGO sector is making waves at the United Nations' Commission on Narcotic Drugs, upsetting the traditional diplomatic exchanges between nations. Negotiations at the UN are rarely the drivers of national policy changes, yet nested understandings of scale are still dominant when it comes to narcotic policy.

This was just as true in the first half of the twentieth-century as it is today.

How to theorise this complexity?

Human geographers have provided theoretical work that troubles nested understandings of scale. Scale is now understood to be a constructed political hierarchy where the global/national/local lenses do not adequately represent the way power is exercised. Scholars have adopted networked understandings of hierarchies that critique 'taken for granted and shape our thinking in implicit ways'.<sup>166</sup> As Müller and Schurr suggest, this troubling of scale is a strength of ANT as it demonstrates an 'explicit spatial sensitivity where it refers to regions, scales, distance and topologies'.<sup>167</sup> I show how scalar thinking was put to political use to secure certain geopolitical aims by drawing on Legg's use of assemblage analysis to British India's relations with the LoN.<sup>168</sup> He suggests the acrimony between the British and League grew out of conflicting understandings of the division between national sovereignty, domestic law and international mandates. Ultimately, a lack of faith in the League's geographical reach and sovereign authority led to its eventual demise.<sup>169</sup>

Assemblages are less concerned with hierarchy as a frame of analysis, and more with emergence and dynamism. I approach the history of narcotic law similarly, suggesting international policy did not simply trickle down to nation-states. Many nations flouted their international obligations by citing national concerns and violations of their domestic sovereignty. The FBN often circumvented the international arena by bilaterally engaging nations. This was particularly true of nations where US foreign policy was focussed. By harmonising narcotics policy with foreign policy, the Federal Bureau of

Narcotics inserted itself into an intelligence network that spanned the globe. It transcended its role as a domestic regulatory agency to become an important player in international affairs.

To surmise, the assemblage approach outlined here leads me to four starting points.<sup>170</sup> First, the assemblage is gestalt. Each element cannot be reduced to its functions. It is the relations between elements within that lead to emergent causality (or the creation of an international drug system). Second, the assemblage is constantly becoming. This is not to say it is constantly changing, but it can never be thought of as stable or entirely coherent. Periods of stability are better understood as periods of provisional territorialisation; periods of incoherence are deterritorialised, signalling new actants that are making new connections that lead to further change. Third, we must be open to including surprising actors and events in our account; assemblages are never truly demarcated by scale. Fourth, discourse plays an important role in coding or decoding an assemblage with meaning, but materiality can do the same, if not more. As we shall see in the next chapter, this led me to a methodological focus on new ways of reading the archive and analysing the history of drug control.

### Reflexivity, ethics and positionality

I begin this final section with the question of where I stand as a researcher. This, as Donna Haraway would suggest, is because we cannot claim to represent without escaping representation.<sup>171</sup> While personal opinions may seem irrelevant to understanding drug diplomacy in the early-mid twentieth-century, Bailey et al., remind us 'wanting to know what happened in the past is connected to our development and self-understanding as modern

individuals'.<sup>172</sup> My interest in this topic was purely academic, growing out of my master's thesis on the symbolism and alter-geopolitics of the remembrance poppy. My position as an interested, but unaffected, researcher is not tenable for many people who find their lives dramatically altered due to punitive drug regulation. Likewise, my position as a white, male researcher from a prestigious research university ultimately helped negotiate access to sources which others might not have access to.

As a scholar, I have been influenced by the approaches to geopolitics outlined in the literature review as they blend with my wider politics. In critical geopolitics, where the male, tactician's eye has viewed much of the world as conquerable and inert, rather than as an active biosphere.<sup>173</sup> It is only in the last decade that this position has been roundly challenged. The materialist position that seeks to correct the anthropocentrism within political geography brings our attention to the non-human factors that shape not just geopolitics, but the planet. Similarly, the feminist theories that seek to open geopolitics to everyday individual experiences influenced me greatly, not just as a researcher, but as a British citizen living between London and the US.

I undertook my PhD, however, as new materialist theories became fashionable. As much as I feel they are useful for explaining diplomatic history in a more accurate and non-anthropocentric way, they will eventually be superseded by a new approach. This alerts me to their fallibility. They have theoretical shortcomings (outlined above) and methodological challenges for researchers applying them to a study (discussed in the next chapter). While undertaking a new materialist reading of the archive, the

theories did not map easily onto the research design. For one thing, the realm of drug diplomacy was (almost exclusively) the domain of white men. It would not be possible to tell this story without reference to the decisions and attitudes of some of these figures. They helped shape the geonarcotic discourses by giving interviews in the papers and over the radio. They often wrote extremely influential position papers that influenced Congress and international delegates. It is their perspectives that have survived and form the raw data for this project.

If we take Keith Ansell-Pearson's definition, the goal of 'new materialism is to be strictly non-anthropocentric: there is no privileging of human bodies or even of human capacities for agency'.<sup>174</sup> This poses a methodological problem: how can we place human and non-human agency on an equal footing in archival research which is written exclusively by humans for humans? Resolving this issue became a practical and theoretical goal for me. It meant that my research design was a constant negotiation between recognizing the limits and biases inherent in the archives, applying the correct interpretive framework and thinking through the agency of materials as relational with human actors. These are discussed in depth in the next chapter.

### **Contributions: making narcotics international**

Just as theory can help tell a new empirical story, the empirics can help nuance the theory. I believe my thesis helps develop new materialist theory in political geography in three different ways.

- Opening the terrain of historical drug studies to political geographers through assemblage theory, informed materials, and the concept of ‘diplomatic opium’ (empirical)
- Developing the theory of new materialism so that it can be applied to historical objects in critical geopolitics (theoretical)
- Providing a framework for a materialist analysis of historical objects in archives (methodological, discussed in the next chapter)

We now study plenty of historical objects. There are studies of the politics of milk,<sup>175</sup> and watermills on the Thames in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>176</sup> *Making Things International 1 and 2*, edited by Mark Salter, is an impressive collection of essays that show how things, ideas, and expertise circulate in our globalized world today. Salter suggests ‘diplomacy is made by telegrams, the Internet, diplomatic pouches, chicken dinners, and cameras’.<sup>177</sup> The book is an important contribution to international relations that compliments this study greatly. While ‘*Making Things International 1*’ does include reference to cocaine, it is an analysis conducted in the latter half of the twentieth-century. Only recently is there work in political geography that applies this materialist approach to historical topics.<sup>178</sup> My study shifts the materiality to objects which are not prosaic parts of an assemblage but, are intense objects of study. Narcotics, so obviously important to geopolitical life, remain poorly conceptualised as objects of regulation, rather than objects of prohibition.

Throughout this thesis, the reader will see where narcotics and their materiality, along with formal and popular geopolitics, blended to support or scupper American efforts to impose a more prohibitory international system of drug control. By drawing on work in critical geopolitics, I tease out the



disjuncture between the public and popular understanding of narcotics and expert understandings of their medical and diplomatic uses.

By placing narcotics at the forefront of my analysis, I offer three broad contributions to political geography. First, I go beyond the division of narcotics into legal/illegal categories. Such a division is unhelpful when considering their role at the League of Nations and United Nations. Second, I explore the geonarcotics of early drug control, and how the illicit understanding of opium and its derivatives crowded out their analgesic uses to the detriment of pain-killer access worldwide. I draw out the narcotic geographies that described a world divided into producers, manufacturers, and consumers. By comparing these roles against a country's geopolitical standing with the US, I highlight how international relations and narcotics became intertwined after 1909. Finally, I emphasise the materiality of the substances, and how changes in the technology and geography of drug production influenced and thwarted the missions of the 'grand old men' of drug control. In doing so, I develop theories of new materialism that have developed in critical geopolitics.<sup>179</sup>

Through these contributions, I hope to provide critical geopolitics with an opening into the fertile field of drug studies. The point is not to imbue opium with a set of powers, diplomatic, weaponised, or otherwise, that have heretofore remained undiscovered. It is rather to examine how opium was critical part of wider networks and discourses and *became* geopolitical.

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<sup>2</sup> Berridge, V. (2013). *Demons: our changing attitudes to alcohol, tobacco, and drugs*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

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- <sup>179</sup> Yusoff, K., Grosz, E., Clark, N., Saldanha, A., Yusoff, K., Nash, C. & Grosz, E. (2012). Geo power: A Panel on Elizabeth Grosz's Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30(6): 971–988.



## Methodology and Method

In this chapter, I use a narrative timeline to guide the reader through my decisions about research design, data collection, analysis, and presentation. Next, come the limitations. I point to the compromises I made with the data, the archives, and institutions from which it was collected. I made many other choices about the scope of the project, but the scope was also set by practical considerations of the project (funding, timeframe, and visa limits in the United States). Contingency, surprises, and dead-ends played a part in this thesis, forcing me to look for new approaches to problems and even abandon data collection methods entirely. I show how I circumvented such problems by altered my methodology and the empirical scope of the study.

### Research design

The project's overarching aim is to re-tell the history of drug diplomacy from the perspective of a critical, materialist geopolitics. The three research questions are restated below

- A. What is the relationship between narcotic discourses and geopolitical agendas from 1909-1961?
- B. How did the materiality of narcotics shape American attempts to create international narcotic legislation during this period?
- C. How did the same materiality confound attempts to know and determine narcotics?

I began the research design with a strong urge to contribute to debates on animating the archive. These debates seek to 'bring the material and documentary properties of archives into play'.<sup>1</sup> I hoped to create a set of

principles for geographers who were dealing with objects that had once existed (opium seizures, purchases, samples), but were only recognisable by their textual traces. Scholars have applied Deleuzian thought to their methodologies in a variety of ways.<sup>2</sup> Examples include visual images<sup>3</sup> and, more specifically related to this project, ethnographies with drug users and interviews with teachers and students who engage in drug education.<sup>4</sup> Dowling et al., suggest 'it is essential that the particular historical trajectories of new objects of study are thoroughly investigated and brought into the present'.<sup>5</sup> The same can be said of international relations. Salter suggests that the usual archival methods are 'unsuited to the task of understanding how particular objects, ideas and people come together to create, dispute, solve, or perhaps cause the political configurations'.<sup>6</sup> We do not yet have a methodological approach for assemblages that no longer exist. This methodology shows how I used archival sources to analyse entirely deterritorialised assemblages.

The research design I constructed made it impossible to ignore the interactions between the material properties of narcotics and foreign policy. It invokes what Deleuze, drawing on Whitehead's concept of the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness',<sup>7</sup> calls transcendental empiricism. This concept examines how other abstract concepts used in research (the State, the international drug control system, etc.) are immanent to the situation a researcher is examining. This immanence refers to 'the specificity or singularity of a thing; not to what can be made to fit into pre-existing forms'.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the questions examine how the international drug control system and geopolitical subjectivity of the US emerged from the relations between

geonarcotic discourse, materials, and affect. In doing this, I follow other geographers and avoid pre-conceived identity of 'The State' to structure my analysis.<sup>9</sup>

In my approach, the causality between those actors who make up the state and international system and the eventual state effects is problematised. This is because an assemblage is always becoming. Becoming is not just 'a process of transforming from one thing to another',<sup>10</sup> it is a recognition that any degree of stability was always provisional and subject to change. Of course, the debates and treaties hammered out in international forums led to the adoption of narcotic laws, but so much of what was agreed in these boardrooms was catalysed by public moods and narcotic discourses, as well as developments in chemical processing, external conflict, and of course, the chemical capacities of the narcotics themselves. As I have shown, these laws are continually being reinterpreted, renegotiated, and outright ignored.

There are empirical limitations that my research design created. As Dittmer suggests, archives contain preselected material.<sup>11</sup> The researcher has no access or way of analysing the absences an archivist has created. Second, the size of the archive limited the practical scope of what I could achieve during my fieldwork. For example, there were over one hundred synthetic and semi-synthetic narcotics under international control by 1961. These drugs were accompanied by hundreds of pages of technical documents in LoN and UN committee meetings, as well as the national laws and position papers of the assembled nations. It is impossible to tell all their stories in one thesis. Narrowing my focus to narcotics, and the smaller subset of narcotics

mentioned in this thesis, is one limitation of my archival and assemblage-based approach.

## Data collection

### New materialism for old archives

Archival research was the most appropriate method for collecting data for this project. There are rigorous accounts of the GDTR tracing back to its inception in 1909. As I will show shortly, I planned to hold interviews with policymakers and ex-narcotic agents. They were problematic and this led me to abandon them.

Archival research also allowed me to conceptualise narcotics 'materially' and was the best-suited method for using assemblage theory. I examined parts of archives that previous historians have viewed as mildly interesting footnotes. An example is a diplomatic struggle over the international opium monopoly (IOM). McAllister suggests this idea failed because of the obsessions of its chief architect Leon Steinig, head of the Division of Narcotic Drugs (DND) of the United Nations. McAllister argues that Steinig's blinkered insistence on this programme was undermined by American diplomats who pushed for a more stringent law (the 1953 Opium Protocol).<sup>12</sup> This reading has merit; it brilliantly captures Steinig's domineering role at the UN. In departing from this human-centred approach, I consider the failure of the IOM through a more dispersed agency; new technologies of cropping increased the yield from raw opium significantly and reduced the demand for raw poppy crops. With an assemblage methodology, researchers can ask new questions of archival documents that previously have been deemed uninteresting.

McCann and Ward use the notion of urban assemblages to describe how policy is made and materialises in specific places.<sup>13</sup> These are determined by local practices rather than any scalar, or hierarchical authority invested in authority figures or institutions. In a similar vein, De Goede focuses on the policy implications of assemblages. She examines how security practices 'exceed institutional change and coherent direction'.<sup>14</sup> For De Goede, financial services, corporations, and legislation impact the multiple paths that illicit flows of money take. When it comes to people, she considers more than formal stakeholders. Technical advisors, mid-level bureaucrats, and administrators also shaped policy debates. The lessons of these papers, when applied to my archival methods, were that I should focus on technical minutia – or prosaics – of the diplomatic proceedings, as well as fringe figures who may not be central, but are nevertheless part of the emergent international system.<sup>15</sup>

Andrew Barry develops this way of thinking through materials in the archive. In *Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline*, Barry presents the paradox of materiality. As geographers have become more alert to the vibrancy and unpredictability of studying things, materials, and the 'natural' environment, they forget that materials are written about, studied, risk-managed, accounted for, deliberated, and predicted. Information, and the materials such information concerns, are intimately bound together. Barry recommends we 'develop accounts of the political geography of materials whose ongoing existence is associated with the production of information'.<sup>16</sup> His case study is the Baku-Tbilisi Ceyhan pipeline, an international project

that brought together companies, nations, and protestors who produced conflicting information-rich narratives about the pipeline.

Barry is interested in the materiality of the pipeline insofar as it generates a wealth of conflicting information which is used to support conflicting political claims. I apply his approach to his data sources on historical narcotics. When considered in relation to their geonarcotic discourses, their scientific and chemical profiles, the archives become treasure troves of data. In other words, technical detail about narcotics (their purity, seizures, quantities etc.) becomes just as vital to understanding drug diplomacy. His approach to archival data makes clear the need to understand 'how and why particular materials, events and sites became so controversial'<sup>17</sup> and why certain parts of the pipeline became important where others did not.

There are other approaches from critical security studies that support the idea of thinking materially about narcotics in the archive.<sup>18</sup> An already mentioned approach is Foucault's *dispositif*, along with a wealth of research on Actor-Network Theory. They each have their similarities with my approach. ANT, for example, considers an actor a 'patterned network of heterogeneous relations'.<sup>19</sup> Latour has recently elaborated an approach called dingpolitik or 'thing theory'.<sup>20</sup> One study on drone strikes applies dingpolitik and yields fascinating findings. Walters suggests objects can be 'fleeting, ambiguous, partial...and more-single'.<sup>21</sup> To demonstrate this, he uses archival and textual research to explain the role of missile fragments from a drone strike in Gaza. Here, two groups contested the legality of the strike by disputing the number of non-combatants. He shows how alternative conceptions of the drone and missile from Human Rights Watch and the

Israeli Defense Force created forensic accounts that gave more credence to the missile fragments than to the voice of victims of the strike. In each of these studies, the goal is to examine the way different groups understand materials, technology, and technical studies of materials work become part of political life. Likewise, Mark Salter defines the *dispositif* as a 'constellation of institutions, practices and beliefs that create the conditions of possibility within a field'.<sup>22</sup> Both are useful when thinking about narcotics as multiple. Indeed, in my archival research, I found reports on seizures of narcotics that contributed to the understanding of weapons of war. In the same archives, I found files that documented the importance of narcotics as critical war materials.

On their own, none of these approaches are enough to use archives to analyse geonarcotic discourse and materiality together. For example, thing theory and dingpolitik both ask 'how materials and objects become entangled in political controversies, and how objects mediate issues of public concern'.<sup>23</sup> In doing so, these theories move away from issues of governance and strategies of governing, what Rose and Miller call political technologies of calculation.<sup>24</sup> As my study is concerned with the regulation of narcotics, I did not wish to dispense with this focus. Instead, combining parts of these approaches with Barry's work on informed materials and previous studies of assemblage theory allowed me to explain how narcotics and their properties became part of diplomatic technologies of calculation.

#### Timeframe, location, and scope

The first decision I made was to decide the period of history in which I would collect data. Here, I was guided by previous scholars and gaps in the

literature (see previous chapter). For example, Eva Herschinger has analysed the contemporary expression of post-1961 drug treaties through a materialist lens.<sup>25</sup> I did not want to repeat her work, which I think admirably captured the essence of ambivalent materiality in this era. I decided to cast my focus back in time to the twentieth-century and its drug laws, which created plenty of further questions about drug control in the early twentieth-century.

When focusing on the *where* of my project, my preliminary research identified the importance of American drug diplomacy as it was at the vanguard of prohibition based on supply reduction in the early twentieth-century. The US was also a logical choice as a data source. Records at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA, Record Group 170) contain files from the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Various other record groups from the Department of State, War Production Board, and General Treasury Records are located at NARA (see Appendix One for a list of all archives consulted). For many scholars, the papers of private individuals, particularly those of Harry J Anslinger, are particularly pertinent to understanding his thinking as the pre-eminent drugs czar. Other official documents are in Vienna at the UN Drug Control Programme Archives or in the League of Nations Archives in Geneva and other relevant figures such as Colonel Sharman of Canada have relevant papers in Ottawa, Canada. The archives at Vienna are the most comprehensive collection on League and UN deliberations.

I did not have the funds to visit all these countries. I focused my project on the United States as I knew the breadth and detail of that country's archives



would be sufficient. After discussing with other researchers who have worked in the field, I concluded the Vienna archives would not be as useful as the NARA documents for my specific purposes. The United States was also advantageous as the archives concerning the laboratories involved in the Opium Determination Programme are located at NARA.

I surveyed the various archives outside of NARA in the United States, but many of the files dealing with figures of drug diplomacy were scattered across the country. A version of the Harry Anslinger archive is held in the Truman Library in Missouri, while another is stored at Pennsylvania State University. I focused on the databases of the NARA in the US and planned to conduct archival fieldwork there. The benefit of doing so was twofold. I would have access to the historical records at NARA, which would reduce the costs of fieldwork and travel to surrounding states. It was for these reasons I settled on Washington DC.

In November 2014, I applied to the Economic and Social Research Council's flagship PhD fieldwork programme. The fellowship is for scholars who required access to the Library of Congress' archives. The fellowships were up to six months long and opened the world's single most extensive archive of research data I had not considered previously, nor had been widely consulted by other researchers in the field. In applying for the ESRC fellowship, I consulted reference librarians at the Library of Congress who pointed me to a treasure trove of unexamined archives at including manuscripts, unpublished theses, cartoons, maps and images on twentieth-century narcotics. The Library's newspapers and manuscripts division would bring a whole new perspective to the issue of geonarcotic discourse.<sup>26</sup> I was

accepted into the Library of Congress programme in June 2015, with a departure date of September.

## Limitations

### Interviews

The design of my interviews is only briefly discussed here since the few I conducted were not used in the final project. I developed a list of expert interviewees who would supplement my archival data with contemporary understandings of the US's relationship to international drug laws.<sup>27</sup>

I settled on specific informal and semi-structured interviews based upon the expertise of the research participants. I included academics, journalists, politicians, their staff, and federal employees. I also looked to conduct oral histories of ex-narcotic agents. The Association of Former Federal Narcotics Agents was to be the gatekeeper. These potential participants would allow for the reconstruction of past events from the perspective of involved individuals.<sup>28</sup> To better answer question B, I would use these findings to show supply logics influenced the daily workings of narcotic agents, and how credible they felt geonarcotic discourses regarding the weaponisation of heroin were.

After arriving in Washington DC, I soon realised that expert interviews were problematic. The Association of Former Federal Narcotics Agents website only recruited ex and active Drug Enforcement Agency employees, not employees from the disbanded Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Second, bureaucratic processes stopped me using the findings in this project. For example, I secured an interview with a congressional aide on Capitol Hill to

talk about US drug policy. Because of UCL ethical guidelines, I had to keep these participants anonymous in my study and provide each participant with a consent form. Before the formal interview started, the aide refused to read the form, let alone sign it, and our conversation became frosty. While I assured the aid that it promised total anonymity, they informed me they were only able to have with me a general discussion of the Congressional member's official stance on drug policy, and their role on certain congressional committees.

Even when federal participants were happy to sign the form, they said they would have to refer it to their legal counsel for checking, a process which could take more than six months, longer than my fellowship in America lasted. The few interviews which I did secure consent for provided thin, unsubstantiated, and insufficient data. I spoke to a drugs advisor for a 2016 presidential candidate, but they were too busy with the campaign to partake in a formal interview.

As a condition of my scholarship, I had to work in the library at least four days a week, and attending the National Archives and conducting my few expert interviews took up my spare time. I decided to abandon interviews entirely, along with my comparative study of contemporary US drug policy. Reflecting on this decision here, I remain convinced it was correct. My oral history interviews would have involved an arduous search for federal narcotics agents from the 1950s and 60s who may not have been alive, or under witness protection. This would have taken time from consulting archives outside of the Library of Congress. Further research into the

subjective accounts of narcotic agents who worked at the FBN could be a future direction for postdoctoral research.

At the same time, my archival work was going magnificently. I took heart from Dittmer's suggestion that archival analysis can be undertaken 'new interpretive resources'.<sup>29</sup> Baker aptly describes the challenge, 'all historical geography is source-bound: all historical geographers should know the full range of their sources and so of their evidence, thereby enabling them to push their research to its empirical limits'.<sup>30</sup> Many of the archives I found in the Library of Congress (The Richmond P Hobson papers, the Elizabeth Washburn-Wright Papers) are neglected, or briefly mentioned in traditional histories of drug diplomacy. I also collected quantitative data from my archival research information relating to historical trends in medicinal narcotics, the ODP, and the flows of narcotics.

The only salient information I did not gain from archival research were direct observations of the quotidian workings of drug diplomacy between the United States and international machinery. This had been something I had hoped to speak to ex-diplomats about, and I viewed it as desperately important. As Kuus suggests, there is a pressing need to understand better how ideas travel from international to national frameworks.<sup>31</sup> This is particularly true for my focus on assemblages and flat ontologies.

In 2016, I was invited to attend the 2016 Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGASS). The special session was devoted to the world drug problem. It would give me access to speak with a range of diplomats and employees at various UN drug agencies. While the

diplomatic process has dramatically changed since the period I was studying, the archival resources I consulted only gave a sense of diplomatic process; I wanted to see the real thing in action. I returned to the US in mid-April of 2016 and attended the UNGASS event held at the UN campus. I also had identified further archival sources which I visited on the same trip. These included the DEA library in Virginia and the Harry J. Anslinger collections held at Pennsylvania State University.

When attending UNGASS, I adopted a non-participant observation approach to the proceedings. There were practical and theoretical reasons for this. Practically, I anticipated that formal interviews would be inappropriate for the hectic event. Ethnographic research is best suited to long, in-depth engagements with specific groups and communities and was also entirely inappropriate for the three-day event. I agree with Merje Kuus' sceptical intervention on ethnography and foreign policy. She states, 'it is one thing to recognize the analytical value of ethnographic fieldwork; it is quite another to do it'.<sup>32</sup> UNGASS was heavily securitised, which led some civil society groups involved to protest both inside and outside the grounds of the UN. Members of the Drug Policy Alliance dressed up in 1930s garb and handed out fake newspapers which criticised the prohibition of drugs. UN security then confiscated these stylised newspapers. As security became stricter after this stunt, my access to key figures from the UN drug machinery was hindered. Observers were physically confined to specific parts of the UN campus, away from the diplomats and sensitive proceedings. Many events took place in restricted venues, devoid of both press and civil society. Furthermore, civil society delegates were given UN grounds passes which

varied from day to day, with changing access to certain events. One bizarre incident involved members of Students for Sensible Drug Policy, a charity focused on youth and drug use, being refused entry to a side-event on youth and drug use.<sup>33</sup>

Being so tantalisingly close to experts and practitioners of drug diplomacy gave a new salience to Kuus' assertion that 'foreign policy institutions are opaque and inaccessible by design'.<sup>34</sup> While Kuus soldiered on with interviews in her research on diplomacy and expert knowledge at the EU, I decided to adopt the non-participant observation approach. I paid careful attention to the ways that diplomats presented their cases and how UN staff managed dissidence in the conference rooms.

My findings from the UNGASS trip are valuable as they introduced me to the language and compartments of drug diplomacy, as well as an understanding of the roles and disputes between the CND, INCB, and UNODC.

There were plenty of archives I was unable to visit in the United States that might have yielded interesting findings. Examples include the National Library of Medicine and the United Nations Archive in Maryland. These are archives that have been visited by other scholars who told me they were of limited worth. However, these archives could well form part of a future, postdoctoral research project.

Another limit stems from access to specific files at NARA. Some files contained the names of narcotics agents who were still alive and were confidential. The same was true for the DEA library; while I was told I could

access their library if I knew what I wanted to research, the catch-22 was that I could not access the classified finding aids to locate what I wanted.

Furthermore, the quantitative data I present is not infallible: much of it is incomplete due to the non-compliance from various nations, and many scholars have suspicions about the validity of data from the FBN.<sup>35</sup> Showing where the numbers disagreed, or complimented the stories being told about foreign narcotics, helps to triangulate the account of geonarcotic discourse I give.

### Data analysis

There is little research which considers the way a researcher can use speculative and materialist philosophies to inform their data analysis. Pierre and Jackson addressed this problem in a special issue of *Qualitative Inquiry*.<sup>36</sup> In this issue, Bronwyn Davies undertook a Baradian-inspired analysis of childhood anger.<sup>37</sup> She viewed anger not as an inherent emotive force, but rather as a flow of intensities between multiple subjects. She calls this a diffractive analysis. She did not look to analyse anger inherent in her subjects, but rather the affectual relation of shared anger. For Davies 'the question that emerges, then, is not who was to blame, but who and what came to matter'.<sup>38</sup> Her approach can be transposed into my approach to my archival sources. I searched for the authoritative sentiments of authority figures or individuals who substantiated geonarcotic discourses and analysed how these discourses were emergent and dependent on the interactions between humans and non-humans. This is reflected in my coding and can be seen in the appendix.

The first step in analyzing data involved deciding which documents among the mass of sources were useful, relevant, and reliable. I had collected far too many pages of data in my visits to NARA and the Library of Congress. An initial reading of my selected data quickly revealed which sources were useful. Many texts were redundant, or outside of the timeframe I was interested in. To further limit my dataset, I homed in on official data on American delegations in international settings, which meant focusing on official documentation from the FBN. I also looked for technical reports that would help develop accounts of 'informed materials'. Here, official statistics and reports, particularly the FBN's annual *Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs* reports, and UN's *Bulletin on Narcotics* were fundamental. These specialised reports documented changes in yields, purities, seizures, potency, and price of narcotics. These variables helped to understand the ways agency was spread between human agents (farmers, diplomats, users) and the materials (opium, its derivatives, and technologies that improved yields or created entirely new substances). The personal collections of key figures (Harry Anslinger, Richmond Pearson Hobson, Elizabeth Washburn-Wright) were also coded. They dealt less with proceedings from debates at the LoN and UN, but more on their personal understandings of the world drug problem. The Newspaper Division of the Library of Congress, plus the clippings kept by the aforementioned figures, were thus vital for conceptualising geonarcotic discourse in the US. A full list of archives I used can be found at the end of the thesis.



## Coding my data

For some scholars, the ubiquity of coding has meant that it is equated with data analysis *per se*.<sup>39</sup> This is a superficial reading of the actual process of data analysis. I do not believe that simply because coding is a dominant tool in data analysis that it is used by researchers with ‘nothing much to say’.<sup>40</sup> I instead argue that the quality of coding can be determined by the extent to which a researcher outlines their process and reasons for adopting a coding strategy. It is this I turn to now.

First, I coded to categories the data by its subject matter. This was important for analysing the geonarcotic discourses: if a source referred to the opium evil, it was coded as an important signifier. I also coded data by its reliability. When referring to reliability, I do not mean replicable and repeatable, but the more popular understanding of a source as trustworthy, authoritative, and respected by the public. Hearst newspapers, while today known to be great engines of propaganda, were often the only source of information available to the public on the world drug problem.

Etic and emic coding was also used, and both are justified by the theoretical approach I was taking. Assemblage theory led to deductive analysis; it was a theory applied to my data, whereas the actual workings of the materials were often inductive: the interactions between humans and non-humans in the assemblages emerged from the data itself. Mixing etic and emic forced me to capture ‘things that [were] always in the midst of unfolding’.<sup>41</sup> Coding helped problematise the geographical hierarchy of the international sphere where the LoN and UN drug machinery is the most important, followed by the

national (FBN, US Congress) and finally local and state laws. My coding showed where these scales butted up against one another or overlapped.

The codes were also significant for thinking about the data in new ways. For example, the relationship between the US and international law and the decisions over where international drug machinery would be located were both salient to my analysis. I developed this technique from Stephen Legg's analysis of the LoN, particularly noting how he troubled the nested scalar analysis where the international sphere encompasses and eclipses the national and local.<sup>42</sup>

### Quantitative analysis

Since I collected technical documents, I amassed quantitative data on historical trends in narcotic trades, production, and use. These reports, compiled by the FBN and the PCOB, provide fascinating insights into the information that legislators and the press were working with. While the figures should be deemed inherently unreliable (either distorted for political gains or often missing vital contributions from stubborn nations), they show which empirical material was used to substantiate various discourses of the opium evil or medicinal shortages. To understand these trends, I had to use basic descriptive statistics and Geographical Information Systems.<sup>43</sup> While these techniques were useful for presenting and visualising my data, they also help bridge a gap that has been called the quantitative-qualitative divide in human geography and new materialism more broadly, which has been overly reliant on qualitative data analysis and presentation.<sup>44</sup>

Dowling et al., raise an important point about data presentation in qualitative non-human projects: scholars tend to rely on textual data.<sup>45</sup> I supplement my qualitative analysis with quantitative analysis of technical data from the archive. Figures were made in Tableau and illustrate changes in treaty ratifications, narcotic production, seizures, or chemistry. I have opted for the simplest line and bar plots, maps, the occasional table, and a single map. This helps the reader in two ways. First, by substantiating the claims I make about geonarcotic discourse and diplomatic processes. Secondly, by providing yardsticks that the reader can use to compare the size of legal and illegal flows.

Quantitative analysis allowed the materials to be conceived of differently. By examining the numbers, we can get a sense of the scope of the problems drug diplomats wrestled with and newspapers reported/exaggerated. They speak to the importance of material changes. For example, the massive increase in the use of poppy straw technology in Eastern Europe (discussed in chapter three) caused changes in the narcotic geographies and importance of players at the LoN.

#### Data presentation and chapter structure

The chapters and material have been ordered to show how the drug control assemblage was made of multiple material and discursive elements. Each chapter deals with a specific element as it changed over time: first is the traditional history; second is geonarcotic discourses; third is materiality and its role in diplomatic proceedings, and the fourth chapter is a discussion of attempts to determine narcotics. In using this structure, I depart from a chronological approach used by many other drug historians.<sup>46</sup> The

discussion and analysis take place within each chapter, which spans the breadth of the project (1909-1961). In presenting my analysis this way, I analyse changes in geonarcotic discourse and materiality within the specific historical context, instead of a single, ahistorical analytical chapter. This shows how the assemblage of drug control was emergent and immanent.

### Methodological contributions

Sixteen years ago, after the tenth anniversary of critical geopolitics, Klaus Dodds wrote that 'much critical geopolitical writing on foreign policy and national identity has been concerned (perhaps excessively) with representation rather than the mass of textual and bodily practices which enable such expressions of geopower'.<sup>47</sup> The non-human-human division has now become a methodological debate. As Hayden Lorimer suggests, 'there is a widely shared sense among non-representational and more-than-human geographers that methods are lagging behind theoretical developments and that the discipline requires methodological invigoration and innovation'.<sup>48</sup>

In the seven years since that intervention, political geographers have crafted fascinating new methodological stances and – in some cases – methods for engaging with the more-than-human project. In their study of nationalism and affect Militz & Müller travelled to Azerbaijan to examine the 'banalities of belonging' in national ceremonies.<sup>49</sup> They used ethnographic fieldwork and what they term 'affective writing' to capture the shared feelings of belonging. This turn towards banal nationalism has proved fruitful, other scholars have examined maps and their logos to explore Jordanian nationalism.<sup>50</sup> For Dittmer, analysing the more-than-human involves exploring how laughter

spreads among those engaged in the Model UN.<sup>51</sup> As critical geopolitics turned away from the voice of the author towards the consumption of geopolitics by active audiences,<sup>52</sup> a concern for human and non-human interactions became commonplace. My contribution to the discipline's methodological development is to think about how the role of the non-human can be conceptualised in the archive.

I do not believe historical data is always 'a blockage for methodological innovation'.<sup>53</sup> Contrary to Dowling, I show how archives can be examined or thought of as more-than-human: what an archive can do is limited by what we expect of it. The first methodological contribution I offer is that informational traces of objects in the archive can yield a new materialist perspective. In making this claim, I draw from a small cadre of interdisciplinary scholars who have discussed historical objects and their role in organising institutions and individuals. Cunha et al., focused their analysis of the Cambodian Genocide of 1971 and the objects that turned extraordinary violence into a normal experience of everyday life.<sup>54</sup> In analysing their data, they grouped their objects into organisational, symbolic and administrative groups. They then developed a list of banal objects which helped normalise and sanitise the process of conducting genocide. They suggest that clipboards, pens, and even copies of Mao's 'little red book' helped to bureaucratise genocide during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. They believe there is a pressing need to examine how such trinkets helped organise systems of murder and racism. In my work, I seek to invert their findings, showing how powders, pills, and potions became the objects of intense scientific and geopolitical focus. Following Martin Müller,<sup>55</sup> we might

say it was through the enunciative dimension of an assemblage – the textual accounts that dramatised the danger of the chemistry of narcotics – that let geonarcotic discourses grow such deep roots in the American psyche.

Second, I show that materialising the archive requires reading it differently. While I have consulted the same archives as previous scholars on the topic of drug diplomacy, I have examined them with an entirely different gaze. By conceptualising narcotics as informed, those interested in the materiality of archives have a method for extracting what Barry calls the *in silico*, or digital (in my case, non-digital) existence of narcotics as information.<sup>56</sup> They were understood through a wider set of material/textual referents: their wrapping, packaging, strength, presence on a ship's itinerary, and of course, the country from which the seizure was coming.

Third, archival sources should not be seen merely as documents, but rather as artefacts with capacities to influence drug diplomacy.<sup>57</sup> For example, in the ODP, many documents were the product of expert knowledge, materials and bureaucratic procedures. They were authoritative statements or accounts regarding the chemical composition of opioids and drugs. Latour and Woolgar call such documents 'inscription devices'.<sup>58</sup> These devices solidified certain understandings about opium within wider networks, allowing other scientists to attempt to replicate their findings and understand opium in a standardised way. Many of these inscription devices are 'more or less certain, more or less able to hold together, more or less precarious'.<sup>59</sup> These inscription devices are more than the textual traces of narcotics; they are political attempts to create scientific truths about what opium was, rather than what it could be.

- <sup>1</sup> Dwyer, C. & Davies, G. (2009). 'Qualitative methods III: animating archives, artful interventions and online environments' p.89; Mills, S. (2013). Cultural–Historical Geographies of the Archive: Fragments, Objects and Ghosts. *Geography Compass* 7(10): 701–713.
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## The Traditional History of Drug Control

In this chapter, I provide a brief history of narcotic control from 1909-1961. I structure my account through inflexion points that mark substantial changes in the international drug control assemblage. These points are the international conventions and protocols to which the world slowly became beholden. By telling this traditional story of drug control – through the desires and tactics of diplomats – I ultimately show it is insufficient by pointing out what it doesn't tell us about: the role of geonarcotic discourse and materiality. It is a control chapter on which each of the following chapters builds.

At the beginning of the twentieth-century, narcotic consumption was rife and widespread, but the type of narcotic, and method of consumption, varied geographically. McAllister's typology of nations distinguishes between raw opium that was shipped or manufactured into opiates, opioids, and smoking/eating opium. As I show in chapters three and four, other information about narcotics was essential in diplomatic debates.

Geographical factors influenced the morphine content, which in turn influenced the price and the user of the product. In later years, the strength of the opium, most often defined by its percentage of morphine, meant certain countries were welcomed into the legal market whereas others were not.

The United States was one of the first countries to confront the problem of unchecked opium use. The concern came from medical practitioners who wanted to separate their profession from separate charlatans, quacks and

feckless peddlers.<sup>1</sup> As Malleck suggests 'opiates played an important role ... in physicians' sense of professionalism'.<sup>2</sup> In 1903, the Pharmacists Association proposed selling opium and cocaine with a prescription. In the same year, Congress had a vote to enforce federal prohibition of certain types of drug use, which failed to reach a two-thirds majority in both houses.<sup>3</sup> The Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 was the first American legislative act to provide consumers with information about their medical remedies, requiring manufacturers to label which ingredients were included in their substances. This legislation recognised certain substances were harmful, and that consumers needed more information about what was within. The second law was the Smoking Opium Exclusion Acts of 1909, which banned opium imports of prepared opium for smoking. As Gierenger argues, this was not done to tackle a public health crisis, but to curry favour with the Chinese, who had long suffered under the British trade and fought two separate wars to try and end opium abuse.<sup>4</sup> Smoking opium was, traditionally, a popular pastime among Chinese migrants. If the US could help habitual users end their habit, they would distinguish themselves from the British. While the US didn't enact federal legislation banning certain opiate exports and imports until 1922, the State Department disliked the international opium trade in the early 1900s. It afforded the UK, Dutch, and French empires dominance in Asian markets. The British would sell Indian opium to China, predominantly for smoking, and made substantial money off the trade.

### The Philippines monopoly

Traditional historians such as McAllister are not unaware of geopolitical influences on drug control. He notes that when the US annexed the

Philippines in 1898, it colonised not only a war-torn nation but an opium monopoly (whereby opium was sold and taxed legally by the government).<sup>5</sup> Some 200 opium dens existed in Binondo, where Manila's Chinatown was located. Initially, the US benefitted from a 45% sales tax on opium imports, with the McKinley administration tolerating the trade.<sup>6</sup> Two events led to a change in attitude towards the monopoly. First, an outbreak of cholera in 1902 led to increased opium consumption. Narcotics induce constipation, which was then an effective method of tackling diarrhoea and dehydration. Second, the US government worried that opium's availability on the conflict-ridden island would repeat the consumption trends of the Civil War. Addiction would rise as painkillers were doled out to the wounded, and troops stationed in the Philippines would smuggle raw and smoking opium back to the continental United States.

The US had to act to control the rapidly spiralling epidemic. The Philippines Commission was appointed to tackle the problem. In 1905, the Commission created a subcommittee to 'Investigate the Use of Opium and the Traffic therein'. Among its members was the Episcopal Bishop Charles Henry Brent, an ardent anti-opium campaigner. Brent and his compatriots sailed to countries and colonies with legal trades in opium (Taiwan, Java, China, Malay, and Burma, which was split then into Upper Burma and Lower Burma),<sup>7</sup> to investigate how different countries managed opium consumption.

The Commission reported back with two possible solutions. The first was to continue administering the Spanish opium monopoly, with one tweak. The US government would supply opium to users but slowly reduce the purity of

smoking opium and wean users off narcotics altogether. Opium monopolies had long been in use in Asia, particularly in Formosa (Taiwan), where this strategy had been used with some success.<sup>8</sup> Under this system, a central authority or local government body would import opium and sell it to users. The second, favoured by Bishop Brent, was a gradual shift to prohibition which would provide users with time to wean themselves off the drug.

The first proved attractive to US lawmakers as prices could be kept artificially high to keep consumption low, and tax revenues could be used to fund the rehabilitation of users. Opium users would have to register, allowing the government to keep pace with the number of users and the extent to which they imbibed. The downside was that a government monopoly also encouraged illegal imports at lower prices than the inflated government prices.

Congress examined the idea, and it was approved by the Governor of the Philippines William Taft. That Congress even discussed it caused an uproar among Temperance advocates. Led by Dr Hamilton-Wright, another forceful advocate for anti-narcotic policies, the more stringent wing of the Temperance movement strongly opposed the opium monopoly on moral, rather than medical or economic grounds. Drug use, they insisted, was a moral failing, and could only be rectified by penance and abstinence, not government intervention. In 1903, *The New York Times* had rallied against the monopoly.<sup>9</sup> With this unfavourable public opinion, Congress scrapped the plan. They adopted the second recommendation. The US would gradually restrict the sale of Philippine opium over three years from 1907-

1910 to eventual prohibition. The three-year period is significant. It gave users with high tolerance time to convalesce and dilute their dosage. Even the fervent Brent supported this period of withdrawal, noting that an immediate cessation of the trade would do little to stop cravings of users. While he abhorred the trade, he did not demonise users.

Brent's position signals an important point: Temperance advocates did not always agree about the best methods for tackling addiction. Some believed treatment should also be available for those in withdrawal, with some registration system for addicts. Others, such as Hamilton-Wright, took a much stricter view that that immediate cessation was the only hope.

Scholars have not explored how this early version of the opium evil discourse influenced the decision regarding the opium monopoly. McAllister has investigated the Temperance movement's attacks on the British opium trade, but not the Philippines monopoly itself, noting merely that 'Washington imposed a policy of suppression, excepting medical needs, upon the Philippines'.<sup>10</sup> This omission is significant; the Philippine opium monopoly used a strategy depended on morphine content; reducing the strength of opium was a public health strategy. If the amount of morphine were reduced, then users would be slowly weaned off opium. But for Hamilton-Wright, tinkering with the morphine content did not get to the route of the problem: the foreign production and trade in opium.

In March 1906, an interim law was established where the opium was sorted by the degree of preparation. Crude and raw opium of up to 1kg was charged at 2.50 Philippines Pesos (p) cooked and prepared opium at the same weight

was charged at p7.50 with import costs of p2.50 and p0.5 respectively. The prices of licenses for opium varied. Users had to pay p0.5 retailers p200, and distributors p1000.<sup>11</sup> While Bamero notes that the difference of prices between raw and prepared opium showed that potency was linked to price, little has been said about the way price, type of opium, and potency were manipulated for political purposes.

Congress took a stronger tone than Bishop Brent and sided with Hamilton-Wright. They overturned the interim law and decreed that, on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1908, all opium paraphernalia was to be handed into the government. All Filipino consumption was banned unless it was for medical use, and all non-Filipino (mainly Chinese) use was to be banned in three years. Under the new laws, strict fines and imprisonment awaited Filipino residents found to be possessing opium. Foreigners in breach of the law were deported. Opium prohibition won its first overseas victory, and opium was transformed from a palliative and pastime into a social menace wrought by foreign powers. Hoffmann suggests this punitive shift was caused by economic concerns over the cost of addiction to the Philippines,<sup>12</sup> but I argue it was partly geopolitical: the US wished to show it was stricter than other Asian nations, that it was sympathetic to China's plight, and that it would not countenance a colonial and barbaric trade. A critical account of the geopolitics and posturing of various nations is discussed further in chapter two.

Prohibition in the Philippines led to legislative changes in the continental US in 1909. opium problem was mostly believed to be a foreign issue confined to Asia (one 1848 estimate suggested 27% of the Chinese population were

habitual opium users), but the problems in the Philippines brought it closer to home.<sup>13</sup> The Smoking Opium Exclusion Acts of 1909 banned what was perceived as a Chinese behaviour (the racial elements of this argument are discussed in chapter two).

### The 1909 International Opium Commission

Soon after prohibition in the Philippines, America's ambitions for narcotic prohibition went global. Brent canvassed the Philippines Governor William Taft, and President Roosevelt, to create the first ever International Opium Commission to study the opium problem in the Far East. Brent blended the foreign trade with moralism and geopolitics. The US had already bilaterally agreed not to ship opium to China; a US-led commission would help repair damaged relations due to the Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882 and Opium Smoking acts of 1909. The State Department agreed to the commission with one crucial caveat: the commission's findings were to be advisory, and delegates were not given plenipotentiary powers.<sup>14</sup>

The 1909 Opium Commission was to be held at The Hague. As invitations were circulated, a protest was raised from uninvited nations who demanded a seat at the table. Even worse, Turkey refused to participate. With its blooming, lucrative, high-morphine poppy crops, Turkey ostensibly did not attend because it had no representative in the Far East, but also because it did not desire international narcotic control.<sup>15</sup> In a shaky start to the international efforts, Turkey's absence signalled that producer nations held strong negotiating positions. One recalcitrant producer nation could quite easily sabotage multi-lateral efforts by ramping up its production. The

invitation list was expanded to include Austria-Hungary, China, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, and Siam (Thailand). Of these nations, only Siam and China were independent Asian territories.

When the Opium Commission met in February 1909, nations with little cultivation but plenty of demand dictated the parameters of the debates. Dr Hamilton-Wright led the American delegation. He viewed the problem through a supply-focussed lens and was keen to enamour the Chinese government to the US position on strict control.<sup>16</sup> He argued colonial opium hurt the US trade with China in other goods, and offered a stringent definition of what legitimate usages of opium should be. This excluded all quasi-medical uses that involved eating and smoking, practices that were illegal, and deemed non-medical in the United States. Apart from Hsu, who focuses on Japanese legislation in Taiwan,<sup>17</sup> scholars haven't dwelled on the significance of this division.<sup>18</sup> In chapter three I will develop the argument that the division between illegal and legal or medical/non-medical uses of narcotics was more about the *type* of narcotic in question than usage.

Colonial powers immediately objected to the American proposal, sensing a threat to their established trades. They believed opium smoking was a cultural behaviour deeply embedded in each country. Consumption was not a matter for international discussion; it was an issue for governments to legislate. They won the argument. The Commission recommended that each delegation 'move its government to take measures for the gradual suppression of the practice of opium smoking in its territories and possessions, *with due regard to the varying circumstances in each*



*country*'.<sup>19</sup> The point was moot. The Commission delegates had no plenipotentiary powers, and governments ignored the diluted recommendations. Only the US and Canada would begin to establish strict national legislation. In 1911, Canada successfully prohibited drugs with the Opium and Drug Act. It would take the US another two years to even begin this process.

### The 1912 International Opium Convention

Following the minor successes of the first commission, the United States pushed for a second, binding conference with support from Brent's ally (and now President) Howard Taft. Undeterred by the Shanghai meeting, they devised loftier goals: an international system that regulated countries who produced and manufactured opium, as well as some early efforts at interdiction against smugglers on the high seas.<sup>20</sup> An attempt to discuss interdiction reveals that American diplomats were interested in supply control, rather than demand-based measures: responsibility for smuggling lay with the producing nations, rather than those facilitating the demand. While it is well established in the literature that economic policies that – apart from price – try to manage the demand of psychoactive substances are often ineffective,<sup>21</sup> the geopolitical significance of a supply-based approach remains under-theorised. I suggest the American delegates knew that consumption was an off-limits topic. They instead tried to tackle the production of poppy crops and their movement from country-to-country.

Twelve nations participated in the 1912 Convention and met at The Hague. The conference proved more successful than the 1909 Commission. Article One of the Convention required countries to 'enact effective laws or

regulations for the control of the production and distribution of raw opium'.<sup>22</sup> It also led to states agreeing to suppress opium smoking, although no timetable was ever set for a clear plan. Chapter Four provided specific measures to tackle the traffic in China. It was also the first time that manufacturing states had their trade in opiates curtailed, although states only had to use their 'best efforts' to tackle the trade. This allowed Germany and France to escape serious action. The treaty behoved signatories to develop pharmacy laws and regulations on the import and export of medicinal morphine to other nations. Articles three and four only placed restrictions on the countries *exporting* raw opium to those who already had national legislation. Many nations who had not enacted legislation that prohibited the trade, effectively nullifying article four. Morphine and heroin were left unregulated. Before the outbreak of World War One, only eight ratifications of the 1912 Convention had been received. More would not come until 1919 when countries ratified the Paris Peace Conference and the 1912 Convention as part of that process.

Despite the lacklustre progress on opiates, the minor successes with opium smoking were greeted with joy by the Temperance movement in the US. For Speaker, the results of the galvanised domestic support for further drug laws in the US. In 1914, 4,000 people stormed down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington DC, singing 'Onward Christian Men and Women' to protest alcohol and drug abuse both in the United States and the Philippines.<sup>23</sup>

A disjuncture soon emerged between America's international agenda and its domestic narcotic policies regarding opiates. Morphine abuse was still rife, and Dr Hamilton-Wright noted, 'we have made ourselves a bit amusing by

the blithe way in which we called a conference to study the sins of others, to discover through it we are the greatest sinners'.<sup>24</sup> Hamilton-Wright was questioning the US's ability to lead international proceedings without strict domestic legislation regarding opiates.<sup>25</sup> American politicians were united in their goal of narcotic control that was not limited to opium smoking. When the US did enact legislation, it helped shape the rigorous approach to prohibition that located the problem outside of the country. As we shall see, this caused them to clash with other nations that favoured domestic market controls to reduce opiate consumption.<sup>26</sup>

#### The 1914 Harrison Narcotics Act

The most important act of the early years of US drug control was the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914. Musto states it consolidated the position of medical professionals as the legitimate arbiters of opium dispensation. The lengthy description of the act reveals a regulatory, rather than a prohibitive goal.

An act to provide for the registration of, with collectors of internal revenue, and to impose a special tax upon all persons who produce, import, manufacture, compound, deal in, dispense, sell, distribute, or give away opium or coca leaves, their salts, derivatives, or preparations, and for other purposes.<sup>27</sup>

The Harrison Act stipulated a sales tax on all narcotic purchases and required all dispensers to register with the federal government. Dispensers were required to prescribe for all purchases, meaning that doctors and licensed chemists could legally provide opium and opiates to customers. This

act paved the way towards calculating the size of America's narcotic appetite.

In 1917, the Harrison Act guidelines were amended. Addiction was no longer treated as a disease, but rather a criminal, moral, and individual failing. The new guidelines banned the practice of maintenance therapy (providing addicts with legal supplies of narcotics and reducing an addict's dosage until they were weaned off their prescription). The Narcotic Division of the Treasury employed some 170 agents to enforce the Act. The guidelines quickly led to court cases and disputes.<sup>28</sup> While some physicians fought the rulings tooth and nail, the medical and pharmaceutical dispensers were eventually cajoled, incarcerated, and browbeaten into accepting the new federal drug approach. This would not be the last time the medical practitioners challenged the government on what they could and couldn't do with narcotics.

These early successes in prohibitive law are attributable, in large part, to the hard-line members of the Temperance Movement including Dr Hamilton-Wright, the WCTU and ASL. These groups had formidable resources; they were spending millions of dollars on lobbying for alcohol prohibition.

However, they were aided by medical practitioners who had first worried about a blurry division between medicine and quackery. By specifying legitimate uses of narcotics, the US created a system that enforced these divisions. This had the effect of discursively severing licit medicinal use from recreational, illicit use. The US would advocate for this division internationally time and time again at the League and UN.

## The League of Nations

With the end of the First World War in 1918, a new international approach was needed to make sure the world had a coordinated approach to ending opium smoking and also providing enough medicine. The newly created League of Nations in Geneva was charged with administering the 1912 Convention and began its work on narcotics control on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1920.<sup>29</sup> The United States did not join the League, but it would observe the regulatory proceedings through the watchful eyes of Dr Hamilton-Wright and Bishop Brent. They pushed the American agenda into proceedings.

During the Versailles Peace Process in January 1919, a clause was inserted into the peace treaties mandating ratification of the 1912 Opium Convention by Turkey and Germany. As McAllister suggests, 'with the stroke of a pen, the requirement of the 1912 treaty for near-universal adherence was satisfied'.<sup>30</sup> This was the first time Germany and Turkey, two important manufacturing and producer nations respectively, agreed to tackle the trade and consumption of opium, but recall that the 1912 Opium Convention only dealt with raw opium, processed opium for smoking, and medical opium; its provisions for opiates were heavily diluted. With opium smoking on the decline but opiate usage and manufacturing rising, the 1912 Convention quickly became insufficient for tackling abuse of opiates.

When the US Senate refused to join the LoN in 1919, American interests were only represented in ad-hoc functions (individual expert testimony and employment in the League). In 1920, the League of Nations Secretariat, recognising the sprawling world drug problem, delegated drug operations to two different agencies. The first was the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in

Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, notable by its common name 'The Opium Advisory Committee' (OAC). The OAC was the fulcrum of drug operations, staffed by an advisory board of experts from various nations who provided political and legislative support for the League. It was the political arm of the League, dealing with the creation of international agreements. The second agency was the League Health Committee (which would become the World Health Organisation). It dealt with the classification of new substances and the science of addiction.<sup>31</sup>

American diplomats deemed access to the League's drug deliberations vital for keeping Americans safe from drug abuse, but they had to contend with public hostility towards the League.<sup>32</sup> Many in the League hoped Americans could slowly integrate with League functions without officially joining. The Secretary-General of the League formally invited the United States to join the OAC in 1923, and the Harding Administration accepted and sent its first delegation to the OAC in the same year. It was comprised of Stephen G. Porter, former chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Bishop Brent, and former Surgeon-General Rupert Blue.

### [The 1925 Conventions, American withdrawal and the creation of the PCOB](#)

In early 1924, preparations were made for two narcotics conferences (called the Geneva Opium Conference) to be held from November 1924 to February 1925. When the American delegation was sent to discuss proposals for a new international treaty at the 1925 Geneva Opium Conference, their message of stringent drug control rang clear: elimination of excess production, the end of opium monopolies under governmental control, and

most importantly, that quasi-medical use would be expunged from future treaties.<sup>33</sup> The Americans also hoped to tackle opium smoking, but colonial powers dismissed both proposals almost entirely. They argued that the illegal traffic would increase should they relinquish control of their opium monopolies. They also suggested opium smoking was not harmful enough to count as part of the world drug problem. Even if it was, the Royal British Commission in India had argued that medical use overlapped so heavily with abuse of opium it was practically impossible to separate the two.<sup>34</sup>

The first conference resulted in signatories agreeing only to sell opium through legal monopolies. It also produced an agreement to phase out opium smoking in fifteen years. The US was unhappy with both pledges. They had denounced the opium monopoly in the Philippines, and fifteen years did not satisfy their desire for rapid change.

The second of these conferences (named the Geneva Conference) was attended by 41 nations and proved more controversial. The American delegation looked to expand narcotic control beyond opium to cocaine and cannabis.

American preparations for this second conference proceeded from a tough stance.<sup>35</sup> Porter, Brent, and Blue came with an ironclad resolution passed unanimously in 1924 by both Houses. The resolution stated that international drug control had

Utterly failed to suppress illicit traffic ... without adequate restriction upon production, the source or root of the evil ... has resulted in extensive and flagrant violations of the laws by reason of the fact that

the great commercial value of these drugs, the large financial gains derived from handling them, and the smallness of their bulk, which renders detection in transportation and sale exceedingly difficult, have induced and encouraged the unscrupulous to divert enormous quantities into the channels of illicit international traffic, thereby rendering partially, if not wholly, ineffective the [1912] treaty and laws adopted in pursuance thereof.<sup>36</sup>

The Americans had noted the materiality of opiates compared to opium. Morphine, heroin, and codeine were usually powdered, potent, and purer than opium, and thus harder to detect while being more profitable and dangerous. They used the properties of narcotics to shift the focus away from usage towards the production of raw opium and manufactured opiates. The Geneva Convention was the first time that opiates, or semi-synthetics such as morphine and codeine, were discussed.

The US startled other delegates with their hard-line, non-negotiable stance. They effectively demanded the League place non-negotiable limits on the world's annual production of raw opiates. This would be set at the amounts required for medical and scientific usage. Only China and Egypt supported the American position, yet Egypt produced no raw opium for export. Before the civil war in China, opium production had almost been eradicated due to internal control. The British had also agreed to reduce their exports of Indian opium to the nation (the Ten Years Agreements) but had then drastically increased exports in 1917 to account for 9/10<sup>ths</sup> of the world's production.<sup>37</sup>



Colonial nations deflected the focus from their production by pointing to the vast outflows of illicit opium from China and the Pacific. The increase in cultivation was attributed to warlords used opium to fund internal skirmishes. The Chinese revolution from 1925-1927 meant that — in later years — there was little governmental control to enforce drug law.

Another sticking point came from disputes over defining what a dangerous substance was. In one draft of the treaty, Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention stipulated that the League's Health Committee would advise and recommend to the Secretary-General that a substance be subject to international control. Each judgement was to be based on generally recognised scientific research. The trouble was that research into addiction was not generally recognised. Many countries disagreed about the addictive potential of opiates and other synthetic drugs.

The final straw for the Americans came when the British Government forced a change in the wording of the 1925 Geneva Convention's final document. The phrasing was changed from 'limitation to strictly medicinal and scientific needs' to 'limitation to legitimate needs'.<sup>38</sup> This rendered prepared opium for smoking and eating entirely legal, and would enable the enormous consumption of prepared opium in the Far East indefinitely. The Congressional resolution stipulated the American delegation could not renege on their proposals. Brent, Porter, and Blue had no choice. They withdrew from proceedings, quickly followed by the Chinese.<sup>39</sup> The chair of conferences — British veteran diplomat Malcolm Delevingne — sought to assuage the Americans with assurances that the American proposals embodied the eventual goal of the League's mission. The British even

promised to agree to the eventual suppression of opium smoking in their territories. It wasn't enough. So enraged was Porter that he noted, on record, that 'if when I get back to America anybody says, "League of Nations" to me, he ought to say it conveniently near a hospital'.<sup>40</sup>

Despite these setbacks, the second conference established the Permanent Central Opium Board (PCOB) — the precursor to today's International Narcotic Control Board (INCB) — to police the provisions of the 1912 and 1925 conventions. The PCOB was tasked with collecting statistics on imports and exports of narcotics from signatory nations. It was hoped these numbers would provide an estimate of an upper limit for global raw opium production. This could be administered and policed by the neutral PCOB. The conference ended on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1925 and passed into law on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1928.

Disagreement over the efficacy and ethics of opium monopolies reared its head again in 1929. A League Commission produced a report on the relative value of prohibition compared to the opium monopoly as two models of drug control. The report concluded both systems had shown some reduction in trafficking,<sup>41</sup> but both encouraged unscrupulous smugglers to produce and import a commodity that was in high demand. A year later, the US responded: it counter-investigated in the Philippines. The trip was led by Mrs Washburn-Wright, an ardent anti-narcotics campaigner who had taken up her late husband (Dr Hamilton-Wright's) mantle. In 1930, Congress sent Wright to the islands, where she reported on the success of prohibition compared to the monopoly system. She conceded that a great deal of opium was smuggled into the nation.<sup>42</sup> Contraband came from Persia, the Yunnan

peninsula in China, Hong Kong, North Borneo and Amoy.<sup>43</sup> Both systems were ill-equipped to tackle the illegal trade, and smuggling would be widely discussed in the 1930s.<sup>44</sup> She used these findings to discredit the idea that opium monopolies could reduce illegal trafficking. With so much contraband on the island, there would be little incentive for users to register through a monopoly system.

The significance of these reports and the evidence they presented have not been theorised from a geopolitical perspective. In chapter three, I examine the disputes over the opium monopoly in more depth.

#### Enter Harry Anslinger

1930 was a pivotal moment in American and International Drug Law. The Federal Bureau of Narcotics (hereafter FBN) was created in 1930. Harry Anslinger became Commissioner and de facto czar of US drugs policy. His recommendations came from Herbert Hoover and William Randolph Hearst.<sup>45</sup> With a long career in diplomatic service both behind and in front of him, Anslinger would shape the legislative narcotic landscape of the US, the League, and UN for the next thirty-five years. Anslinger dominated the FBN by suffering no usurpers. He had been tutored by State Department senior negotiator Stuart Fuller, a man who was deeply sceptical of the League's commitment to drug control. Along with later State Department counterparts (Joseph Stilwell and George Morlock), Anslinger would lead US drug diplomacy until he was forced out by the mandatory retirement age of 75 in 1962.

It is essential to describe the FBN, as some view it as an institution that dealt with solely enforcing the law against illegal drugs.<sup>46</sup> This is far from the truth. While the FBN did engage in well-publicised drug busts, much of its work was clerical, administering legal narcotics and the 200,000 wholesalers, pharmacists and doctors who handled and dispensed them.<sup>47</sup> The FBN was charged with the licensing, auditing, and regulation of the US's legal market in controlled substances, as well as educating the public about the dangers of narcotics. It made estimates of the nation's medicinal needs, issued permits for the import of opium, examined, weighed and assayed these imports at US ports, stored opium in secure facilities, divided the opium into quotas, and licensed them to American manufacturers. It also audited manufacturers, chemists, doctors, and pharmacists. As we shall see, it was these legal duties, and the powers the FBN wielded through them, that gave its Commissioner international influence. Anslinger had complete control over the narcotics bought and sold by the US. This was a powerful position, and is perhaps the most overlooked aspect of his tenure. It is fully discussed in chapter three.

### The 1931 Conventions

1931 marked the negotiation and passage of two international events. First, an Agreement Concerning the Suppression of Opium Smoking, held in Bangkok on 27 November. This agreement was designed to highlight the problem of opium smoking in Asia, and the signatories (Table 1) pledged to stop sales to minors and curb opium use by limiting sales to government retailers (opium monopolies). The measures were largely tokenistic.

Stopping the legal sales to minors did not tackle diversion from the licit market, nor did it combat illegal smuggling or production.

**TABLE 1: COUNTRIES AND DATES OF RATIFICATION OF THE 1931 OPIUM SMOKING SUPPRESSION AGREEMENT SOURCE: UNTC TREATY DATA. <sup>48</sup>**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Date of Ratification</b>
France	10 May 1933
India	4 December 1944
Japan	22 January 1937
Netherlands	22 May 1933
Portugal	27 January 1934
Thailand	19 November 1934
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	3 April 1933

The League held a second conference in 1931. This was the Geneva Convention for Limiting the Manufacturing and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs (hereafter 1931 Convention).<sup>49</sup> It was attended by 57 nations from 27 May to 13 July 1931. It symbolised a return to US cooperation with the League. Afterwards, John Caldwell, of the State Department's Division of Far Eastern Affairs, served on League advisory committees. The presiding member of the PCOB was Herbert May, an American lawyer who would spend 25 years working for the OAC and later, at the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) at the LoN and UN respectively.<sup>50</sup>

The 1931 Convention placed supply reduction and regulation at the centre of the League's operations. It had four parts: 'regulating the illicit trade, suppressing illicit manufacture, reducing excess raw material production and attacking the international traffic'.<sup>51</sup> Its specific directives were varied: firstly, Article 15 required nations to create a federal regulatory agency based on the remit of the FBN. It included both regulatory and prohibitive dimensions that the US desired. Second, it built on the import and export calculations introduced into the Geneva Conventions. It required nations to furnish the PCOB with estimates of their medical and scientific needs of manufactured narcotics. Estimates were based on imports and export ratios which the 1925 Geneva Convention had stipulated must be furnished by each country annually. These estimates were to be evaluated by a newly created Drugs Supervisory Body (DSB). The DSB was empowered to establish estimates for countries not party to the treaties, and for those who failed to furnish their estimates, but it lacked powers of enforcement. The estimates supplied were, in theory, binding, yet they could only be published with the respective country's agreement.

An under-examined aspect of the 1931 Convention was provision via stockpiling. All nations agreed that providing a steady flow of medicines was vital, but the American Civil War had shown how vital narcotics were, and World War One had proved that international markets could be disrupted. The League recognised this, and the provision of narcotics was written into the 1931 Convention via Article 4. Article 4 stipulated that pharmaceutical companies could procure a six-month stockpile of raw materials for manufacture. It also stated that government stocks were exempt from the

six-month rule, a loophole that Anslinger would exploit in later years to great effect.<sup>52</sup> Countries did not have to indicate which signatory nation they would buy opium from, allowing them to shop for the lowest price. Finally, it established protections for the pharmaceutical firms and markets. This was, according to the State Department, a key strength of the agreement because 'the quantities of dangerous drugs manufactured in other countries, renders much stricter the control of the legitimate trade abroad in these substances'.<sup>53</sup>

The 1931 Convention's passage was hard fought by the Americans.<sup>54</sup> Stuart Fuller went on the offensive by regularly criticising nations who were reluctant to sign it.<sup>55</sup> Anslinger and Fuller found an early ally in Canada, which adopted the prohibitory spirit of its southern neighbour. Canada's drug czar was Colonel Charles Henry Ludovic Sharman. He was Chief of the Narcotics Division of the Department of Pensions and National Health and pushed heavily for the American proposals.

In 1932, the FBN was under threat of being subsumed into the Secret Service, only one year after its creation. It needed international victories to protect it from re-structuring.<sup>56</sup> By working with Fuller, Anslinger cajoled nations into accepting the 1931 Convention by threatening to bar their medicinal exports to the US. Turkey ratified the 1931 Convention after this threat, and the League received the required number of ratifications on June 9, 1933.

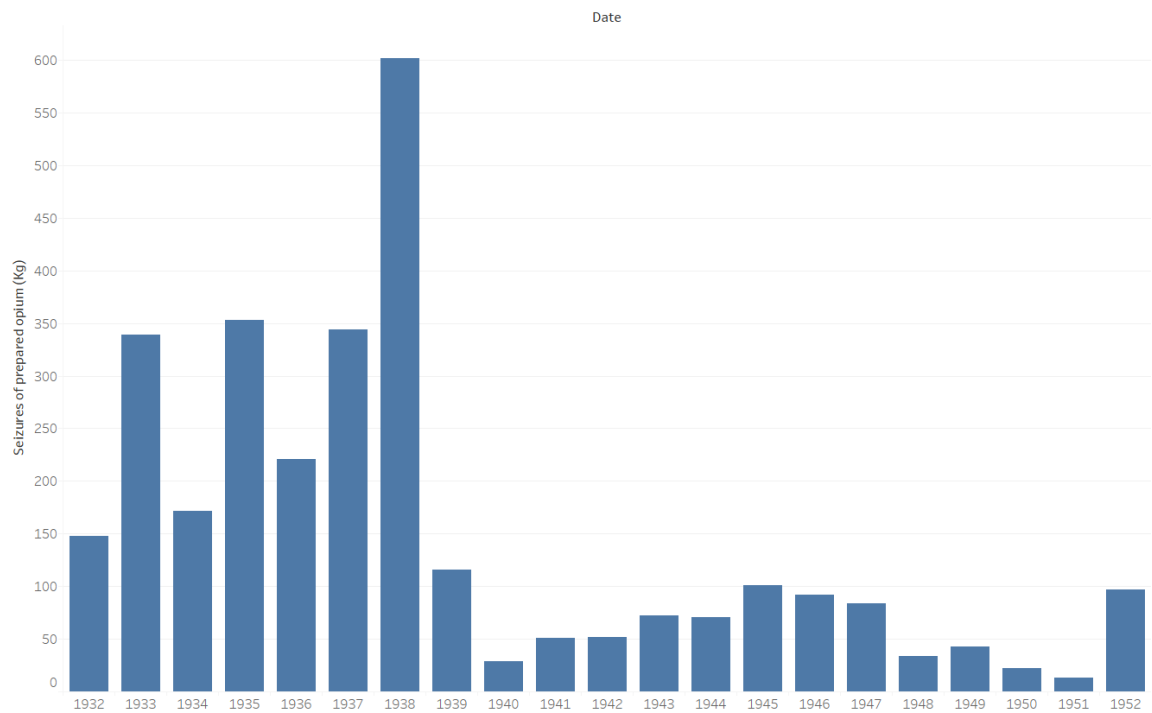
At a luncheon celebrating the passage of the act, Sharman stated that 'far from being a musty document from which occasional reference is made ... it

is the foundation from which springs the daily exchange of information between Ottawa and Washington'.<sup>57</sup> Both Anslinger and Sharman were shrewdly aware that drug control relied on cooperation. Adequate provision and narcotic security underlay the North American approach to prohibition. Indeed, Anslinger gained Canadian support by promising Sharman cheap and reliable access to narcotics if supplies ever dried up (discussed fully in chapter three). By 1931, there were five different international bodies involved with some aspect of drug control, not to mention the 40 plus countries who sent delegations to the League.

#### Post-1931: The lead up to the Second World War

Global opium production declined 45% from 1909 to 1937. From 1934 to 1937, global legal opium production fell from 7,200 tons to 2,300.<sup>58</sup> China's output remained problematic. It produced, and consumed, most of the world's opium. US seizures declined massively due to the war (figure 1) as German submarines closed the Mediterranean shipping channels.





**FIGURE 1: SEIZURES OF PREPARED OPIUM (Kg) IN THE UNITED STATES FROM YEARS 1932-1952. AS PREDICTED, SEIZURES DECLINED DURING THE WAR. SOURCE: FBN.<sup>59</sup>**

Between 1931-1938, the League of Nations made overtures to the United States which, in turn, pledged cautious but optimistic support for the League's approach to drug control. They did not, however, change their hard-line stance of prohibition based on strict definitions of medical/non-medical use. League officials were acutely aware of the complexity of the opium problem in the Far East, yet found themselves unwilling to contradict the US after the fractious negotiations of 1925.<sup>60</sup>

When the 1931 Convention came into force in 1934, many nations cooperated with the League by furnishing the PCOB (Permanent Central Opium Board) and DSB (Drugs Supervisory Body) with statistics on their estimated needs, imports, and exports of narcotics. The figures they produced are some of the first clear measures of the world's narcotic traffic.

The PCOB and DSB set about documenting and tabulating the rise of heroin and morphine abuse, but they lacked any enforcement capacity when it came to the illegal traffic.

Much of the diplomatic history outlined by McAllister focuses on the key individuals of drug policy in this era. These include Bertil Renborg, chair of the OAC; Leon Steinig, an American-Austrian who became head of the DSB; and of course, Harry Anslinger.<sup>61</sup> In 1936 he began authoring the FBN's annual report to Congress entitled '*Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs*'.

The federal laws that created the FBN also made Harry Anslinger the chief enforcer of the Harrison Narcotics Act of 1914. This meant the FBN's earliest battles were not against drug dealers or belligerent diplomats, but against state legislatures. In 1932, Congress passed the Uniform State Narcotic Law. This act led to a gradual alignment of state legislation with federal law, but it would not enjoy the support of all fifty states until 1940. Heroin had been made illegal as both a medicine and recreational substance in 1924. The Narcotic Farm Act had become law in 1929. It established narcotic hospitals in Lexington, Kentucky and Fort Worth, Texas due to the overcrowding of prisons with minor drug offenders.<sup>62</sup> Under Anslinger's tenure, domestic drug law for the legal and illegal trades became the strictest in the world. By 1932, the US had criminalised the use of most narcotic drugs, unless specifically prescribed under strict conditions enforced by the FBN. The agency had offices across the country, which monitored druggists and pharmacists. The prescription of narcotics for maintenance purposes (providing an addict with a legal, safe supply of narcotics) became illegal. A campaign against

marijuana was gaining momentum, spearheaded by an Anslinger. He co-wrote a publication entitled '*Marihuana- Assassin of Youth*'.<sup>63</sup> In 1937, the Marijuana Tax Act banned the drug's use altogether. Although we know these campaigns were influential in the US, we know little about their impact upon international control.

The 1925 Conventions had focussed the world's attention on the global trade but rendered the issue of cultivation strictly off-limits. The 1931 Conventions had then made some inroads into controlling supply at the source. Neither tackled the illegal production and trafficking of narcotics. The senior US drug diplomats renewed their focus on the illicit (in their view, illegal) drug markets. No act of Congress would bring the cultivating nations to heel, nor would it deter foreign traffickers. Once again, the FBN's attention turned to tackling narcotics at the source.

#### The opium situation in China and Japan

After World War One, the Japanese empire encouraged the production of home-grown, legal narcotics for domestic, medical, and scientific purposes. It maintained opium monopolies in Taiwan and Shandong Peninsula, arguing that the monopoly would gradually suppress the illegal trade. They argued their monopolies were effective routes to abstinence.<sup>64</sup> Japan also looked to become a global competitor in the licit export market for manufactured narcotics. Under the guise of self-sufficiency, Japan's exports to other nations also grew, particularly China.

In the early years of the Roosevelt administration, the State Department was wary of upsetting Japan. The emperor had issued demands and claims to

Chinese territory that were in direct contravention of the US 'Open Door' policy that called on all nations to respect the sovereignty of China. The narcotic situation had gained a geopolitical gleam with the establishment of Kwantung opium monopoly in North-eastern China in July of 1928, and the Mukden incident of 1931, a staged explosion on a commuter train (placed by Japanese militants).<sup>65</sup> The explosion led to a Japanese invasion of North-eastern China.<sup>66</sup> Japan believed the region was important for defending its colony in Korea and bolstering against Soviet and Chinese aggression. The US did not want to engage in this diplomatic incident. Targeting the opium monopolies allowed the US to express its dissatisfaction with Japan and assert its tough stance on recreational use to other nations. In 1931, when the State Department sent Caldwell and Fuller to represent the United States at the League's Conference on the Suppression of Opium Smoking, they did just this. To avoid being accused of 'buckling down to the British',<sup>67</sup> Caldwell explicitly told the conference that the United States would not cooperate with any nation that continued to use a monopoly system.

The Government of the United States most strongly urges frank recognition of the fact that there is but one real method by which to suppress the evil of opium-smoking in the Far East or anywhere else, and that this method is complete statutory prohibition of the importation, manufacture, sale, possession or use of prepared opium, coupled with active enforcement of such prohibition.<sup>68</sup>

In making this statement, the US was throwing down a geopolitical gauntlet. While it provoked little discussion at the conference, its non-negotiable status increased acrimony between the US and Japan (at this point the world's

biggest supporter of the opium monopoly). Opium monopolies were at the heart of the problems of the first 30 years of drug control; they reflected a debate over whether a legal market could tackle narcotic abuse and whether users could be registered and weaned off a substance by the state.<sup>69</sup>

The FBN's preoccupation with the Uniform Narcotic Act and campaign against marijuana meant that the Treasury Department did much of the early work at the LoN. Dr Hamilton-Wright had died in 1917 and Bishop Brent in 1929. Narco-diplomacy fell to Stuart Fuller of the Treasury's Division of Far Eastern Affairs. Fuller's gusto for strict narcotic control at the League was unmatched. He worked 'incessantly at it, seven days a week, and with definite and very great efficiency' per one State Department colleague.<sup>70</sup> Fuller's workload is unsurprising, considering the worsening narcotic situation in the Far East. In the early years of the decade, the seizures of illicit opium in that region increased with a sharp spike in 1935 and 1936 (Table 2).

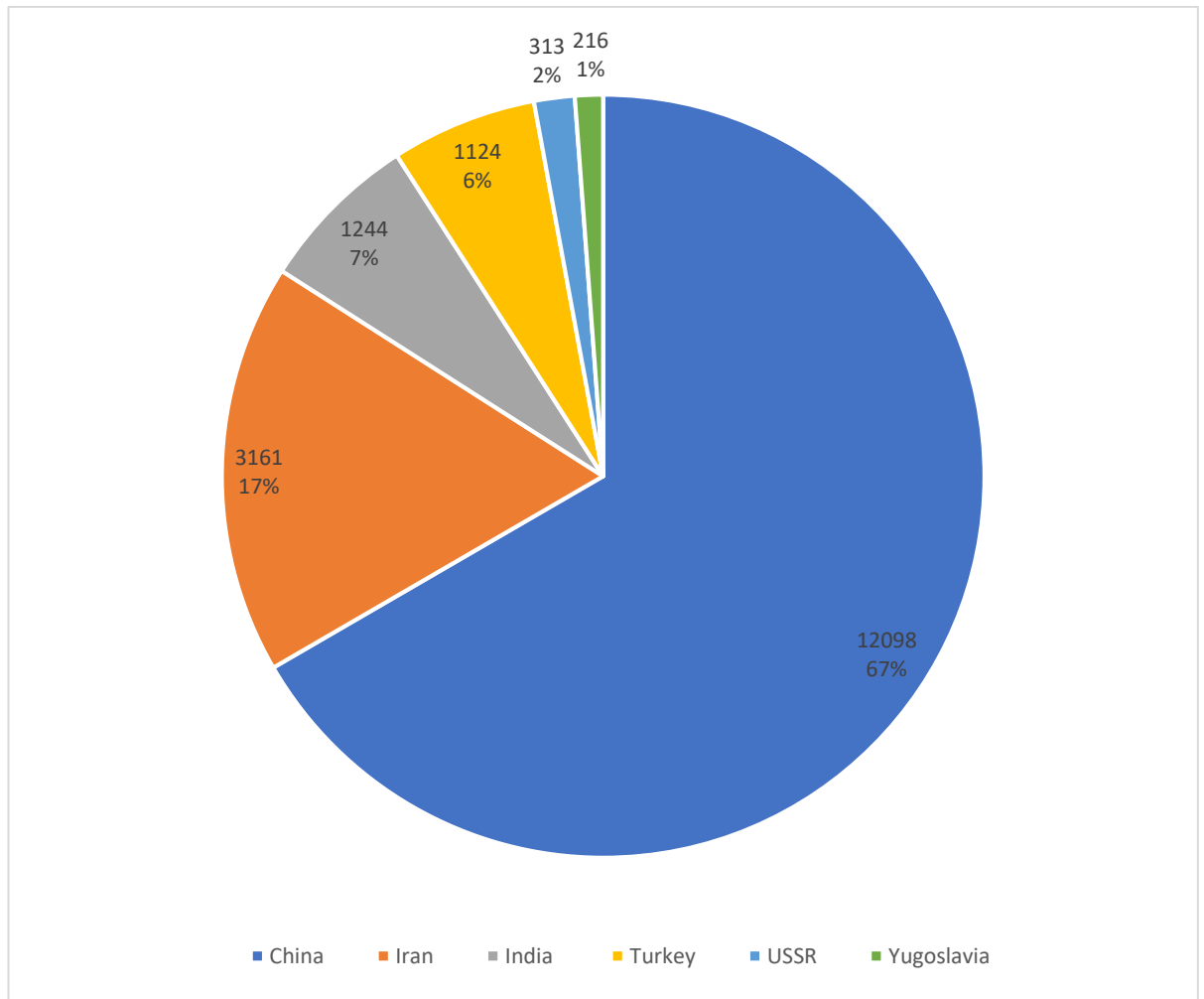
**TABLE 2: TOTAL WORLD SEIZURES OF OPIUM FOR THE YEARS 1932-1941. SEIZURES INCREASED MASSIVELY BEFORE THE WAR BUT DECLINED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE WAR. SOURCE: OAC.<sup>71</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>World Seizures (Kg)</b>
1932	17,161
1933	24,222
1934	34,372
1935	195,600
1936	143,326
1937	36,252
1938	37,865
1939	28,724
1940	19,279
1941	9,646

Many of these seizures came from China. Both the LoN and the Americans blamed this on Japan and Persia. Whereas Turkish and Eastern European opium travelled westwards towards Europe and North America, Japanese and Persian opium travelled eastward to China, Malaya, Hong-Kong, and Singapore. Persia had increased its production and exports due to the slack from Indian reductions in 1926. It outright refused to participate in the PCOB estimate system, meaning the figures calculated for the actual size of the nation's output were unreliable.<sup>72</sup> In China, narcotics were legally produced, sold to unscrupulous traders and then unleashed upon the general population for recreational use. If they were exported to other countries, they were often diverted into the illegal traffic. In the earlier years of the twentieth-

century, narcotics had often been legally produced before entering the illegal market. It was rarer for poppies to be grown explicitly for the black-market.

In 1935, the OAC estimated that a minimum of 12,261 tons and a maximum of 18,000 tons of opium were being produced in China,<sup>73</sup> amounting to 67% of the world's total (Figure 2).<sup>74</sup>



**FIGURE 2: PREWAR PRODUCTION OF WORLD RAW OPIUM IN TONS 1934-1937. THE FIGURE SHOWS CHINA'S WORRYING SHARE BUT EXCLUDES THE PROVINCES OF MANCHURIA AND JEHOL. SOURCE: PCOB.<sup>75</sup>**

The US was uneasy with China's unchecked production and Japan's growing dominance in the Far East. Opium from China was being seized in 'Australia, Hong Kong, Netherlands, East Indies, Malaya and the Philippines' and North

America.<sup>76</sup> China's internal strife meant warlords had used opium crops to fund military campaigns. Warlords had long used the national banks to store profits from opium, and it is estimated that one-quarter of all the banks that emerged between 1912 and 1926 did so to cater to the opium trade.<sup>77</sup>

American suspicions about Japan's colonial ambitions were confirmed when the puppet state of Manchukuo was established in Manchuria and Jehol in 1932. This led to the Opium Law of Manchukuo in 1933, which gave the state control over the production and drug markets.<sup>78</sup> By this time, international faith in the Japanese's commitment to tackling the narcotic problem had all but been destroyed. Madame Chiang-Kai Shek, the wife of the leader of the Kuomintang, stated that 'opium pellets long preceded lead bullets in Japan's invasion of China'.<sup>79</sup>

The US believed that Japan actively benefited from the sale of narcotics into China. Japan had created a demilitarised zone in East Hebei as part of the Tanggu Accords (a formal truce agreed two years after the invasion of Manchuria). Here, Japanese soldiers sold narcotics with impunity, as did members of *Zaibatsu*, the Japanese pharmaceutical industry. They also exploited the Tanggu Accords by extending the demilitarised zone further into China.<sup>80</sup>

On 17 April 1934, *The Central China West* newspaper asserted that massive quantities of morphine and heroin were reaching the American West coast, as well as pouring into the Chinese territories. The paper noted with obvious frustration that the PCOB reports, which at the time had recorded a 14% drop in morphine production in Europe, were not considering the illicit traffic and thus ignoring the Japanese activities.<sup>81</sup> The article stated that the United



States Treasury had found significant increases in morphine and heroin being smuggled into the country. The report referenced was the 1934 '*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*', authored by none other than Anslinger. Stuart Fuller was particularly eager to note that the Japanese policy in Manchukuo was facilitating flows of Persian morphine, of much higher morphine content than domestic Chinese opium into the US.<sup>82</sup> With wider relations between the US and Japan on tenterhooks, Fuller's zealous criticism earned him a cautionary dispatch from Undersecretary of State William Phillips.<sup>83</sup>

The situation in Manchuria was more complex than reported. Many Japanese administrators did not favour the opium monopolies. In the years leading up to the war, no opium was found on any Japanese craft.<sup>84</sup> Ellen Newbold La Motte, an American nurse and author, had long praised how the 'Japanese Government is as careful to protect its people from the evils and dangers of opium as any European country could be'.<sup>85</sup> More likely was that a small section of the Kwantung Army – operating without permission from the Empire – sold opium and morphine illegally. For Kinsberg, Japan's imperial power depended upon staying free of the opium that weaker nations fell prey to.<sup>86</sup>

There was also evidence to suggest that the nationalist Chinese government (Kuomintang) was benefitting from the domestic growth of opium within China, using it to fund their war against the Communist army headed by Mao Zedong.<sup>87</sup> This was despite the New Life Movement, a Kuomintang-led civic movement, issuing a commandment banning opium across the country.<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, Walker suggests that the FBN, drawing on reports from the

Treasury Department attaché in Shanghai, was fully aware of the role Chiang Kai-Shek's nationalist government played in facilitating the opium traffic within Southern China.<sup>89</sup> Joseph Stilwell, a US general in charge of China during WWII, went as far as suggesting Chiang was a 'vacillating, tricky, undependable old scoundrel who never keeps his word'.<sup>90</sup> Regardless, they felt that Kuomintang represented the best efforts to eventually suppress the traffic. This complexity did not stop the anti-Japanese sentiment spreading in the US and at the League.

The DSB and PCOB's mediating functions deterred nations from acting outside treaty stipulations, as those nations which did have large estimated requirements were immediately subject to critical scrutiny (Table 3). As relations with Japan worsened, the DSB and PCOB issued increasingly stern condemnations against Japan's requirements in Kwantung.

**TABLE 3: THE USAGE OF MORPHINE AND HEROIN IN DIFFERENT NATIONS AS ESTIMATED BY THE PCOB IN 1930. NOTE THE HUGE CONSUMPTION IN KWANTUNG. THE FIGURES REPRESENT CONSUMPTION (OF UNSTATED MEASUREMENT, ASSUMED TO BE TONS) PER MILLION INHABITANTS. SOURCE: PCOB.<sup>91</sup>**

Country	Morphine	Heroin
Great Britain	8.42	1.05
France	16.09	2.06
Germany	18.09	0.59
USA	16.89	0.03
Kwantung	91.67	33.33
Japan	13.74	21.1
Formosa	2.63	12.94

The PCOB provided political cover for all nations; all benefited from its role as an intermediary. Accusations or complaints were not made by nations against nations, but quietly processed through the PCOB, who would give countries a fair chance to bring their markets to order. Even so, the PCOB and DSB could only admonish and shame nations who submitted suspiciously large estimates for their requirements. If no such statistics were offered, the DSB would calculate forecasts on behalf of the absent nations.

Japan and its territories stood out as having aberrantly large medical requirements. Privately, many League officials conceded that the quantities outlined in Table 3 could not be for medicinal purposes, and most of the drugs were being diverted into the illicit traffic. The problem was delicate: how could Japan be encouraged to act against its citizens without being alienated at a time of geopolitical turbulence?

One solution that would both placate Japan and provide some control over the narcotics problem was to certify Manchukuo as an exporting state that could then be subject to PCOB control – allowing League officials to at least estimate the size of the traffic. This was geopolitically unpalatable. If the puppet state of Manchukuo were given the authority to issue import and export certificates, the League would be *de facto* recognising the sovereignty of the Japanese in this region. This was an impossible option for the Americans since recognising Manchukuo violated the American ‘Open Door’ policy they held with China.<sup>92</sup> This solution was the most effective method of drug control and would have usually been welcomed, but it clashed with American foreign policy.

Another solution was to have the PCOB issue estimates for the region of Manchuria, thus preserving Chinese sovereignty and providing a framework to regularise the traffic.<sup>93</sup> This strategy would be based on estimates from previous years. The problem was the Kuomintang had submitted no statistics on production and consumption in the Northern regions before the Japanese invasion. Notwithstanding the figures provided by Japan, there was very little information on the actual scope of the problem to infer estimates from.<sup>94</sup>

The situation was resolved when Japan left the League of Nations in 1933. It continued to submit estimates until 1935 when Tokyo ordered their representative to resign his position at the OAC.

### The 1936 Illicit Trafficking Conference

The 1931 Convention had successfully addressed the legal market but had neglected the problem of illicit trafficking. As such, preparations were made for a new agreement (called the 1936 Illicit Trafficking Convention). This conference's full title was the 'Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs'. The Americans once again offered proposals that would end the trade of non-medical or scientific drug use. These were summarily rejected by the other delegations, led by the Portuguese (a nation with considerable investment in the licit trade in coca in South America) who contended that raw licit ingredients (opium and coca leaf) were outside the scope of the conference. They believed it would be improper to even discuss such matters at a conference designed to tackle the illegal traffic.<sup>95</sup>

Anslinger and Fuller were furious, but initially unable to withdraw the US from the conference. The State Department did not want to appear uncooperative

with the League; it was mindful of the American withdrawal from the 1925 Convention. Instead, Anslinger and Fuller paid little attention to the rest of the proceedings.<sup>96</sup>

The convention's outcomes were bland. It provided some provisions for the extradition of drug traffickers and vague assertions to reduce the traffic. The US eventually refused to sign it, stating that it was too weak. The treaty failed to gain the ten signatures needed for ratification and the outbreak of war postponed its entry into force indefinitely.<sup>97</sup> As Taylor argues 'rather than deal with the question of supplies at the source, the international conferees attempted to control the supplies themselves with the hope that sources would automatically contract'.<sup>98</sup> Ironically, the start of World War Two meant that seizures and supplies contracted as traditional shipping routes closed.

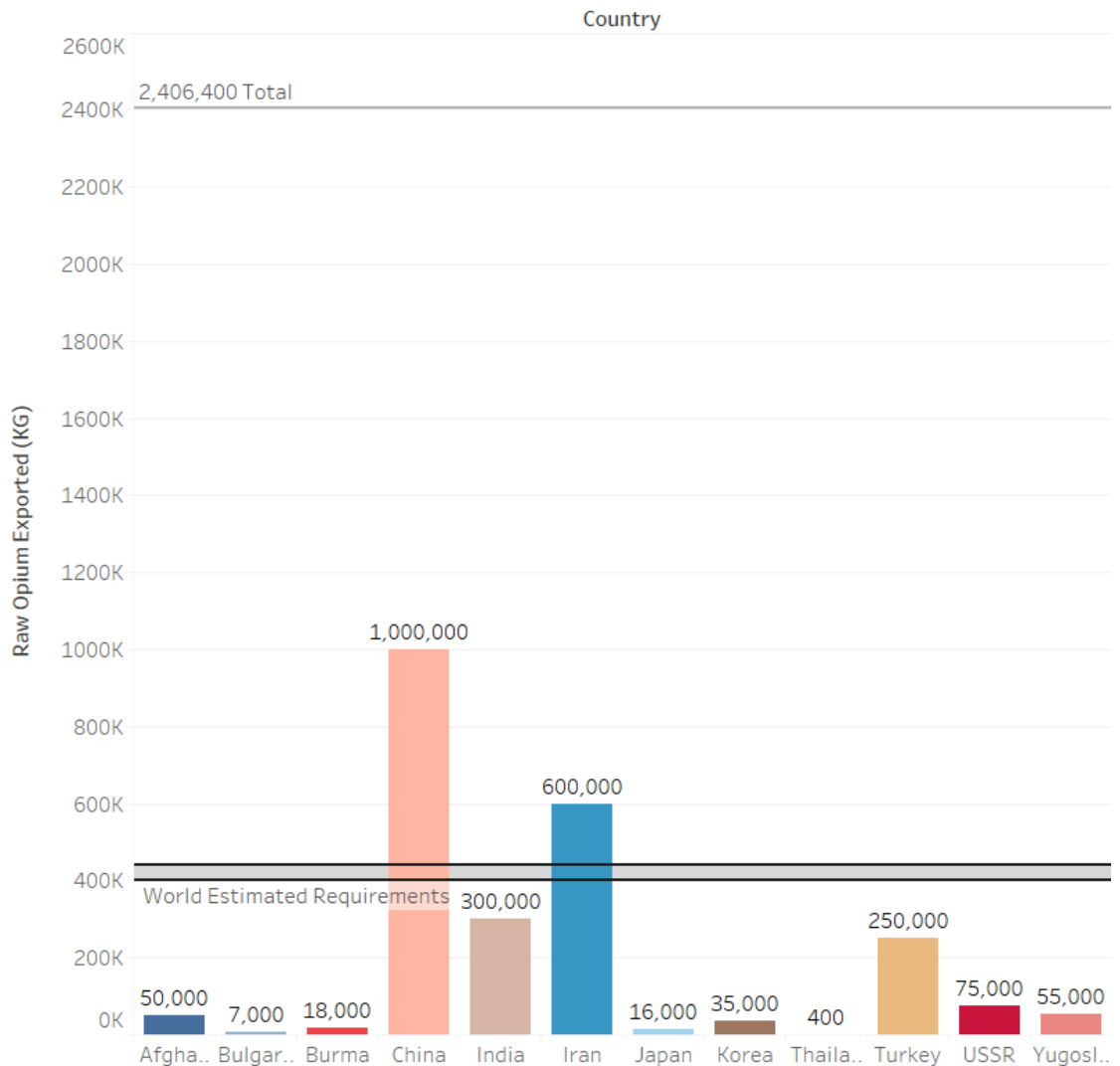
By 1936, the PCOB's aim was to decrease the licit demand of global opium. If nations only purchased what they estimated, the price of raw opium would fall into equilibrium. With a decrease in demand, the PCOB hoped that the number of growers would fall concurrently. In this venture, the League had already somewhat succeeded: the price of raw opium in the 1930s was one-quarter of what it was in the late 1920s.<sup>99</sup> Sensing changes in the geopolitical winds, Anslinger made the risky but hugely profitable move of secretly buying opium, morphine, and much of the world's painkiller. This strategy is discussed in-depth in chapter three.

### America's entry into World War Two

The American entry into World War Two provided more opportunities for the advancement of American narcotic policy than peacetime negotiations ever

had. The core functions of the PCOB, DSB, and OAC were threatened in Geneva by the Nazis. An agreement was brokered by Herbert May, chair of the PCOB, whereby these three branches were transferred to Washington DC on a temporary basis.<sup>100</sup> The move meant the technical and administrative aspects of the League drug machinery (the DSB, OAC and PCOB) survived. These organisations continued to collect information on the legal drugs trade, yet the war massively hampered their efforts. With their operations taking place in Washington, the core drug bodies were kept within the purview of the US.<sup>101</sup>

As we shall see in chapter two, the geonarcotic discourses of America's opposition to Japan intensified during the war, but narcotic trafficking stalled as many traditional smuggling routes closed. After the war, the illicit traffic was negligible, and consequently less worrisome than the short supply of medicines. Opium production in China was eradicated under the Chinese Communist Party between 1942 and 1952. In 1944, American reports put total world production of opium between 2,400 and 2,647 tons, with world requirements only averaging between 400 and 440 tons for medical and scientific purposes (Figure 3).<sup>102</sup> India produced on average 700 tons of opium annually from 1946, capturing a large proportion of the licit market.<sup>103</sup> The situation meant that there were both shortages of medicines and increases in the illicit trade as the post-war period progressed.



**FIGURE 3: ESTIMATES OF TOTAL WORLD PRODUCTION IN JULY 1944. CHINA AND IRAN WERE PRODUCING WELL OVER THE WORLD'S ESTIMATED REQUIREMENTS. SOURCE: STATE DEPARTMENT BULLETIN.<sup>104</sup>**

The newly created United Nations brought the issue of drug control under the purview of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It was populated by previous League employees. McAllister describes an 'inner-circle' of drug experts including Harry Anslinger, Colonel Sharman of the Canadian Narcotics Division, Herbert May of the PCOB, and Helen Moorhead of the Foreign Policy Association. They all campaigned to have the tenets of the supply and control agenda built into the new UN system: strict national control mechanisms and the abolition of non-medical use.<sup>105</sup> These ideas

were formalised in Congressional joint resolution No. 241 in 1944. The President encouraged opium producing nations to reduce production to legitimate amounts for medical and scientific needs.

The UN's first task was not to reduce, but to fend off the expected rise in narcotic abuse following the end of the war (as had happened during the First World War). The 'inner circle' of seasoned diplomats had to contend with new personnel with different ideas for the post-war approach to drug control. Bertil Renborg (chief of the League's Drug Control Service) and Leon Steinig, head of the DSB, looked to revive the League's old machinery that would place each man at the head of the system. Anslinger's greatest fear was a post-war revival of the League of Nations drug mechanisms and senior staff to their ossified positions at the OAC.

#### The end of the national opium monopolies

On 10 November 1943, the Dutch and British announced their intention to suppress opium monopolies in their territories, thirty-three years after their initial signature to the 1909 International Opium Convention. McWilliams attributes this decision to a stunning display of diplomatic wrangling by Harry Anslinger and his allies, although he concedes other forces played a part.<sup>106</sup> There is certainly merit to this account. In 1943, Anslinger pre-emptively challenged the British and Dutch at a meeting of the OAC, claiming that the US and Canada both concurred on the need for opium suppression in the colonies.<sup>107</sup> Neither Canada nor the US had officially announced this position. Anslinger risked a dressing down from the State Department, but the risk paid off. With US forces occupying their Pacific territories, both the



UK and the Dutch feared that the State Department might delay in handing back control should they attempt to restore the opium monopolies.

It was not just Anslinger's prowess that led to this change. When the UN pressured the Dutch to grant Indonesia independence, they lost much of their interest in the opium trade. The Dutch privately informed the British of their decision, should they wish to join them and make a joint statement.<sup>108</sup>

This influenced some senior policymakers in the UK, but the Colonial Office was reluctant to relinquish the lucrative trade. In 1940-1941, the year before its demise, the Hong Kong opium monopoly had sold more opium than any previous year since 1928 due to an influx of refugee smokers from China.<sup>109</sup>

This profit was not replicated across the empire. In Burma and Malay, the 1934 figures show the number of opium users had declined enough to render opium revenues negligible. The Colonial Office found itself outgunned by the Foreign and Home Offices. When an interdepartmental opium committee convened in September 1943, it was agreed that territories under Japanese control would not have their opium monopolies re-opened upon return. The decision was also made to close the Hong Kong monopoly. The 1943 decisions were followed by the French commitment to end their opium monopolies and suppress the opium traffic in 1945. When the British granted independence to India and Burma in 1947 and 1948 respectively, India retained its markets and position as a dominant exporter for legal poppy crops, and with its independence in 1947, became a powerful producer nation on the international scene. Burma continued to produce opium, although much of it was destined for the illegal market (it became part of the Golden Triangle of illicit opium producers).

When the newly established United Nations formally undertook the League's functions after the Lake Success Protocol of 1946, it assigned international drug regulation to ECOSOC. ECOSOC delegated its duties to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), The CND reported directly to ECOSOC and replaced the OAC of the LoN.<sup>110</sup> A newly-created Division of Narcotic Drugs (DND) was charged with the preparatory work for international conferences and was headed by Leon Steinig, an old hand of the League. The PCOB continued to police the international narcotics treaties, and the DSB continued to compile statistics. Colonel Sharman of Canada retired from the Canadian Narcotics Division but increased his international standing by becoming chairman of the CND in 1945. In 1948, he also gained a seat on the DSB. Scuffles and turf wars continued to plague the administrative function of the international machinery.

In chapter three, I move away from senior squabbles and show how changes in the production and type of narcotics dramatically influenced international policy. The creation of the DND is also important because it created the Narcotics Laboratory Section (NLS) in 1954 through Resolution 834 of the United Nations General Assembly.<sup>111</sup> The NLS was responsible for the development of standardised testing for narcotics and their origin, which I examine in chapter four.

One of the last acts of the LoN had been to expel the USSR in 1937. The Russian return to drug diplomacy through the UN was received with mixed feelings. Control advocates approved of Russia's punitive policies for drug users (termed 'narcology').<sup>112</sup> Narcology involved widespread incarceration of drug users under Josef Stalin.<sup>113</sup> The USSR also submitted some statistics

to the PCOB, indicating its desire to cooperate in tackling international drug trafficking. They did, however, withhold information, particularly those pertaining to legal supplies. Illicit trafficking across the border between the Soviet and Allied zones of Berlin was rife. There were no simple arrangements regarding drug regulation within divided Berlin. The Soviets refused to acknowledge any drug abuse within their zone. Nor did they allow UN investigations into their producing and manufacturing facilities. Notwithstanding these refusals, the Soviet's strict position on drug abuse meant that the American focus on narcotics remained in the Middle and the Far East.

After the war, all nations agreed that new international law was needed to deal with the trade in new, synthetic drugs that had proliferated during the war years. New synthetic substances were not created from opium, and thus escaped control. The change from natural opiate to synthetic opioid is symbolic of changes in drug diplomacy occurring at the time. New families of synthetic drugs, ranging from opioids to amphetamines, were churned out of the pharmaceutical industries of manufacturing nations. An example is Pethidine, created in Germany just before the war. Since it was not a derivative of opium but was instead created in a lab, it escaped all the previous treaties.<sup>114</sup> Powerful pharmaceutical firms created pills for pain, weight loss, and psychological disorders. As companies sought returns on these costly investments, the advertising of synthetics continued to grow and so did their abuse. The international system struggled to keep pace with innovation in the licit market. The 1948 Synthetic Protocol went some way in

tackling synthetic substances that could be added to the 1931 schedules.

These are discussed in chapter three.

The 1948 Synthetic Protocol duly passed into international law on 19 November 1948 in Paris. It represented a significant victory for control advocates. The WHO, the successor to the League Health Committee, would designate new synthetic substances as dangerous and subject to international control. The fact that it passed without much debate is a testimony to the massive problems new narcotics were causing.

While illicit drug use did not experience the post-war upswing that was anticipated, the US inner circle tried steering the international community away from etiological and public health approaches towards policies that limited excess production and curbed diversion into the illegal trade. This first meant encouraging newly independent and non-signatory nations to ratify the 1925 and 1931 Conventions that dealt with the trade and supply of narcotics. After this, they looked to create a new, stringent treaty in the early 1950s.

### [The 1953 Protocol and failure of the opium monopolies](#)

During the early years of the UN, many power grabs were made by different figures to climb onto the 'poppy throne'.<sup>115</sup> The most salient figure is Leon Steinig, an Austrian-American international lawyer who directed the Division of Narcotic Drugs from 1946-1952. Steinig proposed an international opium monopoly (IOM), a system whereby one regulatory agency (headed by himself) would buy opium from producing nations and sell the required

amounts to manufacturing nations. In doing so, each nation would be provided with its legal requirements, without an ounce more.

This idea was immediately unpopular with American control advocates, as it would see Steinig controlling the world's market supply, a position Anslinger had *de facto* held to great effect (as we shall see in chapter three).

Pharmaceutical companies worried that such an agency would encourage higher prices on the world market to reduce demand. Producing nations worried the exact opposite: that an agency might encourage lower prices for their exports. With key figures in the inner circle denouncing Steinig's ideas, the idea collapsed.

The collapse of the idea of the international opium monopoly is important. It was the death knell for international legislation that tried to use narcotics to reduce narcotic addiction. Furthermore, it turned licit activities that were not deemed medical or scientific (by American standards) into illicit ones. This was the precursor to a clear definition of illegality.

The need for new international agreements arose around the obvious shortcomings of previous treaties. The LoN had produced a tightly regulated legal market where diversion of legal narcotics into the illicit market was low and declining. This change begat new problems, particularly increases in the consumption of opiates (semi-synthetic narcotics and fully synthetic opioids). When these industries became profitable, illicit heroin and morphine production was driven into the ungoverned regions of the Golden Triangle, Afghanistan and Mexico. The drug control treaties did not give the CND and PCOB an international mandate to tackle production outside of government

control. Up until 1953, they had been predominantly focused on the legal traffic. More importantly, crops grown exclusively for the illicit traffic were not included in PCOB estimates. Nobody was sure just how much of a problem illegal production was, and cross-border drug activity presented a new international challenge to nation-states.

A new treaty was required. The 1936 Convention had been signed by only a handful of nations. Others had deposited signatures but had never ratified the 1912 or 1925 Conventions. In the 1950s, a new agreement based on national controls was presented by Charles Vaille of France to the 6<sup>th</sup> session of the CND in 1953.<sup>116</sup> This would eventually morph into another international agreement to add to the eight preceding regulations and became known the 1953 Opium Protocol (Protocol for Limiting and Regulating the Cultivation of the Poppy Plant, the Production of, International and Wholesale Trade in, and Use of, Opium). This was a strict, punitive treaty on the production of poppy crops that was favoured by the Americans and French.

The 1953 protocol was negotiated in only five weeks. It contained onerous provisions for producing states. Its most important provision was Article 2, an explicit recognition of the need to restrict opium use to medicinal and scientific uses (a formal, legal recognition of American standards of licit and legal use). Defining 'Opium' and 'Stocks' proved troublesome, yet ultimately agreed by recourse to the 1931 Convention Text.<sup>117</sup> With the 1953 protocol, quasi-medical use would be consigned to history, and illegal drugs would be targeted and sanctioned by international law.

Despite these protections, the treaty was received lukewarmly. The Dutch and British, fearing for their manufacturing markets, did not ratify. Neither did the Soviet states, who disagreed with the onerous inspection processes proposed. It required three ratifications from the seven producing nations to enter into law, but only received two before 1963. Ambivalent nations watched the rivalry between those who favoured an entirely new simplified, single treaty that would incorporate all others, and those who favoured the 1953 Opium Protocol.

Both Anslinger and Vaille pushed for more ratifications of the 1953 protocol based on the first draft of the text. Western manufacturing nations with powerful pharmaceutical lobbies aggressively resisted it. They wanted to increase the number of licit producers from the seven that the draft treaty stipulated. This was because of shortages in 1955, catalysed by Iran's opium ban, had driven prices up. Diplomats worried that future shortages, caused by artificially by government edicts or naturally by crop blights, would damage their markets. The British — who were heavily lobbied by their pharmaceutical industry — also feared increased prices if the seven producers behaved like a cartel. To amass support for an alternative to the 1953 Protocol at the CND, they convened a cabal of manufacturing nations. A close ally was West Germany, particularly eager to re-assert its role as a medical manufacturer.

Producing states were aware that the 1953 Protocol was particularly strict on their exports. It required them to report the same figures as manufacturing nations were required to by the 1931 Conventions.<sup>118</sup> Many refused to ratify,

despite pressure from the Americans. The protocol required at least three signatures from producing nations to enter into international law (figure 4).



**Figure 4: RATIFICATION AND ACCESSION TO THE 1953 OPIUM PROTOCOL BY 1960. PRODUCERS SUCH AS AFGHANISTAN, TURKEY, GREECE, THE USSR, AND YUGOSLAVIA DID NOT RATIFY BY 1960. SOURCE: UNTC TREATY DATA. <sup>119</sup>**

Figure 4 shows that the main producing nations were almost absent from the protocol's ratifications, effectively blunting it. All agreed that the 1953 treaty should be modified and improved, or negotiations for a new, single convention should be started. India was an exception. To show its commitment to licit production, it banned quasi-medical use, ended its sales of smoking opium, and tightened controls on production by only allowing opium to be grown for export. They ratified the protocol, thereby qualifying themselves for a share of the trade in licit opium production.



In 1960, it appeared Turkey would provide the all-important third ratification to make the 1953 Protocol law. Charles Vaille was the architect and driving force behind the treaty. Just as he thought he would secure his legacy and protect the interests of supply control advocates, he was promoted to Inspector General of Health for France and removed from the League.<sup>120</sup> Without his leadership on the 1953 protocol, support quickly collapsed. Without Vaille, more moderate voices prevailed. Producing nations withdrew their support, and the debate turned back towards the Single Convention.

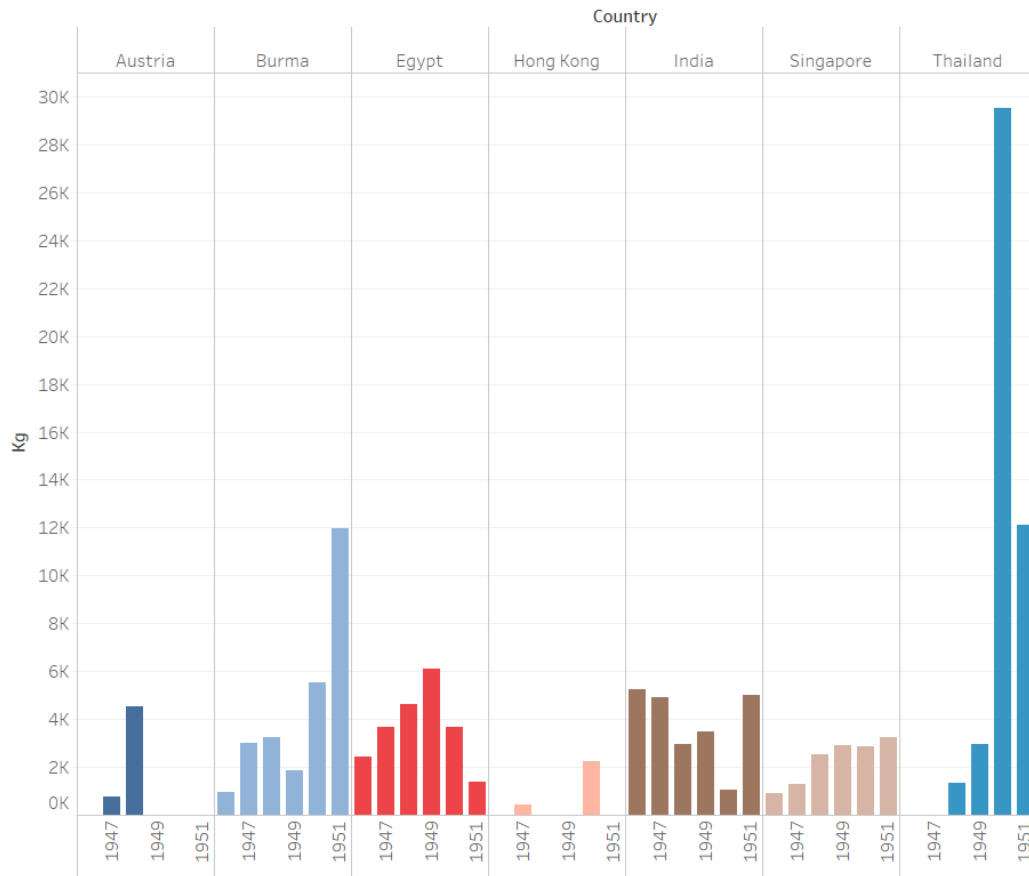
### [The road to the 1961 Treaty Negotiations](#)

Seizures had grown in the post-war years (Table 4). The PCOB and DSB continued to serve out their functions by reducing diversion but could do little to tackle smuggling and illicit production.

**TABLE 4: GLOBAL POST-WAR OPIUM SEIZURES. SOURCE: BULLETIN OF NARCOTICS.<sup>121</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Kg</b>
1946	22,413
1947	18,389
1948	17,948
1949	20,503
1950	46,286
1951	39,492

Some countries suffered from the illicit traffic more than others. Figure 5 shows the geographical distribution of the origin of seizures of raw opium. The situation in Thailand and Burma meant newly independent states sought help to tackle the illicit production of raw opium, now cultivated in lawless hinterlands where governments could not or did not intervene.



**FIGURE 5: COMPARISON OF ORIGIN OF SEIZURES OF OPIUM BY COUNTRY IN Kg. 1946-1951. SOURCE: BULLETIN OF NARCOTICS.<sup>122</sup>**

By 1960, the world drug problem was characterised by a paradoxical situation: shortages of some opiate medicines, an abundance of synthetics, and plenty of illicit opium in Asia.

### Negotiating the Single Convention

Negotiations for the Single Convention proved to be just as tricky as the 1953 Protocol. In January 1961, 73 nations attended the debates in New York. Producer nations stressed the importance of regulating synthetics and new psychotropic drugs. This angered manufacturing nations, who had developed an astonishing range of new medicines for all sorts of ailments. They did not want to see these substances become subject to the same onerous provisions placed upon opiates. The USSR sided with producing

nations, blanching at the on-site inspections advanced by the US and the French.

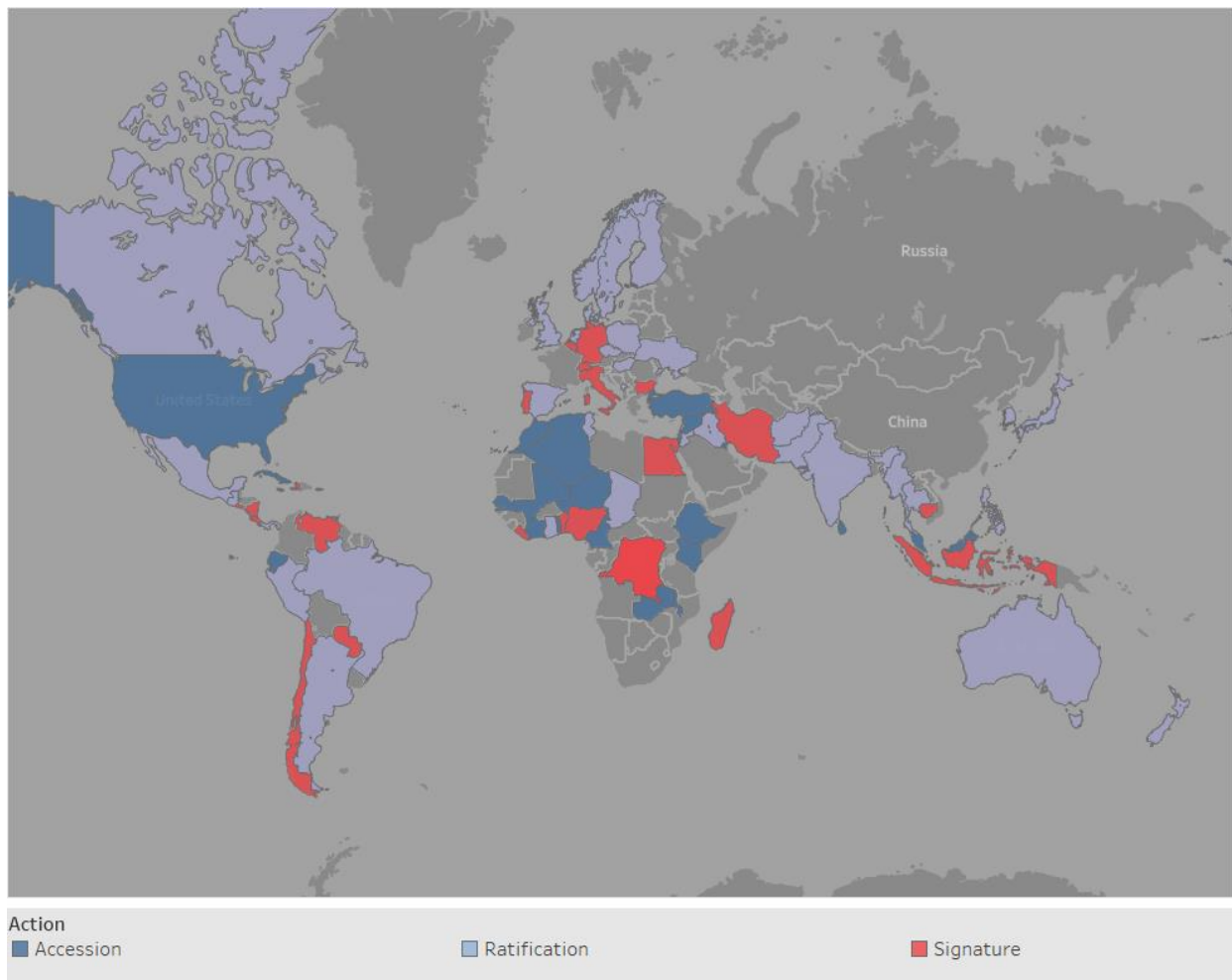
Furthermore, in-fighting between Anslinger and Gilbert Yates, head of the DND, diverted attention away from policymaking.<sup>123</sup> Yates had won a victory when he had negotiated the move of the DND back to Geneva from Washington (where it had moved to during World War Two). Still smarting from this move, Anslinger sent underlings to treaty negotiations in protest, and in doing so only succeeded in isolating himself from the action. He still looked to revive the now-defunct 1953 Protocol. After Sharman's retirement, Kenneth Hossick took charge of the Canadian delegation. Under his tenure, the country became more amenable to ambulatory treatment and public health approaches. Anslinger lost a key ally. Domestically, the FBN found itself under siege from dissident doctors and lawyers, particularly due to the passage of the Boggs Act of 1956 (discussed in chapter two). Anslinger's bombastic style of diplomacy at the CND put him at odds with the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. With little support domestically, he lost clout internationally.

Conference attendees eventually agreed upon a single convention that incorporated elements of the nine previous treaties (excluding the redundant 1936 Convention). Most importantly, the Single Convention would terminate the 1953 Protocol entirely, along with its requirement of a cap on legal producers at seven. Although the treaty did require each producer to create a government agency that licensed growers and then bought narcotics from them and sold them on the international market, the goal of strict control at the source (as the US envisioned it) had not been achieved.

The final draft of the treaty was approved on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1961. The US, through the final play by the outgoing Commissioner Anslinger, spurned the treaty, believing it would bring about 'a retrocession of international narcotic controls'.<sup>124</sup> The official rejection was due to the lack of control of raw opium production, and a clause allowing countries to withhold estimates about their production. McAllister speculates that Anslinger, in the latter years of negotiation, was particularly opposed to the 1961 Convention due to the threat to his domestic job.<sup>125</sup> The 1961 Treaty would replace the 1931 convention that had mandated each country establish an FBN-style agency. Without that, the FBN lost its international protection from restructuring by an unfavourable executive branch.

This was the third time that the US had rejected international attempts to control the illicit trade. The rejection required the FBN to draw allies from afar. Anslinger mustered support from pharmaceutical organisations and allies in Congress. He also leaned on the Greek delegation (a producer nation) who had ratified the 1953 Opium protocol just before the Single Convention came into force. Anslinger 'won the ratification race but lost the war'.<sup>126</sup> 81 nations approved a resolution for the Single Convention at the 1962 CND session, and it entered the law on 13 December 1964, replacing nine previous international treaties, including the 1953 convention. Many nations quickly began to sign and ratify the treaty thereafter. By 1967, when the US finally ratified the 1961 Convention, 61 nations had deposited signatures or ratified the treaty (Figure 6). Without the provisions of the 1931 Convention, the international mandate for the FBN was lost. Anslinger retired

from the agency in 1962, and the FBN was restructured in 1967 by the Johnson Administration.



**FIGURE 6: SIGNATURES, RATIFICATIONS AND ACCESSIONS BY 1967. NOTE THAT MANY NATIONS SIGNED, BUT DID NOT RATIFY OR ACCESS UNTIL AFTER 1967**  
**SOURCE: UNCTC TREATY DATA.<sup>127</sup>**

When it entered into force in 1968, the Single Convention carried over the complicated system of calculating estimates, imports, and exports established by the 1925 and 1936 conventions. It also transferred the regulatory functions of the PCOB and DSB to the newly created INCB.<sup>128</sup>

The INCB was given authority to schedule substances based on WHO recommendations (discussed in chapter four). These came from the WHO's

Expert Committee for Drug Dependence that has formal responsibility for classifying narcotics at the UN today.

The years beyond 1961 represent the modern era of drug control, governed by the 1961 Convention that included more nations than ever before. Turkey signed the Single Convention in 1967, in doing, so it gained status as a legal opium producer.<sup>129</sup> However, the Convention's shortcomings in the face of rising drug abuse became apparent as illicit production rose to meet the demand. Synthetic abuse exploded around the world, and this led to another set of international agreements (the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1972 Conference to Consider Amendments to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs).

The declaration of a 'War on Drugs' by the Nixon Administration came in 1971. Nixon secured a symbolic victory in pressuring Turkey to end its production after the coup d'état in 1971. Unfortunately, Mexican heroin producers picked up the slack.<sup>130</sup> Three years later, Turkey re-legalised its opium production, following domestic pressure from farmers who charged that US interference on an industry upon which Turkey relied so heavily was an imperialistic violation of sovereignty.

When compared to the US position in the previous half century, Nixon's 'war' is somewhat progressive, particularly in its approach to foreign countries. This was the first time the US focussed on demand reduction at home and internationally. The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) was pushed for by the Nixon Administration in 1971. The US donated \$2 million to this fund. Producer nations demanded technical assistance to

combat addiction in their own countries. More than ever, the international community shared a belief that drug abuse was a threat to all of humanity, rather than a weapon in a single nation's arsenal. INCB reports indicated that the world's illicit market was almost entirely in the hands of criminals, and production took place in regions out of governmental control. One report from the WHO Expert Committee on Dependence-Producing Drugs of 1965 estimated that there were some 200 tons of licit production worldwide compared to 1000 tons of opium produced in South East Asia alone.<sup>131</sup>

The 'Grand Old Men' of the League of Nations is the name of an article authored by Bertil Renborg, Former Chief of the Drug Control Service of the League of Nations.<sup>132</sup> In it, he listed the achievements of figures mentioned here: Bishop Brent, Malcolm Delevingne, and Harry Anslinger. The scholars cited in this chapter followed suit. They trace a very human story of international drug control and situate it against the wider geopolitics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some hint at other human actors who are excluded from diplomatic accounts: members of the Temperance Movement, pharmaceutical companies, and wealthy politicians.

There is merit to this formal, diplomatic history: it shows where the desires of power-hungry diplomats clashed, where global events influenced proceedings and how the US pushed for a hard-line understanding of drug regulation. However, to cite Dittmer, the history offered is one where 'pre-existing geopolitical subjects [are] coming together'.<sup>133</sup> It is a history of what Protevi calls second-order body politics: nations or supranational organisations comprised of first-order body politics (individuals).<sup>134</sup>

Ultimately, the decisions of the individuals are most important when it comes



to the political history of drug control. However, the League of Nations and United Nations were not the only arenas where international drug diplomacy took place. To ascribe agency to the individuals located in New York, Geneva, Vienna or even Washington DC is to exclude a suite of other actors, things, affects, and media that formed the international drug control assemblage and affected the 'grand old men' of drug control. For example, in this chapter, I have hinted at how geography featured in international debates. Drugs were understood to be a foreign problem, which necessitated control at the source, rather than with the consumer.

The geographical elements of anti-narcotic discourse have not been in explored in detail. We are missing a geonarcotic account that explains how and why control at the source became the centrepiece of the American delegate's mission and ultimately led to them withdrawing from two sets of international negotiations. This critical account of geonarcotics will be developed in the next chapter. There, I explore how affectively charged media was immanent to the drug control assemblage, playing an important role in its development.

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## Geonarcotic discourse: the 'Opium Evil'

In this chapter, I focus on what Müller calls the enunciative element of the assemblage: the growth of US geonarcotic discourse. The opium evil, as this discourse was commonly known, neatly cleaved narcotics into medical/legitimate and illicit/recreational groups. Following Grayson, this chapter explores the ways that narcotics became 'illicit', referring to a social circumscription rather than a legal one. The FBN quickly realised that the illegality of drugs would not be accepted by the public if they were not also culturally taboo.<sup>1</sup> For narcotics to become illicit, a process of meaning construction that was inherently geographical took place.

Today, the scourge of drug abuse is understood to be a universal problem. In the earliest days of American drug control, drug abuse was, ultimately, the fault of other nations. The US posited itself as a victim of an illicit, international trade, most notably through its withdrawal from the 1925 Geneva Conventions. Here, the domestic and international were intricately linked. Geonarcotic discourse was predominantly a reactive force that responded to international action, but also it played out in the bodies and consumption choices of Americans. Drugs and drug users were both understood to be terrifying threats to the US body politic. As a powerful social and affective force, American geonarcotic discourse was emergent. As World War Two loomed, narcotics were no longer understood as lucrative and immoral commodities forced upon the poor by imperial powers: they were described as actual weapons of war used by Japan and, in later years, Communist China. The evidence to support these ideas is thin, but these claims performed important affective work in the US. By combining narcotics

with the threat of war, smuggling narcotics became a terrifying method of conquest in which the consumptive choices of American could decide the fate of the country.

We should not just look to diplomats formally representing the US as the sole promulgators of this discourse. This idea was nurtured by one powerful anti-drug activist called Richmond Hobson, perpetuated by William Randolph Hearst, and made its way into diplomatic proceedings through Harry Anslinger.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, these individuals drew on certain material capacities of narcotics to give weight and sincerity to their claims about the danger of foreign drugs.

### The early 1900s: the wild west of drug control

The term 'opium evil' had been around in the nineteenth century, particularly to describe opium smoking by Chinese migrants in the US. Everything about opium signalled something different to other pastimes such as drinking or tobacco smoking. The smoking paraphernalia was different, the establishments within which it took place were exotic, and of course, the psychoactive effects of opium use were entirely different from smoking and drinking. For Malleck, historical interpretations of opium use in China have often skewed towards a simplistic story: opium use was forced upon a hapless population via British gunboat diplomacy. The realities are more complex; opium smoking was not always seen as debilitating, and nor was it the dominant drug of use in twentieth-century China; some Chinese valued morphine and heroin.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Malleck, suggests that the myths of imperial-sponsored opium smoking were central to eventual narcotic



legislation in Canada.<sup>4</sup> This was equally true in the US. The term opium evil was first used by doctors in the US in 1899,<sup>5</sup> but it retained its colonial associations when used by anti-narcotic advocates.

As mentioned, the earliest years of the twentieth-century were replete with many substances that contained narcotics. For the Temperance movement, this was a failing of government. In an interview in *The Oregon Daily Journal* in 1911, Hamilton-Wright noted that other nations had taken steps to protect their citizens from 'the most pernicious drug known to humanity', but 'opposition representing aggregated capital of \$100,000,000 with an annual turn-over five times that' had quashed anti-narcotic bills (the prohibition bill of 1903) in the House.<sup>6</sup> In this early formulation, Dr Hamilton-Wright cast opium as a lucrative trade, backed by big money that cared little for the harm their product caused.

In the US, the geographical aspects of the opium evil were linked to social and racial inequality. The Smoking Opium Exclusion Acts were passed in 1909. Evidence had drawn directly from physicians who concluded opium smoking would increase miscegenation.<sup>7</sup> Opium eating and smoking were roundly condemned as non-medical, migrant Chinese behaviours. Chinese migrants were deemed to have brought the habit of opium smoking to the United States and were responsible for wider use in the white population (this conveniently ignored widespread opiate use among white, wealthy Americans in the form of Laudanum and injectable morphine). Raw and smoking opium were demonised *vis-à-vis* the medical uses of opiates such as morphine. Doctors testified in Congress with stories about the foreign

roots of the American narcotics problems. They did not mention analgesic opiates such as morphine which also caused widespread iatrogenic (self-inflicted) addiction.

The Smoking Opium Exclusion Acts banned imports of prepared opium for smoking in the US. Scholars have long discussed the Sinophobia of this period,<sup>8</sup> but there is an important material qualifier that supplemented this racism. By outlawing smoking opium, Congress was approving certain types of narcotic and prohibiting others. Morphine, popular with white middle-class women, was still freely available. The chemical form a narcotic took was an indication of its acceptability. By passing the Opium Exclusion Acts, Congress sketched out a model that would lead to drug schedules that categorised the legitimacy of a drug by its material composition and capacity to be used in injurious or recreational ways. Classifying narcotics by their materiality was inherently geopolitical. Certain types of narcotics from certain places were a threat to the US, whereas others were not. This early stratification of narcotics was the basis for alcohol regulation during prohibition; some alcohols were deemed medical, and thus legitimate, if prescribed by a doctor.<sup>9</sup>

### The Harrison Narcotics Act

The pressure by religious activists dovetailed with the aims of the nascent pharmaceutical lobby who watched the passage of the 1914 Harrison Narcotics Act closely. They recognised that public opinion against opium threatened their medical markets. In 1913, the *Charlotte Observer* wrote that the US 'imports more than 100,000 pounds of opium [this] proves, therefore, that the balance is being used either for smoking or illicit medical

purposes'.<sup>10</sup> Pharmaceutical companies worried that Congress might ban many of the medicinal products they manufactured. They courted the religious lobby to create legitimacy for themselves. The American Pharmaceutical Association (APhA), the American Medical Association (AMA), the State Department, and the Treasury Department, all worked with Dr Hamilton-Wright to craft the Harrison Act. As Musto argues 'by 1914, prominent newspapers, physicians, pharmacists and congressmen believed opiates and cocaine predisposed habitués towards insanity and crime'.<sup>11</sup>

This division between medical, scientific, and quasi-medical/ recreational that was outlined in the Harrison Act became the defining backbone of the US drug legislation. This led to a seductively simplistic conclusion: 'the only method which can stamp out drug addiction all over the world is to reduce opium production to the exact needs for scientific and medicinal purposes'.<sup>12</sup> Prohibition would be reached by ensuring a monopoly on legitimate provision. Convincing the world of this approach would become a priority for US diplomats at future negotiations.

The 1914 Harrison Act clamped down on the abuse of narcotics for the population at large by making all narcotics less accessible. However, it had unintended consequences. Fewer middle-class women used morphine, but more working-class Americans picked up an opiate habit in the form of heroin, an opiate that had been discovered in 1874 and marketed as cough medicine.<sup>13</sup> With the Harrison Act limiting domestic access to pharmaceutical supplies, demand for heroin and morphine grew. In 1924, heroin was banned from the United States as both a medicine and recreational substance. By 1915, American concerns with alcohol and drug use were reflected in society

in groups such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and the Anti-Saloon League (ASL). Temperance advocates concentrated on the spiritual aspects of drug abuse, particularly the pervasive and unwholesome human desire to alter human consciousness.<sup>14</sup> There were complex debates about the morality of drug use, but ardent prohibitionists coated drug and alcohol use with a moral gloss that saw intoxication of any kind as an individual problem. This project, however, is concerned with how the production of the trade was portrayed. Geopolitically, the blame was cast outside of the United States as the domestic demand for smuggled narcotics grew.<sup>15</sup> This vindicated the anti-narcotic advocates' position that narcotic abuse was foreign-born, domestically inflicted, and individually suffered.

In 1919, journalist Albert Weber, responding to the Chinese decision to buy some £3,000,000 of British Indian Opium, described the decision as 'China's Future Opium Evil Problem'.<sup>16</sup> The strictest prohibitionists of the Temperance movement developed the colonial links further. Many Western missionaries in Asia found their work hampered by a suspicion of opium.<sup>17</sup> The actions of their own government, in supporting the monopoly, would further impede the word of God. They argued passionately against the opium monopoly as a medical programme and response to addiction. They posited it as little more than a revenue stream for colonial centres. Consumption was individualised, but production was collectivised to become a problem of international relations. In 'Temperance Torchlights', a booklet full of poems, essays, and topics on the Temperance Movement written by Matilda Erickson, a prolific author for young people, one memorable poem entitled 'Sparks from the Anvil' thundered that 'when the Dutch Flag was raised on a certain Island in

the East Indies, the first building was not a school, nor a church, but an opium den'.<sup>18</sup> With many citizens describing the McKinley administration's decision to take the Philippines as a form of European imperialism, the Temperance movement offered McKinley a strategy for distancing the US from other colonial centres by taking a strong stance on opium.<sup>19</sup>

### Geonarcotics post World War One

After the First World War, diplomats sought to regulate the trade in legal narcotics as the American public's view of the League of Nations, and its efforts to control narcotics became decidedly hostile. At the League, American drug diplomats had a nuanced agenda. They wanted strict control of the trade for two reasons: to limit diversion into the black-market and to maximise their medical stockpiles in the face of future conflict. These twin understandings of opiates would influence diplomatic proceedings for the next forty years.

Strict prohibition advocates, emboldened by the success of the 1919 Volstead Act, looked to the American diplomats to eradicate opium abuse. It is worth comparing the geopolitical significance of alcohol and narcotic prohibition. With alcohol, prohibition was an introspective exercise. Blame was cast inwards towards American brewers, saloons, and distilleries. Bootleg beer and whiskey were a domestic problem, but also compounded by the imports of whiskey and gin from the UK and Canada (ironically, Canadian drinkers in Ontario viewed American drinkers as troublesome and representative of social disorder).<sup>20</sup> With narcotics, the blame was cast entirely outwards towards smugglers and foreign governments. Opium was a

foreign problem created by specific foreign actors. In 1922, the *Washington Post* ran an article titled 'British Opium Policy is a Menace to the World'. The piece excoriated the British for a policy in which 'America [was] being systematically drugged'.<sup>21</sup> The article drew on statistics from the Public Health Service of the Treasury which compared the average per capita consumption of grains of opium in Italy (1 grain) and Germany (2 grains) with the United States (36 grains). It argued that the British were expanding their trade to previously held German territories in Africa and fuelling demand in China. While not blaming the British directly for opium smuggling, the newspaper argued the black-market grew out of the legal trade and that responsibility to combat it lay with the British. The *Pittsburgh Daily Post* ran a similar story in 1923. It reported that the US was the number one consumer of dope (referring to opium, morphine, and heroin) in the world, imbibing over 17 times more than in any other country. It posited that American addicts were consuming enough dope to furnish 36 doses to every man, woman, and child in the country.<sup>22</sup> This was despite the 1914 Harrison Act. As the paper lamented, the Harrison Act 'prohibits altogether the importation of derivatives. But it cannot prevent smuggling.'<sup>23</sup>

America's role as the world's largest consumer of illicit opium was incidental, rather than constitutive of, the opium evil discourse. Demand was understood to be a function of supply. This meant that newspapers focused on the illegal diversion of legal stocks from colonial trade into the black market. This dovetailed with domestic racism. Opium smoking was a Chinese behaviour. Indeed, Grayson notes that as early as 1920, some Canadian commentators speculated that narcotics were being used as a

weapon to overthrow the white races.<sup>24</sup> Hostility to the flows of certain *types* of narcotic into the United States was present, rather than a rejection of narcotics *per se*. The legal flows of morphine, codeine, and other derivatives into the United States were controlled by the Harrison Act and Narcotics Division's accountants. The trade in raw opium and prepared opium for smoking, both illegal in the US, was not. Geonarcotic discourse scripted narcotics by the chemical form in which a user encountered them. Only by convincing other nations of the danger and immorality of the legal trade in raw and prepared opium (from other countries), could the US be protected. This idea was developed by one man who stepped onto the drug regulation scene in 1919.

#### Richmond Pearson Hobson

Admiral Richmond Pearson Hobson lived an extraordinary life. As a naval officer in American-Spanish war, he had been responsible for the sinking of his ship (*The Merrimac*) in the Battle of Santiago Bay. He gave the order to blockade the bay to try to stop Spanish ships from entering. It failed, and Hobson was captured. At the end of the hostilities, Hobson was released and Congress, unsure whether to imprison or honour him, presented him with the Medal of Honour. Hobson became a House Representative for Alabama but did not excel in formal politics.<sup>25</sup> Sir Arthur Willert, *The Times* correspondent in Washington, recalled 'he [Hobson] came home as a national hero, but unfortunately allowed himself to be kissed in railway stations and other public places by female admirers. That finished him'.<sup>26</sup> In the 1920s, Hobson turned to what he saw as a scourge of substance abuse. He retired from formal politics and spent the remainder of his years campaigning for alcohol and

narcotic prohibition. At the height of his career, he was the highest paid speaker on the alcohol prohibition circuit, accruing large profits from the Anti-Saloon League. After the repeal of the Volstead Act, Hobson would focus on narcotics until his death in 1937.<sup>27</sup>

Hobson made sure his speeches and writings recognised the foreign nature of narcotics and the threat they represented to the US, a strategy he had used to whip up anti-Japanese fervour in the 1910s.<sup>28</sup> He did this with widely exaggerated claims about the extent of addiction, and by blaming the Bureau of Public Health for suppressing these statistics.<sup>29</sup> In 1924, Hobson sent a memorandum entitled the '*Menace of Narcotics Shadows the World*' to King George V in London. The letter exaggerated claims of addiction, suggesting there were five times as many drug addicts in the US as there had been African slaves. Hobson implored King George to recognise that

America is assailed by Opium with Asia as a base, by Cocaine with South America as a base, by Heroin and Synthetic Drugs with Europe as a base. This deadly drug warfare, that from three sides is striking at our citizens, our homes, our institutions.

This 'germplasm of our people', according to Hobson, was 'more dangerous for our future than would be united warfare against us from these continents'.<sup>30</sup> He repeated this assertion in a *New York Times* article on 9<sup>th</sup> November. King George declined to reply.

Hobson spatialised the narcotic threat. He gave it a geography. The US was under attack on both coasts and from the south. Drugs flowed into the US from uncaring colonial territories and were facilitated by an incompetent



international bureaucracy at the League's headquarters in Geneva. Hobson cast blame outside of the US and, in doing so, away from the issue of why people consumed narcotics.

For Hobson, the proliferation of narcotics into semi-synthetic forms was as dangerous as the smuggler who brought them in. Hobson helped shaped what Jasanoff and Kim call a socio-technical imaginary. They use this concept to describe how visions of the future are transformed into realisable political goals.<sup>31</sup> A socio-technical imaginary is by no means a simple representation of an issue that is repeated in the news and media; it operates in between 'public opinion and instrumental state policy'.<sup>32</sup> It shapes government activity, the allocation of funds and, in this instance, the development of legislation. I use the concept to think through Hobson's geography of drug production and his prophecy for a terrifying, unregulated chemical future.

In one sense, Hobson's socio-technical imaginary was prophetic. The growth of new substances did indeed present the international system with new problems. Hobson's early warnings about technological fatalism tied into a foreign-focussed discourse. In the 1920s and 1930s, the US pharmaceutical industry lagged behind Europe and Japan. Hobson suggested unchecked pharmaceutical growth threatened the United States with their chemical creations. He attacked the chemical sciences, directly citing the industries inability to control or understand new compounds they were creating. In a 1924 *New York Times* article, amid the ongoing discussions at the LoN's 1925 Convention, Hobson wrote

Modern chemistry, responsible for morphine, cocaine and heroin, as yet offers no sure defence against the Frankenstein of its own creation, nor has medical science been able to cope with this merciless exploitation of the human race.<sup>33</sup>

Hobson believed the American people should protect themselves against narcotics through education. In 1927, Hobson founded the World Narcotic Defence Association (WNDA) to provide this service. This was a public pressure group that dominated the airwaves in the USA. Hobson's salary reflects his importance in this movement, as his \$7,000 annual paycheck was the WNDA's single largest expenditure (the next highest paid staff member received around \$500 from 1934-1935).<sup>34</sup> The WNDA preached its message through the Press, the Pulpit, and the Radio.<sup>35</sup> It castigated the 1925 Conventions and celebrated the 1931 Conventions alike.<sup>36</sup> It served as the public mouthpiece of America's quest for stringent international drug laws, organising a Narcotic Education Week in the second week of February of every year from 1930 until Hobson's unexpected death in 1937.

With the repealing of alcohol prohibition in 1930, mafia involvement and smuggling in narcotics grew, seemingly vindicating Hobson's predictions. Missionary groups, disappointed with the failure of alcohol prohibition, supported his anti-narcotic message. Hobson drew on his experience as a military figure who had spent time abroad to lecture on a coming war with narcotics. He painted the traffickers and smugglers as a terrifying adversary. In an indicative passage, in one of the pamphlets of the WNDA in 1931, he stated there was

A dark cloud on the horizon. When the traffickers in narcotics were driven out of Turkey by the drastic action of that government [strict domestic laws which banned production in certain areas] and the vigilant enforcement activities of the Turkish officials charged with that duty, they invaded Bulgaria and China, and are there engaging in extensive activities, which will require resolute decision on the part of the government, and zeal on part of its enforcement officials.<sup>37</sup>

Hobson used the WNDU to change how the international trade in drugs was understood by the public. Eschewing the delicacies and intricacies of League deliberations, the importance of provision, and the complaints of other nations, his achievement was to remove nuance and context from the world drug problem. Hobson's narco-geography was filled with synthetic narcotics, stubborn and irresponsible nations, greedy scientists, feckless manufacturers, and shadowy traffickers outside of the United States.

Narcotics were discursively separated by legality and their medical value. The public knowledge of licit painkiller provision was slowly marginalised, as was the League's important work in this field, at least in the minds of the American public. His annual Narcotic Education Week made narcotics — and America's battle against them — a public issue.

*Image removed.*

**FIGURE 7: POLITICAL EDITORIAL BY JAMES ENRIGHT ENTITLED 'FROM THE EAST AS WELL AS THE WEST'. EACH MONSTER REPRESENTS THE PROBLEM OF FOREIGN DOPE. WASHINGTON HERALD, 10TH SEPTEMBER 1934. SOURCE: HARRY ANSLINGER ARCHIVES, PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY, AUTHORS PHOTO.**

Scholars have debated Hobson's convictions regarding the narcotic problem.<sup>38</sup> As a formidable fundraiser, whose livelihood and reputation was

dependent upon deep-seated fears of narcotics, it is no wonder some scholars point to his wild exaggerations regarding narcotic abuse (claiming millions of addicts menaced the United States as early as 1920). He earnestly lobbied his old colleagues in Congress to mandate drug education and wrote educational pamphlets he desired to see in every school.

More than any other figure, Richmond P. Hobson took the pulse of the American public most accurately by focusing on post-war American anxieties that were existential in their nature. In doing so, he gave geonarcotic discourse an affective intensity. Rupert Wilkinson has typified these anxieties into four broad categories: the fear of being owned and dependent (through colonial rule), the fear of anarchy and societal collapse, the fear of failing progress in America's goals and the fear of losing past virtue.<sup>39</sup> Hobson slotted drugs into all four of these fears.

One of the least researched parts of the early anti-narcotics armature is Hobson's influence in international diplomacy. Significantly, Hobson helped shaped develop the US' strict and non-negotiable position at the League of Nations. Through the WNDA, he brought the debates at the OAC squarely into the public eye. In 1936, he noted that the WNDA's relationship with both the League and the State Department had become 'more intimate', noting that the Secretariat of the League had published a special document reporting on the WNDA's activities.<sup>40</sup> The League was interested in the variety of activities that the WNDA and its affiliated organisation were taking against drug abuse since the League did little to promote education and awareness itself.<sup>41</sup> Through Hobson, the obscure and technical discourse of diplomatic process became a pressing issue of public concern. This public

scrutiny meant that the American delegation could not afford to lose face at the 1925 Geneva Conference. For a nation defined by narcotic exceptionalism, Hobson's socio-technical imaginary gave legitimacy the delegation's decision to withdraw from the 1925 conferences.

Hobson created an international arm of the WNDP and called it the Geneva Centre (the eponymous location of the League of Nations headquarters in the early 1930s). This Centre leveraged LoN diplomats, providing Hobson with some access to diplomatic proceedings. In a memorandum circulated between League delegates, the Geneva Centre was painted in a positive light, which noted its 'firm intention of doing everything within their power to promote the successes of any conferences which the League of Nations may hold in the future'.<sup>42</sup> If anything, a warm reception to the centre was one small condolence the League could offer the US after their withdrawal from the 1925 Conventions. The Geneva Centre communicated with the Director of the Opium Traffic Section of the LoN, which in turn corresponded with the OAC.

#### American reactions to the 1925 Conference withdrawals

The American press reported the delegation's decision to withdraw from the 1925 Convention favourably.<sup>43</sup> One local Pennsylvanian newspaper noted that without the American presence, the conference was in a 'terribly weakened position'.<sup>44</sup> The press also noted the plight of China, itself a victim of the colonial-administered opium evil. The *Indiana Palladium* noted that American missionaries had first begun their fight against narcotics in China and that they should not give up because of this setback.<sup>45</sup> Congressman Lindenberger of California introduced a resolution to hold another

international conference in the US on the narcotic evil, effectively embarrassing the League of Nations. He drew support from Hobson, who made thorough plans for the conference. He planned for President Coolidge to invite 500 delegates from countries around the world and 2000 delegates representing concerned organisations, states, provinces, and cities.<sup>46</sup>

Although that conference never materialised, it signalled the exceptionalism the US felt as both a victim and leader in the fight against narcotics.

Much of the blame for the US' plight was focused on Europe. The press had long criticised the Colonial Centres' grasp on the trade in manufactured narcotics. In 1923, the *Chicago Tribune* accused Europe of 'narcotic fakery', noting 'well over 90% of all narcotics seized in and near New York City in original packaging have been of foreign manufacture. This seems to point the finger of accusation directly at Europe'.<sup>47</sup> This is important insofar as it draws our attention to the first of many examples where seizures at US borders acquired geopolitical significance due to their packaging. Packaging became a critical part of early efforts to geolocate the origin of opium seizures. This is discussed further in chapter four.

Hobson took advantage of the stuttering diplomatic progress to press for domestic legislation.<sup>48</sup> In 1925, he pushed for the passage of the Uniform Narcotic Act, a law that would harmonise state-wide legislation to stop domestic smuggling and was ultimately successful in doing so.<sup>49</sup>

In a radio address celebrating the success of the implementation of the 1931 Convention, Hobson identified the next goal of narcotics legislation as 'destroying altogether the narcotic Drug Evil. There remains the evil's other

main root, — ineffectively restricted production of the raw materials out of which narcotic drugs can be made'.<sup>50</sup> This evil of 'ineffectively restricted production' drew the American press focus on the opium and coca crops of Asia and South America.

In assemblage terms, Hobson did much to territorialise the American drug control towards prohibition. He connected narcotics to a variety of other issues: alcohol; through a shared framework of control, foreign policy; through the imperial powers, and new synthetic substances through the chemical sciences. Hobson also abetted Anslinger, protesting when plans were made to subsume the FBN into the Secret Service. He is what McConnell & Dittmer refer to as a 'liminal figure' in the drug control assemblage: he was not a traditional diplomat who represented American interests at the LoN, but he influenced the public and on formal US drug control position.<sup>51</sup> As Musto suggests, 'although not respected by someone like Anslinger, [Hobson] was used as an active propaganda force; he knew influential people'.<sup>52</sup> It was Hobson's ability to enrol new actors to the cause of drug control that made him so useful.

Hobson's direct contribution to the League of Nation's debates was minimal, but he did much to intensify the affective struggles and representation of the US position at the League by exaggerating America's battle with narcotics. His role in creating US drug diplomacy is therefore central, showing how scholars must look beyond traditional diplomatic histories to understand how geopolitical subjectivities emerge.

The WNDA eventually went bankrupt in 1936, and Hobson died of a heart attack on the 16th March 1937. After his death, another figure picked up on the importance of shaping geonarcotic discourse. However, this figure was very much an insider, more aware of the multiple materialities of opium and the League's bureaucratic processes. Harry Anslinger would code both the American and international drug assemblages towards prohibition.

### Anslinger's geonarcotics

As alcohol prohibition ended in 1930, many of the Bureau of Prohibition's employees were transferred to the newly created the FBN. Part of its remit involved educating the public about the dangers of drug abuse. In his early years, Anslinger was happy to collaborate with Hobson, effectively outsourcing education to the WNDA. He appeared at their events to address the nation on the dangers of narcotics. Anslinger like Hobson, played down the issue of consumption. It was an unfortunate, individual failing, ultimately caused by foreign forces. After Hobson's death, Anslinger assumed the role of America's anti-narcotic hero by feeding the press information about FBN busts and raids. As Pembleton argues, he did this by working with reporter Frederic Sondhern in the late 1940s,<sup>53</sup> yet we can trace Anslinger's use of the press back even further to the creation of the FBN.

### Alfred Blanco and the opium monopolies

Disagreement over the efficacy and ethics of opium monopolies reared its head again in 1929. The US's role in discrediting the opium monopoly is an important part of geonarcotic discourse. While monopolies were touted as public health interventions in Japan, the opium evil discourse was built on individual choice, rather than a collective understanding of public health.



Opium consumption, unless prescribed, was a moral failing in the eyes of anti-narcotic campaigners in the US. The best thing governments could do was to make it as difficult as possible for individuals to obtain opium. A material argument for licensed opium monopolies emerged, somewhat counter-intuitively, from the Anti Opium Information Bureau (AOB), an organisation that usually supported strict prohibition based in China. This one-man organisation was founded by the 'colourful cosmopolite'<sup>54</sup> Alfredo Blanco, a disgruntled ex-officer of the League's Opium Section who worked there from 1922-1928, yet was dismissed due to his more radical advocacy of all-out prohibition. Described as a 'striking figure, speaking perfect English and French, sartorially dressed with white spats', he was credited with keeping 'the narcotics problem alive for the general public, thus obtaining their support'.<sup>55</sup> Blanco was a keen proponent of supply reduction measures in the Far East; dross was the substance that remained after being smoked, roughly 40-60% of the original opium.<sup>56</sup> This contained a small measure of morphine which could then be converted into purer forms of morphine or heroin. The AOB recommended a monopoly system in China so that the dross could be collected from registered addicts, rather than making its way into the black market. Privately, Anslinger suggested he would support it if opium smoking were legalised, but that publicly, he could not express an opinion.<sup>57</sup>

### Geonarcotics, Japan, and the Hearst newspapers

In the late 1930s, the blame for the world narcotic problem moved from Europe to hostile nations in Asia. This was due to geopolitical developments. Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and the declaration of war by the British on Germany on September 3, 1939, meant that American foreign

policy became more aggressive, culminating with their entry into World War Two in 1941.

As the situation with Japan worsened, League officials struggled to challenge the country directly on its opium policy. Leaks were an important mechanism for pressuring change. They could shame a nation into action, but leaking official data submitted voluntarily by states could also discourage participation in the future League activities. When leaks did occur, they were channelled through the Anti-Opium Bureau. The AOB produced pamphlets with titles such as 'The Drug Evil in China' and 'Japanese Drug Trade Poisoning North China'.<sup>58</sup> Many of Blanco's reports and ideas – including a plan to halt all opium smoking and eating by 1948 and another to reduce the world requirement of raw opium to 290 tons — were cited in American newspapers and drew massive support in China.<sup>59</sup> He invoked the ire of many senior League officials by accusing the League of being beholden to countries 'financially interested in the manufacture of narcotics'.<sup>60</sup> Blanco had little hope for a change of stance from the Japanese, describing this as likely 'as forest fires in the North Pole'.<sup>61</sup>

Anslinger was also less concerned with diplomatic protocol. He deployed the full force of the media to vividly render the narcotics problem with a Japanese taint. Much has been written on the association between Anslinger and the media.<sup>62</sup> Marshall suggests Anslinger had few qualms with exaggerating narratives in order to give credence to the important work of the FBN. Douglas Kinder notes that Anslinger used the media to 'sensationalize intelligence reports reflect[ing] a crusading side of Anslinger's personality. He employed that tactic to redirect the public's perception of drugs toward the

one held by the FBN'.<sup>63</sup> Kinder also labels Anslinger as a survivalist: when the Roosevelt administration looked to restructure the FBN and transfer its functions and agents into the Secret Service, he was forced to respond. Both moves threatened the very existence of the FBN and with it Anslinger's career. It remained in the FBN's interest to highlight the importance of its work, particularly in stopping foreign drugs from reaching the United States. To do so, it needed an echoing chamber to highlight both the scale of the problem and the FBN's role in solving it. William Randolph Hearst was a newspaper magnate whose papers reported the progress made at the LoN and America's efforts to convince the world of the importance of the prohibitory approach. Hearst newspapers would do much to politically code the US drug assemblage and the FBN's role in it. While the details of Anslinger's relationship with Hearst are unclear, there can be no mistaking their symbiotic gains. Some have pointed to Hearst's heavy investments in the wood pulp as a reason for his aversion to marijuana (the hemp plant threatened to destabilise the wood pulp industry). Others point to the Mexican Revolution, and some 80,000 acres of land Hearst lost in this process, citing this as a factor for his eagerness to castigate the foreign drug and its Latino users.<sup>64</sup> Hearst newspapers had focussed on the 'Oriental' problem of opium smoking during the 1900s, and then on the mafia connection post-prohibition 1930s. For Taylor, Hearst newspapers were critical to developing drug law. He notes that 'publicity was considered to be the most important weapon in the fight against the drug evil'.<sup>65</sup> I examine this idea specifically for narcotics. Hearst newspapers focused on the foreign and domestic parts of the illegal drug trade. As we shall see, geonarcotic

discourse was affective. It tied into wider fears of impending conflict to bring the FBN into the US war effort.

William Randolph Hearst's newspaper conglomerate was the perfect bedfellow for geonarcotic discourse. It had long emphasised the foreign aspects of America's ills, and Hearst's aversion to 'Oriental' immigration has been documented elsewhere.<sup>66</sup> His newspapers attacked plans to use Chinese Labour to dig the Panama Canal, and opposed the intermarriage of American and Japanese citizens. His newspapers had tracked the FBN's battle against the Mafia and Chinese Tongs who had muscled into the narcotics trade after alcohol prohibition in 1933.<sup>67</sup> After the Russo-Japanese War, Hearst saw Japan as threatening US interest and territories in the Pacific.<sup>68</sup> Narcotics were a conduit for anti-Japanese sentiment. The Hearst newspapers ran a series of political editorials on the threat of narcotics to the United States in 1934. These editorials were accompanied by foreboding cartoons. The cartoonists included well-known figures such as Frederick Packer, Walter Enright, and Windsor McCay.

The campaign was well received by the political elite in Washington. An article dated 31 July 1934 from the *Washington Herald* entitled 'Hearst Campaign Lauded for Campaign on Dope Evil' reported that a Superior Court Judge congratulated the campaign for its ceaseless efforts to educate the public on the narcotic menace.

*Image removed.*

**FIGURE 8: STILL A MENACE' WASHINGTON HERALD, THURSDAY, JULY 12TH, 1934  
SOURCE: THE HARRY ANSLINGER FILES, PENNSYLVANIA STATE ARCHIVES,  
AUTHOR'S PHOTO.<sup>69</sup>**

Figure 8 depicts the foreign aspects of the drugs trade. While Americans squabbled amongst themselves over the details of domestic legislation, foreign drugs, symbolised by death, make their way ashore. The image establishes the US as a victim nation. The editorial accompanying the image describes the passage of the 1931 Convention that came into force in 1933. It asserted Japan had 'conquered provinces of Manchukuo and Jehol [and] are fostering opium culture and putting out vast quantities of cheap morphine which reaches our West coast'.<sup>70</sup> This is the first hint that narcotics were deliberately being produced for the American consumer.

*Image removed.*

**FIGURE 9: STAMP IT OUT', THE WASHINGTON HERALD, OCTOBER 19TH, 1934, SOURCE: THE HARRY ANSLINGER FILES, PENNSYLVANIA STATE ARCHIVES, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.<sup>71</sup>**

Hearst newspapers saw the US government as the main defence against narcotics. This second cartoon in Figure 9 personified dope as a snake-like creature, struggling to penetrate the US under the watchful eye of the FBN, ('dope' is used as an umbrella term for all drugs, as opposed to just narcotics). The editorial notes that 'the Federal Narcotics Bureau has already made substantial progress in stopping our newest dope menace- cheap smuggled opium from the Far East... State enforcement officials must now support adequately the Federal Government's intensified campaign'. This refers to the State Uniform Narcotic Act. Recall that the Act was designed to harmonise state regulations so that a minimal level of regulation and control existed across the country in the licensing, purchasing, and selling of narcotics. In 1933, only nine states had ratified the act, and in 1935

Roosevelt publicly endorsed the Act in a message on Columbia Radio Network.

*Image removed.*

**FIGURE 10: 'STILL POURING IN' WASHINGTON HERALD, JUNE 18TH, 1934. SOURCE: THE HARRY ANSLINGER FILES, PENNSYLVANIA STATE ARCHIVES, AUTHOR'S PHOTO.<sup>72</sup>**

The image in Figure 10 depicts the opium bloc – a collection of colonial nations unwilling to end their unregulated trades in opium, heroin, and morphine – as the figure of greed. Notable is the association of the bloc with John Bull and British fashion. The UK was perceived as the ringleader of the narcotic nations, particularly after it refused to place restrictions upon its prepared opium exports to its territories (despite the Bangkok Conference on opium smoking). The editorial makes direct reference to the failure of the opium bloc to make substantial progress on the opium problem. It instead noted all the bloc could offer were 'pious platitudes'.

The article vindicates the honest and moral demands of the American delegates at the League. It consecrates America's exceptionalism as an anti-narcotic nation. With punitive narcotics policy that disavowed all but the most tightly regulated supplies of medical and scientific drugs, the USA was unique. This is demonstrated by a triumphant report in the *Washington Star* in November 1934. It celebrated Fuller's scathing criticisms of the opium monopolies of France and Great Britain, which offended the Swiss, Dutch, Indian, and Austrian delegates.

By 1938, the geonarcotic discourse had firmly shifted from Europe to Japan. The US had gained support for their position. *The Ottawa Journal* reported that Colonel Sharman, the Canadian drugs czar, 'stood behind Fuller's

attacks on Japanese narcotics policy 100% in 1938'.<sup>73</sup> The *Albuquerque Journal* later reported that four other nations, China, India, Great Britain, and Egypt concurred with Fuller's accusations.<sup>74</sup>

Hearst newspapers functioned as a mouthpiece of the FBN. Occasionally, opinions that were contradictory to the FBN's stance slipped through the net. The example of Army Doctor Captain La Roe, stationed at Lowry Field shows this clearly. La Roe was a supporter of maintenance policies. These provided addicts with medically-authorized narcotics to deal with their cravings. La Roe had published in *American Weekly*. This was anathema to the FBN position. Very quickly, Anslinger described him as a 'dangerous demagogue' and the Medical Corps denounced his position as not of their office. In a letter, Anslinger noted the article was contrary to Hearst policies and 'as is sometimes the case, some of these fanatics sell themselves to an editor who is not thoroughly familiar with the policies and it takes some time to correct the situation'.<sup>75</sup>

The Hearst newspapers painted a sardonic picture of a real and terrifying future due to the stuttering progress on international narcotic prohibition at the League of Nations. The cartoon editorials analysed here encouraged a resigned, cynical chuckle at foreign incompetence, but they also pointed to a biopolitics of drug use. As Malleck suggests, a good citizen was of good morality and physicality. Their civic duty was also their duty to their own body.<sup>76</sup> American's would not find help from the opium bloc, nor, under Anslinger's tenure, should they look to their own government to protect their fragile corporeality against foreign dope. To win the fight against narcotics, they had to stay strong, sure of purpose, and most importantly, sober.

## Narcotics as a weapon of war

Just before the outbreak of war, narcotic discourse would undergo a new development that shifted the attention Eastwards. The 1930s was the first era of 'narcotisation', or the belief that certain nations were using narcotics as weapons of war. As Malleck suggests, addiction was a term that was 'rooted in notions of slavery and a loss of freedom'.<sup>77</sup> It did not prove difficult to link a public health crisis to wider geopolitics.

Nevertheless, the press and politicians who accused another nation of narcotisation took a large step forward from condemning the policies of London, Amsterdam, and Paris. The most viperous criticism levelled against Japan was that it was deliberately flooding China with narcotics to make its population amenable to conquest. By actively peddling drugs for finances in Japanese-administered Manchuria and Formosa, critics alleged that Japan was fostering addiction among the Chinese, and weakening the body politic. In 1937, Anslinger filed a report to the Commission on Genocide recommending narcotics be considered a weapon of war.<sup>78</sup>

Narcotisation was portrayed as a biopolitical form of warfare, enacted by a cruel and callous enemy. With Japan's withdrawal from the LoN, the FBN was free from the usual practices of restrained diplomacy in making such drastic allegations, and the State Department did not intervene to stop the narcotisation discourse. In 1940, the AOB produced a press release entitled 'Narcotics as a Weapon of War' which argued that 'the man who has never touched drugs and who would give his life for his country is capable, when doped, of betraying his country'.<sup>79</sup> The issue of enslavement, demoralisation, and surrender of the Chinese population dominated American perceptions of



the foreign drug trade. The occupied territories in China became a 'vast arsenal of narcotics'<sup>80</sup> as Japan was using Manchukuo for the base of its nefarious operations. In one letter sent to the editors of the *Fresno Bee* in December of 1937, a concerned citizen noted 'with Japan cognizant of the terrible power of opium to subjugate whole peoples, with a minimum of military activity, should we not become cognizant of our own susceptibility?'<sup>81</sup>

The form of weaponised opium was invariably smoking opium. The *Muncie Evening Press* reported smoking opium was peddled through opium monopolies, and that this had the dual purpose of 'smashing his [the enemy's] resistance and making him pay for it at the same time.'<sup>82</sup> This represents the two dimensions of the weaponisation thesis. The Chinese were first subjugated physically through their continued addiction to smoking opium, facilitated by the Japanese, who then reaped the financial rewards of selling the narcotics. The newspaper drew on charges made by Stuart Fuller at the OAC and noted that the Japanese were charged with importing opium from Iran and 'manufacturing huge quantities of narcotic derivatives and exporting them to the United States and other countries for the illicit traffic'.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, Americans who purchased narcotics illegally were seen to be aiding Japan's military. Upton Close was a journalist specialising in the Far East. He gave a lecture in Portland where he suggested Japan gained 'money to purchase materials of war from the United States by selling in America 90% of the narcotics Japan produced'.<sup>84</sup> While this report went uncorroborated, the assertion was clear. Buying illicit drugs meant US citizens were helping the Japanese develop their war machine.

As Grayson suggests, ‘ideas of security and Canadian identity [have] managed to code particular practices as unCanadian, thereby making it possible to pursue various forms of prohibition’.<sup>85</sup> In the US, geonarcotic discourse was inscribed into the bodies of Americans. The moral and physical weaknesses of users directly contributed to America’s enemies, the bodies of addicts were sites ‘where geopolitical strategy [was] animated and made material’.<sup>86</sup> A true patriot was a sober patriot. Just one sniff, injection, or puff on a pipe was enough to render an American amenable to conquest from a foreign foe, putting the security of the rest of the nation at risk.

#### *Anslinger’s Army: Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

Commissioner Anslinger — the authoritative source on narcotics in the US in the late 1930s — gathered a network of allies early in his career. John Collins calls this network of grassroots organisations ‘Anslinger’s Army’.<sup>87</sup> This included the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the National Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Despite his lack of medical credentials,<sup>88</sup> Anslinger also courted the interests of the National Association of Retail Druggists (NARD) and the American Medical Association (AMA), a crucial move in his war against health professionals who disagreed with the Harrison Act’s stipulations on addiction.<sup>89</sup>

These organisations helped spread geonarcotic discourse in the United States. Narcotisation was given a domestic mouthpiece through a joint publication of the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), entitled, ‘*Japan and the Opium Menace*’ by Frederick T Merrill. This book, published in 1942, squarely laid blame ‘at the door of

Japan, and particularly of the commanders of the Japanese armies operating in Chinese territories and the Kwantung- leased territory'.<sup>90</sup> The book described a 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde policy' where Japan appeared 'to have two opium policies. One towards its own citizens, the other as it relates to Chinese'.<sup>91</sup> In other words, Japan abhorred opium use in Japan but used it to exploit other nations.

Merrill alleged that Japanese traded opium in Hong Kong, Macao, and Kwangchowan. This opium would then make its way to the US. He argued opium seized in the US came with familiar labels (Lu Fook Yee, and Yick Kee, discussed further in chapter three). Where seizures were not directly applicable to Japanese smugglers, the book blamed the Southern Japanese invasion for an influx of refugees and increases in smuggling in that region. The book received interest in Canada and the UK, and parts were reprinted in *Economic Record*, *New Masses*, *Chatham House*, *Far Eastern Quarterly* and *Magazine Digest*.<sup>92</sup> The text is important because it construed the US as 'the first country to fully recognise that it alone could not effectively limit the supply of drugs', and that the international machinery was 'a place where nations could be arraigned for transgressions against the common good'.<sup>93</sup> It distorted the purpose of the OAC to that of a court rather than a debating chamber for future policy. It thus positioned Japan as a nation with no qualms about the opium trade, nor using it to exploit, pacify, and even kill its neighbours.

As Bewley-Taylor rightly argues, 'the United States consistently put its faith in a policy that held control at the source to be the most effective way to halt drug use within its own borders. Consequently, the source of the drug

problem had already been placed outside of American societal borders'.<sup>94</sup> I would add that this also applies to legal drug production, itself located outside of the United States.

### Geonarcotics post World War Two

By the end of the war, a minority of ethnic Chinese users on the West Coast continued to smoke opium. Morphine, heroin, and codeine were the illegal narcotics of choice. At the same time, stockpiling caused the price of opium to increase to three times its value (discussed in chapter three).<sup>95</sup> The seizures of narcotics dropped precipitously, as did the purity of morphine and heroin. Prices subsequently increased.<sup>96</sup> Both were touted as a proof of the success of US policy. The FBN claimed that the lower purity inadvertently weaned addicts off their substances. It was a material signifier of the success of the US strategy of supply control at home.<sup>97</sup>

However, World War Two was far more responsible for changes in the drug traffic than any policy decisions. The American geonarcotic focus continued to be fixed on the Far East, not least because of battalions of American troops stationed in the Pacific. With fears that injured and addicted soldiers could bring back a wave of demand to the United States, a discourse of narcotic containment preceded the discourse of communist containment.

In chapter one, I noted that the closure of the opium monopolies was an important American victory. Here, I suggest the British and Dutch decisions were also guided by geonarcotic discourses. The viability of the opium monopolies had been tainted by Japanese abuses in Northern China.<sup>98</sup> The history of the opium monopoly was told as a long history of negative

consequences for the health of citizens, particularly due to the influence of Miss Ellen Newbold La Motte and Elizabeth Washburn-Wright.<sup>99</sup> The opium monopoly could not shake its moniker as an Axis method of conquest, rather than a public health approach to drug control. In the UK, the Temperance movement had long opposed London's policies abroad, and public support for the market was at an all-time low.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, the government of Chiang Kai-Shek had pledged to abolish opium smoking from its country under the '6 Year Plans' made in 1935, and publicly burned 950,000 ounces of opium in January 1946 in Peiping.<sup>101</sup> The very public and national commitment to anti-opium policy from the Chinese and the Dutch weighed heavily upon the British. Continuing monopolies in Hong-Kong, Burma, and Malay would inevitably lead to smuggling and undermine China's largely symbolic efforts to rid itself of a problem inflicted upon it.

The US applied geopolitical pressure to the imperial powers. The Judd Resolution of 1944 was passed by both houses. It called upon the US President to ask the opium-producing nations and empires to end their trades.<sup>102</sup> The British did not want to risk alienating the Americans, an ally on whom they were entirely reliant during the latter years of the war. After closing their monopolies, Britain's strategic interest shifted to its domestic manufacturing markets and pharmaceutical sector. Along with other colonial powers, the UK would become a powerful advocate for manufacturing nations.<sup>103</sup>

Anslinger described the closures of the monopolies and commitments to the suppression of opium smoking as 'the most important developments of all time in international drug control'.<sup>104</sup> Congress also agreed: such success,

combined with previous victories during the war, led to a more aggressive US position when discussing the creation of the UN machinery. It engendered changes in the chemistry of world drug production. With the British no longer defending the 'quasi-medical' uses of opium smoking and eating, a cleaner division between acceptable uses, a key part of the American agenda, was a more realistic prospect. Following this, smoking opium became illegal across the world (apart from in Thailand).<sup>105</sup> Opium production that was not intended for the legal market in semi-synthetics could now be considered, broadly speaking, illegitimate, if not illegal.

#### The poppy persists: geonarcotic discourse in the Middle East

In the immediate post-war period, prepared opium was still heavily required for the manufacture of codeine and morphine. The geography of narcotic production shifted to a group of newly independent Asian and Middle Eastern states: Iran, Turkey, Burma, and India, who proved more recalcitrant than the British when negotiating with the United States. The FBN complained of 'numerous seizures of raw opium in lumps and slabs which because of the morphine content of the opium and other factors appeared to be of Indian origin.'<sup>106</sup> Direct appeals to the Indians at the CND had little effect. Threats of onerous inspections at US borders were rebuffed by India, who threatened the same with American products. The FBN still relied on legal imports from the Indian government to bolster its stockpiles, and quietly backed away from the issue.

Other countries toyed with the boundaries of acceptable practice, provoking new tactics from the US in response. McAllister believes that when Turkish opium production increased, the FBN began to subvert traditional diplomacy,

bypassing the Turkish government by dealing directly with the military in efforts to stem production.<sup>107</sup> However, narcotic policy was often subordinated to broader foreign policy. The Indonesians also used opium to finance their resistance to the Dutch, and the French continued to sell opium through their monopoly, despite their announcements after the War. Walker suggests that the importance of the French as allies in the Cold War was prioritised over the FBN agenda, thereby preventing any criticism of this underhanded continuation of the opium monopoly.<sup>108</sup>

While the changing geography of narcotic production between 1940 and 1960 has been extensively documented,<sup>109</sup> the geonarcotic discourses in the United States have not. The most astonishing shift in the FBN's position was on China.

The defeat and exiling of Chiang Kai-Shek and rise of Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1949 caused great consternation among US drug control advocates. In September 1949, China offered to sell opium on the open market.<sup>110</sup> Anslinger instantly banned all Chinese narcotic imports, along with other manufacturing states. He did not want to appear to be cooperating with the communist forces. The move also sent a clear signal that the United States did not believe that China had a legitimate stake in the legal market. Their attempt to sell opium for medical purposes was described as 'offering to dump 500 tons of opium along the shores of Western Nations, and for no other purpose than to weaken the people of those nations, just as Great Britain has done in India and China!'<sup>111</sup> In Marshall's view, China was emphasised as a rogue producing nation through the doctoring of reports and outright deception.

## The Sixth Column: communist heroin, the Korean War and Red China

In the same year, the 'Big Four' opium exporting nations (Turkey, Iran, India, and Yugoslavia) agreed upon a division of the licit market among themselves. It seemed, albeit briefly, that the world had come to a geopolitical consensus on the size and proportions of the market for narcotic medicine. That market excluded Chinese narcotics. Opium from China and Korea was as illicit and dangerous as the communists themselves (it also was memorably described as the 'Sixth Column' by Commissioner Anslinger). It threatened US troops and by extension, the US population at large. It became vital to stem the narcotic threat and contain it within a specific geographical area. Discourses of containment fused with the threat of narcotisation. Much like Japan before it, China became a country that was spreading an infection that could reach non-communist nations.<sup>112</sup> Where the threat of foreign narcotics from Iran was met with assistance and offers to purchase licit opium (discussed in chapter three), it was not so with China.

The FBN's criticism of China became vitriolic and intense. I suggest this was a response to domestic developments concerning drug abuse. From the mid-1940s onwards, challenges to FBN definitions of drug addiction began to gather support as the number of habitual users reached new highs.<sup>113</sup> A two-pronged attack was launched by political and medical detractors of prohibition in the early 1950s. Democratic Congressman John Coffee of Washington argued the FBN was subverting the original intentions of the 1914 Harrison Narcotics Act and Supreme Court Justice rulings that permitted physicians to provide addicts with small amounts of narcotics. This was backed up by Professor Alfred Lindesmith, a medical sociologist who



questioned the entire basis of America's drug laws.<sup>114</sup> In two articles, in 1951 Lindesmith promoted the successes of the 'English System' of prescribing heroin for narcotic users.<sup>115</sup> To make things worse, a year later the American Bar Association began to decry the 1952 Boggs Act that gave birth to the controversial 'mandatory minimum' sentencing guidelines, as well as the death penalty for those who sold narcotics to minors.

Such criticism against the FBN came at a delicate time. The FBN had survived serious attempts at restructuring in the past by appearing extremely effective through small appropriations and high arrest rates. It was also a small bureau, and was more productive than any other law enforcement department (in terms of numbers of arrests per officer). While the voice of critics was relatively quiet, Anslinger fought them tooth and nail, writing a twenty-five-page response to Lindesmith's 'the Dope Fiends Mythology' paper.<sup>116</sup> Throughout his career, Lindesmith remained of 'constant interest' to the FBN.

One area where the FBN's expertise could not be easily disputed was abroad. Between 1951 and 1960, the FBN opened permanent offices in Beirut and Paris and established a training school in Rome.<sup>117</sup> It was part of an expansive intelligence network developed with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Many FBN operatives were given intelligence-gathering roles during the Cold War. For forty years, 'very little happened in the world of drugs or international affairs that Anslinger did not know about'.<sup>118</sup>

To assert the importance of the FBN, the threat of narcotics had to become a looming menace. Anslinger leaned on his international credentials in press interviews, blaming other countries and smugglers for the supply of drugs to the US.<sup>119</sup> As domestic policy scuffles grew, Anslinger shifted the attention towards the foreign drug problem, an area which domestic dissenters could not dispute, not least because smuggling was a large problem. China took centre stage, although now as the aggressor, rather than the victim.

On the first examination, this is surprising. In 1949 the victory of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) against the US-favoured Chiang-Kai Shek and Kuomintang led to one positive outcome for control advocates: a complete and brutal suppression of all opium consumption and production. James Windle has written extensively on the suppression of opium under the CCP, particularly the decree in 1950 that all production in CCP areas is immediately abolished and that offenders be severely punished.<sup>120</sup> Alternate crops and tobacco seeds were handed out by CCP officials to local opium farmers, and those caught growing or using narcotics became highly public prosecutions. Most were imprisoned, but some 880 dealers were executed. Production had ceased by 1953 in CCP controlled areas. Officials announced the complete eradication of opium in 1960. They had eradicated 25,000 metric tons of opium in 1949. As Marshall, argues, opium resisted depreciation in the hyperinflationary environment of China; it functioned as a currency for the nationalists against the threat of warlords and CCP.<sup>121</sup> By stopping its production and consumption, the CCP benefitted by denying the Kuomintang in the South funds for their war effort.

The FBN had to tread delicately. It could not openly applaud such a brutally effective approach in which prohibition was enforced via mass incarceration and execution, nor could it denounce Communist Chinese tough prohibition, lest it received unfavourable accusations of hypocrisy. Worse still, the Kuomintang resistance had fled to Burma, and there was some evidence it was using opium to finance its resistance to the CCP.<sup>122</sup> This sensitive information could embarrass the FBN if made public, particularly after its support of the nationalist government. Much like it did with Japan, the trick became one of directing attention away from China's domestic policy, and towards other nations where a Chinese presence was noticeable.

Deputy FBN Commissioner G.W Cunningham made an opening salvo against China in 1951. He stated that China had produced some 500 tons of heroin for sale on the black-market.<sup>123</sup> Anslinger himself did not accuse China of directly selling narcotics to corrupt individuals, a charge that had been levelled at the Japanese. In a television interview in 1951, Anslinger was asked:

Commissioner, do you think that the Chinese communists raise opium to increase addiction among the Western powers or their enemies or potential enemies or they do it to raise a cash crop?

He responded

Primarily it's to raise a cash crop ... Now, I think one of their best ways of obtaining American dollars is through the sale of heroin in the illicit traffic. Anyone who sells heroin, regardless of whether it's planned or not, creates physical and moral destruction. You sell a

poison you can't get away from the fact you are injuring people when you sell heroin especially on the scale of which it's coming out of Red China today.<sup>124</sup>

Before exploring the veracity of these claims, it is worth noting the change in discourse from opium as a weapon designed to weaken the body to one that financially supports the war effort.

The FBN's '*Traffic in Narcotics*' reports indicated seizures increasing from 13-97 kg from 1951-1952.<sup>125</sup> The seizures were from a mixture of countries, with Turkish, Italian, Iranian, and French opium being seized along with Chinese heroin. The reports also argued that considerable seizures of pure heroin had been made on the West Coast and that the source was Communist China.<sup>126</sup> Marshall argues that Anslinger had CND and Congressional reports edited to remove reference to any Asian suppliers but China.<sup>127</sup> This delegitimised the Chinese attempts to enter the legal market. In his view, China was painted as a rogue producing nation through the doctoring of reports and outright deception.

Departing from Marshall's analysis, I argue two things. First, that the geonarcotic discourse was as much about the drugs as it was the sellers; Chinese opium had to be painted as an illegitimate commodity on the world market. It was portrayed as a weapon, distinguished from other suppliers of a globally traded commodity. Second, I suggest the Korean War provided the perfect opportunity for deflecting criticism and focussing press attention on the seductive and geopolitical narrative of narcotics as both a weapon and financial tool of war. The Japanese had turned Korea into an opium exporting

nation. 'From 1937 to 1944 there was an average production of 34.5 tons yearly and average exports from 1937 to 1943 of some 33 tons' in Korea.<sup>128</sup> After the division of Korea, opium production was banned in the South, but it does not appear to have been successful. PCOB documents indicate many farmers were illiterate, and perhaps unaware of the edict. The FBN suggested narcotics were being used to directly influence the military conflict and corrupt American soldiers on the Korean peninsula. To substantiate this claim, the FBN circulated reports of Chinese heroin being sold through North Korea and making its way across the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel to American troops. At the 1952 CND meeting, Anslinger asserted that China was gearing up for major narcotic incursions into Korea. This 'long-range dope and dialectic assault' was once again defined by Anslinger as the 'sixth column to weaken and destroy selected targets in the drive for world domination.'<sup>129</sup> The FBN identified the Chinese finance minister as a key ringleader who was training some 400 agents to sell narcotics overseas.<sup>130</sup>

The return of narcotisation discourse proved popular with the press,<sup>131</sup> yet it did not flourish until late 1951. Newspapers reported Anslinger's assertions, feeding a wave of fear about teen narcotic use.<sup>132</sup> In the press, Anslinger was the single hero fighting this trade, with little help from the international community who stubbornly refused to recognise the scope of the problem.<sup>133</sup> A sense of the US's isolation was increased when the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the UN (the DND) was moved back to Geneva from its office in Washington. This was a precursor to China's eventual entry into the UN, despite protests and dire warning of the US. By 1954, media fury at the international community was a notable theme in the US press. One reporter

wrote in the *Indiana Palladium* that 'somebody should open the big glass windows of the United Nations building and let the sickening odour of opium politics escape'.<sup>134</sup>

### The rise of the mafia

As Jenkins suggests, 'it is impossible for the twentieth-century historian to find an epoch or a region in which Italian organized criminals, often members of "Mafia" groups, were not deeply involved in narcotics'.<sup>135</sup> In 1920s New York, the Castellammarese War had led to the consolidation of power under one organisation, led by Charles 'Lucky' Luciano, who came to dominate the international trade. Charles Siragusa, one of the FBN's most senior agents, spent much of his career trying to impede the Mafia's distribution of heroin on the Eastern Seaboard.<sup>136</sup> At the beginning of his tenure, Anslinger struggled to find support for his 'organised crime' thesis in Washington. Indeed, as late as 1962, J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI and arguably the world's most powerful policeman, was denying the existence of the mafia while Anslinger was expounding it.<sup>137</sup>

Organised crime, particularly the activities of the Sicilian Mafia, had played a role in geonarcotic discourse as early as 1937. In November, the *Sarasota Herald Tribune* reported that the brother and wife of infamous mobster Charles 'Lucky' Luciano – along with a former, unnamed president of the 'Hip Song' Tong – had been arrested in narcotics raids.<sup>138</sup> This created a link between smuggling from the Far East and the Italian mafia. When Luciano appeared in Cuba in 1946, the United States pressured the government to deport him back to Italy. Anslinger stopped shipping medical narcotics to the island, arguing that Luciano could easily direct these drugs back into the

black market. The move was harshly condemned by the Cuban government, who were almost entirely dependent upon the supplies, but the Americans held firm, and Luciano was deported in March 1946.<sup>139</sup> Charles Siragusa, one of Anslinger's top agents, devoted the latter half of his career to hunting down Luciano, even following him to Italy when he was deported from the US. This is just one example of legal narcotics playing a critical role in advancing the US narcotic agenda. More will be discussed in chapter three.

It was the mafia link that further tied narcotics to the communists. In 1951, the same year China was accused of narcotisation, Anslinger testified before the Kefauver Committee on organised crime. The committee's primary goal was to determine whether a single organised body or family-led business controlled crime across the country. It was broadcast on live television, exposing millions of Americans to the testimonies of famous mobsters. When J. Edgar Hoover refused to allow FBI operatives to testify in that committee, arguing that such a racket did not exist, Anslinger stepped in, promising FBN employees could publicly highlight the link between organised crime and narcotic drugs across the United States.<sup>140</sup> The FBN identified Lebanon, Beirut, and Turkey as entry points for opium making its way into Europe (this route became known as the French Connection).<sup>141</sup> From there, it was transported to Marseilles, converted into heroin and trafficked on to the United States. During his testimony, Anslinger argued that FBN agents had traced much of this opium to a factory in Tientsin, China.<sup>142</sup> These were then distributed and sold by the mafia. When directly asked by Senator Estes Kefauver if these were 'Red Chinese supplies', Anslinger replied 'by all means... we have very definite proof of that'.<sup>143</sup> The evidence that this proof

rested on was often interpretations of where the seizures had originated (discussed further in chapter four). The link between a domestic mafia and communist sponsored narcotics became the lynchpin of American geonarcotic discourse.

The result of the Kefauver Committee was the aforementioned 1951 Boggs Act. This instituted mandatory minimum penalties for drug possession.<sup>144</sup> It linked the importance of foreign narcotic policy to domestic fears at home. Emboldened by the Act's passage, Anslinger further explained in a newspaper interview that 'the Reds took over the largest known narcotics plant in the world in Mukden, Manchuria ... this became the focal point to produce morphine alkaloids'.<sup>145</sup> By linking the communists to this well-known narcotics-producing region, the Chinese eventually replaced their Japanese predecessors. One tactic for representing the threat of the illegitimate traffic was to compare it to the world's legitimate needs. Anslinger went on to report that the Mukden factory could produce some '50,000 kilos of heroin a year. The Red's [CCP] total production could conceivably turn out to be 12,000 tons a year. The world's medical need currently stands at 450 tons yearly'.<sup>146</sup> Thus the coastal regions of Tientsin and the Yunnan peninsula became centres of narcotic production, entrenching the threat of foreign narcotics in specific locales. The message was clear: while the Chinese might be brutally cleaning their backyards of narcotic crimes, their actions in supporting the mafia and black-market opium consumption in other countries was a threat to the United States and its troops.

Newspapers and politicians seized on the association between communism, weaponisation, and the mafia. The co-author of Anslinger's book *The*



*Murderers*, Will Ousler, wrote an op-ed for the *Chicago Tribune* on February 1, 1953, entitled 'They Get Rich from Foreign Dope'. The article was taken from another book on foreign drugs entitled '*Narcotics: America's Peril*' co-written by Ousler and Anslinger. The book warned that Luciano had 'reorganised mafia gangsters into the most powerful and far-reaching international drug syndicate in the history of this traffic'. The report fingered the Vito Genovese Mob of New York as co-conspirators, who were receiving the heroin with Cuban aid. The report alleged that this heroin was 'stamped with the digits '999' and was responsible for infiltrating our military system with spies but [also] our economic system with the underworld'.<sup>147</sup>

One key figure who spread discourses of narcotisation was Richard Deverall, an ex-civil servant and military officer who had been stationed in Japan during World War Two. In 1950, he was employed by the American Federation for Labor to help stabilise the region against Communist incursions in Japan.<sup>148</sup> Deverall was the author of many books and pamphlets that documented the dangers of Chinese communism, and two of these were devoted exclusively to narcotics. These sported punchy titles such as '*Red China's dirty drug war; the story of the opium, heroin, morphine and philopon [amphetamine] traffic*' and '*Mao Tze-tung: stop this dirty opium business! How Red China is selling opium and heroin to produce revenue for China's war machine*'. Many of the book's sources were testimonials from Harry Anslinger, particularly his statements to the CND.

Deverall noted that India was 'seriously trying to stamp out the use of opium as an intoxicant and that India ... is no longer the world problem it was a few generations ago'.<sup>149</sup> This was a backhanded stab at the British and

unsurprisingly invoked their ire. Since closing their opium monopolies, they had thrown their weight against the illegal opium traffic. John Walker of the Home Office noted that Deverall's books drew on Anslinger's regular annual onslaughts against Red China at the CND.<sup>150</sup> Walker also noted that the US Treasury consul stationed in Hong Kong had little proof to back up the assertions Deverall and Anslinger were making.

*The New York Times* regularly reported on the opium traffic in China,<sup>151</sup> and the FBN's appropriation budget was repeatedly raised in the news, as was the small size of the FBN force (totalling only 188 agents in 1951).<sup>152</sup> *Time Magazine* and *The Chicago Tribune* interviewed Anslinger or published sections of his speeches on communist heroin.<sup>153</sup> One radio address on 22 July 1951 in San Francisco, stated that 'against the efforts of such men as Commissioner Anslinger, we find walking in our midst the very figure of public apathy, a psychological poison almost as dangerous as the narcotics itself'.<sup>154</sup>

### The geonarcotics of the mid-late 1950s

While he faced many criticisms for his accusations, Harry Anslinger was one of the first to highlight the link between organised crime and narcotics trafficking in the early 1930s. By 1953, the association between narcotics, the mafia and foreign heroin had been well established.<sup>155</sup> The Kefauver Committee had demonstrated the role of the mafia in narcotics trafficking and the 1951 Boggs act had secured mandatory minimums for all drug offenders. Geography and materiality striated the new iteration of geonarcotic discourse. Heroin — by now the most widely abused narcotic — was linked to its geographical production in the Communist-controlled parts of Asia. The

*Bulletin on Narcotics*, in summarising the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the CND in 1954, noted that ‘the United States representative [Anslinger] pointed out that the heroin seized in many of the cases reported by governments could be traced to the Far East and that most of the heroin entering the western United States came from the Chinese mainland’.<sup>156</sup> The statement was strongly opposed by the Polish and USSR representatives. At appropriations hearings from 1951 through 1957 committees heard Anslinger repeatedly name Communist China as a primary source of heroin.<sup>157</sup> *The Orlando Evening Star* cited Anslinger, who claimed heroin trafficking was done in a ‘very big way’ by trafficking opium on mules out of Yunnan, through Hong-Kong, into Cuba and ultimately into the United States.<sup>158</sup>

In 1956, another Senate subcommittee was convened and chaired by Senator Price Daniels of Texas. Daniels approved of Anslinger’s CND statements about foreign heroin from China.<sup>159</sup> He organised the committee in response to another subcommittee that had been requested by the American Bar Association to review the harshness of the penalties of the 1951 Boggs Act. The echo chamber of the Daniels Committee reinforced the link between organised crime and weaponised narcotics. Anslinger stressed that the narcotic problem abroad was no longer one of diversion, but the work of international and domestic criminals. Once again, he pointed to the narcotics produced in China that made their way to the United States. As a result, Anslinger ensured the federal focus shifted from small-time peddlers to interstate and international trafficking.<sup>160</sup> Off the back of the Daniels subcommittee, it was concluded that new laws were required at home to tackle trafficking abroad, and Anslinger’s recommendation for stricter

penalties at home be put into action. The Narcotic Control Act of 1956 was passed and, much to the horror of the ABA, it doubled the penalties laid out in the Boggs Act and introduced the death penalty for traffickers. The FBN congratulated Congressman Boggs and Daniels on its passage and noted that 'the Narcotics Control Act of 1956 will give us our greatest weapon to attack the vicious traffickers and to suppress the abuse of narcotic drugs'.<sup>161</sup>

Emboldened by the decision of the Daniels committee, Anslinger continued to promote the link between the mafia and foreign dope. This was despite a report released in late 1956 by the CIA entitled 'Examination of the 'Charges of Chinese Communist Involvement in the Illicit Opium Trade'.<sup>162</sup> It stated there was no evidence to support the argument that the CCP were flooding Korea and adjacent markets with opium. Anslinger instead focused on a narcotic threat nearer to home. Cuba had been subject to US sanctions regarding Charles 'Lucky' Luciano in 1943, resulting in his deportation to Italy.<sup>163</sup> During the 1958 revolutionary struggle in Cuba, Anslinger suggested that Luciano was directing narcotics through Cuba from his villa in Naples. When a Congressional fact-finding mission travelled to Cuba in that same year and found no evidence of such actions, the FBN then stated they had accrued evidence showing that Chinese migrant workers were producing opium in Cuba.<sup>164</sup> The Castro government lodged a formal diplomatic protest with the State Department, and this was subsequently rejected by the State Department.<sup>165</sup>

In 1958, Anslinger testified to a House Appropriations Subcommittee that narcotics was 'unquestionably' on the agenda at a meeting of powerful mafia bosses (the Gangland Convention in Appalachia).<sup>166</sup> When Fidel Castro

came to power in 1959, top agents at the FBN alleged that the Castroite agents used Cuba as a transshipment point for cocaine trafficking into the United States. In doing so, they gained foreign currency. This was the same charge that had been levelled at communist China in Korea.<sup>167</sup> Charles Siragusa was quoted in the *Chicago Tribune* as stating that the Cubans were 'pumping cocaine into the United States to weaken and even destroy the minds of Americans [this] would certainly be applauded by the dictator bosses in Moscow'.<sup>168</sup> This charge was broadened to include narcotics and was laid out in the *News Journal* of Wilmington Delaware. Communist opium was grown in Cuba so the Chinese could gain foreign currency, disrupt Western economies and weaken the American spirit.<sup>169</sup> Geonarcotic discourse took on a new dimension with an article by Victor Riesel of *The New York Times*, who asserted that Chinese and Russian spies were using 'millions of dollars of dope in its espionage against the United States'.<sup>170</sup> The claim was based on a report authored by Anslinger that stated some 280 agents had been either arrested or known to travel out of North Korea with narcotics amounting to a total of 70kg. The association of foreign narcotics with communist foreign policy and domestic organised crime formed the backbone of Anslinger's last charges and captured the attention of the press and public.

Even this could not save Anslinger's job. He guarded his position at the CND until 1970 but was forced from the FBN in 1962. This meant his assertions carried less weight, and his influence in the intelligence community waned. When relations with China began to thaw, FBN accusations were perceived as damaging by the State Department and were formally retracted in 1967.

Chinese production was reported at legitimate medical levels in 1971.<sup>171</sup>

After Anslinger's departure in 1962, a series of FBN agents spoke out against the baselessness of his anti-Chinese rhetoric. They believed geonarcotic hostility towards China was propagated by the Commissioner to secure his future employment.<sup>172</sup> In war zones where information was scarce, but public attention was focussed, narcotics were woven into a narrative of anti-Americanism without being challenged.

The debate over the veracity of the FBN claims is already well-trodden. John McWilliams suggests that Anslinger's claims at the CND were made as the world's foremost expert on opium. He also points to the FBN's importance as an intelligence agency with offices and informants around the world. On the other hand, Marshall believes that Anslinger cooked the books, with little challenge from the media.<sup>173</sup> PCOB reports of the time indicate there was no doubt that opium production was taking place in China, particularly in the Yunnan peninsula. Addiction in China remained a serious problem, despite the PRC's crackdown.<sup>174</sup> While Anslinger did have support from other senior sources such as Frank Berry, Assistant Defence Secretary in the government, Berry also acknowledged that the only evidence for he had seen came from Anslinger, and that he had not seen other credible evidence for the political use of opium by the Chinese. Citing the statements of other CND diplomats, Chinese based journalist Jack O' Kearney wrote that while China was required to take some of the blame for production, it did not support the trade, nor did it have political goals in mind.<sup>175</sup>

I am concerned with examining the link between geonarcotic discourse and organised crime that developed during the late 1950s, rather than whether

Anslinger's assertions were true or false. The FBN reported that opium production in China was used for the explicit purposes of gaining foreign currency and weakening the American body politic. My point is to suggest is that Anslinger, like Hobson, emphasised the role of geography in his accounts of the scourge of narcotics. This was a necessary condition of narcotisation. I agree with McWilliams' statement that Anslinger recognised the media as an 'authoritative source on international relations'.<sup>176</sup>

The rise of the transnational mafia did not spell the end for geonarcotic discourse based on adversarial nations. It enhanced it. Even as Anslinger's accusations against Communist China were rebuffed by the CIA, the UN and other nations, the Sicilian Mafia, through its fecklessness, was painted as the domestic cog in the foreign dope machine. In response, domestic legislation was toughened and by 1960, newspapers were reporting that senior mobsters were looking to 'get out of the game' due to the government's aggressive prosecutorial position.<sup>177</sup>

Anslinger was replaced by Henry Giordano, an ex-pharmacist who had been a top undercover agent for the FBN. With Giordano came a more lenient approach to addicts and users, and a tougher approach on the criminal overlords.<sup>178</sup> Giordano focussed less on the origin of opium, and more on the criminals involved in trafficking it. By the mid-1960s, the weaponisation thesis (in its traditional form of being instigated by a foreign nation), had lost much of its credibility due to China's impending entry to the United Nations. There were also accusations of CIA complicity in the drug traffic in South East Asia and leaks of the MK-Ultra experiments. After these events, it was the US government that had to defend against charges of weaponising narcotics.

Regardless, the fear of foreign narcotics was entrenched in US society by 1960. Lohman et al., list a set of problems that contribute to opiophobia: 'treatment with opioids leads to addiction; that pain is necessary because it enables diagnosis; that pain is unavoidable; and that pain has negligible consequences'. Many people became suspicious of opiates and opioids, even when prescribed by professionals.<sup>179</sup> If an opiate-based medicine was adopted by a country, it underwent reinterpretation via the LoN, UN, and associated discourses. The fear of addiction by any opiate-based medicine was particularly acute in developing nations that had recently decolonised. As we have seen, the years from 1909–1961 were peppered with descriptions of opium and its alkaloids as a weapon of war. Extending further back in time brings the Opium Wars and the policy of opium monopolies, so often portrayed as tools of colonial domination, into sharper focus. As Krauker et al., suggest 'considering this sordid history, antipathy toward opioids in Asia is not surprising'.<sup>180</sup> Opiates were portrayed as instruments of domination and control and the tool of colonisers, or organised criminals, and communists.

More than this, geonarcotic drug discourse shaped the American diplomatic message, making it indisputable and unnegotiable at both the League and United Nations. After the Kefauver and Daniels committees, narcotics and organised crime became regular bedfellows. By 1961, the legal narcotics had been discursively severed from the illegal dope. Through press reporting, foreign dope was a weapon of the enemies of the United States, and its role as an essential painkiller and vital diplomatic tool was neglected.



This chapter has given a critical geopolitical account of the discourses of international and American drug control. It focused on the intersection between formal and popular geopolitics. This is useful insofar as it points to the wider influences upon the 'grand old men of drug diplomacy', as described by President of the PCOB, Herbert May. We cannot tell this history through these men alone. We must include the roles of fringe figures such as Elizabeth Washburn-Wright, Richmond Hobson, and Richard Deverall. They did much to flesh out the various iterations of foreign drug flows in the US Press. But more than this, their actions were influential on diplomatic and political proceedings. Geonarcotics territorialised the American towards a more punitive configuration and the international assemblage towards control at the source. Well-defined geopolitical subjectivities were forged in the American press. National drug subjectivities were coded as producers of raw opium, manufacturers of synthetic opiates and opioids, and victim nations.

Even though this discourse failed to completely persuade foreign diplomats, it highlights the problems of a traditional analysis of drug diplomacy that focuses only on the international sphere. American geonarcotic discourse propagated a scalar understanding of the problem of drug control. The international system had the responsibility to solve a problem outside of American borders. This does not mean that American consumers were not punished; they certainly were. Rather, geonarcotic discourse posits consumers as the least important part of a supply chain: weak, unpatriotic, and unable to resist a foreign supply of narcotics. Geonarcotic discourse was, however, hierarchical. It persuaded the League and UN that supply was

control was the most effective method of drug control with demand reduction remaining in the purview of national and local authorities.

Pembleton's study of the FBN's role in cultural management concludes that 'the FBN frequently portrayed narcotics as so dangerous it was as if they possessed human agency all on their own'.<sup>181</sup> Pembleton does not believe narcotics have human agency, but what agency do they possess? While this chapter distributes agency among a broader range of human actors who connected with the international drug assemblage, it does not go far enough. There is no discussion of how 'decision makers are nudged and pushed in various directions by the affects circulating through the diplomatic system'.<sup>182</sup> What follows in the two final empirical chapters is a discussion of the narcotics themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Pembleton, M. R. (2015). 'The Voice of the Bureau: How Frederic Sondern and the Bureau of Narcotics Crafted a Drug War and Shaped Popular Understanding of Drugs, Addiction, and Organized Crime in the 1950s'.

<sup>2</sup> Mugridge, I. (1995). *View from Xanadu: William Randolph Hearst and United States Foreign Policy*. McGill-Queen's Press, Kingston.

<sup>3</sup> Dikötter, F., Laamann, L., & Xun, Z. (2002). Narcotic Culture. A Social History of Drug Consumption in China. *British Journal of Criminology*, 42(2), 317-336.

<sup>4</sup> Malleck, D. (2015). 'When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws'.

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<sup>6</sup> Shame of the American People Lies in Increasing Opium Consumption', *The Oregon Daily Journal*, March 12th 1911, Newspaper Division, Library of Congress Collections.

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad, D.L. (2000). 'Opium smoking, anti-Chinese attitudes, and the American medical community, 1850-1890'.

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<sup>9</sup> Kneale, J. & French, S. (2015). 'Moderate drinking before the unit: Medicine and life assurance in Britain and the US c.1860-1930.'

<sup>10</sup> 'The Final Battle to Dethrone King Opium', *The Charlotte Daily Observer*, Oct 20<sup>th</sup> 1913, Newspaper Division, Library of Congress Collections.

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<sup>12</sup> Editorial of the Day, *Chicago Tribune*, 17<sup>th</sup> June 1923.

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- <sup>18</sup> Erickson, M. (1920) 'Sparks from the Anvil' in 'Temperance Torchlights', Wipf and Stock, Oregon. p.110.
- <sup>19</sup> Scheltema, J.F. (1907). The Opium Trade in the Dutch East Indies. I. *American Journal of Sociology* 13(1): 79–112.
- <sup>20</sup> Malleck, D. (2007). An innovation from across the line: The American drinker and liquor regulation in two Ontario border communities, 1927-1944. *Journal of Canadian studies*, 41(1), 151-171.
- <sup>21</sup> 'British Opium Policy is a Menace to the World', *Washington Times*, August 20<sup>th</sup> 1922, Newspaper Division, Library of Congress Collections.
- <sup>22</sup> 'US Becoming a Nation of Drug Addicts', *Pittsburgh Sunday Post*, Feb 25<sup>th</sup> 1923.
- <sup>23</sup> US Becoming a Nation of Drug Addicts' p.24.
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- <sup>26</sup> Davenport-Hines, R. (2003). *The pursuit of oblivion: A global history of narcotics*. WW Norton & Company, NY p.22.
- <sup>27</sup> 'Hobson's Great New Crusade', *The Palm Beach Post*, January 9<sup>th</sup> 1925.
- <sup>28</sup> Daniels, R. (1962). *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California, and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion*. University of California Press, CA.
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- <sup>41</sup> 'Summary of Reply Communicated by the WNDa and its Affiliated Organisations', September 1<sup>st</sup> 1936, C.C1628(a), Richmond P Hobson Collections, Folder 2, Box 63: Library of Congress Collections.
- <sup>42</sup> 'Summary of Reply Communicated by the WNDa and its Affiliated Organisations', (Annex 1), League of Nations, September 1<sup>st</sup> 1936, Box 63, File 11 of The Papers of Richmond P. Hobson, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress Collections.

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- <sup>43</sup>See discussion in the Hearst newspaper *New York American*, Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 1925 p.24, Library of Congress Collections. Also see the *Fitchburg Sentential*, Jan 6<sup>th</sup> 1925; *The Allentown Morning Call*, Feb 7<sup>th</sup> 1925.
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- <sup>51</sup> McConnell, F. & Dittmer, J. (2018). Liminality and the diplomacy of the British Overseas Territories: An assemblage approach. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 36(1): 139–158.
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- <sup>55</sup> Renborg, B. (1964) ‘The Grand Old Men of the League of Nations, Bulletin on Narcotics, 1, 1, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1964-01-01\\_4\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1964-01-01_4_page002.html).
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- <sup>60</sup> ‘Keeps Keen Eye’, 1930, p.13.
- <sup>61</sup> Blanco to Anslinger, March 30<sup>th</sup> 1939, NARA, RG 170, Blanco Files, Box 14.
- <sup>62</sup> See McWilliams, J.C. (1989). ‘Unsung Partner against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962; Marshall, J. (2013). ‘Cooking the Books: The Federal Bureau of Narcotics, the China Lobby and Cold War Propaganda, 1950-1962’.
- <sup>63</sup> Kinder, D.C. (1986). Stable Force in a Storm: Harry J. Anslinger and United States Narcotic Foreign Policy, 1930-1962. *The Journal of American History* 72(4): p.913.
- <sup>64</sup> See Nasaw, D. (2000). ‘*The Chief: The Life of William Randolph Hearst*’, Mariner Books, NY for a sceptical account of the role of the wood pulp industry.
- <sup>65</sup> Taylor, A.H. (1969). ‘American diplomacy and the narcotics traffic, 1900-1939: A study in international humanitarian reform’. p.52.
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- <sup>68</sup> Daniels, R. (1962) ‘The politics of prejudice: the anti-Japanese movement in California, and the struggle for Japanese exclusion’.
- <sup>69</sup> Still a Menace, *The Washington Herald*, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1934, Historical Collections and Labour Archives: Box 1, File 12, The Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives.

- <sup>70</sup> Stamp it out, *The Washington Herald*, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1934, Historical Collections and Labour Archives: Box 1, File 12, The Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives.
- <sup>71</sup> Stamp it out, *The Washington Herald*, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1934
- <sup>72</sup> Still Pouring in, *The Washington Herald*, June 18<sup>th</sup> 1934 Historical Collections and Labour Archives: Box 1, File 12, The Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives.
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- <sup>76</sup> Malleck, D. (2015). 'When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws'.
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- <sup>83</sup> 'Japan Charged with Narcotic Invasion', June 30<sup>th</sup> 1938, *Muncie Evening Press*.
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- <sup>87</sup> Collins, J. (2015). 'Regulations and prohibitions: Anglo-American relations and international drug control, 1939-1964'.
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- <sup>92</sup> A list of the of organisations the book was sent to can be found in 'Japan and the Opium Menace' File 23, Box 7, Chinese/Canadian Research Project, University of British Columbia University Archives.
- <sup>93</sup> Japan and the Opium Menace (note 52), p.xii
- <sup>94</sup> Bewley-Taylor, D.R. (2002). *United States and International Drug Control, 1909-1997*. A&C Black, London p.48.
- <sup>95</sup> McWilliams, J.C. (1989). 'Unsung Partner against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962'.
- <sup>96</sup> FBN. (1944). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs', Library of Congress Collections. p.1.
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- <sup>99</sup> 'Baltimore Woman Attacks Opium Monopoly in India', April 16<sup>th</sup> 1922, *Baltimore Sun*.
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<sup>105</sup> ‘An interview with the Hon. Harry J. Anslinger United States Commissioner of Narcotics’, *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1954 1, 1 [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1954-01-01\\_1\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1954-01-01_1_page002.html).

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<sup>112</sup> ‘Inside Labour’ 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1951, *The Daily Times, Maryland*; ‘Dope Trade Must Be Attacked At All Levels’, July 5<sup>th</sup> 1951, *Salt Lake Tribune*; ‘Suspected Narcotics King Seized by Federal Agents’, August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1951, *Oakland Tribune*, Newspaper Division, Library of Congress Collections.

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<sup>118</sup> McWilliams, J.C. (1989). ‘Unsung Partner against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962: p.236

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<sup>125</sup> FBN (1952). ‘Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs’ Library of Congress Collections.

<sup>126</sup> FBN (1952). ‘Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs’ p.19.

<sup>127</sup> Marshall refers to a specific CND report which is ‘Review of the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs Throughout the World As Reported Between April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1951 and March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1952,’ submitted by Mr. H. J. Anslinger to the CND, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 1952. Also see the draft text, in ‘Communist China, 1952-1954 file’, NARA, RG 170, Files of the Bureau of Narcotic and Dangerous Drugs, U.N. Documents Relating to Communist China file, Box 153.

<sup>128</sup> ‘Opium Production Throughout the World’, 1949.

<sup>129</sup> Messac, L. (2016). ‘No Opiates for the Masses: Untreated Pain, International Narcotics Control, and the Bureaucratic Production of Ignorance’ p.118.

- <sup>130</sup> 'Statement to the 14<sup>th</sup> CND', The Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 11.
- <sup>131</sup> 'House Told Red China Tried to Trade Opium,' August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1951, *New York Times*.
- <sup>132</sup> Rusk, D. 'Headway Seen for Control of Teen Age Narcotics Users', May 20<sup>th</sup> 1951, *New York Times*, Library of Congress Collections; Zeltner, E. 'The Right Dope on Narcotic Cure' *Sunday Mirror*, August 4<sup>th</sup> 1952; The Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 5 File 6; Glaser, V. 'Iron Curtain No Barrier in Fight to End Evil of Narcotics Trade' *The Star*, Harry Anslinger files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 5, File 6.
- <sup>133</sup> 'Chinese Reds Selling Opium', March 27<sup>th</sup> 1956, *Sarasota Herald Tribune*.
- <sup>134</sup> 'Probe Would Bare Dope Plot', December 5<sup>th</sup> 1954, *Palladium*, Indiana.
- <sup>135</sup> Jenkins, P. (1992). Narcotics trafficking and the American mafia: The myth of internal prohibition. *Crime, Law and Social Change* 18(3): p.303.
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- <sup>137</sup> Accounts from Anslinger's official biographer are McWilliams, J.C. (1989). 'Unsung Partner against Crime: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962'; McWilliams, J.C. (1991). Covert Connections: The FBN, the OSS, and the CIA. *Historian* 53(4): 657-678. A less positive account is Kinder, D.C. (1981). 'Bureaucratic Cold Warrior: Harry J. Anslinger and Illicit Narcotics Traffic'.
- <sup>138</sup> 'Federal Agents Smash Big Dope Ring: Arrest 17', *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, Nov 21<sup>st</sup> 1937, Library of Congress Collections.
- <sup>139</sup> 'Cuba to Deport Luciano. Due to Sail Next Month' *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 28<sup>th</sup> 1947, Library of Congress Collections; Rovner, E.S. (2008). *The Cuban connection: Drug trafficking, smuggling, and gambling in Cuba from the 1920s to the Revolution*. University of North Carolina Press, NC.
- <sup>140</sup> Valentine, D. (2004). *The strength of the wolf: the secret history of America's war on drugs*. Verso, London
- <sup>141</sup> Jenkins, P. (1992). Narcotics trafficking and the American mafia: The myth of internal prohibition. *Crime, Law and Social Change* 18(3): 303-318.
- <sup>142</sup> Kinder, D.C. (1981). 'Bureaucratic Cold Warrior: Harry J. Anslinger and Illicit Narcotics Traffic'.
- <sup>143</sup> Bewley-Taylor, D.R. (2002). United States and International Drug Control p.111.
- <sup>144</sup> 'House Approves Stiffer Narcotics Traffic Penalties', July 17<sup>th</sup> 1951, *St Louis Dispatch*.
- <sup>145</sup> Mowery, E. 'Red China Spreads Dope for Sabotage Dollars, November 29<sup>th</sup> 1953, *Washington News*, Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 5, File 6.
- <sup>146</sup> Mowery, E. 'Red China Spreads Dope for Sabotage Dollars, November 29<sup>th</sup> 1953,
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- <sup>148</sup> For a biography of Deverall please see <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/findingaid/deverall.cfm>
- <sup>149</sup> Deverall, R.L.-G. (1954b). 'Red China's Dirty Drug War: The Story of the Opium, Heroin, Morphine and Philopon Traffic'. p.22.
- <sup>150</sup> Mowery, E. 'Smuggled Heroin Pours Into Country' N.D, Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 5, File 6.
- <sup>151</sup> Example articles include as 'U.S. Charges China Spurs Drug Habit', May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1954, *New York Times*; 'Traffic in Narcotics is Flourishing', May 11, 1952, *New York Times*; "Narcotic Charge Scored," May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1952, *New York Times*, Library of Congress Collections, Newspaper Division.
- <sup>152</sup> Mowery, E. 'Thin Line of Customs Squads Battle Dope Smugglers' Tricks', August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1951, *Ironwood Daily Globe*, Library of Congress Collections, Newspaper Division.
- <sup>153</sup> 'Investigations: Dope from Red China,' *Time*, March 21<sup>st</sup> 1955, Library of Congress Collections but can also be accessed at <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,936587,00.html>; 'China Called Dope Vending Dragon on East', Jan 31<sup>st</sup> 1962, *The Chicago Tribune*.
- <sup>154</sup> Radio Broadcast, KYA, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1951, Thaine Michelson, Judge of the Superior Court, City and County of San Francisco, Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 5, File 6.
- <sup>155</sup> By 1958, the CND was reporting that 'much of the traffic in diacetylmorphine [heroin] continued to be directed towards North America, the target of much of the more highly organized international illicit traffic'. 'The thirteenth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the twenty-sixth session of the Economic and Social Council', cited in the *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1958, 4, 43-48.
- <sup>156</sup> 'The Ninth Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Eighteenth Session of the Economic and Social Council' cited in *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1954 4, 71-74, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1954-01-01\\_3\\_page007.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1954-01-01_3_page007.html)

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- <sup>157</sup> 'Standing in the Shadows, The Legacy of Harry J. Anslinger', DEA Museum Lecture Series, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2014 p.14.
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- <sup>159</sup> 'Remarks of Anslinger', 17th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, May 8 - June 1, 1962, Harry Anslinger Files, Pennsylvania State Archives, Box 1 File 8.
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- <sup>166</sup> 'Appalachian Rally Tied to Dope, House Told', Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> 1958, *The Star Gazette*, NY.
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- <sup>168</sup> Cocaine, Cuba and Castro', September 11<sup>th</sup> 1966, *Chicago Tribune*, p.54.
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## Materiality and Stockpiling

Having established how geonarcotics subjectivised countries towards specific identities in the previous chapter, I delve into the materiality of narcotics and their role in the international drug assemblage. I show how countries and the international system responded to material changes in narcotics and their production. Specifically, I am interested in two things. First, the shift in consumption from opium, to opiates, and finally, to opioids. Second, the procurement of medicinal narcotics (through stockpiling) and their diplomatic uses. I focus on the stockpiling of morphine and opium before, during, and after the Second World War. The FBN purchased massive quantities of the world's narcotic painkillers. Here, the US developed its geopolitical subjectivity and became the geonarcotic middleman who traded in diplomatic opium.

In most scholarly histories, the different types of opium are not discussed beyond their functional value. In the first decade of the twentieth-century, the narcotics use was geographically striated. Raw opium was produced in India, Persia, China, some Eastern European states, and Turkey. Much of this was treated and turned into prepared opium (containing about 8% morphine) which was then smoked, predominantly in China, but also in the Western United States. South Asia had large opium smoking and opium eating populations, and much of its poppy crop was consumed domestically or in nearby countries. In India, smoking opium was known as *chandu*, and exported widely across Asia, with the British export of Indian opium to China being the most problematic. In some parts of India and the UK, opium was

also eaten, as made famous by de Quincey's *Confessions of an Opium Eater*.<sup>1</sup> From 1880 to 1908, imports of opium into China fell to 3000 from 6500 metric tons. Domestic production filled that vacuum. 584,000 piculs (or 3500 metric tons) were cultivated in 1906.<sup>2</sup> Prior to the first international meeting of drug diplomats at Shanghai in 1909, Britain and China were already concerned with the scale of the trade. They agreed to a bilateral deal of 10% reduction in the trade from India over ten years from 1900-1910 (known as the 10-year agreements).

Raw opium was also shipped to manufacturing nations who converted it into pure morphine, heroin, and codeine for medicinal uses. This was then consumed domestically or sold back to other nations. The colonial empires of Great Britain, France and the Dutch enjoyed a lucrative trade with their Far Eastern territories in the exchange of spices, tea and opium. The imperial nations engaged in minimal manufacturing and almost no raw production but imported both raw drugs and opiates in often large amounts for their own legally untrammelled usage. Most of the raw opium exported to the West went to manufacturing nations. Germany and certain USSR states such as Bulgaria, and the Austro-Hungarian empire used high-purity opium to make derivatives. These nations boasted well-established chemical industries that created semi-synthetic opiates from raw opium. In the early years, yields from raw crops were initially low due to inefficient cultivation techniques, and pharmaceutical industries used vast quantities of opium and coca leaf to synthesise morphine sulphate, diacetylmorphine (heroin), and cocaine hydrochloride.

At the turn of the century, the United States occupied a unique geopolitical position. It consumed enormous amounts of cocaine and narcotics but had minimal investment in the opium trade compared to the colonial powers.<sup>3</sup> Its appetite for narcotics had grown out of domestic conflict. Morphine sulphide had been instrumental during the Civil War, thanks to the newly invented hypodermic syringe that provided quick pain relief vital to both sides.<sup>4</sup> Opium was imported as a foodstuff and sold unproblematically across the country. Many products, including paregoric (camphorated opium tincture) and laudanum (solution of alcohol and opium), were sold as powerful tonics to almost every ailment, available as freely as foodstuffs without prescription. The first efforts at American drug control were predicated upon information. In 1840, opium was listed as a chemical rather than a foodstuff on commodity import manifestos.<sup>5</sup> Prior to this, many chemists and apothecaries had kept their ingredients secret. Information about ingredients gave consumers more knowledge of a product. Providing consumers with information, however, does not always lead to more informed choices. Nor does a standardised dosage lead to a consistent and predictable result. After the American Civil War, many soldiers who had been given morphine for their injuries started abusing it, taking the habit back into civilian life. Accompanying the growth of consumer information was the nascent pharmaceutical industry. German patents on coal-based tar medicines dominated the European and American markets until the First World War, but American chemists had been creating alkaloids, most importantly morphine, quinine, and strychnine since the mid-1830s. Recall that in 1903, the APhA had proposed selling opium and cocaine with a prescription. When

the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act was passed it was not a prohibitive measure, but a labelling measure. It was also less strict than the Canadian Proprietary or Patent Medicine Act of 1908, since this forbade remedies containing cocaine. The 1906 Act's main purpose was distinguishing medical practice from quackery. To do so, the purity and consistency of medicines were tested by biological assays, and the science of dosing was developed by famous chemists such as Eli Lilly and William Upjohn. They created steady-release medicines that did much to regularise how often patients needed to take narcotics.

While Barry's interpretation of informed materials applies to the science of contemporary drug discovery (or, as he calls it, invention), I apply it to historical narcotics. The chemistry and pharmacology of opium and opiates were central to debates at the 1909 Opium Commission. To understand why the chemistry of the poppy mattered, we must first examine how opium was extracted from the poppy crop. Traditionally, the buds of *papaver somniferum*, or opium poppies, were lanced (scored with a knife). Gum would drip from inside the bud and dry on the outside of the bud. This dried gum would be scraped off the buds and compacted into small cakes of 1-4 pounds, which were then left to dry before being sold as raw opium. It was morphine, along with other naturally occurring alkaloids (papaverine, codeine, papaverine, narcotine and thebaine) in opium, that were valuable. Opium alkaloidal content ranged from 10-20%, depending on the region and quality of the harvest.<sup>6</sup> Geographical variance also led to changes in the quality of the opium due to differences in climate and soil. The method of cultivation impacted the eventual product. Here, the way a poppy was lanced

and the climate within which it was grown were vital to how it was treated, discussed and subsequently used. If opium was lanced more than once, the morphine content would be lower. This lower quality opium would be mixed with tobacco for smoking or turned into morphine base for synthesis into morphine hydrochloride or other opiates.

As Barry notes, this knowledge was part of the informed materials of narcotics. There was no such thing as a pure, distinct molecule of opium. In the early 1900s, this geography of production mattered. A crude distinction was made by geographical origin. If raw opium was sourced from India or China, it tended to have a low proportion of morphine (known as white opium) and was turned into smoking opium (for domestic consumption in China) or eating opium (for domestic consumption and smoking in India). Black opium came from Turkey, and was chiefly exported to manufacturing nations. The division between these two opiums had been noted as early as 1748, when Monsieur Pomet, chief druggist to Louis 14<sup>th</sup> of France, wrote ‘there are two kinds of it [opium] the Thebain [black] and Indian [white]; but they are both produced by the same species of poppy. The Indians prefer the Bengal [white] Opium to the Thebain, but we always account the Thebain better than the Indian’.<sup>7</sup>

American hostility towards white opium and its trade (administered by imperial powers) grew much quicker than black opium. This is evident from the Smoking Opium Exclusion Acts of 1909. The US focus at the Opium Commission was on the export and smuggling of white opium from its source regions, namely China and India.

At the 1909 Opium Commission, both the British and Americans tried to multiply the categories of narcotics that existed. As mentioned in chapter one, colonial powers did not like the demands laid out by Dr Hamilton-Wright for a clear division between medical and recreational uses of opium.<sup>8</sup> The British proposed a different definition of legitimate use that included the 'quasi-legitimate' practices of opium smoking and eating. Their point wasn't altogether inaccurate: just as it had in the US, Indians had long used opium in preparations, tinctures, and remedies for medical purposes. They stressed that making these activities illegal would push the opium trade away from regulated government control towards smugglers. The British and other producing nations also raised the issue of morphine and heroin abuse in the Far East, a strategy that deflected attention towards Germany and Austria-Hungary. Both had well-established manufacturing industries for opiates. They, in turn, protested any changes that would damage their lucrative trade in important painkillers. Negotiations faltered on the question of legitimate use, which quickly became shorthand for much broader debates regarding sovereignty, colonial influence, and the type of narcotic under question. This first meeting of nations was less concerned with controlling drugs and more concerned with establishing what constituted an illicit drug or drug use. The Commission eventually agreed that the practice of opium smoking should be reduced.

When the nations met again in 1912 at the Opium Convention, they made headway on defining their substances in-depth, thus enriching the informational environment of narcotics. Raw opium was defined as the 'spontaneous coagulated juice obtained from the capsules of the *papaver*

*somniferum*'.<sup>9</sup> Prepared opium was defined as 'the product of raw opium, obtained by a series of special fermentations, especially by dissolving, roasting... designed to transform it into an extract suitable for consumption'.<sup>10</sup> Finally, and most importantly, was the definition of 'medicinal opium', which was 'raw opium heated to 60 degrees centigrade and contains not less than 10% of morphine, whether it be powdered, or granulated or mixed with indifferent materials'.<sup>11</sup> The chemical space of opium was defined, albeit within a spectrum. While chemically similar, the distance between prepared opium and medicinal opium was geopolitically significant. The foundations of a legal market for medicinal narcotics was developed with an appreciation that opium was multiple.

While the international assemblage was partially territorialised by 1912 Convention definitions of narcotics, one setback came from Russia, who rejected any form of opium production control. Indeed, their argument was predicated on an even broader material basis. They cultivated poppies not just for narcotics, but for the oil and seeds for culinary markets. This agricultural argument, based on the many properties of opium, would rear its head again in the US (discussed in the next chapter). Nations and farmers would use the multiple materialities of opium *beyond* medicine (its use as a foodstuff) to undermine American attempts to control the production of poppies in 1942.

Most importantly, the formal, legal division between the raw, prepared, and medicinal opium created by the 1912 Convention was not supplemented with any stipulation on the legitimacy of use. What happened to these substances after export was a domestic concern for the recipient nation. This meant calls

to reduce the production of morphine and heroin were defeated, and the issue of opium poppy production was ignored. Furthermore, the Convention would not come into force unless all 34 nations agreed to ratify. As Berridge suggests, control was 'an all or nothing affair'.<sup>12</sup> A nation was still free to produce as many narcotics as it wished, and refrain from enacting legislation that limited their consumption.

### The Harrison Narcotics Act

As mentioned in chapter one, the Harrison Act made the federal government the arbiter of defining drugs. The Act successfully divided narcotics into medicinal and recreational categories. Many of the medicines and drugs were imported from manufacturing nations, making the United States dependent upon the regular and regulated flow of legal narcotics. Since the Harrison Act was primarily a tax, it was run by the Treasury's Narcotic Division, the precursor to the Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Much of the initial policing was done by the pen rather than the baton, as accountants and bureaucrats patrolled those who sold narcotics. Drug dispensers were required to pay a nominal fee of \$1 for certification and worked within some ambiguous but discernible limits upon how much opium they could prescribe.<sup>13</sup> The Act provided medical professionals with authority to practice and dispense their trade but this freedom was dependent on the type of substance being used. Pharmacists had little use for raw opium or opium prepared for smoking. Their trade was in tinctures and opiates.

As well as defining the difference between licit and illicit uses, the Harrison Act was important for pharmaceutical companies. Limon suggests that it allowed them to focus on the positive aspects of drug control (research and



profiteering) where the government focused on the negative aspects of drug control (policing and compliance).<sup>14</sup> While she is right to point to these dimensions, she misses the productive linkages between the government and pharmaceutical companies. To understand how both groups benefitted from the other, we must focus on the substances themselves.

So far, we have seen that opium was divided into two broad chemical-geographical types (black and white opium), and that the US goal of banning certain flows of white opium resonated with the professionalisation of medicine. Many countries supported a healthy flow of medical opiates sourced from black opium, particularly manufacturing nations such as Germany and the Austro-Hungarian empire. Shortages during the War, however, meant both the US government and pharmaceutical industry would explore the value of narcotics more broadly. World War One would precipitate changes in drug control that would benefit both the government and the pharmaceutical industry.

### World War One: chemical combat and opioid shortages

World War One was a war of chemical experimentation. Mustard gas, new explosives, and chlorine gas clouds dramatically altered battlefield tactics.<sup>15</sup> With over twenty million casualties, global conflict alerted all nations to the problem of drug shortages. Much like the American Civil War before it, morphine was indispensable on the battlefield. When intravenously injected with scopolamine, it was known as the 'twilight sleep'.<sup>16</sup> Aside from amputations and pain relief, there are documented cases of doctors administering morphine for shell shock, diarrhoea, and dysentery.<sup>17</sup> Morphine, more than any other substance, became the drug of war.

During the War, the United States experienced shortages of morphine. Turkish opium and German morphine was cut off from the US and Europe, and the prices for raw opium began to rise. Pharmaceutical company Merck reported changes in prices for opium and morphine sulphate (\$16.50 and \$7.50 per ounce respectively) from April 1916 to January 1917 to \$18.75 and \$9.30 per ounce. By April 1917, Merck had no morphine left to sell.<sup>18</sup> This made the Indian (white opium) profitable. India was one of the few remaining places the US could source opium for morphine manufacture.

The value of narcotics was not lost on Harry Anslinger. At the time of the First World War, Anslinger was employed in the Efficiency Board of the Ordnance Division of the War Department, a position which remains under-discussed regarding its influence on his tenure as Commissioner. After the war, Washington created programmes to secure analgesic stockpiles by stimulating the private sector's output of opiates. The US stopped short of producing their own opium crops *en masse*. This would have undermined the narcotic exceptionalism the US had advocated at the 1912 Opium Convention. The Eli Lilly pharmaceutical company ramped up morphine production with tight, regular, and intensely supervised production lines to supplement the shortfall.<sup>19</sup> Around the world, pharmaceutical companies turned over massive profits and were supported by their respective governments.

Outside of the US, many countries scrambled to better account for the dwindling chests of legal opium and morphine entering and leaving their shores. In the UK, regulation 40B of the Defence of the Realm Act of 1918 gave the Home Office complete control over drug policy, a principle that

remains to this day.<sup>20</sup> The UK introduced import and export certificates to better track shipments, as much of its exported morphine was being diverted into China via Japan. In turn, Japan ramped up its production in efforts to become self-sufficient and developed a formidable pharmaceutical industry.<sup>21</sup> It also provided subsidies to farmers and continued to rely on its opium monopoly in Formosa, a move popularised by Japanese Home Minister Gotō Shinpei.<sup>22</sup> Rather than reducing the amount of opium and morphine, the world increased its output.

It makes no sense to think of the international drug control solely through the lens of prohibition at this point in history. Nations were far more concerned with provision, and, by extension, the limiting of precious supplies into the black-market by prohibiting specific types of non-medical use. The issue of 'ambivalent materiality' is important here. An international legislative framework did not yet exist to account for narcotics in their many forms, and national governments had decided they should retain the power to regulate opiates. The type of narcotic, the morphine content, the seller, and wider geopolitical context all influenced whether a narcotic was deemed licit or legal. While prepared opium for smoking was banned from American shores, the production of manufactured morphine and heroin was encouraged.

The next round of international negotiations would be met with a sober evaluation of the emerging complexity of new substances, and a massive upsurge in drug abuse following the end of World War One.

## Definitions and quantities at the 1925 Conventions

If the 1912 Convention defined narcotics, the 1925 Conventions tried to quantify them. Specifically, delegates argued over how much of the world's opium and morphine could be defined as legitimate. The problem was definitional. You could not decide how much of the world's supply was legitimate until you were certain which drugs should be counted as legitimate. To do that, the League decided to further expand the definitions of what constituted legitimate and illegitimate drug use. The 1925 Conference's work had been split into subcommittees dealing with various aspects of the world drug problem. The work of subcommittee F is of interest. It focused on the definitional aspects of the drug question: namely, which substances should be considered problematic and why.<sup>23</sup> British delegate John Campbell was a member of subcommittee F that provided the OAC with critical definitions and technical information about the world drug problem. At the 1925 conventions, the committee was tasked with defining what constituted drug abuse, and how it could be prevented. The definitions it produced would be used to underpin any future system of regulation. Two American proposals were rejected. The first was the suggestion that, opium and coca leaf derivatives be subject to the same control as morphine and cocaine and that the manufacture of heroin be prohibited (derivatives were drugs that had other ingredients mixed with an opium-based alkaloid such as morphine, thebaine or most commonly, codeine). Campbell refused to include quasi-medical uses that were prominent in Asia, as they were long established cultural behaviours. This resulted in the League estimating a figure for the world's legitimate use of opium that was much larger than American

delegates would have liked.<sup>24</sup> Although Blue, Brent, and Porter of the American delegation eventually succeeded in having the definition changed, they eventually withdrew from the proceedings altogether.

The second proposal was that the 'morphine and cocaine content of preparations dispensed without medical prescription [should] be reduced to  $\frac{1}{4}$  grain to the ounce'.<sup>25</sup> By reducing the strength of over-the-counter sales, the US would see more substances subject to prescription. This was also rejected by the committee. They were protecting manufacturing and producing nations by rejecting a proposal that would require medical preparations with higher concentrations to require a prescription. The decision to not ban heroin, instead allowing nations to adopt their own regulations, resonates to this day. Whereas it is entirely illegal in the US, medical heroin remains legal in many other nations. In the UK, a medical version of heroin (known as diacetylmorphine) remains an important analgesic. By rejecting these two provisions, the subcommittee was acknowledging the diversity of opiates that could be considered legitimate.

Attempts to give the League authority to declare substances dangerous, and thus pursuant to international control, were stalled by political disputes - a decoding of the assemblage. In 1924 the Egyptian Government introduced a resolution that sought to make the determinations of the Health Committee binding upon all signatory nations. Arguments against the position were made on geopolitical grounds. Those nations protesting Egypt's proposal described it as an 'unreserved surrender of sovereign authority'. The vote lost by 17-2. <sup>26</sup> Here, national concerns trumped international goals.

This point is critical for thinking through how the definitions of narcotics territorialised international control. The definitions adopted by the League did not provide the radical shake-up that the US had wished for. If anything, it weakened drug control due to the rejections of the American and Egyptian proposals. They only referenced heroin and morphine, whereas the 1912 Convention had referenced all 'new derivatives of morphine, cocaine and their respective salts'.<sup>27</sup>

The conference ended on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1925, and passed into law on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1928. It is worth noting the conference proceedings barely mention the illicit traffic or illicit cultivation – such issues were yet to be established as threats. Instead, they emphasised the limits on the legal production in narcotics and set definitions for what constituted the legitimate trade and use. In assemblage terms, a weak degree of territorialisation was achieved, but at the cost of coherence and stricter drug control. This points to another important point that is worth restressing: diplomats were concerned with quantifying what the world needed, rather than reducing what it did not.

The 1925 Convention was weak on new substances, and this quickly showed in what would be the first of many battles against synthetic substances. By 1928, Benzoyl-morphine, an ester of morphine, highlighted the problems of leaving chemical innovation in the hands of individual nations. Because it was not a traditional derivative of opium, and because nations had jurisdiction over which substances they produced, Benzoyl-morphine was being manufactured and sold in place of traditional morphine, free from any international control. The League were compelled to introduce

a resolution making nations aware of the need to pass national legislation for Benzoyl-morphine as rapidly as possible.<sup>28</sup> The minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the OAC, held in 1928, recalled that

‘Manufacturers hastened to manufacture another narcotic which might escape the consequences of these provisions, at any rate momentarily. Thus they had adroitly taken advantage of the fact that Article 4 of the 1925 Convention related only to morphine and its salts to put on the market a product which was not a salt of morphine but a derivative of it, and which, as such, was not under control.’<sup>29</sup>

Thus, ‘the decade of the 1920's came to an end before the flood of poison was stopped in all the manufacturing countries’.<sup>30</sup>

Drawing on Alfred North Whitehead, Andrew Barry describes the molecules that make informed materials as an event or ‘historical route of actual associations’.<sup>31</sup> Benzoyl-morphine is an example of a material that became informed. The League realised it was unequipped to deal with new substances, and the informational framework to account for new narcotics did not exist. The League’s Health Committee produced a series of three resolutions that included Benzoyl-morphine and other substances (Dilaudid and other morphine esters) as dangerous substances. This process took five years, and in that time over six tons of Benzoyl-morphine had made their way into China.<sup>32</sup> The blame was mostly laid at Germany’s feet, where some 18,620 kg of drugs ‘not covered by the convention’ made their way onto the world market. It was only with 1930 that these drugs were subject to the controls of the 1925 Convention. Furthermore, it was only with the passage

of the 1931 Conventions that a workable schedule for controlling new substances was created (discussed in chapter four).

Benzoyl-morphine was not the only change that led to deterritorialisation, or radical changes in drug law. New technologies for harvesting poppy crops pushed the international assemblage towards stricter control.

#### New technologies for a new decade

The 1925 Conventions had focussed the world's attention on the global trade but rendered the issue of cultivation strictly off-limits. This was exactly where the next problem emerged. New advances in the technology of opium production were changing the geography of poppy cultivation. In 1925, a Hungarian pharmacist named János Kabay created a new method of extracting alkaloids of morphine, codeine, and thebaine directly from the capsule and stem of the dried poppy. Kabay described the process as follows.

The poppies are cut shortly after flowering. The usual method of harvesting is for the plants to be mown down and sheaved. The extracting machine is carried wherever the harvesters go, so as not to have to move the whole crop. The plants are weighed, then finely chopped and crushed. After a preliminary pressing these are fed into the extracting machine, where they are continually mixed with the extracting liquids. The extract and the juice emerging from the press are carried in barrels to the factory, where the liquid is concentrated into a soft extract and is stored in barrels. This pasty substance has a morphine content of 0.4% to 0.8%; there is no risk of deterioration,



because it contains preservatives in sufficient quantity, and it can therefore be stored without loss.<sup>33</sup>

The method removed the need to harvest the raw opium and was far more efficient than lancing the buds (scoring with a knife and collecting the sap). It became known as the poppy straw method. In 1927, Kabay set up a factory and company named Alkaloida committed to harvesting poppy crops.<sup>34</sup> The method took off. Firms could now grow the hardy poppy crop and synthesise narcotics directly from their own stocks rather than importing raw opium.<sup>35</sup>

This material change in the science of poppy cultivation remains understated in the literature. It is important due to the hope that supply control advocates placed in it and also the legitimacy it gave to European producers. With manufacturers producing and manufacturing their own raw opium, there would be fewer chances for diversion into the black-market. In Europe, the poppy was also grown as a food crop for both human and animal consumption, along with soaps, oils and varnish products.<sup>36</sup> It was hard to distinguish between poppy cultivation for narcotics and poppy cultivation for other uses. The poppy straw method changed this. It was extremely efficient when adapted on a large scale by pharmaceutical companies and was viewed as a positive step towards international regulation. The method could not be used for illegal cultivation. It required expensive machinery, masses of storage for harvested poppy straw, and extensive time commitments. It required 16 railcars of poppy capsules to create just 10 kg of morphine.<sup>37</sup> Poppy straw was 'virtually useless as a raw material for illegal opiates manufacturers. They should, therefore, be viewed quite differently from opium for control purposes'.<sup>38</sup>

Farmers who continued to grow narcotic poppies were thus deemed illegitimate. The method was implemented in European countries that had ratified the drug conventions. It allowed firms to furnish the League with clearer and more accurate data on yields, imports, and exports. Today, the poppy straw method accounts for 90% of the production of the world's legal morphine.<sup>39</sup>

Poppy straw, the newest addition to the assemblage, was not adopted universally. While it improved the situation in Eastern Europe and Turkey, it did not replace traditional cultivation methods or the trade in raw opium trade in the Far East. Raw opium was still cultivated for eating in India, and the problem of prepared opium smoking remained largely unsolved across the Far East. The 1931 Conventions made some inroads into controlling supply at the source, but strict controls for manufactured opiates shifted illicit consumption eastwards. The Far Eastern market continued to Hoover up the surplus crop. These crops were not accounted for in PCOB estimates, unlike those that had been grown for legal purposes. This unexpected consequence gave the League less control and knowledge over the scope of the illicit trade. The poppy straw method led to a change in how the international system viewed cultivation practices. Poppy straw was modern, efficient and legitimate, whereas lancing was backwards, inefficient and often used to supply the illicit traffic.

The PCOB had been calculating the world's narcotic needs through estimates and statistics on exports and imports since 1925. With poppy straw, the price of licit raw opium in the 1930s was one-quarter of what it was in the late 1920s.<sup>40</sup> Neither the 1925 or 1931 Conventions had mandated

limits on the purchase of opium for military purposes, and countries were free to source the opium without notifying the League. This was deliberate. World War One had shown that nations did not want to find themselves without a regular supplier of narcotics if they went to war.

Harry Anslinger knew hostilities had dire implications for the licit flows of analgesics, and that the German and Japanese, with their advanced pharmaceutical markets, were likely to cut off supplies. Without German and Japanese production, the supplies in the licit market would shrivel. Having learned the lessons of World War One, Anslinger made every effort to secure America's supply of licit narcotics in the build-up to conflict. Once again, provision would prove central to securing prohibition.

#### Preparations for war: diplomatic opium is stockpiled

When Harry Anslinger died in 1975, *The New York Times*, eulogised him by suggesting he believed 'all dope from marijuana to morphine, was equally dangerous'.<sup>41</sup> If that was true, he also believed all narcotics were valuable. In remarks to the International Association of Chiefs of Police in Florida in 1931, Anslinger acknowledged there were two sides to the opium narcotic problem.<sup>42</sup> One was the issue of regulation; the other was prohibition. In this section, I argue Anslinger's grasp of opium's value played both a vital role in commerce, military strategy, and diplomacy. It was just as significant as his castigation of its debilitating, criminal, and addictive capacities of foreign dope.

With the war on the horizon, the League's drug operations were threatened by the dominant German pharmaceutical market and the Nazi's disposition

towards drug control. German authorities ostensibly refused to send statistics to the League because such information was commercially sensitive and would threaten their economic markets. Worried that an uncooperative Germany threatened the whole edifice, the League agreed not to publically publish the German figures but kept them for private analysis. To placate the Nazis further, Herbert May declined the position of PCOB chairman due to his Jewish heritage.<sup>43</sup>

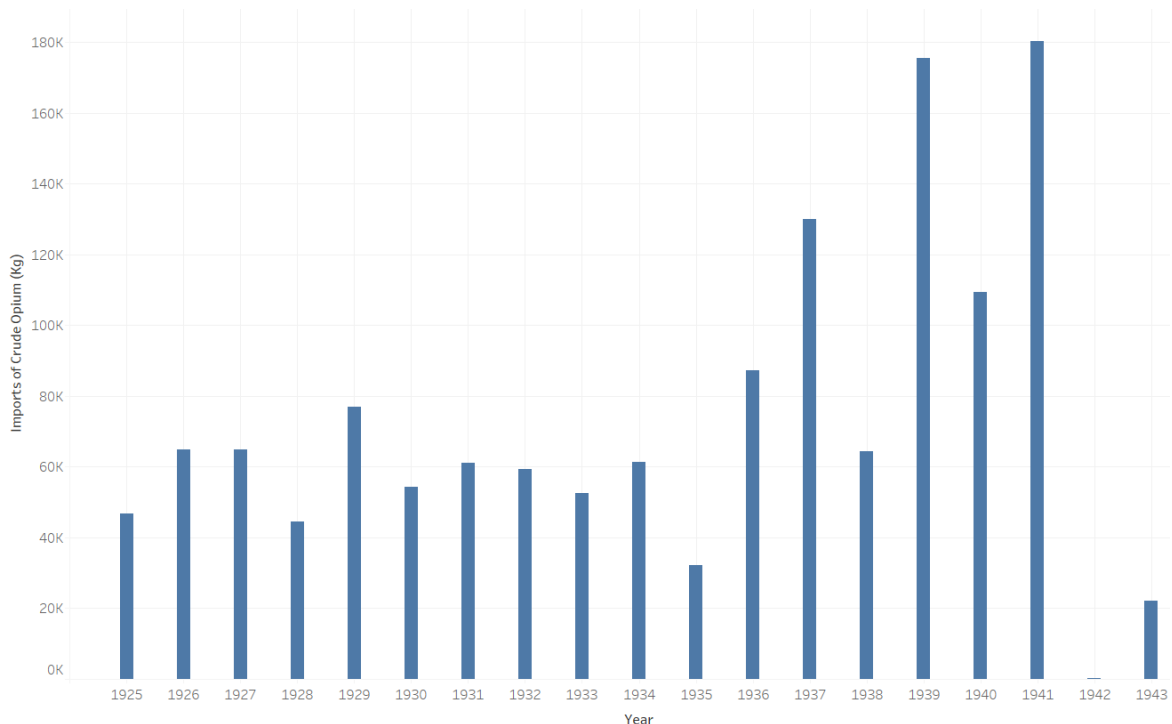
In 1936, German interest in the poppy straw method was noted by the DSB. German production of morphine was already well beyond their estimated requirements and raw opium exports to Germany were increasing. This worrying development was taken as a precursor for war; there was simply no other reason for such large annual surpluses of narcotics. The Americans did not criticise the Nazis for their narcotic policy in the 1930s. The FBN, like the League, was more worried about the impact that German non-cooperation might have on legal markets. In 1938, Anslinger and Colonel Sharman of Canada praised the German crackdown on narcotics in Austria after the *Anschluss*.<sup>44</sup>

The FBN did pay attention to the Nazi's increased orders of morphine; they decided to mimic them. In 1935, Anslinger reported to Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau that the US stockpile of narcotics, at its current holdings, would only last until 1937. On 10<sup>th</sup> October 1942, ten months after the bombing of Pearl Harbour, Directive 10 was ordered by the chairman of the War Production Board. The Commissioner was given full authority over the 'production, manufacture and distribution of narcotic drugs to authorise their allocation in the manner and to the extent deemed 'in the public interest

and to promote the national defence'.<sup>45</sup> The last phrase is perhaps the most important and misunderstood part of the directive. It is also the part which Anslinger exploited most fully. Anslinger was authorised to stockpile the 'war materials' that had been designated by Congress as vital to the war effort in 1936.<sup>46</sup>

The certainty of war meant narcotics became 'critical war materials'. The Office for Emergency Management defined these as 'materials required for essential uses in a war emergency, the procurement of which in adequate quantities, quality, and time is sufficiently uncertain for any reason to require prior provision for the supply thereof'.<sup>47</sup> They broke this category down into two subgroups: 'strategic' and 'critical'. Critical materials were defined as 'essential to the national defence, the procurement of which, while difficult, are less serious than those of strategic materials'.<sup>48</sup> Strategic materials were 'materials which were essential to the national defence for the supply of which in war dependence must be placed in whole, or in part, on sources outside the continental limits of the United States and for which strict conservation and distribution measures will be necessary'.<sup>49</sup> Strategic materials were further divided into three subgroups of A, B and C. Group A materials were those for which stockpiling was the only realistic means of supply. Group B referred to materials where stockpiling was 'practicable'.<sup>50</sup> These resources could be stimulated by production in North America. Group C referred to materials where stockpiling was not practicable, often due to deterioration or biological decay. Instead, every effort would be made to ensure adequate supplies continued to flow into the USA. Opium was placed

in group A, and Anslinger increased the procurement nationwide (Figure 11) as well as those needed for emergency stockpiles (not shown in figure 11).



**FIGURE 11: MANUFACTURER'S IMPORTS OF CRUDE OPIUM IN Kg 1925-1943. GOVERNMENT IMPORTS ARE NOT INCLUDED. 1942 IS LOW DUE TO THE CLOSURE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN FOR SHIPPING: SOURCE: FBN.<sup>51</sup>**

Anslinger initially wished to stockpile some 30,000 pounds of opium in London or Amsterdam; such was his distrust of his own agency's employees. Anslinger knew the surplus opium would not need to be in the United States to supply troops; it just needed to belong to the US, and be easy to transfer within Europe.

It is worth thinking about the market, or what Andrew Barry calls the 'calculus of the market' with reference to stockpiling opium.<sup>52</sup> Information and projections about markets are not neutral information. They can influence a market's trajectory. Anslinger knew that the FBN's actions could shape the global opium market. The FBN decided to secure these supplies without

raising suspicions from other countries. Using a loophole in the 1931 convention, they kept governmental imports secret; Anslinger could not afford for producing and manufacturing nations to be aware of his country's appetite for narcotics, lest they raised prices and increased production, two things that were anathema to the US approach to drug control. Furthermore, increased production would dilute the diplomatic value of the stocks bought by the FBN. McWilliams suggests that Morgenthau approved the purchases of 130,000 pounds (58 tons) of opium to be distributed among retailers and 30,000 pounds (13.6 tonnes) to be held in the vaults in Washington in 1939.<sup>53</sup> McAllister estimates that the US acquired some 600,000 pounds (272 tonnes) of opium or the equivalent of a four-year supply by 1940 (most of these were stored at Fort Knox).<sup>54</sup> Others estimate a much higher figure of 300 tons.<sup>55</sup> In 1980, the *Washington Post* reported that there were still some 60,000 pounds (27 tonnes) of narcotics across the US government vaults.

A simpler method of procurement would have been to grow opium in the United States under strict medical conditions. Anslinger discussed this with George Morlock from the State Department (Morlock had taken over from Stuart Fuller in 1938). Both agreed that Congress and the State Department could not countenance large-scale growth of the opium poppy in the US. The option was politically unpalatable. The FBN would struggle to police the production by small farmers. While the federal government dictated who could grow opium, they could not easily enforce it.<sup>56</sup> Much of the crop could find its way into America's black-market. Furthermore, it was estimated that 13,000-22,000 acres would be needed to supply the entire country along with 7,800,000 pounds of poppy seed.<sup>57</sup> Many smaller pharmaceutical companies

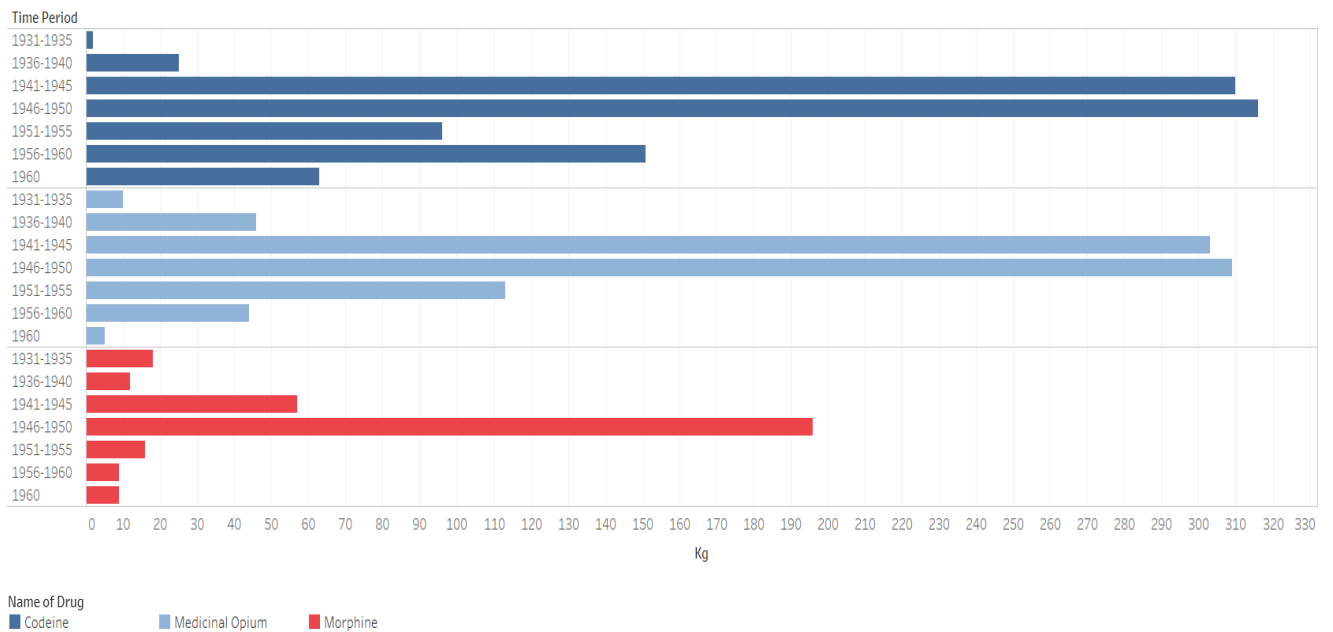
dotted across the country stood to profit from the lucrative industry. But it was small companies that presented the biggest risk for diversion (discussed further in chapter four). Plans for experimental and small-scale production by pharmaceutical companies were thus rejected due to economies of scale. It made no sense to invest in cultivation unless large-scale, secure production could be authorised. Even if domestic crops were grown in large-scale government facilities, the bright red poppy crops would be noticed by the press. More embarrassingly for Morlock and Anslinger, the amounts being grown would ultimately have to be reported to the PCOB and published for the world to see. This would be a humiliating climb down from the anti-narcotic cultivation position the US had maintained since the early 1910s. Domestic production plans (for 30,000 acres) <sup>58</sup> were developed, but kept as an ultimate last resort.

As Commissioner, Anslinger had the discretion to buy as many narcotics as the FBN saw fit. This was a more attractive solution both politically and materially. Stockpiling narcotics made sense based on the expiration of narcotics: the quality of raw opium and morphine sulphate only deteriorated slowly over a period of two years, long enough to fight the war. Furthermore, Anslinger recognised that cornering the narcotic supply in the Western Hemisphere would provide a strong negotiating position with Mexico and Canada. After cross-border alcohol smuggling during Prohibition, Anslinger knew that Mexico and Canada would need to adopt drug policy in line with that of the US. The US-Mexico border was rife with smuggling, the prospect of the United States facing an onslaught of cheap opium from the South galvanised Anslinger into action. Just as he increased the imports of raw



opium and morphine into the country, he increased the exports. Anslinger promised his Mexican and Canadian counterparts a reasonable price for narcotics if the conflict in Europe raised demand. In return, he secured promises from each country to prohibit the cultivation of poppies, relying instead on the US as its supplier.

As Gray notes, Anslinger entirely controlled the domestic market, admitting only eight companies: 'Merck, Mallinkrodt, Hoffman La Roche, New York Quinine, Parke-Davis, Sharp and Dohme, Eli-Lilly, and Squibb' to the lucrative legal drugs industry.<sup>59</sup> By granting these eight companies licenses to manufacture pharmaceuticals, Anslinger commanded their loyalty, support, and their lobbying of Congress. In return, he ensured a flourishing wartime business. As other nations ordered their opiates from the US, these companies rushed to fill the orders. The demand for narcotics in Europe, Canada and Mexico (Figure 12) kept them operating.



**FIGURE 12: AVERAGE US EXPORTS (Kg) FOR KEY NARCOTICS 1931-1960. NOTE THE SPIKE FOR ALL THREE DURING AND AFTER WORLD WAR TWO. SOURCE: FBN. <sup>60</sup>**

Anslinger was also able to monitor the pharmaceutical organisation’s sales, ensuring they travelled where he wanted. The FBN made sure Hoffman-LaRoche’s subsidiaries in South America did not supply Axis powers with narcotics. In the immediate post-war period, the FBN refused licenses to other US competitors looking to muscle in upon the lucrative pharmaceutical market, appeasing the eight companies he had already licensed. With Anslinger limiting the number of legitimate manufacturers, they could operate without fear of new companies or organisations stealing their profits or products.

We should not attribute Anslinger’s successes entirely to his persuasive skills as a diplomat (although these played an important part) but also to his ability to enrol other actors and actants in the American drug assemblage. He pushed the pharmaceutical industry towards a strictly controlled system that

contributed to the war effort. To further bolster his position, Anslinger secured legislation that would legally prevent the US from supplying needy nations with medicines unless they ratified both the 1912 and 1931 Conventions. Under this process of certification, countries had little choice but to ratify the conventions if they wanted American aid. In my view, there is no clearer example of the relation between provision and prohibition. Where countries had already ratified, Anslinger extracted further commitments in different countries that had little to do with the trade or trafficking in narcotics. He threatened to suspend painkiller exports to Mexico unless they abandoned a maintenance programme that used US narcotics to wean addicts of illegal narcotics. Mexico conceded the point after some mild protest.<sup>61</sup>

In 1943, Anslinger testified before the House Appropriations Committee that the US was supplying the Netherlands, Russia, South America, Canada, and Mexico with narcotics.<sup>62</sup> This was just one year after the Mediterranean Sea closed for shipping.<sup>63</sup> He told Congress that 'being the only manufacturing nation in this hemisphere, we are able to keep international control functioning on this side of the Atlantic'.<sup>64</sup> He received a mention in the Congressional Record for his foresight.<sup>65</sup>

Diplomatic opium played another important diplomatic role in the war years. One critical problem was transiting key league personnel to Washington who were fleeing from Europe. League personnel would need to be issued travel visas through Spain. The Franco government initially refused to provide travel visas for these employees. Anslinger threatened the withdrawal of legal narcotics to Spain, and eight staff members were eventually allowed to

transit through Spain to the US.<sup>66</sup> This skeleton crew continued to operate the League machinery. Wartime conditions meant many nations were suspicious of submitting statistics that would reveal sensitive information regarding their manufacturing capacities to the enemy (and even allies). While the temporary move to Washington was to ensure the survival of the international system, communications with Geneva were hindered. Apart from Sweden, Switzerland, and the Baltic states, all other nations communicated with the new Washington offices. This was an act of territorialisation in the international assemblage. With the League staff living and working in Washington, Anslinger could keep a watchful eye on them.

I wish to stress the distributed agency of these achievements. Without a massive supply of opium and morphine, full political support from the Secretary of the Treasury, Colonel Sharman of Canada, and a specific set of geopolitical factors (the warring producer nations and increased demand for narcotics due to injuries), the drug control assemblage might have changed dramatically. Furthermore, buying up the world's opium was fraught with virtual problems that – had they actualised – could have deterritorialised the international assemblage rapidly, with catastrophic consequences for the FBN.

#### The problems of diplomatic opium

The calculus of the opium market brought some certainty and power to the FBN, but it also created geopolitical problems about the near future. With so much narcotic stock in hand in 1941, the Commissioner wanted to reduce the rate of import. Large stockpiles were valuable and vulnerable to theft. Any changes in narcotic policy had to be considered through wider foreign

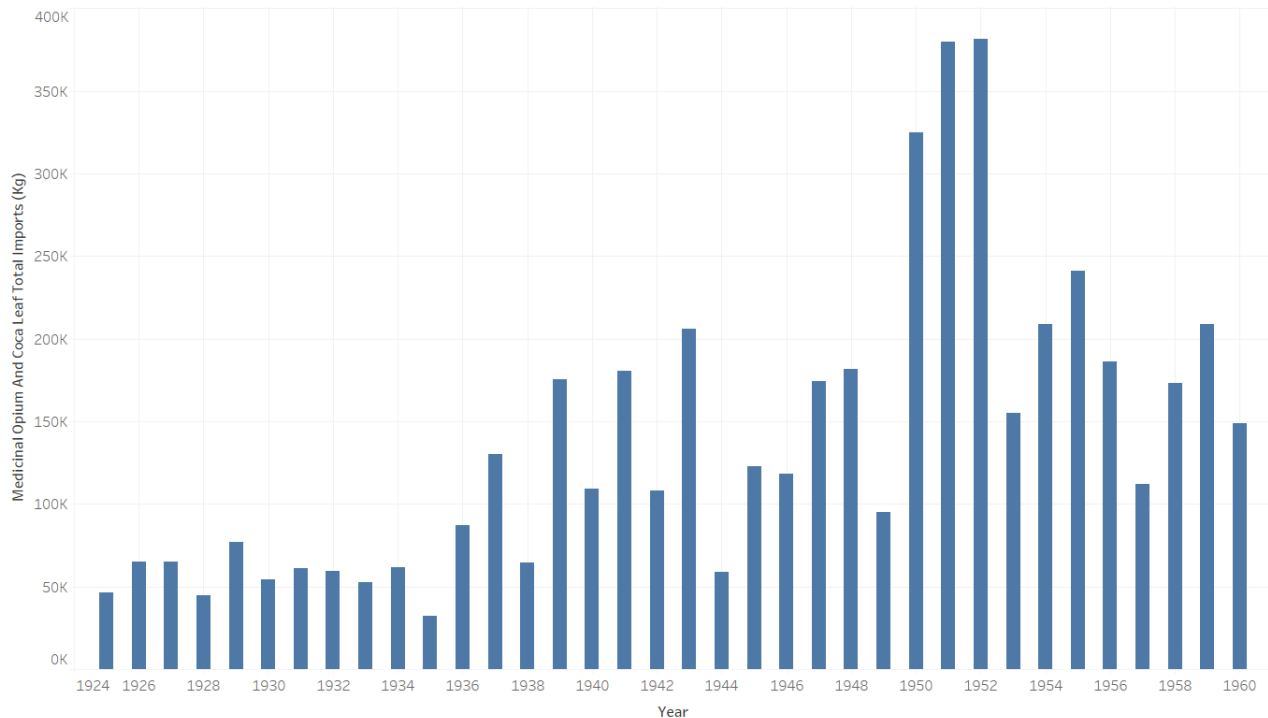
policy considerations. The State Department ordered the FBN to continue with purchases. The preclusive buying of stocks from non-combatants such as Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan aided the Allied cause by starving the Axis powers of much-needed medicaments. Germany was the exception. The Third Reich had adopted their *Opiumgesetz* (opium laws) from the Weimar Republic. These policies meant that the Germans manufactured their own analgesics and were unaffected by America's efforts to starve them of painkillers. The German occupation of Eastern Europe, particularly in Hungary where Kabay was perfecting the poppy straw method, meant their production remained unhindered. They tightly controlled their markets and borders, sealing off any potential diversion.

Germany's low addiction rate suggested their black-market was not nearly as problematic as that of the US. Nearly all morphine and heroin produced was consumed by those who needed it.<sup>67</sup> Uncertainty over the extent to which the Germans were self-sufficient was compounded by contradictory information emerging from London. The British stated that the Germans held insufficient supplies and that the Turkish opium should be pre-emptively purchased by the Americans to stop the German's buying it. Sharman and Anslinger suspected the British wanted to artificially lower the supply of narcotics in the market and create demand for their own exports. Despite these suspicions, the 'Office of Production Management, the Board of Economic Warfare, the Defence Supplies Corporation and the State Department all indicated their desire to [continue to] purchase'.<sup>68</sup> Thus continued the policy of buying a substantial chunk of the world's opium, opiates, and coca leaf.<sup>69</sup>

Anslinger eventually reduced the import rate in 1944, but the sheer amount of potent painkiller held by the US posed problems. Much of it was disseminated into the various branches of the US military. This came with its own unintended consequences. The FBN found narcotics quickly went missing, were illegally sold to pharmacies, or cropped up in the black market. In one instance, the US Army sold thousands of lifeboats to the public complete with first aid kits stocked with vials of morphine, causing the FBN to scramble its agents and launch an investigation. Not all the lifeboats were recovered.<sup>70</sup>

How to conceptualise the impact that narcotics had on the international system? As Dittmer suggests, Bruno Latour's notion of *pouvoir* and *puissance* are helpful. *Pouvoir* refers to the exercise of observable, tangible power that causes change. While holding narcotic stocks was a concrete example of *pouvoir*, it led to *puissance*, which refers to the power to 'affect and be affected'.<sup>71</sup> The US tied itself to legislation that only allowed it to supply narcotics to nations that had signed specific international treaties. As Dittmer says, the whole point of 'entering into assemblage is to re-work states assemblages through technical means rather than traditional ones'.<sup>72</sup>

The end of the war did not entirely end the US strategy of mass imports of opium for the manufacture of semi-synthetic medicines. Imports increased again in the early 1950s (Figure 13).



**FIGURE 13: FBN FIGURES FOR TOTAL US IMPORTS OF OPIUM AND COCA LEAF (Kg) FROM 1925 TO 1960. THE SPIKE IN THE COLD WAR AMOUNTS SHOWS HOW IMPORTANT THE STRATEGY OF STOCKPILING REMAINED. THIS FIGURE INCLUDES GOVERNMENT STOCKS NOT INCLUDED IN FIGURE 11. SOURCE: FBN.<sup>73</sup>**

With the end of hostilities and the re-opening of transport links in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, shipping and smuggling increased to pre-war levels. With the PCOB receiving statistics from most of the opium-producing world, a clearer picture of the complexity of opium’s chemistry also emerged that replaced black and white opium. For example, within Turkey, there was ‘soft’ opium that had morphine content ranging from 10-15%, depending on which region you were in (the vilayets of Amasya, Chorum and Tokat produced high quality, whereas Malatya produced the lower quality).<sup>74</sup> This recognition of opium’s different chemical profiles would be used by the UN at their Narcotic Laboratory Section in later years (discussed further in chapter four).

Decolonisation also influenced the politics and geography of narcotic production. Newly independent India and Pakistan, along with Iran, continued to produce opium for both manufacture and opium smoking, inheriting the ire the United States had previously held for the British. In Hungary, the poppy straw method turned the country into an exporter of opiates rather than exporter of opium. Yugoslavia and Bulgaria continued to produce opium for export and produced reliable figures that did not trouble the PCOB. Poor harvests in the USSR meant that they often did not produce enough opium for their medical needs. Turkey continued to grow massive raw opium crops for legitimate export. Despite the official closures of the opium monopolies, Burma, Thailand, and French Indochina grew illicit opium illegally for their smoking populations.

Poppy crops bloomed in Mexico in the state of Sinaloa. The town of Ciudad Juarez functioned as a node in the cross-border illicit trade. These poppies were grown, turned into morphine, and smuggled into the US. There was little interest from the Mexican government in the problem.<sup>75</sup> The Nationalists in China ramped up production in the south to procure funds for their campaign against the CCP in the North. In 1948 they were driven into newly-independent Burma's Shan region, where opium production was further encouraged. Along with Laos and Thailand, Burma proved unable to exercise control over poppy crops and black-market street heroin produced in the mountainous region now known as the Golden Triangle.<sup>76</sup> As the trade in black-market poppy cultivation, opium and opiate production boomed, all involved in the legal trade looked to the newly created UN for guidance.



Despite the threat of illegally produced opium, a new challenge in the form of legally produced synthetic narcotics would quickly occupy the nascent United Nations.

### The post-war years and synthetics: shifting narco-geographies

In 1924, biochemist Gordon Alles had discovered amphetamines.<sup>77</sup> This heralded an era of drug discovery. The first synthetic narcotic was synthesised in 1939 when Otto Eisleb of I.G. Farben created the 1-methyl-4-phenylpiperidine-4-carboxylic acid ethyl ester. Other substances quickly followed, most notably Demerol (meperidine).<sup>78</sup> Synthetic opioids could be manufactured without raw opium, and were not included in any of the previous treaties. This would shape the United Nations' drug control agenda most decisively, with important ramifications for the provision of medicines around the world.

Health officials and drug control advocates were initially hopeful about synthetics. They were seen as a silver bullet. If chemists could synthesise a painkiller that mimicked opiates and was not dependent upon poppy crops, then eventually, the need for poppy crops could be eradicated, thus ending diversion into the black-market. Others hoped chemists could design synthetics that would not cause addiction. This did not come to pass for three reasons. First, new synthetic narcotics offered no reduction in abuse potential. They were often more potent than their natural counterparts and users could easily switch from semi-synthetics to synthetics. Second, demand continued to support the growth of illegal opium that was destined for the black market. Third, there was no synthetic version of codeine, the mild and popular painkiller for which most legal raw opium was grown. Poppy

crops continued to dominate both the legal and illegal trade, particularly in the Middle East.

From 1943 to 1953, changes in the production and type of narcotics dramatically influenced international policy. In the immediate post-war period, however, a more pressing geopolitical development also brought the problem of synthetics to the forefront of UN debates.

#### The breakup of Axis pharmaceutical cartels

Before the war, US medicinal innovation was ineffective. Many new substances were simple variations of previous products. In 1938, one hundred people had died due to the poisonous toxin diethylene-glycol in Elixir Sulfanilamide, a medicine made by Massengill. This led to the passage of the 1938 Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act which stipulated that a medicine must be proved safe before it could be sold (the precautionary principle). There was thus little incentive to invest in new expensive drugs, but large penalties for mistakes. In 1940, there were still plenty of pharmaceutical companies across the United States, and none had a market share larger than 3%. During the war, this very quickly changed. Many American firms incorporated and merged, and those with bigger budgets for research and development began questing for lucrative 'big hitters' that could then be patented. Along with antibacterials such as streptomycin, aureomycin, chloromycetin and steroids such as prednisone,<sup>79</sup> nations searched for the holy grail of non-addictive powerful painkillers.

International shortages during the war had led many nations to galvanise research into synthetic narcotics.<sup>80</sup> Penicillin was brought to the masses

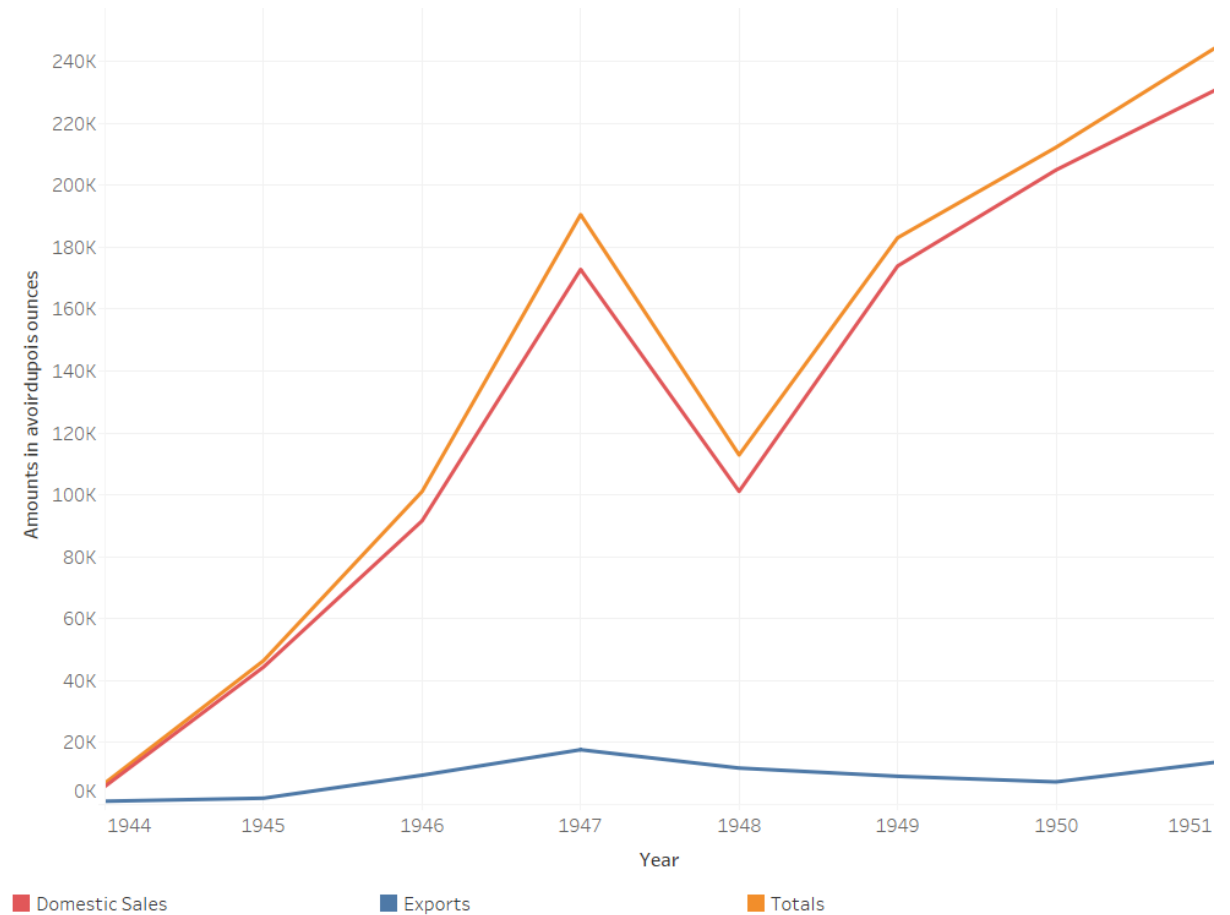
through the Anglo-American Penicillin Project. In 1942, the Office of Science and Research Development (OSRD) nominated fifteen firms to work on penicillin production. OSRD provided federal assistance to chemical firms and elevated an 'un-innovative industry into the most profitable, stable, innovative industry of the past fifty years'.<sup>81</sup> By 1950, consolidation had meant these fifteen firms dominated the US landscape, and eight had been chosen by Anslinger to produce narcotics.<sup>82</sup>

The UK, France, Germany, and Japan had already developed significant pharmaceutical industries and interests. The German conglomerate I.G. Farben had formed in 1925 and was a world leader in chemical innovation.<sup>83</sup> Well-known companies such as Bayer (which had first marketed heroin) and Hoechst belonged to I.G. Farben. During World War Two, the cartel had created dolophine (methadone) as a synthetic solution to Germany's opium shortages.<sup>84</sup> They had also experimented with many illegal chemicals on perfectly healthy prisoners in concentration camps. Some of these horrors came to light at the Nuremberg trials in 1947, yet many I.G. Farben employees were quickly released and went on to work in the post-war pharmaceutical industry.<sup>85</sup> I.G. Farben itself was broken into four new companies by the allies in 1941, one of which is Bayer, a world leading pharmaceutical supplier today. A similar break-up occurred in Japan with the dissolution of the *Zaibatsu* or business cartels that were accused of peddling opium in China during the 1930s. These chemists did not fare so well as their European counterparts. 149 Japanese were executed on drug-related charges by the Guandong government at the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal.<sup>86</sup>

The breakup of these cartels is important if one is to understand the relationship between post-war geopolitics, materiality, and drug diplomacy. Strict control advocates wished for special restrictions on Japan's ability to create and produce drugs due to their history of narcotisation. A ban on Japanese exports was suggested, along with the draconian policy of prohibiting domestic manufacture in Japan. Its economic recovery was deemed more important; allowing Japan to develop its manufacturing industry was vital to its swift re-entry into the liberal world order. On top of this, the country suffered from a massive public health crisis in the form of leprosy, tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted diseases.<sup>87</sup> Medicines were badly needed, and the Public Health and Welfare Section of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP) allowed Japan and Germany to manufacture narcotics in joint ventures with foreign firms, despite Anslinger's vehement protests. The professional branches of medicine and chemistry were separated by SCAP in 1946 to match the practice in the US.<sup>88</sup>

As Barry notes, the legal spaces of chemical innovation matter. Companies do not just produce molecules in isolation, but send new medicines into the 'legal and economic environment of other molecules developed by other companies'.<sup>89</sup> I would add they also had to contend with a geopolitical environment. When I.G. Farben was disbanded after the War, SCAP allowed the firm's patents to be abrogated and made public. This meant that German secrets were shared, and in the late 1940s numerous firms in the US applied for permits to manufacture Nazi narcotics such as methadone. Anslinger denied many of these permits, but European nations were not so strict.<sup>90</sup> Even so, the promise of synthetic narcotics, not to mention a whole new

generation of other chemicals, seemed closer than ever. The domestic output from all manufacturing nations increased, including the US (Figure 15).



**FIGURE 14: US DEMEROL CONSUMPTION FROM 1944-1951. THE US CONSUMED MUCH MORE THAN IT EXPORTED. FIGURES IN AVOIRDUPOIS OUNCES OF ALKALOIDS SOLD: SOURCE: FBN.<sup>91</sup>**



**FIGURE 15: US DOMESTIC SALES VS EXPORT OF DEMEROL, PAPAVERINE AND METHADONE IN AND FROM THE US. AMOUNTS ARE IN AVOIRDUPOIS OUNCES.**

**SOURCE, FBN.<sup>92</sup>**

The US engaged in synthetic research just as heavily as its allies, but synthetics posed a unique dilemma: if research progressed too quickly and successfully, synthetic opioids would obviate the need to stockpile opium and remove the central diplomatic tool of the US. Nevertheless, the synthetic market boomed.<sup>93</sup> Research into synthetic narcotics produced many new substances that fell outside of the purview of the international treaties.

In 1946, the US passed legislation to deal with synthetic substances. These came through revisions to the Harrison Act and the Synthetic Substitutes for Morphine Act,<sup>94</sup> yet even this legislation threw up material ambiguities. In one 1952 court case in New Orleans, a local chemist wrote to the FBN for

clarification as to whether other plants could yield heroin aside from the opium poppy. A defence attorney had asked him this question based on a definition in the 1943 Webster Dictionary Definition that erroneously stated heroin was sourced from three other plants aside from the opium poppy. The chemist worried that he would not be able to say with certainty that morphine or heroin seizures were made from the opium poppy due to new synthetics. Charles Fulton, an FBN and then UN chemist, responded by stating that synthetic morphine was, at its current stage, a 'laboratory curiosity' and that 'you may be quite certain that any morphine or heroin in your cases was derived from the opium poppy'.<sup>95</sup>

By 1951, the Durham-Humphrey Amendment of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act had made a permanent distinction between medicines (excluding narcotics, which as we have seen, had already been controlled in the US) that could be sold over the counter and those that required the approval of a physician. Synthetics fell almost exclusively into the latter category. Government funding fuelled widespread synthetic innovation, with over forty laboratories looking to understand and reproduce the chemical structure of key narcotics without opium.

### Synthetic narcotics and the 1948 Protocol

In the immediate aftermath of the war, the first task for the United Nations was to restore national drug controls to ravaged European nations, it then had to legislate against synthetics. The profusion of synthetic substances worried control advocates at the UN just as Benzoyl-morphine had.

The 'ambivalent materiality' of narcotics had been recognised by the framers of the Opium Convention in 1912. They had decreed that governments should decide which substances could be deemed 'addictive'. The 1931 conventions amended this so that responsibility lay with the now defunct League Health Committee, who would make advisory recommendations to both the League and signatory parties about new substances.<sup>96</sup> The shortfalls of this approach quickly became apparent. Neither the 1912 or 1931 treaties managed to produce an agreement on a satisfactory balance between economic interests, pharmaceutical innovation, and regulation. UN personnel feared a return to the Wild West of the 1900s, with little regulation and less evidence that these new substances were non-addictive, or even beneficial for health.

In 1948, the newly formed UN decided to bring the world's nations together to discuss the growing problem of synthetics. Debates for a new narcotics protocol began at its first session in Paris in June 1948. At the second session held in November of 1948, United States public health professionals testified about the addictiveness of methadone, a German creation that is a popular medical substitute for heroin users today. They warned that methadone could (and was) being created in large quantities with no legal ramifications for unscrupulous chemists. One chilling estimate stated that one factory devoted to producing methadone could easily flood the world market. The issue was summarised aptly in the *Bulletin on Narcotics*

New addiction-producing drugs are constantly being added to the physician's arsenal of analgesics, and since international conferences cannot remain in permanent session, some other way must be found



to determine which new drugs are addiction-producing and to bring them under international control with a minimum of delay.<sup>97</sup>

The problem lay with each signatory nation's sovereign ability to determine which substances could be labelled addictive. With the passage of the 1948 Paris Protocol, that power was transferred to the WHO, who would then make a recommendation to ECOSOC on the need for a new substance's control. If approved, the DSB and PCOB would add these substances to the 1931 Convention. Nations would have to furnish statistics on their import and export of synthetic narcotics, just as they did with opiates.<sup>98</sup>

It was not just narcotics that were being synthesised. Powerful pharmaceutical markets responded with pills for pain, weight loss, and psychological disorders such as anxiety, depression, and poor concentration. As companies sought returns on these costly investments, the advertising of synthetics continued to grow and so did their abuse. The international system struggled to keep pace with innovation in the legal market. While twenty new narcotic drugs were placed under international control from 1951-1954, others slipped through the net.<sup>99</sup> Meaningful discussions of synthetic narcotics became regular at the CND.<sup>100</sup>

Even with pharmaceutical companies heavily researching synthetic narcotics, their role in the world medical markets was negligible compared to morphine and codeine. Pethidine consumption rose to 13 tons in 1955 but dropped to 14 tons in 1957. Furthermore, synthetic consumption was geographically concentrated. Propoxyphene and normethadone were only consumed in the US and Germany respectively and under a ton in each.<sup>101</sup>

Of the 37 synthetic narcotics controlled by the UN in 1956, only Propoxyphene was consumed at anything above a single metric-tonne (7,470 kg in 1956 and 4,140 kg in 1955).

Even though the quantities of synthetics paled when compared to the trade in opiates, the PCOB still struggled to exercise control over these new substances. The example of normethadone shows this aptly. Manufactured in Germany under the tradename of Ticarda, it was brought under control through the schedules of the 1931 Convention. Problematically, Germany had not ratified the 1948 protocol and therefore was not bound to bring the drug under national control. The PCOB wrote to the German government informing it that some 1571kg of normethadone had been exported in 1956. The PCOB also attempted to obtain the export figures for 1957, but the Germans did not furnish them. The Board analysed figures from 1956 and learned that normethadone, regarded no less dangerously than morphine, had been shipped to some 56 nations. The PCOB noted, 'several of these governments replied that the transactions had taken place without their knowledge.'<sup>102</sup>

Drugs such as normethadone can be treated as an event: they catalysed discussions at the CND and led to debates for new international legislation. However, these debates were held against the backdrop of a drastically altered political geography of narcotic production.

### Iran and the legal market

The start of the Cold War forced the United States to continue stockpiling painkillers. This placed the FBN in an awkward position, just as it had at the

end of the Second World War. They had to decide which nations they would become reliant on for regular imports, but they were once again limited by wider geopolitical considerations. One choice was Iran, a nation that continued to produce well over the global legal requirements and estimates (despite repeated PCOB warnings). However, some two-thirds of seized opium in the US in 1942 was of purported to be of Iranian origin.<sup>103</sup> In the 1944 *Traffic in Narcotics* report, Anslinger had stated

There were various cases in which it was not possible to determine definitely the source of the opium seized because of lack of identifying marks, labels or wrappings, and other information. In such instances reliance, must be had [sic] upon itineraries of vessels, statements of defendants, and chemical analysis of the opium seized.<sup>104</sup>

The morphine content and shape of the opium were circumstantial evidence for the countries culpability in the opium traffic. In several cases, 'the opium [seizures] appeared in stick form and because of this fact and its morphine content was logically presumed to be of Iranian origin'.<sup>105</sup> The issue of culpability will be discussed in much greater depth in the next chapter, yet it is worth noting how quickly the FBN's attitude toward Iran changed. Usually, Anslinger would criticise producer nations formally at the OAC or CND, but he was overridden by the State Department, due to the fragile state of Iran's government. They did not want to push the Iranians towards the USSR (who had also offered to buy a two-year's supply of opium from Iran). The FBN, however, did not want to import opium from a nation which continued to support the black market. If its purchases were made public, the FBN would

have to explain why it was now eagerly buying a surplus of opium from a country that it and the UN accused of producing a surplus of opium.

Anslinger made quiet moves at the OAC, showing his willingness to buy Iranian opium for the US stockpile. As part of the 1931 Convention, keeping the price for opium supplies as low as possible had functioned as a deterrent to increased opium production. The US did not want to be accused of facilitating an increase in prices by artificially dampening the supply of opium. Furthermore, if other producing nations got wind of the US strategy, there was a fear that price, and production could rapidly increase around the world. This would harm pharmaceutical companies' ability to sell competitively.

It is interesting to compare how geopolitics and economics influenced the FBN's approach to opium purchases from different countries.<sup>106</sup> Marshall argues that Anslinger had CND and Congressional reports edited to remove reference to any illegal Asian suppliers but China.<sup>107</sup> He alleges that Anslinger did so to delegitimise Chinese attempts to enter the legal market. The FBN's '*Traffic in Narcotics*' reports indicated that seizures from China increased from 13-97 kg in from 1951-1952, even though the seizures were from a mixture of countries, with Turkish, Italian, Iranian, and French opium seized along with Chinese heroin. The reports also argued that considerable amounts of pure heroin had been seized on the West Coast and that the source was Communist China.<sup>108</sup> By emphasising China's illegal traffic and delegitimising its offers to sell opium on the market, the FBN was able to harmonise its policy with foreign policy.

Despite its prominence in the illegal trade, Iranian opium became part of the US stockpile. To purchase it discreetly, Anslinger made large-scale purchases through US pharmaceutical companies, masking the governmental need and plans to stockpile.<sup>109</sup> The FBN also made purchases through agents they had stationed in Iran. Two important figures are George White – who would go on to have a critical role in the MK-ULTRA experiments of the late 1950s – and Garland Williams who would go on to serve on the State Department’s Office of Public Safety’s Mission to Iran.<sup>110</sup>

Garland Williams’ assessment of the importance of Iranian narcotic policy to United States’ foreign policy demonstrates how closely the two areas aligned. Iranian opium was central to Iran friendly relationship with the US. Williams believed in a version of ‘domino theory’: an acquiescent Iran would cause other producing states such as Turkey, India, Pakistan and Thailand to follow suit. By bringing these countries into line, the blame could be solely laid at the feet of the newly communist China. It would also provide a bulwark against communist influences. As one FBN agent stressed to his superior, ‘a deteriorating narcotics situation in Iran could affect both our own narcotics problem directly and our national security, since a weakened Iran might fall prey to Communism’.<sup>111</sup>

With plenty of American troops and bureaucrats stationed in Iran after the signing of the Treaty of Amity in 1955, Williams wasted no time in trying to influence the country’s narcotic policies. The US provided funds and troops to help Iran deal with smuggling inside and outside of its borders. American naval patrols doubled up as interdictors, and Iranian operatives were sent to the FBN’s anti-narcotic training school in Italy.<sup>112</sup> In 1955, after the overthrow

of Mohammad Mossadegh, opium production was banned in Iran to deal with the 2.8 million addicts in the country. The announcement surprised diplomats.<sup>113</sup> Suspicions were raised, and only slightly assuaged, when Iran ratified the 1953 Opium Convention in that same year. Afghanistan soon followed suit, banning opium production in 1957. The diplomatic reasons for the bans are clear. Both looked to receive technical assistance from the UN to help stem addiction and smuggling problems.<sup>114</sup> Per McAllister, these nations wanted to show that producing nations could not 'shoulder the burden alone' and that manufacturing nations should provide financial assistance for public health initiatives, crop substitution and the training of police and technical staff.<sup>115</sup>

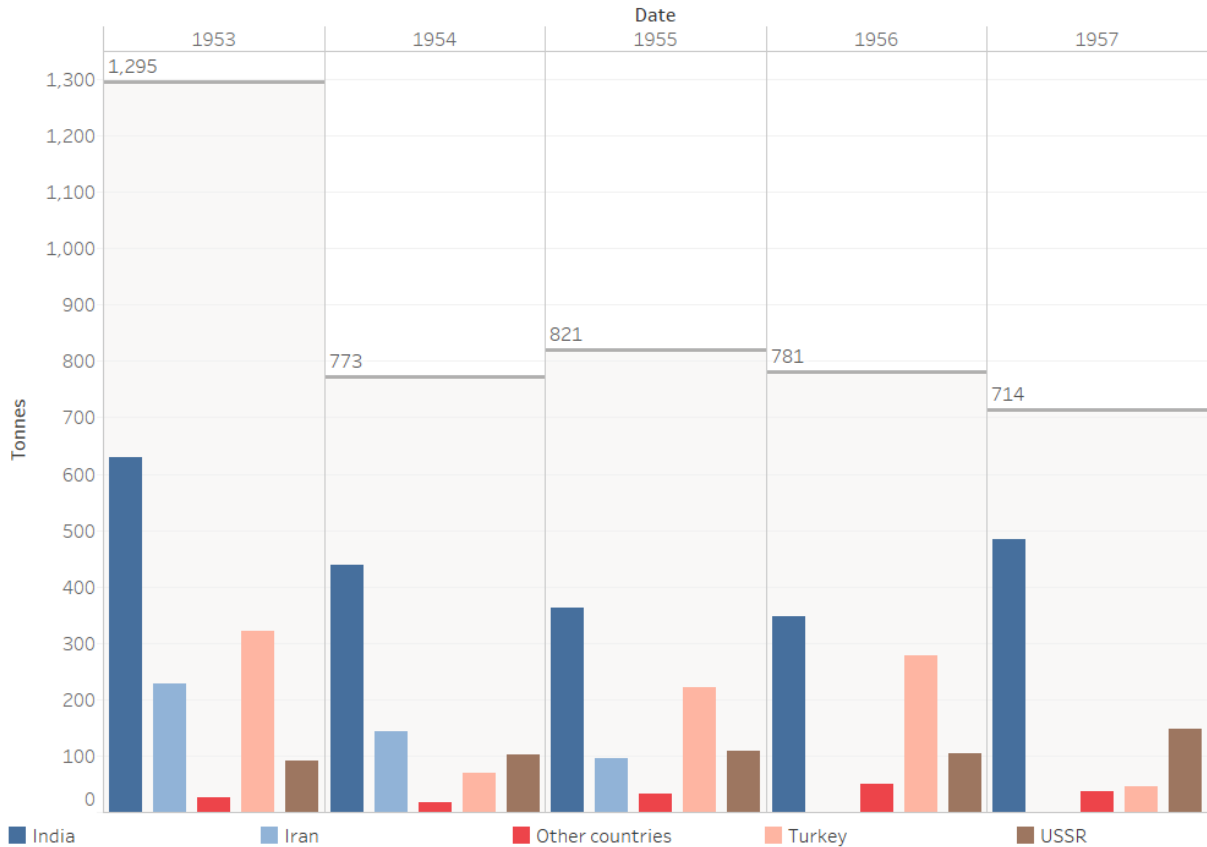
The US approach in Iran reveals a policy not dissimilar to that of communist containment, encapsulated in President Truman's speech to the United Nations regarding Greece's civil war on 12 March 1947.<sup>116</sup> The FBN's policies tackled both legal and illegal opium in efforts to bring the opium-producing world into the capitalist and regulatory sphere of the US. By investing in anti-narcotic policies in Iran while buying their legal opium, it was hoped the country would act as a barricade against both the influence of communism and traffic in narcotics. These strategies were focussed on the legal market. The preclusive buying of opium, coupled with the training of Iranian operatives, were touted as successes. A year later, Anslinger reported the number of addicts in the country had dropped dramatically from 200,000 to 500.

These successes turned out to be pyrrhic. Accusations of high-ranking Iranian officials benefitting from opium smuggling plagued the FBN's efforts.

Investigations into smuggling were repeatedly dropped or put on hold by the Iranian government. In the years between 1949 and 1969, Iran changed its position on the legality of opium three times. First, cultivation was legalised in 1949 for tax revenues and because Iran claimed it had the legitimacy to cultivate the crop under the 1912 International Opium Convention. It was banned once again in 1955 when these costs were offset by petroleum revenues during the overthrow of Mossadegh, and once again legalised in 1969.<sup>117</sup> Even when production was banned, Afghan opium quickly picked up the slack from Iran, crossing the border into Afghanistan in Northern Badakhshan. Efforts to include Afghanistan in a more regional anti-opium agreement faltered. The country was excluded from the 1953 Protocol as one of the seven producers.<sup>118</sup> Post-1961, Afghanistan would go on to increase its prominence as an illegal opium-producing region, along with Thailand, Laos and Burma. It would become the world's biggest producer of illegal opium in 1992.<sup>119</sup>

### Opium shortages

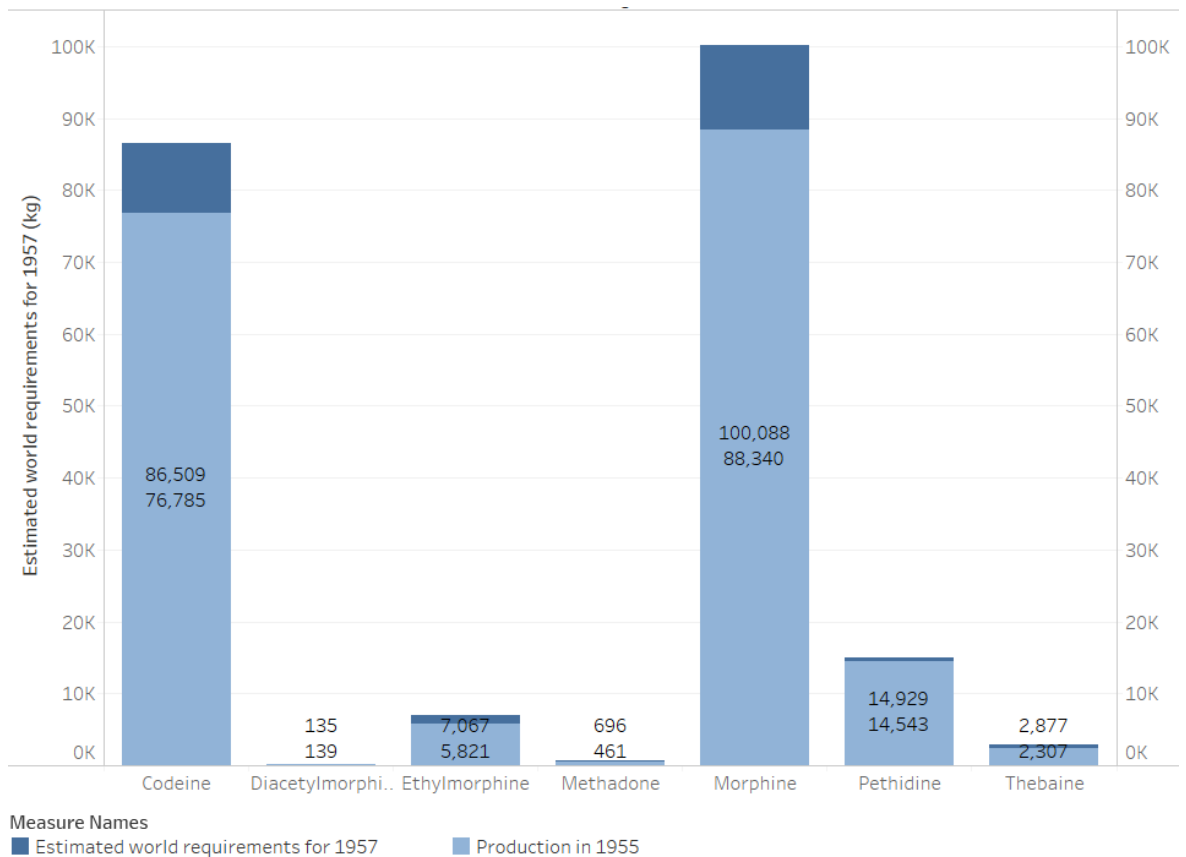
As amphetamines became part of the medical arsenal, the importance of old-fashioned narcotics did not diminish. When conscription swelled the size of the US army, stockpiling continued to buffer against narcotic shortages. A drop in Turkish production of 249 tons from 1953-1954 caused problems due to a bad harvest (Figure 16). When coupled with the Iranian ban in 1955, the price for narcotics rocketed as the amount on the world market shrank.



**FIGURE 16: PRODUCTION OF LEGAL RAW OPIUM FROM 1953-1957. TURKEY DROPPED 248 TONS FROM 1953-1954. GREY SHADED AREA SHOWS WORLD TOTAL IN THAT YEAR. SOURCE FBN, 1960.<sup>120</sup>**

Demand for raw opium for manufacturing purposes increased. Fifty more tons of raw opium were converted into morphine and codeine in 1955 (659 tons) than in 1954 (609 tons). Another 17 were added in 1956 and another 209 tons in 1957.<sup>121</sup> Countries began increasing and over-estimating their requirements (Figure 17) in the hope that this would stimulate production, causing the PCOB to issue a stern rebuke against the practice.<sup>122</sup>





**FIGURE 17: WORD ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT FOR NARCOTICS IN 1957 VS PRODUCTION IN 1955. CODEINE AND MORPHINE WERE STILL DOMINANT COMPARED TO OTHER ALKALOIDS AND SYNTHETICS SOURCE: FBN 1960.<sup>123</sup>**

Increased demand and shortages made opium production more important in the late 1950s. Opium shortages ensured that raw opium remained vital to the legal market and that producing nations had a powerful voice in both the 1953 Opium Protocol negotiations and 1961 Convention negotiations. This caused a change in the geopolitical subjectivity of producer nations; they began to work closely with the UN. Turkey was attempting to establish itself as a producer with honourable intentions, despite the illicit opium continued to pour out of its borders. Turkey did not want to risk its position as a supplier and made efforts to secure its role by cooperating with international law, short of ratifying the 1953 protocol.<sup>124</sup> This did not give Turkey *carte blanche*

to dictate diplomatic proceedings. Between 1931 and 1941, it had enacted regulatory systems that were symbolic but largely ineffective. Control was limited to 'gradually restricting permissible production to areas where the state possessed the greatest authority and away from areas with easy export access'.<sup>125</sup>

Turkey also diverted attention from its opium production by repeatedly pointing to the problems of synthetics at the annual meetings of the CND. It did so due to a fear that synthetics might eventually replace the need for raw opium. The more control that synthetics were placed under, the less likely they were to replace morphine and codeine.

In the late 1950s, US Aid programs became part and parcel of drug control.<sup>126</sup> They represented a shift in the US approach to narcotic policy. By 1962, aid for anti-narcotics purposes had been delivered to China, Iran, Greece, Spain, Thailand, Turkey and the United Arab Republic. By the 1960s, many nations had established strong controls on their opium markets and taken similar steps to Turkey. In 1971, external pressure, coupled with funding to replace poppy crops from the Nixon administration, caused Turkey to enact a ban on opium production across the nation.<sup>127</sup> By doing so, everyday access to opiate-based pain relief was all but removed, a system that remains in place today.

In the late 1950s, American actions had helped deterritorialise the international assemblage. Their aid packages meant that producer nations were increasingly required to tackle the illicit trade. This set the scene for the negotiations of the Single Convention. The Single Convention incorporated

elements of the nine previous treaties (excluding the 1936 Convention). Although the Single Convention represented a degree of consensus on the illegal smuggling of drugs, the debates over the legal trade were not resolved. Producer nations tried to direct attention away from coca and opium towards synthetics. They insisted on controls on poppy straw and the termination of the 1953 protocol. Manufacturing nations defeated attempts to have psychotropic substances placed under control.<sup>128</sup> The treaty also required each producer nation create a government agency that licensed growers, bought narcotics from them and sold them on the international market. Furthermore, producer nations had to submit statistics on their requirements for poppy crops to the newly created INCB.

The single most important step was the international consensus on the definition of which activities were licit and illicit. This enshrined the aim of ending all non-medical and scientific drug use that characterises the global system today. However, the goal of strict control at the source (as the US envisioned it) had not been achieved. That chance had been lost when the 1953 Protocol was axed. The final draft of the Single Convention was approved on the 30<sup>th</sup> March 1961. It represented an uneasy compromise between manufacturing and producer nations and something of a travesty for Anslinger and the prohibitionists.

Assemblage analysis forces us to reconsider the FBN's actions in a broader geopolitical context. While stockpiling was a strategy, it could not have been achieved without the aid of a much wider network of actors (pharmaceutical companies) and actants (new substances, SCAP mandates and organisational changes to pre-war conglomerates). Geopolitical subjectivities

were performed, particularly by of producer nations who wanted to justify their crops as legitimate. Both Turkey and Iran had producer identities that were not so much crafted, but emergent from the conditions of the world market.

In assemblage terms, we see that narcotics have relations of exteriority. That is, their ability to make connections. They were multiplicitous, depending on where they came from and who they were sold by. Hoovering up much of the world's supply was a successful strategy that territorialised the assemblage, but it was always invested with the virtual possibility of failure.

To suggest that key diplomats orchestrated the changes to the international system is to neglect distributed agency. The importance of this conclusion, following Bruno Latour's reading of Gabriel Tarde, is that 'if there is something as special as human society it is not determined by any strong opposition with all the other types of aggregates ... which will put it apart from mere matter'.<sup>129</sup> As I have shown, agency cannot be boiled down to individuals or materials, but rather the relations between them. Of course, it is only humans that exert a conscious effort upon diplomatic proceedings: it took a diplomat as savvy as Anslinger to realise that morphine could be used to ensure the security and dominance of the US. Without stockpiles in Fort Knox, the international assemblage may not have been territorialised towards prohibition.

In this chapter I have shown how drug diplomacy was influenced by a wide range of non-human and wider geopolitical forces. The final chapter examines another neglected aspect of drug control: the technical,

administrative activities that tried to pin down and determine the materiality of narcotics.

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- <sup>50</sup> 'Raw Materials in War and Peace', 1947.
- <sup>51</sup> 'Traffic in Narcotics', 1943.
- <sup>52</sup> Barry, A. (2010). On the Calculus of the Market, Rethinking Capitalism Conference, UC Santa Cruz, April 9<sup>th</sup> <https://vimeo.com/12429883>.
- <sup>53</sup> 'US Strategic Stockpile goose feathers', June 9<sup>th</sup> 1980, *Washington Post*. Note that these amounts are measured in American tonnes as opposed to British tons.
- <sup>54</sup> McAllister, W. (2000). 'Drug Diplomacy in the twentieth-century'.
- <sup>55</sup> Courtwright, D.T., Joseph, H. & Des Jarlais, D. (2013). *Addicts who survived: An oral history of Narcotic use in America before 1965*. University of Tennessee Press, LO.
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- <sup>65</sup> 'Harry Anslinger Obituary', 1975.
- <sup>66</sup> McAllister (2000) discusses the problem eloquently yet draws on the problem that League officials faced upon their arrival in Washington in February of 1941. The LoN was entirely discredited and 'ensconced on inhospitable soil in the midst of a global war' p.140.
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## Determining Narcotics

In this final empirical chapter, I revisit Latour and Woolgar's argument that 'to concentrate only on the 'social' rather than 'technical' aspects of science severely limits the range of phenomena that can be selected as appropriate for study'.<sup>1</sup> I show that the technical governance of narcotics was not apolitical; it had consequences on the formal diplomatic debates at the LoN and UN.

This chapter explains the ways scientists and drug diplomats attempted to 'determine' narcotics. My use of the verb determine is specific: The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines determining as an action 'that decides, or leads to a decision; that fixes the course or issue'.<sup>2</sup> Determining a narcotic did not just involve establishing what it was, but also establishing the most appropriate way to regulate narcotics. Determining opium is thus an apt phrase for the three case studies in this chapter. These are the international schedules introduced in the 1931 and 1961 Conventions, the so-called 'poppy rebellion' of early 1942, and the scientific endeavour of opium determination (inferring the geographical origin of smuggled opium by testing its chemistry). Opium determination was a technical solution to a fundamentally political dispute. To explain this, I follow the work of Shapin and Schaffer to explore how ODP chemists constructed a boundary between their work and the geopolitics of opium.<sup>3</sup>

In the previous chapter, I showed how the associations between narcotics and American diplomats were productive; they helped Americans further their aims. In this chapter, I show how they were problematic, unexpected, and – to use the language of assemblage – deterritorialising. Two of the

three examples in this chapter catalysed radical changes in the way drug control was conducted (Scheduling and the ODP). The poppy rebellion did not. The UN did not adopt the US style of prohibition, but a new, hybrid approach to drug control. Ultimately, the ODP did not provide proof of a seizure's geographical origin; the methods were repurposed. In the same way, the schedules introduced to classify narcotics were problematic, and continually had to be updated by new international laws. The reasons for this are both technical and political. Any attempt at standardisation and classification, following Shelia Jasanoff, has implications that are profoundly political.<sup>4</sup>

I conceptualise the relations between materiality and drug diplomats through Barry's interpretation of Bensaude-Vincent and Stenger's idea of informed materials. Opium was 'constituted in relation to [its] complex informational and material environments'.<sup>5</sup> That the opium itself was addictive was only part of the problem. Who and where it was shipped to, and from, also influenced early diplomatic progress. The informational environment of narcotics would become an important part of whether they were deemed safe/dangerous or licit/illicit. An opium-based product was never an *a priori* object that could be perceived 'from a viewpoint external to it'. Narcotics acted in 'a living labyrinth [the human body] whose topology varies in time'.<sup>6</sup> I also draw on Barry's notion of the technological zone. For those working in the middle of a technological zone, they experienced a smooth, functioning system bounded by shared standards of uniformity. This was the experience of FBN employees. At the edges of the zone, the experience is very different. Not everyone agreed with the ODP, nor, as we shall see, did they agree on

the appropriate way to deal with farmers who refused to stop growing poppies. There were 'different perspectives, and uncertainties and anxieties about what may be possible or desirable, and different accounts of where the ends exist.... Whether or not they are solid or permeable, contestable or non-negotiable'.<sup>7</sup>

### Early narcotic determination

As mentioned in chapter one and three, the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 was the first American legislative act to provide consumers with information about their medical remedies, requiring manufacturers to label their ingredients in their products. Smugglers of opium did not provide the same courtesy. US customs agents and the Narcotic Division developed methods to determine where seizures of smuggled opium that reached American shores came from. They would use crude proxies of the seizure's purity, appearance, packaging, the testimony of crewmen, and the suspect ship's itinerary.

The informational environments of narcotics became important as early as 1908 when smoking opium was outlawed. Seizures had to be distinguished from legal imports. In 1914, the Harrison Narcotics Act provided the Narcotics Division of the Treasury with a tool for tackling foreign seizures. While this Act had secured a relationship between the pharmaceutical industry and the enforcement arm of the government, it also helped distinguish, materially, between illicit and licit opium imports. This demarcation was not dependent upon the chemical itself, but its attendant information. Licit opium would be marked, whereas illicit opium would not. It was not illegal to possess or trade narcotics; it was illegal to not pay taxes on

them. Of course, only official importers were granted this right by the Treasury, so violations of the Harrison Act were not due to possession, but the avoidance of tax. The act was an 'excise tax ... to be evidenced by stamps affixed to packages or container and payable by the importer, manufacturer ... i.e., the first domestic handler'.<sup>8</sup>

Stamps played an integral role in delineating the opium and opiates arriving at American shores. Narcotics that entered the country and did not have the correct stamps were understood to be trafficked. The 'mere possession of drugs in unstamped containers [was] prima facie evidence of a violation'.<sup>9</sup>

These early attempts at determination were not concerned with the origin of a substance. Rather, customs officials and FBN agents used stamps to decide whether a substance had been legally imported. In these early years, illicit cultivation was negligible, and seizures came from countries that had not criminalised narcotics. This meant narcotics were often marked with stamps from other countries. It became difficult to tell which stamps were lawful in the US, and which were lawful elsewhere. The criticism of the established opium trades, particularly the monopolies in the British and Dutch territories, was that they facilitated the flow of legal substances into the black market. It is partly for this reason the US delegates pushed for a clear division between medical and scientific usage and recreational and habitual usage. If the international system had uniform definitions of what was legitimate use, then all seizures would be equally illegal.

The typology of opium types features in the American argument against the opium monopolies. The black opium of Turkey was of higher morphine

content and often used in opiate production. This meant that in the early years of the twentieth-century, seizures of high morphine opium were generally associated with those crops that were destined for licit market, whereas white or prepared opium may have been grown explicitly for the illicit market. There was plenty of crossovers, however, as prepared opium for smoking was often traded through monopoly systems and found its way into the illicit market. Seizures could be used in international debates to stress either the problem of diversion, illicit growth or both. Early determination was 'a political argument which [was] articulated by technical means'.<sup>10</sup> The evidence it provided played a part in League debates ethics and morality of different approaches to drug control.<sup>11</sup> At the 1925 Convention proceedings, progress was held up by a geopolitical dispute between Japan and Britain.<sup>12</sup> Japanese smugglers were using Japanese import certificates to smuggle opium into China through British territories. The British had begun denying all opium shipments with Japanese certificates in response. Denying any wrongdoing, the Japanese refused to partake in international negotiations until the British relented. Eventually, both countries agreed to inspect all certificates before shipping or allowing any shipments.

We will return to opium determination shortly. The intervening years from 1918-1931 are of interest for another type of determination: the international scheduling of narcotics by their addictive potential and value. Schedules were a logical extension of determining narcotics by proxy. They represent a partial shift from information regarding a narcotic to the chemistry of the substance itself. For the first quarter of the twentieth-century, the chemistry

and addictiveness of narcotics were not included in international law. When discussions of narcotic chemistry and pharmacology did start at the League, they tangled with differing social and political attitudes towards drug consumption.

The 1925 Geneva Convention was the first time that the materiality of semi-synthetic narcotics (morphine, heroin, and codeine) were discussed. Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention stipulated that the League's Health Committee would advise and recommend to the Secretary-General that a substance be subject to international control. The Health Committee would place a substance into a list of controlled substances. The idea behind this system was that the list would provide a neutral way of classifying narcotics that circumvented arguments about the morality of drug use, thereby offering 'a technical solution to the management of affect'.<sup>13</sup> Disagreement within the scientific community, however, stopped any consensual agreement about addiction being reached. The case of heroin is instructive here. The UK's Rolleston Committee was formed to tackle precisely this question. It was led by Royal College of Physicians president Humphrey Rolleston to establish whether the UK should prescribe morphine and heroin to addicts.<sup>14</sup> It affirmed the right of doctors to do so, the opposite of laws introduced into the US. This disagreement was once again aired at the 1931 Convention, which sought to establish definitive schedules that could classify narcotics once and for all.

### Scheduling and the 1931 Convention

The 1931 Convention's specific directives have been discussed in chapter one. It should be noted that schedules were one of the earliest political

technologies for regulating drugs. The UK Pharmacy Act of 1868 regulated the sale of poisons by a two-part schedule.<sup>15</sup> The 1931 schedules are unique in that they were the first time anyone had sought to regulate substances for an international trade rather than a domestic market. They were also the first laws that had a geopolitically disputed purpose.

The 1931 Convention placed supply reduction and regulation at the centre of the League's operations. All nations agreed that a steady flow of medicines was vital and all nations should be able to stock up on painkillers. To help with this task, the 1931 Convention created the DSB (Drugs Supervisory Body). This technical body performed administrative work for the PCOB. It would examine the needs of an individual country and, if necessary, provide estimates for usage if a nation failed to submit, or provided grossly exaggerated estimates. It would also examine underestimates, rectifying them upwards. This would ensure the supply of legal medicines did not run out, particularly during wartime. Finally, it would carry out an Annual Statement of World Requirements of Drugs.

Melissa Bull<sup>16</sup> has referred to the DSB as a centre of inscription, borrowing from the work of Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar,<sup>17</sup> Michel Callon,<sup>18</sup> and Michel Foucault's work on governmentality and objects of calculation.<sup>19</sup> She suggests that the DSB, together with the PCOB, were 'centres of calculation', or organisations that governed through the 'accumulation and distribution of information'.<sup>20</sup> For Bull, the DSB and PCOB embodied Foucauldian values of self-government. She reveals how Bertil Renborg, Chief of the Drug Control Service (formerly the opium section of the OAC) in 1931, viewed the international drug machinery as the path towards a planned economy of the



world, extending its influence across the globe by covering every poppy lanced, every batch of morphine produce, every shipment of codeine and every ampoule of morphine dispensed.<sup>21</sup> At the heart of this aim was a desire for an entirely regulated market in which smuggling would wither away as there would be no surplus narcotics to smuggle.

However, Bull's use of governmentality limits her analysis to the orderly and successful mechanisms of the 1931 Convention. Power closed down materiality by categorising it, ultimately making 'the supply of opium stable, mobile, comparable and combinable'.<sup>22</sup> Bull thus points towards the success of the DSB as a technology of government. In assemblage terms, like Renborg's scheme for a planned, global drugs market, this is too simplistic. As Protevi puts it 'Deleuze and Guattari put the line of flight first, with power chasing after, while for Foucault, power and resistance are co-constitutive'.<sup>23</sup> The schedules were always provisionally working, with the potential for failure always virtual (in the Deleuzian sense) as new elements joined the assemblage. A planned global drugs market could not account for externalities that impacted the assemblage. International schedules were constantly adjusted to deal with new substances, changing attitudes, and changes in the science of addiction.

For example, Bull notes that the success of the 1931 Convention led to a reduction in drugs that were diverted into the black-markets. She does concede, however, that this had an unexpected effect: an increase in the production of black-market opium. In emphasising the rise of the illegal traffic, Bull portrays it as the driving force for stringent drug control in later years. This misses the importance of licit uses of narcotics in later years of

drug control. She does not consider that narcotics occupied the blurry position between legal and illegal, a binary that assemblage theory can circumvent. To understand how the international system juggled this blurriness, we must further examine how the 1931 Convention system of scheduling tried to accommodate the multiple materialities of narcotics.

The desire for scheduling came from the worrying growth of derivative production (the example of benzoyl morphine), but it also came from the problematic, habitual consumption by habitual users. Consumption had gone unaddressed at the 1912 and 1925 Conventions; it was a matter for domestic law. In 1929, Ellen Newbold La Motte, an American nurse and journalist, published an article in *The American Journal of Nursing* suggesting American morphine addicts consumed up to 125 grains a day<sup>24</sup> on average.<sup>25</sup> During World War Two, anaesthetists provided American soldiers with 1/8 - 1/4 of a grain of morphine for sedation.<sup>26</sup> Today's National Health Service (NHS) Guidelines recommend a maximum of 20-30 mg for someone suffering chronic pain. A dosage of 125 grains is nearly equal to a single gram of morphine, up to three times the NHS recommendation. If La Motte's findings were correct, they indicated some users had built up massive tolerances that were fuelling the rise in black-market morphine. As the US had enacted strict controls upon its imports and exports in 1922 with the Narcotic Drugs Import and Export Act, the price of morphine in the illegal traffic had risen from \$12-\$13 an ounce in 1927 to \$90 per ounce in 1929. By 1934, heroin was priced at \$50-150 an ounce.<sup>27</sup>

In 1931, the US only exported about half a percent of the total narcotic drugs it manufactured: the rest were kept under lock and key by pharmaceutical

companies, pharmacists and the FBN. With such strict control over the legal trade, lawmakers were fully aware that the demand for morphine and heroin in the US would prove irresistible for potential smugglers. They feared manufacturing nations would export massive quantities of legitimate morphine and heroin, but much of which would be smuggled to the shores of the Eastern seaboard. If the League could introduce schedules that categorised substances by their addictive potential, then heroin and morphine would be the most regulated, making it harder for smugglers to divert them to enter the black market. New substances could be added to the schedules by the League's Health Committee as and when they were discovered.

The pharmaceutical companies played a significant role in the debates over scheduling. They supported the 1931 Convention for economic reasons. If their drugs were deemed less dangerous than their competitors; they would occupy a different schedule, gaining a comparative advantage. In 1932, a conference of delegates representing various areas of the drug industry adopted a resolution supporting the 1931 Convention as it was being considered by the Senate.<sup>28</sup> In the US, the pharmaceutical industry had risen from a quirk of industrial chemistry to a well-defined lobby in 1928. It became the sixteenth most profitable in the country by 1934.<sup>29</sup> The industry grew concurrently with the number of new medicines produced for domestic consumption and export (table 5). With the unchecked growth of the industry, the market could quickly become crowded out. Schedules would deter would-be competitors who would have to prove their medicines were safe.

**TABLE 5: TOTALS OF SELECTED NARCOTICS PRODUCED BY AMERICAN COMPANIES FROM 1935-1955 (AMOUNTS IN AVOIRDUPOIS OUNCES). MORPHINE AND OPIUM WERE PRODUCED IN LARGE AMOUNTS DURING THE WAR, WHEREAS SEMI-SYNTHETICS WERE PRODUCED MORE HEAVILY AFTER THE WAR. SOURCE: FBN.<sup>30</sup>**

<b>Medicine</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Average Production</b>	<b>Average Export</b>
Medicinal Opium	1931-1935	147159	342
	1936-1940	157550	1637
	1941-1945	202009	10689
	1946-1950	146642	10911
	1951-1955	150438	3993
	1955	121860	2068
Morphine (opiate)	1931-1935	107445	646
	1936-1940	100650	429
	1941-1945	112491	2019
	1946-1950	90448	6930
	1951-1955	54363	552
	1955	49062	521
Papaverine (semi-synthetic)	1931-1935	5331	0
	1936-1940	7257	142
	1941-1945	33612	10002
	1946-1950	241862	97269
	1951-1955	135676	22559
	1955	152887	9599
Hydrocodone (semi-synthetic)	1931-1935	0	0
	1936-1940	0	0

	1941-1945	452	19
	1946-1950	8342	231
	1951-1955	18508	674
	1955	0	1242

At the 1931 negotiations, the US and Canadian delegations pressed this point upon the Germans and their advanced pharmaceutical market. Any legislation that forced their European competitors to adhere to standards as strict as the US Import and Export Act of 1922 would be beneficial to North American markets.

Predictably, the German industry did not want international control to be as strict as the US was suggesting. They secured another concession at the 1931 conference: that the schedules would not apply domestically, thus allowing countries to sell new substances as they pleased within their own markets.<sup>31</sup> This was viewed as critical for research and development, as a 'guilty until proven innocent' approach of blanket regulation would stifle pharmaceutical innovation, one of the few successful industries during the Great Depression.

The key question the 1931 Convention had to resolve was whether all drugs should be subject to the same onerous provisions. Many countries did not want to limit their profitable industries, many doctors complained about overly bureaucratic processes for dispensing narcotics and diplomats felt considerable pressure to show the international system was making progress (talks on disarmament had failed at the time).<sup>32</sup> A wide-ranging debate on how to regulate the trade in licit drugs followed. Germans pointed to the

differing composition and strengths of opiates. Restricting codeine as stringently as morphine made no sense, they argued. The restrictions would confuse doctors, who might worryingly view codeine as interchangeable with morphine or heroin. As a compromise, delegates agreed the schedules would evaluate substances by two criteria. The first was the degree of danger (in terms of addictive capacity), and the second was the value of the drug to medical professions. Here, the production of information on addiction gained geopolitical significance. Codeine sat at the centre of a debate on addictive potential. Germans vetoed all attempts to include codeine in the 1931 treaty altogether. The Americans and the League relented and agreed to create a set of schedules that recognised the differing addictive potentials. This meant that narcotics fell into three schedules. The first was for morphine and other dangerous substances that received the most stringent controls. The other schedule was for codeine and less dangerous drugs such as dionine. Heroin, deemed highly dangerous and less useful, was placed in a separate schedule and banned from export in all but the most special of circumstances.

The 1931 schedules were far from watertight. Companies could manufacture and sell what they wished to domestic populations, provided they adhered to national law. Elizabeth Washburn-Wright summarised the situation aptly, 'the administration of world legislation respecting narcotics depends mainly on the care with which national governments license drug manufacturing and trading concerns'.<sup>33</sup> While the League was, in principle, more powerful a legislator than individual countries, drug control was ultimately the purview of individual nations.

At the 1931 negotiations, the problems of Benzoyl-morphine had not disappeared, and the assembled nations accepted a German proposal whereby 'a new narcotic could not be manufactured unless the government found it to be of medical value and notified the League's Secretary-General accordingly, in order that the Health Committee make its finding as rapidly as possible'.<sup>34</sup> The US proposed another amendment where a new drug that had yet to be proved to be non-addictive could not be manufactured beyond its scientific and medical needs. This was accepted by the conferees, and provided protection against the unfettered production of new substances (it became known as Article 16). It only, however, applied to 'any product obtained from any of the phenanthrene of opium or from the ecgonine alkaloids of the coca leaf'.<sup>35</sup> It was by no means comprehensive, and new substances still escaped control. These lines of flight led to deterritorialisation where the assemblage was changed by a new connection, revealing a new pathway for the system of control. New narcotics did not work against the control system, but away from it, constantly causing it to adapt and develop.

In the previous chapter, I showed how the proliferation of new substances quickly outpaced the schedules. Scheduling led to more actors becoming part of the assemblage of international drug control. By 1931, there were five different international bodies involved with the League's official activities of drug control. The OAC, the PCOB, the DSB, the League Health Committee, and the League Secretariat. However, assemblage analysis points to the wider players that influenced proceedings; pharmaceutical companies had

'no choice but to insinuate themselves into the process of implementing and modifying the regime'.<sup>36</sup>

I wish to introduce a new set of players involved in the drug control: scientists who believed that chemistry could help solve the political problems of drug control.

### The origin of opium and the quest to combat narcotic trafficking

In the early 1930s, there was no method for scientifically proving the origin of seized opium that had been diverted from the legal trade. Nor were there methods of identifying seizures of produced opium that did not enter regulatory channels. As mentioned, official stamps indicated a substance might have started its journey in the legal traffic, but this was not always the case. Governments relied upon 'such things as the port at which a vessel last called, or wrappings of newspapers, poppy leaves, or oiled paper'. The US was fully aware that 'such evidence may be lacking or unconvincing as concerns the origin'.<sup>37</sup> When Mrs Hamilton-Wright travelled to the Philippines to evaluate the opium monopoly and asserted that the opium in the American-occupied Philippines was of Yunnan or Persian origin, she had little way of proving so, aside from the testaments of residents or smugglers.

This problem presented itself to Harry Anslinger in 1934. In the annual *Traffic in Narcotics* report of 1934, Anslinger describes some common patterns. The general location of opium could be inferred from its colour, shape and texture. Indian and Iranian opium, for example, were known by their stick form, smooth and clean fracturing, whereas Turkish opium was higher purity, coarse and irregular.<sup>38</sup> He noted 'approximately 228 pounds (102) kg of raw



opium were seized in the continental US. Of this total, over 79 pounds (34Kg) of raw opium were identified as being of Indian origin'.<sup>39</sup> The FBN would often infer geographic origin from the appearance of a seizure.

There were numerous seizures of raw opium in lumps and slabs which because of the morphine content of the opium and other factors appeared to be of Indian origin.<sup>40</sup>

There were, however, various cases where it was not possible to determine the source from identifying marks, labels or wrappings and other information. In such instances, the FBN and Bureau of Customs made inferences from the 'itineraries of vessels, statements of defendants and chemical analyses of the opium seized'.<sup>41</sup>

These basic attempts to analyse seizures satisfied the Congressional committees to which Anslinger testified but vague recourse to 'other factors' would not help in international negotiations. With so little proof or origin, the ambiguity surrounding the source of a seized narcotic allowed nations to circumvent culpability for opium the FBN believed came from their country. A trafficker of a specific nationality could be dismissed as a bad egg, the testimonies of arrested traffickers could themselves be false, doctored, or given under duress, and opium could be wrapped in foreign newspaper to deliberately deceive customs officials.<sup>42</sup> By determining an actual geographical origin through chemical means, the FBN believed their claims would be irrefutable.

The most worrying seizures were opiates and opioids that had not been diverted from the legal traffic, but grown and manufactured illegally. With

almost no identifying characteristics, these types of seizures gave customs agents at the borders and FBN agents within the US even less to work with, particularly if they were not found on traffickers, but hidden within vessels. As the 1949 *Bulletin on Narcotics* noted,

Factory-made products, such as the pure salts of morphine or heroin, show few points of difference, no matter where they are made.

although the products made in clandestine laboratories or factories are not wholly pure and still show some 'marks of origin', frequently including characteristic adulterations.<sup>43</sup>

Characteristic adulterations of opiates included the presence of sugar and other inert substances used to dilute a narcotic for unscrupulous drug dealers. These adulterants were found further along the supply chain when drugs had been widely dispersed to small-time dealers. They did not help authorities locate the powerful smugglers who traded in bulk.

In the 1937 *Traffic in Narcotics* report submitted to Congress, Anslinger admitted the shortcomings of the traditional methods of identification. He tried to triangulate his findings by relying on multiple inferences. He wrote that

A total of 344 kg and 205 grams of smoking opium was seized and confiscated during the calendar year 1937. The exact origin of this smoking opium could not be determined, but the great bulk was undoubtedly manufactured and packed somewhere in the Far East, since it was seized from vessels arriving directly or indirectly from Eastern ports.<sup>44</sup>

A more reliable indicator was the labelling on the tins, packets, and containers in which seizures were found. The report continues

The greater portion of the prepared opium seized came by ship from the Far East. The most common marks were “Am Kee” (Rooster and Elephant), “Yick Kee” in the Atlantic and Pacific coast areas; “Lam Kee” in the Hawaiian Islands and “Lion” and “Tonggee” in the Philippine Islands. A notable feature in 1937 was the increased extent to which there appeared in the illicit traffic prepared opium labels not hitherto met with. Labels not previously encountered in the United States were the “Running Deer” “Lion Brand Special” and the “Three Coins” or “Three K’s”.<sup>45</sup>

Prepared opium seized at Seattle, New York, and Boston bore narrow strip labels bizarrely purporting to be tax stamps issued by the Shanghai Opium Suppression Monopoly. These labels indicated where seizures had been sourced from and where increased scrutiny from the League might be focused, but they were problematic. Other labels such as ‘TaiKeeCo Ltd Manufacturing Chemists’ and ‘Bremen-Shanghai’ were believed to be fakes attempting to hoodwink customs agents into believing they were legitimate imports. In the 1940 *Traffic in Narcotics* report, Anslinger wrote

On September 17, 1939, 1 kilogram of heroin was purchased by narcotic agents in the United States ... it bore the following legend: Manufactured by the “Tai Kee Company, Ltd, Manufacturing Chemists, Bremen- Shanghai”. This label is believed to be false since

the evidence available indicates that the heroin was manufactured and packaged in the Japanese quarter of Tientsin.<sup>46</sup>

With so little certainty over whether the labels were genuine, stolen, or outright fakes, the FBN could not use them as robust evidence of a seizure's geographic origin. To compound this problem, the geography of the illegally produced opium was just as complex.

All available information indicates that illicit traffickers continue to rely on the Far East for supplies of prepared opium, while France, Yugoslavia and Italy were used as bases for smuggling of raw opium, and heroin into the US. It was likewise evidence that Australia was, for a time, at best, the base for smuggling of prepared opium into the Hawaiian Islands.<sup>47</sup>

It was around this time that the FBN's interest in alternate methods of opium identification grew. By 1940, chemists knew different countries had well-established types of opium. Korean opium was described as 'rubbery' and Japanese opium as 'coarse and blocky' with high morphine content, whereas Indian opium was dark and oily.<sup>48</sup> It was these material characteristics that became geopolitically significant.

In 1940, the US had also established itself as a world leader in scientific research. It had the most Nobel science laureates and powerful universities which had specialised scientific knowledge in specific disciplines.<sup>49</sup> The science of organic chemistry had support and funding from large companies investing in new medicines and techniques for identifying and synthesising new substances. Chemists looked for a molecule that would mimic the

painkilling function of opium, morphine, and heroin without the addictive side effects.

Previous work had examined the crystalline structure of opium and its derivatives and the difference of morphine purity between Indian and Turkish opium.<sup>50</sup> The results pointed to a cultural factor: how opium was extracted or lanced. Indian opium was often lanced twice, allowing for a greater yield but a reduced purity, whereas Turkish poppy capsules were lanced once, resulting in higher purity. Higher purity opium was used by manufacturing nations, and Turkey and India had long supplied the opium for this purpose. Another identifying characteristic was how oily the opium was. Indians tended to add oil to their poppy crops and opium harvests requiring analysts to conduct further tests to determine whether the oil was naturally occurring or artificial.<sup>51</sup> Gradually, these studies painted a general picture of the basic chemical profile of opium's geographical variance.

The most effective methods for confirming an origin had long been questioning traffickers and analysing packaging. Determining opium by chemical means was, theoretically, a beguilingly simple prospect. A seizure would be chemically analysed for the proportions of ash, organic material, and alkaloids within the sample. These would be compared to a compendium of known samples, and the determined samples would corroborate a customs agent's assessment of its surface appearance. As we shall see, in practice, the process was complex and ultimately subjective. The technical and scientific expertise required to analyse opium was an expert skill but also an art form; interpreting the colour, texture and granularity of a piece of seized opium was not simple, and experts could disagree.<sup>52</sup>

As the poppy straw method and synthetic production led to new substances entering the illicit traffic, diplomats contemplated whether the science of pharmaceutical evidence could be used on new drugs to ascertain geographic origin. This aim wasn't formally stated until 1949, in the first issue of the *Bulletin on Narcotics* issued by the newly created United Nations

It will be much more satisfactory if some characteristics of the drug itself can be used to tell its origin – at least to supplement and confirm the other evidence – possibly to show in some cases that suspicions may not be correct, in other cases to establish the truth beyond a reasonable doubt.<sup>53</sup>

As war broke out, all progress in narcotic determination was halted, and the problem remained dormant until the end of the war and the establishment of the United Nations. Before exploring how the science of opium determination advanced after the war, it is necessary to detour through a domestic dispute regarding the materiality of the flowering opium poppy and its non-narcotic cousins.

#### The 1942 Poppy Rebellion: *papaver somniferum* vs *papaver rhoeas*

The FBN did not just focus on foreign narcotics for opium produced outside of the United States. The stockpiling of opium led to other worrying possibilities for advocates of staunch drug control within the US.

One problem stemmed from agriculture. The 1942 Poppy Control Act was passed in response to an extraordinary dispute over the legality of non-narcotic poppy crops. Poppyseed was consumed heavily in the US, and non-

narcotic versions of the flower were harvested by approved farmers for the seeds and oils. This led one expert to conclude that

There is no good reason why the extremely widespread cultivation of the poppy, which has been practised for centuries and is intended for the production of poppy seeds, should - merely because of the incidental production of poppy capsules - be subject to the same control measures as the cultivation of poppy in opium-producing countries.<sup>54</sup>

This is exactly what happened in the US after the Poppy Rebellion in California. Prior to 1942, poppies were grown for agricultural rather than narcotic purposes. They replaced the poppy seed crops that had previously been imported from Europe but had been cut off during the war. In 1938, some 4,400 tons of poppy seed had been imported into the United States. Consequently, the value of poppy seed increased from 7 cents a pound to 50 cents a pound.<sup>55</sup> American farmers picked up the slack. The FBN was fearful of widespread non-narcotic poppy growth. Opium poppies could be hidden among the normal flowers. They also worried that opium could be extracted from some other poppies in much smaller yields by traditional methods of lancing. The farmers disputed this was possible. So worried were the FBN that they did not publicise or act when made aware of families growing poppies in their garden. They did not want to draw attention to the potential of poppy growth.

Widespread poppy crop growth across the United States would not only risk supplying the black-market but could also undermine the US' geopolitical

subjectivity at the League. For opium to remain a diplomatic tool, Anslinger had to retain complete control over the American market, lest other arrangements undermined his ability to negotiate painkiller supplies. After passing these reservations to Congress, the 1942 Poppy Control Act was passed, giving the FBN license over who could grow any type of poppies and how much they could grow. This further enamoured the FBN with large pharmaceutical companies, who benefitted from large-scale poppy growth that the FBN licensed to them.

The threat of rampant, unchecked poppy growth was always virtual. It never occurred, but the FBN had to constantly act to stop the threat materialising. The biggest challenge the FBN faced was in California; many poppies were grown with the approval of the State Legislature, and the Department of Agriculture.<sup>56</sup> The variety of poppies being grown ranged from the signature state flower (California Poppy) to the 'Tall Paeony Flower Double'. In 1941 the FBN collected samples from the region's growers to determine which poppies contained opiate alkaloids. Chemical tests revealed every crop belonging to the family of *papaver somniferum* was found to contain minute amounts of morphine (including 'Holland Blue', 'Mikado Carnation' and 'Persian Poppy') whereas the California Poppy belonged to the non-opiate family of *papaver rhoeas*. The FBN asked the California companies to discontinue the growth of these flowers. Most companies agreed. Some small-scale growers abjured the FBN, arguing that it was unfair that Northern and Mid-western growers were permitted to plant their seed before the act came into law in February 1942. Because of the difference in climate, Californian growers didn't plant their seeds until February had ended.



The FBN agreed to authorise a single year's growth of seeds and then expected all growers to desist in the following year. In 1943, the California state attorney general then issued a decision obliging the state's narcotics division to license permits to farmers. The FBN reported the infraction to Congress, but growers from the Santa Maria Valley farmers filed a lawsuit arguing the 1942 Act did not apply to them, as the poppies were used as a foodstuff rather than narcotics.

Once again, the question was whether the flowers were legal, based on the materiality of the substances. The morphine content of the poppies was high enough to warrant a threat to the nation's security. Once again, narcotic agents gathered samples for the impending court case. These were sent to three separate chemists, one in Washington DC, one in San Francisco, and one in St Paul, Minnesota. The results conclusively proved trace amounts of morphine within the flowers (table 6).<sup>57</sup>

**TABLE 6: ADAPTED FROM 1953 RESULTS OF THE SAMPLES OF FLOWERING POPPY PLANTS AND CAPSULES. ALL CONTAINED MINUTE AMOUNTS OF MORPHINE. SOURCE: BULLETIN ON NARCOTICS.<sup>58</sup>**

	Washington chemist		Saint Paul chemist	
Case No.	Exhibit no.	Morphine (%)	Exhibit no.	Morphine (%)
<i>Young plants</i>				
3327	5	0.051	6	0.043
3330	5	0.062	6	0.047
3343	2	0.072	3	0.040
3344	2	0.052	3	0.040
3345	2	0.048	3	0.039
3346	2	0.056	3	0.035
3350	2	0.056	3	0.052
<i>Capsules</i>				
3327	13	0.18	14	0.19
3330	14	0.18	13	0.27
3343	8	0.17	9	0.23
3344	8	0.18	9	0.23
3345	5	0.25	6	0.19
3346	8	0.24	9	0.23
3350	8	0.17	9	0.19

Even these minor amounts, hardly enough to yield a marketable crop, were deemed a threat to national security by the FBN. The growers stood firm, arguing that

all poppies produce opium and morphine, including the California poppy (*eschschozia californica*), the state flower of California; and that innumerable other agricultural plants produce poisons in some part of the plant or at some stage of growth, so that there was no more reason to prohibit the cultivation of poppies for food purposes than of tomatoes, potatoes, lima beans, rhubarb, lettuce, tapioca, apricots, and cherries.<sup>59</sup>

The FBN flexed its geopolitical muscles in response, arguing the growers were impeding their ability to uphold the 1912 International Opium Convention and destabilising America's diplomatic reputation as a leader in global drug prohibition. The US was one of the few countries which strictly controlled opium production. These trace amounts of morphine jeopardised that position. This argument was enough to convince a Statutory Emergency Court in 1942. When the verdict was handed down in favour of the FBN, the farmers decided not to appeal to the Supreme Court. With this decision, the US rid itself of the last vestiges of poppy production.

As Bewley-Taylor rightly argues 'the United States consistently put its faith in a policy that held control at the foreign source to be the most effective way to halt drug use within its own borders'.<sup>60</sup> The rebellion indicates how this discourse failed to appreciate the complexity of poppy consumption within the country. Entirely innocent agricultural practices threatened to deterritorialise the American drug control assemblage.

## The Opium Determination Programme: chemistry, modernity, and geopolitics

Opium determination grew out of a belief in science and the scientific method. Krige & Wang suggest that science and technology, emerged from WWII as ‘major forces for destruction – and liberation – [and] propelled their practitioners into positions of influence’.<sup>61</sup> They go on to suggest our knowledge of technocratic lobbyists and their role in steering policy is not well-known. This section offers a contribution to scholarship on that problem in the context of opium determination.

As Malleck suggests, early twentieth-century pharmacists contributed to a Canadian ideal of national integrity where ‘the proper and improper use of ... substances was but one part of a broader vision for the future of Canada’.<sup>62</sup> The same holds true for the US and opium determination. In 1951, the president of the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science) Rodger Adams described a vision of the future global order where the chemically sophisticated nations prospered. He did not want the US to become ‘technologically unsuited to a future in a strictly chemical world’.<sup>63</sup> As Reiss suggests, ‘Adam’s geopolitical hierarchy was shaped by a faith that the capacity to chemically alter raw materials was a marker of national superiority, and the ideal relationship between powerful and weak nations was one that ensured a steady flow of raw materials into US industrial laboratories’.<sup>64</sup> The developed markets of the European and American manufacturing and pharmaceutical industries were deemed superior to the opium cultivating regions of the world. This narco-geography was marked by

technological superiority and adherence to international law. The hinterlands of opium production remained dangerous, wayward, and unregulated.

The scientific process achieved during this era reflected the dominant liberal order of the time.<sup>65</sup> The ODP was no exception. Even if its work was deemed apolitical, its purpose was markedly geared towards preserving the integrity of the international system. This was not just through the desires of prohibitionists. The ODP was viewed as a place in which information about the trade could be exchanged, and the UN could use its findings to improve the situation for all.

Diplomats were interested in the secrets that opium seizures might provide about the scale and nature of the trafficking problem. How much opium was being syphoned off into the illegal traffic? At what stage in a country's control mechanism was there a lack of scrutiny? Most importantly, as the *Bulletin on Narcotics* put it, 'where does all the opium come from that provides the illicit traffickers with their wares and the clandestine factories with the raw material for the manufacture of drugs for the illicit market?'<sup>66</sup>

So began various investigations into methods to determine the origin of seized opium — what I am referring to broadly as the Opium Determination Programme (ODP). In 1938, the League's Health Committee had compiled a report on the 'Determination of Morphine Content in Raw Opium' which had reached Anslinger by 1939.<sup>67</sup> The method was quickly re-appropriated to supplement methods of determining the source of opium. Yet the method needed samples upon which it could be tested. In 1948, two resolutions were adopted by ECOSOC. The first invited governments to send samples of

legally produced opium to the US and also asked participating governments to encourage and offer scientists and laboratory space for opium determination. The second resolution allowed the Secretary-General to accept facilities offered by the US.<sup>68</sup> The FBN provided labour and access to laboratories, to investigative methods of opium determination.<sup>69</sup> Much of the work undertaken by the UN was done in New York in laboratory space owned by the Treasury Department (of which the FBN was a division).

Initially, ECOSOC requested that governments submit samples from the legal traffic to the laboratories.<sup>70</sup> If opium determination were to be credible, it would need to be a uniform and thorough practice that could be repeatable and replicable. It would code the drug production assemblage through a shared commitment to the scientific method. As Barry reminds us, standards are cultural values that have to be imposed upon unruly elements.<sup>71</sup> On 27 May 1952, the CND tried to do just this to opium. After some early successes, this remit was expanded to include illicit seizures in 1952, and a second laboratory was set up in 1953 in Geneva.<sup>72</sup> The CND adopted a resolution that put research into the origin of opium squarely within the purview of the international community. The CND

Noting the progress made in research work into the origin of opium,

Desiring to extend the research to cover all types of opium produced in the world,

1. Requests governments to send to the United Nations Research Laboratory for analysis samples of all opium seized in illicit traffic; and

2. Instructs the Secretary-General to study and submit to the Council, at its fifteenth session, a detailed estimate of the cost of preparing and equipping a laboratory, preferably in the Secretariat building of the United Nations, large enough to handle the increased research work.<sup>73</sup>

Governments were thus requested to submit samples of seizures to the US. These were meant to be clearly identified substances that would be used to catalogue the various types of opium around the world. Proxy methods such as labelling, ship's itineraries and suspect testimonies could then corroborate findings from the lab.

This work yielded promising results in the identification of known opium samples, primarily through their morphine content. Researchers found similarities in their results when testing various samples and optimism for the programme grew. On 5 May 1948, Charles Fulton, the chemist who was now working with the Internal Revenue Service, FBN and Narcotic Division of the UN Secretariat, submitted one of the first reports to the CND outlining a scientific method for determining opium origin through microscopy.<sup>74</sup>

The UN solicited many countries, but also chemists, and corporations to aid the US chemists in analysing, categorising, and cross-referencing seizures with industry-standard opium. One such chemist was Charles Farmilo of the Organic Chemistry and Narcotic Section, Food and Drug Laboratories, Department of National Health and Welfare in Canada. Pharmaceutical companies provided the industry standard samples from which standardised tests could be developed. 95 substances with many different trade names in

different countries were submitted to the FBN. The FBN procured substances from as far as Rangoon (Yangon) in Burma for the chemists to work with.<sup>75</sup>

Interoperability between the US and UN in opium determination became a key goal. For Dittmer, interoperability is the ability of different organisations, nations, and military forces to function together, conducting joint operations and sharing common doctrines.<sup>76</sup> Dittmer sees this as strikingly similar to DeLanda's definition of an assemblage, where parts of the assemblage may leave and join another. Despite the aims of interoperability, the movement of one element into another assemblage rarely produces the desired effects. This is obvious in the attempts to try and harmonise the process of opium determination across multiple laboratories. If a determination were to be credible, results produced at one laboratory would have to be repeatable at another, using the same methods and equipment.

The latter years of the ODP demonstrate just how deeply entrenched supply-focussed policies were at the UN and CND. Through opium determination, the FBN and UN became interested in technical solutions to an essentially geopolitical problem: persuading nations to suppress the production of narcotics. They desired an apolitical method of proving that illegal opium reaching the US came from a specific nation. For the FBN, opium determination was indifferent to politics. It did not account for the nationality of a smuggler or vessel, nor did it point fingers at governments. It could not lie, nor could it deceive. It simply pointed to a geographical region of the planet where that opium had originated. Because it was perceived as



apolitical, it became the perfect political tool for prohibitionists navigating the sensitive world of Cold-War diplomacy.

Scholars have used different theoretical models to explore how scientific knowledge is created. Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar refer to the enrolment of different materials within actor-networks<sup>77</sup> Michel Callon has explored how individuals with diseases research their conditions to gain an active stake in the naming and treatment of it.<sup>78</sup> Both have their merits as they draw attention to a process of construction, but Barry, drawing on Foucault's notion of 'the gaze', sees knowledge production as a process of demonstration, where an object is made visible to an audience in a technological society. Barry's notion is useful as it points to the blurring of scientific and political debate at the UN. While standards have the benefits of creating a homogeneous zone in which geographical or social difference can be eradicated, they necessarily lead to abstraction. A demonstration, be it a political rally or a scientific experiment, legitimises the person or group that speak about an object authoritatively, often out of the context within which an object or issue is encountered. By implication, it de-legitimises others. The ODP was a demonstration of opium to the audience of international delegates. As Barry notes: 'in those international political arenas in which consensus might be difficult to reach ... science and technology can have a large role to play'.<sup>79</sup>

In 1954 Paul Martin, Minister of Health for Canada, announced a provisional way to determine opium's origin.<sup>80</sup> The 1953 Protocol did not enter law until March of 1963 and then was soon supplanted by the 1961 Conventions entry into force in 1964. As both were being debated in the early 1950s, seizures

had increased in the post-war years (Table 7, reprint of Table 4). The PCOB and DSB continued to serve out their functions by reducing diversion but could do little to tackle smuggling and illegal production. While the 1956 Narcotic Control Act gave the US more powers to tackle international trafficking, the UN remained hamstrung by the bitter debates over the 1953 Opium Protocol and 1961 Single Convention. The ODP produced encouraging results at a geopolitically salient moment in the development of drug diplomacy. The only area of drug control showing a measure of progress was the ODP. Anslinger vigorously supported the research of the ODP chemists. Customs agents, chemists, and the FBN had long identified narcotics by their colour, texture, and alkaloid content. The ODP promised them confirmation of these conclusions.

**TABLE 7: GLOBAL POST-WAR OPIUM SEIZURES. SOURCE: BULLETIN ON NARCOTICS<sup>81</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Kg</b>
1946	22,413
1947	18,389
1948	17,948
1949	20,503
1950	46,286
1951	39,492

In 1954, the US seized a variety of opium that was of high enough quality for chemical analysis (seizures from street level sellers had usually been adulterated and were useless for identification). Most of these seizures came

from the East Coast and New York (Table 8), then the heroin capital of the world. The FBN chemists had performed basic tests on their purity and heroin content, but analysing them would prove useless unless a chemical standard against which they could be judged was produced. As we shall see, the UN had to intervene to make this happen.

**TABLE 8: AVERAGED CHEMICAL PROPERTIES OF US SEIZURES IN 1954 BY LOCATION. THE EAST COAST, PARTICULARLY NEW YORK, HAD BECOME THE HEROIN CAPITAL OF THE USA. SOURCE: FBN.<sup>82</sup>**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Number of Samples</b>	<b>Total Weight (g)</b>	<b>Anhydrous Heroin (%)</b>	<b>Purity (%)</b>
Boston	29	37.43	10.2	11.75
New York	508	349.7	42.71	49.01
Philadelphia	23	393.17	6.22	7.12
Baltimore	67	114.14	4.84	5.55
Atlanta	4	121.5	6.75	7.72
Louisville	11	230	4.86	5.58
Detroit	166	175.85	7.57	8.69
Chicago	116	12.24	16.42	18.84
Kansas City	64	35.6	5.31	6.08
Minneapolis	3	138	3.25	3.64
San Francisco	48	171	61.23	70.27
Seattle	14	163	31.38	36.01
Hawaii	5	79.3	74.03	85.35

On January 24, 1955, Anslinger received a letter from a Mr K. Hossick of the Canadian Division of Narcotic Control, discussing a paper he observed at the Pittsburgh Convention on Analytical Chemistry. This paper dealt with measuring the content of ash in opium seizures, but like Anslinger, Hossick looked to expand the purpose of opium identification. Hossick suggested ‘in

order to control the international drug traffic, the geographical source of the illicit opium must be known so that supplies of the drug may be cut off at the start'.<sup>83</sup> This suggests that Hossick, a scientist, felt that the ODP would help tackle the illegal trade in smuggled narcotics, rather than just highlighting it at the CND. In other words, he was suggesting that the scientific findings of the ODP could benefit the process of drug diplomacy in other ways.

The basic tests analysed the alkaloid and organic composition of opium samples along with atomic absorption spectrometry.<sup>84</sup> Many hoped that once a set of techniques had been found to effectively determine opium, they could also be applied to other opiates found in the illicit traffic. By 1955, the FBN had recorded a decrease in opium smoking of 60-80%. The narcotic threat now existed in the form of opiates and opioids.<sup>85</sup> Some 10% of the global traffic was reaching the US shores, and smuggled heroin and morphine had taken over as the drugs of choice. They were less bulky than opium and captured a much wider market.

In 1955 morphine's stereochemistry (the spatial arrangement of a molecule's atoms) was confirmed in 1955 by Dorothy Hodgkin of Oxford.<sup>86</sup> This was useful for ODP researchers. It let them study the molecule in the abstract, divorced from the context of chemistry and geography. Farmilo published many of his findings in the *Bulletin on Narcotics*,<sup>87</sup> as did assorted ODP researchers.<sup>88</sup> Most of their findings were positive and seemed to suggest that a county or region could be inferred due to the opium poppy's geographical adaption to specific soil and climate. These two factors remained constant, whereas other factors affected the chemistry: storage,

the number of times a bud was lanced, and crop age would confound any single clear determination.

The UN established a 'committee of experts' to determine whether the laboratory methods had applications in the field. This committee was made up of chemists from around the world, including Axel Jermstead of the University of Oslo, Ps Krishnan of the Indian Government's laboratories and Lyndon F Small of the US National Institute of Health. They were so impressed with the progress made by the FBN that in 1956, the UN's Division of Narcotic Drugs established its laboratory for determining the origin of opium under the moniker of the Opium Research Project, directed by the Norwegian Scientist Olav Braenden.

It is at this point that the value of the project to international diplomacy was first discussed publically. In 1952, in one report sent to the FBN on the progress made by the DND, a series of FAQs were answered in detail. One of these questions was 'what is the value of determining opium to law enforcement?'. The report responded by noting that it would 'cut down the source of supply'. It would do so by alerting 'governments of producing countries to greater precautionary measures and suppressive measures... and also to alert the victim countries as to the source of danger'.<sup>89</sup>

The ODP was only ever designed to provide intelligence in the broader fight against the illicit traffic, rather than evidence for securing convictions for specific cases. Charles Fulton wrote

I find that there is a lot of misunderstanding and that even people who approve of our programme tend to leap to the idea that it is intended

to lead to the conviction of the particular purveyors in the country of origin. On the contrary, as I see it, our programme is intended to convince any producing country concerned, or alternatively the community of nations as a whole, that we know where the opium is coming from, and — if it leaks out in any quantity—that something must be done about it on the home grounds.<sup>90</sup>

If control advocates felt that the opium determination might aid in capturing smugglers, they were broadly mistaken. The report noted that ‘probably, it would not help at all’.<sup>91</sup>

The ODP was methodologically complex. There were many competing tests that offered contradictory results. The UN’s DND laboratory specialised in ‘routine chemical analysis, paper chromatography, paper electrophoresis and equipment for opium ash analysis using spectrographic and spectrophotometric methods’.<sup>92</sup> Ash determination had the most potential and garnered plenty of interest.

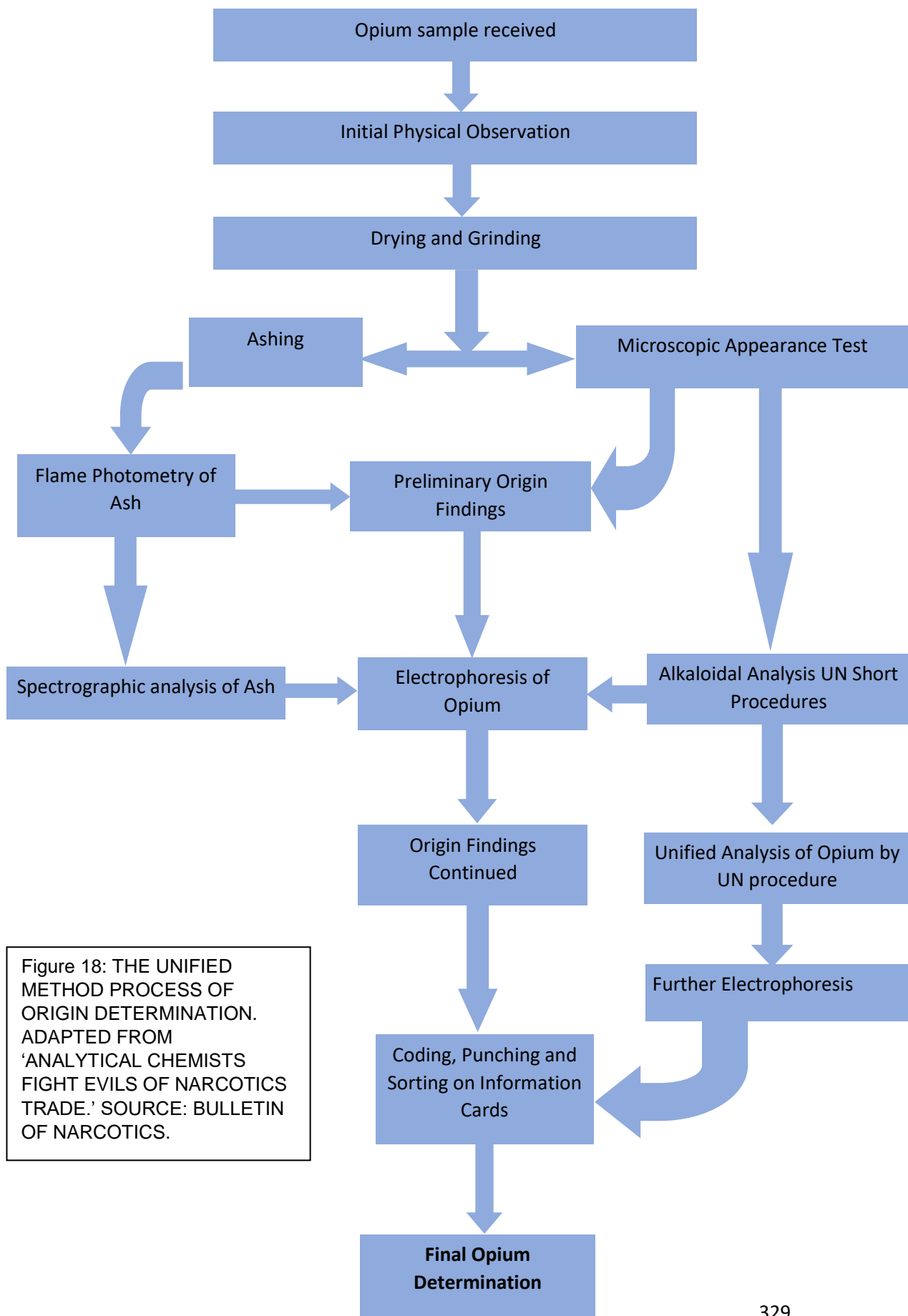
It is here that opium is best thought of a multiplicity which has ‘no need whatsoever of unity in order to form a system’.<sup>93</sup> For every sample that was successfully documented and tabulated, a thousand variations in the chemical composition of actual seizures and ash content could confound any certainty over its origin. Furthermore, the methods were unreliable. Titration – one of the main methods for determining yields from opium that was not included in the unified method – often produced inconclusive results when countries estimated their requirements for the PCOB. The French had conceded that this required that the utmost confidence ‘be placed in the

manufacturers and that this confidence must rest on a solid basis. The standing of the licence holders should be unquestioned'.<sup>94</sup> The results could vary drastically on the same sample. With such variations it could be difficult to ascertain exactly how much product a batch of opium would yield, and therefore how much a country would produce and subsequently export. Determining the morphine content of a sample via titration for the ODP also yielded inconsistent results when the same sample was measured twice.<sup>95</sup>

On 15 March 1955, Anslinger received a letter from Dwight Avis of the Alcohol and Tax Division. Avis had presented a paper on ash seizures to the American Chemical Society. In it, he counselled against any premature enthusiasm regarding the ash method: factors affecting both the ash and metallic compounds had not yet been evaluated to reveal any substantial conclusions.<sup>96</sup>

As such, no single chemical test was designated as sufficient for opium identification. Instead, the DND laboratory developed a 'single unified method', comprised of multiple methods developed by a variety of governments and organisations).<sup>97</sup>





There were many problems with the unified method. First, was procurement. The ODP was entirely reliant on samples supplied by producing nations and pharmaceutical companies. Most pharmaceutical companies obliged, and medical grade samples from pharmaceutical companies were useful, but researchers required reliable samples from the illicit traffic from across the world.

Many producer nations were hostile or indifferent to the programme. Some even tried to sabotage it. One simple method of discrediting the ODP was non-compliance. Producer nations could withhold samples or make their transit onerously difficult. This was not hard to do. US law had made shipping narcotics so difficult researchers found it difficult to transport samples to one another anyway. Simple noncompliance was also effective. Some nations deferred on sending regular samples.<sup>98</sup> Even if they did submit a sample, they could cause further confusion by forgetting or omitting to send accompanying information. One undated report from the CND noted 'the inadequacy and often even contradictory nature of the information obtained and supplied'.<sup>99</sup> Such problems forced the CND to pass a resolution in April 1958 where it

Urged the Governments of the following countries: Bulgaria, Greece, India, Iran, Japan, Pakistan, Turkey, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugoslavia, to provide or continue to provide the United Nations Laboratory with sufficient authenticated opium samples from the various regions of production inside the country over a period of years covering possible fluctuations in local production, accompanying each sample with the following information: year of

production, precise locality of production, details of harvesting - e.g., first or second lancing, weight of the sample, whether it is opium from one cultivator or several neighbouring cultivators, local name of the variety of poppy and other relevant data.<sup>100</sup>

Second, researchers were dismayed to learn that the number of variables that could change the chemistry of a seizure kept growing. Research was undertaken on fertiliser,<sup>101</sup> soil, slope, latitude, and also the variations in each alkaloid found within a sample.<sup>102</sup> With such variation, cataloguing the full spectrum of results was a daunting task. DND researchers estimated that three different sets of samples would be needed to produce a dataset comprehensive enough for comparing seizures against. The first was a set of the salts of the opium alkaloids of accurately known composition; the second would be exported opium where the composition had been determined, including major and minor alkaloids (there are twenty in raw opium) in the opium and ash. The third was a set of ten authenticated blocks of opium unknown to the laboratory, who would then use their methods to see if their conclusions matched the authenticated samples.

The third set of problems in the ODP were technical and financial.

Cataloguing the sheer variety of chemical compositions that opium could take required a substantial investment of time, money, and equipment, often well beyond the limited budget of the ODP.<sup>103</sup> There were only three full-time chemists in the DND laboratory,<sup>104</sup> and the US laboratory was ill-equipped to perform the unified method. Furthermore, scuffles about the make-up and financing of the team hindered progress. The FBN lobbied for the inclusion of Dr Eimar Brochmann-Hansenn, a professor of pharmaceutical chemistry at

the University of California Medical Centre. Brochmann-Hansenn wanted to extend the project to include the alkaloids of opium: morphine, narcotine, papaverine, thebaine, and codeine. If the program could offer determination on these substances, it would be useful to the FBN. Other chemists wanted to focus exclusively on opium determination. These disagreements hampered the hiring process at the bureaucratic UN.

Finally, using the unified method on just one sample could take weeks. Whereas the first half of the unified method gave a rapid screening and indication of the profile of a substance, it could not provide the detailed information or a conclusive or definitive origin without further, extensive analysis. The first half was also unreliable. The latter, more accurate methods, particularly spectrographic methods and electrophoresis, required expensive laboratory equipment, technical know-how, and time. Worse still, a single part of a larger seizure might not be consistent with other parts of the same seizure. A seizure could often contain a composite of different types of opium. The two assumptions made by the FBN – that samples would display uniform materiality and that a single seizure would contain opium from a single location – turned out to be problematic.

To tackle these problems, the expert committee on the unified method broke down the testing into two groups, one that could be applied in labs across the world (including micro and macroscopic analysis of appearance, unified analysis, and the punching and sorting of samples). The more specialised, secondary methods were to be performed by another group at the UN lab, whose work was considered 'highly essential'.<sup>105</sup> If a sample did make it through the method – and the steps were fully followed and corroborated in

different laboratories – an origin might be provisionally determined. It could not, however, be located to anything smaller than a region or country. There were many cases where two possible locations were submitted to the CND. This meant that the conclusions reached by the DND were easily disputed by an accused nation. In a telling letter from Charles Farmilo to Anslinger in 1958, Farmilo disclosed that an unnamed embassy had protested the results of some of his findings. They did so by suggesting ‘the sample I considered to be of X origin the opium (in their opinion) did not present any similarity of characteristics with opium of X origin’.<sup>106</sup> Farmilo confessed he ‘sometimes got discouraged by these continuing setbacks’.<sup>107</sup> With recalcitrant nations able to quash findings, it appeared that the material profile would not provide the certainty control advocates sought. As the ODP stalled, Anslinger would not be discouraged. He urged Farmilo on.<sup>108</sup> He wrote

I feel that the availability of more comparative samples from the various opium producing regions of the world will be advantageous in securing wider acceptance of the validity of the laboratory determinations of origin ... I hope that this will not result in a discontinuance of the splendid research efforts that, in my opinion, have had such valuable results.<sup>109</sup>

As the world’s appetite for morphine and heroin dramatically outweighed that of raw opium, the traffic and seizures of these alkaloids increased, the progress made in opium determination became less important. As early as 1953, diversion was almost zero in the United States. By 1963, heroin had become ‘by far the most important drug of addiction, at least in the Western world’.<sup>110</sup> As it became clear that more opium was produced and

manufactured entirely outside of governmental control and national legislation, instead of being diverted from legal stocks, many states began to admit they had little capacity to control criminal activities within their borders. As mentioned in chapter three, countries such as Iran and Turkey reached out for help and technical assistance. Coupled with a drastic reduction in diversion and increase in illegal cultivation, the geopolitical value of the ODP declined.

The findings of opium determination had no identifiable impression upon nations, who were then gearing up for a long and arduous debate on the 1961 Convention. When Harry Anslinger retired from the FBN in 1962, so did the fervent desire for origin determination for diplomatic purposes. The DND shifted towards opiate analysis and identification in the field. Analysts focused on the substance and its toxicity rather than the country of origin.<sup>111</sup> With that shift, the search for scientific evidence for diplomatic claims died. Progress into the science of drug identification continued, and the DND laboratory became a hub for regional training and reference samples around the world.<sup>112</sup> It went on to have many successes, particularly for the rapid identification of unknown substances.

The Opium Determination Programme could only emerge from the specific geopolitical context that saw supply control as equivalent with drug control. It was only when the world largely agreed that opium smuggling was a problem that the UN provided resources to analyse it. Ironically, as more nations agreed to tackle the illegal production and trade of narcotics, the ODP became less relevant.

The failure of the ODP came from misunderstandings about the materiality of opium. Whereas Anslinger saw an ironclad, irrefutable honesty in determination, the materiality of opium complicated the act of truth-telling. Demonstrating an origin meant creating instruments, methods and expertise that could demonstrate truth and make it visible. Furthermore, Andrew Barry distinguishes between political and anti-political actions. A political action may seek to open 'new sites and contestation',<sup>113</sup> whereas an anti-political action would seek to close it down. The ODP was an attempt to reduce the space for politics. By bringing the scientific method into opium determination, drug diplomacy was turned into a technical practice of government. If there were no dispute over the origin of a seizure, then ending opium smuggling itself might become a technical strategy rather than a political goal. However, by placing faith in organic chemistry, the technical and scientific arena within which opium was analysed was politicised. States began to disagree about claims to truth and question the value of the programme altogether. In the US, disagreements over funding and staffing were as much political as they were technical. With Anslinger keeping a close eye on the programmes, geopolitical aims were imbued into scientific ones.

The next part of my analysis examines the mediums on which the ODP's truth claims were carried: documents were not simple conveyors of truth, but themselves agentic in that they conditioned the conclusions that the ODP offered.

#### Documents and agentic capacities

For Barry, the production of 'information has complex and often unexpected implications for those involved in its production'.<sup>114</sup> Here, I would like to

discuss the materiality of information production: the paper on which the ODP findings were communicated. While these documents might seem insignificant, a flat ontology does not hold any entity in the assemblage as, conceptually, more important. Instead, the relative importance of elements emerges from specific interactions rather than any notion of human agency. The term agency itself is somewhat problematic since it indicates a quality that is possessed, rather than shared, distributed or generative. As Coole has argued, the phrase 'agentic capacities' is more useful in considering how processes unfold (in this case, knowledge production).<sup>115</sup> I argue agentic capacities help us understand how the materiality of opium influenced Anslinger's political aims. This means paying careful attention to the role of documents in the ODP.

It is the capacity of the documents to enter new relations in the assemblage that makes them agentic, and ultimately impactful upon drug diplomacy. They provide an insight into the failure of the ODP that does not rest on funding, staffing, or a lack of political will. As Dittmer has convincingly argued in his case study of the Foreign Office, paper documents shaped diplomatic practice by their capacities. He notes that its capacity to catch fire and its weight made it cumbersome and difficult to store in the Nineteenth Century Foreign Office. Because of this, the problems of storing paper formed part of the bid for a new governmental building.<sup>116</sup>

The documents I analysed are formal, technical records of seizures and their chemical profiles kept by analysts in the ODP. They also include instructions for undertaking narcotics tests, receipts for seizures, and of monetary



transfers made to the DND and ODP staff. I believe they became agentic in two ways.

The first obvious point here is that the paper medium functioned as recording devices. The ODP documents were ultimately meant to provide a compendium of opium samples that were chronicled so that standards for each nation's opium signature could be deduced. It was only when these samples were chronicled and recorded in concert, that such measurements could be made.

Conceptualised thus, the absolute value of a sample's morphine content, its colour and microscopic profile were worthless: if all opium contained 16% morphine, there would be no point in measuring it. The samples became both scientifically, and subsequently geopolitically, meaningful when the differences in relative values of morphine content were recorded on paper.

Second, the paper documents were replicable and easy to transport. They could be appended to reports to UN funders to demonstrate progress, and most importantly, they provided a solution to the problem of posting seizures through the mail. Fulton often attached summary reports of seizures in his correspondences with Anslinger. Paper was not subject to the same onerous legal requirements for transportation that seizures were beholden to. Every sample that was transferred to the US ultimately had to be authorised by Anslinger, and chemists had to make their case before he would approve a transfer. Before posting a seizure from the FBN – or shipping samples entering the US – to the UN laboratories, a paper summary of the basic chemistry of the sample could be sent to determine if the sample was of

interest to the researchers. If a paper description of a sample was deemed important, a request for the sample to be securely posted could be made to the FBN. The converse was also true. One seizure named the 'Contini sample' was unusual in that it exhibited abnormal levels of porphyroxine and codeine. This made it similar to opium produced in Malatya, Zaire in Turkey, and the Punjab region of India. Fulton believed it was not from India, but was nonetheless worth ruling out chemically. He asked Anslinger for more time to study the sample.<sup>117</sup> To keep his missive brief, Fulton included technical details of the differences in codeine and pophyroxine. Technical documents were informative, but also authoritative; they 'manipulated an object into a more or less standardised form'<sup>118</sup> that made the work of the ODP possible. It was not just technical reports or samples that had to be posted, but academic articles, procedural documents and of course, permits and permissions for working with seizures. Charles Fulton had to order seven new copies of the '*The Determination of Codeine, Narcotine, Papaverine and Thebaine in Opium*' for his laboratory so he could continue with his work and train other chemists.

Documents were not infallible, nor did they always accurately reproduce the information that was sent. The reliance on forms that described samples at the ODP made them indispensable and this could be problematic for researchers if the information sent did not match a sample. Honest mistakes from customs officials also caused problems. It was also often the case the photographs of seizures were included with letters and reports, but these photos, taken in black and white, were somewhat unhelpful when trying to compare opium-based on one of its basic defining characteristics: colour.

If documents were incomplete or absent, opium determination was impossible. An FBN chemist named Fuller became increasingly irate due to the lack of information he received with the samples. The competition between the FBN and the Customs Agency is well-known among historians.<sup>119</sup> In one instance, a customs agent sent Fuller a thin sliver of opium and asked him to identify it. It was a 'thin slice ... with no accompanying information as to morphine content or anything else.' Fuller told the Bureau of Customs that he thought it was from Turkey, and asked them to 'resubmit a sample from the seizure, namely, one complete piece, together with information as to the morphine content or anything else already determined on this opium, that might bear on the origin, including particulars as to where the vessel was from, statements of defendants if any were made'.<sup>120</sup> What this shows is that the minor successes of the ODP hinged upon the clear and standardised classification of seizures as they linked to one another, but these were ultimately reliant upon the relationship between two competing government agencies.

It is here that insights from Actor-Network Theory are useful. When thinking through how the ODP progressed, we cannot boil agency down to individuals who worked in it or funded it. Neither does agency exist in the technical documents themselves. Instead, it is their ability to be enrolled into the assemblage for productive purposes (their agentic capacities). The most accurate and substantial determinations were not solely made from chemistry but were confirmed by the traditional proxies for identification. In peering into the black box of the ODP, we are immediately encouraged to look beyond its employees to a much wider set of associations between

humans and non-human actants. Agentic capacities of technical documents played a significant role in the opium determination programme. On the one hand, they allowed for the translation and standardisation of the complexity of variable samples to be displayed uniformly and compared. On the other, they were at best, a mediocre replacement for the sample. The problems of enrolling other actors to their cause, as Fuller found with the lack of documents submitted by the Customs Bureau, could hinder progress. By examining the 'circuits through which matter flows'<sup>121</sup> we can begin to understand how the geopolitical aims of supply control advocates were hindered by the technical documents of the ODP.

### Schedules and the 1961 Convention

The final section of this chapter returns to the issues of narcotic scheduling. When it entered force in 1968, the Convention carried over the complicated system of estimates and import and export licensing established by the 1925 and 1936 conventions, transferring the regulatory functions of the PCOB and DSB to the newly created INCB.<sup>122</sup> In Article 3 of the Convention, the INCB was also given authority to schedule substances based on World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations. These came from the WHO's Expert Committee for Drug Dependence which has the formal responsibility for classifying narcotics under the global drug policy regime today. The WHO could classify drugs into four schedules, two more than the 1931 Convention. These were

Schedule I – The substance is liable to similar abuse and productive of similar ill effects as the drugs already in Schedule I or Schedule II, or is convertible into a drug.

Schedule II – The substance is liable to similar abuse and productive of similar ill effects as the drugs already in Schedule I or Schedule II, or is convertible into a drug.

Schedule III – The preparation, because of the substances which it contains, is not liable to abuse and cannot produce ill effects; and the drug therein is not readily recoverable.

Schedule IV – The drug, which is already in Schedule I, is particularly liable to abuse and to produce ill effects, and such liability is not offset by substantial therapeutic advantages.<sup>123</sup>

The difference between schedule I and II is that in schedule II, substances could be accumulated by governments and medical prescriptions were not obligatory for them to be dispensed. Schedule I substances required these measures, plus had their amounts and estimates submitted to the INCB. Schedule IV substances were to have an extra set of regulations attached for countries that continued to use them, and many countries abolished their use entirely.<sup>124</sup> Over 100 substances were regulated by the 1961 Act. Heroin, morphine, and their derivatives were both categorised into schedule I, the schedule that deals with medicines most important for the twin goals of provision and prohibition. Codeine was categorised into schedule II, and heroin was also categorised into schedule IV, a class reserved for the most dangerous and least useful of substances. That heroin could enter two schedules is an example of its multiplicity. The 1961 schedules territorialised the assemblage towards prohibition. Narcotics were ‘dangerous first and foremost, hence postponing the acknowledgement of their other – in this

case, medicinal – advantages as only the second step in line with the overall effort to exert control and securitize'.<sup>125</sup>

Schedules were designed to streamline the international system and eradicate irregularities between states, creating a smooth space. They were a blueprint which could be adapted by UN member-states. Adherence and adoption of UN schedules was a technical procedure that masked a political argument in favour of prohibition. This was made flagrantly clear when Article 3 of the 1988 Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychoactive Substances required states to take criminal action against people who obtained or sold scheduled substances.

Schedules, as an instrument of regulating drug control, form a technological zone in which standards were made uniform and consensus was reached. They smoothed over the messy materiality of substances (which we have seen, can vary within one small sample). They are not, however, watertight. They created new opportunities for political contestation. The schedules of the 1961 Conventions remain in use today, and many countries have adopted models based on them. States are judged on their ability to create legislation that mirrors the UN schedules and meets international standards.

In the UK, drugs are classified as either A (highly dangerous with higher penalties for trafficking and possession) to C (lowest penalties and least danger). In recent years, some substances have changed schedules, to some protest and controversy (marijuana from class C to class B in the United Kingdom). The UK also has the Misuse of Drug Regulations 2001 that provides a scheduling system for companies wishing to import controlled

substances into the United Kingdom. This is based on the 1961 schedules.

The US uses a system ranging from schedule I (no medical use, high penalties) to schedule II- V (decreasing penalties and potential for abuse).

The architects of the 1961 convention left the definition of 'medical and scientific' usage vaguely defined. Like their predecessors, they recognised it would mean different things at different times.<sup>126</sup> Today, the UN system is still reflective of the spirit of the 1961 conventions: substances are tightly controlled with clear blueprints for tackling the illegal drug trade provided to signatory nations. The medical capacity of substances remains important, if not secondary, to the international drug control regime. This has meant that when it comes to demand reduction, nations have more freedom to experiment with domestic policy; thus, the prescription of heroin, needle exchanges, and therapeutic uses of MDMA and LSD all have their places in the international schedules, but are theoretically and simultaneously permissible under 1961 Convention's provision clauses.<sup>127</sup>

However, UN law is not self-executing; it is not enforced, nor can it be enforced, by the INCB.<sup>128</sup> The decriminalisation of cannabis for personal, non-medical use is exemplary of the fuzzy limits of the GDTR. The GDTR does not require a state to criminalise use per se, which was one of Anslinger's problems with its passage. While the INCB considers non-medical, personal use contrary to the spirit of the conventions, a nation-state which does permit personal possession of small amounts of cannabis has a variety of ways of doing so. Non-enforcement, decriminalisation, and technical arguments are used to stretch the schedule boundaries. In some Indian states, *Bhang* is made from the leaves of cannabis, but the 1961

schedules only cover the flowering buds and resin of the plant.<sup>129</sup> Just as it was in the 1920s, claims about the legality of drugs, at least in the international sphere, are political claims that are made on technical grounds. It is the flexibility of provision that allows nations to circumvent the prohibitory aspects of international control. If a country chooses to abjure international law by scheduling substances differently to the UN, there is little that the international community can do but raise formal complaints. As Barry might say, the edges of the GDTR's technological zone provide opportunities for political and geopolitical flexibility.

This was just as true in the first half of the twentieth-century as it is today. Much of the work of the LoN was a geopolitical struggle towards defining medical and scientific usage; countries could signal a change in geopolitical allegiance by their adherence or rejection of the drug treaties, and mask these political changes with recourse to technical disagreements about narcotics and their ambivalent materiality. It was this ambivalence within the technological zone that Anslinger and his allies were trying to eradicate.

#### Aftermath: killing painkiller access

The provision of painkillers around the world was a critical goal of the 1961 Convention. It is stated in the preambular paragraphs of the treaty.

The parties: *concerned* with the health and welfare of mankind, recognising that the medical use of narcotic drugs continues to be indispensable for the relief of pain and suffering and that adequate provision must be made to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs for such purposes.<sup>130</sup>



It is therefore ironic that provision, which had done so much to secure narcotic prohibition, would be neglected by differing interpretations of the 1961 Convention. To ensure a system of adequate provision, the Single Convention required each signatory country to take four steps when creating a regulatory system for medicinal narcotics. First, individuals dispensing narcotics must become members of a professional body. Second, movement of narcotics must travel between authorised bodies only. Third, a prescription should be required for medical opioids in schedules I and IV of the convention. Fourth, countries also had to institute a regulatory framework that could estimate a country's needs and submit these to the INCB. These factors were designed to maximise provision where needed and reduce diversion to the illegal trade.

For some countries, the technical, legal and financial resources required to implement the basic four-step regime of control did not exist. Other countries created regulatory systems so difficult to navigate that hospitals, pharmacists and doctors did not bother stocking certain narcotics.<sup>131</sup> A simple ban on schedule IV substances was easier, cheaper, and satisfied the INCB, a situation redolent of debates over medicinal value.<sup>132</sup> If developing nations hoped their salvation would lie with new non-narcotic synthetics from manufacturing nations, they were wrong. Developing nations struggled to procure new synthetic narcotics such as oxycodone, dihydrocodeinone, and dihydromorphinone. Many were too expensive to buy from developed nations. In 2003, it was estimated that morphine costs in middle-income countries were twice as high as in developed countries (\$112 against \$56).<sup>133</sup>

In some ways, the perversity of the Single Convention is its success. Even with its pre-ambulatory statement, the Single Convention did not put provision of medicines on an equal footing with the illegal traffic. The noble goal of a controlled world market for medicines led to some nations instituting regulatory systems so strict that gaining a narcotic almost improved impossible. This led many nations to woefully under-assess their narcotic needs. The INCB and WHO have constantly reminded nations of this pressing requirement of the treaty, yet millions continue to suffer needlessly,<sup>134</sup> although some scholars argue the INCB could re-balance its focus back towards provision.<sup>135</sup>

The years beyond 1961 represent the modern era of drug control, governed by the Single Convention and its sister treaties. Iran legalised opium production in 1969 and Turkey signed the Single Convention in 1967. In doing so, Turkey gained status as a legitimate opium producer.<sup>136</sup> However, the Convention's shortcomings in the face of rising drug abuse became apparent as illegal production rose to meet the demand. The problems of synthetic substances in the 1940s portended future problems. As amphetamines and barbiturates became part of the medical arsenal, their abuse exploded around the world, followed by international legislation (the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1972 Conference to Consider Amendments to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs). The 1972 debates caused bickering over the familiar issue of materiality. By signing the 1972 amendments into law, 'manufacturing states conceded an essential point – at least some non-narcotic substances were liable to abuse and should be treated accordingly'.<sup>137</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Latour, B. & Woolgar, S. (2013). 'Laboratory life: The construction of scientific facts'. p.23.
- <sup>2</sup> The definition can be found at Oxford English Dictionary:  
<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/51251?rskey=cuHFSG&result=3&isAdvanced=false#eid>.
- <sup>3</sup> Shapin, S. and Schaffer, S. (1985). *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life*, Princeton University Press, NJ.
- <sup>4</sup> Jasanoff, S. (2006). *Technology as a site and object of politics*. In Oxford handbook of contextual political analysis, Tilly, C. and Goodin, R. (eds.) 745–763. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- <sup>5</sup> Barry, A. (2005). 'Pharmaceutical Matters' p.52.
- <sup>6</sup> Bensaude-Vincent and Stengers, in (Barry, 2005). 'Pharmaceutical Matters' p.57.
- <sup>7</sup> Barry, A. (2005). 'Pharmaceutical Matters' p.53.
- <sup>8</sup> King, R. (1957). 'Narcotic drug laws and enforcement policies'. *Law and Contemporary Problems* 22(1): 113-131.
- <sup>9</sup> King, R. 'Narcotic drug laws and enforcement policies'. p.6.
- <sup>10</sup> Barry, A. (2001). 'Political machines' p.81.
- <sup>11</sup> Barry, A. (2013). 'Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline'.
- <sup>12</sup> McAllister, W. (2000). 'Drug Diplomacy in the twentieth-century'.
- <sup>13</sup> Barry, A. (2013). 'Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline' p.71.
- <sup>14</sup> Bennett, T. (1988). The British experience with heroin regulation. *Law and contemporary problems*, 51(1): 299-314.
- <sup>15</sup> Malleck, D. (2015). 'When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws'.
- <sup>16</sup> Bull, M. (2016). 'Governing the heroin trade: From treaties to treatment'.
- <sup>17</sup> Latour, B. & Woolgar, S. (2013). 'Laboratory life: The construction of scientific facts'.
- <sup>18</sup> Callon, M. (1999). The Role of Lay People in the Production and Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge. *Science Technology & Society* 4(1): 81–94.
- <sup>19</sup> Rose, N. And Miller, P. (1992). 'Political power beyond the state: Problematics of government'.
- <sup>20</sup> Bull, M. (2016). 'Governing the heroin trade: From treaties to treatment' p.88
- <sup>21</sup> Renborg, B. (1964). 'Grand Old Men of the League of Nations, What they Achieved, Who They Were', available at [https://css.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1964-01-01\\_4\\_page002.html](https://css.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1964-01-01_4_page002.html).
- <sup>22</sup> Bull, M. (2016). 'Governing the heroin trade: From treaties to treatment' p.88.
- <sup>23</sup> Protevi, J. (2009). 'Political affect: Connecting the social and the somatic'. p.36.
- <sup>24</sup> One grain of morphine is equivalent to 64.79891 milligrams.
- <sup>25</sup> La Motte, E.N. (1929). The Opium Problem. *The American Journal of Nursing* 29(7): 791–794.
- <sup>26</sup> Doud, E. 'Anaesthesia' US Army Medical Department, *Office of Medical History* available at <http://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwii/thoracicsurgeryvoll/chapter10.htm>
- <sup>27</sup> Courtwright, D.T., Joseph, H. & Des Jarlais, D. (2013). 'Addicts who survived: An oral history of Narcotic use in America before 1965'.
- <sup>28</sup> Druggist Long for Old Times' 15<sup>th</sup> July 1932, *The Star Press*, Indiana. Other examples of mutual cooperation between the FBN and the pharmaceutical lobby (broadly conceived as manufactures, retailers and pharmacists) can be found in newspapers such as the *Lansing State Journal*, 25<sup>th</sup> June 1939 which detailed an event where Anslinger presented awards to the doctors of the American Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Association for 'outstanding chemical research'.
- <sup>29</sup> Epstein, R. C., & Clark, F. M. (1934). Industrial profits in the United States. *NBER Books*, DC.
- <sup>30</sup> FBN (1960). Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs'.
- <sup>31</sup> LoN (1931). 'Limiting Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs', Convention and Protocol Document Signed at Geneva July 31<sup>st</sup> 1931, Library of Congress Collections.
- <sup>32</sup> McAllister, W. B. (2004). The global political economy of scheduling: the international–historical context of the Controlled Substances Act. *Drug & Alcohol Dependence*, 76(1), 3-8.
- <sup>33</sup> Washburn-Wright, 1935: p.483 cited in Musto, D. (1987) 'The American Disease'
- <sup>34</sup> The Paris Protocol of 1948' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1956, 1-10 available at [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1956-01-01\\_1\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1956-01-01_1_page002.html).
- <sup>35</sup> The Paris Protocol of 1948,' 1956.
- <sup>36</sup> McAllister, W. (2000). 'Drug Diplomacy in the twentieth-century' p.97.

- <sup>37</sup> *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1953 'Progress in Determining the Origin of Illicit Opium', 1, P 8-14, UNODC Website [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1953-01-01\\_1\\_page003.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1953-01-01_1_page003.html).
- <sup>38</sup> 'Science trails opium smugglers' *Chemical and Engineering News*, July 17<sup>th</sup> 1954, 27 (37) NARA, RG 170, BNDD, Box 63, p. 1708.
- <sup>39</sup> FBN, (1934). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs' Library of Congress Collections, p.19.
- <sup>40</sup> FBN, (1934). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs' p.20.
- <sup>41</sup> FBN, (1934). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs.'
- <sup>42</sup> The *Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs* reports had sections that reported specific arrests and cases the FBN had successfully prosecuted. They document the colourful and creative methods that traffickers used to smuggle or deceive customs officials.
- <sup>43</sup> FBN, (1934). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs'.
- <sup>44</sup> FBN, (1934). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs' p.75.
- <sup>45</sup> FBN, (1937). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs' Library of Congress Collections, p.13.
- <sup>46</sup> FBN, (1937). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs' p.21.
- <sup>47</sup> FBN, (1937). 'Traffic in Narcotics and Other Dangerous Drugs' p.12.
- <sup>48</sup> 'Opium production throughout the world', *Bulletin on Narcotics*: 6-38 [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1949-01-01\\_1\\_page005.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1949-01-01_1_page005.html).
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- <sup>50</sup> Annett, H. (1920). 'Factors Influencing Alkaloid Content and Yield of Latex in the Opium Poppy (*Papaver somniferum*)'. *Biochemical journal* 14(5): 618-636.
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- <sup>52</sup> 'Determining the Origins of Opium' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1953 1, 14-47 [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1949-01-01\\_1\\_page008.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1949-01-01_1_page008.html).
- <sup>53</sup> 'Determining the Origins of Opium' 1953.
- <sup>54</sup> Kussner, W. (1961) 'Poppy Straw, a problem of narcotics control' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1961-01-01\\_2\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1961-01-01_2_page002.html).
- <sup>55</sup> The Suppression of Poppy Cultivation in the United States, (1950).
- <sup>56</sup> The Suppression of Poppy Cultivation in the United States, (1950).
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- <sup>58</sup> The Suppression of Poppy Cultivation in the United States, (1950).
- <sup>59</sup> The Suppression of Poppy Cultivation in the United States, (1950) p.15.
- <sup>60</sup> Bewley-Taylor, D.R. (2002). United States and International Drug Control p.48.
- <sup>61</sup> Krige, J. & Wang, J. (2015). Nation, Knowledge, and Imagined Futures: Science, Technology, and Nation-Building, Post-1945. *History and Technology* 31(3): 171-179. p.171.
- <sup>62</sup> Malleck, D. (2015). 'When Good Drugs Go Bad: Opium, Medicine, and the Origins of Canada's Drug Laws'. p.8
- <sup>63</sup> Adams, R. (1952). 'Man's Synthetic Future', *Science*, 115(2981): p.157.
- <sup>64</sup> Reiss, S. (2014). 'We Sell Drugs: The Alchemy of US Empire' p.113.
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- <sup>69</sup> 'Opium's spread is under study' July 15<sup>th</sup> 1945, *Palm Beach Post Times*.
- <sup>70</sup> 'Analytical Chemists Fight Evils of Narcotics Trade', *Analytical Chemistry* 1958 30 (8): 19-26.
- <sup>71</sup> Barry, A. (2013). 'Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline'.

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- <sup>75</sup> Anslinger to Aye, Jan 17<sup>th</sup> 1955, 1952-1953, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.
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- <sup>79</sup> Barry, A. (2001). 'Political Machines': p.8
- <sup>80</sup> 'Canadians find way to trace Opium's Origin', 5<sup>th</sup> May 5<sup>th</sup> 1954, *Chicago Tribune*.
- <sup>81</sup> 'Illicit Traffic in Opium', Bulletin on Narcotics, 1953,3, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1953-01-01\\_3\\_page009.html#s0012](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1953-01-01_3_page009.html#s0012).
- <sup>82</sup> 'Hearings Before the subcommittee to investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee on the Judiciary', United States Senate, 84<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session on Communist China and Illicit Narcotic Traffic, NARA RG 170, Blanco Files, Box 14.
- <sup>83</sup> Hossick to Anslinger, Jan 24<sup>th</sup> 1955, NARA RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.
- <sup>84</sup> Bakre, V.J., Karaata, Z., Bartlet, J.C. & Farmilo, C.G. (1959). The Determination of the Origin of Opium. *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* 11(1): 234–243.
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- <sup>87</sup> Yates to Anslinger, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1957, Fulton 1952-1953, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63; Genest, K. & Farmilo, C.G. (1959). Microestimation of Opium Alkaloids in Pharmaceuticals by Paper Chromatograph Food and Drug Directorate, Department of National Health and Welfare, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association (Scientific ed.)* 48(5): 286–289.
- <sup>88</sup> See for example Modern Ion Exchangers in the Analysis of Narcotics and Alkaloids, 1955, 1 p.20-26; Levi, L. Hubley, C. Hinge, R. (1955). 'Infrared Spectra of Narcotics and Related Alkaloids', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1, 1 p.42-42; Manning, J. 'Pressed Bromide Method of Infrared Spectrographic Analysis of Narcotics' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1,1: 85-86. A summary of findings up until 1956 can be found at 'Résumé of recent developments in the programme of opium research' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1956, 2: p.38-39.
- <sup>89</sup> Untitled and undated report on opium determination, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.
- <sup>90</sup> Fulton to Anslinger, May 7<sup>th</sup> 1952, NARA, Fulton 1952-1953, Book 2, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.
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- <sup>92</sup> 'Analytical Chemists Fight Evils of Narcotics Trade', 1958.
- <sup>93</sup> Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and Repetition*, translated by P. Patton, London, Athlone.
- <sup>94</sup> Vaille, C. and Stern, G. 'Control of the opium alkaloid manufacturers'. *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1956, 8 (2): 14-17.
- <sup>95</sup> As reported by the French in the Bulletin, (Vaille, C. and Stern, G. 'Control of the Opium Alkaloid Manufacturers', 2, 1956, 14-17) measures of industrial opium often yielded inconclusive results even when this morphine was destined for the licit market: 'For control purposes, therefore, two runs of titrations are made, as well as random analyses carried out by an official laboratory. Experience has shown, however, that this last-mentioned practice does not afford certainty. Discrepancies have been found between the factory titrations and the Harrison titrations, according to the source of the opium'.
- <sup>96</sup> Avis to Anslinger, March 15<sup>th</sup> 1955, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.
- <sup>97</sup> 'Analytical Chemists Fight Evils of Narcotics Trade', 1958.
- <sup>98</sup> Samples were eventually received from: China, Denmark, Egypt, France, Greece, Guatemala, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Yugoslavia. See 'Resume of Developments in the programme of opium research' 1956 *Bulletin on*

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*Narcotics*, 1, 1: p.39. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1956-01-01\\_2\\_page010.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1956-01-01_2_page010.html).

<sup>99</sup> 'The Geographic Origin of Opium' unpublished report, Fulton 1952-1953, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>100</sup> CND Res.V(XIII). 'Opium Origin Determination' available at [http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/Resolutions/resolution\\_1958-05-01\\_5.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/Resolutions/resolution_1958-05-01_5.html).

<sup>101</sup> 'The part played by fertilizers in increasing opium poppy yields', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1956, 1, 3, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1956-01-01\\_3\\_page010.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1956-01-01_3_page010.html).

<sup>102</sup> 'Influence of the conditions under which the poppy is grown on the alkaloid content of the opium obtained', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1956, 3: p.38-41, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1956-01-01\\_3\\_page009.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1956-01-01_3_page009.html).

<sup>103</sup> There are numerous instances where academics and chemists did not participate in the programme because funds for their salaries or equipment could not be sourced. For example see Anslinger to Farmilo, March, 31 1958, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files Box 63; Fulton to Office of the Controller, Pay and Allowance Division of the UN Secretariat, March 9<sup>th</sup> 1959, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>104</sup> Analytic Chemists, 1958.

<sup>105</sup> Analytic Chemists p.6.

<sup>106</sup> Farmilo to Anslinger, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1958, Fulton Files, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>107</sup> Farmilo to Anslinger, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1958, Fulton Files, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>108</sup> Anslinger to Farmilo, December 17<sup>th</sup> 1958, Fulton Files, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>109</sup> Anslinger to Farmilo, December 17<sup>th</sup> 1958, Fulton Files, Book 2, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>110</sup> 'Some Modern Aspects of Heroin Analysis', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1963, 1: 37-42, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1963-01-01\\_1\\_page008.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1963-01-01_1_page008.html).

<sup>111</sup> 'Analysis of an impure heroin seizure' *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1962, 3: 47-57, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1962-01-01\\_3\\_page006.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1962-01-01_3_page006.html).

<sup>112</sup> Examples of work undertaken can be found in 'The activities of the Narcotics Laboratory Section of the Division of Narcotic Drugs in supporting national laboratories', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1984, 1: p.69-74, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1984-01-01\\_1\\_page008.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1984-01-01_1_page008.html).

<sup>113</sup> Barry, A. (2001). 'Political machines' p.194.

<sup>114</sup> Barry, A. (2001). 'Political machines' p.153.

<sup>115</sup> Coole, D. (2013). Agentic Capacities and Capacious Historical Materialism: Thinking with New Materialisms in the Political Sciences. *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 41(3): 451-469.

<sup>116</sup> Dittmer, J. (2017). 'Diplomatic Material: Affect, Assemblage, and Foreign Policy'.

<sup>117</sup> Fulton to Hoyt, March 22<sup>nd</sup> 1952, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files, Box 63.

<sup>118</sup> Barry, A. (2001). 'Political machines' p.154.

<sup>119</sup> Pembleton, M. R. (2015). 'The Voice of the Bureau: How Frederic Sondern and the Bureau of Narcotics'

<sup>120</sup> Fuller to Harney, September 24<sup>th</sup> 1949, NARA, RG 170, Fulton Files Box 63.

<sup>121</sup> Coole, D. (2013). Agentic Capacities and Capacious Historical Materialism: Thinking with New Materialisms in the Political Sciences p.463.

<sup>122</sup> 'A forty-years' chronicle of international narcotics control', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1968, 2: p.1-4. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1968-01-01\\_2\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1968-01-01_2_page002.html).

<sup>123</sup> The full text of article three can be found at the UNODC website '1961 Convention: Article 3' [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Mandate\\_Functions/Mandate-and-Functions\\_1961-Convention.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CND/Mandate_Functions/Mandate-and-Functions_1961-Convention.html) accessed 26/04/208.

<sup>124</sup> 'The Use of Diamorphine (heroin) in Therapeutics', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1963, 3: [1-5]. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1963-01-01\\_3\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1963-01-01_3_page002.html)

<sup>125</sup> Herschinger, E. (2015). 'The drug dispositif: Ambivalent materiality and the addiction of the global drug prohibition regime'. p.188.

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- <sup>126</sup> Chatterjee, S. K. (1981). *Legal Aspects of International Drug Control*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, Leiden.
- <sup>127</sup> Collins, J. (2014). *Ending the Drug Wars, Report of the LSE Expert Group on the Economics of Drug Policy*. London: LSE. The examples of the US and Columbian experiments with decriminalisation of marijuana and the Swiss experiment with Heroin maintenance (see Transform, (2017). 'Heroin-assisted treatment in Switzerland: successfully regulating the supply and use of a high-risk injectable drug' <https://www.tdpf.org.uk/blog/heroin-assisted-treatment-switzerland-successfully-regulating-supply-and-use-high-risk-0>) are just some of the examples of countries who had tested the edges of the technological zone.
- <sup>128</sup> Bewley-Taylor, D.R. (2012). 'International drug control: Consensus fractured'.
- <sup>129</sup> TNI, (2014). 'The Rise and Decline of Cannabis Prohibition: The History of cannabis in the UN drug control system and options for reform Cannabis reforms: the scope and limits of treaty latitude, *Transnational Institute*, [https://www.tni.org/files/download/rise\\_and\\_decline\\_ch3.pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/download/rise_and_decline_ch3.pdf).
- <sup>130</sup> United Nations, Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, as amended by the 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, 42; and the 'U.N. Secretary General, Commentary on the Single Convention' UNTC treaty data.
- <sup>131</sup> Lohman, D., Schleifer, R. & Amon, J.J. (2010). 'Access to pain treatment as a human right'.
- <sup>132</sup> 'History of Heroin', *Bulletin on Narcotics* 1953, 2, [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1953-01-01\\_2\\_page004.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1953-01-01_2_page004.html)
- <sup>133</sup> Manjiani, D., Paul, D.B., Kunnumpurath, S., Kaye, A.D. & Vadivelu, N. (2014). Availability and Utilization of Opioids for Pain Management: Global Issues. *The Ochsner Journal* 14(2): 208–215.
- <sup>134</sup> De Lima, M. L., Sakowski, J. A., Hill, C. S., & Bruera, E. (2001). Legislation analysis according to WHO and INCB criteria on opioid availability: a comparative study of 5 countries and the state of Texas. *Health Policy*, 56(2): 99-110.
- <sup>135</sup> Taylor, A.L (2007). 'Rethinking the Tragedy of Needless Pain'.
- <sup>136</sup> Rolles, S. (2016) 'Turkey's opium trade: successfully transitioning from illicit production to a legally regulated market',
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## Conclusion

What is the value of this alternative, material history of narco-diplomacy to critical geopolitics? From this thesis, I have drawn the following conclusions. First, that a traditional, geonarcotic perspective highlights issues which are of longstanding interest to political geographers: identity politics, popular geopolitics, diplomacy, and the everyday experience of geonarcotic discourses. Second, there is value in examining the materiality of narcotics. Third, by combining these two insights, we can begin to conceptualise the history of drug control differently; the geopolitical subjectivities of producer, consumer, and manufacturing nations were socio-material. Fourth, there is methodological value in adopting assemblage theory when studying international objects in the archive.

Before reviewing these conclusions individually, I wish to note a general conclusion. Geographical research is strengthened when it considers a broad range of human and non-human influences. One challenge for researchers is finding a way to conceptually link seemingly unrelatable phenomena. In my study, I wished to conceptualise the disjuncture between materiality and discourse when it came to narcotics. This disjuncture emerged between public knowledge of what a narcotic was (a weapon of war) and expert practice of what a narcotic could do. The opium evil discourse pushed for prohibition, repression, control at the source. Diplomatic opium pushed for contradictory actions: regulation, procurement, and a well-regulated trade in vital painkillers.

When thinking through the relationship between geonarcotic discourse and materiality, it is tempting to see the two as opposed. The medicinal story



provides the gritty truth of drug diplomacy, whereas geonarcotic discourse portrayed put the US on an inexorable march towards international prohibition. This would be a mistake. Assemblage analysis suggests that prohibition and provision were complementary concepts. In an assemblage, things are not defined by an essence, but their capacity to connect. For most of the early twentieth-century, a legal narcotic was simply a narcotic being used in a specific way in a specific place and time; legality was dependent upon who was talking, testing or trying to legislate against them. A clear statement on the legitimate uses of opium was what the US desired most. They felt it would help ensure narcotics were administered and used by those who needed them most, while also stopping those who did not need them.

This did not however, translate into the public sphere. Geonarcotics did discursively divide between legal and illegal narcotic, and the public was much less informed about the trade in licit narcotics than the opium evil. Public discourse about weaponised opium had significant impacts on diplomatic debates. Geonarcotics was more than a discourse. Geonarcotics was a terrifying threat, and when combined with a public that was distrustful of the League, it conditioned the actions of diplomats and led to the US withdrawal from the 1925 and 1936 Conventions. The US rejection and subsequent reporting of the rejection of the 1925 Convention attest to this.

This, I feel, is the value of using assemblage theory: to reconcile new-materialist and discursive account of narcotics. As Barry tells us, a chemical isolated in the laboratory is not the same as that same chemical in the real world. This holds true for narcotics. Two substances may share the same

chemistry, but they were differently adulterated and occupied entirely different roles because of the informational and material environments within which they circulated. These informational accounts complimented and contradicted each other, leading to changes in narcotics policy. It is these I turn to now.

### Significant findings: geonarcotics

In the introduction, I set out to answer the following question

What is the relationship between geonarcotic discourses and geopolitical agendas from 1909-1961?

Geonarcotics draws our attention to the ways discourses about drug production are spatialised, rather than the spatialisation of drug use and users. My first conclusion is that narcotics, unlike alcohol and then marijuana, were understood as external threats to the United States. Of course, petty dealers perpetuated the trade within US borders, but the roots and route of the problem were the focus. Narcotics were not just geographically distant, but geopolitically distant. Countries that perpetuated the trade held views on narcotics and political governance that the US viewed as anathema. It is from these roots the subjectivity of the US as a victim of the international opium trade grew.

Second, and following on from this, is that the weaponisation of narcotics grew out of the victim subjectivity that the US press and diplomats wilfully adopted. By setting itself up as a victim of the trade, the US also became the warrior that protected other nations against the opium evil. Geonarcotics was more than a discourse. It was a socio-technical imaginary that demonstrated

the narcotic exceptionalism of the US. By assuming the role of the world's leading proponent of drug control, the US rallied China to its cause and established a link between colonialism and narcotics. While the US and China renounced the lack of progress at the League and blamed the 1925 and 1936 Conventions for this, they strongly supported the 1931 Convention that established controls upon producer nations but protected the world's legal supplies.

This geopolitical subjectivity was dependent on domestic US policy. Flurries of national legislation were enacted to convince the world the US was both a victim of, and leader, narcotic control. The idea that opium was a foreign weapon threatening the US only gained prominence when the US had its own legislative house in order. When Harry Anslinger entered the scene in 1930, he presided over massive punitive shifts in US drug law and led numerous drug delegations at the League and UN. With support from Richmond Hobson, Stuart Fuller, and Alfred Blanco, the US became David in a fight against the Goliath of opium. As conflict began to engulf Manchuria, this geopolitical narrative extended to include China and Japan. In the late 1930s, the weaponisation discourse came to full fruition. With evidence that the Japanese were trafficking in Manchuria, US newspapers reported on the horrors of the opium evil as a prominent part of the conflict. By the time the Second World War was underway, the trade in narcotics was used as an example of how the Japanese subjugated China, and indeed the US, with opium.

After World War Two, the weaponisation discourse, mirroring dominant geopolitical concerns, shifted to accuse China, North Korea, and eventually,

Cuba. The contours of geonarcotics changed slightly: there was a stronger emphasis on using narcotics to finance communist military operations. Eventually, as fewer nations actively supported the trade in raw and smoking opium, this position became less tenable. Instead, the transnational mafia became an existential threat to the United States, with the occasional help of rogue communist nations. When it became clear that drug trafficking was squarely in the hands of organised criminals – rather than any communist or recalcitrant states – the weaponisation discourse lost potency.

This story matters, because the grounds of today's opiophobia are rooted in the weaponisation thesis. Domestic controls in countries are rooted in a discourse based on fear of invasion by a foreign enemy. After 1961, many nations made narcotics harder to access, even for legitimate purposes. Unearthing the foundations of opiophobia is important preparatory work for tackling the 'tragedy of needless pain'.

Third, geonarcotics stresses the chequered history of foreign policy and narcotic policy. Scholars have highlighted this link,<sup>1</sup> but my significant finding is to suggest that drug diplomats do not just harmonise their goals with those of foreign policy. Their goals were multivalent, and the FBN would occasionally overstep the mark, supporting a nation or leader that were at odds with State Department directives. In other cases, narcotics policy would be deferred for more important policy, as Anslinger found when the State Department reigned his virulent criticism against China or ordered him to continue stockpiling. Yet for all these territorialising affects, we cannot argue that words, affect, and discourse totally shaped the international assemblage. These findings point towards the need for a more

comprehensive account of drug diplomacy that can explain how agency was distributed.

### Significant findings: materiality

The second question I set out to answer was

How did the materiality of narcotics shape American attempts to create international narcotic legislation?

The alternative history told here reveals much about the importance of materiality to American drug diplomacy and the legacy of the contemporary international system. I believe three significant findings have emerged. First is the importance of technological changes in shaping diplomatic debates.

This can be seen in almost every decade examined in this project, most obviously through changes in the use and production of opium, opiates, and opioids. The latter two substances were easier to conceal, quicker to manufacture, and far more profitable per kilogram. By the 1950s, their demand far outstripped raw opium. The growth of poppy straw technology vastly improved the negotiating position of the Eastern European nations, giving them a legitimate slice of the poppy cultivation pie.

Second, just as technology influenced drug diplomacy, the converse is also true; diplomatic decisions altered technological progress. The first synthetics were invented by the powerful German industries of I.G. Faber and the Japanese *Zaibatsu*. Their proliferation was accelerated by the breakup of these groups after the Second World War. The Allies determined who had access to patented technology, and spreading trade secrets was one strategy for ameliorating narcotic shortages. The governmental support for

synthetic development was underpinned by the silver bullet of narcotic control: an analgesic which did not lead to abuse or addiction. In their quest for this, manufacturers searched for the perfect, non-addictive, narcotic that did not need raw opium. The number of substances skyrocketed, bringing entirely new challenges to the LoN and UN.

Third, as vital war materials, raw opium and morphine sulphate became valuable. This was a deterritorialising affect: it led to new possibilities for the US and changes in the international system. Narcotics were a hard currency underwritten by the United States; ratifications for new drug treaties were primarily bought with it. Harry Anslinger became the *de-facto* chair of this federal narcotic reserve, as an opiophile, he was well attuned to the commercial capacities of narcotics. He knew the value of large supplies of opium and pursued a quiet, but effective policy of procurement during and after the Second World War. The US's geopolitical subjectivity changed. It became the world's biggest narcotic lender and played a dangerous game: without its own poppy crops to rely on, it was vulnerable to changes in the price of raw opium and the whims of its own creditors, the producer nations from which it sourced narcotics. It worked closely with producer nations, specifically Iran and Turkey, to make sure their supplies did not flow to the Communists. Stockpiling narcotics paid off at the end of the Second World War, as Anslinger secured promises from the British, the Dutch, and the French that they would close their opium monopolies. This was a clear victory for the prohibitionists; it codified the assemblage by cementing a legal and symbolic division between medicinal and illegitimate use. It switched the international focus to the illegitimate trade and production of raw opium.

The third question I sought to answer was

How did the same materiality confound attempts to know and determine narcotics?

Establishing a claim over the chemistry of a substance was an important part of the diplomatic process. These claims were anti-political; that is, they attempted to shut down the possibility for debate and disagreement, not just over a substance's origin, but in wider debates about the appropriateness of supply control as the UN's dominant approach to drug regulation. Claims were not just made as to whether narcotics were dangerous or addictive. They were made about the geographical origin of a seizure. For the FBN, these were fundamentally claims about where responsibility lay for the diversion and trade in illegal narcotics. In the early days of the twentieth-century, proxies such as packaging, ship itineraries, and basic diagnostic tests on the shape, colour, and texture of opium were used to infer location. By 1945, the US and UN had become interested in chronicling and catalogue the various opium's of the world more rigorously. Chemists and diplomats misplaced their confidence in the replicability of a sample's biochemistry.

The ODP reflects the pinnacle of post-war hopes that the scientific method could help solve many of the problems of traditional diplomacy. The ODP never delivered on this front, primarily because the opium trade passed from national control to international criminals and cartels. Its failure was also due to the problem of conceptualising opium on paper, in the lab, and in the real world. The sheer number of confounding variables within an opium sample made determination impossible. Opium itself was an assemblage, a mix of

material, geographical, and political associations. The properties of a seizure were revealed by the ODP's single unified method, but a variety of material, social, political, and economic processes hamstrung its progress.

Determination did not provide the clarity and control advocates so greatly required.

Materiality thus helps tell a more complicated, comprehensive story about the US quest for strict international drug control. Narcotics are commodities that become constitutive of the US geopolitical subjectivities. How the US portrayed narcotics, stored, and sold narcotics, as well as legislated against narcotics, had ramifications at the League and UN. Likewise, narcotics were multiple and contested. Harry Anslinger understood this. He knew a narcotic's properties were less important than its capacity (importance as a war material, abuse potential).

Much of the work at League and UN on narcotics was technical, rather than political. While debates on policy and legislation were thrashed out in the OAC and CND, other work on the geographical origin of narcotics were seemingly apolitical. Disagreements over what opium was, and what it could do, were to be resolved through recourse to evidence and the scientific method. However, disagreement and debate, while not formally political, impacted drug diplomacy. Prohibitionists wanted international law to close down the ambiguity of opium and its derivatives. Whether this was through determination, scheduling, or domestic legislation, prohibitionists were interested in fixing legal definitions of what opium and other narcotics were, rather than what it could become.



From these conclusions, I extrapolate two theoretical contributions to political geography. First, is to highlight assemblage theory's value for circumventing binary, legalistic thinking. A focus on legal drugs is as of much interest as illegal drugs. Susan Reiss had undertaken an analysis of coca and US foreign policy, but my contribution is to tell this story for narcotics. Raw opium, prepared opium, morphine, and other derivatives play a part in constructing different geonarcotic subjectivities. Some studies on flows of energy<sup>2</sup> have already been undertaken in geography. This approach could be usefully applied to other internationally regulated but legally traded substances; nuclear materials, weapons, and tantalum are obviously valuable commodities, but mundane flows of logs, furs, and copper have also played unexpected roles in national security throughout history.<sup>3</sup>

Outside of the discipline, the study of prosaic items and their relevance to international trade is well established.<sup>4</sup> Political geographers who are interested in legal flows can use assemblage theory to conceptualise the value of these objects in geopolitical contexts. It accounts for items which are contradictory and multiple. During the Second World War, Opium was in shortage in some places, but it also was abundant in China. It was simultaneously illegal and legal. Finally, it was regulated and unregulated. In other words, assemblage theory is useful for conceptualising the multiplicity of objects as they circulate through the international system.

Second, I suggest scholars look outside of the international sphere to better understand how diplomacy progresses. A linear history of geopolitical commodities that focuses on the international scale will only get us so far. The international was by no means the arena in which the most important

narcotic decisions were made. While laws, treaties, and regulations were ratified in Geneva, Vienna and New York, there were other geographies of drug control that must be considered. Whether it was the rebellion of the farmers in California or the two trips taken by Elizabeth Washburn-Wright to the opium monopolies in the Far East, it makes less sense to think of drug diplomacy as an unfolding narrative at the international scale, and more sense to see it as an assemblage where different temporalities, materials, and discourses converge and conflict.

### Significant findings: method

Assemblage provides those interested in drug diplomacy with an alternative way (both theoretically and methodologically), of explaining how geopolitics is experienced/enacted. We can use an archive to avoid a dominant conception of human agency (the so-called 'gentlemen's club' of drug control).<sup>5</sup> Instead, I look to agency as distributed and emergent from the assemblages. This has meant focussing on a variety of actors — human and non-human – who were linked through the diplomatic sites of drug control.

On its own, this finding is no longer novel. I believe my specific approach has novel methodological value as it treats the archive as a repository of informed materials with agentic capacities. This can help scholars apply the ideas of new materialism to diplomacy. For researchers interested in commodities that circulate in the international sphere, the scientific and technical governance of objects reveals much about diplomatic practice.

As Barry notes, certain methods become authoritative when doing research: his example is ethnography in the city through the Chicago school.<sup>6</sup> In

diplomatic drug histories, the reports and testimonies of human diplomats are dominant. Within these testimonies, geopolitical subjectivities are taken for granted. Treating documents as informed and agentic helps scholars develop a transcendent empiricism where 'the abstract [state, international system, LoN etc.] does not explain but must itself be explained'.<sup>7</sup> In my case, the ODP, as an impartial, neutral programme, can be critiqued. Technical documents were agentic in that they were ostensibly indisputable. They made anti-political claims that were themselves contested by nations with different geopolitical agendas. The non-negotiable status, or supposed irrefutability, of organic chemistry, was used to bolster geopolitical claims about the most appropriate way to govern drug control at the source. For example, a scientific analysis of a seizure of opium made a claim that was designed to transcend politics: the proportion of carbon and dross in a sample is not open to political dispute. This is, I suspect, why the ODP has been neglected in other studies of drug diplomacy; It shuts down debate, rather than opening it up.

For archival researchers, I argue that focusing on the scientific, technical aspects of regulation in international systems leads to new ways of thinking through diplomatic disputes. Assemblage theory helps researchers conceptualise these disputes broadly. A claim against a substance was never just political, scientific, or geopolitical. The variety of methods, a lack of samples, and confusion over the eventual goals of the ODP all weakened the claims that could it made. What is of interest to archival scholars of critical geopolitics is a document's association with its referential object. As my study of the ODP shows, no amount of cataloguing is ever able to fully pin

down the materiality of opium. Instead, technical information about materials was subject to the same fallibility as the statements and claims of diplomats at the OAC and CND.

### Limitations of study

In this study, I do not claim reliability (that it could be repeated and the same results would be found). The advantage of my approach is the theoretical approach it adopts in examining a well-trodden history.

There are limitations that must be addressed. The study is unashamedly focused on the United States. I have spent little time analysing the perspectives of other nations, nor have I considered domestic political debates that contributed to international decisions (such as the closure of the British, Dutch and French opium monopolies). In doing so, I have risked giving too much power to the US in influencing world drug diplomacy, particularly in the context of their leverage through medicinal stockpiles. The threat of withdrawing supplies was never used against allies: it remained a virtual possibility that was never actualised but was nonetheless influential. It could well have been the case that nations would have established other supply routes if such a threat was acted upon. Developing an argument for this counterfactual argument, I believe, is of limited use. As I have shown, simply having the supplies of opium stored in Fort Knox was enough to win over other nations. It had real consequences in the world.<sup>8</sup> Future work could examine the assemblages of different nations and their interactions with the international system.

Second, many of the sources I analysed were manipulated for political purposes. Numerous scholars believe the FBN exaggerated their reports. Other sources are incomplete and lacking key data (this is a particular problem with PCOB data). Inevitably, the figures that purport to show the scope of the world drug problem are, at best, estimates based on incomplete data. While this reduces the accuracy of my project, there is simply no other way to grasp the rough size and scope of the world drug trade. Furthermore, the figures I cite are not designed to accurately quantify the scope of the world drug problem, but rather the scope that was presented to the public. For my purposes, such figures are more interesting because of the geonarcotic claims they supported. Drug diplomats knew their data was weak; it did not stop them from making very real interventions in the world.

Third, while the Library of Congress and National Archive holdings are vast, they are by no means the only data sources that could have been consulted. Many of my PCOB findings did not come from the original archives, but from collections held by the Library that had been compiled by others. These inevitably exhibit selection bias. Nowhere is this clearer than with the Harry J. Anslinger files of Pennsylvania State University, many of which were compiled by the man himself throughout his tenure. My choice of archives means the documents cited here tend towards a prohibitory stance. While I have tried to ameliorate this with a wider search using online databases of newspapers, UNODC online archives, and other scholarly work, there is danger my account of geonarcotic discourse plays down alternative and critical accounts of the time period I analysed. Where I found conflicting accounts of drug control, I have done my best to highlight them (as is the

case with the Lindesmith papers and poppy growers of California). My findings are therefore useful insofar as they offer fresh insights into the workings of drug diplomacy, but they should not be interpreted as a new, definitive history of drug control in the twentieth-century.

In the 52 years of legislation examined here, the international drug machinery did much to curb and regulate the consumption and production of dangerous substances. In the early 1930s, there existed some 4000 tons of opium available for illicit uses. By 1968, that figure was 1200 tons.<sup>9</sup>

Hopefully, as has been clear from this thesis, reducing this number was just one part of drug control. The other purpose of providing the world with access to analgesic medicine remains neglected in academic scholarship, despite its importance to both prohibition-based drug control and foreign policy.

The control of the drug trade was lauded as a success compared to other international commodities and efforts at regulation. After all, the PCOB was never compelled to use its 'nuclear option' — to recommend the imposition of a narcotics embargo on a country where 'excessive quantities of narcotic drugs have accumulated or which is in danger of becoming a centre of illicit traffic'.<sup>10</sup> As Herbert May, ex-president of the PCOB, celebrated this point in 1957, prohibition had still not been installed at the UN. It remained an ideal of the US drug mavens. State Department officials, other nations, and representatives from the United Nations were less sanguine about prohibition becoming an international standard. Even with the passage of the 1961 Single Convention, debates about what a drug was, who could trade and

take them, as well as who could sell them, raged on. The twentieth-century drug control assemblage was constantly becoming, just as it is today.

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<sup>1</sup> Boggs, C. (2015). 'Drugs, Power, and Politics: Narco Wars, Big Pharma, and the Subversion of Democracy'; Friman, H.R. (1996). 'Narcodiplomacy: exporting the US war on drugs'.

<sup>2</sup> Dalby, S. (2009). *Security and environmental change*. Polity Press, Cambridge; Barry, A. (2013). 'Material Politics: Disputes Along the Pipeline'; Le Billon, P. (2001). 'The political ecology of war: natural resources and armed conflicts'.

<sup>3</sup> See Le Billon, P. (2004). The geopolitical economy of 'resource wars'. *Geopolitics*, 9(1), 1-28 for examples of cobalt, logging, copper and nuclear material, and Marsden, S., & Galois, R. (1995). The Tsimshian, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the geopolitics of the Northwest coast fur trade, 1787–1840. *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe canadien*, 39(2), 169-183 for a historical study of the value of fur.

<sup>4</sup> Salter, M. (ed.) 'Making Things International 1'; Salter, M. (ed.) 'Making Things International 2'.

<sup>5</sup> Bruun, K., Pan, L. & Rexed, I. (1975). *The gentlemen's club: international control of drugs and alcohol* (Vol. 9). University of Chicago Press Chicago, IL.

<sup>6</sup> Barry, A. (2001). 'Political Machines'.

<sup>7</sup> Coleman, R. (2013). 'Deleuze and research methodologies'. p.13.

<sup>8</sup> Deleuze, G. (1988). 'Bergsonism'.

<sup>9</sup> 'A forty-years' chronicle of international narcotics control', *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1968, 2: 1-4. [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1968-01-01\\_2\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1968-01-01_2_page002.html).

<sup>10</sup> May, H. (1957). *Bulletin on Narcotics*, 1 [https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin\\_1957-01-01\\_2\\_page002.html](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1957-01-01_2_page002.html).

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- 2) Library of Congress Collections Manuscript Division
  - i. The Papers of Richmond P. Hobson
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## Other sources

- 1) DEA Museum and Visitors Centre Exhibitions, 700 Army Navy Dr, Arlington, VA 22202, USA
  - a. Good Medicine, Bad Behaviour
  - b. Illegal Drugs in America
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- 2) United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly (UNGASS) 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016, UN Headquarters, 405 East 42nd Street, NY.

## Appendix

### Example of coding document

#### NARA: The Boggs Committee

#### Box 46

Photo	Page/subject	Quote/subject	Etic/inductive	Emic/Deductive	Notes
7996	June 10 1940: Elton Shaw, anti-narcotics warrior	Shaw operates a nudist camp near Floris, Virginia, which was recently the subject of an article in the Washington Post	Anslinger was good at knowing his enemies and what they got up to, this guy was particularly dangerous as he wrote a book entitled "drug addicts are human beings". A bigger problem was the World Narcotics Research Foundation, the society set up by Shaw		Not so useful
7999	May 9 <sup>th</sup> 1940. Shaw to Elanor Roosevelt,	We believe that when the truth is known, one of the worst scandals in the history of the US will unfold. Will you continue your investigation?	What was it that Roosevelt was investigating?		Shaw wanted a legal monopoly, and also an investigation into the FBN
8002	March 29 <sup>th</sup> 1940	The incident Shaw felt so aggrieved by was a couple of narcotics agents entering a peaceful assembly in Michigan. This letter to their congressman was written by his wife. This has been done for no other	A bill was tabled in the House, H. J Res 103 was introduced by Congressman Coffee of Washington and made it to the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee of the House.		Useful information for debates over science of addiction.

		<p>reason than that we differ from Mr Anslinger concerning some points of the narcotics problem and on which he is determined to suppress an public discussion. In this connection, it is significant that our views are in complete Harmony with the five great organisations working in this field, our own WORLD NARCOTICS RESEARCH FOUNDATION, THE AMERICAN WHITE CROSS ASSOCIATION ON DRUG ADDICTIONS, THE ANTI_NARCOTIC LEAGUE, THE INTERNATIONAL WHITE CROSS ANTI NARCOTIC ASSOCIATION and the INTER-STATE NARCOTICS ASSEMBLY. All are a unit in programme, all agree that the Anslinger programme is in violation of law, inhuman, diabolical and the most egregious and reprehensible in our modern life.</p>			
8005	March 5 <sup>th</sup> 1940	Elton Shaw went to the FBN and asked them a			



		series of questions.			
8008	October 21 1941	We have a letter about a series of articles from La Roe, a medical doctor who had letters published in Hearst newspapers but they were taken out when they were found to 'be contrary to Hearst policies. 'As is sometimes the case, some of these fanatics sell themselves to an editor who is not thoroughly familiar with the policies and it takes some time to correct the situation	This is a nice example of public dialogue on narcotics being managed, the letter is to a Judge Michelsen, from Anslinger on Roe, who felt he was out to obtain funds., it goes on to talk about how La Roe was cancelled from talking to the WCTU, this was another organisation Anslinger was close to.		La Roe was a doctor who worked against Anslinger
8010	Anslinger to Mrs Williams Dick Sparberg, September 1941	This letter is interesting for two reasons, we have the geonarcotic discourse, element, but also the growth of poppy which Anslinger mentions. ' We are having a great deal of activity in regard to the production of seed and we wish to control it before the poppy growth becomes as prevalent as marihuana. Poppy seed is used as a decoration on bread rolls only. I cannot see the necessity of	This poppy seed bun problem is a big problem		

		growing thousands of acres of poppies just to decorate buns.			
8011	Manning, district supervisor, to Anslinger, September 22 1941	To say the least, I am a little bit surprised that the Hearst papers would publish such a story as this without first taking it up with you or some other official of our service	This is clear link to Anslinger and Hearst, and was all about Dr La Roe.		
Photo	Page	Quote	Etic/inductive	Emic/Deductive	
8012	Anslinger to Mr Bielaski, September 20 <sup>th</sup> 1940	It is remarkable what an interesting discussion can be had when one is hampered by neither information nor facts	Anslinger scathingly referring to La Roe		
8013	Anslinger to Kolb	His attitude has always been that there is a sinister attempt to silence him			
8015	La Roe	While admitting, therefore, the sheer necessity for proper enforcement of the penological provisions of the present laws, or of later and better ones, it is my contention that there is also a medical aspect to this problem, and that enforcement personnel are not fitted by their training, or their points of view, to administer this aspect of it. My contention is that drug addiction is	This is interesting, Anslinger and La Roe did not disagree on much, but this one vital point		

		a disease, and being a disease it should be handled as a medical problem, by medical men and women, with proper training in medicine, psychology, psychiatry and sociology.			
8017	Anslinger to Kolb, November 1 <sup>st</sup> 1939	In an article which appeared in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle of January 11, 1939, Dr La Roe claimed that Japan was smuggling drugs into this country to prepare the United States for the slaughter she plans here 10 to 20 years from now. He also stated that the drug peddlers were concentrating on youth, high school students and young workers". He predicted that it would be completely impossible to recruit a physically fit army if narcotic addiction continues to increase at the present rate. He said official figures were far too low and that the number of addicts in the country ranged up to 4, 000,000. He estimated in the year 1938	Was it that La Roe was being too dramatic for Anslinger, making the drug problem too worrying? This appeal to the exaggerated nature of his stats is clearly interesting, as this is a charge levelled at Anslinger today.		

		Japan produced at least 100,000,000 new addicts in China. The above will give you an analysis of Dr La Roe			
8026	February 22 <sup>nd</sup> 1939		Many of these articles are Anslinger advising people to avoid Dr La Roe and his organisation, as he 'handles the truth rather carelessly'		
8028	November 14 <sup>th</sup> 1938	La Roe to Anslinger, they wrote one another! Concerning the parallel lines of our activities, the more I think of it, the less reason I see for any friction. It seems that each effort ought to supplement the other as far as possible. Yours so well done considering the small force			
8028	Blanco to La Roe	It seems La Roe was brought to Anslinger's attention by Blanco			Blanco was a conduit for Anslinger?
8031	Will S, Wood, Acting Commissioner	Information on La Roe's society formation, and his problems with its irresponsible use of arithmetic			
8034	John Wyeth and Brother Inc (who are they?) writing	It seems many people were worried by La Roe and wrote to			Highlights the scope of the problem, and perhaps

	to Anslinger November 1937	Anslinger for assurance, they were a pharmaceutical lobby, perhaps worried it would hurt sales, or lead to more restrictive laws			the FBN's eagerness to respond?
8035	Anslinger to La Roe	Anslinger began to ask La Roe about his statistics in the Washington Sunday Star, November 14, 1937 (next image 8036). LA Roes quote on Japan's military campaign in North China as "the first victory in the world history won with a narcotic needle"	I think that Anslinger was probably worried about competing knowledge claims. He was disagreeing with Anslinger on marihuana,		Nice link to weaponised opium
8038	Anslinger to La Roe	Cooperation prior to the letter after this one			
8042	La Roe to Cordell Hull, Secretary of State	La Roe was Hobson's physician.			Is there more information about the extent to which Hobson, La Roe and Anslinger knew one another?
8046	Feb 24 <sup>th</sup> 1936, this is Anslinger's address over NBC Anslinger and Hobson had a great relationship	Some good quotes. 'Opium has greater potentialities for good and evil than any other drug known to mankind. As to benevolent use there can be no question; but it is the malignant misuse I wish to emphasise today; and the necessity	Anslinger and the Janus face of opium  Anslinger on importance of public knowledge.		

		<p>for the public at large to study the narcotic problem.</p> <p>The habit-forming tendencies and the physical injury and moral degradation which inevitably follow the continued use of opiates must be exposed to the tribunal of public opinion if we are to make more rapid progress in solving this world menace.'</p>			
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