

Drug Wars Before Duterte: 'Illicit' Substances and the American Colonial  
Experiment in the Philippines

Eva Ward

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Strathclyde for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Department of History

University of Strathclyde, Glasgow

March 2022

## Abstract

This thesis presents an analysis of the existing market for psychoactive substances in the Philippines at the end of the nineteenth century and the subsequent development, enforcement and impact of drug regulations during the American colonial era of the Philippines. The analytical focus is primarily on the actors involved in the processes of commerce, consumption and regulation of drugs, namely the colonial state, consumers, distributors and activists, throughout the last decade of Spanish rule and the entirety of the American colonial era of the Philippines, from circa 1890 to 1946. The research therein draws on records of the United States Bureau of Insular Affairs, Philippines Supreme Court cases relating to drug violations, media sources from the time, colonial agency records, international treaties and a number of published works by US colonial officials. This thesis argues that the true impact of the American colonial era on drug regulations in the Philippines was not the limitation of unsanctioned commerce and consumption of psychoactive substances there but the creation of a colonial prohibition that developed into an international drugs regulatory regime focused on controlling supply. In doing so, the thesis examines the nature of the market for drugs in the Philippines throughout the late Spanish and American colonial eras. It assesses the reciprocal impact of American regulatory activity and colonial enforcement of these regulations on the drugs market and, in turn, the significance of the market for the contestation and development of new regulations and regulatory structures. Overall, it explores the genesis of colonial drugs prohibition in the Philippines in the first decade of the American colonial era and its longitudinal impact throughout the first half of the twentieth century, and presents a new way of evaluating American empire in practice.

## Acknowledgements

The timing of this thesis was far from ideal, given it coincided with the first global pandemic in a century. As such, I am indebted to a great number of people- far too many people to list here individually- for making its completion possible.

First, I am sincerely grateful to my supervisors Professor Jim Mills and Dr. Patricia Barton for their advice, support and invaluable guidance during the PhD. I am very fortunate to have had the benefit of Professor Mills' expertise throughout this project. I also wish to thank Caroline Marley for her assistance, patience, and organizational genius. I'm very grateful as well to the generous funding of the Wellcome Trust for the PhD and in particular supporting research trips and conference travel.

My sincere thanks also go to the staff of the Library of Congress, the British and US National Archives, and the University of Strathclyde Library. In particular, my endless thanks to the unknown but invaluable archivists that digitized a number of sources in the collections of the University of Michigan, the National Library of Australia, and the *New York Times*, making the completion of primary research for this dissertation possible during a lockdown.

Within Strathclyde itself, thank you to Dr. Laura Kelly, for proofreading the first draft of the literature review, organizing postgrad writing retreats, and being an exemplary CSHHH director. Thanks as well to Dr. Matt Eisler for proofreading the second draft of the introduction, to Dr. Catriona Ellis for a wonderful teaching experience in the second and third years and to Dr. Mark Ellis for the teaching experience, support and understanding throughout the PhD.

My thanks also go to friends and colleagues near and far for the support, advice and commiseration for the last four years. I wish to particularly thank Dr. Thembisa Waetjen and Dr. Oliver Charbonneau for their assistance and advice.

My greatest thanks are to my family, particularly my parents, who have always unconditionally encouraged, believed in, and supported me for 28 years and frequently from thousands of miles away. My thanks as well to Ziggy (bearded dragon), Taco (cat) and Margarita (also cat) for their affection, distraction and moral support. Finally, thank you to my partner Peter, for the support and encouragement, making me innumerable cups of coffee, listening to endless thesis-related anecdotes and complaints, and as always, being a source of great joy in my life.

## Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction	5
Chapter Two: A tale of two regimes: the beginning of the US colonial state and the end of the opium monopoly in the Philippines, 1890-1903	44
Chapter Three: “Impossible to cut off the supply without international cooperation:” Colonial Drug Policy in the Philippines and the Rise of International Control, 1903-1912	96
Chapter Four: <i>The Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs</i> : Prohibition and the Philippine Islands, 1912-1932	133
Chapter Five: Prohibition, the Philippines, and the Last Decade of American Rule, 1932-1942	195
Chapter Six: Conclusion	237
Appendix A	260
Bibliography	261

## Chapter One: Introduction

### Manila, Philippines, 1909

On 19 January 1909, the Supreme Court of the Philippines issued a ruling in the case of Vy Can Siu. The case was straightforward and the two page ruling was correspondingly succinct, as Vy Can Siu had pleaded guilty to a violation of the opium ban in June 1908 and was merely contesting the nature of his sentence. Siu had been fined 2,000 pesos and, if unable to pay, would be jailed one day for each 2.50 pesos, approximately 800 days. By the terms of the statute prohibiting non-medicinal use of opium, Siu could only be imprisoned for a maximum of six months in the case of insolvency. The Supreme Court agreed with Siu's argument and altered his sentence accordingly.<sup>1</sup>

Vy Can Siu's case was nonetheless remarkable, not for the intricacy of the legal issues involved, but as one of the first examples of prosecution for drug offenses by a U.S. territory. At the time of his initial arrest in June 1908, Act No. 1761 restricting opiates and cocaine to medicinal or scientific purposes had only been in effect for approximately three months. As it applied to the whole of the American colony of the Philippines, rather than a single municipality like San Francisco, this law was the first of its kind in a United States jurisdiction. The initial prosecution, seemingly routine at first glance, is evocative of the beginning of a sea change in the regulation of narcotics.

---

<sup>1</sup> *The United States, plaintiff-appellee, v. Vy Can Siu, defendant-appellant*, G.R. No. L-4915 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1909).

In violating the ban Vy Can Siu's error was arguably one of timing rather than judgment. Before 1 March 1908, it had still been possible to buy and consume opium legally for non-medicinal purposes. Only a decade previously, the opium trade in the Philippines during the Spanish government had operated through a monopoly farm system, where Vy Can Siu would have been contributing to the licit colonial economy in buying opium. His contemporaries in surrounding colonies like British North Borneo still retained the right to consume opiates without risking prosecution. How, then, did Vy Can Siu, "a Chinaman who from childhood has been in the habit of smoking opium" find himself in this predicament? <sup>2</sup>

### Research Questions

The answer to this question and the resulting impact form the central narrative of this thesis. My research explores the dramatic changes to the laws in the Philippines governing the sale and consumption of opium and other intoxicants that took place from the end of the nineteenth century through the immediate postwar era. In order to explain these changes, it examines the state of the market in the Philippines for psychoactive substances and the regulations controlling it by the end of the Spanish era. Most importantly, it asks what the prohibitory reforms enacted by the US entailed, why they were passed, and what the local, regional and transnational impact of prohibition consisted of by the time of Philippine independence in 1946. Essentially, why was Vy Can Siu facing imprisonment? What did this ultimately mean for the Philippines, the surrounding region of Southeast Asia, and the United States as a member of the international community?

---

<sup>2</sup> *The United States, plaintiff-appellee, v. Vy Can Siu, defendant-appellant*, G.R. No. L-4915 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1909). [archaic racial terminology in quotes does not reflect the views of the author]

The significance of Vy Can Siu's prosecution is not immediately evident from the facts of the case but becomes visible in the context of what Steffen Rimner describes as "the multilayered conditions that turned the global revolt against opium from nineteenth-century utopia to twentieth-century reality."<sup>3</sup> Vy Can Siu would be among the first of many, many individuals incarcerated for drug-related charges in the following decades. The first half of the twentieth century entailed the transformation of the regulation of intoxicants from legal commerce, largely unlimited regarding access and use and intended to generate profit, to a system of restrictions shaped by a rigid dichotomy of narrowly defined legitimate and illegitimate use and designed to curtail consumption to the former. Vy Can Siu's arrest and conviction is not included as an example of where prohibition succeeded but as an illustration of the dynamic era of drug regulatory reform in which he lived.

In looking at the transnational history of drug policy in the late Spanish and American Philippines, my research consists of several primary topics: the drugs market, colonial regulations and their enforcement. Ultimately, the driving aim of this narrative is the impact of these forces. In order to best address these issues and associated research questions, I have structured this thesis in a generally chronological manner. While I have organized my research questions in thematic terms here, they are in many ways also chronologically sequential.

---

<sup>3</sup> Steffen Rimner, *Opium's Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2018), p.3.

## Drugs market, drugs regulations and enforcement

What did the existing market for drugs in the Philippines at the beginning of the American colonial era entail and why? What was the social, political and economic context? The second theme of research that my thesis addresses is regulation. In particular, what comprised US colonial regulations of psychoactive substances? Why were they created? What shaped their formulation and ultimately led to the beginning of prohibition? However, drugs regulations formed only one element of the American colonial project in the Philippines, and were undoubtedly influenced by the larger imperialist agenda. The principal inquiries regarding enforcement therefore concern the nature and parameters of enforcement of colonial drug laws and the processes that influenced this activity of the colonial state. Essentially, who enforced these laws, and perhaps most importantly, against whom? How were they enforced? What internal and external pressures shaped enforcement? Moreover, what do patterns of enforcement reveal about the demographics of illicit trade and consumption, both real and perceived?

## Impact

The overarching theme of my research questions, and the primary area of inquiry my original research consists of, is impact. Impact as the key research theme essentially evaluates the previous research issues and their effects on each other. This analysis brings together the market for drugs, the colonial restrictions and later international regulations developed as a result, and the impact of those regulations on the dynamic drugs market. There are two spatial areas of impact, in that this research theme interrogates the significance of these regulations for a) the market for psychoactive substances in the Philippines and b) the international drugs regulatory regime. The focus of the former spatial area of impact is rather narrow. Rather than examining the broader changes to society as demonstrated by the technological advancements responsible

for the modern pharmaceuticals described above-in a similar manner to Carroll Pursell or David Arnold-this research theme looks specifically at the impact of regulatory activity on the Philippine market for pharmaceuticals themselves.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the colonial state's impact must be evaluated in the context of not only the flow of substances themselves across borders as commodities, but also on the transnational movements of their consumers and ideas about their consumption.

In exploring this impact on the international drugs regulatory regime, this focus expands the analytical framework outward from the Philippines to the surrounding region. Existing networks of trade and transport in southeastern Asia, legal and otherwise, long predate the timeframe of my research.<sup>5</sup> These still continued to be in use for narcotics shipments after this particular cargo was deemed illegal in some destinations. The commercial activity in narcotics that the authorities considered to be unlawful smuggling following the opium ban in the Philippines was, in Philip Thai's words, "'creative accommodation' employed by broad swaths of social actors coping with...enormous changes."<sup>6</sup> The attempts of the colonial state to put a stop to this "creative accommodation" led to the beginnings of the international drugs regulatory regime, the second spatial area of impact my thesis examines. As the historiographical section will indicate, the role of the Philippines in the initial creation of the drugs regulatory regime is well established. This thesis seeks to build on this by looking at the role of the Philippines in the

---

<sup>4</sup> See Carroll Pursell, *The Machine in America: A Social History of Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007) and David Arnold, *Everyday Technology: Machines and the Making of India's Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> See Craig Lockard, "'The Sea Common to All: Maritime Frontiers, Port Cities and Chinese Traders in the Southeast Asian Age of Commerce, ca. 1400-1750,'" *Journal of World History*, 21.2 (2010) pp. 219-247.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Thai, "Old Menace in New China: Coastal smuggling, illicit markets, and symbiotic economies in the early People's Republic," *Modern Asian Studies*, 51.5 (2017), pp. 1561-1597.

For more on smuggling in southeast Asia, see Eric Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States Along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

subsequent evolution and contestation of the interwar drugs regime. It also examines the reciprocal effects of this regime in the Philippines, its colonial neighbors and their respective metropolises, as the colonial state in the Philippines was eventually joined by international organizations in trying to restrict transnational flows of psychoactive substances. This is not a “global” focus but instead a framework of “links within and between different empires (European and non-European), and within and between different colonies,” as described by Potter and Saha.<sup>7</sup> Far from the proverbial city on a hill that Americans in 1898 envisioned their new colony becoming, the Philippines retained their existing nature as a node within a dynamic and wide ranging regional and imperial network. The set of historical movements within this network brought both Vy Can Siu and his American prosecutors to the Philippines, where he found himself a static figure in the face of the dynamic forces of a new colonial regime with correspondingly novel ideas about the nature of drug consumption. It is therefore this context that underpins the narrative of the colonial state’s impact on drug commerce, consumption and control in the American Philippines that my thesis entails.

As this background indicates, the story of drug regulations in the Philippines did not take place in a vacuum, separate from external historical trends. This thesis was also written within the context of a larger story as part of the Wellcome Trust-funded investigation “The Asian Cocaine Crisis: Pharmaceuticals, consumers & control in South and East Asia, c.1900-1945.” This project was led by my primary supervisor, Professor Jim Mills, and researches the little-explored history of cocaine in Asia during the first half of the twentieth century.

---

<sup>7</sup> Simon Potter and Jonathan Saha, “Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire,” *Journal of Colonialism & Colonial History* (2015), pp 1-34.

Between 1890 and 1945 Asia formed one of the world's largest markets for cocaine as it became a medicine and intoxicant for users as far apart as Bombay and Shanghai. Responses by governments there show they quickly viewed this as a crisis. As early as 1900 administrators in Bengal attempted to limit sales to those for strictly medical purposes, and by 1912 officials from a number of Asian governments had forced cocaine into the emerging international drugs regulatory system at the Hague Opium Conference. In subsequent decades administrators grappled with Asian consumers of the drug, and with those that defied governments to produce and distribute it.<sup>8</sup>

Its potential for transforming current ideas lies in the unusual features of the story. Cocaine was the first industrially-produced modern pharmaceutical to find a mass market in Asia. It did so despite the efforts of both indigenous and colonial governments. It was sought as a medicine and as an intoxicant in a period when a sharper distinction was being drawn between the two. It appeared in Asia at a time when the politics of intoxication there lay behind the establishment of the international drugs regulatory regime, which continues to shape global drugs policy to this day.<sup>9</sup>

Despite this context, my thesis is not focused on cocaine. Instead, it considers cocaine as one element in the larger narrative of controlling psychoactive substances in the Philippines. As David Courtwright noted, frequently “drugs are not merely substitutes for one another, but serve to increase demand for other psychoactive products. Drug commerce is more than a zero-sum game.”<sup>10</sup> As a new pharmaceutical product, cocaine was consumed in the Philippines alongside the older tradition of opium smoking and the other modern practice of injections of morphine, a more potent derivative of opium. Seizures of significant quantities of opium by Philippines customs officials indicate that it remained a consistently popular commodity as late as the

---

<sup>8</sup> James Mills and Patricia Barton, “Asian Cocaine Crisis: Pharmaceuticals, Consumers and Control in South and East Asia, c.1900-1945”, Wellcome Trust Investigator Award Application, 200394/Z/15/Z, 2016-2020, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Mills and Barton, “Asian Cocaine Crisis” p.2.

<sup>10</sup> David Courtwright, *Forces of habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World*, (London: Harvard University Press London, 2001) p.20.

beginning of World War II, despite the availability of manufactured pharmaceuticals. In seeking to understand the reasons for this, I drew inspiration from the background and framework of the Asian Cocaine Crisis project. I adapted the focus of my research aims within this framework to the specific context of the Philippines, primarily the market for psychoactive substances and the effects of colonial drug regulations on existing networks of commerce and patterns of consumption. The primary sources that were the focus of my research indicated that opium, morphine and- to a lesser extent- cocaine were the primary controlled psychoactive commodities traded and consumed during the era in question. Other psychoactive substances, including alcohol, were also objects of trade and consumption but were not subjected to the same controls and regulations, placing them outside the analytical bounds of this thesis. Opium, morphine and cocaine are therefore the primary focus of my analysis, rather than solely cocaine or a broader range of commodities that includes tea, betel and alcohol.

## **Literature Review**

### Historiography of drugs in the Philippines

The primary reason for my focus on the drugs market and the long-term impact of government regulatory activity in the Philippines is the existing literature on the topic of my thesis and its lack of reference to these subjects. Essentially, the extant work does not address in depth the issues of the drug market, regulations and enforcement and their longitudinal historical impact. This is due to the nature of the majority of scholarship on the history of drugs regulation and consumption in the Philippines, which consists of brief allusions to the subject in much

larger works on the general history of opium, cocaine, or cannabis. These works by David Musto, David Courtwright, Jim Mills, Paul Gootenberg, Joseph Spillane and other historians, discussed later in this section, focus in particular on the initial regulation of these substances and the beginning of the international drugs regulatory regime. As such, they do not address the remainder of the American colonial era or the impact of this regulatory regime in the Philippines themselves.

The brevity of these references do not allow for discussion of drugs history in the Philippines in greater detail. Exceptions to this general rule are a handful of short works on the subject, i.e. journal articles and book chapters. Daniel Wertz's paper on opium regulation in the American Philippines explores the 'opium question' primarily through the lens of internal controversies in American colonial governance regarding the "fundamental question of what an American-made colonial state should look like."<sup>11</sup> In short, the root of the opium ban for Wertz is the victory of the American faction promoting a centralized colonial government and moral reformers advocating opium prohibition. The Philippines then acted as a springboard for opponents of the opium trade in Asia to demand international action on extending the opium ban of the Philippines to other regional polities. Wertz also discusses the impact of the ban on the opium trade in the Philippines and argues that prohibition there resulted in a more democratized system. Essentially, the ban "shifted the control of the opium trade from largely autonomous economic networks— controlled by the elite of the overseas Chinese community and the Sulu Sultanate in the southern Philippines—to a newly created, and much more dispersed, illicit economy with a multitude of participants."<sup>12</sup> Wertz notes further the extensive difficulties of

---

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Wertz, "Idealism, Internationalism, and Imperialism: Opium Politics in the Colonial Philippines, 1898-1902," *Modern Asian Studies*, 47.2 (2013), p.470.

<sup>12</sup> Wertz, "Idealism," p.471.

enforcing the ban not only on the oft-discussed Chinese community of the Philippines but also the previously independent Muslim sultanates.<sup>13</sup>

Anne Foster's discussion of the regulation of opium in Southeast Asia from 1898-1925 also prominently features the Philippines.<sup>14</sup> She juxtaposes the opium ban of the Philippines with the opium monopoly systems of neighboring colonies and argues American policy was rooted in the goal of demonstrating their more civilized form of colonialism by banning opium rather than profiting from the trade.<sup>15</sup> Foster substantiates this by citing Philippines Governor Francis Burton Harrison's statement that "the white man's burden has been materially lightened by the money thus derived from the trade" by other imperial powers.<sup>16</sup> Americans' belief, which is also evident in Heiser's writing, that the United States "offered a new and better colonial vision which Europeans would do well to emulate" consequently resulted in banning opium as one facet of the superior American method of colonial governance.<sup>17</sup> Foster argues further that preventing opium consumption formed a part of the previously-discussed American civilizing mission, wherein reformers "saw prohibition whether of alcohol or narcotics as necessary for good government...Prohibition of opium consumption in the Philippines was therefore a logical step in promoting behavior and values which Americans believed would help Filipinos, over time, develop their character and intellect sufficiently to rule themselves."<sup>18</sup> Tim Madge concurs regarding the role of moral reformers, as "moves to ban alcohol were part of a growing wider belief that the American way of life was the only one and that the nation had a moral duty to help

---

<sup>13</sup> Wertz, "Idealism," p. 490.

<sup>14</sup> Anne Foster, "Prohibition as Superiority: Policing Opium in South-East Asia, 1898-1925," *The International History Review*, 22.2 (2000) pp.253-273.

<sup>15</sup> Foster, "Prohibition as Superiority," pp.253-273.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p.254.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p.272.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 272-273.

the rest of a benighted world re-create these values. It was this view that wove the backcloth of the movement for the banning of opium.”<sup>19</sup> Foster builds on this argument in a second paper on colonial opium regulation in Southeast Asia, stating that through prohibition in the Philippines, “American colonial officials were demonstrating their benevolent intentions to improve the colony.”<sup>20</sup> Moreover, she asserts prohibition was intended further to circumvent the opium problem entirely by eliminating opium consumers, in that “US officials hoped that prohibition might help make the whole ethnic Chinese problem, as they saw it, literally go away. Then US officials could concentrate on reforming the indigenous islands.”<sup>21</sup> However, Foster does not consider the practice of opium consumption in the Muslim sultanates as a factor in the formulation of American anti-opium policy.

Foster’s lack of reference to Mindanao and Sulu is not uncommon; the majority of secondary sources discussing the ban on opium in the Philippines focus almost exclusively on consumption within specifically the Filipino Chinese community, which was a small minority as it comprised approximately 70,000 ethnic Chinese individuals by the time of the American conquest.<sup>22</sup> Secondary sources are ambiguous on the extent of participation in the practice of opium smoking there, either habitually or occasionally. David Courtwright and Richard Davenport-Hines merely state “many” of the Chinese inhabitants of the Philippines smoked opium.<sup>23</sup> Paul Gootenberg claims fewer than “50,000 opium addicts, nearly all Chinese” lived in

---

<sup>19</sup> Tim Madge, *White Mischief: a cultural history of cocaine*, (Mainstream London 2001), p.92.

<sup>20</sup> Anne Foster, “Models for Governing: Opium and Colonial Policies in Southeast Asia, 1898-1910” in Anne Foster and Julian Go (eds.), *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 94.

<sup>21</sup> Foster, “Models for Governing,” p.95.

<sup>22</sup> David Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: A History of Opiate Addiction in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2Rev Ed edition 2001), p.79.

<sup>23</sup> Courtwright, *Dark Paradise*, p.79; Richard Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Global History of Narcotics 1500-2000* (London: Orion Press, 2001), p.154.

the Philippines at the turn of the century.<sup>24</sup> The scale of the ‘opium problem’ is noted by Gootenberg and Carl Trocki to be smaller in comparison to other Asian colonies at the time, particularly Taiwan.<sup>25</sup> Trocki attributes this to the impoverished state of most of the native Filipino population rather than the “ethical principles of their rulers.”<sup>26</sup>

One possibility regarding the limitations of work on opium consumption may be that the majority of work on drug history in the Philippines there has been done by outsiders to the Philippines, in large part British and American academics (myself included). One exception to this is the late Filipino sociologist Ricardo Zarco at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, who early in his career wrote about opium use in the colonial era and published a journal article in 1995 on the history of drug use from a sociological perspective.<sup>27</sup> Similar to Wertz, Zarco also departed from the dominant narrative of the Chinese as opium consumers and wrote about historical use of opium by the Muslim Malay inhabitants of Mindanao in the southern Philippines, dating from the seventeenth century.<sup>28</sup> Zarco’s account of historical drug consumption in the Philippines is primarily focused on explaining the historical “periods [in which] the practice of narcotic drug addiction...entered Philippine society.”<sup>29</sup> He describes changes in the demographics of drugs consumers over time and notes this “addiction among the Chinese aided in spreading the habit among Filipinos in whose midst they settled.”<sup>30</sup> However, as the title implies- “A Short History of Narcotic Drug Addiction in the Philippines, 1521-1959”-

---

<sup>24</sup> Paul Gootenberg (ed.), *Cocaine* (London: Routledge 1999), p.131.

<sup>25</sup> Gootenberg, *Cocaine*, p.131; Carl Trocki, *Opium, Empire, and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950*, (London: Routledge, 1999), p.89.

<sup>26</sup> Trocki, *Global Political Economy*, p.89.

<sup>27</sup> Ricardo Zarco, “A Short History of Narcotic Drug Addiction in the Philippines”, *Philippine Sociological Review*, 43.1/4, (1995), pp. 1-15.

<sup>28</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” pp.1-15.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, p.1.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, p.6.

the breadth of the subject matter constrains his description to a general overview of events without a great deal of analysis as to their cause or significance.

Another exception to the scarcity of Filipino representation in scholarship on drugs in the Philippines is Ferdinand Victoria who currently works on the history of drugs in the Philippines. Victoria also addresses opium consumption among the Moros of Mindanao and Sulu as well as the Chinese, and is virtually unique in that he claims that attitudes by Filipinos themselves toward opium use, rather than American aims or ideals, shaped American policy to a much greater extent than is commonly acknowledged.<sup>31</sup> Victoria's argument is that Filipino elite opposition to opium "helped validate the official views that made the progressive implementation of a punitive regime a model worthy of replication on the international level."<sup>32</sup> For Victoria, the views of Filipinos themselves at the time regarding opium have long been marginalized in analyses of American anti-opium policy. He argues Filipino "insights, attitudes and perceptions ...expressed in the official record and projected towards the prevailing culture of opium consumption" were a significant part of the process of prohibition in the Philippines.<sup>33</sup> Wertz does also note opposition on the part of the Filipino elite to the opium trade but does not regard it as influential in the formation of colonial policy.<sup>34</sup>

David Musto and other drugs historians focus more on the economic aspects of American imperialism and the resultant influence on drug policy in the Philippines. This argument claims that Filipino views on the subject notwithstanding, American opium policy was predicated on a

---

<sup>31</sup> Ferdinand Victoria, "The Most Humane of Any that Could be Adopted": The Philippine Opium Committee Report and the Imagining of the Opium Consumer's World in the Colonial Philippines, 1903-1905." in *Towards a Filipino History: A Festschrift for Zeus Salazar* (BAKAS, 2015), pp.89-157.

<sup>32</sup> Victoria, "The Most Humane," p.91.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p.93.

<sup>34</sup> Wertz, "Idealism," pp.479-480.

desire to achieve greater access to the Chinese market and ensure the stabilization of China for the purposes of uninterrupted trade. Given the destabilizing effects of opium in China, a strong anti-opium stance on the part of the US in Asia would help avoid further insecurity in China and gain the favor of the imperial Chinese government. Musto in particular claims that economics predominated and cites Finley Peter Dunne's claim that, far from the American public being preoccupied with the morality of the opium trade in the Philippines, most did not know "whether [the Philippines] were islands or canned goods."<sup>35</sup> Madge reconciles both lines of inquiry as "moral issues posed by the opium smokers of the Philippines would be combined with this desire to break into the Chinese market, creating a climate whereby Christian duty could happily sit with economic necessity."<sup>36</sup> William McAllister concurs that "after 1898 America's East Asian interests...were best served by maintaining Chinese territorial integrity. Through the Open Door notes and subsequent initiatives, Washington sought to protect American trading, investment, and development opportunities throughout the Celestial Kingdom. An anti-opium policy complemented this general approach."<sup>37</sup> This was facilitated in domestic American politics by a lack of extensive business interests in the opium trade overseas.<sup>38</sup> In *Cannabis Britannica* by Jim Mills, the anti-opium stance adopted by the United States is also explained by "extensive trading interests with China" and the desire to "trade with a strong China."<sup>39</sup> Similarly to Foster, Mills also cites aspirations on the part of the US to appear as "an 'enlightened' colonial ruler in the Philippines" as a factor in American anti-opium policy.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> David Musto, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973, 1987, 1999), p.25.

<sup>36</sup> Tim Madge, *White Mischief: a cultural history of cocaine*, (London: Mainstream London, 2001), p.98.

<sup>37</sup> William McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Routledge, 2012) p.27.

<sup>38</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, p.27.

<sup>39</sup> James Mills, *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade, and Prohibition* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2003) p.153

<sup>40</sup> Mills, *Cannabis Britannica*, p.153.

More recent scholarship in Steffen Rimmer's *Opium's Long Shadow* describes the Philippines as a link in the transnational movement against the opium trade. Rimmer's discussion of the Philippines focuses primarily on the work of the Philippines Opium Commission in 1903-1904 in southeastern Asia and its various interviews with colonial officials, religious leaders, doctors and businessmen in various polities there.<sup>41</sup> Rimmer considers the Commission, led by Brent, to have "exhibited an overt extroverted transnationalism by embarking on its Asian opium investigation" and credits the Commission with later "facilitating a breakthrough in international cooperation against the opium trade."<sup>42</sup> Rimmer also notes the input from the Chinese outside of the Philippines to a greater extent than other scholars and cites the petition in July 1903 signed by ten thousand Chinese citizens in support of Brent's opposition to a legal opium monopoly in the Philippines.<sup>43</sup>

As previously stated, drugs historians frequently refer to the Philippines in studies of the beginnings of the international drugs regulatory regime, particularly the 1909 Shanghai Convention and the resultant American domestic legislation. These works all predominantly feature the role of Charles Brent in the Philippines in campaigning for international cooperation against the opium trade and agree on the 1909 Convention's significance for later drug regulation initiatives. David Musto states that "the Philippine opium problem made Brent an international leader in the anti-opium movement."<sup>44</sup> David Courtwright agrees and cites Brent's lofty contention to President Roosevelt that "from the earliest days of our diplomatic relations with the East the course of the United States of America has been so manifestly high in relation to the

---

<sup>41</sup> Steffen Rimmer, *Opium's Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2018) pp. 167-177; 180-190.

<sup>42</sup> Rimmer, *Opium's Long Shadow*, pp. 170; 176.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, p.188.

<sup>44</sup> Musto, *The American Disease*, p.26.

traffic in opium that it seems to me almost our duty... to promote some movement that would gather in its embrace representatives from all countries where the traffic in and use of opium is a matter of moment.”<sup>45</sup> Paul Gootenberg notes more pragmatically that out of frustration with smuggling following the ban, Bishop Brent realized prohibition could not be enforced “in a vacuum” and prevailed upon Roosevelt to call for international action.<sup>46</sup> Richard Davenport-Hines summarizes events as “Brent’s work stimulated US attempts to enforce a global policy of drug prohibition. At the instigation of President Theodore Roosevelt, an international Opium Commission was convened in Shanghai in 1909.”<sup>47</sup> McAllister also briefly notes Brent’s initiative in calling for the Shanghai Convention.<sup>48</sup>

Historians generally agree on the significance of the opium ban in the Philippines as an essential beginning to the international drugs regulatory regime and its largely prohibitionist nature. Carl Trocki describes the prohibition of opium in the Philippines as “the first instance in which a major Western power had moved decisively to ban opium in any part of Asia. It was the first step in the process of banning the opium trade on an international level.”<sup>49</sup> Gootenberg agrees, in a rather US-centric manner, that “drug control policy was never considered a fit subject for diplomacy until the US government decided to formulate policy” following the conquest of the Philippines.<sup>50</sup> Ferdinand Victoria argues the “current prohibitionist strategy in the global war against illegal drugs was an American legacy that was rooted in the Philippines’ encounter with opium.”<sup>51</sup> Davenport-Hines concurs, stating that “American drugs prohibition

---

<sup>45</sup> Courtwright, *Dark Paradise*, p.80.

<sup>46</sup> Gootenberg, *Cocaine*, p.132.

<sup>47</sup> Davenport-Hines, *Pursuit of Oblivion*, p.159.

<sup>48</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, pp.27-28.

<sup>49</sup> Trocki, *Global Political Economy*, p.155.

<sup>50</sup> Gootenberg, *Cocaine*, p.131.

<sup>51</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.90.

eventually culminated in the outbreak of the Global War on Drugs. The annexation of the Philippine Islands by the USA in 1898 was a crucial event in this process.”<sup>52</sup>

Aside from inclusion in drug histories, the history of drugs in the Philippines also features in some discussions of the social and political history of the Philippines, particularly regarding the impact of American imperialism and the Chinese community. Edgar Wickberg’s account of the Chinese in the Philippines during the last half century of Spanish rule briefly discusses the role of the Chinese in the opium monopoly system under the Spanish.<sup>53</sup> Wong Kwok Chu’s more recent analysis of the Chinese role in the historic economy of the Philippines discusses the Chinese and the brief revival of the monopoly system under Aguinaldo’s revolutionary government.<sup>54</sup> Philip Ginsberg’s discussion of the role of the Chinese community in the Philippine Revolution against the Spanish and subsequent American invasion also briefly refers to Chinese commercial activity in the opium trade.<sup>55</sup> However, aside from opium little attention has been paid to psychoactive substances as part of popular culture in the Philippines during the Spanish and American colonial eras.. Zarco does include a description of narcotics in pre-Hispanic Filipino culture, namely alcohol derived from “rice, sugar cane and nipa and coconut palms” as well “masticatory preparations from local materials.”<sup>56</sup> These “masticatory preparations” included betel, areca nut, and after the Portuguese arrival to southeast Asia, tobacco.<sup>57</sup> The importance of these substances is described as “deeply ingrained into the native

---

<sup>52</sup> Davenport-Hines, *Pursuit of Oblivion*, p.154.

<sup>53</sup> Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1965, 1999) p.115.

<sup>54</sup> Wong Kwok-Chu, *Chinese in the Philippine Economy, 1898-1941*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p.25.

<sup>55</sup> Phillip Ginsberg, “The Chinese in the Philippine Revolution,” *Asian Studies* (1965), pp.143-159. .

<sup>56</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” p.1.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

culture” and “used in rituals and social intercourse.”<sup>58</sup> Zarco adds a caveat that “their effects were mild contrasted to the habituating nature” of later drugs like opium.<sup>59</sup> Maggie Brady and Vic McGrath’s work on the spread of *tuba* in southeast Asia also refers to alcohol in Filipino culture and discusses the spread of the knowledge of *tuba* distilling from the Philippines to neighboring cultures. Brady et al describe the spread of “the technical knowledge of tuba fermentation and distillation” as an example of “relocation diffusion, that is, when individuals move from one place to another (in this case, from one country to another), exporting a particular habit or trait to the new location.”<sup>60</sup> *Tuba* is referred to elsewhere in Asia as toddy and comes from the Filipino language Tagalog, meaning “fermented coconut milk,” which can then be distilled into *lambanog*, known elsewhere as *arrack*.<sup>61</sup> Brady and McGrath’s research charts the spread of tuba from the Philippines to the Torres Strait and as far afield as Mexico through the migration of Filipino laborers.<sup>62</sup> Aside from opium, preparations for chewing, and alcohol, additional mention of drugs consumed in the Philippines includes Wertz’s citation of Hamilton Wright’s claim that drug users in the Philippines had turned to manufactured narcotics like morphine due to shortages of opium.<sup>63</sup>

This thesis does not set out to challenge the above perspectives so much as expand upon them. The Spanish opium monopoly system, the American decision to ban opium in the Philippines, the role of religious leaders in the Philippines in the beginnings of the international drugs regulatory regime and the resultant American domestic legislation are all well established.

---

<sup>58</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” p.2.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Maggie Brady & Victor McGrath, “Making Tuba in the Torres Strait Islands,” *The Journal of Pacific History*, 45.3 (2010) p.317.

<sup>61</sup> Brady and McGrath, “Making Tuba,” p.317.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p.327.

<sup>63</sup> Wertz, “Idealism,” p.488.

However, after the prohibition of opium was instituted following the Philippines Opium Committee Report and the 1909 Shanghai Convention took place, there is very little scholarship on drugs in the Philippines except to cite the Philippines situation as one example among many of the failure of prohibition. There is little mention of drug commerce or consumption in the Philippines outside the Chinese community. Moreover, there is limited discussion of drugs aside from opium. In many ways the history of drugs in the Philippines during the American colonial era is a blank canvas, particularly for the later decades. My thesis seeks to explore in greater depth the factors behind American policy, the demographics of illicit commerce and consumption, the logistics of enforcement and the role of the Philippines in later international diplomacy in drug regulation following the establishment of the League of Nations. Most importantly, my research particularly seeks to examine prohibition's long-term impact on the illicit commerce and consumption of psychoactive substances in the Philippines, especially the increase in consumption of morphine and cocaine. In short, it builds upon the existing work on the history of drugs in the Philippines in order to contribute to a better understanding of the long-term impact of the international drugs regulatory regime indirectly instituted through American colonial rule.

### Historiography of American imperialism and Western colonialism in Asia more widely

The history of drugs in the American Philippines cannot be extricated from the history of American imperialism and the Philippines, and forms a part of the broader historiography of colonialism more generally in Asia. The literature on these subjects is much more extensive than

that of drugs history in the Philippines, and has undergone significant changes in recent decades. In a similar manner to Ranajit Guha's characterization of the historiography of the nation of India as "dominated by elitism- colonialist elitism and bourgeois nationalist-elitism," earlier scholarship on the Philippines reflected a limited perspective rooted in the legacy of the American colonial state.<sup>64</sup> More recent scholarship from Filipino and American historians has moved away from the Orientalist and imperialist assumptions that underpinned earlier works.<sup>65</sup> Resil Mojares notes that, "since the 1960s, much historiography has been done on the US occupation of the Philippines...they stress such themes as the collaborative role of the Filipino elite in the making of the new order, mutual manipulation by Filipinos and Americans, the problematic impact of American rule on Filipino politics, culture, and economics, and the many-sided character of Filipino resistance to US occupation."<sup>66</sup>

The exceptionalist narrative of American empire in earlier works was grounded in the popular imagination of the US. Long before the American occupation of the Philippines, Americans viewed themselves as distinct from European nations in their vision of empire. By the time of the Spanish-American War, American public opinion had already developed a strong opposition to opium sales financing imperial aims and moreover was increasingly suspicious of unrestricted access to opium and other intoxicants more generally. In John Collins' words, "Washington looked at the European monopolies not as a mechanism to control a complicated trade but as an attempt to provide legitimacy to a large source for potential diversion into illicit

---

<sup>64</sup> Ranajit Guha, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," in Ranaji Guha and Gayatri Spivak (eds.), *Selected Subaltern Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) p. 37.

<sup>65</sup> For examples of this older Orientalist historiography, see Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother: How the United States Purchased and Pacified the Philippine Islands at the Century's Turn*, (London: Lowe and Brydon Ltd, 1961) and Teodoro Agoncillo, *A Short History of the Philippines*, (Dublin: Mentor Books, 1969).

<sup>66</sup> Resil B. Mojares, *The War against the Americans: Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu, 1899-1906*, (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999), p.1.

supplies.”<sup>67</sup> Most Americans, particularly missionary societies and reform associations, viewed imperial powers’ sales of opium as vile exploitation of their colonized populations.<sup>68</sup> Elizabeth Gray argues that in addition to condemnation of foreign imperialism, concerns regarding opium’s intrinsic effects on American interests themselves were beginning to take root, as “the nation’s industrialization made a sober and efficient workforce more crucial.”<sup>69</sup> Jessica Kuperavage also states that opposition to opium sales and consumption was due to its perceived threat to American work ethic and capitalism and describes this stance as the “rhetoric of economic morality.”<sup>70</sup> Similarly to Jim Mills, Arnold Taylor and Ian Tyrrell both note that, moral opposition aside, opium’s destabilizing effects in China also threatened a much-desired market for American exports, which foreign missionaries made a point of emphasizing to the US government.<sup>71</sup> Additionally Jerry Mandel writes that “early on, missionary anti-drug crusaders saw the Philippines as an opening.”<sup>72</sup> Kenton Clymer expands further on missionary zeal for American imperial expansion. Given that the colonial Spanish government had “vigilantly opposed Protestant incursions into the Philippines and had persecuted religious dissenters, any

---

<sup>67</sup> John Collins, “Imperial Drug Economies, Development, and the Search for Alternatives in Asia, from Colonialism to Decolonisation,” in Julia Braxton, Mary Chinery-Hesse, and Khalid Tinasti (eds.) *Drug Policies and Development: Conflict and Coexistence, International Development Policy Series* (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2020), p.55.

<sup>68</sup> Anne L. Foster, “The Philippines, the United States, and the Origins of Global Narcotics Prohibition,” *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 33.1 (2019), pp. 15-16.

Jessica Kuperavage, “Petitioning Against the “Opium Evil”: Economic Policy as Humanitarian Intervention in Early Antidrug Rhetoric,” *Southern Communication Journal* 79. 5 (2014), pp. 369-386.

<sup>69</sup> Elizabeth K. Gray, “The Trade-Off: Chinese Opium Traders and Antebellum Reform in the United States, 1815-1860,” in James H. Mills and Patricia Barton (eds.), *Drugs and Empires: Essays in Modern Imperialism and Intoxication, c. 1500-c. 1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 220.

<sup>70</sup> Kuperavage, “Petitioning Against the ‘Opium Evil,’” p. 371.

<sup>71</sup> Arnold H. Taylor, “American Confrontation with Opium Traffic in the Philippines,” *Pacific Historical Review* 36.3 (1967),pp. 307-324; Arnold H. Taylor, *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Trade, 1900-1939: A Study in International Humanitarian Reform*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1969); Ian Tyrrell, “The regulation of alcohol and other drugs in a colonial context: United States policy towards the Philippines, c. 1898- 1910,” *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 35.4 (2008),pp. 539- 571.

<sup>72</sup> Jerry Mandel, “Protestant Missionaries: Creators of the International War on Drugs” in Jefferson M. Fish, (ed.), *Drugs and Society: US Public Policy*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), p. 24.

successful missionary activity almost certainly required that Spanish authority be ended,” and with it, the opium monopoly system.<sup>73</sup>

Drug regulations formed only a small part of the grandiose American vision for empire, however. In a similar manner to Catherine Hall’s depiction of British Baptist missionaries in Jamaica, the aims of the occupying colonizers in the Philippines themselves were twofold in a sense, where the putative drive to “civilize” the Philippines for the sake of the colonized population’s wellbeing mingled with and was motivated in part by the desire for economic gain.<sup>74</sup> Expansionist Americans insisted that, in contrast to the Spanish, their occupation of the Philippines was not to exploit but in President William McKinley’s words, “to develop, to civilize, to educate, to train in the science of self-government.”<sup>75</sup> The United States perceived themselves as providing a model for a new, more beneficent system of colonialism.<sup>76</sup> However, Rosario Mendoza Cortes argues that, contrary to the American self-image of innovative colonialism, these twin motives were equally true of Spanish colonization.<sup>77</sup> Oliver Charbonneau asserts that, unlike Spanish colonial rule, the American “transformative vision of colonial rule” in the Philippines was shaped by the extremely violent legacy of settler colonialism in the United States and the treatment of indigenous peoples there.<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> Kenton Clymer, “Religion and American Imperialism: Methodist Missionaries in the Philippine Islands, 1899-1913,” *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (1980), p. 32.

<sup>74</sup> Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

<sup>75</sup> Ginsberg, “Philippine Revolution,” pp. 144-145.

<sup>76</sup> Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority,” pp. 272-273.

<sup>77</sup> Rosario Mendoza Cortes, “La experiencia filipina bajo el dominio español: la cristianización como cambio social” in David N. Lorenzen (ed.) *Cambio religioso y dominación cultural: el impacto del Islam y del cristianismo sobre otras sociedades* (Mexico City: Colegio de Mexico, 1982), pp.125-135.

<sup>78</sup> Oliver Charbonneau, *Civilizational Imperatives: Americans, Moros, and the Colonial World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020).

Despite the rhetoric of bringing ‘civilization’ to the Philippines, economic considerations were of equal if not greater significance in American policy, as Anne Foster’s study of American opium regulations in the Philippines demonstrates.<sup>79</sup> David Brody et al note that the media at the time highlighted this juxtaposition of civilization and commercialization through its portrayal of the Philippines both “as a visually curious site where civilization did not exist...[and] as a potential site for commercial activity.”<sup>80</sup> The idea of the Philippines as a “site where civilization did not exist” was largely due to the destruction of military conflict between the US and Spain and subsequently the US and Filipinos. Warwick Anderson writes that the Philippine-American War brought about the destruction of “much of the recently constructed apparatus of education and public health in the archipelago...as Americans assumed control they found little evidence of previous scientific and medical endeavor and felt justified in representing the Spanish period as a time of unrelieved apathy, ignorance, and superstition, in contrast to their own self-proclaimed modernity, progressivism, and scientific zeal.”<sup>81</sup> “Benevolent assimilation,” in McKinley’s words, was therefore necessary from the American viewpoint in order to improve the condition of the islands both for the sake of the natives and for commerce to flourish. Anderson argues that ‘benevolent assimilation’ centered on programs of public health and enforced hygiene measures and that “experiencing hygiene could also be a means of experiencing empire and race. Indeed, racialized agency was constructed and contested in the colonial Philippines more through the projects of hygiene and bodily reform than any other means.”<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority,” pp.253-273.

<sup>80</sup> David Brody et al, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), p.61.

<sup>81</sup> Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), pp.21-22.

<sup>82</sup> Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies*, p.2.

Anderson's conceptualization of "biomedical citizenship" is useful in understanding the American goal of remaking the Philippines in their own image.<sup>83</sup> Civic and hygienic discourses were conflated in the idea of a "medico-moral uplift," through which Filipinos could be granted the status of "civilized and Christianized."<sup>84</sup> American views of their colonial project's superiority to European imperialism is evident in Dr. Victor Heiser's description of his tenure as director of public health in the Philippines in *A Doctor's Odyssey*, where his work is framed as a struggle of advanced Western medicine against the 'backward' customs of the indigenous population.<sup>85</sup> Heiser differentiated American colonialism from European methods by citing his purportedly idealistic opposition to European arguments that "the Oriental could not be persuaded to accept the benefits of hygiene...to persuade him to live in any other way was hopeless."<sup>86</sup> Despite this exceptionalist narrative, other empires also viewed themselves as bringing scientific modernity to subject populations. In David Arnold's words, nearly a century before the US conquered the Philippines, "the British saw science, technology and medicine as exemplary attributes of their 'civilising mission,' clear evidence of their superiority over, and imperial responsibility for, a land they identified as superstitious and backward."<sup>87</sup>

American imperialism was initially framed in an altruistic sense, wherein Heiser declared "You cannot let people suffer if you have the means to relieve them."<sup>88</sup> This sentiment was nonetheless inextricably intertwined with the economic aims of the colonial government. Heiser stated bluntly that "it should also have been evident to employers of colonial labour that human

---

<sup>83</sup> Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies*, p.3.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, pp.1; 3.

<sup>85</sup> Victor Heiser, *A Doctor's Odyssey*, (Jonathan Cape Ltd 1936, 1937), pp.46-50.

<sup>86</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.44.

<sup>87</sup> David Arnold, *Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) p. 15.

<sup>88</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.46.

life had a direct monetary value...I believed that health should be regarded from the economic as well as from the humanitarian viewpoint. To be without it was to be without earning power.”<sup>89</sup> The mission, then, was to “transform the Filipinos from the weak and feeble race they were into the strong, healthy, and enduring race that they might become...to lay the foundations for the future on a sound basis.”<sup>90</sup> Heiser’s interest in this ‘transformation’ and the indigenous workforce is explained by Greg Bankoff’s study of colonial labor in the first decade of American rule in the Philippines. Bankoff demonstrates that this workforce was an ever-present concern to the colonial state, causing “an informed commentator at the time to declare that ‘the primary problem in the Philippines is the labor problem.’”<sup>91</sup> Consequently, Heiser was determined to “lay the foundations for the future on a sound basis” with or without the cooperation of the colonized population of the Philippines, leading eminent Filipino historian Reynaldo Ileto to characterize the Bureau of Health’s “medico-sanitary measures and popular resistance to such [as] continuing acts of war.”<sup>92</sup> As Ileto puts it, “the image of the crusading soldier soon became transformed into that of the crusading sanitary inspector.”<sup>93</sup> David Rubio Quintero concurs with Ileto in categorizing the nature of the colonial public health system as martial and claiming that it functioned as a form of “spiritual conquest” in the Philippines.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.46.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, p.47.

<sup>91</sup> Greg Bankoff, Wants, Wages, and Workers: Laboring in the American Philippines, 1899–1908,” *Pacific Historical Review* 74.1 (2005), p. 67.

<sup>92</sup> Reynaldo C. Ileto, “Cholera and the origins of the American sanitary order in the Philippines,” in David Arnold (ed.), *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988) p. 127.

<sup>93</sup> Reynaldo C. Ileto, “Outlines of a Non-Linear Emplotment of Philippine History,” in *Reflections on Development in Southeast Asia* (ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 1988), p. 111.

<sup>94</sup> David F. Rubio Quintero, “El fenómeno de las Drogas en Filipinas, características Históricas y Debate actual,” *Trans-pasando Fronteras* 11 (2018), p. 148. [Translation and any errors thereof my own].

The American colonial agenda was facilitated by the growth of a new political class among the Filipinos.<sup>95</sup> The US colonial regime actively sought to propagate this in the first decade of their rule, desiring to bring about the social, economic and political ‘transformation’ of their new territories through the indigenous ruling class.<sup>96</sup> Mojares attributes this to America having “worked within the limited (and, often, conservative) parameters of her own culture, which predisposed her to a partnership with the local elite.”<sup>97</sup> This mirrored other forms of empire- particularly the British Raj in India- where “major regional and local Indian notables were incorporated into the British gathering...enabling the colonial state to...be endowed with and to reciprocate the support of powerful local controllers.”<sup>98</sup> Despite its significance to British imperial rule, this arrangement was not unique to the Raj. As Anand Yang noted, “the collaborative arrangements worked out between Europeans and important elements in the local population formed a major part of colonial rule.”<sup>99</sup> In keeping with this colonial phenomenon, the new political elite class in the Philippines was still largely drawn from the existing ranks of the educated elite, or *ilustrados*, of the Spanish era. This class believed that the implementation of the American model of political democracy could resolve the political and social instability the Philippines had experienced in recent years. As the US took steps to establish theoretically democratic political institutions, elite Filipinos felt it was in the best interests of the Philippines to cooperate with the US in order for the islands to eventually be deemed ‘worthy’ of self-government. Patricio Abinales describes this process as the growth of “Filipino ‘colonial

---

<sup>95</sup> Yves Boquet, *The Philippine Archipelago*, (Springer International Publishing, 2017), p. 92.

<sup>96</sup> Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during U.S. Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

<sup>97</sup> Mojares, *The War against the Americans*, p.209.

<sup>98</sup> Anand Yang, *The Limited Raj: Agrarian Relations in Colonial India, Saran District, 1793-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p. 225.

<sup>99</sup> Yang, *Limited Raj*, p.226.

nationalism.”<sup>100</sup> This political class soon split into two groups and supporters of continued US governance found themselves quickly marginalized by other Filipino elites seeking independence rather than the continuation of the American colonial state.<sup>101</sup>

Julian Go argues that rather than accepting or resisting the supposed tutelage of the United States in self-government, Filipino elites merely “refashioned the Americans’ imposed discourses and institutions in accordance with their preexisting political culture.”<sup>102</sup> For example, the account of Resil Mojares of turn of the century Cebu describes Filipino usage of American anti-opium policy against their local rivals, notably when the mayor of Cebu City falsified charges of opium smoking against some of the local Chinese in order to collect fines from them.<sup>103</sup> Machiavellian maneuvers aside, Paul Kramer states that Filipino nationalists felt they “would prove their very readiness for self-government...through the elaboration of an ‘internal’ empire” governing “their own colonial subjects.”<sup>104</sup> Aaron Rom O. Moralina and Francis Gealogo add a public health dimension to this line of inquiry in evoking the alliance between the colonial state and the elites in their discussions of later public health campaigns against tuberculosis and influenza, respectively.<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Patricio Abinales, “American Rule and the Formation of Filipino ‘Colonial Nationalism,’” *Japanese Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 39.4 (2002), pp. 604-621.

<sup>101</sup> Abinales, “Colonial Nationalism,” pp.604-621.

<sup>102</sup> Julian Go, “Colonial Reception and Cultural Reproduction: Filipino Elites and United States Tutelary Rule,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12.4 (1999), pp. 337-368.

<sup>103</sup> Mojares, *The War Against the Americans*, p.149.

<sup>104</sup> Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> Aaron Rom O. Moralina, “State, Society, and Sickness: Tuberculosis Control in the American Philippines, 1910–1918,” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 57.2 (2009), pp.179–218; Francis A. Gealogo, “The Philippines in the World of the Influenza Pandemic of 1918–1919,” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 57. 2 (2009), pp.261-292.

Elite cooperation with the American agenda would also later facilitate the promulgation of the drugs prohibitory regime. In Nathaniel Smith's words, Heiser and other "American officials viewed incarceration as a coercive tool to make drug users into sober colonial subjects fit to learn self-government," the same self-government sought by elite Filipino nationalists.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, Ferdinand Victoria argues that Filipino elites specifically viewed themselves as "opium non-users" and therefore deserving of eventual self-government in comparison to the "addict...who parodied the Filipino national vision and the American social order."<sup>107</sup> Alfred McCoy's extensive work on the American Philippines features enforcement of the opium ban as a facet of the rise of the surveillance state in the US. For McCoy, the opium ban was a significant component of an American hardline colonial stance "on matters of personal vice."<sup>108</sup> Prohibition of opium smoking was the face of a "colonial morals regime" which also sought to extinguish common Filipino practices like gambling which were likewise deemed morally unacceptable.<sup>109</sup> The difficulties inherent in enforcing laws against these customs "demonstrated the limitations of coercive policing in the realms of public morality and popular culture."<sup>110</sup> These limitations were also felt in other areas of colonial governance, as Anderson demonstrates regarding resistance to hygiene measures imposed by the Bureau of Public Health. This resistance which "Heiser took to be racial and illicit was, for many Filipino physicians, at once social and comprehensible."<sup>111</sup> The public health service was predominantly staffed by Filipino doctors by the 1920s, whose less interventionist approach was viewed by Heiser as a failure of his purported

---

<sup>106</sup> Nathaniel L. Smith, "Cured by the Habit of Force": *The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970*, unpublished PhD thesis, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2007) p.9.

<sup>107</sup> Victoria "The Most Humane," p. 90.

<sup>108</sup> Alfred McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 2009), p.148.

<sup>109</sup> McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*, pp.148-153.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies*, p.193.

tutelage. The remarks of a senior health official in 1929 that “few things arouse greater resistance and antipathy than efforts to enforce changes in the daily lives of people and the conditions that surround them, and it is but natural that they should resist measures which, so far as they can see, are devised solely to make them unhappy and uncomfortable” infuriated Heiser, who reiterated his belief of “what poor imitators the Filipino physicians had proven to be.”<sup>112</sup>

However, the scholarship of Anderson on public health and Wertz, Foster, Victoria and briefly McCoy on the beginning of prohibition does not evaluate drug policy in detail as a framework for studying American empire in practice. As Anderson, Go, Mojares and others have argued in relation to public health and political institutions respectively, there was undoubtedly a gap between the rhetoric of societal transformation and the partial at best realization of the aims of American imperialism in the Philippines. Mojares states that “Filipino response to United States rule was mediated by tenacious facts of social structure and historical experience.”<sup>113</sup> Go concurs that “transformative pretensions of US colonialism did not match the realities of rule.”

<sup>114</sup>This was true of the ‘civilizational’ aspirations of other empires, as Eric Tagliacozzo discusses in relation to maritime smuggling in the West Indies. Tagliacozzo noted regarding smuggling and piracy that “violence and the perceived damage it caused to any attempts to impose European ‘order’ seemed to be everywhere.”<sup>115</sup> For Dutch authors like H.P.E. Kniphorst and his English counterparts Thomas Raffles and James Brooke, illicit maritime activity was a “manifestation of cultural anomie and violence that needed to be stamped out if civilization was

---

<sup>112</sup> Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies*, p. 193.

<sup>113</sup> Mojares, *The War Against the Americans*, p. 209.

<sup>114</sup> Go, “Introduction: Global Perspectives on the U.S. Colonial State in the Philippines,” in *Anne Foster and Julian Go (eds.), The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 24.

<sup>115</sup> Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders*, p. 109.

to come to the region.”<sup>116</sup> Faced with the conundrum of geographical realities of enforcing maritime colonial regulations in Southeast Asia, the British enlisted the assistance of local elites, with varying degrees of success.<sup>117</sup> As previously discussed, Anand Yang demonstrates the significance of similar partnerships with local elites in India. However, Yang argues that the actual presence of the British colonial state in the lives of the majority of the population was limited to the extent that the local indigenous rulers, or *zamindars*, were the true governing authorities for the rural peasantry [*raiya*ts].<sup>118</sup> Effectively, “the lack of penetrating state institutions at the local level restricted the British presence to an administrative apparatus that focused on districts...with British personnel largely confined to towns and urban centers...much of the countryside was abandoned, thus placing the overwhelming majority of the rural population in the grip of devices fashioned by zamindari networks.”<sup>119</sup> Gyan Prakash argues similarly that in British India, science had to be “translated” locally to align with indigenous needs and ideas, rather than accepted as part of the ‘civilisation’ the central colonial state sought to impose.<sup>120</sup> American colonial attempts at enforcing prohibitory drug regulations have not been utilized similarly as a framework for examining the differences between the rhetoric and reality of US empire. In addition to the research questions detailed above, this thesis also sets out to incorporate drug policies into the existing analyses of the limits of the impact of American colonialism on the Philippines. It therefore additionally functions as a case study of the impact of the attempted interference of modern colonial states with the flows of drugs, people carrying or consuming them and the ideas underpinning these processes. As such, American drug regulatory

---

<sup>116</sup> Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders*, p. 109.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid* p. 110.

<sup>118</sup> Yang, *Limited Raj*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>119</sup> Yang, *Limited Raj*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>120</sup> Gyan Prakash, “Science between the Lines,” in Shahid Amin and Dipesh Chakrabarty (eds.), *Subaltern Studies IX* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 60-62.

activity in the Philippines serves as a new way of contextualizing American colonialism as well as drugs and empire more broadly.

## **Research Aims and Methodology**

In addition to the research questions and existing literature detailed above, I would like to clarify further the parameters of the research for this thesis. The aim of this project has been to explain the existing market for psychoactive substances in the Philippines at the end of the nineteenth century and the subsequent development, enforcement and impact of drug regulations during the American colonial era of the Philippines. This thesis is not a social history of opium, morphine and cocaine as objects of consumption, nor is it generally an analysis of the lives of their primary users. It is instead essentially a narrative of commerce and regulation, and to a lesser extent, consumption. This dissertation focuses primarily on the actors involved in the processes of commerce, consumption and regulation of drugs, namely the colonial state, consumers, distributors and activists. It concerns itself with their activities throughout the last decade of Spanish rule and the entirety of the American colonial era of the Philippines, from circa 1890 to 1946.

In addition to the literature on the topic, my analytical focus was also shaped by the archival and primary sources available to me. These included the National Archives and the Library of Congress in the United States, as well as the British Library and the British National Archives. Additional archives in the US consisted of the Anti-Saloon League archive in Westerville, Ohio and the Kautz Family YMCA archives at the University of Minnesota. Due to

the timing of the global pandemic in 2020-2022, archives in the Philippines were unfortunately inaccessible, as were additional visits to archives in the United States or elsewhere.

Consequently, I was limited to available digitized archival and primary sources after March 2020. I was very fortunate in that these included a number of sources related to the colonial government of the Philippines and the activities thereof. In particular, the LawPhil Project of the Arellano Law Foundation at the Arellano University Law School in Manila provided digitized records of Philippines Supreme Court cases relating to drug violations during the US colonial era, including rulings and case notes, and as such were an invaluable source of information of judicial proceedings. The Philippine Diary Project and the novels and essays of Filipino author and revolutionary Jose Rizal likewise proved to be significant sources of information from the Philippines. The *New York Times* digital archives, the digital collections of the National Library of Australia and the Chronicling America: Historical American Newspapers collection of the Library of Congress also formed a significant part of my primary source research. The University of Michigan also had a substantial collection of colonial government records, including annual reports from the Bureau of Health of the Philippines. In addition, a number of published works by US colonial officials in the Philippines were available in print or online. These were primarily autobiographical, such as Victor Heiser's *A Doctor's Odyssey* and Francis Harrison's *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, or semi-autobiographical histories like W. Cameron Forbes' *The Philippine Islands* and Najeeb Saleeby's *A History of Sulu*.

However, a casual perusal of these sources, let alone an in-depth analysis, reveals an unmistakable drawback of relying upon their accounts of events. They are largely drawn from the perspective of the colonial state and the metropole of the United States rather than the colonized population of the Philippines. This limitation is of course not unique to my thesis;

Daniel Immerwahr notes in “The Greater United States: Territory and Empire in U.S. History” that the history of US empire is still predominantly written by and from the perspective of the colonizers rather than the colonized.<sup>121</sup> In other words, as Vicente Rafael states, it is “written from the place of forgetting, the USA.”<sup>122</sup> The glimpses of the colonized population in colonial archives must therefore be ‘read against the grain’ rather than taken as a reliable narrative. Moreover, the limited sources that I have available from Filipino viewpoints are still from representatives of an elite minority rather than a broader cross-section of Filipino society. In Dipesh Chakrabarty’s words, “the ruling-class documents often used for historical reconstructions of working-class conditions can be read both for what they say and for their ‘silences.’”<sup>123</sup> As such, colonial sources carry three significant limitations; the first being that the biases of their overwhelmingly white, Western or Western university-trained authors of the early twentieth century inevitably affected their accounts of events. Many of them were ardent supporters of American imperialism and the colonial project in the Philippines and displayed strong racial prejudices towards the indigenous population. Secondly, the information contained therein is limited to perceptions of the colonial state and of outsiders of the underground commerce and consumption of drugs and can only hint at the true scope and significance of the unsanctioned drug trade. Finally, the nature of these sources means that the focus is primarily on the development of US colonial government regulatory activities and the beliefs of the authorities regarding the effect of these regulations on the illicit drug trade based on the knowledge available to them. They consequently provide a story of commerce and regulation

---

<sup>121</sup> Daniel Immerwahr, “The Greater United States: Territory and Empire in U.S. History,” *Diplomatic History*, 40. 3 (2016) pp. 373–391.

<sup>122</sup> Vicente Rafael, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000) p. 2.

<sup>123</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Conditions for Knowledge of Working-Class Conditions: Employers, Government and the Jute Workers of Calcutta, 1890-1940” in Guha & Spivak ed., *Selected Subaltern Studies*, p. 179.

substantiated by statistics that were realistically vague estimates at best, rather than a reliable basis for a social history of drugs in the colonial Philippines.

In reviewing this thesis, readers will also note the paucity of information related to the Japanese wartime occupation of the Philippines from 1942 to 1945. Given the general lack of accessibility of Japanese World War II era records and the previously stated lack of access to Philippines archives, there were few sources available apart from US wartime records. In light of the Japanese control of the Philippines at the time, these were more extrapolations based on knowledge of Japanese activities in other occupied regions rather than firsthand accounts specific to the Philippines. The majority of the research cited for the war years is drawn from media accounts, the records of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East- more popularly known as the Tokyo Trials- and US Bureau of Narcotics reports which briefly referred to the occupied Philippines.

Finally, terminology plays an important role in any area of academic writing but is particularly important in the context of drugs history. As subjects of considerable consumption, condemnation, and control, both in historical contexts and the present day, the phrasing of their nature and mode of use must be taken into consideration as part of research and analysis. Historians of drugs have chosen different names to describe their objects of study, generally related to the argument they are proposing regarding the role and status of the substance in question. David Courtwright has frequently utilized the term psychoactive substances, while in histories of marijuana and cocaine, Jim Mills has commonly referred to them as intoxicants and, in more recent years, psychoactive medicines.<sup>124</sup> Throughout this thesis, I have usually referred

---

<sup>124</sup> Courtwright, *Forces of habit*; James Mills, "Decolonising Drugs in Asia: The Case of Cocaine in Colonial India", in *Third World Quarterly* (2017), pp.1-2.

to substances by name in discussions of their consumption, characterization, and regulation by the authorities involved. The primary substances in question are opium, morphine and cocaine. Opium and morphine are both narcotics; as morphine is a derivative of opium, I have generally referred to them in situations involving both as ‘opiates’ or ‘narcotics.’ Cocaine is a stimulant; however, as Virginia Berridge notes, cocaine has historically erroneously been referred to in legislation as a narcotic as part of laws intended to suppress consumption.<sup>125</sup> There are consequently some references to cocaine in the context of laws regulating narcotics, as that is how they were categorized in the original legislation.

I have referred to them collectively as drugs or psychoactive substances, particularly with regard to regulations that applied to all three. The term ‘drugs’ is admittedly a rather loaded one, so to speak, as it carries certain connotations of danger and illegality to some audiences. The use of the collective term ‘drugs’ in my thesis should be read as synonymous with psychoactive substances; that is to say, in the objective sense of materials for human consumption that are taken for their physiological and psychological effects on the body. They are neither intrinsically illicit nor illegitimate but only categorized as such by some of the actors in my thesis.

The same is true of modes of consumption of the substances in question. The colonial state of the Philippines established a binary system of categorization of consumption and use, wherein medicinal consumption and scientific research formed the only purposes for importing, selling and consuming opium, morphine and cocaine deemed legitimate by the authorities. As ‘medicinal’ and ‘scientific’ are both socially constructed concepts rather than objective categories, medicinal or scientific in the context of colonial drug regulations refers to treatments

---

<sup>125</sup> Virginia Berridge, *Opium and the People: Opiate Use and Drug Control Policy in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century England*, (London: Free Association Books, 1999). p.222.

and activities that were considered as such by the US professions concerned, rather than indigenous forms of medicine in the Philippines or other Asian contexts.

Non-medicinal consumption, and commerce in drugs for this purpose, were considered illegitimate. For reasons of brevity I have sometimes in this thesis referred to non-medicinal as recreational. This denotes that it was not considered a medicine in the eyes of the US colonial authorities, rather than as a reflection of how the consumers involved viewed their use of drugs. These categories of medicinal and non-medicinal could of course overlap, wherein smoking opium to prevent infectious disease intertwined with and constituted as significant a motive as pleasure to some consumers. However, this strictly demarcated binary system of drug use was the one reflected in legislation on drug control. References to ‘illicit drugs’ or ‘illicit narcotics’ are therefore not opinions or judgments on the nature of the substances or mode of consumption in question, but only a description of their legal status in the context of the historical time and places featured in my research.

In light of the historical time and places in question, it is important to clarify my choices in nomenclature as well as terminology. Locations that were colonies at the time in question or have changed their name for other reasons, such as Indonesia and Thailand, are generally referred to with the name used in the relevant primary source, with the contemporary name in brackets. This is for the purposes of clarity when referring to places mentioned by name in the original sources rather than a tacit endorsement of colonial nomenclature. Furthermore, as Eric Tagliacozzo states in *Secret Trades, Porous Borders*, “because almost all of the ‘smugglers’ discussed in this book were of the middle or lower classes, their names are not preserved other

than in the ways that colonial governments recorded them.”<sup>126</sup> I have likewise used the spellings found in colonial legal documents or English language print media from the time. Moreover, as the description of Vy Can Siu in the opening section as “a Chinaman who from childhood has been in the habit of smoking opium” indicates, there are occasional uses of archaic racial terms as part of direct quotes from original sources. There are also racial categorizations mentioned that reflect the medical and popular thought of the early twentieth century United States. These are both only referenced due to their usage in the original sources and intended to illustrate the prejudices and harmful biases that shaped the formulation and enforcement of drug regulations. Their inclusion is not an uncritical reproduction of the racist and imperialist beliefs and practices of the historical individuals and organizations quoted.

### **Thesis Chapters Overview**

As previously stated, the research questions underpinning this thesis are largely chronologically sequential. Thesis chapters are consequently broadly organized on a chronological basis, particularly the first two. The first research chapter addresses issues of the drugs market and opium regulations under the Spanish, with an additional focus on opium trade and consumption in the popular culture of the Philippines. It then turns to the initial social and political impact of the US invasion and occupation on drug regulations and examines the beginnings of American colonial institutions charged with later enforcement of prohibition. This chapter follows the trajectory of drug regulations in the Philippines throughout the final decades of the Spanish colonial period and the turbulent years of the 1896 revolt, the Spanish-American War, the short-lived Philippine Republic, and the Filipino-American War. By the end of the era

---

<sup>126</sup> Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders*, pp. ix-x.

covered by this chapter, the American colonial government was debating a return to the policies of their Spanish predecessors. The defeat of this proposed return to a monopoly system at the hands of an unlikely coalition of opium importers and religious anti-opium trade campaigners sets the stage for the beginning of the following chapter in 1903.

Chapter 3 examines further the market for drugs in the Philippines in the first decade of the American colonial era, the development of new colonial regulations and the impact of their initial enforcement. The same Protestant anti-opium influence that was instrumental in the rejection of a new monopoly system played a significant role in the process ultimately leading to prohibition. The travels of the Philippine Opium Committee in East and Southeastern Asia to compare the opium regulations of various polities was decisive in the 1905 ban on non-medicinal sale and consumption of opiates. The results of the colonial state's attempts to enforce the ban led to the United States seeking a new international consensus on drug regulation in Shanghai in 1909 and three years later in The Hague.

Chapter 4 further expands the geographical scope of the thesis with the aftermath of The Hague Convention in 1912. It focuses on the impact of international regulatory structures upon colonial attempts to control the flow of psychoactive substances to the drugs market in the Philippines. The need for international cooperation in order to successfully enforce colonial drug regulations in the Philippines drew the United States into ongoing negotiations with producer states like Great Britain. The unyielding ideological commitment of the US to supply control led to conflict at the League of Nations and further international conventions on drug control. Moreover, the reluctance of the British colonial government in Sandakan to implement greater restrictions on opium exports to the Philippines brought the colonial government in Manila into conflict with the British Empire in a regional setting as well. Within the Philippines, the nature of

the drugs regulatory regime continued to be contested and its provisions often resisted. Political developments in the metropole also altered the legal status of the Philippines, granting greater autonomy to the colony. However, the autonomy of the United States in directing multilateral drugs diplomacy was undermined by the international agreements and structures it had a hand in creating, diminishing American interest in international drugs diplomacy in relation to their colonial possessions by the time of the Bangkok Convention in 1931.

Following this diplomatic retrenchment by the United States, Chapter 5 shifts the geographical focus back from the American metropole and the stage of international diplomacy at the League of Nations to the local setting of the Philippines. The remaining years of the American colonial era entailed the rise of both the Philippine Commonwealth as a precursor to independence and the imperialist expansion of Japan in Asia. This chapter examines the impact of the Japanese expansion on the drugs market in the Philippines and the colonial state's attempts to enforce restrictions in the increasingly unstable context of the build-up to the Second World War. The military defeat of Japan by end of the Second World War also resulted in the independence of the Philippines in 1946. Despite the nascent statehood of the Philippines, the restrictions imposed by the colonial state on the flow of narcotics into and throughout the archipelago remained in force under the new national government. The nature and impact of this regulatory continuity underscores the enduring legacy of the American colonial era.

## **Chapter Two**

### **A tale of two regimes: the beginning of the US colonial state and the end of the opium monopoly in the Philippines, 1890-1903**

#### Introduction

The decades spanning the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth brought about drastic changes for the Philippines, both socially and politically. In 1898, the Spanish empire finally came to an end with the US conquest of the Philippines and other former Spanish colonies. The United States replaced the Spanish as the resident foreign colonial power and sought to remake the Philippines in their own image to effectively ‘train’ the Filipinos in the science of self-government. The end of Spanish rule also entailed the end of the opium monopoly system. This chapter explains the beginning of this process by examining the state of the market in the Philippines for psychoactive substances and the regulations controlling it by the end of the Spanish era. It subsequently seeks to illustrate the transnational flows of people, ideas and psychoactive substances that shaped the US conquest of the Philippines in order to later explain their future impact on the American colonial drug regulatory reforms. Currents carrying soldiers, missionaries, officials, migrant laborers, and their beliefs regarding the nature and role of drugs, Philippine society and the US colonial regime collided with the existing structures of power, consumption and commerce in the archipelago. This chapter looks at the initial impact of this collision- the end of an old imperial consensus regarding drug regulations and the beginning of an uncertain new era.

## Section 1: The final years of Spanish rule, 1890-1898

### Development of the Spanish opium monopoly system

Although little remarked upon at the time, the American attempt at suppressing the existing vital market for psychoactive substances in the Philippines was preceded by earlier colonial efforts at drugs control. In 1814, the Spanish colonial governor of the Philippines had instituted an interdict on opium growth, sale, or consumption there. Chinese opium consumers managed to circumvent the ban nonetheless. This was facilitated at the time by collaboration with the members of the Spanish elite who could be relied upon to shield Chinese opium consumers from discovery or prosecution. The potential of trade with China led to an 1828 ordinance permitting the cultivation of opium in the vicinity of the capital for the purposes of export only.<sup>127</sup> By the 1830s however, the Spanish colonial government found itself increasingly short of revenue and eventually resorted to replacing the earlier prohibition with a limited government monopoly for domestic consumption in 1843. This later altered to a farm system, in which entrepreneurs could bid for lucrative contracts with the colonial government to sell opium strictly to Chinese residents of the Philippines. Initially limited to the immediate vicinity of Manila, after 1850 government opium contracts were extended throughout the archipelago. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, the opium trade in the Spanish-controlled Philippines had solidified into a strictly controlled monopoly system predominantly run by the Chinese elite.<sup>128</sup> This system would be disrupted by the upheavals of the 1896 revolt against Spanish colonial rule and the American invasion of the Philippines in 1898.

---

<sup>127</sup> Juan Gamella et al, "Las Rentas de Anfi3n: El Monopolio Espa3ol del Opio en las Filipinas (1844-1898) y su Rechazo por la Administraci3n Norteamericana," *Revista de Indias*, 52.194 (1992). p.66.

<sup>128</sup> Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press (1965, 1999) p.114. (I have cited Wickberg extensively on the Spanish opium monopoly system in the Philippines, as his

The system was similar to the opium farms of the surrounding colonies. The colonial government auctioned off contracts for each region to the highest bidder to sell opium- albeit only to Chinese consumers- for a guaranteed length of time. The length of the contracts was eventually codified at three years. The Spanish monopoly system was variously referred to by the Spanish authorities as the *Estancamiento del Opio* [Opium Monopoly], the *Contrata de Anfion* [Opium Franchise] and *Renta de Anfion* [Opium Concession].<sup>129</sup> Having been awarded the monopoly contract for a specific region, the contract owner was then responsible for the import, storage and preparation of smoking opium. He was also charged with the establishment and management of public opium smoking facilities which were licensed by the government. Contract owners were allowed to subcontract these responsibilities as they saw fit, and also served as customs agents in practice, as the law provided for contract owners and their deputies to search for illicit sources of opium. The government also incentivized the purchase of exclusive contracts to sell opium by ensuring opium contractors had “access to whatever law enforcement institutions were necessary to maintain his monopoly.”<sup>130</sup>

The prices of the contracts were increasingly expensive by the 1890s. The winning contract bid for Manila alone from 1890-1893 was 532,127 pesos.<sup>131</sup> Smaller contracts for other provinces were still considerable, as the winning bids for Samar, Pampanga and Leyte in the 1890s were 46,000, 62,000, and 64,000 pesos respectively. Prices had risen significantly in the preceding decade, as the Cagayan-Isabela contract winning bid had more than tripled from

---

sources are taken directly from the Philippines National Archives, which were inaccessible to me at the time of writing.)

<sup>129</sup> Ferdinand Victoria, "The Most Humane of Any that Could be Adopted": The Philippine Opium Committee Report and the Imagining of the Opium Consumer's World in the Colonial Philippines, 1903-1905." in *Towards a Filipino History: A Festschrift for Zeus Salazar* (BAKAS, 2015) p.93

<sup>130</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.115.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, p.116.

24,570 pesos in 1881 to 81,200 pesos in 1892.<sup>132</sup> The overhead expenses, in addition to the price of the contract itself, were also considerable. As both Spanish law and environmental conditions in the Philippines prevented large-scale opium cultivation within the archipelago, opium had to be imported, primarily from British India. Shipments were directed to the northern port of Manila and the southern harbors of Zamboanga and Jolo, necessitating the payment of both shipping costs and customs tariffs on importation. Opium importation entailed an additional fee of forty pesos per chest, with a 50 percent surcharge added in 1890.<sup>133</sup>

In return, opium contract owners could expect significant returns on their investment. Edgar Wickberg's analysis of the nineteenth century Filipino Chinese community uses estimates of Philippine taxation to calculate the profits that could be derived from various opium monopoly contracts by the 1890s. Under the Spanish, "opium monopolists were taxed by the government at a rate of 0.5 percent of the contract figure [and] by the 1880s the Spanish were attempting to establish a general 5 per cent income tax on most non-agricultural occupations... this tax applied to the profits from monopoly contracts as well." Therefore a .5 percent tax would indicate profits of at least 10 percent.<sup>134</sup> By this estimate, the 1892-1895 contract for Cagayan-Isabela costing 81,200 pesos could have produced a profit of over 8,000 pesos.

The Cagayan-Isabela contract for those years was acquired by Federico Gamrir Co Sequieng, a Manila Chinese merchant, cigar manufacturer and businessman with extensive interests in the opium monopoly. Rather than attempt to control the Manila contract, Co Sequieng had turned his attention to primarily small-scale opium contracts in outlying provinces in Luzon. In 1893 he controlled the opium monopoly in nine provinces. A Manila-based

---

<sup>132</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.117.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid*, p.116.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid*, p. 117.

monopolist controlling contracts for provincial regions was not unusual. Public auctions for opium contracts in the provinces were held in Manila as well as in the province in question, pitting provincial Chinese would-be monopolists against Manila-based Chinese competitors. Chinese in the capital were often more prosperous than their provincial counterparts, giving them a competitive edge in bidding.<sup>135</sup> Co Sequieng had won the Cagayan-Isabela contract over not only the opposition of bidders from the regions in question but also a larger monopolist and Manila-based Chinese businessman Tan Quien-Sien. Tan Quien-Sien was also known by the Hispanicized name of Carlos Palanca.<sup>136</sup> Quien-Sien had, however, not entered the bidding fray himself but had instead provided a 15,000 peso loan to a “rival claimant” of Co Sequieng.<sup>137</sup> Monopolists of Tan Quien-Sien’s stature sought larger prizes, in particular the Manila contract, which was the most profitable of all. Manila in comparison for 1890-1893 may have produced over 53,000 pesos in profit.<sup>138</sup>

Bidding for opium monopoly contracts in other provinces was also intensely competitive, as illustrated by the activities of Nicasio Veloso Chiong Tuico in Cebu.<sup>139</sup> Chiong Veloso was a Chinese immigrant who settled in Cebu in the mid-nineteenth century, seeking to establish a foothold in the monopoly business of the region. Initially unsuccessful in securing and retaining contracts for licensing fees for transportation and slaughterhouses, by the 1890s he had diverted his efforts to competing for control of the opium trade instead. In 1893, he managed to secure the opium monopoly contract for the combined provinces of Cebu and Bohol over the opposition of

---

<sup>135</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.117.

<sup>136</sup> Philip Ginsberg, “The Chinese in the Philippine Revolution,” *Asian Studies* (1965), p.147.

<sup>137</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.118.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid*, p.116.

<sup>139</sup> Michael Cullinane, “A Chinese Life in Late Spanish Era Cebu City,” *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, 43.3/4 (2015), pp.258-321.

14 other would-be monopolists, 13 of whom were fellow Chinese businessmen. The winning bid for Cebu-Bohol proved to be 116,280 pesos, granting Chiong Veloso and his Filipino wife, Genoveva Visitación Rosales, the exclusive right to distribution and sale of opium for 1894-1897 in the two provinces. In obtaining the Cebu-Bohol contract, he managed to outbid a longstanding commercial rival, a group of Chinese entrepreneurs led by Lucio Herrera Uy Chijon. Chiong Veloso sought to further expand his influence in the opium trade by bidding the same year for an additional contract for the province of Negros but was defeated by a rival Chinese group from Bacolod.<sup>140</sup>

The intense bidding for contracts and high profits of the early to mid-1890s were due in large part to the increase of the Chinese immigrant population in the preceding decades. The Chinese population of the Philippines had increased from approximately 5,700 in the mid nineteenth century to about 90,000 in the decade from 1876 to 1886, nearly half of whom lived in Manila. The population level fell during the 1890s but still constituted a significant increase from a few decades previously.<sup>141</sup> Profits were also partially due to opium being widely accessible to a variety of consumers. Future US public health commissioner Dr. Heiser noted that by “the time the [American] civil regime was instituted in Manila [in 1901], there were two hundred or more places where the Chinese could buy a pipe and table spaces for twenty cents.”<sup>142</sup> Outside of the major population center of Manila, by the mid-1890s the province of Cagayan had around 40 opium dens and Iloilo had at least 100.<sup>143</sup> Opium as a commodity was inexpensive enough to allow for working class as well as elite consumption. However, the

---

<sup>140</sup> Cullinane “A Chinese Life,” p.276.

<sup>141</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.93.

<sup>142</sup> Victor Heiser, *A Doctor's Odyssey*, (Jonathan Cape Ltd 1936, 1937) p.176.

<sup>143</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.116.

stratified class system that had developed under Spanish rule influenced the management of the opium monopoly system as well.

Public opium smoking places had a typical capacity of around 20 to 30 consumers, and were legally required to be open to all Chinese consumers. However, elite Chinese objected to sharing public venues with poorer Chinese consumers. Elite consumers consequently sought permission to set up legal private opium smoking facilities within their own homes or sometimes businesses, in a somewhat analogous manner to private members' clubs versus public houses, or pubs, in the United Kingdom. Authorities in Manila, with its large Chinese community, acquiesced to elite proposals for "private dens" but arrangements elsewhere were made on a more ad hoc basis.<sup>144</sup> Despite the lack of official "private dens" in the provinces, elite Chinese were usually allowed to smoke opium in their own homes or de facto private dens on the condition that the opium was acquired from the legal monopoly holder.<sup>145</sup> An 1896 investigation of opium dens in Olla, in the province of Iloilo, revealed that 56 out of 100 licensed dens in the region were private, contrary to the law. The official investigating the dens in question reported this to the central administration in Manila, who pragmatically replied that this was a standard arrangement in many regions and was necessary for the opium monopoly system to produce adequate revenue.<sup>146</sup> Spanish authorities were inclined to be flexible on the subject, given that opium monopoly revenues at their peak constituted approximately four percent of total revenue for the colonial government, even funding operations for the colonial district courts at one point.<sup>147</sup>

---

<sup>144</sup> Richard Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Global History of Narcotics 1500-2000* (Orion Press 2001), p.154.

<sup>145</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, pp.117-118.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, p.118.

<sup>147</sup> Victoria, "The Most Humane," p.93.

Despite opium dens being legally limited to Chinese consumers, the monopoly was not controlled solely by Chinese or Chinese mestizo entrepreneurs in the Philippines. Wealthy Filipinos, usually of Spanish descent, sometimes held opium monopoly contracts or otherwise acted as “agents, partners or bondsmen of Chinese contractors.”<sup>148</sup> The Manila contract was held from 1890 to 1893 by a Spanish businessman, who had business associates in a Spanish firm which represented the Manila interests of opium contract holders for Cavite and Bulacan. The bondsman and agent for Co Sequieng’s previously mentioned contract for Cagayan-Isabela were both not of Chinese origin, and monopolist contemporaries of Co Sequieng sometimes consisted of partnerships between Filipinos and Chinese. The opium contracts for Leyte, Samar and Cavite in 1890 were held by a joint venture of Eulogio Mendoza, Mariano Fernando Yu Chingco and Joaquin Tan Angco. However, despite Spanish and Filipino involvement in the higher echelons of the monopoly system, the day-to-day management of public opium smoking places was usually run by Chinese or Chinese mestizo individuals.<sup>149</sup>

By the end of Spanish rule, regulation of the opium trade had therefore undergone a significant change from the earlier prohibition. Spanish authorities, presumably learning from their earlier attempt at banning opium, had concluded resignedly that “the prohibition was impossible to enforce against the Chinese.”<sup>150</sup> Most importantly, the “Chinese who used opium could work just as hard as those who did not.”<sup>151</sup> Overall, the opium monopoly system formed one part of the broader Spanish colonial government strategy towards ‘personal vices’ in popular

---

<sup>148</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.118.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.115.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

culture. Contracts for monopolies on cockfighting pits were likewise awarded to the highest bidder, although at much lower prices than opium monopoly contracts. These were also a common business interest of affluent Chinese Filipinos in the 1890s. The wealthy Chinese businessman, Tan Quien-sien, having lost the Cagayan-Isabela opium contract to Co Sequieng, was reported to have paid 68,000 pesos per year for the monopoly license for “the great cockpit of Manila” and an additional cockpit.<sup>152</sup>

This strategy was not as laissez-faire as the above regulations imply, however. Opium sales to the native Filipino population were strictly banned, as was consumption of opium by the same. In addition to generating much-needed revenue for the colonial treasury and averting the formation of a black market, the monopoly system was intended to prevent the spread of opium consumption among the Filipino population.<sup>153</sup> Despite the seemingly counterintuitive loss of additional revenue from potential Filipino consumers, the Spanish prioritized limiting access to opium over added income, in a similar fashion to the drug policies of the British colony of Burma and in the Dutch East Indies.<sup>154</sup> Spanish authorities had previously concluded opium use among the Chinese was not a threat to their economic productivity. However, the widespread myth of the “indolence of the Filipino” convinced authorities that Filipino opium consumption would exacerbate their supposed innate slothfulness. Jose Rizal’s essay “The Indolence of the Filipino” argued that this so-called “indolence does not exist, and that all said about it...by government employees who make it responsible for their own shortcomings...[and] the friars who regard it as necessary in order that they may continue to represent themselves as

---

<sup>152</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.113.

<sup>153</sup> Gamella et al., “Rentas de anfi6n,” p.61

<sup>154</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.92; David Courtwright, *Forces of habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press London, 2001) p.50.

indispensable” was untrue.<sup>155</sup> However, Spanish authorities were less interested in the root causes of behavior attributed to Filipinos than in its potential impact on colonial economic productivity and the prohibition remained in force.

### Opium trade and consumption in popular culture of the Philippines

Enforcement of prohibition on Filipino consumption was facilitated by the antipathy many native Filipinos felt towards the practice of smoking opium. This is not to imply that there were no Filipino recreational consumers of opium; however, it was not a widely accepted practice in Filipino culture. Depictions of the trade in and consumption of opium in popular culture of the time were predominantly negative. José Rizal’s lengthy novels *Noli Me Tangere*, published in 1887, and *El Filibusterismo* in 1891 both refer to opium smoking numerous times in the fictional narrative of Capitan Tiago. Don Santiago de los Santos, known as Capitan Tiago, is a prominent local figure in Binondo and wealthy landowner and businessman with a number of interests in various monopolies, one of which is opium. Rizal establishes his standing by describing him as appearing younger than his age, due to a “clear complexion, a corpulent figure and a full face, thanks to the liberal supply of fat which according to his admirers was the gift of Heaven and which his enemies averred was the blood of the poor.”<sup>156</sup> Capitan Tiago’s wealth has been derived in part from his estates worked by agrarian laborers and partially through a variety of business interests, of which “it is superfluous to state that the opium monopoly controlled by him and a Chinese brought in large profits.”<sup>157</sup> After a series of family tragedies largely brought

---

<sup>155</sup> José Rizal, “The Indolence of the Filipinos” (Madrid: *La Solidaridad*, 1890) p. 1.

<sup>156</sup> José Rizal, *Noli Me Tangere* (Berlin, 1887) p.36.

<sup>157</sup> Rizal, *Noli*, p.37.

about through the corruption of the Spanish friars, his standing has significantly fallen and he resorts to smoking opium as a coping mechanism for depression. By the end of *Noli Me Tangere*, he has been forgotten by his former admirers and adversaries alike. The once-powerful Capitan Tiago has been reduced to “a small man, yellow, thin, and bent, with stained and dirty fingernails, gazing through dreamy, sunken eyes at the passers-by as if he did not see them. At nightfall you would see him rise with difficulty and, supporting himself on his cane, make his way to a narrow little by-street to enter a grimy building over the door of which may be seen in large red letters: FUMADERO PUBLICO DE ANFION [Public Opium Smoking Room]. This is that Capitan Tiago who was so celebrated, but who is now completely forgotten, even by the very senior sacristan himself.”<sup>158</sup>

Rizal continues the narrative of Capitan Tiago in *El Filibusterismo*, the sequel to *Noli Me Tangere*. Capitan Tiago is characterized as completely consumed by his dependence on opium at this point. His servant, Basilio, attempts to prevent Capitan Tiago’s use of opium in an attempt to wean him off the substance. Capitan Tiago circumvents Basilio’s efforts by sending him to one of his estates in San Diego, “under the pretext of looking after his property, but in reality so that he may be left to smoke his opium with complete liberty.”<sup>159</sup> Capitan Tiago is later described as having been reduced to invalid status due to his addiction: “the sick man, except for short periods of improvement, grew worse. Basilio had planned gradually to reduce the amount of the dose, or at least not to let him injure himself by increasing it, but on returning from the hospital or some visit he would find his patient in the heavy slumber produced by the opium, driveling, pale as a corpse.”<sup>160</sup> As a result of the decreased dosage, Captain Tiago becomes “depressed from lack of

---

<sup>158</sup> Rizal, *Noli*, p.494.

<sup>159</sup> José Rizal, *El Filibusterismo* (Ghent, 1891) p.15.

<sup>160</sup> Rizal, *Filibusterismo*, p.226.

opium.” He responds to Basilio’s attempts to prevent further opium use with verbal abuse of his servant, who eventually is forced to concede “only in the last extremity” in order to placate his employer’s “vicious appetite” for the substance.<sup>161</sup> Capitan Tiago later receives a message that his daughter has died, after which he smokes “an enormous quantity of opium.”<sup>162</sup> By the end of the novel, Capitan Tiago himself has also died, by which point his name has become synonymous in the community of Binondo with opium addiction.

Following Capitan Tiago’s death, nuns in a local convent claim that his soul appeared to them in a vision at the moment of his passing. In their recounting of the apparition, “the appearance of Capitan Tiago was minutely described—of course the frock coat, the cheek bulged out by the quid of buyo, without omitting the game-cock and the opium-pipe.”<sup>163</sup> Capitan Tiago has clearly not discontinued the opium habit even in death. Rizal satirizes further the opium trade of the Philippines in a separate scene in *El Filibusterismo* in which Spanish colonial officials debate the merits of a proposal to use cockfighting pits as schoolhouses on weekdays, justifying this scheme by claiming that “it’s more immoral that vice has good buildings and learning none. Let’s be practical, gentlemen, and not be carried away by sentiment...we forbid the cultivation of opium in our colonies [but] we tolerate the smoking of it.”<sup>164</sup> A Spanish friar, theoretically the spiritual guidance of those assembled, then enjoins the council to “remember [regarding the opium trade] that it yields to the government, without any effort, more than four hundred and fifty thousand pesos.”<sup>165</sup>

---

<sup>161</sup> Rizal, *Filibusterismo*, p.225.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, p.231.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid, p.284.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid, p.98.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

Capitan Tiago's travails and descent into opium addiction were not intended to be taken entirely at face value by the reader. Rizal was writing primarily for a European audience and used the fates of Capitan Tiago and other characters as a metaphor for the plight of the Philippines under Spanish rule. Capitan Tiago's opium use in particular has been interpreted as "an allusion to the corrupted state of the Philippines in the throes of a revolution."<sup>166</sup> However, the clearly negative connotations of opium smoking and commerce expressed in Rizal's characterization of Capitan Tiago and Spanish colonial authorities, as well as the overwhelming popularity of the books in the Philippines, implies that themes of opium consumption as the pathway to ruin resonated with Filipino readers.

The predominantly negative views held by the Filipino majority towards opium smoking were doubtless also influenced by its association with the Chinese minority. Despite assimilation and intermarriage, tensions had long existed between the two groups in the Philippines. Spanish colonial official and historian Jose Montero y Vidal claimed that during the first major cholera outbreak of the nineteenth century in the Philippines, "the natives attributed its origin to the poisoning of water by foreigners and that as a result they murdered twenty-seven foreigners and a large number of Chinese."<sup>167</sup> In 1896, prior to the outbreak of revolution, a Manila delegation of manufacturers and merchants petitioned colonial authorities to end further Chinese immigration to the Philippines and ban the existing Chinese community from participation in trade and manufacturing. This petition was put forth on the premise of being "an echo of the people;" essentially, as a representation of public sentiment against more Chinese arrivals.<sup>168</sup>

---

<sup>166</sup> Victoria, "The Most Humane," p.97.

<sup>167</sup> Cited in Dean Worcester, *A History of Asiatic Cholera in the Philippine Islands*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908) p.4.

<sup>168</sup> Ginsberg, "Philippine Revolution," pp.144-145.

## Opium consumption in Mindanao and Sulu

While opium consumption was legally limited to the Chinese community in the Spanish-controlled Philippines, Spanish regulations did not apply in practice to much of the Muslim sultanates in Mindanao and Sulu in the south of the archipelago.<sup>169</sup> Part of Mindanao had been previously colonized by the Spanish and Zamboanga established there as a port city, uneasily coexisting and often clashing with Muslim sultanates in the region. Sulu remained entirely independent of Spanish rule until the second half of the nineteenth century. After repeated Spanish attacks, the respective Sultans were eventually forced to acknowledge Spanish sovereignty over Jolo in 1851 and Sulu in 1876. The Sultans and the nobility and provincial leaders, or Datus, still retained their position but executive authority was transferred to the Spanish governors general of the regions concerned. Following acknowledgement of Spanish suzerainty, “the governor of Sulu addressed the sultan as his son, the sultan addressed the governor as his father and relations were friendly and pleasant.”<sup>170</sup> Hostilities broke out again in 1883 but were soon quelled by the Spanish. However, the duration of Spanish rule in the region was characterized by intermittent violent conflict and the Spanish presence there was essentially limited to capital cities of the sultanates and fortified outposts.<sup>171</sup>

---

<sup>169</sup> Ricardo Zarco, “A Short History of Narcotic Drug Addiction in the Philippines,” *Philippine Sociological Review*, 43.1/4, (1995), p.5.

<sup>170</sup> Najeeb Saleeby, *The History of Sulu*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908) p.236.

<sup>171</sup> Anabelle Ragsag, *Ethnic Boundary Making at the Margins of Conflict in the Philippines: Everyday Identity Politics in Mindanao*, (Springer International Publishing, 2020) pp.111; 119.

Similarly to the Spanish-dominated northern Philippines, immigration of Chinese to the southern Philippines was also common. However, unlike the rest of the Philippines, opium smoking was a known practice by both the Chinese immigrant community and the indigenous Muslim population, particularly the elites. Unlike the Visayas and Luzon, in “the southern Islands such as Jolo, Sulu, and Mindanao, where the Filipino Moslems or Moros continued their armed defiance of Spanish control, the use of opium prevailed and was not confined to the Chinese settlements there.”<sup>172</sup> By the end of Spanish rule in the late nineteenth century, knowledge of the widespread practice of opium consumption in the southern Philippines was already well established. Reports existed as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries describing the use of opium by Moros, or the Muslim inhabitants of the southern Philippines, to prepare themselves for battle.<sup>173</sup> Opium had become a commodity in the region by the late eighteenth century, supplied by the British and Dutch.<sup>174</sup> In the nineteenth century, visitors to the southern Philippines further noted the practice of opium consumption there. Prior to Spanish sovereignty over the sultanate, an American naval commission sojourned in Sulu in 1841. One of the commanding officers, Commodore Charles Wilkes, recounted the experience in his *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition During the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842*, published in 1856. Wilkes recalled his interactions with Sultan Mohamed Damalial Kisand of Sulu and noted that both he and his son, Datu Mohamed Polalu, appeared to exhibit the physical effects of consuming “large quantities of opium.”<sup>175</sup> Wilkes described the Moro population more generally as frequent users of “their favorite pipe of opium,” among other intoxicants.<sup>176</sup> The

---

<sup>172</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” pp.4-5.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid, p.3.

<sup>174</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.97; Zarco, “A Short History,” p.4.

<sup>175</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” p.5; Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.97.

<sup>176</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” p.5.

British delegation to the Sulu Sultanate in 1848, led by Sir James Brooke and Captain Henry Keppel, also noted the Sultan's use of opium. In Keppel's *Visit to the Indian Archipelago*, he described him as "a young-looking man, but with a dull and vacant expression, produced by the too free use of opium."<sup>177</sup>

The successors of Sultan Mohamed Kisand to the Sulu Sultanate were also known to have been opium consumers. The attempts of Sultan Badarud Din II in the 1880s to modernize Sulu were considered to be unsuccessful in part due to the Sultan "acquiring the opium habit and methods of licentious living."<sup>178</sup> As a result, Badarud Din "finally lost his hold on affairs in general."<sup>179</sup> Baharud Din's death in February 1884 resulted in a struggle for the succession between three candidates, all descendants of former Sultans. The two candidates with the strongest claims were Raja Muda Amirul Kiram, the half brother of the late Sultan Baharud Din, and Datu Aliyud Din, a more distant relative.<sup>180</sup> Amirul Kiram was supported by the southern half of the island of Sulu, while Aliyud Din's power base was in the north. Neither side could gain a decisive victory and despite attempts by the Spanish Governor Parrado to mediate, the conflict became a stalemate. A year after Sultan Baharud Din's death, "no agreement could be reached, nor did the Spanish Government officially recognize any of the claimants."<sup>181</sup> With neither candidate able to gain control, "Amirul Kiram indulged in licentiousness and Aliyud Din took to opium."<sup>182</sup> Fighting resumed when the Spanish Governor was replaced by a new officeholder, Colonel Juan Arolas. Arolas backed the third candidate, Datu Harun ar-Rashid, believing him to be more amenable to Spanish rule and accommodating of Spanish interests in

---

<sup>177</sup> Saleeby, *History of Sulu*, p.202.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid, p.236.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid, p.237.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, p.238.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

the region. Aliyud Din was forced into exile, but Amirul Kiram refused to surrender, leading to an ongoing brutal campaign in southern Sulu. Arolas left office in 1893, and Harun ar-Rashid was replaced by Amirul Kiram, restoring order to the sultanate.

For most of the duration of the opium monopoly system in the northern Philippines, the southern Philippines had been either independent of Spanish rule or were too unstable for the enforcement of regulations on opium consumption. Once the conflict over the succession to the Sulu Sultanate had subsided in the mid-1890s Spanish authorities turned their attention to the possible regulation of opium in Mindanao and Sulu as well. Existing correspondence from the era indicates that these efforts were primarily focused on Chinese consumers. In 1893, the Spanish provincial governor of Sulu proposed the institution of a tax on Chinese opium smokers in the region.<sup>183</sup> In July 1896, his successor wrote to the governor-general of the Philippines on the subject of general taxation for the province. In light of the instability of the area, Sulu had evidently been free of “all taxes, tributes, and gabels imposed, or to be imposed, in favor of natives or foreigners taking up their abode in the Sulu archipelago” in an attempt to stimulate economic development of the newly conquered province.<sup>184</sup> The port of Jolo was likewise granted “the declaration of a free port, with exemption from all taxes and customs formalities in favor of the capital of the island.”<sup>185</sup> These exemptions had been initially granted for the duration of a decade beginning 24 February, 1877 and extended for another decade on 23 August, 1887.<sup>186</sup>

---

<sup>183</sup> Saleeby, *History of Sulu*, p.366.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p.361.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

In 1896, the governor recommended the continuation of the exemption of the port of Jolo from customs revenues, pragmatically noting that in the event of new taxes “the foreign steamers which now visit this port would immediately discontinue their voyages.”<sup>187</sup> Moreover, in a foreshadowing of future American difficulties in the region, the governor admitted that “trade would be continued by means of smaller boats which would come from Borneo, and it would not be feasible to prevent this except by the posting of a very large number of coastguards along the shores of the innumerable islands of Sulu, a method which it would be altogether impossible to adopt.”<sup>188</sup> The governor recommended instead that as there “exists here a numerous Chinese colony, which is the element that really enjoys the benefit of the advantages flowing from the present free-port conditions...It is, therefore, expedient to impose upon all Chinaman [sic] residing in the Sulu territory the obligation to pay the same taxes as are paid by those of the same race in other parts of the Philippines.”<sup>189</sup> The governor advocated in particular that “there should be imposed a tax upon smokers of opium and upon the importation thereof. This tax would be a source of revenue of some consideration.”<sup>190</sup> The tax appears to have been instated following the provincial governor’s recommendation. Approximately a year later in September 1897, the head of the Treasury Division of Indirect Imposts wrote to the Philippines governor-general on the same subject, recommending the continuation of the tax on opium. The future imposition of the tax must have been in doubt, as the letter stated that in light of the “the reasons set forth by the governor of Sulu as well as for these given by his predecessor on June 11, 1893, in favor of a tax upon opium smokers, the undersigned chief believes that it is not only just but a matter of the greatest necessity to continue the imposition of this tax. Your most illustrious Excellency will,

---

<sup>187</sup> Saleeby, *History of Sulu*, p.362.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid, p.364.

however, order whatever he deems most expedient.”<sup>191</sup> [emphasis added] However, the question of taxation in the southern Philippines was largely overshadowed by the outbreak of challenges to Spanish rule elsewhere in the islands.

#### 1896-1898: Filipino revolt to American invasion

By 1896, the instability and violent resistance characterizing Spanish colonial rule in the southern Philippines had spread throughout the archipelago. Similarly to many business enterprises, the opium monopoly system was significantly damaged by the outbreak of revolt against Spanish rule in 1896. Cavite, the site of the 1872 barracks mutiny outside of Manila, was once again the epicenter of revolt, and the opium trade there was particularly disrupted. This was due in large part to a significant proportion of the Chinese community in Cavite fleeing to the relative safety of Manila, depleting the customer base so severely that the monopoly holder for the province was forced to default on the contract.<sup>192</sup> Despite the upheaval, Nicasio Chiong Veloso appears to have retained his contract for Cebu for the duration of the revolt in the province, which lasted from August 1896 to December 1897.<sup>193</sup> The extent of the disruption of the monopoly system throughout the Philippines is measurable in the decrease in revenue. In 1896, the monopoly system had generated over 500,000 pesos in revenue for the colonial government, which saw its earnings reduced to approximately 250,000 pesos in 1897.<sup>194</sup>

---

<sup>191</sup> Saleeby, *History of Sulu*, p.366.

<sup>192</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.119.

<sup>193</sup> Cullinane, “A Chinese Life,” p.276.

<sup>194</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.93.

Apart from the colonial government, the other party with vested financial interests in the opium monopoly system was naturally the monopolists themselves and their employees, the majority of whom were Chinese. Consequently, their support for the revolt and its inherently destabilizing effects was limited, and it “was as neutrals, seeking business opportunities on both sides, that the Chinese played their major role in the revolution.”<sup>195</sup> In this spirit, Tan Quien-Sien approached a friend of revolutionary leader Emilio Aguinaldo about the possibility of establishing an opium monopoly system under the auspices of an independent Filipino government.<sup>196</sup> However, by 1898 the revolt had resulted in an uneasy truce with the Spanish rather than full independence of the Philippines.

The subsidence of the revolt was soon superseded by a greater and final disruption to Spanish colonial rule. The American invasion of the Philippines began in spring 1898, following the outbreak of the Spanish-American War. Admiral Dewey’s fleet arrived in the Manila harbor on 1 May and blockaded the bay, limiting the importation of a number of commodities, including opium. This also made it impossible to move existing shipments of opium already in Manila to other regions of the Philippines by maritime transport.<sup>197</sup> Consequently, for the limited duration of Spanish rule in the Philippines, the opium monopoly “contracts went begging for bidders, or were taken on a month by month basis only.”<sup>198</sup> The American arrival was therefore initially greeted with cautious optimism not only by native Filipinos viewing it as a new opportunity to be free of Spanish rule but also by Chinese engaged in the trade and commerce of opium. This view was held “not mainly for any political reasons, but because it held out a possibility of the peace

---

<sup>195</sup> Ginsberg, “Philippine Revolution,” p.152.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid.

<sup>197</sup> Wickberg, *Philippine Life*, p.119.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

and vigorous resumption of commerce which were prerequisite to... financial security.”<sup>199</sup>

Despite the hopes of monopolists for restored stability, the end of Spanish rule signified the beginning of an entirely new era in the Philippines, with correspondingly momentous implications for regulation of the trade, commerce, and consumption of opium and other psychoactive substances.

## Section 2: The American colonial era begins, 1898-1903

### Drugs before conquest

The US regulation of drugs in the Philippines was shaped by domestic attitudes towards the substances themselves as well as the context of imperial conquest. By the onset of the Spanish-American War in 1898, opium and derivatives thereof had already become a fixture of daily life in the United States and the subject of increasing controversy. The United States was a significant consumer of the opium re-exported from their Asian colonies by imperial powers like Great Britain, whose own consumption had increased 2.4% per year between 1831 and 1859.<sup>200</sup> Opium was used for pain relief but also used to treat a myriad of disorders ranging from respiratory issues to gastrointestinal diseases such as dysentery.<sup>201</sup> In addition to medical dispensation of opium, the substance also formed the active ingredient in a wide variety of commercial products that were sold to the public.<sup>202</sup> In addition to its medical efficacy, Virginia Berridge argues that opium served as “a remedy for the ‘fatigue and depression’ unavoidable in

---

<sup>199</sup> Ginsberg, “Philippine Revolution,” p.152.

<sup>200</sup> Martin Booth, *Opium: a history*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1996) p. 51.

<sup>201</sup> Mark Postler and David Waisel, “An Historical Perspective on Opium and its Therapeutic Uses throughout the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *Bulletin of Anesthesia History* 15.2 (1997), p.3.

<sup>202</sup> Mike Jay, *Emperors of Dreams: drugs in the nineteenth century*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p.68; Postler and Waisel, “An Historical Perspective,” p.5.

working class life at the time...a cure-all for complaints.”<sup>203</sup> Berridge also notes the usefulness of opium in coping with the material conditions of working class standards of living at the time. Opium functioned as a palliative for the myriad of illnesses endemic to poor sanitary and living conditions.<sup>204</sup> These factors in opium consumption were noted by an 1877 study by the Massachusetts State Board of Public Health on opium use in Massachusetts, titled simply “The Use and Abuse of Opium.” The author, F.E. Oliver, sought to ascertain both the nature and extent of the non-medical use of opium in Massachusetts, relying upon survey responses from 125 practicing physicians and reports from pharmacists across the state.

Oliver attributed heavy consumption of opium by the working classes to the circumstances in which they lived, namely “overwork with deficient nutrition” and an unfortunate state of being “too apt to live regardless of all hygienic laws.”<sup>205</sup> However, Oliver was aware of the medical community’s role in the extent of opium consumption at the time, acknowledging “the injudicious and often unnecessary prescription of opium by the physician.”<sup>206</sup>

Growing concern over non-medical opium use in the US at the time is evident from popular media as well as debate within the medical community. Fitzhugh Ludlow, writing for *Harper’s Magazine* in New York in 1867, stated ominously that “The [opium] habit is gaining fearful ground among our professional men, the operatives in our mills, our weary serving women, our fagged clerks, our former liquor drunkards, our very day laborers, who a generation ago took gin. All our classes from the highest to the lowest are yearly increasing their

---

<sup>203</sup> Virginia Berridge, *Opium and the People*, (London: Free Association Books, 1999), p. 31.

<sup>204</sup> Berridge, *Opium and the People*, p. 102.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid, p.216.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

consumption of the drug.”<sup>207</sup> Quite apart from fears of general increase in use due to habit-forming tendencies of the drug, concerns over opium use also grew due to increasing association with the Chinese diaspora in the United States. Opium had already been associated with the eastern hemisphere in the popular imagination of the Anglosphere, as the raw material for prepared opium was predominantly grown and harvested in Asia. Despite this association, opium had been essentially domesticated in American eyes through acceptable forms of consumption as part of their daily lives. This perception shifted in the second half of the nineteenth century, as processes of migration became linked with a new mode of opium consumption that awakened fears of Asiatic influence on society.<sup>208</sup>

The migration of thousands of young male Chinese laborers to the western US in the second half of the nineteenth century was met with xenophobic distrust by the general public. The practice of opium smoking commonly associated with the Chinese became a particular target of condemnation. In 1874, Dr. J.P. Newman, the chaplain to the US Senate, evoked the general public sentiment regarding opium use by the new arrivals. Newman stated “the Chinese come in great numbers as domestic servants, washermen, labourers, miners etc. We are doing what we can to civilize and Christianize them- for we are giving them schools of learning and temples of religion- but they have come to us debilitated, they have come enervated by the influence of opium.”<sup>209</sup> Newman’s belief in the necessity of “giving them schools of learning and temples of religion” in order to “civilize and Christianize” the newcomers hinted at President McKinley and his successors’ future policies towards the inhabitants of the Philippines.

---

<sup>207</sup> Booth, *Opium*, p. 192.

<sup>208</sup> David Musto, ed., *Drugs in America: A Documentary History*, (New York: New York University Press, 2002), pp.181-183.

<sup>209</sup> Booth, *Opium*, p.54.

Newman also pragmatically acknowledged the contribution made by Chinese laborers, admitting “we need them as laborers...as servants...as citizens; for in that great region from the Missouri to the Golden Gate [San Francisco, California] there is less than one million of white inhabitants. We therefore bid them welcome, but we cannot bid them welcome as opium smokers.”<sup>210</sup> The Chinese presence in the US was therefore grudgingly tolerated as long as they fulfilled the labor market’s needs and complied with societal standards regarding acceptable forms of opium consumption.

However, suspicions that the Chinese had influenced the opium consumption habits of white society, defying the expectation of becoming “civilized and Christianized,” constituted cause for immediate action by authorities. In San Francisco, opium smoking was outlawed altogether in light of fears that, as an 1882 article claimed, “many women and young girls, as well as young men of respectable family, were being induced to visit the dens, where they were ruined morally and otherwise.”<sup>211</sup> The article’s veiled association of opium smoking with sexual promiscuity and prostitution attests to the roots of the fears regarding the presence of male Chinese immigrants in the US, which eventually resulted in the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act.<sup>212</sup> Despite the city’s ban on opium smoking, by 1883 208,152 pounds of smoking opium were imported by the US, mainly through San Francisco.<sup>213</sup> By 1886, opium smoking was claimed to have spread to the capital of Washington, DC, on the other side of the United States. In response, Senator Henry Blair from New Hampshire introduced an unsuccessful bill to ban opium smoking in the capital and American territories. Subsequent attempts in 1888 and 1889 also failed to pass

---

<sup>210</sup> Booth, *Opium*, p.54.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid*, p. 195.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid*, p.196.

both Houses of Congress.<sup>214</sup> Despite Blair's lack of success, it set a precedent for future legislative action against opium smoking in US territories.

The negative connotations of opium smoking due to its associations with the East was not entirely due to the presence of immigrants within the United States. Religious reformers, who comprised a significant proportion of the opium reform movement, had long agitated against the opium trade overseas in Asian colonies and spheres of influence. The British sale of Indian opium in China, facilitated by their victory in the Opium Wars and driven by the demand of Chinese consumers, was a particular target of groups like Anglo-American Protestant missionaries and their respective denominations back home.<sup>215</sup> Religious beliefs about the sinfulness of the trade and recreational consumption of opium would later play a significant role in the formation of US drug regulation in the Philippines. By the end of the nineteenth century, opium would not be the only substance facing increasing calls for regulation and restrictions for use, as more potent derivatives of opium like morphine also came under greater scrutiny.

#### From the Philippine Republic to the Filipino-American War, 1898-1899

The full impact of the American arrival on drug regulations would not be felt for some time, however. After the American invasion, the surviving leaders of the 1896 revolt declared independence from Spain and established the first Republic of the Philippines. The nascent Philippine Republic led by Emilio Aguinaldo promulgated an edict reinstating the opium farm

---

<sup>214</sup> David Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: A History of Opiate Addiction in America*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2Rev Ed edition, 2001) pp. 78-79.

<sup>215</sup> James Mills, "Decolonising Drugs in Asia: The Case of Cocaine in Colonial India", in *Third World Quarterly* (2017), pp.1-2; Steffen Rimner, *Opium's Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), p.7.

system in June 1898.<sup>216</sup> In an echo of Spanish officials previously expressing the futility of prohibition, Aguinaldo's government had concluded that "the Chinese are unable to stop smoking" and decided to maintain the existing method of regulating the trade.<sup>217</sup> The longstanding competition of Tan Quien-Sien, Nicasio Veloso Chiong, Lucio Herrera Uy Chijon, and other would-be monopolists for opium contracts simply continued in a new political context.

The ongoing competition in Cebu between Lucio Herrera Uy Chijon and Nicasio Veloso Chiong illuminates both the unstable nature of the commerce in opium during the uncertainty characterizing the turn of the century Philippines and the relationship between the opium trade and the Filipino quest for self-government. Veloso Chiong's activities are particularly useful at illustrating the latter, as he was initially "able to deploy his well-developed relationships with key officials of the nascent Philippine Republic in Cebu" in pursuit of control of the opium trade there.<sup>218</sup> Veloso Chiong had previously been on excellent terms with Spanish colonial officials, to the extent of being awarded the *Medalla de Mérito Civil*.<sup>219</sup> Following the establishment of the Philippine Republic however, he switched allegiances in hopes of retaining his commercial advantages under a new regime. In accordance with Aguinaldo's decision to reinstate the opium farm system, in late 1898 local officials acting under the auspices of the newly established Philippine Republic were charged with assigning to a leaseholder the contract for the sale of opium in Cebu and Bohol. The contract was awarded to Sergio Osmeña, a young protege of Nicasio Veloso Chiong, who had entered the competition for the opium monopoly contract on his mentor's behalf. Osmeña retained the contract after Cebu City came under control of the American-backed Provincial Government following the outbreak of the Filipino-American War

---

<sup>216</sup> Victoria, "The Most Humane," p.97.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Cullinane, "A Chinese Life," p.277.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid, p.282.

in February 1899. However, by June of that year, Lucio Herrera Uy Chijon was reported as controlling the opium dens of Cebu City, the provincial capital. In July, Nicasio's son-in-law and business associate, Segundo Singson, had been appointed as interim president of the Provincial Council, and he auctioned off the contract once more. Sergio Osmeña once again became the leaseholder following the successful bid of his agent, Teodoro Velez, another son-in-law of Nicasio Chiong Veloso. The winning bid was four monthly payments of 6,760 pesos, a considerable reduction from the scale and duration of the contracts in the 1890s.<sup>220</sup> At the next auction in the end of 1899, Lucio Herrera Uy Chijon's syndicate regained control of the opium trade. Lucio's son Juan Herrera was awarded the contract with a winning bid of 14,544 pesos, acting as agent for Lucio's associate Ong Diongjay. Ong Diongjay and the Herrera family retained control of the legal opium trade in Cebu until the American colonial government ended the opium monopoly system altogether throughout the provinces.

The continuance of the opium trade and consumption following the American invasion was, of course, not unique to Cebu in the Visayas. Following the American conquest of Manila in Luzon on 13 August 1898, American troops almost immediately noticed the prevalence of opium smoking there. Private John Bowe of the 13th Minnesota Volunteer Infantry's diary for 16 August 1898 noted that the "Chinese hop-joints [opium dens] were open to the street."<sup>221</sup> As the dust settled in Manila, the military administration there began to take shape. Dispatches from General Elwell Otis in September 1898 stated that, in regards to the newly conquered capital "United States laws [had been] applied for admission of Chinese and opium; sales of licenses for lotteries and other pastimes opposed by public morals discontinued."<sup>222</sup> Contrary to some state

---

<sup>220</sup> Cullinane, "A Chinese Life," p.277.

<sup>221</sup> Victoria, "The Most Humane," p.98.

<sup>222</sup> *New York Times*, NYC, USA, "The Situation at Manila: General Otis Reports that He Has a Sufficient Force; Position of the Insurgents," 17 September 1898.

and local ordinances, federal law in the United States in 1898 placed no restrictions on importation and use of opium for recreational purposes. Consequently, the practice continued in Manila, despite the legal cessation of “other pastimes opposed by public morals” such as gambling on cockfights.<sup>223</sup>

The question of the nature of the American long-term presence in the Philippines was in theory still undecided. Excerpts from a report dating from the 19th of September were later published in the *New York Times* in November 1898. Written by Charles A. Whittier, originally Brigadier General of Volunteers and newly created Collector of Customs at Manila, the report detailed the general conditions of Manila and the Philippines to the extent of the author’s knowledge. Tellingly, the report described the potential for commercial investment in the islands and “suggestions as to methods to be pursued pending any permanent occupation of the country which may be decided upon.”<sup>224</sup> In addition to “currency [and] revenue” Whittier considered the issues of “opium and the admission of Chinese” into the Philippines to be among the “grave questions....[which] cannot be decided under a brief consideration.”<sup>225</sup> Whittier’s report indicated both the early significance of opium regulation in the Philippines to American officials and the clear intentions of establishing a colony there.

As previously stated, the American invasion of the Philippines had been initially greeted by the hopes of the native Filipinos and Chinese immigrant communities for independence and economic stability. It soon became clear, however, that the arrival of US troops had only meant further conflict. The war between America and Spain was over in a matter of months, with the

---

<sup>223</sup> *New York Times*, “The Situation at Manila,” 17 September 1898.

<sup>224</sup> *New York Times*, “Philippines Very Fertile: Report by General Whittier on General Conditions and Trade Possibilities in the Islands,” 12 November 1898.

<sup>225</sup> *New York Times*, “Philippines Very Fertile,” 12 November 1898.

Treaty of Paris in December 1898 formally ceding the Philippines to the United States. Despite initial assurances to the contrary from American leaders, the victory of the US over Spain signified the beginning of a new era of colonial subjugation of the Philippines. Consequently, on 4 February 1899 the Filipino-American War broke out in Manila.<sup>226</sup>

The revolutionaries soon desperately needed revenue to continue their struggle against a new foreign colonial power. Despite the distaste of much of the Filipino elite for the trade in opium and practice of opium smoking, the revolutionary government resorted to continuing the auctioning of opium contracts in regions still under their control. The importance of the revenue from opium is indicated by the maintenance of the system despite reports from Filipino provincial governors concerned by the spread of opium consumption among native Filipinos.<sup>227</sup> The reliance on opium revenue meant that “the Aguinaldo-led government was not only the first Asian republic, it was also the first Asian nationalist regime to profit from opium sales.”<sup>228</sup> However, the US military government in the Philippines was also deriving funds from the trade in opium, as officials eventually abolished the farm system in areas under American control in favor of a tariff on imports. The military government raised taxes on importation of opium from 2 pesos per 100 kilos, or 220 pounds, to 6 pesos per individual pound. The steep rise in the tariff resulted, in Whittier’s words, in “increased smuggling, at which the Chinese are most adroit.”<sup>229</sup> Opium smuggling subsequently became a thorn in the side of colonial officials almost immediately after arrival, even prior to the ban on importation and use of opium for recreational

---

<sup>226</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” p.6

<sup>227</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” pp.97-98.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, p.98.

<sup>229</sup> *New York Times*, “Philippines Very Fertile,” 12 November 1898.

purposes. Whittier admitted in regards to smuggling that it “will be difficult to prevent this, even with the use of the greatest vigilance and expense.”<sup>230</sup>

#### Opium and the American military occupation, 1899-1901

Aside from the issue of smuggling, opium proved troublesome to the initial American military occupation in other ways. As the fighting continued, American troops found themselves in close contact with the Chinese community in the Philippines, many of whom were hired as laborers. The military spent over \$100,000 for the fiscal year ending in June 1899 hiring “coolie” and native laborers at a typical rate of 40 cents a day.<sup>231</sup> Officers sometimes complained of difficulties in retaining the services of Chinese laborers; essentially, what “made it hard to keep Chinamen in the field was that they missed their ‘hop’ [opium].”<sup>232</sup> Moreover, the population of opium smokers in the Philippines soon gained new members in the form of American soldiers themselves. John E.T. Milsaps, a Salvation Army staff member who had accompanied the American military to Manila, expressed clear concern in his diary regarding the predilection of some of the troops for opium smoking. The entry for 21 March 1899 noted a visit from one such soldier. “About the dinner hour Albert Scott Co. D, 1st North Dakota volunteer infantry called with a cigar in his mouth and acting strangely. Had a long straight talk with him. He confessed that he is on the back track. Returned to his opium smoking habit & uses tobacco. Says he is not backslidden. I take but little stock in such talk. Scott is unstable.” Milsaps sought to deter Scott from further use of opium through “counseling him faithfully to get Christ to restore him, then to

---

<sup>230</sup> *New York Times*, “Philippines Very Fertile,” 12 November 1898.

<sup>231</sup> Ginsberg, “Philippine Revolution,” p.150.

<sup>232</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.99.

give up opium & tobacco & serve the Lord faithfully. I prayed with him before we parted. Requested him to pray but he refused.”<sup>233</sup> Milsaps noted regretfully that “I dared hope he would be a bright trophy of the saving power of Christ, but alas...I have been disappointed.”<sup>234</sup>

From a more secular perspective, an “Ex-Volunteer” in the Philippines recalled his military service there in a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, noting that “there could always be found a number of opium joints wherever a considerable number of Chinese were colonized.”<sup>235</sup> The author of the letter claimed that when “a member of a regiment unequipped with a canteen was off duty, his natural impulse was many times to leave his quarters, stroll over the city, drop into a Chinese opium den... ‘just to see what they were like,’ and when the paroxysms, as a result of his foolishness, were upon him, be arrested and sent to the straightjacket.”<sup>236</sup> Rear Admiral Robley D. Evans was also stationed in the Philippines and recalled his own experiences with trying opium in his youth: “We desired to smoke opium Chinese fashion...When I had managed to get the large stem of the pipe into my mouth, he applied a redhot iron to the opium and the smoking began. I inhaled three whiffs of the smoke...and then was very sorry I had done it.”<sup>237</sup> Evans was evidently spared the “paroxysms” described by the “Ex-Volunteer,” but a sensation of being “nauseated until I could neither eat, sleep, nor stay awake...for several days” ensured that he was “quickly and thoroughly cured of my desire to smoke or take opium in any form.”<sup>238</sup> Other servicemen apparently found the results more enjoyable. Dr. George A. Zeller, a military surgeon in the Philippines, later estimated that

---

<sup>233</sup> *Philippine Diary Project*, Diary of John E.T. Milsaps, 21 March 1899 (accessed 5 May 2020).

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> *New York Times*, “The Canteen in the Philippines,” 13 June 1901.

<sup>236</sup> *New York Times*, “Canteen,” 13 June 1901.

<sup>237</sup> *New York Times*, “Admiral Evans’s Memoirs: Reviewed for the New York Times Saturday Review by Rufus F. Zogbaum,” 27 April 1901.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*

on average three members out of every company [between 80 and 200 soldiers] there became addicted to opium.<sup>239</sup>

Despite the issue of American soldiers falling prey to the “opium habit,” albeit a very small percentage of them, the military left it to the local authorities to regulate the commerce in opium. Order No. 40 of the General Orders promulgated 29 March 1900 by the US military governor in the Philippines stated in Article 33 that the “municipal council has power to...prohibit and punish the keeping or visiting of any places where opium is smoked or sold for smoking.”<sup>240</sup> The General Orders stopped short of banning places of this kind altogether. Manila, with its large Chinese population, failed to enact any municipal ordinances banning public places for opium smoking. When the American Prohibitionist William “Pussyfoot” Johnson visited Manila in 1900, he made a tour of a dozen or so opium dens and requested to see their licenses issued by the government. It transpired that, in a further departure from Spanish regulations, the issuance of licenses for opium dens had been discontinued by the American occupation government. The den owners claimed that “they paid so much at stated intervals” to Tan Quien-Sien instead, who had clearly resumed his entrepreneurial activities in the opium trade.<sup>241</sup>

Tan Quien-Sien was already a familiar figure to the authorities as he had engaged in commerce with American forces almost as soon as their arrival, having sold “the Americans their first set of rattan-and-bamboo barracks, at a cost of \$32,000.”<sup>242</sup> The American quartermaster found the quality sufficient to order another set from Tan Quien-Sien at an increased cost of

---

<sup>239</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.100.

<sup>240</sup> Hearings before the Committee on the Philippines, US Senate: *Affairs in the Philippine Islands*, 1902, Part I; Part II (Division of Printing, Washington D.C., 1902), Part I, p.120.

<sup>241</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.100.

<sup>242</sup> Ginsberg, “Philippine Revolution,” p.150.

\$42,000.<sup>243</sup> Tan Quien-Sien's role in the opium trade of the transition period was to "square things with the authorities" on behalf of the opium den owners, evidently paying "a duty on all the opium imported" and essentially re-establishing his opium monopoly. Den owners who obtained their opium from other sources were subject to prosecution by the authorities, as the other opium importers had not paid the tariff imposed by the American military government. However, Johnson's estimate of "five or six hundred dives" that purchased opium "in the proper place are not disturbed."<sup>244</sup> The majority of opium dens in Manila in 1900 could be found in the Chinatown districts of Binondo and Santa Cruz.<sup>245</sup>

Despite legal regulations allowing the operation of such establishments, the existence of public opium smoking places was decried by the American Bureau of Health in the Philippines. The Bureau of Health described them as "naturally filthy and insanitary, due largely to the character and habits of their patrons."<sup>246</sup> The American medical professionals that constituted the Bureau condemned the practice of opium smoking itself as an "evil" and "a curse that will eventually bring disaster to those who indulge in so dearly bought illusory pleasures."<sup>247</sup> In light of the inescapable fact that these establishments did exist, however, the Bureau of Health proposed further regulations for the maintenance of opium dens. These establishments were usually informal arrangements, located in the back of Chinese-run laundries or *tiendas* [small shops]. Public health officials claimed that if "opium divans are permitted to exist the business can be forced out of laundries and tiendas into the divans, where it can be so supervised and controlled as to reduce to a minimum the resulting evil effects which are now apparently on the

---

<sup>243</sup> Ginsberg, "Philippine Revolution," p.150.

<sup>244</sup> Victoria, "The Most Humane," p.100.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid, p.101.

<sup>246</sup> *Report* [1903] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1904) p.81.

<sup>247</sup> Bureau of Health, 1903, p.82.

increase.”<sup>248</sup> The report hastened to emphasize that the “Board of Health deplors the existence of such establishments... nevertheless they exist, and because they do exist and will continue to exist it would seem to be wiser to recognize them for what they are than to ignore them for sentimental reasons.”<sup>249</sup>

By 1900 American military control of the Philippines had extended from the base in Manila in northern Luzon to the provinces of the Visayas. The activities of the syndicate of Nicasio Veloso Chiong and his associates are once again helpful in illustrating the situation in the turn of the century Philippines, as the US struggled to extend the imposition of colonial rule throughout the islands. American forces had taken control of Cebu City earlier in 1899, following which the revolutionaries retreated into the outlying areas of the province to maintain the armed struggle against the US. Cebu City was subsequently “administered by a growing body of urban elites who rejected the military struggle for independence and chose what they hoped to be increased autonomy in administering the archipelago.”<sup>250</sup> Despite their previous support and cooperation with the Filipino Republic, Chiong Veloso and his associates were aware of the inevitable American victory in the province and began to court American occupying officials in hopes of restoring economic stability in the region. The “urban elites” governing the city were thus partially comprised of Nicasio Chiong Veloso’s sons-in-law, Segundo Singson and Teodoro Velez, and protege Sergio Osmeña. As previously stated, all of these men were actively engaged in the opium trade in the province. Having previously used their connections to the Filipino Republic, Chiong Veloso’s syndicate now cultivated contacts with American officials to further their interests in the commerce in opium in Cebu. Segundo Singson became

---

<sup>248</sup>Bureau of Health, 1903, p.82.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Cullinane, “A Chinese Life,” p.282.

the acting Provincial Governor of Cebu, a “leading figure working with the resident military commander.”<sup>251</sup> By April 1900, American forces had extended control throughout the province of Cebu as well as Cebu City, and Singson was appointed Justice of the Peace.

#### Opium and civilian rule, 1901-1902

1901 brought about the establishment of a civilian government and the Philippine Commission. The Philippine Commission was essentially a Cabinet charged with operating the colonial state in the Philippines and was comprised of eight members. In keeping with McKinley and later Taft’s vision of “instructing” Filipinos in the science of self-government, three of the Commission members were Filipino. This obviously gave Americans veto power, although Dr. Heiser insisted that “the vote seldom split along racial lines.”<sup>252</sup> Nonetheless, the de facto upper hand of the Americans in policymaking in the Philippines ensured the continued discontent among many Filipinos regarding the colonial state. The formation of a civil government also led to the creation of new political parties, one of which was the Partido Federal [Federal Party]. The members of the Partido Federal, or Federalistas, were primarily elite Filipinos who believed, at least externally, that cooperation with the US to end the Filipino-American War and establish an American colonial administration was the best means of eventually achieving Filipino self-government. Segundo Singson was chosen to be President of the Cebu branch of the Federalistas in early 1901. In April of that year, the Philippine Commission, led by William Howard Taft, visited Cebu City and were greeted with a lavish banquet at Nicasio Veloso Chiong’s home. The family’s influence continued after the Commission’s departure. Following the promulgation of

---

<sup>251</sup> Cullinane, “A Chinese Life,” p.282.

<sup>252</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.57.

new evaluations and assessments of land by the American government, Nicasio was the only Chinese individual noted to have spoken at an assembly of landowners in November of that year.<sup>253</sup> Competition from Lucio Herrera notwithstanding, “as the new century began, the Chiong Veloso family was well placed to play a major role in the future of Cebu.”<sup>254</sup> The family’s influence extended to the media of the province as well, as Sergio Osmeña was the director of the only daily newspaper in Cebu City, *El Nuevo Día*. (By the time of the Commission’s visit, Sergio Osmeña had become another one of the son-in-laws, having married Nicasio’s daughter Estefania.)

On 4 July 1901, William Howard Taft was inaugurated as the first American civil Governor-General of the Philippines.<sup>255</sup> A Republican but a pragmatist at heart, Taft’s ideological leanings regarding governance largely consisted of a belief in the need for a centralized colonial government in the Philippines.<sup>256</sup> Consequently, Taft thought that complicated issues such as opium regulation should be dealt with by the Philippine Commission in Manila rather than left to local authorities. However, he did not act on this immediately, instead maintaining the existing tariff on opium and making no moves towards central regulations or banning opium dens.

Similarly to the domestic politics of the United States, the issue of Chinese immigration to the Philippines became inextricably entwined with the ‘opium question.’ Relationships with wealthy Chinese like Nicasio Veloso Chiong notwithstanding, the Chinese in the Philippines became targets of suspicion from the American colonial government. Influenced by the

---

<sup>253</sup> Cullinane, “A Chinese Life,” p.282.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Zarco, “A Short History,” p.6.

<sup>256</sup> Daniel Wertz, “Idealism, Internationalism, and Imperialism: Opium Politics in the Colonial Philippines, 1898-1902,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 47.2 (2013) p.472.

discontent that resulted in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the prejudice of American colonial authorities against Chinese immigration to the Philippines was equally blatant as that in the metropole. The extent of this prejudice was such that the colonial authorities even took into account the Spanish precedent, noting that “by reason of the limited number of Spaniards in the Philippine Islands and the facility with which Chinamen came to Manila in large numbers, measures were adopted to limit the immigration of the Chinese.”<sup>257</sup> Under the US military government of the Philippines, the US Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 had been temporarily applied there in 1899. The American diplomat and member of the Philippine Commission Charles Denby stated the same year, “wherever the Chinese go in the world they supplant everyone else. You go to Singapore and you find twenty or thirty thousand there; you go to Colombo and you find the same thing. They undersell everybody and they work cheaper than any other person, and after they have made a certain amount of money, they return to China.”<sup>258</sup> The Philippine Bureau of Health overtly linked continued Chinese migration to the preservation of the ‘opium habit’, claiming in regards to the Chinese diaspora that “as long as there is a Chinaman in the Philippines there will be opium smoking.”<sup>259</sup>

American prejudice towards the Chinese diaspora appears to have been a source of common ground with the newly conquered Filipino population. American colonial officials noted in the Philippine Commission Report of 1900 “that the great majority of the natives are strongly opposed to Chinese immigration.”<sup>260</sup> The report in question attributed “the prevailing and pronounced antipathy to the Chinese” to “labor competition.”<sup>261</sup> Testimony of an upper class

---

<sup>257</sup> *Census of the Philippine Islands: Taken under the Direction of the Philippine Commission in the Year 1903, in four volumes; Volume I: Geography, History, and Population* (Manila: Bureau of Printing), p.318.

<sup>258</sup> Davenport-Hines, *Pursuit of Oblivion*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>259</sup> *Report [1904] Philippines Bureau of Health*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905), p.44.

<sup>260</sup> *Report of the Philippine Commission, 1900* (Manila: Bureau of Printing), p. 154.

<sup>261</sup> *Philippine Commission, 1900*, p.154.

Filipino businessman, Gabriel Garcia Ageo, to the Philippine Commission stated “that the Chinese had been unduly protected by Spain to the detriment both of Spain and of the Philippines; that the losses to the islands had been considerable, for the Chinese consumed imports from China.”<sup>262</sup> In response, Ageo proposed “three measures of restriction: first, impose heavy duties on Chinese goods; second, impose heavy duties on opium; and third, prevent the Chinese from engaging in agriculture.”<sup>263</sup> Limitations on opium were thus initially proposed as a means of both regulating access to the substance itself and restricting the numbers of its primary consumers in the Philippines. In light of the above considerations, the Chinese Exclusion Act was applied on a permanent basis to the Philippines in 1902 and thereafter “rigorously enforced.”<sup>264</sup>

Ironically considering the role the Chinese had played in the American military campaigns, American civil leadership proved more tolerant towards Filipino revolutionaries. A proclamation from US President Theodore Roosevelt on 4 July 1902 granted a general pardon to Filipinos who had taken part in the Filipino-American War.<sup>265</sup> In spite of the proclamation declaring peace throughout the Philippines, the conflict continued in some regions as late as 1907, and military rule continued in the southern Philippine provinces of Mindanao and Sulu until 1913. Moreover, the general amnesty and subsequent release of Aguinaldo and his compatriots did little to mitigate the suffering previously inflicted on the general Filipino population by the brutality of the Filipino-American War.<sup>266</sup> The atrocities committed by soldiers

---

<sup>262</sup> R. McCulloch Story, “The Problem of the Chinese in the Philippines,” *The American Political Science Review*, 3.1 (1909) p.32.

<sup>263</sup> Story, “The Problem of the Chinese,” p.32.

<sup>264</sup> Story, “The Problem of the Chinese,” p.32.

<sup>265</sup> *New York Times*, “General Amnesty for the Philippines: Proclamation Issued by the President,” 4 July 1902.

<sup>266</sup> See Oliver Charbonneau, *Civilizational Imperatives: Americans, Moros, and the Colonial World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020) and Michael Hawkins, *Making Moros: Imperial Historicism and American Military Rule in*

fighting under the American flag were overlooked by many Filipino elites, who sought to curry favor with their new imperial counterparts. The wealthy landowner Felipe Buencamino, who had previously supported the Spanish government, now advocated for a new form of colonial rule. In a similar fashion to the activities of the Veloso Chiong syndicate of Cebu, Buencamino had joined Aguinaldo's cabinet after the establishment of the Philippine Republic, endeavoring to maintain his standing in the face of a new regime. After being captured by American forces in November 1899, he had quickly reconciled himself to the American colonial presence and cooperated with the military occupation. Following the establishment of the administration, he sought to exert influence over affairs in the Philippines through "employ in the civil government of the islands" and membership in the Federalistas.<sup>267</sup>

In his testimony before Congress on 31 May 1902, Buencamino said through an interpreter that "my country may be likened unto a sick man, convalescing from a very serious illness."<sup>268</sup> Buencamino testified in his capacity as representative of the Federalistas that the effects of the Taft administration and particularly the establishment of local government had been "very satisfactory."<sup>269</sup> Of approximately 8,000 municipal employees, only 10 had been "suspended from their offices, which is also an evidence that the law is being complied with faithfully, and also proves the full capacity of the Filipino for municipal self-government. Buencamino is best understood as a representative of the Filipino elite minority who were predisposed to cooperate with the US, rather than indicative of the common attitude of the Filipino population towards the American colonial presence and the regulations imposed by

---

*the Philippines' Muslim South*, (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013), for more on American military atrocities in the Philippines.

<sup>267</sup> Felipe Buencamino, "Statement before the Committee on Insular Affairs on Conditions in the Philippine Islands," 31 May, 3-4 June 1902 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) p.1.

<sup>268</sup> Buencamino, 1902, p.1.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid*, p.6.

successive administrations. Elite Filipinos such as Buencamino enabled the US colonial agenda in saying (and some may even have genuinely agreed), that the people of the Philippines “cannot govern themselves” on a national scale and “it would not be advisable for them to endeavor to do so.”<sup>270</sup> Nonetheless, the “great majority of people wanted independence.”<sup>271</sup>

Similarly to the Spanish context, Mindanao and Sulu proved to be an exception to the general rule of colonial administration in the American Philippines. In particular, the Muslim sultanates of Mindanao and Sulu “provided a unique opportunity for American imperialists to test the efficacy and limits of their civilizing abilities.”<sup>272</sup> In 1899, the Bates Treaty between Brigadier General John Bates and the Muslim leadership of Sulu had recognized “Muslim exceptionalism and promising provisional autonomy.”<sup>273</sup> In practice, this had installed a military government in the South which pledged not to interfere with matters of religion and Islamic jurisprudence. This also effectively maintained the status recognition and limited autonomy granted to the Sulu Sultanate under Spanish rule, as the Bates Treaty acknowledged the sovereignty of the signatories and granted them a monthly stipend in Mexican pesos. This agreement enabled the US military to continue the Filipino-American War in Luzon and the Visayas without resistance from the leadership of Mindanao and Sulu.<sup>274</sup> In his testimony to Congress as the Filipino-American War drew to a close three years later, Buencamino strongly recommended the indefinite presence of US troops in the southern Philippines. His claim that the Moros were “not capable of civilization...they are Mohammedans and therefore permit

---

<sup>270</sup> Buencamino, 1902, p.19.

<sup>271</sup> Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother: How the United States Purchased and Pacified the Philippine Islands at the Century's Turn*, (London: Lowe and Brydon Ltd, 1961), p.322.

<sup>272</sup> Michael Hawkins, *Making Moros: Imperial Historicism and American Military Rule in the Philippines' Muslim South*, (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013), p.304.

<sup>273</sup> Hawkins, *Making Moros*, p.304.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*

polygamy” indicates the prevailing view of the Filipino Christian majority towards the Muslim south.<sup>275</sup> Ongoing guerrilla warfare, in some areas dating back to conflicts with the Spanish provincial government, ensured the continuance of military rule over the south after the establishment of civil government in the rest of the archipelago.

### Cholera in the Philippines, 1902-1903

The hardships previously inflicted upon the Filipino population by armed conflict were greatly exacerbated by a new outbreak of cholera at the beginning of 1902, which worsened throughout the year. The day before President Roosevelt’s amnesty proclamation on 4 July 1902, authorities recorded “thirty-nine fresh cases and thirty-three deaths from cholera” in Manila alone. Available statistics for outlying provinces noted “190 new cases and 147 deaths” that day, inducing colonial health officials to plead for “larger appropriations” from Washington to fight the outbreak.<sup>276</sup> By the end of the epidemic, an estimated 110,000 inhabitants of the Philippines had succumbed to the disease.<sup>277</sup>

The American-run Bureau of Health admitted their own helplessness in the face of the epidemic, claiming that “every effort was made to check the epidemic at its outset, but, owing to the impossibility of establishing an absolute quarantine, these efforts only served to delay the disease.”<sup>278</sup> The failure to control the spread of cholera was attributed in part to the virulence of the disease itself, which the Bureau described as “perhaps the second greatest epidemic scourge known to man.”<sup>279</sup> Eventually it became clear to Major Edward Carter, the head of the Bureau of

---

<sup>275</sup> Buencamino, 1902, p.34.

<sup>276</sup> *New York Times*, “Cholera in the Philippines,” 4 July 1902.

<sup>277</sup> Bureau of Health, 1904, p.70.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*

Health in the Philippines, “that all the precautions against the spread of the disease were doomed to failure.”<sup>280</sup> He was consequently forced to write to his superiors in Washington, D.C. “that nothing could be done except to relieve, so far as possible, the sufferings of the sick and destitute, and that the epidemic would cease only when the vulnerable material was exhausted.”<sup>281</sup> This projected end through the depletion of “vulnerable material” was a far more cold, clinical description of cholera sufferers than the Bureau had ever managed in regards to opium smoking, as the mortality rate of those infected in Manila alone was approximately 80%.<sup>282</sup> The longstanding economic disparity between the wealthy and poor in the Philippines also exacerbated the mortality rates, as working class Filipinos in poor living conditions were more vulnerable to infectious disease and thus most likely to be victims of cholera. This was particularly true in provinces such as Leyte that received the most brutal treatment at the hands of American military forces, where “displaced and destitute, sometimes crowded into reconcentration camps, ordinary Filipinos were especially vulnerable to disease.”<sup>283</sup>

In light of the failure of the authorities to check the epidemic, Filipinos often relied on traditional cures of *mediquillos*, or folk healers and herbalists, evidently to little avail in the face of cholera.<sup>284</sup> In the search for means to prevent infection, it did not escape the attention of the Filipino majority that the Chinese proportionally had significantly fewer victims of the disease. Dr. Heiser later estimated that in Manila “there was one case of cholera out of a thousand Chinese, one out of seven hundred Americans, and one out of two hundred and fifty Filipinos.”<sup>285</sup> This comparative lack of susceptibility was widely attributed to the practice of

---

<sup>280</sup> Bureau of Health, 1904, p.70.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid; *Report* [1907] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing), p.107.

<sup>283</sup> Davenport-Hines, *Pursuit of Oblivion*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>284</sup> 1903 Bureau of Health, 1903, p.264.

<sup>285</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.129.

opium smoking prevalent among the Chinese. In reality, the relative defense of the Chinese against infection was due to the use of boiled water in tea and rice, which killed the bacteria in water responsible for the spread of cholera.<sup>286</sup> Many Filipinos were unaware of the significance of using boiled water, however, and despite the previous stigma towards the practice, opium smoking became more common among Filipinos in a number of provinces. The practice continued in several provinces even after the medical emergency had passed, “as many natives assert that they contracted the opium habit in trying to avoid cholera.”<sup>287</sup> The Bureau of Health thus noted in its 1903 report that “opium smoking is said to be practiced to a very large extent among the natives, especially on the west coast of Leyte. It is also used very largely by the people living in towns along the Agusan River, in Surigao, where it is said to have been introduced during the first cholera epidemic, the claim being made that this disease could be prevented by its use.”<sup>288</sup> In the province of Zambales in Luzon, cholera appeared in July of 1902, and proved to be “more deadly among the poorest classes of people” living “under very unfavorable conditions.” As a result, health inspectors found that in Zambales “opium smoking is a common practice, the people believing that it cures disease.”<sup>289</sup>

The spread of opium smoking among many Filipinos came to the attention of the recently-established provincial municipal governments described in Buencamino’s testimony, as well as the Bureau of Health in Manila. In the province of Pangasinan, bordering on Zambales, the provincial governor Perfecto Sison noted in his 1902 report to the central administration that the practice of opium smoking “has already been acquired by several natives.”<sup>290</sup> Sison

---

<sup>286</sup> Bureau of Health, 1904, p.70.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Bureau of Health, 1903, p.257.

<sup>289</sup> Bureau of Health, 1903, p.264.

<sup>290</sup> 1902 Hearings, Part 1, p.486.

denounced opium smoking as a “great evil, morally and physically”, and recommended that “the use of it by the natives ought to be strictly prohibited and punished with fines and imprisonment. This will prevent the development of such a detestable vice...”<sup>291</sup> In the province of Isabela, the site of one of the largest opium contracts under the Spanish, the governor stated acerbically that “under former [American] instructions I believe all city councils have passed ordinances prohibiting the sale and use of opium, but it is doubted that these ordinances are rigidly enforced. Some municipal officers and many leading citizens manifest a stupidity so dense that it is believed to be due to the fumes of opium rather than a hereditary infirmity.”<sup>292</sup> The difficulty in enforcing the province’s regulations on opium smoking was attributed to be to the refusal of municipal councils to “adopt binding ordinances, and [the] presidents will not enforce them if passed, while their friends and supporters derive a benefit therefrom.”<sup>293</sup> As a result, the governor recommended that the “provincial governor be authorized to prohibit and make arrests for gambling, opium smoking, and immorality.”<sup>294</sup>

In addition to opium smoking as a means of attempting to prevent cholera, opium and its derivatives were used medicinally to treat the symptoms of the disease itself. The therapeutic efficacy of opium as a cholera remedy was well established by the beginning of the twentieth century. The Bureau of Health, always wary of unrestricted narcotics dispensation, admitted nonetheless that opium “is truly a valuable drug in cholera.”<sup>295</sup> As Maj. Edward Carter had noted, palliative care was frequently the only available treatment during the epidemic.<sup>296</sup>

---

<sup>291</sup> 1902 Hearings, Part 1, p.486.

<sup>292</sup> 1902 Hearings, Part 2, p.1518.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid, p.1525.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Bureau of Health, 1904, p.70.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

Despite the increased use of opium, medicinal and otherwise, no new laws restricting access came into effect during the cholera epidemic. A new Sanitary Code of Manila, promulgated in 1903, did have the effect of regulating the hygiene and maintenance of the approximately 200 public opium smoking places of which the authorities were aware.<sup>297</sup> The Bureau of Health claimed this resulted in an improvement in the conditions of opium dens, which they attributed to their own surveillance: “the vigilance of the police and the special care given them by the inspectors of this bureau keep them in a reasonably sanitary condition.”<sup>298</sup> The Bureau’s report indicates the early partnership of law enforcement and the colonial public health system in regulating spaces for opium smoking, which would later prove essential for the colonial government’s attempts to enforce a ban on the practice. The tone of the report is far from clinical, as the Bureau lambasted public opium smoking places as “where Chinese congregate to indulge in their favorite dissipation. The usual charge per man is 20 cents a pipe, which includes table space which the victim may occupy while he is dreaming the dreams so dear to the Chinaman’s heart.”<sup>299</sup> The clear contempt for the “favorite dissipation” of the Chinese expressed in the Bureau’s report also exemplifies the aforementioned prejudice of the American authorities towards the Chinese community of the Philippines.

The ‘opium question’ resumes, 1903

For the moment, authorities were less concerned with the continuance of opium smoking among the Chinese than with the threat of emulation of the practice by the much larger Filipino

---

<sup>297</sup> Bureau of Health, 1904, p.44.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

population. These fears were compounded by a significant increase in imports of opium in the first few years of American rule, which had jumped from 224,115 pounds to 369,037 from 1900 to 1901 alone.<sup>300</sup> In response to rising levels of imports and the apparent spread of opium consumption among Filipinos, in spring 1903 Taft proposed a return to the Spanish system of a monopoly catering strictly to Chinese consumers. This proposal differed from the previous monopoly system in that it called for licenses for individual users as well as opium dens, but overall was essentially a reversion to the government-auctioned monopoly contracts used by the Spanish. News of the proposal soon reached the United States. The *New York Times* described it as “based on the theory that it will restrict the use of the drug to Chinamen who have used it all their lives, and prevent its indiscriminate sale to Americans and Filipinos, many of whom are falling victim to the use of opium. Sales of the drug are to be controlled by a concessionary, who may acquire the right to sell opium in the islands by bidding for the privilege every three years. There are provisions for licenses and control of the traffic.”<sup>301</sup>

As the Bureau of Health annual reports indicate, the medical profession was also monitoring developments in the American colonial regulations governing access and consumption of drugs. Consequently, the American diplomat and writer James LeRoy discussed the fate of Taft’s proposal in an article for *The Medical News*, noting the response to the bill in both the US and the Philippines.<sup>302</sup> Taft’s recommendation of a legal monopoly on opium was promptly met with the opposition of the Protestant missionaries who had taken up residence in

---

<sup>300</sup> Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs On H.J. Res 195, *Authorizing an Appropriation for the Participation of the United States in the Two International Conferences for the Control of the Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs*, Feb. 21, 1924 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) p.95.

<sup>301</sup> *New York Times*, “Oppose Opium Bill: Chinese Merchants and Evangelical Union Argue Against the Measure at Manila,” 9 July, 1903.

<sup>302</sup> James LeRoy, “The Opium Question in the Philippines,” *The Medical News*, (New York, February 1905) pp.1-16.

the Philippines following the American conquest. John E.T. Milsaps was far from the only missionary who arrived in the Philippines in the wake of the US military invasion. The religious organizations in the US who had supported the annexation of the Philippines in order to “civilize and Christianize” them viewed the subsidence of the Filipino-American War as the opportunity to begin establishing a proselytizing presence in the archipelago. Among these was the Episcopal Church of the United States, who in October 1901 had elected Charles Henry Brent as the first Missionary Bishop of the Philippines. Originally from Canada, Brent was a naturalized US citizen who had served in dioceses in New York and Massachusetts, and arrived to begin his new post in Manila in August 1902. In William McAllister’s words, Brent “took an extreme prohibitionist position on the opium question.”<sup>303</sup> He was well-placed to further the anti-opium trade campaign, having made connections with high-ranking officials prior to arrival through securing meetings with both Roosevelt and Taft.<sup>304</sup> Brent was an advocate of the American colonial project in the Philippines, believing Filipinos incapable of self-government. He held an equally derogatory view of the trade in recreational opium, claiming “in the history of human affairs there has never been any trade more lucrative or more indifferent to human welfare.”<sup>305</sup>

With the assistance of his Methodist counterpart Homer Clyde Stuntz, Brent effectively led the charge against Taft’s monopoly proposal, seeking an absolute prohibition in the Philippines.<sup>306</sup> As the 1902 provincial governor reports indicate, they were supported by a number of the Filipino elite.<sup>307</sup> Ostensibly, some elite Chinese also professed an opposition to the

---

<sup>303</sup> For more on Brent, see McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, pp. 27-32.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid, p.28.

<sup>305</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C., USA, Charles Henry Brent (CHB) Papers, Conferences on Opium, *The Moral Side of the Opium Question*, Rev. Charles H. Brent, D.D., 22 March 1924, *Religious Weekly Review*, Box 41, Folder 16.

<sup>306</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, pp. 27-29.

<sup>307</sup> Hearings before the Committee on the Philippines, US Senate: *Affairs in the Philippine Islands*, 1902, Part I; Part II (Division of Printing, Washington D.C., 1902), Part 1, p.486; Part 2, pp.1518; 1525.

monopoly system out of a distaste for opium smoking. The Bureau of Health had noted, albeit grudgingly, that “it should be stated that the better class of Chinese condemn the practice.”<sup>308</sup> However, in light of the class-based de facto segregation of opium smoking facilities under the Spanish system, it’s entirely possible that they were expressing disapproval of the conditions of working class consumption rather than the practice of smoking opium itself. Regardless of the equivocacy of elite Chinese in the Philippines, it was categorically condemned by other members of the Chinese community. In July of 1903, ten thousand Chinese citizens signed a petition in support of Bishop Brent and Homer Stuntz.<sup>309</sup> Prohibition advocates in the American metropole also took notice of the proposed changes to opium regulations in the colony of the Philippines. Reverend Wilbur Crafts, who led the International Reform Bureau in the United States, organized a letter and telegraph campaign petitioning President Roosevelt to veto the bill, as “to profit from such ignoble trade would involve the United States in the support of indefensible vices.”<sup>310</sup> Prominent members of the Anti-Saloon League in Albany and Schenectady, New York, also sent a petition on 13 June 1903 to the White House calling for a veto of Taft’s proposal.<sup>311</sup>

Brent and his compatriots had assistance from an unforeseen quarter however, as they found an ally in the form of the Chinese with vested interests in the opium trade in the Philippines. LeRoy noted that their motives for opposing a government monopoly were entirely separate from the moral qualms of the missionaries. Far from absolute prohibition, their preferred policy was simply the maintenance of the existing tariff system, under which opium

---

<sup>308</sup> Bureau of Health, 1904, p. 44.

<sup>309</sup> Rimner, *Opium’s Long Shadow*, p.188.

<sup>310</sup> David Musto, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973, 1987, 1999) pp.26-27.

<sup>311</sup> *New York Times*, “Oppose Philippine Opium Monopoly,” 14 June 1903.

and other drugs could be imported freely for any designated purpose once the tariff was paid. In light of the unlikelihood of this scenario, the Chinese importers and consumers of opium chose to advocate for the prohibition backed by the missionaries. Essentially, “it seemed quite evident, from their course of opposition, that they would rather see an attempt at absolute prohibition of the traffic, as the missionary societies desired, than have the government take into its own hands the regulation of the sale and smoking. In case of absolute prohibition there could still be the contraband trade; but, if the government should set up an elaborate inspection system, it would be better able to check smuggling.”<sup>312</sup> The evangelical lobby was aware of the motives behind their erstwhile ally’s opposition to the bill, and objected to their proposal to maintain the existing system in place of Taft’s plan. The *New York Times* noted that on 8 July, the occasion of the bill’s third reading in Manila, representatives from both the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Evangelical Union argued “for six hours today in opposing the Opium Bill.”<sup>313</sup> However, in addition to advocating for the bill’s defeat, the Evangelical Union also claimed that “the Chinese are tampering with the newspapers and raising a fund destined to be used in bringing about the defeat of the bill” in order to ensure the continuance of the trade.<sup>314</sup> Homer Clyde Stuntz was personally nonetheless adamant that not all opposition from Chinese sources was due to “a selfish reason,” claiming that many Chinese felt that “such a monopoly would result in...largely increased consumption, and this...could only mean the degradation of the Chinese community.”<sup>315</sup> Regardless of each individual’s reasons for opposing the bill, a petition prepared and distributed by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Manila in support of the bill’s

---

<sup>312</sup> LeRoy “The Opium Question,” pp.1-2.

<sup>313</sup> *New York Times*, “Oppose Opium Bill,” 9 July, 1903.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>315</sup> Homer Clyde Stuntz, *The Philippines and the Far East* (Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye, 1904) p.277.

withdrawal garnered seven thousand signatures from the Chinese community in less than a week.<sup>316</sup>

In the face of such opposition at home and in the Philippines themselves, Elihu Root, Secretary of War under Roosevelt, cabled Taft “Hold opium monopoly bill. Further investigation. Many protests.”<sup>317</sup> As he reported to Root, Taft subsequently withdrew the bill. The ‘further investigation’ took shape in the form of an investigative committee, charged with an inquiry into the status of the ‘opium habit’ in the Philippines and the nature of regulatory systems elsewhere in the region. There was a precedent for a committee of this sort, as the British had carried out a similar exercise in the Royal Commission of 1895.<sup>318</sup> The Philippine Opium Committee’s task was essentially to undertake a best practice review of the systems of opium regulations in the surrounding regions of Southeast Asia, in addition to summarizing the current conditions regarding opium use in the Philippines. The Committee should then report their findings in order to determine the ideal method of regulating opium within the archipelago.

Taft’s instructions directed the Committee to arrive at these conclusions entirely on their own, without taking into account previous colonial policies on the subject. Despite his erstwhile proposal of a return to a monopoly system, Taft claimed that his administration in the Philippines had “not the slightest desire to influence or control the conclusions of your committee.”<sup>319</sup> Moreover, “any attempt on our part to secure a prejudiced report from you would be met with proper rebuke.”<sup>320</sup> Taft’s confidence in the judgment of the Committee and its abilities to carry

---

<sup>316</sup> Stuntz, *Far East*, p.277.

<sup>317</sup> Musto, *American Disease*, p.27.

<sup>318</sup> John F. Richards, “Opium and the British Indian Empire: The Royal Commission of 1895,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 36.2 (2002), pp.375-420.

<sup>319</sup> Rimner, *Opium’s Long Shadow*, p.171.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*

out this assignment is evident; in the event that “your investigation shall lead you to suppose that you may obtain information in other countries than those mentioned, please let me know, and I will authorize your going to those countries.”<sup>321</sup> The existing itinerary was fairly comprehensive, as the planned destinations consisted of Hong Kong, Japan, Formosa [Taiwan], Shanghai, Saigon [Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam], Singapore, Burma, and Batavia [Jakarta, Indonesia].<sup>322</sup>

The composition of the Philippine Opium Committee is telling. Despite the mandate to review southeastern Asia and determine the status of the ‘opium habit’ among the ordinary population of the Philippines, the majority of the group was comprised of outsiders from North America. These were Bishop Brent and Major Edward Carter, the head of the Bureau of Health. In a nod to native elite cooperation with the American colonial agenda, José Albert, a Filipino doctor and president of the Federalistas, also accompanied them.<sup>323</sup> The only Chinese member of the commission was Tee Han Kee, included merely in the capacity of an interpreter.<sup>324</sup> Despite (or perhaps due to) this background, Taft was confident that the Committee could carry out an unbiased, scientific review of the policies of their various destinations. The central thrust of Taft’s instructions was the production of an accurate, objective account, as “all that the Commission desires to know is the truth.”<sup>325</sup> The Committee set sail for Hong Kong, their first port of call, on 17 August 1903.<sup>326</sup>

---

<sup>321</sup> Rimner, *Opium’s Long Shadow*, p.171.

<sup>322</sup> *Report of the Committee Appointed by the Philippine Commission to Investigate the Use of Opium and the Traffic Therein*, 1905 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905) p.1 [hereafter referred to as POC].

<sup>323</sup> POC, p.1.

<sup>324</sup> Victoria, “The Most Humane,” p.104.

<sup>325</sup> Rimner, *Opium’s Long Shadow*, p.170.

<sup>326</sup> POC, p.1.

## Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the rise of the American colonial state in the Philippines resulted in the end of the Spanish era and-most importantly for our purposes- the opium monopoly system in place. The strictly regulated opium trade under the Spanish had created a flourishing market for psychoactive substances with continuous opium flows into the Philippines but largely confined opium consumption to the Chinese diaspora it catered to, in large part due to negative perceptions of the drug in Filipino popular culture. Opium consumption was less regulated in the southern provinces of Mindanao and Sulu, however. This became true for the remainder of the Philippines following the end of Spanish rule, as the initial regulatory impact of the United States occupation was the replacement of the monopoly system with a tariff on imports. Colonial policy was nonetheless shaped in part by events in the metropole, and distrust of the Chinese diaspora and opium itself had grown in the United States prior to the beginning of the invasion of the Philippines. Fears regarding the spread of opium consumption from the Chinese diaspora to the Filipino majority took root following a devastating cholera outbreak in the Philippines. Governor-General Taft's proposal of a return to the Spanish system in 1903 was consequently rejected. The same Protestant missionary influences that brought about its defeat were chosen to formulate an alternative to a monopoly system, setting the stage for the end of legal flows of opium into the Philippines.

## Chapter Three

### **“Impossible to cut off the supply without international cooperation”: Colonial Drug Policy in the Philippines and the Rise of International Control, 1903-1912**

#### Introduction

1903 marked five years of American control of the Philippines. The first five years had seen the end of the opium monopoly system, the introduction of a tariff on imports, a proposed return to the monopoly system of the Spanish and the rejection of this proposal. The work of the Philippines Opium Committee in 1903-1904 resulted in the decision to prohibit the sale and consumption of opiates apart from medicinal or scientific use, the first of its kind. Prohibition was passed in 1905 and went into effect in 1908. Initial attempts to enforce it demonstrated both the limits of the colonial government's ability to impede the flow of drugs into the Philippines and to medically intervene in the lives of the islands' inhabitants in order to reduce the number of consumers. Effective enforcement was therefore not possible through the efforts of the colonial state alone but dependent on the cooperation of other polities, particularly producer states with colonies in the region. Consequently, the ban on opium in the Philippines and subsequent attempts to enforce it had the effect of not only reforming the regulation of the opium trade in the Philippines but also spurring international action in the form of the Shanghai Commission of 1909 and the Hague Convention of 1912. These international agreements began the long process of establishing an international drugs regulatory regime, transforming the American crusade against opium in the Philippines into a global punitive approach to the regulation of psychoactive substances. The impact of the previous chapter's social and political collision at the turn of the century on the drugs market in the Philippines and the regulations governing the trade in psychoactive substances and treatment of consumers essentially forms the subject of this chapter.

## Section 1: From the Philippine Opium Committee to Prohibition, 1903-1908

“One of the gravest moral problems of the Orient:” The Philippine Opium Committee in Asia, 1903-1904

The Committee was acutely aware of the significance of their mission for the future of opium regulation in the Philippines. Moreover, they considered it to be historically significant in its own right, noting that “as far as the Committee has knowledge, this is the first time in which any attempt has been made to collate the opium legislation of a number of countries where the use of the drug is dealt with as a matter of large concern.”<sup>327</sup> In gathering information they considered themselves to have adhered to Taft’s directions regarding objectivity, claiming that in “arranging interviews the utmost impartiality was observed.”<sup>328</sup> However, the objectivity of the directions themselves is suspect given that the Committee, in their own words, “according to instructions, confined its efforts to securing information useful in framing regulations ‘for reducing and restraining the use of opium by the Filipinos.’”<sup>329</sup> The purpose of the mission was therefore not an impartial survey but the first step in a colonial exercise in preventing a further spread of the ‘opium habit’ among the indigenous Filipino population.

However, the Committee does seem to have selected individuals to interview on a relatively impartial basis, given the range of viewpoints represented in the report. The interviewees were chosen on the basis of “length of residence, of occupation, or of force of character,” as well as logistical availability.<sup>330</sup> Multiple interviewees, many of whom had spent

---

<sup>327</sup> *Report of the Philippines Opium Committee*, 1905 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905) p.12. [hereafter referred to as POC].

<sup>328</sup> POC, p.11.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid*, p.13.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid*, p.11.

considerable time in Asia, considered the trade and consumption of opium to be of little importance from a moral standpoint and less harmful than alcohol from a medical one. Francisco Gomez, an export firm manager in Hong Kong, stated there were no noticeably negative effects on public health in Hong Kong from opium use.<sup>331</sup> Frederic Jennings, the former chief inspector of police in the British-controlled Straits Settlements [Singapore], claimed that “the habit of opium smoking in a moderate degree after the day’s labor, by a Chinese, appears to be not only harmless but in some ways beneficial.”<sup>332</sup> Dr. P.V. Locke, also residing in the Straits Settlements, disagreed with the “error which is made by missionaries, who... exaggerate the evil of opium... almost every opium user who shows marked emaciation is a consumptive.”<sup>333</sup> Moreover, Dr. Locke implicated the medical profession in the opium habit, claiming that habitual consumers often “began the use of the drug on the advice of a physician...our only resort in consumption, and that his condition is not the result of the use of opium, but that the use of opium was begun as a result of his condition.”<sup>334</sup> Dr. N.N. Parakh in Rangoon stated further that “I have seen no crimes due to the use of opium...I would rather have opium than alcohol” and that the moderate recreational use of opium was not problematic from a medical viewpoint.<sup>335</sup>

In spite of the insistence of the Committee on the “utmost impartiality” regarding interviewees, the biases of the Committee members are evident in the conclusions they drew from the answers. The religious sentiments of Brent in particular are evident in the disapproving response to the French regulatory system in Saigon. The monopoly farm system there “paid no attention whatever to the moral aspects of the question.”<sup>336</sup> The Japanese, on the other hand,

---

<sup>331</sup> POC, p.91.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid, p.93.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid, p.103.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid, p.103.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid, p.110.

<sup>336</sup> Musto, *The American Disease*, p.27.

were lauded as “the only country visited by the Committee where the opium question is dealt with in its purely moral and social aspect.”<sup>337</sup> Recreational use of opium in Japan itself was strictly banned. Under the Japanese system in their colony of Formosa, licenses allowing for purchase from the government opium monopoly had been issued to recreational consumers of opium until 1900, when issuance ceased and opium was restricted to medicinal use only for those without licenses, allowing for a gradual prohibition.<sup>338</sup> The Committee approved of this approach towards colonial prohibition and stated they would emulate it in their recommendations on the Philippines.<sup>339</sup> The Committee’s preconceptions regarding the opium trade overall are evident in their conclusion “that in however small a degree, yet at least in some measure it [the Committee] has made a contribution to what is one of the gravest, if not the gravest, moral problems of the Orient.”<sup>340</sup>

In addition to the knowledge gained from interviews and observations gleaned from their travels, the Committee formed their recommendations on the basis of information submitted regarding opium consumption in the Philippines. Filipino respondents, typically provincial officials, proved to be much more accommodating in this regard than the Chinese community in the Philippines. The Committee noted the Filipino “response to the request of the Committee for information and statistical aid was uniformly serviceable and courteous,” whereas “this was not so of the Chinese in Manila.”<sup>341</sup> The Committee had only two Chinese respondents, described as a “professional man” and a “merchant.” The Chinese Chamber of Commerce declined to

---

<sup>337</sup> POC, p.16.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid, pp.18-19.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid, p.16.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid, p.12.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid, p.11.

participate, “except under conditions such as no government committee could accept.” The report failed to specify what those conditions entailed, however.<sup>342</sup>

The reports from Filipino respondents gave the Committee cause for optimism to an extent. The Committee’s report estimated that out of the total population of the Philippine Islands, consisting of approximately 7,502,199 Filipinos and 70,000 Chinese, about “10,000 Filipinos are addicted to the opium habit.”<sup>343</sup> This numerical estimate seems to have excluded Moro opium consumers in Sulu and Mindanao, as the report admitted that “among the Moros the consumption of the drug has already reached considerable proportions” without attempting to quantify the extent of the practice.<sup>344</sup> This estimated population of 10,000 habitual Filipino consumers was evidently predominantly located in the provinces of Cagayan, Isabela, Negros Oriental, Negros Occidental, Capiz, and Surigao, several of which had previously been described by provincial governors and the Bureau of Health as home to a number of opium habitués. The Committee concluded that “the use of opium fortunately does not constitute so grave a social calamity in the Philippines as it does in the neighboring territories.”<sup>345</sup> Moreover, opium use was mainly limited to men, “the swallowing of pills is exceptional... and hypodermic injections are unknown,” meaning the comparatively mild form of smoking opium was the most common mode of consumption.<sup>346</sup>

In discussing the state of opium consumption in the Philippines, the Committee’s report also revived the previously mentioned contentions over the link between Chinese immigration to the Philippines and the spread of the ‘opium habit’ among the Filipino population. The Report

---

<sup>342</sup> POC, pp.11-12.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid, p.40.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid, pp.44-45.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid, p. 43.

briefly discussed the medical debate of the time, alluded to in some of the interviews, regarding the susceptibility of various ethnic groups to the effects of opium and other narcotics. The Committee was ambivalent regarding the common belief that the Chinese could moderately consume opium with relatively little to no physical problems, as the religious beliefs of the majority of the members dictated that recreational consumption was morally wrong regardless of the physiological results. The Committee's conclusions were nonetheless adamant that the physical effects of opium smoking on Filipinos and other nationalities of Malay ethnic origin were catastrophic, and that "there is no reason to suppose that prohibition would be effective among the Filipinos, if permission should be the rule among the Chinese."<sup>347</sup> The Committee therefore considered the primary threat to preventing narcotics consumption among Filipinos to be the presence of Chinese opium smokers intermingling with the indigenous population, and claimed that "as long as the present Chinese exclusion act continues in force, there can be no influx of opium smokers from without."<sup>348</sup> In the Committee's mind, this necessitated not only the extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act but the prohibition of opium for the entirety of the Philippines, further precluding a return to the Spanish system of legal opium smoking for the Chinese only.

The information on Filipino opium consumption in the report, particularly that of a statistical nature, is best understood as indicative of the general perceptions of the Filipino elite and the Americans to whom they reported regarding the state of the 'opium habit' in the Philippines, rather than data to be taken entirely at face value. These perceptions nonetheless underpinned the subsequent formation of colonial regulations on opium and other intoxicants

---

<sup>347</sup> POC, p. 42.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid, p. 45.

(the sole and notable exception being alcohol). Moreover, the Report's section on the Philippines formed part of the basis on which policymakers and activists created and propagated a narrative of the American colonial project in relation to the opium trade on a national and eventually international scale.

As promised, the Philippine Opium Committee's recommendations were modeled on the Japanese system in Formosa and consisted of an end to the legal practice of opium smoking, albeit gradually. Over the next three years, opium sales through a government monopoly should be gradually reduced. Chinese males over the age of 21 who smoked opium should be registered and issued with licenses to smoke. Following the end of the three years in 1908, opium, as well as derivatives like morphine, would be entirely prohibited except for medicinal use. Poppy cultivation in the Philippines should also be banned, and Chinese violating the ban on importation of opium prepared for smoking should be punished with deportation. The report also recommended funding for medical cures of addicts and public education on the evils of opium.<sup>349</sup> Even the temporary compromise with advocates of a monopoly encountered opposition, as the *New York Times* reported disapprovingly that "Our Government May Sell Opium to Filipinos."<sup>350</sup> This headline was inaccurate, however. The Committee proposed a monopoly selling only to Chinese consumers for the next three years, in a manner ironically reminiscent of the Spanish system and Taft's original proposal.

Having submitted the report and its recommendations to the Philippine Commission and Governor-General in June 1904, the Committee awaited a decision on the future of narcotics in the islands. Taft had resigned his post prior to the report's submission and was replaced by Luke

---

<sup>349</sup> POC, p.45.

<sup>350</sup> *New York Times*, "Our Government May Sell Opium to Filipinos," 22 September 1904.

Wright. Major Carter also resigned his appointment as head of the Bureau of Health and was replaced by Dr. Victor G. Heiser. Heiser fully shared his predecessor's negative views of the trade in and recreational consumption of opium and agreed further with the 'civilizing' mission of the colonial project.<sup>351</sup> He was consequently well equipped to play a vital role in the implementation of the Committee's recommendations on the medical treatment of opium consumers.

Work on the draft of opium legislation continued steadily following the submission of the Committee's report. As this work continued, so did the practice of opium consumption. Moreover, the bill continued to face opposition from multiple sources. The origins of this opposition essentially mirrored the backlash to Taft's initial proposal. The *New York Times* reported in December of 1904 that "the recent official report...has awakened fierce hostility in two classes that do not have an idea in common, on the one side being the men in the Islands, chiefly Chinese, who deal in the drug, and the many good people here at home who...are filled with horror at the suggestion that the Government may have a direct hand in selling opium to its victims."<sup>352</sup> The *Medical Record*, quoted in the article, took a different approach and suggested that "the drug is comparatively innocuous among the nations that have used it long" and that it "might have been wise to ignore the matter in the Philippines, at least for some time to come."<sup>353</sup> The *Medical Record* emulated Brent in referring to the Japanese colonial system in Formosa, but considered Japan's example a reason to avoid a limited monopoly and eventual prohibition rather than adopt the same system. This was largely due to the difficulty the Japanese colonial officials

---

<sup>351</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, pp.46-50; 176-180.

<sup>352</sup> *New York Times*, "Topics of the Times," 12 December 1904.

<sup>353</sup> *New York Times*, "Topics," 12 December 1904.

had encountered in preventing smuggling, which the *Medical Record* correctly reasoned would be equally significant in the Philippines.<sup>354</sup>

For the time being, the future of opium regulation was still not legally codified. Opium legislation was only one facet of the colonial agenda and many other issues deemed equally pressing occupied the colonial government's time. W. Cameron Forbes, who served on the Philippine Commission as Secretary of Commerce, noted in his journal entry for 8 January 1905 that the Commission had been deliberating over the penal code, the road law, corporation law, and government finances, as well as the opium bill.<sup>355</sup> Advocates of opium prohibition nationwide in the metropole monitored the bill's progress, as can be seen in an editorial published on 18 February 1905 in the *Donaldson Chief*, in Donaldsonville, Louisiana. The author of the editorial claimed that "the use of opium as a narcotic, both in smoking and as a dope, is rapidly spreading in the Philippines."<sup>356</sup> The author ominously declared that "the worst of degradation will be the result" and urged the Philippine Commission and the US Congress to act swiftly.<sup>357</sup>

From limited licensing to "'Black Sunday' for opium addicts," 1905-1908

The following month on 6 March 1905, the opium bill submitted by the Philippine Commission to Congress became law in the form of the *Act to amend the tariff laws of the Philippines and for other purposes*, implementing most of the Philippine Opium Committee's

---

<sup>354</sup> *New York Times*, "Topics," 12 December 1904.

<sup>355</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, William Cameron Forbes papers 1904-1935, Set A Volume I, Diaries, p.130.

<sup>356</sup> *Donaldson Chief*, Donaldsonville, Louisiana, USA, "Opium in the Philippines: In Manila the Traffic is Principally in the Hands of Chinese Merchants," 18 February 1905.

<sup>357</sup> *Donaldson Chief*, "Opium in the Philippines," 18 February 1905.

suggestions. The Committee's recommendation of an official government monopoly was rejected in favor of essentially the farm system, but the grace period of three years of legal opium sales remained. The bill's passage and the nature of its provisions highlighted the triumph of anti-opium ideology over financial pragmatism. This was underscored by debate in the US Congress in 1905 over the separate issue of a domestic tariff on imports from the Philippines. The record of the hearing before the House of Representatives Committee of Ways and Means cited revenue derived from the Spanish opium monopoly system in the fiscal year 1894-1895 as consisting of \$602,300, which would be lost to a colonial government already operating under tight budgetary constraints.<sup>358</sup> The success of the bill indicates the influence wielded by the advocates of prohibition in the colony.

For advocates of the bill, most notably Brent himself, a compromise between the interests of suppressing the 'opium habit' and increased colonial revenue derived from economic growth could be reached. Brent argued in an article for the *North Atlantic Review* in September 1905 that "the introduction of Chinese labor means the extension among the Filipinos of Indian opium."<sup>359</sup> He reiterated the supposed greater physical susceptibility of Filipinos to the effects of opium but optimistically noted the passage of the opium ban and theorized that "if the law is as effective as it is in Japan, ultimately we may import Chinese labor with a minimum of risk."<sup>360</sup> Brent thus conceptualized the prohibition of opium as safely facilitating the utilization of Chinese labor in the service of colonial economic productivity. Brent's pragmatic acknowledgement of the economic value of Chinese labor was entwined with disapproval of the unfortunate predilection for opium smoking of the labor force in question. This combination is

---

<sup>358</sup> Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means, US House of Representatives: *Philippines Tariff*, December 13-16, 18 1905 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) p.141

<sup>359</sup> Charles H. Brent, "American Democracy in the Orient," *The North American Review*, 181.586 (1905) p.332.

<sup>360</sup> Brent, "American Democracy," p.333.

reminiscent of the US Senate chaplain Dr. J.P. Newman stating in 1874 in reference to Chinese immigration that “we need them as laborers...We therefore bid them welcome, but we cannot bid them welcome as opium smokers.”<sup>361</sup>

Having determined the future of opium regulation in the Philippines, the US promptly began trying to convince other colonial powers in the region of the benefits of adopting a similar system. In a letter dated 17 October 1906, Sir Edward Grey in the British Foreign Office wrote to Sir Mortimer Durand in the India Office on the subject of recent overtures by the US Ambassador. The American ambassador had told Sir Edward that “his Government are much concerned with regard to the question of opium, which has been raised in connection with the Philippines.”<sup>362</sup> The ambassador had been directed to inquire regarding the British view of a Joint Commission or Joint Investigation of “the Opium Trade and the Opium Habit in the Far East,” to be carried out by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Germany, China, and Japan.<sup>363</sup> The purpose of this exercise would be to “come to a decision as to whether the consequences of the opium trade and opium habit were not such that civilized Powers should do what they could to put a stop to them.”<sup>364</sup> Grey refused to answer until consulting with the India Office on the subject, but was privately open to the possibility of considering the American proposal, subject to it being “clearly proved that the result would be to diminish the opium habit.”<sup>365</sup> If, on the other hand, this undertaking resulted in the Chinese simply growing more opium themselves following a decrease in Indian opium production, the

---

<sup>361</sup> Martin Booth, *Opium: a history*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1996) p.54.

<sup>362</sup> “Correspondence respecting the Opium Question in China,” No. 2, Sir Edward Grey to Sir Mortimer Durand, 17 October 1906, Foreign Office, FO 415: Correspondence Respecting Opium, PRO., 6 vols (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1974).

<sup>363</sup> “Correspondence respecting the Opium Question in China,” 17 October 1906.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*

British sacrifice would be futile and financially damaging. This tension between the possibility of reducing the ‘opium habit’ and the financial risk it entailed, as expressed by Grey, would exhibit itself again in future British involvement in international diplomacy regarding the ‘opium question.’

The impetus for the American ambassador’s overtures regarding opium policy in the region is clear from the reports from the Philippines during the transition period of 1905-1908. During these three years, the government-sponsored medical treatment of opium consumers provided for in the ban was instated but initially to negligible interest. The Bureau of Health report for 1906 noted that the Bureau of Internal Revenue had sent representatives to speak with those known to be “addicted to the use of the drug” regarding the medical treatment offered.<sup>366</sup> Despite the Bureau of Internal Revenue’s claim that “many of them seemed anxious to apply for treatment” and subsequent notification to the Bureau of Health that they should prepare for hundreds of new patients, actual hospital intake was almost nonexistent.<sup>367</sup> The Bureau of Health reported the San Juan de Dios Hospital in Manila received six patients, half of whom were American. The Mission Hospital in Iloilo recorded four patients, all Filipino and-unusually-all female.<sup>368</sup> By the terms of the government contract with the hospitals concerned, all patients were treated in the hospital for a maximum of sixty days. Not only was the intake extremely limited, the success of the treatment had decidedly mixed results. The Americans and Filipinos in Manila were all discharged as “cured” or “improved.” However, two out of the four Filipino female patients in Iloilo were recorded as “escaped” and the third discharged as “unimproved,” with only one released as “improved,” rather than “cured.”<sup>369</sup> The professions of the female

---

<sup>366</sup> *Report* [1906] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1907), p. 51.

<sup>367</sup> Bureau of Health, 1906, p. 51.

<sup>368</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*

patients in Iloilo and how they came to be admitted to the hospital there for treatment was not recorded by the Bureau of Health. Given the association of the time between female opium smoking and prostitution and the municipal governments' powers to regulate "immorality," and moreover that two of them evidently "escaped" rather than were discharged from the hospital, one can nonetheless speculate.<sup>370</sup>

Opium imports notably increased in the years following the ban as well, which applied to both the ports of Manila and as far south as Zamboanga in the southern Philippine province of Mindanao. Customs reports for Zamboanga indicated that opium imports approximately tripled between the fiscal years of 1905 and 1906, from 8,928 pounds to 26,254.<sup>371</sup> Opium was consequently the foremost category of imported good apart from basic necessities, and the report admitted that the statistics in question "represent the total value of the imports and exports of the town to and from foreign ports only" and not the "grand total of the imports and exports of the Archipelago," nor the "large amount of commodities smuggled into the country by means of small boats."<sup>372</sup> These boats continually ran between Sulu and Mindanao and Borneo and Palawan, as well as between Negros and Cebu. As predicted by the Spanish governor in 1896, smuggling was an inexorable aspect of trade in the southern Philippines, even before prohibition went into effect.

Nonetheless, in the three year transition period following the ban, the trade and consumption of opium became only one of the issues facing the authorities. In light of the prohibition being due to take effect in 1908, individuals engaged in the commerce in opium adapted by taking advantage of an unforeseen loophole in the 1905 law. The wording of the ban

---

<sup>370</sup> Bureau of Health, 1906, p. 52. For more on gender and opium consumption, see Booth, *Opium*, pp.195-196.

<sup>371</sup> Saleeby, *History of Sulu*, p.140.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid*, p.141.

meant that after 1 March 1908, “it shall be unlawful to import into the Philippine Islands opium, in whatever form, except by the Government, and for medicinal purposes only, and at no time shall it be lawful to sell opium to any native of the Philippine Islands except for medicinal purposes.”<sup>373</sup> However, as the Bureau of Health and Philippine Commission subsequently realized, the *Act to amend the tariff laws of the Philippines and for other purposes* said nothing about the importation and consumption of psychoactive substances that were not a derivative of opium, in particular cocaine. Opium purveyors evidently realized this before the authorities, as the Bureau of Health reported in 1907 that “certain unscrupulous persons” had begun to “teach systematically the use of cocaine to the opium habitués, and for a long time it appeared as if one bad habit might be supplanted by another one of greater danger.”<sup>374</sup>

The original omission of cocaine from the 1905 legislation is surprising, given that reports of ‘cocaine epidemics’ had already emerged in the 1890s in the United States.<sup>375</sup> In a similar manner to opium and Chinese immigration, the growing opposition to cocaine in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth century United States was rooted in the context of racial tensions of the era, particularly in the South.<sup>376</sup> The first reports regarding the purported danger of cocaine consumption in the African-American community had emerged in the early 1890s. Doctors in New Orleans warned that ‘cocaine sniffing’ there was on the rise, and soon a number of publications began to feature articles alleging the threat of ‘black cocaine use.’<sup>377</sup> In 1894, a

---

<sup>373</sup> *An Act to amend the tariff laws of the Philippines, and for other purposes, 1905* (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.)

<sup>374</sup> *Report* [1907] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908), p. 73.

<sup>375</sup> Joseph Spillane, *Cocaine: from medical marvel to modern menace in the United States, 1884-1920*, (John Hopkins London, 2000). p. 93.

<sup>376</sup> Mike Jay, *Emperors of Dreams: Drugs in the nineteenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p.181.

<sup>377</sup> Spillane, *Cocaine: from medical marvel*, p. 94.

letter to the editors of the *American Druggist* claimed that Dallas, Texas had seen an unprecedented rise in cocaine use and as many as six hundred people, “who had better be in their graves [were] suffering from the cocaine habit.”<sup>378</sup> Moreover, “the drug held a special appeal among blacks and in ‘the lower quarters of the city.’”<sup>379</sup> A later edition of the *American Druggist* asserted that “it is no longer denied that the cocaine and morphine habits have spread to an alarming extent in some of the larger cities of the South” and claimed Chattanooga, Tennessee was a particularly egregious example of the “disastrous use of cocaine among the negroes.”

<sup>380</sup>The *Medical News* concurred that cocaine had “become alarmingly prevalent” among black Southerners.<sup>381</sup> A *New York Times* correspondent in 1902 wrote: “Physicians say that if the habit among the negroes is not suppressed and radical steps to this end taken very quickly, it will mean the utter ruin and extermination of the race in the South.” Cocaine was particularly associated with prostitution. Allegedly, over half the prostitutes [both white and black] in the Fort Worth, Texas jail in 1900 were habitual consumers of cocaine.<sup>382</sup> The same year, the first anti- cocaine bills were introduced in the state legislatures of Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.<sup>383</sup> Hamilton Wright, the future leader of the US delegation to the 1909 Shanghai conference on opium, asserted, “Looking at the wider aspect of the use of cocaine throughout the United States... it is used by those concerned in the white-slave traffic to corrupt young girls, and that when the habit of using the drug has been established it is but a short time before the latter fall to the ranks of

---

<sup>378</sup> Spillane, *Cocaine: from medical marvel*, p. 94.

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Gootenberg, *Cocaine*, p.32.

<sup>382</sup> Madge, *White Mischief*, p.83.

<sup>383</sup> Spillane, *Cocaine: from medical marvel*, p. 94.

prostitution.”<sup>384</sup> This idea of cocaine as the gateway to moral ruin for young women was reminiscent of depictions of male Chinese opium users purportedly luring girls into opium dens in San Francisco.

Despite these domestic concerns- and the association of female consumption of both opium and cocaine with prostitution- the American colonial government in Manila considered opium to be the primary threat to Filipinos and neglected to forbid non-medical cocaine use. This differentiation in policy between the two substances is noteworthy in two ways. Despite the influence of the metropole in relation to colonial governance, the nature of drug legislation was based on colonial perceptions of the local context- particularly the work of the Philippine Opium Committee- rather than the domestic sphere. While the public outcry in the US over Taft’s original plan to restore the monopoly system formed part of the impetus for the ban, the ban itself was not demonstrably affected by the aforementioned state level attempts to restrict cocaine access in the US. While race dictated colonial policy as much as it influenced domestic politics, Filipinos and Black Americans occupied separate roles in the public imagination in relation to cocaine consumption. The initial omission of cocaine is also telling in relation to the market for psychoactive substances in the Philippines. Cocaine was apparently of such limited quantities at the turn of the century that the Philippine Commission did not feel the need to specify its inclusion in drug regulatory legislation. After the ban on opium however, cocaine use in the Philippines appeared to spread to the extent that the Philippine Commission in October 1907 repealed the initial opium law (Act No. 1461) and replaced it with Act No. 1761. The second Act was constructed to avoid any potential additional loopholes, as the law stated that

---

<sup>384</sup> Hamilton Wright, “Report on the International Opium Commission and on the Opium Problem as Seen Within the United States: Disposition of Cocaine within the United States”, 1909 in David Musto (ed.), *Drugs in America: A Documentary History* (New York: New York University Press, 2002) p.372.

after 1 March 1908, it would be “unlawful for any person to hold or to have in his possession, or under his control, or subject to his disposition, any opium, cocaine, alpha or beta eucaine, or any derivative or preparation of such drugs or substances.”<sup>385</sup> As in the previous Act, practicing physicians were exempted from the law.

1907 also saw the passage of further legislation regarding psychoactive substances in the Philippines, as the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act of the United States had taken effect in the Philippines in May of 1907.<sup>386</sup> The Pure Food and Drug Act of the Philippines was passed in 1907 not solely by the Philippine Commission but by a newly-instated popularly elected Philippine Legislature, of which Sergio Osmeña served as the first Speaker of the House.<sup>387</sup> This Act had the effect of regulating medicine sold without a prescription, requiring the contents to be clearly labeled. Aside from the above regulations, the quantity of opium legally sold to licensed recreational consumers gradually decreased starting October 1907 through February 1908, in an attempt to wean customers off the substance prior to the ban taking effect in March. In a marker of missionary influence and contrary to all precepts of the separation of church and state, the approaching end of legal opium sales was also characterized by government-supported religious “revival meetings.” The *Evening Journal* in Adelaide reported that the “necessity has suddenly arisen for improving the moral tone in the islands” prior to the ban taking effect.<sup>388</sup> As a result, instructions were given to hold a series of revivals to attempt to convince the opium smokers of the Philippines to pledge to forego the ‘opium habit.’ The *Evening Journal* described the meetings as “regular temperance movement or church revival, with the opium habit as the *bete*

---

<sup>385</sup> Wright, “Report: Disposition of Cocaine within the United States”, 1909, in Musto (ed.), *Drugs in America*, p.372.

<sup>386</sup> Bureau of Health, 1906, p.26.

<sup>387</sup> Library of Congress, William Cameron Forbes papers 1904-1935, Set A Vol. II, p.47.

<sup>388</sup> *Evening Journal*, Adelaide, Australia, “Fighting Opium,” 29 February 1908.

*noir*.”<sup>389</sup> The success of these ‘revivals’, if this can be measured by the number of pledges taken, is unfortunately not recorded. Their occurrence nonetheless demonstrates further the extent to which Protestant missionary influence dictated government policy on drugs in the Philippines.

## Section 2: Philippine Prohibition to The Hague Convention, 1908-1912

Prohibition goes into effect, 1908

On 1 March 1908, in the words of Dr. Heiser, “‘Black Sunday’ for opium addicts” finally arrived.<sup>390</sup> The end of legal opium supplies evidently entailed a significant increase in the intake of opium patients in hospitals throughout the Philippines. According to Bureau of Health reports from the time, treatment primarily consisted of the “reduction method,” which largely entailed laxatives to purge the body of physical traces of opium and subsequently nourishing food to “rebuild strength.”<sup>391</sup> This was carried out by medical professionals as well as Protestant missionary volunteers, who continued their participation in government anti-opium efforts by contributing “the stimulus of moral encouragement.”<sup>392</sup> In his autobiography, Heiser stated that the Bureau utilized “the Towne [sic] treatment as recommended by Dr. Alexander Lambert.”<sup>393</sup> However, the Bureau of Health report for 1908 (also written by Heiser) noted that the “so-called Towne [sic] treatment was tried very carefully...in a couple of cases, but the result was neither better nor worse than the usual treatment [the reduction method] used here.”<sup>394</sup> Given the time

---

<sup>389</sup> *Evening Journal*, “Fighting Opium,” 29 February 1908.

<sup>390</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.176.

<sup>391</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p.74.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>393</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.177.

<sup>394</sup> *Report* [1908] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1909), p.114.

that had elapsed between the treatment in question and the publication of Heiser's autobiography in 1936, it is likely that the Bureau of Health reports are the more reliable source.

The experimental use of the Towns treatment by the US Bureau of Health in the colonial Philippines is worth noting regardless, as the source of this 'treatment' was a former insurance salesman and stockbroker from New York with no medical training.<sup>395</sup> Charles B. Towns asserted that he had purchased a "cure" from a stranger and subsequently established an addiction treatment program for alcohol, opiates and cocaine habitués. This treatment program "followed the medical theories of the day in prescribing strong laxatives and drugs that countered the [physical] effects of withdrawal."<sup>396</sup> Towns' claims were sufficiently convincing to Dr. Alexander Lambert, later head of the American Medical Association, for him to write "The Obliteration of the Craving for Narcotics" proclaiming the success of the treatment. Dr. Lambert eventually withdrew his endorsement, but at the time of the ban's initial enforcement, the Towns method was still very much in vogue, leading to its use as far away as the Philippines.<sup>397</sup>

The Towns method was not the only experimental treatment in use, however. The production of medical knowledge in the early twentieth century Philippines was informed by medical practices in other Asian colonial contexts. The Bureau of Health stated they had imported shoots of *Combreton sundaicum* [jungle-weed], and "in a short time will be in a position to give the remedy a thorough test."<sup>398</sup> *Combreton sundaicum* was described as having "gained so great a reputation in the treatment of the opium habit in India."<sup>399</sup> Despite the Bureau's descriptions of the nature of experimental medical treatments, a glaring omission in the

---

<sup>395</sup> Musto, *The American Disease*, p.245.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid.

<sup>398</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p.76.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid.

record was the consent of the Filipino and Chinese patients concerned. This is particularly blatant in light of the compulsory medical treatments undergone by opium patients who were also inmates in Bilibid Prison, whose consent was apparently not required prior to any medical treatment, including that of an experimental variety. The language regarding patients given the conventional treatment of the “reduction method” in hospitals rather than incarceration centers is nonetheless suspect.<sup>400</sup> According to the Bureau of Health, these patients were admitted of their own volition, as out of “sheer desperation,” many habitual opium consumers sought medical treatment provided by the government.<sup>401</sup> The description of this treatment nonetheless has implications of coercion, as the “addicts” (who were housed in the insane department of the San Lazaro Hospital in Manila) were recorded as having “fought, screamed, threatened, and sulked until they realized that the Government meant business, when they quietly submitted.”<sup>402</sup> However, this narrative of eventual quiet submission by opium patients was contradicted by the Bureau itself in its descriptions of treatment throughout the archipelago.

The authorities considered treatment in the capital of Manila to be a success, and insisted that many patients professed themselves grateful for being cured. The Bureau of Health claimed to have achieved this through their own efforts as well as the assistance of the Chinese consul-general of the Philippines and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, who “rendered valuable aid in dealing with their people.”<sup>403</sup> Moreover, “the hearty cooperation which was extended by the friends of the victims” in Manila proved essential in ‘curing’ opium patients.<sup>404</sup> The Bureau of Health also noted that, contrary to previous experiences there, “the contract with the Mission

---

<sup>400</sup> For more on violent treatment of inmates in colonial asylums, see James H. Mills and Satadru Sen. “Confronting the Body: The Politics of Physicality in Colonial and Post-Colonial India.” (2004).

<sup>401</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p. 74.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>403</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p.74.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid, p.75.

Hospital at Iloilo was continued during the year on a very satisfactory basis.”<sup>405</sup> Other outlying provinces such as Cebu proved more resistant. In Cebu the population did not see opium treatment as beneficial and therefore “the persons treated did not take kindly to the efforts that were made to redeem them...the victims themselves were opposed to being cured.”<sup>406</sup> This defiance was facilitated by the assistance of family and friends of the patients who smuggled opium products to patients in the Cebu hospital. All patients treated were known to have “relapsed.”<sup>407</sup> As a result the treatment of opium patients in Cebu was forced to end after only 42 days despite the “combined efforts of the provincial board, the district health officer, and the Reverend Mr. Studley.”<sup>408</sup>

The unfortunate Reverend Mr. Studley was one of the previously mentioned Protestant missionaries who volunteered to assist with the treatment of opium patients. An Episcopalian contemporary of Brent, Studley took up residence in the hospital in Cebu, “at great risk to his personal safety and absolute destruction of his personal comfort” according to the Bureau of Health.<sup>409</sup> Despite having “labored incessantly for a number of weeks” alongside medical professionals there, the “indifference and opposition of the persons affected in that province” rendered Studley’s attempts to help effect a cure through incorporating religious elements into the medical regimen for opium patients unsuccessful.<sup>410</sup>

---

<sup>405</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p.74.

<sup>406</sup> Ibid, p.75.

<sup>407</sup> Ibid.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

The colonial administration in the Philippines came to realize from nearly the beginning of the opium ban that change in opium consumption could not be enforced through means of medicine or religion without willing cooperation from the colonized population of the Philippines. Attempts to ‘cure’ opium consumers throughout the Philippines in 1908 demonstrated the limits of colonial authority over not only the enforcement of drug regulations but also public discourse on medicine, faith and wellbeing. This meant that successful execution of prohibition was essentially reliant on the efforts of legal enforcement by customs and constabulary officers. The Bureau of Health claimed that, following the end of medical efforts in the province, “users at Cebu are now being vigorously prosecuted and severe penalties imposed.”<sup>411</sup> As previously stated, under the “severe penalties” inflicted on those convicted of violating the ban, opium users were subjected to further medical efforts to ‘cure’ them, regardless of their lack of consent. The Bureau of Health matter-of-factly remarked that “such cases, of course, come under compulsory treatment in the hospital of the prison, and it will be interesting to observe the outcome.”<sup>412</sup>

The extent to which legal enforcement could prevent violations of the opium ban was also limited in provinces such as Cebu, however. Nicasio Chiong Veloso died in 1903, but his daughter Estefania continued to reside in Cebu City and was married to the former Governor of Cebu and current Speaker of the House in the Philippine Legislature, Sergio Osmeña. Estefania used her social status to carry on the family legacy of controlling the opium trade in the province. Her grandson, John “Sonny” Osmeña later recalled in an interview that his grandmother “was quite a woman, an amazing businesswoman, deeply involved in opium and other smuggling

---

<sup>411</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p.75.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

operations. She usually picked up the smuggled goods in Talisay and would personally ride in the trucks to San Nicolas, where there was a constabulary checkpoint for traffic coming from the south. When approached by the PC soldiers, she would threaten them with the loss of their jobs if they attempted to search her trucks; if it is was night, she would hold the lantern of the truck up to her face to be sure that they recognized who she was.”<sup>413</sup> The Spanish continuity of a socially stratified “culture of corruption, debt and clientelism” hampered American efforts at all levels to enforce prohibition throughout the islands.<sup>414</sup>

Estefania Chiong Veloso was far from the only individual involved in drug smuggling in the Philippines following prohibition. The market for cocaine and morphine in addition to opium is evident in the 1909 prosecution of Louis T. Grant for illegal importation of drugs into the Philippines.<sup>415</sup> Grant was a US citizen and resident of the Philippines, who did not have Estefania Chiong Veloso’s elite social status to shield him from prosecution. He was charged and convicted of feloniously importing into the Philippine Islands from Hong Kong in 1908 210 kgs of prepared opium and 11 kgs of cocaine and morphine, the former of which the court erroneously described as derived from opium.<sup>416</sup> The total worth of these substances was noted to be “equal to and the equivalent of 102,500 pesetas” in Philippine currency, or approximately \$51,250 in 1909 (equivalent to a staggering \$1,459,223 today).<sup>417</sup> The media later reported that the drugs “would probably never have been found but for the Chinese for whom it was smuggled having tipped the revenue officers when they failed to secure the drug for less than what those

---

<sup>413</sup> McCoy, *Policing America’s Empire*, p.151.

<sup>414</sup> Boquet, *The Philippine Archipelago*, p.76.

<sup>415</sup> *The United States v. Louis T. Grant and William Kennedy* (29 December 1910) G.R. No. L-5786 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1910).

<sup>416</sup> For more on the conflation of the two due to cocaï’s initial use as a treatment fr , see Berridge, *Opium and the People*, p. 222.

<sup>417</sup> *United States v. Louis T. Grant and William Kennedy* (29 December 1910) G.R. No. L-5786.

who ran it for them had paid for it. The Chinese, in effect, had ‘double-crossed’ the smugglers, thinking to blackmail them into giving up the smuggled opium for less than what it cost.”<sup>418</sup> The court stated that the legitimate price of opium in Manila at this time was from fifty to sixty pesos per kilo; that is, when opium was imported for pharmaceutical purposes; but opium sold on the black market was worth from two to four hundred pesos per kilo.<sup>419</sup> The court did not attempt to give a price for the sale of cocaine or morphine, but the case nonetheless demonstrates the existence of a market for these substances in the Philippines as early as the first decade of the twentieth century. Grant was initially sentenced to fines and a year’s imprisonment by the trial court, and upon appeal sentenced to two years’ imprisonment.<sup>420</sup>

Chiong Veloso and Grant were joined by a number of Chinese inhabitants of the Philippines in carrying on the opium trade. As James LeRoy had noted previously, outright prohibition facilitated a clandestine commerce in opium and other psychoactive substances better than a government monopoly with extensive customs checks. Dr. Heiser claimed in his autobiography that the “the Chinese are, without doubt, the world’s most adept smugglers.”<sup>421</sup> He described his own role in combating smuggling as follows:

One day, in my routine examination of imported foods, I made an unannounced inspection at the Customs House. A huge shipment of jam had just arrived...I took it [the tin] in my hands, looked it over, and saw it was correctly labelled strawberry jam...Nevertheless, ‘Bring me a plate, please,’ I asked the inspector. When I emptied out the contents of the tin, it seemed an unusually small amount compared to the size of the container. Examining it more closely, I found it had a false bottom. Every one of the forty-eight tins in the crate was then opened, but only four contained opium [1/12]. An examination of the several thousand crates in the

---

<sup>418</sup> *Barrier Miner*, New South Wales, Australia, “Opium Smuggling in the Philippines: Traders Also Sell Rifles to Natives,” 4 April 1910.

<sup>419</sup> *United States v. Louis T. Grant and William Kennedy* (29 December 1910) G.R. No. L-5786.

<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>421</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.178.

shipment showed that the Chinese, mathematically computing the probabilities of detection, had filled just four cans out of each forty-eight in every case.<sup>422</sup>

This anecdote may have been included by Heiser primarily as a testament to his own powers of intuition but nonetheless it gives a sense of the ingenious ways drugs were smuggled into the Philippines. The extent of smuggling can be attributed to the financial rewards for those who managed to evade capture by customs officials. The court records of Grant's trial show that opium fetched significantly higher prices when sold on the black market, making it a highly lucrative commodity following prohibition. Heiser claimed that opium's increased price "made it prohibitive for Filipino purses."<sup>423</sup> He did, however, contradict the prevailing belief that the Chinese were responsible for Filipino use of opium, asserting that "the Chinese were not particularly anxious to force the habit on the Filipinos, once they had to depend on illegal sources for their own supplies."<sup>424</sup>

#### The International Opium Commission of Shanghai and the aftermath, 1909-1911

The aftermath of the ban going into effect demonstrated to the colonial administration that international cooperation from regional opium producers and exporters was crucial for prohibition to be implemented successfully. Eradicating demand through medical treatment and education was proving to be difficult, so the attention of the authorities turned to controlling the supply of drugs instead. The need for international cooperation was framed by prohibition advocates as the continuance of the nobility of American policy towards opium in Asia. Brent

---

<sup>422</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.178.

<sup>423</sup> *Ibid*, p.177.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid*, pp.177-178.

wrote to President Roosevelt that “from the earliest days of our diplomatic relations with the East the course of the United States of America has been so manifestly high in relation to the traffic in opium that it seems to me almost our duty... to promote some movement that would gather in its embrace representatives from all countries where the traffic in and use of opium is a matter of moment.”<sup>425</sup> The overtures of American diplomats eventually bore fruit, as an international commission to be held in Shanghai from 1 February to 26 February 1909 was arranged. In addition to the United States, delegations from Austria-Hungary, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, and Siam also attended. Brent’s efforts in the anti-opium movement and his role in bringing about the summit were acknowledged in the form of his selection as the meeting’s president. Brent was joined in Shanghai by Dr. Hamilton Wright, an equally fervent proponent of suppressing the opium trade and eradicating the ‘opium habit’, and Charles Tenney, the Chinese Secretary to the American Legation in Peking [Beijing].

Despite the primary topic of discussion during the Commission being the opium trade in the Chinese context, the Philippines also featured in the deliberations in Shanghai, as Brent’s papers attest.<sup>426</sup> In preparation for the Commission, the United States delegation produced reports on the state of the ‘opium habit’ and the laws governing the trade in the United States and its territories. These reports were then submitted to the Commission as part of the proceedings. The report on the Philippines, authored by Brent, gave a brief description of the Spanish system, the Philippine Opium Committee, the 1905 ban and the aftermath of the ban taking effect. In

---

<sup>425</sup> Courtwright, *Dark Paradise*, p.202.

<sup>426</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C., USA, Charles Henry Brent (CHB) Papers, Conferences on Opium, *Report of the International Opium Commission: Shanghai, China, February 1 to February 26, 1909*, Vol. I p.26, Box 38, Folder 2.

advocating for prohibition, Brent argued that the Spanish monopoly system had led to the spread of opium use among Filipinos, rather than successfully confining it to the Chinese.<sup>427</sup>

The report also discussed in detail the difficulties authorities had encountered in attempting to enforce prohibition. Brent echoed Heiser in saying that rising prices of opium had rendered it inaccessible to a significant proportion of consumers. However, he claimed that this further necessitated action to suppress the trade, as “the poorer people are those who most need protection, for not only have they the least stamina, but they smoke dross, the cheaper, but most vicious, form of the drug.”<sup>428</sup> The primary obstacle was, of course, smuggling, as the geography of the archipelago provided countless locations for clandestine marine commerce. Brent and Wright asserted that the predominant smuggling routes were from Hong Kong, Singapore and Borneo to various ports throughout the islands. From the American point of view, “the ease with which opium is smuggled makes it impossible to cut off the supply without international cooperation.”<sup>429</sup> Suppressing the opium trade was thus neatly framed as an international responsibility necessitating action on the part of foreign governments, rather than its actual legal status of a quixotic crusade undertaken by the American government in the Philippines, and to a lesser extent, by the 1907 Anglo-Chinese Agreement.<sup>430</sup>

The significance of the report produced for the Shanghai Commission is similar to that of the Philippine Opium Committee’s report. It should not be interpreted as a full and accurate portrayal of the illicit trade and consumption of opium and other substances in the Philippines at

---

<sup>427</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C., USA, Charles Henry Brent (CHB) Papers, Conferences on Opium, *Report of the International Opium Commission: Shanghai, China, February 1 to February 26, 1909*, Vol. I p.26, Box 38, Folder 2.

<sup>428</sup> LOC CHB *Report of the International Opium Commission* Vol. I, p.27, Box 38, Folder 2.

<sup>429</sup> CHB Box 38, Folder 2.

<sup>430</sup> For more on the Anglo-Chinese Agreement, see McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, pp.23-26.

the time, but rather as a glimpse of a shadowy world that, by nature, evades exact descriptions. Moreover, it serves as an indicator of how American policymakers understood the situation and illuminates the rationale behind the decisions made as a result of these perceptions.

The 1909 Shanghai Commission resulted in a series of resolutions calling for gradual suppression of the opium trade. This effectively represented a compromise between the financial interests of producer states like Great Britain and its empire and the demands of the US and China for prohibition to be put into effect as soon as possible. The most significant resolution, particularly for the purposes of the American government in the Philippines, was the agreement that export of narcotics should be limited to countries that legally allowed their consumption. The Americans reasoned that if this could be enforced, then the shipments of narcotics from Hong Kong, the Straits Settlements and Borneo that were subsequently smuggled into the Philippines would be depleted, lightening the burden of the customs officials.<sup>431</sup> This resolution also demonstrated the beginning of the longstanding American ideological commitment to controlling supply as a means of suppressing the trade.

Following the conclusion of the Commission, the 1909 agreement was referred to colonial authorities in the Philippines for further evaluation. The 1909 Bureau of Health Report included a response apparently addressed to the Philippines delegation to the Commission. The report stated that they regretted “the time at their disposal precludes the possibility of giving subject adequate consideration” but nonetheless they had reviewed the resolutions of the International Opium Commission and made recommendations on the subject of public health as a part of the proceedings.<sup>432</sup> The Bureau agreed with the nature of the resolutions and the goal of

---

<sup>431</sup> LOC CHB *Report of the International Opium Commission* Vol. I, p.27, Box 38, Folder 2.

<sup>432</sup> *Report* [1909] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1910), p. 46.

suppressing the opium trade but felt that “it is to be regretted that the paucity of medical commissioners prevented the question from being dealt with fully in its medical aspects.”<sup>433</sup> Moreover, the Bureau noted the use of opium and other intoxicants in products aside from smoking opium, namely patent medicines, and warned that “measures which are introduced for the control of opium must be adequate to guard against the danger of secret remedies containing opium and opium derivatives being substituted.”<sup>434</sup> The report from the same year also referred to the use of morphine in treating cholera patients, illustrating the ongoing dichotomy between the ‘illicit’ consumption and medicinal use of narcotics.<sup>435</sup>

‘Illicit’ consumption unsurprisingly continued to feature more prominently in media depictions of the situation regarding narcotics in the Philippines. In 1910, the *Barrier Miner* in New South Wales, Australia, reported that the extent of smuggling into the islands was facilitated by the fact that the “Philippine Assembly balks the efforts to put down the contraband business.”<sup>436</sup> It is worth recalling once more that Sergio Osmeña, the husband of noted smuggler Estefania Chiong Veloso, was the Speaker of the House in the said Philippine Assembly. Moreover, “the revenue officers have only an old Spanish gunboat...captured during the war...which steams seven knots and can scarcely overhaul a prahu [small fishing boat], to combat the gun-running and smuggling which flourishes...”<sup>437</sup> As the previous quote implies, the same routes bringing illicit shipments of opium and other drugs to the islands evidently also transported weapons to the Moros fighting American troops in the southern Philippines. Despite repeated efforts to obtain “three fast cruisers for revenue service...the Philippines Assembly has

---

<sup>433</sup> Bureau of Health, 1909, p. 46.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid, p.114.

<sup>436</sup> *Barrier Miner*, “Opium Smuggling,” 4 April 1910.

<sup>437</sup> Ibid.

always been able to successfully prevent the passing of an appropriation for this purpose.”<sup>438</sup> In addition to the lack of cooperation from Filipinos in government, customs officials in the southern Philippines noted that the geography of their district facilitated ongoing smuggling. The article quoted a customs official for the district, identified only as J. Evans, as stating: “We have to cover the territory from Cebu to Borneo...Sandakan is the headquarters of the trade but Hong Kong sends out a great deal of contraband opium...In Cebu and Manila the work of the revenue officers is made up a great deal of breaking into Chinese establishments, of smashing down barricaded doors. We have had many fights. The natives baulk the work in every possible way, and it is far from pleasant.”<sup>439</sup> Other media outlets reported more lurid stories regarding the opium trade in the southern Philippines. The *New York Times* quoted claims from W.S. Lyon, a horticulturalist recently returned from a trip to the Philippines, that natives of the Sarangani islands to the south of Mindanao were “offering young girls in barter each for one ounce of opium.”<sup>440</sup> Lyon claimed further that there was also “a considerable traffic in opium in South Mindanao carried on by way of Palm Island.”<sup>441</sup> This was apparently facilitated, not by human trafficking, but more prosaically by customs officials in the area being “lacking in facilities to suppress the traffic.”<sup>442</sup> The story of girls being bartered for opium is not corroborated by other sources, rendering it impossible to determine if this was simply a form of prurient journalistic Orientalism or an accurate portrayal of the opium trade in parts of the southern Philippines.

---

<sup>438</sup> *Barrier Miner*, “Opium Smuggling,” 4 April 1910.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>440</sup> *New York Times*, “Girls Traded for Opium: One for an Ounce the Price in Portion of Philippines,” 18 November 1909.

<sup>441</sup> *New York Times*, “Girls Traded for Opium,” 18 November 1909.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*

The ongoing difficulties with smuggling seemingly vindicated the US delegation to Shanghai's previous insistence that only assistance from other countries could effectively reduce the clandestine trade in opium. However, given the nature of the event as an International Commission rather than convention or conference, the agreement reached was not binding for the participants. Hamilton Wright's report on the proceedings of the Shanghai Commission was delivered to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in February 1910. By this time, plans had already been drawn up for another round of international diplomacy regarding the opium trade. Wright stated that "in consideration of its international relations and duties this Government is called upon to proceed with the work which it has initiated, and to support and pursue the project of a conference which shall effectuate as fully as possible by international agreement the recommendations of the Shanghai commission. The interests of the Government of the United States in and its obligations to the Philippine Islands and their inhabitants forcibly emphasize this duty."<sup>443</sup> Moreover, "as respects both the United States and the Philippine Islands it is most important to obtain, if possible, an international agreement preventing or restricting the shipment of opium from ports of export to countries prohibiting its importation."<sup>444</sup>

Far from hindering American zeal for the ban, the struggle of the colonial state in the Philippines to enforce prohibition there only spurred the US on to greater efforts to induce other nations to cooperate in suppressing the trade. Brent personally took an active role in this lobbying, and used his connections in Great Britain to secure a meeting in July 1910 with Prime Minister H.H. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and Lord Morley, the Secretary for India. The *New*

---

<sup>443</sup> LOC CHB, *Opium Problem: Message from the President of the United States, Transmitting a Report from the Secretary of State on the International Opium Commission and on the Opium Problem as Seen Within the United States and its Possessions, Prepared by Mr. Hamilton Wright on Behalf of the American Delegates to the Said Commission, Held at Shanghai in February, 1909*, p.4, Box 41, Folder 10.

<sup>444</sup> CHB, *Opium Problem*, p.4, Box 41, Folder 10.

*York Times* described the British as “not unwilling to go into another conference.”<sup>445</sup> However, “the Indian Government for economic reasons is not prepared to go as far as the reformers desire in the matter of increasing the reduction of the production of opium.”<sup>446</sup> Despite the British reluctance to forgo a major source of colonial revenue, American efforts were successful enough that by January 1911 congressional hearings were held on the subject of allocating funding for US participation in the next round of international diplomacy.<sup>447</sup>

Meanwhile, the colonial state’s crusade to suppress the opium trade in the Philippines through legal enforcement of prohibition continued. The American government in the Philippines, led by Governor-General W. Cameron Forbes after 1909, strove to demonstrate that prohibition could be successfully implemented in a colonial context. However, the arrests and convictions the authorities did manage to secure merely hinted at the massive scale of the ongoing smuggling and sale of opiates and other intoxicants. Despite persistent stereotypes regarding the Chinese community as the principal traffickers and consumers of opiates, Filipinos, Chinese mestizos and Chinese are all recorded as having violated the opium ban soon after its onset. For example, in 1911, Valeriano de los Reyes and Gabriela Esguerra, both native Filipinos of Spanish descent were charged with possession of a “considerable quantity of morphine,” the former being acquitted and the latter convicted.<sup>448</sup> The following year, Pow Sing

---

<sup>445</sup> *New York Times*, “Move Against Opium Trade: Bishop Brent Presses on Britain Carrying Out of Shanghai Agreement,” 9 July 1910.

<sup>446</sup> *New York Times*, “Move Against Opium Trade,” July 1910.

<sup>447</sup> Charles Towns was among the speakers testifying at the 1911 hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives on the US delegation to The Hague, although whether or not this was due to the Philippines Bureau of Health’s earlier suggestion of including “medical commissioners” in drug diplomacy is unclear. See LOC CHB, *Importation and Use of Opium: Hearings Before the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives*, 61<sup>st</sup> Congress, 3<sup>rd</sup> Session on H.R. 25240, H.R. 25241. H.R. 25242, and H.R. 28971, January 11, 1911 (Washington: Government Printing Office) p.79, Box 41, Folder 12.

<sup>448</sup> *The United States v. Valeriano de los Reyes and Gabriela Esguerra* (16 November 1911) G.R. No. L-6800 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1911).

and Simeon Vega, who were Chinese and Filipino respectively, were convicted of collaborating to smuggle morphine from Hong Kong into the Philippines.<sup>449</sup>

The evidence of record establishes that the steamer Loongsang was anchored in Manila Bay on September 2, 1911, having just recently arrived from Hongkong, and that two men had been sent by the customs officials to keep a close watch on the ship with a view of preventing the landing therefrom of any contraband articles or goods of any character, and that for this purpose the men and stationed themselves in a casco moored alongside a lorcha, the latter being alongside and fastened to the steamer Loongsang. About 2.30 on the afternoon of September 2, 1911, after the men had been watching for several hours, they observed the appellant Pow Sing deliver a package to the defendant Simeon Vega, and the latter immediately started down from the ship into the lorcha by means of a rope. The officers who had been watching forthwith rushed upon the lorcha and arrested Vega and seized the package which at that time was supposed to contain lottery tickets. Upon examination later, however, the contents proved to be some 336 grains of morphine. One of the officers immediately went upon the ship and effected the arrest of Pow Sing, who was the steward of the Loongsang. The steamer Loongsang had just arrived from Hongkong and the morphine contained in the package taken from Vega was not manifested in the ship's cargo, nor was it included among entered upon the ship's stores of provisions.<sup>450</sup>

Many similar cases from the time period exist, demonstrating use of legal commercial routes for illicit trafficking and moreover frequent collaboration between Philippines inhabitants of varying socioeconomic statuses, ethnicities, and sometimes genders in the clandestine narcotics trade of the early twentieth century.<sup>451</sup>

#### The (British) Empire Strikes Back: The 1911-1912 Hague Convention

The *New York Times* reported in December of 1911 from The Hague that “twelve nations will be represented at the International Opium Conference, which meets here

---

<sup>449</sup> *The United States v. Pow Sing et al.* (12 November 1912) G.R. No. L-7424 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1912).

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>451</sup> See also G.R. No. L-9235; G.R. No. L-7973; G.R. No. L-8946; G.R. No. L-10854; G.R. No. 12956.

tomorrow.”<sup>452</sup> The second round of international diplomacy on drug policy would take the form of a Convention, signifying a binding agreement for the signatories. Despite agreement from the other nations to participate, the timing of the Convention- over two years after invitations had been sent out to the countries that had participated in the first Commission in Shanghai- seemed to demonstrate to the US delegation the lack of enthusiasm on the part of many of the other nations in attendance, most notably Great Britain. Sir Edward Grey, in his capacity as the British Foreign Secretary, had despite Brent’s best efforts “advocated a preliminary commission of experts to inquire into the facts before delegates with full powers were appointed to an International Commission.”<sup>453</sup> The Americans viewed this as a delaying tactic by the British and believed subsequent British “discussion on the necessity of a thorough consideration of the use of morphine and cocaine” during the Convention to be an attempt to divert attention from the trade in opium.<sup>454</sup> As this chapter has demonstrated, neither of these substances were unknown in the Philippines. Nonetheless, the US focus during the proceedings remained predominantly on opium.

Similarly to the evidence and opinions presented at the 1909 Commission, the Philippines featured prominently in the US argument for the essential role of international cooperation in suppressing the opium trade. Brent once again presided, and submitted another report, nearly identical to that of 1909, on the state of the enforcement of the opiates ban in the Philippines. Manila, Cebu and the southern Philippines in particular continued to vex American opponents of the opium trade. Brent noted the lackluster state of affairs regarding attempts within the Philippines to combat smuggling, stating that “neither sufficient money nor men are provided for

---

<sup>452</sup> *New York Times*, “Opium Conference To-day: Twelve Countries Represented in the Deliberations at The Hague,” 1 December 1911.

<sup>453</sup> *New York Times*, “Opium Conference To-day,” 1 December 1911.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*

the vigorous enforcement of the law. The Filipino officials afford at best only passive aid. The customs officers and the internal revenue agents, who are Americans, are meeting the situation with moderate effectiveness and hopefulness.”<sup>455</sup> Brent cited the previous commission’s precedent, in that “at Shanghai the difficulties of the Philippine government were urged upon the commission as a whole in favor of a resolution which called upon opium-producing countries to prevent at ports of departure the shipment of opium to countries which prohibit its entry.”<sup>456</sup> As a result, if narcotics smuggling were to be restrained, it “should be conventionalized in the international conference that has been called by our Government to finally deal with the production and international traffic in opium and its products.”<sup>457</sup>

By the end of the deliberations in The Hague, the US had managed to secure an agreement to this end. On 23 January 1912, the International Opium Convention was signed by delegates from China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Persia, Portugal, Russia, Siam, and Great Britain. The Convention not only restricted the exports of opium and other drugs to countries permitting their consumption, but also obligated the signatories to regulate domestic consumption within their territory and work towards restricting it to medicinal use. The Convention stated "The contracting Powers shall use their best endeavours to control, or to cause to be controlled, all persons manufacturing, importing, selling, distributing, and exporting opium, morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts, as well as the buildings in which these persons

---

<sup>455</sup> LOC CHB papers, *Memoranda on the manufacture of and traffic in morphine and cocaine in the United States and the Philippine Islands, with statement as to opium, in continuation of Senate Document No. 377, 61<sup>st</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session: Memorandum in amendment of statement on "Opium Problem in the Philippine Islands,"* pages 26-29) *Senate Document No. 377, 61st Congress, 2nd Session*, p.13. Box 41, Folder 12.

<sup>456</sup> *Memorandum in amendment of statement on "Opium Problem in the Philippine Islands,"* p.13, Box 41, Folder 12.

<sup>457</sup> *Memorandum in amendment of statement on "Opium Problem in the Philippine Islands,"* p.14, Box 41, Folder 12.

carry on such an industry or trade."<sup>458</sup> This agreement was undoubtedly the fruition of years of work by anti-opium trade activists. However, the signing of the Convention entailed the beginning of decades more efforts to amend the regulations therein, expand the scope of the signatories, and, most importantly, enforce it.

### Conclusion

The beginning of the American colonial project in the Philippines proved to have much greater significance than even the most ardent supporters of US expansionism could have foreseen. The impact of the American victory in the Spanish-American War and the end of the Spanish opium monopoly system in the Philippines saw the rise of two new regimes: the American colonial state in the Philippines and eventually the international drugs regulatory system. The previous Spanish monopoly system had created longstanding networks of trade, patterns of consumption, and elite control of opium commerce. These moved underground and ‘democratized,’ in Wertz’s phrasing, following the clash with the American colonial state.<sup>459</sup> The difficulties encountered by the United States in stemming the flow of newly-declared illicit substances and consumers necessitated the re-framing of suppressing the opium trade as a responsibility shared by the international community rather than the quixotic colonial experiment of the US. The drive to “civilize and Christianize” the Philippines and the subsequent promulgation of drugs prohibition there thus resulted in the transformation of a localized ban to a nascent global regulatory regime of psychoactive substances, as the US colonial state sought to establish international organizations to help contain transnational flows of drugs through its borders. However, the road from the Philippines ban in 1905 to the Hague Agreement of 1912

---

<sup>458</sup> *International Opium Convention Signed at The Hague January 23, 1912*, League of Nations Treaty Series, Vol. VIII.

<sup>459</sup> Wertz, “Idealism,” p.470.

proved arduous for prohibition advocates, and was characterized by resistance to the American colonial drugs policy agenda at all levels. Chinese immigrant consumers, Filipino elites, foreign producer states such as Great Britain, and sometimes Americans themselves all became sources of opposition to suppressing the trade that reformers claimed to be “one of the gravest moral problems of the Orient.”<sup>460</sup> Having won the preliminary series of battles to establish a legal basis for the regulation of the trade and consumption of drugs, opponents of the ‘illicit’ use of opiates and cocaine faced a greater struggle with no end in sight: enforcing the laws for which they had so relentlessly campaigned in the opening years of the twentieth century. As McAllister states, the Hague Agreement “exemplified the emerging regime’s possibilities and limitations.”<sup>461</sup>

## Chapter Four

---

<sup>460</sup> POC, p.12.

<sup>461</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, p.39.

## ***The Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs: Prohibition and the Philippine Islands, 1912-1932***

### Introduction

This chapter analyzes the role of the Philippines in the growth of international structures for governing the trade in narcotics and their impact on American colonial attempts to regulate the traffic within the Philippines. Despite being a landmark agreement, The Hague Convention of 1912 ushered in a new era of international clashes over the nature and implementation of its provisions. The unyielding commitment of the government of the United States to prohibitory supply control brought them into conflict with the administration of Great Britain in particular. The Philippines were a significant component of this conflict, as smuggling of narcotics from the colony of British North Borneo to the southern Philippine provinces of Mindanao and Sulu accounted for a large part of the illicit opium traffic in the Islands. As the 1920s wore on, the government of the Philippines was increasingly insistent that opium smuggling was manageable and prohibition in the archipelago had produced satisfactory results. These claims were met with increasing disbelief from international observers, the League of Nations and the government in Washington. The ongoing illicit trade in opium and pharmaceuticals like cocaine and morphine in Asia resulted in further international conferences on the subject at Geneva in 1924-1925 and Bangkok in 1931. The beginning of the 1930s thus began in much the same way as the 1910s. The colonial government of the Philippines struggled to implement a prohibitory international drugs regulatory regime created in part due to the difficulty of stemming the flow of illicit narcotics into the islands. Simultaneously, the US cited the Philippines as evidence of the merits of prohibition and demanded other states enforce a similar system. However, the international structures intended to govern the transnational flow of narcotics impeded the ability of the US to

act unilaterally, diminishing American interest in international cooperation in an Asian colonial context by the time of the Bangkok conference.

### Section 1: The Hague and Harrison's Administration, 1912-1921

#### The aftermath of The Hague, 1912

The signing of the Hague Agreement was greeted positively by international advocates of opium reform. The *Advertiser* in Adelaide stated in March 1912 that “the opium convention recently signed at The Hague is in many respects satisfactory, as bringing us nearer to the time when a traffic, which, by universal admission, is morally indefensible will be under complete control.”<sup>462</sup> This was largely attributed to the recognition by the signatories of “their several and collective responsibilities” regarding the suppression of the opium trade. The Hague Agreement was also depicted as holding imperial powers and producer states like Great Britain in check. As a result of The Hague, “the Chinese may hereafter poison themselves with the drug to their hearts’ content;” however, “it will never again be forced down their throats by means of the bayonet.”<sup>463</sup> Despite the Hague Convention being hailed as a landmark measure by proponents of opium reform, merely signing an international agreement did little in practical terms to immediately affect the situation in the Philippines.

Brent’s September 1912 correspondence with Bernard Cogan, an American businessman and resident of Leyte, addressed the ongoing concern of reformers regarding the efforts of

---

<sup>462</sup> *Advertiser*, Adelaide, Australia, “The Opium Convention,” 20 March 1912.

<sup>463</sup> *Advertiser*, “Opium Convention,” 20 March 1912.

Philippine government officials to stem the tide of illicit narcotics shipments. According to Cogan, the Internal Revenue Agents in Leyte had been instructed- presumably in light of budget constraints, corruption or both- to “spend neither time or money on the opium business.”<sup>464</sup> The Internal Revenue Agent had “promised however to take up the matter strongly when opportunity offers.”<sup>465</sup> In addition to hamstrung customs officials, the ongoing opium monopolies in neighboring polities, primarily British North Borneo [modern-day northern Malaysia] posed a particular threat to ending smuggling in the Philippines. Cogan was evidently resigned to the continuation of smuggling in some form, however. In a drug trafficking version of the truism ‘keep your friends close and your enemies closer,’ he claimed that “if the trade was stopped in British North Borneo it would only mean the shifting the centre to Dutch Borneo and it would probably be preferable to have the trade going on closer home where it can be closer watched.”<sup>466</sup> In addition to the known smuggling port of Zamboanga, Cogan claimed he had “reason to believe that there is a deposit maintained in Dapitan” in northern Mindanao. Cogan substantiated this by claiming that the *Hoi Ching* had carried 20 balls of opium from Dapitan to Sogod, Leyte at a freight charge of 300 pesos. However, given their aforementioned instructions not to pursue the “opium business” in between islands in the Philippines, the Internal Revenue Agent was ostensibly powerless.

In addition to Leyte and Mindanao, Cogan unsurprisingly identified Cebu as a focal point of illicit trafficking. Significant quantities of opium were evidently shipped from Mindanao

---

<sup>464</sup> Bernard Cogan to Charles H. Brent, September 1912, pp.1-3, LOC CHB, General Correspondence, Box 10, Folder 3.

<sup>465</sup> CHB, Box 10, Folder 3.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid.

to Cebu and then to Manila, but Cebu also served as a frequent entry point for illicit shipments into the Philippines. Cogan asserted he happened to “know there is an organization doing a big business there and that they cannot work with such impunity unless with the connivance of Secret service and Custom’s [sic] officials, it may be confined only to native officers but there is no knowing whether or no some of the Americans are mixed up.”<sup>467</sup> Cogan did not specify the identities of individuals involved in the “organization doing a big business” in opium in Cebu, but it is entirely likely he was referring to the syndicate headed by Estefania Chiong Veloso, given that she was certainly known to have operated with the cooperation of customs officials in the region. Brent evidently took this matter to the central government in Manila, as a letter from Philippine Commission member Newton Gilbert in September 1912 to Brent indicates the awareness of the authorities in regards to the situation in Cebu. Gilbert transmitted a report from the Acting Insular Collector of Customs and stated “if you have any further information which would lead you to believe that information obtained by the Customs agent is incorrect would you be so kind as to let me have it, as, of course, the Government is intensely interested in doing everything possible to suppress the opium traffic in the Islands.”<sup>468</sup>

Moreover, the longstanding tensions over Chinese dominance in commerce in the islands were also revived by some unforeseen effects of prohibition. Observers claimed that the enormously lucrative illicit trade in opium enabled Chinese firms in Cebu to undercut Filipino business in legitimate economic activities, and that Filipinos who engaged in commerce in traditional Filipino products such as hemp for textile manufacturing were being driven out of business. It was argued that “the Chinese Firms deal also in opium, the profits from the handling

---

<sup>467</sup> Cogan to Brent, LOC CHB, Box 10, Folder 3.

<sup>468</sup> Newton Gilbert to Charles H. Brent, September 1912, LOC CHB, General Correspondence, Box 10, Folder 3.

of which are so great that they can afford to transact their legitimate business at a loss when necessary to obtain their objects.”<sup>469</sup> However, concerns that drug smuggling facilitated Chinese supremacy in legitimate areas of trade and exports were disputed by other observers. A special agent was evidently tasked with investigating the matter, and reported that “Chinese dealers have secured control of the Cebu market for Philippine products because of their business ability, frugality, and by economy of administration...there is no adequate reason to believe greater progress has been made by the Chinese in obtaining control of the market during the past four years (that is, since the prohibition against the importation and use of opium became effective) than was made during the six years previous when there was no such restriction.” The agent in question made no attempt to deny the extent of opium smuggling in the province, merely that “the opium traffic has at best but a remote connection with the development of Chinese control in the hemp and rice markets of Cebu.”<sup>470</sup>

Despite the ongoing issue of smuggling and the Hague Convention earlier that year, the extent to which the United States was willing to enter into multilateral agreements on drug trafficking was still limited. In October 1912, acting Secretary of State Huntington Wilson was questioned about a rumored Dutch-US treaty regarding drug control between their respective Asian colonies. Wilson replied, “I never heard of it...I think that matter should be referred to the Opium Commission, in common with many other pipe dreams.”<sup>471</sup> The *New York Times* reported that “the propinquity of the Philippines and the Dutch possessions might form reason for an arrangement between the United States and Holland mutually to enforce anti-smuggling laws or

---

<sup>469</sup> Cogan to Brent, LOC CHB, Box 10, Folder 3.

<sup>470</sup> Ibid.

<sup>471</sup> *New York Times*, “Special to the New York Times,” 23 October 1912.

other police measures...There is nothing to show, however, that the United States Government regards any agreement of this character as necessary for the Philippines.”<sup>472</sup>

The Harrison administration begins, 1913

The 1912 electoral victory of the Democratic presidential candidate, Woodrow Wilson, entailed a corresponding change in government in the Philippines the following year. W. Cameron Forbes was replaced as Governor-General by Francis Burton Harrison, scion of a distinguished Southern family on his mother’s side, and erstwhile sponsor of the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act. The Harrison Narcotics Act was passed in response to the Hague Convention agreement of 1912 and put into practice in the United States the Convention’s stipulations on the sale and consumption of drugs. As this sponsorship implies, Harrison believed in the importance of restricting access to psychoactive substances to medicinal use only. He also echoed Brent in arguing that the American decision to ban opium, rather than deriving colonial revenue from the trade, indicated the ‘enlightened’ status of the US colonial presence in the Philippines.<sup>473</sup>

In addition to citing the ban as evidence of the high moral standards of the US, Harrison effectively claimed that the US cared about the physical, social, and moral welfare of the Filipinos more than European states concerned themselves with the wellbeing of their colonies. Moreover, the US was upholding former President McKinley’s goal to ‘civilize and Christianize’ the inhabitants by weaning them off of opium, with the help of public health officials like Heiser. McKinley had directed the Philippine Commission that the local population must be “subjected

---

<sup>472</sup> *New York Times*, “Special,” 23 October 1912.

<sup>473</sup> Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority,” pp.272-275.

to wise and firm regulation; and without undue or petty interference, constant and active effort be exercised to prevent barbarous practices and introduce civilized customs.”<sup>474</sup> Harrison contrasted this policy with those of European states and claimed they sought only to exploit their colonies for financial gain, a far cry from the supposed nobility of the American colonial project. He decried in particular Britain's dependence on the revenue from the 'opium traffic' as one of its 'sins of commission' in the colonies.<sup>475</sup> Harrison stated sardonically that “The White Man's Burden has been materially lightened by the money thus derived, and by the state of physical and moral ruin to which the people have been reduced. If they are thoroughly doped, they are more willing slaves.”<sup>476</sup> He claimed that the enforcement of the US prohibition on opium was a humanitarian example for other colonial powers, not merely in terms of drugs policy, but more generally in providing a model for a new, more beneficent system of colonialism.<sup>477</sup> Some observers did actually agree with this assessment. The *Advertiser* in Adelaide, Australia stated that other colonial powers “could not have a better example than is offered by the United States, which has not merely prohibited opium consumption in the Philippines and Hawaii, but also forbidden American vessels to engage in the opium traffic in Chinese water.”<sup>478</sup>

Despite his support for the colonial state's enforcement of the ban, Harrison encountered significant opposition as governor from other colonial officials in the Philippines. This was largely due to his concurrent support for 'Filipinization', wherein Filipinos took on more responsibilities of governance and were vested with greater authority in order to 'prepare'

---

<sup>474</sup> *Affairs in the Philippine Islands*, Hearings before the Committee on the Philippines, US Senate 1902 Part I p.110.

<sup>475</sup> Francis Harrison, *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence: My Seven Years in the Philippines* (New York: The Century Company, 1922) p.334.

<sup>476</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.335.

<sup>477</sup> Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority,” p.272.

<sup>478</sup> *Advertiser*, “Opium Convention,” 20 March 1912.

themselves for full self-government.<sup>479</sup> Dr. Heiser was one of the more influential adversaries of the Filipinization process, and later wrote in his autobiography that “the novitiate had not lasted long enough; the vows of government had been taken too soon. The people had not ‘had time to absorb and thoroughly master the powers already in their hands.’”<sup>480</sup> The Philippine Commission under Harrison responded to criticism of this type with the rejoinder that “It is the fashion for many critics of the races which dwell in the Tropics to generalize about the inhabitants of these regions, and to deny them the capacity in government affairs with which more northern races are endowed.”<sup>481</sup> In a similar fashion to the ban on opium, Filipinization provided an opportunity for Harrison and the Philippine Government to reiterate the supposed beneficence of American colonialism in the archipelago. Despite the naysayers, “the avowed American policy has always been to give the inhabitants of the islands an increasing control of their own public affairs to qualify them for complete self-government and ultimate independence. This policy was dictated by American ideals and constitutional requirements, and is amply justified in each succeeding concession of self-government to the Filipinos.”<sup>482</sup> Other Americans disagreed, as Heiser claimed that “many Filipinos were lifted into positions which they were not qualified to fill.”<sup>483</sup> Heiser and other critics were personally powerless to prevent Filipinization, however, and could only privately grumble, as Heiser did, that Harrison’s policies simply resulted in creating “much havoc throughout the Islands.”<sup>484</sup> Despite the ostensible difference in outlook, Harrison and

---

<sup>479</sup> As a result, Harrison was the only former Governor-General of the Philippines to be granted honorary citizenship following independence.

<sup>480</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.67.

<sup>481</sup> *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1915 (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.23.

<sup>482</sup> *Philippine Commission*, 1915, p.23.

<sup>483</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.67

<sup>484</sup> *Ibid.*

Heiser represented competing versions of colonialism which nonetheless shared a paternalistic core belief in the superiority of the US.

In addition to Filipinization, Harrison's first term of office saw the end of military rule in Mindanao and Sulu and the beginning of a civil regime in the southern islands. This included colonial public health structures, for which the Philippine Legislature appropriated funding beginning in the fiscal year of 1914. During the third Philippine Legislature, second session, the House of Representatives passed measures to fund "the maintenance of public dispensaries and hospitals in Mindanao and Sulu," and "a temporary form of government for the territory known as the Department of Mindanao and Sulu...[which] provides for a health officer and assistance."<sup>485</sup> The Legislature appropriated 130,000 pesos for public health expenses in Mindanao and Sulu, as well as 21,170 pesos for the Bureau of Health's work in the Mountain Province. Similarly to Mindanao and Sulu, the Mountain Province was inhabited by non-Christian indigenous groups, who were likewise known for their extensive use of opium relative to the Christian Filipino population. The Philippine Legislature also passed Act No. 2381, which appropriated funds "for the restriction of the use of opium and other prohibited drugs."<sup>486</sup> The quantity of this funding was not specified.

Harrison's support for Filipinization and the abovementioned extension of civil government to the southern Philippines should by no means be read as opposition to the American colonial project overall, however. In his autobiography, he referred to Rear Admiral William Dewey's role in the invasion of the Philippines as the primary reason that "the United States secured the opportunity to be of world service in the Philippines."<sup>487</sup> Harrison also echoed

---

<sup>485</sup> *Report* [1914] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p. 94.

<sup>486</sup> Bureau of Health, 1914, p.94.

<sup>487</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.171.

the previous discriminatory sentiments of a number of US colonial officials in decrying the presence and activities of the Chinese diaspora in the Philippines. In his autobiography, published in 1922 soon after the end of his term of office, Harrison claimed that the “Chinese residents of the Philippines constitute, as they have always constituted, a problem for the Government.”<sup>488</sup> He attributed this to “their type of civilization” supposedly being “apart from the current of modern thought, remote from European philosophies.”<sup>489</sup> Harrison also emulated the Bureau of Health reports from two decades prior in overtly linking Chinese immigrants in the Philippines to the ‘opium habit’, claiming that “in the Philippines he [the Chinese] is the organizer and purveyor of the opium trade.”<sup>490</sup> Unlike previous reports on the subject, he also described the Chinese archetypal character as “a natural-born gambler” and asserted that “his activity in the corruption of public officials is notorious.”<sup>491</sup> As the previous chapters have shown, the social custom of gambling on cockfights and the corruption endemic to institutions of governance in the Philippines were acknowledged by Filipino writers and officials as extensive throughout Filipino society and by no means the purview of the Chinese. Regardless, Harrison’s views on the Chinese as responsible for many of the societal ills of the Philippines, in particular due to their role in the illicit narcotics trade, would influence the enforcement of drug laws in accordance with these perceptions. The Philippine Commission claimed that “an appreciable falling off in the use of opium is recorded since the enactment of the law imposing a heavier penalty and providing for the deportation of recidivist Chinese.”<sup>492</sup>

---

<sup>488</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.277.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid.

<sup>490</sup> Ibid.

<sup>491</sup> Ibid, p.278.

<sup>492</sup> *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1914 (Manila: Bureau of Printing), p.180.

The beginning of Harrison's tenure in the Philippines proved to be eventful, if not infamous. Upon his arrival in Manila, his belongings were discovered to contain a large quantity of opium, secretly put there during transit. Harrison complained regarding the incident that a "clever rogue put his smuggled opium among the baggage of our party" by means of an "ingenious bit of rascality," leading to mirth-filled comments from friends (including Hamilton Wright) that he was "the arch opium smuggler of the Far East."<sup>493</sup>

Harrison's first term, 1913-1916

Aside from his personal encounter with opium smugglers, the difficulty inherent in Harrison's task of enforcing prohibition as Governor-General of the Philippines was undeniable. The Report of the Philippine Commission for 1914 stated that as of December 31, 1913-over five years since the opium ban went into effect-8,549 people had been charged with violations of the opium law and 16,305 convictions on individual counts had been made.<sup>494</sup> In accordance with the Harrison administration's policy of Filipinization, by October 1913 nearly half of the 85 American employees at the Bureau of Customs, charged with enforcing laws against the opium traffic, had been replaced by Filipino workers. Insular Revenue Collector William Nolting stated in regards to the transition that "the results have been better than was hoped for."<sup>495</sup> The *New York Times* also reported Nolting's claim that "the time is at hand when the opium evil 'will be

---

<sup>493</sup> Wertz, "Idealism," p. 495.

<sup>494</sup> *Philippine Commission*, 1914, p.234.

<sup>495</sup> *New York Times*, "Filipinos Making Good: Replace Americans in Revenue Service; Opium Traffic Dwindling," 14 October 1913.

effectually eradicated among the Chinese residents, as it has already been among the Filipinos.”

496

Nolting’s statements thus contradicted Brent’s claims in 1912 regarding the general passivity of Filipino customs officials in the archipelago towards smuggling, although he failed to substantiate his belief that the demise of the ‘opium evil’ was fast approaching. The Chief of the Bureau Insular Affairs, Brigadier General Frank McIntyre, reiterated these statements, claiming that “the use of opium among the Filipinos has been checked, if not entirely eradicated” and that prohibitive colonial policies meant that “the use of opium is now confined to a comparatively small number of confirmed users of the drug, practically all of whom are Chinese, who cannot give up the vice and who will go to any length to obtain it.”<sup>497</sup> The *New York Times* claimed in April 1914 that “only 5 percent of the Filipinos formerly using opium, who had numbered 40,000 in 1906, were still victims of the vice in 1911, and that since then conditions in Manila have greatly improved.”<sup>498</sup> The *New York Times* did not provide a basis for these statistics or attempt to specify the situation in the Philippines outside of the capital, however.

Nolting, the *New York Times*, and McIntyre’s collective optimism notwithstanding, Harrison’s government nonetheless tacitly acknowledged the futility of preventing all illicit shipments into the Philippines. The colonial administration tended to measure the success of customs officials in stemming the flow of unauthorized opium imports by rises and falls in the price of opium. The Philippine Commission Report of 1914 stated that “the price of opium has quadrupled in twelve months,” and Harrison later wrote that “when a large amount has been

---

<sup>496</sup> *New York Times*, “Filipinos Making Good,” 14 October 1913.

<sup>497</sup> *New York Times*, “Filipinos Give Up Opium: Use of the Drug Almost Stamped Out Among the Natives,” 21 April 1914.

<sup>498</sup> *New York Times*, “Filipinos Give Up Opium,” 21 April 1914.

smuggled in, the police note an immediate decrease in the price in the contraband market.”<sup>499</sup>

The price of illegal opium was, in part, a reflection of the success of control measures as a stranglehold on imports illegally entering the colony; however, market forces apart from colonial controls also determined the commercial value of drugs. Despite the scruples of reformers like Brent (who once returned a large donation from a known gambler), the Philippine government was not above making a profit themselves when banned substances were seized. Heiser claimed in his autobiography that confiscated opium and other narcotics were “shipped to the United States and made into pharmaceutical products which we could use for the poor in our dispensaries...and for years after the Bureau of Health had an ample supply of the drug.”<sup>500</sup>

However, correspondence from the Bureau of Internal Revenue in the Philippines to the Bureau of Insular Affairs in December 1914 requested that “there be offered for sale in the United States through the Bureau of Insular Affairs about 22 kilos of morphine now in the hands of the Opium Committee.”<sup>501</sup> This was evidently a longstanding practice, as the letter noted that “morphine coming into the hands of the Government in this manner was formerly sold in Germany” but that the outbreak of World War I had ended access to that particular market.<sup>502</sup> The morphine was described as having a market value of approximately \$3000.00, a sufficiently large quantity to indicate a greater demand than the legal market in the Philippines allowed. The Bureau of Internal Revenue thus directed their efforts towards selling it in the US, and noted that “the Director of Health has suggested two concerns in the United States that might be interested in the purchase of this morphine,” one a pharmaceutical manufacturer in Pennsylvania and the other a

---

<sup>499</sup> *Philippine Commission*, 1914, p.180; Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.336.

<sup>500</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.180.

<sup>501</sup> James Rafferty, Collector of Internal Revenue, to the Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department, 16 December, 1914, United States National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, USA; Record Group 350, Records of the Bureau of Insular Affairs (BIA), Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/104.

<sup>502</sup> James Rafferty to Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/104.

competitor in Missouri.<sup>503</sup> The letter stated that “unless it is sold, it must be destroyed” and it would be “an unnecessary waste to destroy anything so valuable.”<sup>504</sup> The response of the Bureau of Insular Affairs is not recorded.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue would likely have had more opportunities to try and offload seized contraband, however. The following year, the Philippine Commission Report of 1915 noted that 589 individuals were convicted of crimes related to illicit trafficking during the calendar year, and that “a jail sentence is generally imposed by the courts and is the only sure method of putting an end to this nefarious business. Fines are of no effect in deterring smugglers, because the profits are so great that a fine is tantamount only to a license fee.”<sup>505</sup>

Smuggling in the southern Philippines in particular had become increasingly difficult to control by the mid-1910s. The report of the provincial governor of Mindanao and Sulu for 1916 noted that the “largest number of violations of the opium law were recorded in Sulu on account of the proximity thereof to Sandakan and North Borneo points.”<sup>506</sup> Harrison also noted in regard to the effect of geography that for “hundreds of square miles are innumerable coral islets with shallow and tortuous passages frequently unnavigable by any boat of more than three feet draft. Through these the Moro smugglers, in their swift vintas, slip with their precious cargo of opium, defying pursuit and capture.”<sup>507</sup> In addition to smuggling by Moros, immigration from Japan as well as China was linked to illicit trafficking. In 1916, “possibly the most important opium importer” to be convicted in the Court of First Instance in Zamboanga was of Japanese origin. Identified only as Miyamoto, he was found guilty of “importing a large amount of opium from

---

<sup>503</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/104.

<sup>504</sup> Ibid.

<sup>505</sup> *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1915 (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.39.

<sup>506</sup> *Report of the governor of Mindanao and Sulu*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1916) p.142.

<sup>507</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.336.

Borneo” and sentenced to a fine of P4,000 and four years’ imprisonment, a relatively harsh punishment for the time.<sup>508</sup>

The Jones Act, education and commerce, 1916

Efforts to enforce prohibition were affected by the restructuring of the government of the Philippines. Developments in US domestic politics had the effect of essentially increasing political autonomy for the Philippines. The Democrat administration of Woodrow Wilson adhered to the party’s platform, which supported greater Filipino autonomy and self-government as soon as it was deemed feasible by the US. The expansion of the powers of the popularly-elected Philippine Legislature brought greater autonomy to the ruling class of the Philippines in all areas of governance, including the enforcement of drug laws. The law responsible for this transfer of power was the Jones Act of 1916. The House of Representatives was thus joined by the popularly-elected Philippine Senate, which replaced the Philippine Commission as the upper house of the Philippine Legislature. Moreover, the Jones Act specified that, unless stipulated otherwise, legislation passed by the United Congress no longer applied in the Philippines.

A series of congressional hearings were held prior to the passage of the Jones Act, which featured discussion on the potential effects of greater political autonomy on attempts to suppress illicit trafficking of narcotics. Rather than questioning Filipino politicians, however, the Senate Committee on the Philippines primarily solicited testimony regarding the enforcement of prohibition from the former Secretary of the Interior in the Philippines, Dean C. Worcester. Despite the Committee’s purview, members of the Committee on the Philippines were evidently

---

<sup>508</sup> *Report of the governor of Mindanao and Sulu*, 1916, p.142.

not overly familiar with current drugs legislation in the Philippines. During the course of Worcester's testimony, the Committee chairman inquired if opium was permitted in the Philippines. Worcester confirmed it was prohibited by an act of Congress, to which the chairman asked if the law would remain in effect in the event of passage of the Jones Act. Worcester was noncommittal in his reply, merely responding "I hope so- most sincerely."<sup>509</sup> A Committee member, Senator Lippitt, inquired further as to the status of the law's implementation in the Philippines. Despite the optimism of previous officials on the status of prohibition, Worcester replied pragmatically that the ban on non-medicinal opiates and cocaine was enforced "as far as it can be," rather than echoing Nolting's sentiments that the end of illicit consumption in the Philippines was fast approaching. Worcester described illicit trafficking as "of the most difficult things in the world to control, when a determined effort to smuggle it is made; you can get such a large value in such a small space that it is very difficult to prevent the smuggling of opium."<sup>510</sup>

His testimony illuminates further the diversity of opinion regarding prohibition dating back to the Taft administration in the Philippines, as he noted that there was a "radical difference of opinion among those who are very strongly in favor of preventing its use as to what are the best practical means for doing so."<sup>511</sup> Evidently some support still remained for the system initially adopted by the military government following occupation, as Worcester claimed that "there are those who believe that the best way to control the evil is to put on the maximum tariff which will not result in smuggling, and then follow it up when you get it in the country, and penalize its use very heavily."<sup>512</sup> Worcester himself contradicted the doctrine of absolute

---

<sup>509</sup> Hearings before the Committee on the Philippines, US Senate on H.R. 18459, *An act to declare the purpose of the people of the United States as to the future political status of the people of the Philippine Islands and to provide a more autonomous government for the Islands*, Part 1 December 14, 1914, p.345.

<sup>510</sup> *Hearings*, 1914, p.345.

<sup>511</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>512</sup> *Ibid.*

prohibition by stating “we get somewhat less satisfactory results under the flat prohibition, which leads to extensive smuggling operations, than we used to get when we admitted opium with the maximum customs charge and provided for the licensing of those who sold it, and also for the licensing of confirmed users.”<sup>513</sup> Undoubtedly aware of the unlikelihood of such a system being reinstated in the Philippines, he added the caveat “but that is a matter of opinion.”<sup>514</sup> Despite the hegemonic paradigm of prohibition that had by this point been enshrined in law both in the Philippines and in international agreements, Worcester’s testimony illustrates the ongoing division of opinion of American officials regarding the ‘opium habit.’ As Worcester was no longer in a position of authority in the Philippines, his words carried less weight than the current colonial Philippine administration. Harrison remained committed to enforcing the prohibitory regulations previously established by advocates of a full ban.<sup>515</sup>

Despite Worcester’s hesitation on the subject, the increased political autonomy of the Philippines did not result in substantive changes to the nature of drug regulations in the Philippines. The expansion of political autonomy in the Philippines did spur the growth of political parties in a similar manner to the beginning of civil government in 1901 and the initial establishment of the Philippine Legislature in 1907. However, unlike the earlier rise of the Federalistas, which had essentially collapsed by the mid-1910s, the new parties were overtly pro-independence for the Philippines. The National Independent Party and the Democratic Party had been the two main political parties, both of whom supported independence. The primary difference between the two was the Democratic Party supported a much more gradual transition to sovereignty, whereas the National Independent Party, led by Manuel Quezon and Sergio

---

<sup>513</sup> *Hearings*, 1914, pp.345-346.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid* p.346.

<sup>515</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, pp.275-277.

Osmeña, advocated independence as soon as possible. The new popularly-elected Senate inspired new, often short-lived parties supporting Philippine independence, such as the Electric Independence Party. As the name implied, the members sought “independence as fast as electricity could travel.”<sup>516</sup> Heiser and other conservatives lamented in regards to the Jones Act that, essentially due to “complacent Harrison failing to assert his prerogative, the Filipinos had affairs in their own hands.”<sup>517</sup>

Legislators and customs officials were not the only colonial authorities tasked with preventing the spread of the ‘opium habit.’ The colonial education system was instructed to eradicate a market for the substance by teaching Filipino school children the dangers of opium consumption. Opium use was thus presented alongside lessons on infectious diseases such as cholera and smallpox as another facet of public health. *Sanitation and Hygiene for the Tropics*, published in 1916, included a chapter on “The use and abuse of opium,” as well as “Diseases that are spread by mosquitos” and “What each person can do for sanitation.” The book’s authors wrote in the introduction that the “purpose of this book is to conserve health and decrease illness in the Philippine Islands...the facts and ideas have been presented in as simple language as possible, and it is to be hoped that Philippine teachers will find the book useful in teaching some of the most important subjects in the schools.”<sup>518</sup> The chapter on “The use and abuse of opium” was contributed by Charles Brent and consequently instructed children that “wrongly used, it is an awful curse, destroying body, mind and character.”<sup>519</sup> In keeping with the theme of the textbook, Brent did discuss the medicinal uses of opium but referred to the common use of

---

<sup>516</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.65.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid, p.67.

<sup>518</sup> J. Woodside Ritchie and M. Anna Purcell (eds.) *Sanitation and Hygiene for the Tropics*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1916) p. iii.

<sup>519</sup> Charles H. Brent, “The Use and Abuse of Opium,” in Ritchie and Purcell (eds.) *Sanitation and Hygiene for the Tropics*, p.172.

opium to treat symptoms of infectious diseases (as shown by the cholera epidemic of 1902) and stated in tropical countries like the “Philippine Islands opium is wrongly used to prevent or cure fevers like malaria.”<sup>520</sup> The only proper way to take opium was “*when a good doctor orders it*” [emphasis in original].<sup>521</sup> “Good doctors” were described as prescribing opium in “as small amounts and as few doses as possible.”<sup>522</sup> By contrast, the non-medicinal use of opium was characterized as “vicious and dangerous...sooner or later it destroys manhood.”<sup>523</sup>

Brent also noted in “The use and abuse of opium” that some patent medicines contained habit-forming substances like opium. Harrison’s administration ultimately proved to be more successful in tackling the legal patent medicine trade than illicit trafficking. Despite their philosophical differences on governance of the Philippines, in this particular policy area the disparate agendas of Harrison and Heiser aligned. The prominence of the Bureau of Health in the colonial state’s attempts to suppress the ‘opium habit’ in the years following the initial enactment of the ban had waned, as efforts to end smuggling and illicit consumption became more reliant on the activities of customs officials and the judicial system. However, a joint initiative of Heiser and Harrison during the final years of his tenure as Commissioner of Public Health resulted in a lasting precedent for patent medicines regulation. The Bureau of Health had previously expressed concern regarding the narcotics content of patent medicines even after the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act of the Philippines in 1907. In the Bureau’s words, the Act “has been beneficial and the present decade will undoubtedly show a decrease in the use of the drug.”<sup>524</sup> However, the Bureau considered the restrictions therein insufficient to prevent the risk of

---

<sup>520</sup> Charles H. Brent, “The Use and Abuse of Opium,” in Ritchie and Purcell (eds.) *Sanitation and Hygiene for the Tropics*, p.173.

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid*, p.172.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid*, p.173.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>524</sup> *Report* [1909] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.16.

developing the ‘opium habit.’ Specifically, “the ruling which permits general sale of certain preparations containing less than 2 grains of opium is not without danger, as it is possible to lay the foundation for drug addictions through the use of insidious, habit-forming preparations.”<sup>525</sup> In the minds of public health officials, this was an issue of particular concern for the Philippines. They considered the indigenous population unlikely to be able to judge for themselves the safety and efficacy of patent medicines, especially those purported to cure addiction to opium and other psychoactive substances. The Bureau claimed that “Filipino people are too prone to believe what they see in print and expend thousands of dollars for advertised cures.”<sup>526</sup> As a result, apart from the provisions of the 1907 Act, “additional measures will be necessary, especially such as will educate the public through the press and by pamphlets, lectures, and cinematographs.”<sup>527</sup>

The Bureau of Health report for 1909 also considered one of the Shanghai Commission’s shortcomings to have been its failure to consider patent medicines as vectors of opium abuse. Consequently, the Bureau recommended that, in future conventions, “any measures which are introduced for the control of opium must be adequate to guard against the danger of secret remedies containing opium and opium derivatives being substituted.”<sup>528</sup> Several years after the first international drug agreements, the colonial government of the Philippines took localized action on the subject. Despite their previous disagreements, Heiser attributed this largely to his personal working relationship with Harrison and recounted the bill’s passage in his autobiography. Heiser described the interaction supposedly leading to the bill’s inception as follows:

---

<sup>525</sup> Bureau of Health, 1909, p.16.

<sup>526</sup> Ibid.

<sup>527</sup> Ibid.

<sup>528</sup> Ibid p.46.

“One morning Governor Harrison’s attention happened to be attracted to a peculiarly lurid example of patent medicine advertising on a billboard. He pointed it out to me. “Isn’t that a bad idea?” he asked. “Frightful,” I agreed. “Poor people waste their small savings on things which are useless, expensive, and often habit-forming. Here in the Islands the credulous population will accept as truth the wildest claims to a panacea, and the patent medicine evil flourishes like the green bay tree. “Why don’t we stop it then?”<sup>529</sup>

In Heiser’s retelling of the event, Harrison and Heiser briefly joined forces to do exactly that. Despite Heiser’s lack of legal training, Harrison evidently relied on Heiser’s medical expertise in directing him to draft a bill on the subject of patent medicine advertising. Heiser claimed he wrote the bill literally overnight and sent it to Harrison the following morning. In order to supposedly safeguard the bill from the numerous revisions Heiser assumed would follow, he “worded it far more stringently than was really necessary” and submitted the draft to Harrison.<sup>530</sup> The bill then proceeded to the Philippine Legislature for a vote. Harrison’s widespread support among Filipino politicians for supporting and facilitating the process of Filipinization, coupled with an apparent lack of personal interests in the Legislature regarding patent medicines, ensured the bill was promptly approved. Heiser paraphrased Senate President Manuel L. Quezon as instructing the assembled Senators: “Here’s a bill which our very good friend Governor-General Harrison has sent down...It doesn’t affect any of us, and I propose that, if he wants it, we suspend the rules, read it by title, and pass it.”<sup>531</sup> The bill then proceeded to the House of Representatives, where Sergio Osmeña apparently echoed Quezon in saying, “Here’s a bill which our very dear friend Governor-General Harrison wants. The Senate has just passed it. Let’s show our respect for the Governor-General and pass it also.”<sup>532</sup> The bill’s success was thus

---

<sup>529</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.181.

<sup>530</sup> *Ibid*, p.183.

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>532</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.183.

largely due to the personal influence of Francis Harrison rather than the nature of the regulations therein, aside from failing to be detrimental to the personal interests of the legislators concerned. Regardless of the law's origin, Heiser claimed it was "the strictest of its kind ever passed."<sup>533</sup> Patent medicines in the Philippines now had to specify the contents of products to advertise them. The bill's passage unsurprisingly had the effect of angering a number of patent medicine distributors and advertising executives. Some of them subsequently presented themselves at six am at Heiser's residence, unsuccessfully demanding the bill be revised. Heiser recounted rather smugly that "the law was so stringent that magazines containing patent medicine advertising could not be shipped into the Philippines unless the formulae were published. Patent medicine concerns from all over the earth raised a howl."<sup>534</sup>

The saga of the patent medicine bill does not feature in Harrison's autobiography, which instead devoted more time than Heiser to describing the struggles of the Philippine Government against illicit narcotics trafficking. As described in the previous chapter, Heiser did briefly recount the activities of opium smugglers in the port of Manila, primarily in the context of his allegedly successful role in catching them. Heiser described the patent medicine law in the same chapter as his tale of the medical treatment of 'opium habitués', tellingly titled "For Their Own Good."<sup>535</sup> Despite their political differences regarding the extent of Filipino autonomy, this paternalistic attitude towards the wellbeing of the inhabitants of the Philippines underscored the activities of both Heiser and Harrison in their respective roles in the colonial state. This shared conviction that they knew what was best for the Philippines and were bound to act accordingly, heedless of and frequently in opposition to Filipinos' opinions on the subject, both drove colonial

---

<sup>533</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p.183.

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>535</sup> *Ibid.*, p.176.

drug policies and formed the basis of Harrison's argument differentiating the US colonial project from other imperial polities in the region.

As stated previously, Harrison believed that the presence of the Chinese diaspora in the Philippines resulted in the extensive illicit traffic his government was responsible for eliminating. Despite the insistence of Harrison and other officials like McIntyre that the Chinese were responsible for the extensive smuggling of opiates and other drugs, the previously demonstrated cooperation between Filipino and Chinese individuals engaged in the illicit trade featured in further accounts of narcotics trafficking. The majority of cases regarding legal offenses concerning opium specifically that reached the Supreme Court of the Philippines during the American colonial era were adjudicated during this decade.

A significant example of collaboration between Chinese and Filipino smugglers was the 1916 case of Lim Tiong Tim and Ignacio Aztigarraga. Tim and Aztigarraga were also charged with smuggling morphine from Hong Kong into the Philippines, in this instance through the postal service.<sup>536</sup> The case notes reported that:

Lim Tiong Tim took station at the entrance of the post-office, Aztigarraga remaining near the boxes. Lim Tiong Tim gave a sign to Aztigarraga, who opened box 1167 and took therefrom three packages of papers which were later found to contain morphine. The secret service men at once arrested the two defendants and took them into the post-office. Papers in Chinese evidencing a code for illicit operations with other parties in Hongkong were found in the pocket of Lim Tiong Tim. The key to box 1167 was taken from Aztigarraga... The purpose of each defendant is plainly to attempt to make out that the other is alone responsible. Thus, Aztigarraga claims that Lim Tiong Tim was the master and that he, Aztigarraga, was only an innocent agent who had no knowledge of the contents of the packages; on the trial of Lim Tiong Tim he went on the stand to testify against him. Lim Tiong Tim on the contrary claims that Aztigarraga is a deliberate perjurer; that the only evidence against him, Lim Tiong Tim, was the fact that he was seen to enter the

---

<sup>536</sup> *The United States v. Ignacio Aztigarraga (alias Sia See Send) and Lim Tiong Tim* (21 September 1917) G.R. No. 12596 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1917).

post-office at the same time as Aztigarraga and that there were found in his pockets certain papers in Chinese.

Both were convicted. Aztigarraga received a sentence of two years in prison, while Lim Tiong Tim was spared deportation but was sentenced to three years imprisonment.<sup>537</sup> Filipinos and Chinese were not the only groups known to have smuggled banned substances into the Philippines, however. U.S. citizens, often serving in the military in the Philippines, were sometimes implicated. In March 1916, Sergeant John R. Hubbard received a reward of \$22.50 for “information furnished...which led to the apprehension and conviction for illegal introduction of opium into the Philippine Islands of one of the former members of the crew of the U.S.A.T. WARREN.”<sup>538</sup>

However, frequently trafficked substances like morphine and cocaine also featured in legitimate medical contexts in the Philippines. The Bureau of Health noted that, in treating a tetanus patient, a combination of injections of magnesium sulphate, bromides and morphine “secured for this patient a peaceful sleep of some twelve hours with comparative freedom from spasms for six hours longer.”<sup>539</sup> Despite the controversies over the medicinal use of the drug as far back as the 1880s, in the first two decades of the twentieth century in the Philippines, cocaine was also still being used for medicinal purposes as a local anesthetic during surgery. The 1916 Report of the Philippines Bureau of Health noted that “of the major operations performed, hydrocele was by far the most common...the disease is...accompanied more or less often by

---

<sup>537</sup> *The United States v. Ignacio Aztigarraga (alias Sia See Send) and Lim Tiong Tim* (21 September 1917) G.R. No. 12596.

<sup>538</sup> J.S. Stanley, Acting Insular Collector of Customs, to Sgt. John R. Hubbard, 11 March, 1916, BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/225.

<sup>539</sup> *Report* [1913] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.133.

herpes around the scrotum and thighs...Some of the cases were operated under under general anesthesia, but others were operated under urea quinine anesthesia... [which] was found to be superior in many ways to cocaine anesthesia, as the drug can be injected in greater quantity, the danger of heart failure is less and the anesthesia, though not so quick, is more lasting than the cocaine anesthesia.”<sup>540</sup>

As the Bureau of Health Report implied, there were a number of drawbacks to the medical administration of cocaine for anesthetic purposes. As a result, the majority of cocaine in the Philippines in the latter half of the American colonial era was increasingly more likely to be of an illicit variety. In 1916, Ngan Ping was charged with felonious possession of 40 centigrams of cocaine. The case notes described him as “a Chinese boy, seventeen years of age. At the time of his arrest he was employed in a tienda [or small shop] located on Calle Nueva [in] Manila, which...belonged to his father, his uncle, and his brother.”<sup>541</sup> Ngan Ping acquired the cocaine from an American saloon employee, Samuel Stokes, who was acting as a spy on behalf of the authorities. Stokes asked Ngan Ping to deliver the package containing cocaine to an undercover police officer, Henry Rusling. The court ruled that there was no proof that Ngan Ping had any knowledge of what the package contained and therefore there was no proof he intended to violate the Opium Law.

In regards to the pervasive smuggling, Harrison was aware of the incentives involved in illicit narcotics trafficking; “the drug is easy to transport and the profits are so enormous as to encourage ingenious plans to outwit the customs.”<sup>542</sup> His focus on drug control as a priority for

---

<sup>540</sup> Bureau of Health, 1913, p.40.

<sup>541</sup> *The United States, plaintiff-appellee, vs. Ngan Ping, defendant-appellant* (2 August 1916) G.R. No. L-11425 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1916).

<sup>542</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.336.

his administration is evident, in that “the struggle to prevent the debauching of public office and the spread of the vice itself is one of the liveliest tasks of the Philippine Government.”<sup>543</sup>

However, in the context of the southern Philippines, Harrison also assigned blame to foreign producer states for this state of affairs, rather than solely criticizing the individuals involved in smuggling. In Harrison’s viewpoint, the geographical proximity of the Philippines to foreign states with extant opium monopolies and the passivity of foreign colonial officials regarding the flow of illicit opium and other drugs were equally responsible. This view was widely held by American observers of the opium trade in the early twentieth century, as shown in Thomas Pelletier’s *Opium: The World Menace*. Pelletier claimed that “the fact seems to be that the British government is responsible for the large quantity of opium flooding the world today.”<sup>544</sup> He also echoed Harrison’s claims of colonial exceptionalism in describing the Philippines under American rule. “Only two countries from the Far East are free from this government-encouraged traffic [in opium]. One, Japan...the other is our own subject colony of the Philippines, which is protected as carefully as United States law can do it.”<sup>545</sup> The inability to protect the Philippines completely from the “world menace” of opium was thus attributed not to a shortcoming of US regulations but rather the failure of other colonial powers to emulate them.

#### WWI and postwar era, 1917-1919

The beginning of American involvement in World War I also marked the end of Brent’s residence in the Philippines, as he left in 1917 after nearly two decades to serve as the Chaplain

---

<sup>543</sup> Ibid.

<sup>544</sup> Thomas Pelletier, *Opium: The World Menace* (Massachusetts: self-published, 1921) p.12.

<sup>545</sup> Pelletier, *World Menace*, p.12.

General of the American Expeditionary Forces. Brent was not the only individual who left the Philippines to serve in the US military during the conflict, as a number of Filipinos joined the Navy and other branches of the armed forces. During the conflict, “the attitude of the Filipinos towards the United States was helpful,” in the words of former Governor-General W. Cameron Forbes.<sup>546</sup>

With the global conflict raging in the background, the dispute between Harrison and his British colonial counterparts over narcotics smuggling continued. As previously stated, the former party held foreign producer states responsible for a good deal of the clandestine commerce in drugs in the Philippines. Harrison claimed in regards to preventing illicit trafficking that the American colonial state “would be fairly successful in that endeavor were it not for the British North Borneo Government Opium Monopoly in Sandakan.”<sup>547</sup> The government of British North Borneo in 1915 had turned over management of the opium monopoly to the Chartered Company, which administered the opium trade in a similar manner to the former Spanish monopoly system. Legal sales of opium were limited to adult members of the Chinese diaspora in North Borneo.<sup>548</sup> Owen Rutter, a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, noted in *British North Borneo: An Account of its History, Resources, and Native Tribes* that “apart from the point of view of persons interested in stamping out opium smoking there is not very much to be said against the Company’s trade in the drug.”<sup>549</sup>

---

<sup>546</sup> William Cameron Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926, 1945) p.343.

<sup>547</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.336.

<sup>548</sup> The British colony of Burma had similar regulations; see Ashley Wright, *Opium and Empire in Southeast Asia: Regulating Consumption in British Burma* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

<sup>549</sup> Owen Rutter, *British North Borneo: An Account of its History, Resources, and Native Tribes* (London: Constable and Company, 1922) p.173.

Harrison was obviously very much “interested in stamping out opium smoking” and found the apathetic nature of the government in North Borneo towards the trade intolerable. Moreover, he viewed the government in North Borneo as typical of the attitude of the British Empire as a whole towards the traffic, noting “an unfriendly critic might well denominate that portion of the British Empire which lies ‘somewhere east of Suez’ as ‘England’s opium empire.’”<sup>550</sup> As previously stated, Harrison considered the continued existence of opium monopolies as a damning indictment of British colonialism, in that “not only have the ‘customs of the people’ not been ‘interfered with’ but their greatest and most debilitating vice has been encouraged, even forced upon them, for the sake of revenue.”<sup>551</sup>

Harrison’s superiors in Washington also proved less than accommodating regarding the colonial state’s attempts to enforce drug laws in the Philippines. The Philippine Legislature passed a resolution stating “That the Governor-General be, and hereby is, authorized to take all necessary steps for the earliest possible construction, under the direction of the Government of the United States and at the expense of the treasury of the Philippine Islands, of a modern submarine and a modern destroyer which shall as soon as available, be offered to the President of the United States for service in Philippine waters or elsewhere, as said President may require or authorize.”<sup>552</sup> The vessels were constructed but the United States Government did not take up the Philippine Legislature’s offer to pay for them. As a result, Harrison noted “the Filipino people now have no claim to the possession of this vessel, which was intended to serve as the nucleus of a future Philippine navy; meanwhile it would have been of the utmost service in putting a stop to the wholesale smuggling of opium from the government monopoly of British North Borneo into

---

<sup>550</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.335.

<sup>551</sup> Ibid.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid, p.186.

the southern islands of the Philippines.”<sup>553</sup> Despite the lack of these vessels, the Philippine Navy was useful nonetheless in rendering “notable service at one time in putting a stop to the opium smuggling carried on by the Moros and Chinese in the southern islands.”<sup>554</sup> Harrison complained that “the reception of the Filipinos’ offer of a submarine and a destroyer was, to say the least, half-hearted on the part of Washington officials, and it is difficult to calculate how much of this lukewarmness was due to overwhelming preoccupation in far greater matters, and how much to reluctance in certain quarters in America to advance or further encourage the development of Filipino nationalism.”<sup>555</sup> Harrison’s primary criticism of opposition in the metropole towards greater autonomy for the Philippines was thus that it hindered not only the process of self-government there, but also attempts on the part of the government in Manila to carry out the business of effective colonial government, including suppression of illicit narcotics trafficking.

The postwar era and the end of Harrison’s term, 1919-1921

The end of World War I in 1918 marked the beginning of attempts to prevent another conflict on the same scale, particularly through the advent of the League of Nations. The isolationist bent of American domestic politics following the war meant that the United States never officially became a member of the League of Nations, but the American presence was felt nonetheless, particularly in drug control efforts. This was necessitated in part by the ongoing difficulties the authorities in the Philippines faced in controlling illicit trafficking, although their task was lessened by the evident lack of clandestine production of pharmaceuticals in the

---

<sup>553</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.186.

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*, p.171.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*

Philippines. The Chief of the Philippine Constabulary wrote in July 1919 that since 1914 “several cases have been discovered where persons imported morphine, cocaine and other drugs into the Philippines, we have not heard of a single case that these drugs were manufactured in the Philippines...neither are there any indications that these drugs are being re-exported for ports abroad.”<sup>556</sup> Manufacturing may not have posed a risk to drug control efforts but corruption did, as a communication from the Director of Military Intelligence to the head of the Bureau of Insular Affairs in October 1919 on opium smuggling in Cebu indicated. According to “a reliable source,” the authorities in Manila “know very well of the existence of the launch that makes trips to Hongkong to bring dope...still they are not caught.” Moreover, “the Philippine National Bank has found out that they have been financing several firms and the money was used to buy and import opium.”<sup>557</sup>

Even more alarming from the standpoint of prohibition advocates, the Governor of Cebu himself was implicated in the opium traffic there. Another classified report from the Director of Military Intelligence in November 1919 stated that the governor had taken legal action against a local newspaper for libel following an article claiming he was involved in opium smuggling. The governor had subsequently withdrawn the lawsuit after the newspaper in question “secured sworn statements of two Divers once used by the Governor to obtain some opium that was thrown overboard and accidentally sunk in the harbor of Cebu.” Moreover, it was also known to the Military Intelligence’s source that “a Chino [sic] named Wala, a big contrabandista, does keep his stock [of opium] at the residence of the governor.”<sup>558</sup> Famed opium smuggler Estefania

---

<sup>556</sup> Charles C. Walcutt, Jr. to J.P. Chamberlain, 25 January 1923, BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/244.

<sup>557</sup> E.R. Wilson, “Opium, in Cebu,” to Dept. Intelligence Officer, Dir. Military Intelligence, 9 October 1919, BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/232-A.

<sup>558</sup> E.R. Wilson, “Opium Smuggling in Cebu,” to Dept. Intelligence Officer, Dir. Military Intelligence, 25 November 1919, BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/232-B.

Chiong Veloso had died in childbirth in 1918, but the effect of social status in facilitating opium trafficking activities was alive and well in Cebu.

Despite corruption plaguing drug control efforts in the Philippines, the earlier efforts of reformers like Hamilton Wright to tackle smuggling had still focused primarily on supply control, and this policy continued to dominate American involvement in drug control deliberations. Wright had died relatively young in 1917, but his widow, Elizabeth Washburn Wright, was determined to carry on his legacy in American international diplomacy. She served on the League Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs in the capacity of an assessor, beginning in 1920. She was at odds almost immediately with her contemporaries, with one official in the British Foreign Office describing her as “incompetent, prejudiced, ignorant, and so constituted temperamentally as to afford a ready means of mischief-making.”<sup>559</sup> While sexism undoubtedly constituted part of this assessment, the conflict was more deeply rooted in conflicting colonial agendas, in a nearly identical fashion to Francis Harrison’s ongoing disputes with the Government of British North Borneo.

Harrison claimed that during 1919, “about six million pesos’ worth of opium, Sandakan price, was sold for smuggling into the Philippines.”<sup>560</sup> By 1920, Harrison asserted “in British North Borneo the opium trade has become a positive scandal...two successive English chief justices of that colony were said to have resigned because of the duplicity with which the officials there were conducting the opium traffic.”<sup>561</sup> Harrison complained to his superiors in Washington, asking them to “invoke the good offices of the Government of Great Britain to the

---

<sup>559</sup> British National Archives, Kew, London, United Kingdom, “Minute by Basil Cochrane Newton,” 5 March 1925, Foreign Office [FO] 371/10966.

<sup>560</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.336.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid.* p.333.

end that the Government of British North Borneo should show some respect for our laws and some consideration for our institutions and people.”<sup>562</sup> This resulted in the US ambassador to Great Britain, John W. Davis, lodging a protest in Whitehall, to no avail. In fairness to Harrison, there was a precedent for acrimonious exchanges between the British and American colonial officials in the Philippines. His predecessor, W. Cameron Forbes, had privately complained in regards to a separate dispute that “it would have taken a stick of dynamite to blast those foolish Britons into action.”<sup>563</sup>

The establishment of the League of Nations hindered the ability of the US to act unilaterally regarding international action on drugs diplomacy in the manner they had previously enjoyed. When the overtures of Ambassador Davis failed to produce results, Harrison approached President Wilson about organizing another international convention on the opium trade but was told that this was a “matter reserved for the League of Nations.”<sup>564</sup> Given Wilson’s support for the League of Nations, he was presumably hesitant to take action that might be seen to undermine the League’s prerogative on issues of narcotics trafficking. This had the effect of safeguarding the League’s standing but also blunting Harrison’s attempts to pressure British North Borneo into cooperation regarding smuggling between their territory and the Philippines.

In light of the lack of international cooperation on the subject, the importance of the colonial apparatus in the Philippines meant to combat the opium trade was renewed. In response to the continued smuggling in the southern Philippines and what Americans viewed as British reluctance in refusing to do more to staunch the traffic, stricter penalties were applied by the

---

<sup>562</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.337.

<sup>563</sup> Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C., USA; William Cameron Forbes Papers, Diaries, Set B, Vol. I, p.184.

<sup>564</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.337.

courts. In September 1920 more than 3,000 Chinese inhabitants of Mindanao and Sulu were sentenced to be deported. They were all “alleged to have smuggled large quantities of opium into Mindanao and afterwards distributed it throughout the Philippines.”<sup>565</sup> The *New York Times* noted that “the territorial authorities are much concerned over the existence of a big opium traffic and have taken drastic measures to wipe it out.”<sup>566</sup> In November, customs officials seized more than 1,800 tins of opium worth approximately 150,000 USD in Cebu, which were believed to have originated in Borneo.<sup>567</sup> Later that month, the authorities discovered and seized 8,300 tins of opium on Hinutangan Island off the coast of Cebu. This opium was evidently smuggled from Hong Kong rather than North Borneo, and was worth \$1,000,000, making it the largest seizure of illicit opium since prohibition came into effect. The *Boston Transcript* noted that “five Cebu officials and a Chinese merchant have been arrested” in connection with the seizure, but did not specify whether one of the Cebu officials in question was the governor previously linked to opium smuggling.<sup>568</sup> The government of the Philippines subsequently tried to sell some of this opium in the United States but failed to find a buyer for it. The *Evening Mail* in New York City reported in January 1921 that “approximately 1,000 pounds of confiscated opium, which was sent by the bureau of supply of the Philippine Islands to the chief of the bureau of insular affairs at Washington for sale in the United States...has just been returned.” No pharmaceutical firms in the US had made an offer for it, apparently preferring Turkish opium.<sup>569</sup>

---

<sup>565</sup> *New York Times*, “To Deport 3,000 Chinese: Philippine Authorities Accuse Them of Smuggling Opium,” 10 September 1920.

<sup>566</sup> *New York Times*, “To Deport 3,000 Chinese,” 10 September 1920.

<sup>567</sup> *Philadelphia Record*, “Big Opium Seizure: Officials Get 1800 Tins on Island of Cebu, Philippines,” 19 November 1920, BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/117.

<sup>568</sup> *Boston Transcript*, “\$1,000,000 Opium Seizure,” 20 November, 1920. BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/117.

<sup>569</sup> *Evening Mail*, “No Market Here for Philippines Opium: 1,000 Pounds Goes Begging and Is Returned,” 7 January 1921, BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/117-A.

By the end of Harrison's term of office in 1921, the public health structures funded by the Philippine Legislature in Manila had expanded throughout the southern Philippines. These hospitals and laboratories also played a crucial role in the colonial state's attempts to suppress illicit consumption of opium in the region. Harrison recounted that on a visit to Jolo in 1920, he "found the government hospital there crowded with patients taking the cure for the opium habit."<sup>570</sup> It is debatable how successful this 'cure' proved to be. The Bureau of Health noted that in Bilibid Prison Hospital the following year, there were two cases of morphine patients and 214 opium patients. The Bureau admitted that the "treatment for these cases has given indefinite results...the majority, after discharge from prison, revert to the same habit with the result of re-conviction and re-admission to the hospital."<sup>571</sup> The report for 1921 did not specify the outcomes for treatment of drug patients in civilian settings, but the techniques involved were clearly not beyond doubt in their efficacy.

Laboratories were also essential in attempts to suppress the trade, as they were used to demonstrate whether or not products or items under suspicion contained opium or other banned substances. In 1920 the Bureau of Health noted that "the laboratories have been of service not only in aiding in the confirmation or corroboration of a diagnosis, but also in the prosecution of prostitutes and in certain cases for the detection of opium or its derivatives...for court cases."<sup>572</sup> The Bureau of Health by the end of Harrison's tenure reported that there were government-run laboratories established throughout the Visayas and Mindanao and Sulu, with laboratories located in Agusan, Leyte, Misamis, Occidental Negros, Pampanga, Sulu, Surigao and Zamboanga. The provincial governors concerned and the Philippine Opium Committee had

---

<sup>570</sup> Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, p.337.

<sup>571</sup> Report [1921] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.77.

<sup>572</sup> Report [1920] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p. 323.

referred to all these sites previously as characterized by widespread illicit opium commerce and consumption. However, by the early 1920s the central laboratory in Zamboanga was still the only one in use for “the more delicate examinations such as...opium and blood identifications” as a result of “the lack of proper equipment and well-trained technicians” elsewhere. The Bureau of Health’s difficulties in securing “well-trained technicians” was related to the low levels of funding they received due to colonial fiscal constraints. Dispensaries attached to hospitals also struggled to retain staff, as “experienced dispensary attendants have been resigning generally to accept more remunerative positions outside.”<sup>573</sup> Similarly to the illicit opium trade itself, this unfortunate state of affairs was also attributed to the British colonial activities in North Borneo. For example, “a dispensary attendant in Sulu who has been rendering services for the last seven years resigned to accept an offer from the British Timber Company” in Sandakan.<sup>574</sup> If Harrison was aware of this at the time, this would no doubt have been considered additional evidence of the perfidious nature of the British in North Borneo. Logistical capacity in the southern Philippines was thus still limited by the beginning of the third decade of the twentieth century, hindering law enforcement’s efforts against the illicit trade in narcotics.

## Section 2: The League of Nations to Bangkok, 1921-1932

### The Philippines and the League of Nations: Continuities and Changes, 1921-1924

March 1921 marked Harrison’s departure from office in the Philippines, as his tenure ended with the inauguration of Republican President Warren Harding. Despite Harrison’s removal from power, the American belief in the supply control model remained unchanged. This

---

<sup>573</sup> Bureau of Health, 1920, p.324.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid.

ideological commitment was highlighted by ongoing US actions regarding the Philippines at the beginning of the new decade. At a meeting of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs of the League of Nations in May 1921, Elizabeth Wright featured once more in an advisory capacity as a delegate of the United States. She addressed the committee as follows: “Since the war, opium abuses [in the Philippines] had generally increased and the situation was further aggravated by the enormous increase in the use of morphine...If any effective work was to be done, the cultivation of the poppy must be restricted...It was extremely regrettable that the Committee had not approached the question on its essential and vital side. If the League of Nations could not succeed in the task it had undertaken, a Conference would have to meet.”<sup>575</sup>

This statement was not made to universal acclaim. The Committee’s deliberations featured a letter from the International Anti-Opium Association petitioning for the abolition of the opium monopolies in Hong Kong and Singapore, which was of particular interest to the US given the frequent illicit trafficking from Hong Kong and the Straits Settlements to the Philippines.<sup>576</sup> Wright’s declaration that “the United States, though not a Member of the League, were watching with the keenest interest for some definite and effective action...when the results of the work of the Committee were known there would be keen disappointment in America, where radical measures were expected” failed to spur the other Committee members forward.<sup>577</sup>

---

<sup>575</sup> League of Nations Records, Category XI, The Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, Andersonian Library, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland, League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs Proces Verbal of First Session May 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 1921, Geneva, Switzerland, “Correspondence on Opium Questions” p.12. C.77.M.39. 1921 [XI] [League of Nations hereafter referred to as LN].

<sup>576</sup> The International Anti-Opium Association, Peking [Beijing] China, to the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs Geneva, Switzerland, 21 February 1921, p.1. LN C21/68/105 [XI]

<sup>577</sup> League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs Proces Verbal of First Session May 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 1921, Geneva, Switzerland, “The competence of the Committee,” pp.22-23. LN C.77.M.39. 1921 [XI]

In response to the letter from the International Anti-Opium Association, Malcolm Delevingne merely proposed the Committee “refer the letter to the British Government and ask for its observations.”<sup>578</sup>

Undaunted, Elizabeth Wright stated to the media that “the opium traffic of the East must be eventually abandoned, that the tax based on the monopoly is a mode of taxation that is unethical.” In order to substantiate this argument, she “pointed to the example of the United States, which gave up the opium monopoly on taking over the Philippines.”<sup>579</sup> She subsequently published a lengthy editorial in the *New York Times* in July entitled “Opium Evil Up to League: Challenge as to Whether Real Control is to be Exercised Follows Geneva Report.”<sup>580</sup> Wright cited the precedent of prohibition in the Philippines again, this time as the reason that the United States had initially been “drawn irresistibly into the maelstrom of discussion that for a hundred-odd years had agitated the Far East.”<sup>581</sup> As the title implies, Wright criticized the League of Nations for failing to take more drastic measures regarding supply control and claimed “as for the recent meeting of the Opium Committee held in Geneva, there is a feeling that the League failed to take advantage of the great opportunity presented.”<sup>582</sup> The editorial did not mention Delevingne by name but did attribute the League’s supposed failure to “a determined effort on the part of the Committee to restrict the [Hague] convention to a most rigid interpretation...”<sup>583</sup> Wright’s conclusion exemplified the American ideological commitment to supply control in that

---

<sup>578</sup> League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs Proces Verbal of First Session May 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 1921, Geneva, Switzerland, “The competence of the Committee,” pp.22-23. LN C.77.M.39. 1921 [XI]

<sup>579</sup> *New York Times*, “League Aid Asked to Curb Opium Evil: Restriction of Poppy Growing the Only Cure, Says Hamilton Wright,” 29 May 1921.

<sup>580</sup> *New York Times*, “Opium Evil Up to League: Challenge as to Whether Real Control is to Be Exercised Follows Geneva Report,” 3 July 1921.

<sup>581</sup> *New York Times*, “Opium Evil Up to League,” 3 July 1921.

<sup>582</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*

“there is but one solution to the opium problem- the suppression of the cultivation of the poppy save for medicinal purposes.”<sup>584</sup>

Elizabeth Wright’s belief in supply control and call for further international action were shared by many of her American contemporaries in the postwar era. In the years following the Paris Peace treaties, the sense of a new era brought about through the cataclysm of World War I inspired a number of reformers to push for additional measures on the part of the international community regarding the opium trade, including the previously mentioned Thomas Pelletier. Pelletier was then the District Attorney for Suffolk County, Massachusetts, and an advocate for suppression of narcotics trafficking. Pelletier stated in his privately published work *Opium: A World Menace* in 1921 that the International Opium Commission of Shanghai in 1909 “was called primarily because of the interest of the United States in the Philippines; now, we are even more justified, in behalf [sic] of *humanity* [emphasis in original], to demand a conference on the present opium situation...in the changed world of to-day, newborn amid the blood and horror of a war...so great a moral appeal cannot fail to arouse a spirit of national right thinking on this question.”<sup>585</sup> Moreover, the narrative previously constructed by US officials in the Philippines regarding colonial drugs policy and American exceptionalism clearly persisted in public discourse within the metropole during the postwar era. For example, Ellen N. LaMotte, a nurse, suffragette and author, claimed (incorrectly) in *The Opium Monopoly* that upon conquering the Philippines “our first act was to eliminate the opium traffic, which had been established there by our predecessors...but we immediately set about to abolish it.”<sup>586</sup> LaMotte differentiated the United States from both the former colonial rulers of the Philippines and the current imperial

---

<sup>584</sup> *New York Times*, “Opium Evil Up to League,” 3 July 1921.

<sup>585</sup> Pelletier, *World Menace*, p.13.

<sup>586</sup> Ellen N. LaMotte, *The Opium Monopoly* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1920) p.75.

powers in surrounding polities by echoing Harrison's rhetoric of morally superior drug regulations. The decision of the US to forgo opium revenues was depicted as the primary evidence of 'enlightened' rule, as "we might have cut in half the cost of our Philippine budget had we followed the example set by other nations... But we refrained from treating our Filipinos in this manner."<sup>587</sup> LaMotte argued this was particularly noteworthy given that "we have seen that certain British colonies, Hongkong and the Straits Settlements, for example, derive from one-third to one-half of their upkeep expenses from this traffic."<sup>588</sup> Aside from what LaMotte viewed as the moral failing inherent in these operations, opium monopolies in Hongkong and the Straits Settlements posed a practical difficulty to the Philippines, as a report in 1921 from the American Consul in Amoy [Xiamen] indicated. The Consul's report noted that "the great centers for distribution are Singapore and Hongkong...Manila also offers a large field for opium."<sup>589</sup> Moreover, "in respect to the Philippines, it is stated that as much as 85 pesos (\$42.40) or thereabouts are readily paid to anyone who will place a 5-tael tin of opium in Manila."<sup>590</sup> This partially ad hoc system of trafficking made it difficult to track down distributors, and the "profit is so extraordinarily large that those who traffic in this product can well afford to pay the amount."<sup>591</sup>

Similarly to Harrison, LaMotte also considered the British colony of North Borneo to be a significant contributor to the ongoing problem of illicit trafficking in the Philippines. In *The Ethics of Opium*, the follow-up work to *The Opium Monopoly*, LaMotte argued that even the official per capita purchase of opium in British North Borneo was too high to be bought solely

---

<sup>587</sup> LaMotte, *Monopoly*, pp.75-76.

<sup>588</sup> Ibid, p.75.

<sup>589</sup> Chief, Division of Customs, to the Chief of the Bureau of the Insular Affairs, 6 August 1921, BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/236.

<sup>590</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/236.

<sup>591</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/236.

for personal consumption. Therefore “we must assume that much of this amount is smuggled out of the country...the Philippines, for example, receive a large amount of opium smuggled in North Borneo.”<sup>592</sup> This condemnatory view of British North Borneo was shared by other Americans, even those not active in anti-opium reform. E. Alexander Powell’s travelogue *Where the Strange Trails Go Down* vividly described the “rank cruelty and injustice of the British managers...their licensing of opium dens and gambling hells, the filth, insanitation [sic] and brutality that prevail.”<sup>593</sup>

Despite the myriad of complaints regarding the opium traffic from various American commentators, official reports from the United States were in short supply. The minutes from the League of Nations Committee on the Traffic in Opium meeting in April 1922 pointedly noted “nor has any information been received from the United States of America, which is one of the largest importing and manufacturing countries. A general review of the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs is therefore not yet possible.”<sup>594</sup> The lack of information from the United States was re-emphasized in another section of the minutes, which stated even more markedly that “the statistical information, which... has not yet been furnished, would be of the greatest value, and...the Committee venture to express the hope that means may be found before long by which the co-operation of the United States in the work of giving full effect to the provisions of the Opium Convention of 1912, of which they took so large a part, may be secured. The Committee feel that they cannot emphasize too strongly that it is only by the fullest international co-operation that a traffic which is world-wide in its ramifications can be effectively

---

<sup>592</sup> Ellen N. LaMotte, *The Ethics of Opium*, (New York: The Century Company, 1924) p.73.

<sup>593</sup> *New York Times*, “Where The Strange Trails Go Down: A Review by Frederick O’Brien,” 13 November 1921.

<sup>594</sup> Report of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs to the Council of the League, 3 April 1922, p.2. LN A.15.1922 [XI]

controlled.”<sup>595</sup> Elizabeth Wright claimed that this was simply “owing to a misunderstanding” and further information would follow forthwith.<sup>596</sup> In the meantime, she lectured the Committee that “the way to rid the world of the course of opium- is to reduce its cultivation” and moreover “the Governor-General of the Philippines makes the same assertion.”<sup>597</sup>

Despite the focus on drugs consumption in the Philippines largely centering on illicit usage, opiates and cocaine continued to serve as medicinal substances as well. Cocaine in particular continued to be in use for medicinal purposes in the Philippines after it had begun to be phased out elsewhere. Despite the drawbacks of the medical use of cocaine as an anesthetic described in the 1916 Bureau of Health Report, the 1922 Report indicated that it was still in use for those purposes. Cocaine served as an anesthetic in the majority of operations performed in the Bilibid Hospital Prison for that year. Stevaine was utilized once in performing a herniatomy for a strangulated hernia, and ether twice in treatments for acute appendicitis and resection of a fistula. However, cocaine remained the primary anesthetic and was recorded as being used on fifteen separate occasions for the fiscal year ending 31 December, 1922. The most common treatment featuring the use of cocaine was circumcision to treat phimosis. It was also used as anesthetic in other operations ranging from resetting fractured fingers to lipoma, as well as a groin abscess and syphilis treatments.<sup>598</sup> Cocaine seems to have been particularly useful as a local anesthetic in operations on genitalia, perhaps due to the short time required for cocaine anesthesia to take effect.<sup>599</sup>

---

<sup>595</sup> Report of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs to the Council of the League, 3 April 1922, p.2. LN A.15.1922 [XI]

<sup>596</sup> Minutes of the second session of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs April 19-29, 1922, p.5. LN C.416.M.254.1922.XI

<sup>597</sup> Ibid.

<sup>598</sup> *Report* [1922] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.145.

<sup>599</sup> *Report* [1916] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.40.

Attempts by the Board of Health to wean individuals from addictive substances were apparently less efficacious. In 1922, the Bureau of Health essentially reiterated the report of the previous year's unsatisfactory outcomes of medical treatments for addiction: "there were 234 cases of opium addict treated during the year; but the treatment of these cases was given indefinite results."<sup>600</sup> Recidivism rates for drug-related offenses remained high, as "the majority of the patients after discharge from the Bureau of Prisons resumed the same old habits resulting in reconviction and readmission."<sup>601</sup>

Doctors' legal access to substances like cocaine could obviously be taken advantage of for less legal purposes, and members of the Chinese and Filipino diaspora within the metropole of the United States were repeatedly implicated in drug smuggling and consumption during this period. In June 1923, Eligio Lazado, a Filipino man living in New York City, was accused of the murder of a young American woman. Lazado was employed as a manservant to Dr. George B. McAuliffe, and was also accused of exploiting his employer's legal access to drugs and stealing them from him, "using cocaine and selling it."<sup>602</sup> In addition to Lazado's case, the Federal Narcotic Division [the predecessor of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics] reported three seizures of opium worth a collective total of \$100,000 in January 1924. Three Chinese and three Filipino suspects were arrested. The three Filipinos were all sailors, two of whom were part of the crew of the steamship *Mamekah* and the third employed on the *Mount Clay*. Opium worth approximately \$33,000 was confiscated from the three Filipinos.<sup>603</sup>

---

<sup>600</sup> Bureau of Health, 1922, p.136.

<sup>601</sup> Ibid.

<sup>602</sup> *New York Times*, "Says He Slew Girl to Save Himself: Filipino Houseman Confesses Strangling Doctor's Secretary but Pleads Self-Defense," 10 June 1923.

<sup>603</sup> *New York Times*, "\$100,000 in Opium Seized: Three Raids Also Net Three Chinese and Three Filipinos," 6 January 1924.

In a xenophobic political climate (the Immigration Act of 1924 established quotas based on national origin later that year), these arrests and similar occurrences heightened suspicion of the colonized population of the Philippines within the United States and increased association of the Philippines with violence and drug trafficking in the popular imagination. Moreover, media reports of drug busts constituted the majority of the information publicly available on the status of drugs regulation in the Philippines. The League of Nations Advisory Committee noted once more in the minutes of the January 1923 meeting that they had not received any reports from the US with regards to the drug control situation outside the metropole; “no statistics nor information on conditions in any colony, possession or leased territory are given.”<sup>604</sup> The League reiterated that information “on the methods adopted for the effective suppression of the opium traffic in the Philippine Islands would have been valuable.”<sup>605</sup> Despite the lack of reports on the subject, representatives of the United States, particularly Elizabeth Wright, continually referred to the Philippines as evidence of the merits of supply control. Wright clashed once more with other members of the Advisory Committee on the issue of gradual limitation of opium production, of which producer states were naturally more in favor. Wright insisted that, “public opinion did not demand the limitation or the regulation of the opium evil but its suppression.”<sup>606</sup> More specifically, “public opinion in the United States was demanding the restriction of cultivation to medicinal needs.”<sup>607</sup> This was substantiated by the claim that “America had so recognized that the use of opium was an evil for which no financial gain could compensate that she had brought

---

<sup>604</sup> Dossier Concerning Proces-Verbaux of the Fourth Session of the Opium Advisory Committee, Geneva, January 1923 p.7. LN C.52.M.20.1923.XI.

<sup>605</sup> Dossier Concerning Proces-Verbaux p.7. LN C.52.M.20.1923.XI.

<sup>606</sup> League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, Minutes of the Fourth Session held at Geneva from January 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 1923, Tenth Meeting held on Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 1923 at 3 pm, p.42 LN C.155.M.75.1923.

<sup>607</sup> Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, Minutes of the Fourth Session, p.42 LN C.155.M.75.1923.

the opium trade in the Philippines to a termination at the end of five years, without financial disaster to that country.”<sup>608</sup>

Further information received by the League on the subject later that year came not from any official reports from the US government but instead from Brent appearing before the League Advisory Committee to testify in person in May 1923. This was obviously not a report attempting impartiality, however, but an impassioned personal defense of prohibition. Brent made the case to the League Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium that the surrounding colonies in southeast Asia should adopt the measures against the opium trade that the US had taken previously in the Philippines. To substantiate this, Brent provided statistics demonstrating that opium imports had fallen from 224,115 pounds in 1900 to 235 pounds in 1918 and 77 pounds in 1921. The duties paid on these imports had correspondingly decreased from \$81.5 million in 1900 to approximately \$4,000 in 1921.<sup>609</sup> There was obviously a glaring flaw to this argument; namely, that these statistics only showed the opium legally imported into the Philippines for medicinal purposes and thus failed to take into account the amount of opium and other drugs smuggled in during the same timespan. The same League Committee meeting noted that opium shipped to British North Borneo from India “was an important question to the United States, as it was [illegally] re-exported to the Philippines.”<sup>610</sup> Moreover, the Philippine Bureau of Health report for 1923 reported treating nearly 200 individuals in the Bilibid Prison Hospital for “opium indulgence.”<sup>611</sup> This was not an appreciable decrease from previous years, indicating rates of recidivism for drug-related offenses remained high. However, the American delegation

---

<sup>608</sup> Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, Minutes of the Fourth Session, p.42 LN C.155.M.75.1923.

<sup>609</sup> *New York Times*, “Geneva,” 30 May 1923.

<sup>610</sup> *New York Times*, “Formosa the Centre of Opium Trade in East; League Notes Big American Exports,” 29 May 1923.

<sup>611</sup> *Report* [1923] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.19.

felt Brent's argument nonetheless bolstered the claims of the US to the moral high ground vis-a-vis the representatives from nations with ongoing opium monopoly systems.

In addition to Brent's statistical information on the Philippines, he also came armed with a unanimous resolution passed by the US Congress earlier in March of 1923. *The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs: Statement of the Attitude of the Government of the United States with Documents Relating Thereto* essentially reiterated the commitment of the United States to supply control as the best method of implementing the Hague Convention protocols. These were summarized as:

1. If the purpose of The Hague Opium Convention is to be achieved according to its spirit and true intent, it must be recognized that the use of opium products for other than medical and scientific purposes is an abuse and not legitimate.

2. In order to prevent the abuse of these products it is necessary to control the production of raw opium in such a manner that there will be no surplus available for nonmedicinal and nonscientific purposes.<sup>612</sup>

*The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotics Drugs* frequently referred to the Philippines in order to substantiate this argument. In particular, the "United States of America, in dealing with the traffic in habit-forming narcotic drugs within its own territory and possessions, notably in the Philippine Islands...has always been committed, without regard to revenue, to a program for the

---

<sup>612</sup> *The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs: Statement of the Attitude of the Government of the United States with Documents Relating Thereto* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1923) p.iii.

complete suppression and prohibition of the production of and traffic in them, except for strictly medicinal and scientific purposes.”<sup>613</sup>

Even opium and other psychoactive substances legally shipped into the Philippines for medicinal purposes were later discovered in less legitimate contexts in the eyes of the authorities. As previously stated, the medical profession’s continued use of cocaine in the Philippines ensured that doctors had greater access to the substance, as well as opiates, and thus were also frequent points of contact in illicit distribution. In a controversial ruling in 1924, a Filipino defendant, Dr. Dominador Gomez, was acquitted of illegal possession and distribution of opium, morphine and cocaine on grounds of lack of intent to violate the Opium Law. Dr. Gomez, a practicing physician in Manila had been accused of “conspiring and confederating with his co-accused Olimpio Sison and Flaviano Torres and with the assistance of the latter, maintained, controlled and offered to the public a place for injecting morphine, cocaine and other prohibited drugs, and the three defendants did then and there and in furtherance of the aforesaid conspiracy wilfully, unlawfully and criminally inject morphine, cocaine and other prohibited drugs in the bodies of Go Ti, Go Tico and So Chian and several other persons.”<sup>614</sup> The trial court judge “held in substance that Doctor Gomez violated the Opium Law but that he probably did not realize that he was doing anything illegal; that he, consequently, did not act with criminal intent and was therefore not guilty of the crime or crimes charged in the information.”<sup>615</sup> Dr. Gomez continued supplying Chinese patients with morphine injections following his acquittal. As a result, an

---

<sup>613</sup> *The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs*, 1923, p.vii.

<sup>614</sup> *Dominador Gomez, petitioner, vs. Hon. Pedro Concepción, Judge of First Instance of Manila, Ricardo Summers, Sheriff of Manila, and Guillermo B. Guevara, City Fiscal, respondents* (30 March 1925) G.R. No. L-23921 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1925).

Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1924, G.R. No. L-23921.

<sup>615</sup> *Dominador Gomez, petitioner, vs. Hon. Pedro Concepción, Judge of First Instance of Manila, Ricardo Summers, Sheriff of Manila, and Guillermo B. Guevara, City Fiscal, respondents* (30 March 1925), G.R. No. L-23921.

injunction was issued stating that his clinic should be forced to cease operating. Dr. Gomez petitioned for this injunction to be repealed and was again successful in court. The medical profession in the Philippines then took action against him, as the Board of Medical Examiners opened an administrative investigation against him for “his alleged medical treatment of morphine addicts.”<sup>616</sup> The Council of Hygiene, a subsidiary of the Bureau of Health, was evidently also invited to testify at a hearing on the subject, but declined. The Bureau of Health Report for 1925 stated “said body has decided not to concede to the request, this matter falling upon the control of the Board of Medicine Examiners which handled the investigation.”<sup>617</sup>

#### From Geneva to Bangkok, 1924-1931

By the mid-1920s, The Hague Convention agreement had clearly failed to meaningfully reduce the available opium supply and curb illicit trafficking. As a result, further international diplomacy on drugs regulations was deemed necessary.<sup>618</sup> The 1924 congressional hearings on funding for the US delegation to Geneva revealed the ongoing significance of the Philippines to the vision of the United States for an international drugs regulatory regime, and moreover, how the US viewed their own role in its development. Brent’s 1923 speech before the League Advisory Committee was included in the proceedings of the congressional hearing, as well as correspondence between Brent and customs officials. This correspondence detailed the activities of customs officials earlier in the 1920s, stating “during 1920 and up to and including March 31, 1921, members of the Philippine Constabulary...made 291 opium raids, caught 474 persons in

---

<sup>616</sup> *Report* [1925] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.184.

<sup>617</sup> Bureau of Health, 1925, p.184.

<sup>618</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, pp.44-78.

these raids and captured opium valued at PI, 392,428 [over \$500,000]... In addition to this amount, the customs officials during this period captured and prosecuted 158 opium importers and confiscated opium and other prohibited drugs valued at PI, 116,735.”<sup>619</sup> In Manila alone, the authorities “arrested 501 persons engaged in the enterprise and captured opium and other prohibited drugs valued at P107,333.”<sup>620</sup> In addition to previously mentioned locations such as the Straits Settlements, this correspondence also identified Macao as a new source of illicit trafficking into the Philippines. These arrests obviously only represented a small part of the illicit narcotics trade, but the extent and scale of the activities of customs officials served to demonstrate to Congress that continued international cooperation was necessary if prohibition was to be effective. In short, “unless the nations stand together it is virtually impossible for any people to be free from the opium addiction.”<sup>621</sup> The overall significance of the Philippines to the US drug control efforts was summarized as: “There can be no doubt that the wider interest of the United States in the international opium problem was one of the results of the occupation of the Philippines.”<sup>622</sup>

Despite these sentiments in favor of international cooperation, American involvement in the Geneva Convention proceedings was not characterized by a willingness to compromise. The ideological commitment of the US to immediate supply control within ten years put them at odds with producer states who favored an approach of gradual limitation. The producer state of Great

---

<sup>619</sup> Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, *The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs On H.J. Res 195, Authorizing an Appropriation for the Participation of the United States in the Two International Conferences for the Control of the Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs*, Feb. 21, 1924 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) pp.100-101.

<sup>620</sup> Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, *The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs On H.J. Res 195, 1924*, pp.100-101.

<sup>621</sup> Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, *The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs On H.J. Res 195, 1924*, p.103.

<sup>622</sup> *Ibid*, p.243.

Britain in particular sought to broaden the focus of the convention from opium to pharmaceuticals such as cocaine and morphine. As previously stated, illicit trafficking of these substances was also a matter of concern for customs officials in the Philippines. Nonetheless, the US delegation eventually walked out. The *New York Times* claimed that “the fumes of opium had permeated so deeply into the physiological habits of the East, and the business and political habits of European Colonial offices, that the program offered by the United States was regarded as impossibly idealistic.”<sup>623</sup> Following the Geneva Convention, Elizabeth Wright attempted to pursue the matter of narcotics smuggling from British North Borneo to the Philippines further in August 1925 and lodged a complaint with the League of Nations. However, this crusade was stymied by intervention from an unexpected source; the Governor-General of the Philippines himself. Leonard Wood cabled to say official reports “indicate a very small amount of opium is being smuggled into the American Eastern Island possessions.”<sup>624</sup> Elizabeth Wright subsequently withdrew the complaint and attempted to save face by claiming that this news substantiated American arguments against the opium trade and demonstrated the success of prohibitory policy. “If it is possible to protect some thousand-odd islands from smuggling, and prevent importation of opium save for medicinal purposes,” Wright argued, “it shows that the United States has not been unsuccessful in carrying out Chapter 2 of the Hague Convention, which calls for progressive and effective suppression of opium used for smoking, even though China is directly across the way.”<sup>625</sup> In the words of the *New York Times*, “her effort to turn her mistake to advantage caused some surprise in the commission.”<sup>626</sup> John Campbell, representing the British

---

<sup>623</sup> *New York Times*, “Opium Trade Spreads With Powers At Odds: Why the American Delegates Withdrew From International Conference That Met to Find a Way to Curb Drug Habit in Far East,” 15 February 1925.

<sup>624</sup> *New York Times*, “Mrs. Wright Drops Opium Complaint: Message From General Wood Denies Smuggling From Borneo to Philippines,” 1 September 1925.

<sup>625</sup> *New York Times*, “Mrs. Wright Drops Opium Complaint,” 1 September 1925.

<sup>626</sup> *Ibid.*

Government of India, stated at the June 1926 meeting of the Advisory Committee that “what had actually occurred, therefore, had been that Mrs. Hamilton Wright had made certain allegations which the reply of the Governor-General of the Philippines had shown to be unsubstantiated.”<sup>627</sup>

Despite Leonard Wood’s claims in 1925 that very few opiates were being smuggled into the Philippines, later reports from the government there in the 1920s belied his assurances. Morphine seizures grew to the extent that José Boromeo, the head of the Customs Secret Service Division, claimed there was a “growing preference for morphine by ‘dope-fiends.’”<sup>628</sup> This was attributed to its greater potency and the ease of consumption via hypodermic injection. Moreover it was easier to smuggle, meaning “morphine powder has gained entrance into the country secreted between the pages of magazines and newspapers.”<sup>629</sup>

There was still a market for opium, however, despite the advantages of morphine. The head of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, Major General Frank McIntyre, who had previously claimed in 1914 that “the use of opium among the Filipinos has been checked, if not...eradicated,” now ordered an investigation into opium smuggling in the Philippines. The *New York Times* reported this investigation was to be carried out by C.H. Anderson, described as the “Federal customs attaché for the Orient,” with the assistance of the Philippine secret service and constabulary.<sup>630</sup> This investigation was ordered in part due to the League’s previous complaints regarding the lack of reports from the government of the United States regarding the drug control situation in their various territories. The reports’ absence was now being reported in the media, as the *New York Times* noted that “interest generally is displayed in the fact that the

---

<sup>627</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/338.

<sup>628</sup> *Manila Bulletin*, “Morphine Takes Place of Opium: Crude Drug is Losing Popularity Among Drug Addicts,” 29 April, 1926, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>629</sup> “Morphine Takes Place of Opium,” BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>630</sup> *New York Times*, “Wood Orders an Opium Inquiry,” 6 March 1927.

American Government has not sent a report on the Philippines, which Bishop Brent several years ago promised to have delivered after he had stressed the inconvenience America's Eastern possessions had suffered from opium smuggling."<sup>631</sup> Communication between departments on the investigation was apparently limited, as Nelson Johnson, the head of the Division of Far Eastern Affairs in the State Department, did not hear of the inquiry until the publication of the aforementioned *New York Times* article. Johnson wrote to McIntyre seeking an explanation, who replied it had been "prompted by requests for such data from the Department of State for incorporation in the reports required under the International Opium Convention and other purposes."<sup>632</sup>

The reasons for the lack of US reports to the League are evident in the subsequent 1927 report by the American authorities in the Philippines regarding the investigation. The report details the widespread failure of Philippines customs officials to effectively control smuggling, but reiterated old claims that this was due to the ingenuity of the Chinese: "Smuggling is carried on principally by the Chinese, and the contraband is obtained in Amoy [modern day Xiamen] and other Chinese ports."<sup>633</sup> The report described the situation as follows:

Various methods are used by smugglers in evading detection. Several large consignments of opium for smoking have been brought into the islands by means of vessels hired especially for this purpose, which usually drop their cargo into the water near some isolated coast town, where it is picked up by launches, fishing boats, or by other means. Small consignments are brought in on boats plying between Chinese and Philippine ports and transferred to small launches or fishing boats prior to entering the port or dropped overboard at designated points. A

---

<sup>631</sup> *New York Times*, "Discuss Opium Traffic: League Advisory Committee Sessions Open in Geneva," 19 January 1927.

<sup>632</sup> Maj. Gen. Frank McIntyre to Nelson Johnson, 16 July, 1927, BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/288.

<sup>633</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1928, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1928) p.3.

considerable amount of opium in small quantities is reported as being smuggled into the islands through baggage or concealed in merchandise. On several occasions small boats or launches from the China coast or Formosa claiming to have been forced to take shelter in Philippine harbors due to inclement weather have been suspected to have carried considerable quantities of opium prepared for smoking.

The report concluded in a somewhat understated fashion that “Owing to the topography of the islands and the inadequate coast-guard facilities, together with the proximity to opium-producing countries, much difficulty has been encountered by the Government in its efforts to eliminate clandestine traffic in prohibited drugs.”<sup>634</sup> Furthermore, the report from the government of the Philippines in 1927 claimed in regard to the nature and consumption of the smuggled drugs, “the greater portion of prohibited drugs smuggled into the islands consists in opium prepared for smoking and morphine for injection...The majority of opium smokers in the Philippine Islands are Chinese. Few Filipinos have been induced by Chinese friends to use opium either for smoking purposes or in the form of pills to alleviate pain.”<sup>635</sup> This claim was repeated verbatim in later reports, and authorities attempted to substantiate it by providing statistics on the ethnicity of individuals charged with violating the opium ban. In 1927, out of 591 charges for violations of the opium ban, 72% of defendants were Chinese and only 28% Filipino. The following year however, only 66% of defendants were Chinese and the proportion of Filipinos charged with violations was 34%.<sup>636</sup> The authorities were forced to admit that “many natives are employed in the distribution of the drug.”<sup>637</sup>

---

<sup>634</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1928, p.3.

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>636</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1928, pp.4-5; *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Six Months' Period from July 1- December 31 1928 and for the Calendar Year 1929* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1929).

<sup>637</sup> *Ibid*.

The Foreign Policy Association chose to carry out its own review of conditions regarding narcotics trafficking in the Philippines and published its findings in a report issued in March 1927. Authored by Herbert May, the *Survey of Smoking Opium Conditions in the Far East* emphasized further the failure of the authorities in the Philippines to suppress illicit trafficking. May's *Survey* detailed the previous lack of reports on the subject by the US on the Philippines, stating "for three years or more there has been a persistent request at Geneva that the United States furnish some figures on the working of prohibition of opium smoking in the Philippines; for a like period persons interested in the subject have besieged the War Department in Washington for such figures; for a year and a half the War Department has been asking the Governor-General's office in Manila for this information."<sup>638</sup> The *Survey* noted that the international suspicion directed at the US following the absence of information on prohibition in the Philippines was understandable. Moreover, the lack of reports was also logical, given that "illegal opium is coming into the Islands in such quantities as to make smoking opium procurable freely at very low prices."<sup>639</sup> Nearly twenty years after prohibition came into effect, opium was an easily accessible commodity to people from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, with the quality of the product varying in accordance with the consumer's resources and the origin of the smuggled opium. The *Survey* noted that as of December 1926, at the time of May's visit to the Philippines, the price for grade two Amoy was five pesos per tael and seven pesos per tael for grade one, where Hong Kong opium fetched a higher price of twelve pesos for grade two and sixteen for grade one. Hong Kong opium was considered to be of higher quality and therefore more expensive due to the fact it was a mixture of Persian or Indian opium

---

<sup>638</sup> Herbert May, *Survey of Smoking Opium Conditions in the Far East*, (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1927), BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 15541/80.

<sup>639</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 15541/80.

as well as opium produced in China, whereas opium from Amoy was purely Chinese. May concluded, “prohibition of opium smoking in the Philippines does not in fact prohibit...prohibition of opium smoking is not functioning in the Philippines or in China, and the problem is as acute there as in countries where smoking is still legal.”<sup>640</sup> Moreover, May asserted the prevalence of human trafficking as well, claiming that “opium is not the only thing smuggled in a considerable scale.” Given the strict immigration laws in place for the Chinese at the time, “there is a ‘market price’ for smuggling in a Chinaman via British North Borneo, and apparently he is privileged to bring in a supply of opium with him on his person.”<sup>641</sup>

The government in Manila disputed these claims, which was noted in the report from the United States to the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium. This was met with opposition from other Committee members, in particular the 1926 report’s allegation that “the situation in the Philippine Islands, even under the most pessimistic view, will compare most favorably with a like situation in any other island possession in Southern or South-Eastern Asia.”<sup>642</sup> The representative from the Netherlands, W.G. van Wettum, stated bluntly in April 1928 that he “did not understand on what basis this opinion had been founded.”<sup>643</sup> John Caldwell, the US representative at the Committee meeting, conceded that “the aim of the passage was not...to express, after thorough examination, a definite opinion regarding the situation in the Philippine Islands as compared with that in other islands possessions, such as the Netherlands Indies, but to state that, from the information available, the position in the Philippine Islands was

---

<sup>640</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 15541/80.

<sup>641</sup> Ibid.

<sup>642</sup> *Minutes of the Eleventh Session*, Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, Held at Geneva from April 12th to 27th, 1928; Seventh Meeting April 17th, 1928, p.39, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/338.

<sup>643</sup> *Minutes of the Eleventh Session*, Seventh Meeting April 17th, 1928, p.41, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/338.

believed not to be worse than elsewhere.”<sup>644</sup> The US also clashed with the British on the issue of prohibition, as Malcolm Delevingne cited the numerous statements regarding opium smuggling in the Philippines in the abovementioned 1926 report by the United States. Delevingne noted in particular the report’s admission that “it cannot be denied that smugglers succeed in bringing into the Philippine Islands large quantities of opium and morphine” and that “these difficulties were exactly the same as those encountered by the British Government.”<sup>645</sup> Delevingne claimed that this “justified the view expressed in 1925 that prohibition was only one way of dealing with the problem and that it was not a decisive way.”<sup>646</sup> Moreover, he echoed May’s sentiments regarding prohibition and stated that it “was not and could not, under present conditions, be equivalent to suppression.”<sup>647</sup>

The US and British representatives on the Committee did finally agree on one issue, however, and that was the issue of smuggling between British North Borneo and the Philippines. By the late 1920s, both were in agreement that the issue had been largely resolved, regardless of conflicting reports from external observers like Herbert May. At the April 1928 meeting of the League Advisory Committee, Malcolm Delevingne raised the question of British North Borneo’s inclusion in the most recent report on drug control in the Philippines. Delevingne asserted that “during the last few years the authorities of British North Borneo had exercised the greatest vigilance and the Government of the United States on enquiry had found that no opium coming

---

<sup>644</sup> *Minutes of the Eleventh Session, Seventh Meeting April 17th, 1928, p.41, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/338.*

<sup>645</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>646</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*

from British North Borneo had been seized for at least two years.”<sup>648</sup> John Caldwell replied that “there had been correspondence with the British Government and the Governor-General of the Philippine Islands and the latter had stated that, during the last two years, there had been no evidence of smuggling into the Philippine Islands from British North Borneo...the report of the Government of the United States had been completed at too early a date to show the inclusion of this statement.” Delevingne was recorded as thanking Caldwell for this explanation, ending, at least on the surface, a long-running conflict between the colonial powers.<sup>649</sup>

The following March, Bishop Charles Brent died in Switzerland. Despite having left the Philippines at the onset of the American entry into World War I, he had remained active in international drugs diplomacy until the Geneva Convention.<sup>650</sup> His individual significance for the sea change in drugs regulation during the first three decades of the twentieth century- facilitated by his position in the Philippines- was recounted in his obituary in the *New York Times*. The *Times* summarized the extent of his activities in opium reform campaigning as “a member of the committee appointed by the Philippine Government to investigate the opium question in the Orient...chief of the American delegation to the International Opium Commission at Shanghai...president of this organization in 1909...chairman of the United States delegation to the International Opium Conference at The Hague in 1911 and in 1912 he was made president of the conference.”<sup>651</sup> Even after resigning his post in the Philippines, Brent had served on the US

---

<sup>648</sup>*Minutes of the Eleventh Session*, Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, Held at Geneva from April 12th to 27th, 1928; Sixth Meeting April 16th, 1928, p.31, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/338.

<sup>649</sup> Ibid.

<sup>650</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, p.76.

<sup>651</sup> *New York Times*, “Bishop Brent,” 28 March 1929.

delegation to the Geneva Conference and testified before the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium.

Brent had been a firm supporter of the League of Nations in life, and would thus have been gratified to know that the League continued to take an interest in the extent of opium smoking in southern and eastern Asia, including the Philippines.<sup>652</sup> In 1930, the League's Commission of Inquiry on Opium Smoking in the Far East visited a number of countries in Asia, as well as the Philippines. The report on their findings further belied the insistence of the colonial authorities in the Philippines that narcotics smuggling was now inconsequential. (Meanwhile, Dr. Dominador Gomez once more had run afoul of the authorities, as 17 individuals were detained in his clinic by Sergeant Raymond Leverly in May 1929 for receiving illegal injections of morphine).<sup>653</sup> The Commission's report in many ways reiterated Herbert May's claims regarding the failure of prohibition in the Philippines. These were reiterated by Elizabeth Wright, who visited the Philippines in spring 1931 and wrote a long report on the subject to Harry Anslinger in DC. Wright stated "the use of smoking opium has not been suppressed in the Philippine Islands...a great deal of opium enters the Islands primarily through the ports of Manila and Cebu...and through Jolo, Bongao and other islands to the South." She attributed this state of affairs to "a definite and well-organized ring with limitless funds" as well as "many individual and petty smugglers."<sup>654</sup> Wright also claimed "I believe my visit wakened a new interest in the opium question and a realization of how important is the part played by the Philippines in the solution of the problem."<sup>655</sup>

---

<sup>652</sup> *New York Times*, "Bishop," 28 March 1929.

<sup>653</sup> *Tribune*, Manila, Philippines, "Turning Back: 5 Years Ago- May 3, 1929," 3 May 1934.

<sup>654</sup> Elizabeth Wright to Harry J. Anslinger, 8 May 1931, BIA, Entry 5, Box 205, File 1023/401.

<sup>655</sup> Wright to Anslinger, BIA, Entry 5, Box 205, File 1023/401.

## The Bangkok Convention, 1931-1932

As a result of the Commission's findings that illicit opium trafficking and consumption were by no means stamped out in Asia, another international conference on the subject was called. Unlike the first two, this one was actually held in Asia, in the Siamese [Thai] capital of Bangkok. However, the US was represented merely by an observer, John Caldwell from the Department of State and League Advisory Committee rather than a plenipotentiary delegation. Similarly to previous international conferences and his statements at League meetings, Caldwell cited US colonial drug policy in the Philippines as evidence of the merits of prohibition. Caldwell noted that the US had considered an opium monopoly system and referred to Taft's original proposal in 1904. He nonetheless hastened to emphasize that "this proposal insofar as it related to government monopoly was rejected and the principle of absolute interdiction of the traffic was adopted by the Congress of the United States."<sup>656</sup> Despite the evidence to the contrary, Caldwell also claimed that the "result of enforcement of complete prohibition of the use of opium for purposes other than medicinal is considered to have proved satisfactory in the Philippine Islands."<sup>657</sup> The Bangkok Convention of 1931 was largely considered ineffectual by observers. The *New York Times* reported that "Opium Conference Counted a Failure: Meeting at Bangkok Reached No Decision on Main Points, Geneva Hears."<sup>658</sup> Despite the presence of the US at the Conference, the State Department later noted "it will be recalled that the Government

---

<sup>656</sup> "Statement by Mr. Caldwell, Observer of the Government of the United States of America, at the 3rd Meeting on November 11th, 1931," *Conference for the Suppression of Opium-Smoking Convened Under Article XII of the Geneva Opium Agreement*, League of Nations, Bangkok, November 11th, 1931, Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs. BIA, Entry 5, Box 205, File 1023/415C(6).

<sup>657</sup> "Statement by Mr. Caldwell," 1931, BIA, Entry 5, Box 205, File 1023/415C(6).

<sup>658</sup> *New York Times*, "Opium Conference Counted a Failure: Meeting at Bangkok Reached No Decision on Main Points, Geneva Hears," 20 December 1931.

of the United States was represented at the Bangkok Conference by an observer only, is not a party to the agreement of signed at that Conference, and did not sign the Final Act of the Conference.”<sup>659</sup>

The United States did send a plenipotentiary delegation to another convention on drug control that year, however. At the 1931 Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotics, John Caldwell featured once more as a representative of the US. In this instance he was joined in Geneva by California Senator Sanborn Young, Assistant Surgeon-General Dr. Walter Lewis Treadway and most importantly Commissioner of Narcotics Harry J. Anslinger. In addition to sending plenipotentiary rather than observational representatives to this round of international drugs diplomacy, the US also actually signed the agreement of the Convention. This came with several caveats, however. The United States reserved the right to enforce “measures stricter than the provisions of the Convention.”<sup>660</sup> The United States in signing did not implicitly acknowledge the Governments also signing the Convention as the legitimate governing bodies of their respective polities if they had not already recognized them as such, or were obligated in any way to a country’s unrecognized government as a result of the Convention’s agreement. The United States also took issue with administrative procedures of the League of Nations, stating that the “Government... finds it impracticable to undertake to send statistics of import and export to the Permanent Central Opium Board short of sixty days after the close of the three months’ period to which such statistics refer.”<sup>661</sup>

---

<sup>659</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 204, File 1023/415C(6).

<sup>660</sup> *Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs*, 13 July 1931, Geneva, League of Nations, C.69(a).M.35(a).1932.XI. p.15

<sup>661</sup> *Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs*, 1931, p.15.

Despite the presence of the US delegation and the rather extensive list of caveats, the Philippines were not represented or mentioned in any capacity in the agreement. This was a telling omission regarding the shift in American priorities regarding drug control. Instead of the prominence of the Philippines in earlier conventions on drug regulations, American concerns were focused on the metropole and drug control efforts there. Anslinger, rather than Brent, was directing American regulatory negotiations now and colonial prohibition was an afterthought rather than a driver of diplomatic priorities. The lack of reference to the Philippines was nonetheless decidedly not because enforcing prohibition there had ceased to be a challenge for the colonial government, or due to a lack of an illicit supply of manufactured narcotics in the archipelago. As previously stated, to the best of the authorities' knowledge, the Philippines did not have an illicit manufacturing problem. However, as this chapter has shown, the smuggling, sale, and consumption of illicit manufactured drugs such as cocaine and morphine continued to vex colonial authorities. Essentially- although the Philippines would not be fully autonomous until 1935- the United States was already preparing to divest themselves of their perceived colonial burden.

The reasons for the American metropole's increasing lack of interest in the drug control situation in the Philippines may be attributable to the difficulty of exerting control. The American representative's claims at Bangkok that prohibition had produced satisfactory results were undermined by the reports of the Philippine Government regarding ongoing opium and other psychoactive substances smuggling. The statements of the Philippine government that illicit trafficking was due to the activities of the Chinese minority were belied by the statistics provided in their own reports regarding the ethnicity of individuals charged with violating the opium ban. By the year following the Bangkok and Geneva Conventions, the ethnic ratio of

offenders had shifted further to 39% of defendants listed as Filipino and 60.7% as Chinese, an increase of 11% in the proportion of Filipinos charged with opium ban violations in just five years.<sup>662</sup> Accordingly, the reports now stated “Very few Filipinos smoke or eat opium. The majority of opium smokers in the Philippine Islands are Chinese.”<sup>663</sup> A further caveat asserted that “Almost all of the natives arrested were found illegally possessing opium (ie not in the act of smoking) and were charged accordingly.”<sup>664</sup> A probable explanation for why the US was so reluctant to abandon a hegemonic narrative of drugs consumption in the Philippines in the face of changing circumstances is that political expediency had as much influence in formulating and enforcing drug regulations as beliefs about race. If only the tiny proportion of Chinese residents of the Philippines were overwhelmingly responsible for the supply and consumption of drugs, then the difficult task of the American colonial authorities in enforcing the opium ban was considerably simplified.

## Conclusion

The ongoing difficulty of enforcing prohibition in the Philippines led to the US promoting an increasingly complicated international drugs regulatory regime in the two decades between The Hague and Bangkok. However, the United States frequently clashed with other colonial powers regarding the practicability of prohibition. The colonial policy of the Philippines was frequently cited as evidence of the merits of prohibition, to the increasing disbelief of

---

<sup>662</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1928, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1928); *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1932).

<sup>663</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1932)

<sup>664</sup> *Ibid.*

producer states in the face of continued smuggling into the Islands. Moreover, the international structures the US had a hand in creating also hindered its ability to act unilaterally against the illicit narcotics trade, forcing them to rely in part on the efforts of foreign powers to control the traffic in their own territories. In the 1910s through the apparent resolution of the issue in the late 1920s, this led to increasing conflict with the British in regards to their colony in North Borneo and the opium monopoly there. Drug control efforts were further obstructed by the corruption endemic to Philippine institutions, ensuring that in Herbert May's words "prohibition of opium smoking in the Philippines does not in fact prohibit."<sup>665</sup> The colonial government of the Philippines thus also found themselves at odds with a variety of international observers who cited the Philippines as an example of the failure of prohibition. Twenty years after The Hague, the colonial administration of the Philippines found themselves in a similar position to the beginning of Harrison's tenure, fighting an unrelenting flow of illicit narcotics and beset by opponents within and without the Islands.

---

<sup>665</sup> BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 15541/80.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Prohibition, the Philippines, and the Last Decade of American Rule, 1932-1942**

#### Introduction

This chapter details the efforts to prevent the flow of illicit narcotics into the Philippines throughout the 1930s, as the ban on non-medicinal sale and consumption of opiates and cocaine entered its third decade. By the late 1930s, customs officials focused on noting the extent of seizures of prohibited narcotics rather than insisting illicit trafficking had been largely stamped out. This tacit admission of the thriving drug trade in the Philippines took place in the context of the advent of the Philippine Commonwealth and the increasing international condemnation of Japan's role in narcotics trafficking and the tensions leading up to the outbreak of World War II. The impact of Japanese expansion was evident in the increase of drugs entering the Philippines from territories they occupied. Moreover, the nature of the market for illicit drugs evolved in response to the regulatory focus on opium. Reports of arrests and seizures of prohibited substances from this decade indicate an increasing demand for morphine and, to a lesser extent, cocaine. However, drugs consumers in the 1930s did not phase out smoking opium altogether in favor of manufactured pharmaceuticals. In the last full decade of American rule in the Philippines, opium continued to be a target of the authorities charged with implementing prohibition. As late as 1940, large quantities of opium were still confiscated alongside lesser amounts of more potent morphine and cocaine. After World War II, the long-term impact of the drugs regulations of the American colonial era of the Philippines became clear post-independence, as a newly sovereign state continued to enforce the narcotics prohibition initiated four decades prior.

The calm before the storm, 1932-1934

By the 1930s smuggling from the Philippines to the continental United States increased in frequency. The Bureau of Narcotics noted in their 1932 report on the *Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* for the United States that the steamship *President Madison* was known to have been used twice in 1932 alone to smuggle morphine and opium into the US from the Philippines. The *President Madison* sailed from Manila to various ports in the United States, providing ample opportunity for illicit trafficking. The company owning the steamship, American Mail Line, Ltd, appears not to have been implicated in either instance. In August 1932, customs officials in Seattle, Washington discovered fourteen bottles, each containing 75 grains of morphine hydrochloride, in an unused steam pipe in the engine room of the vessel. The bottles were labeled with both Japanese and English writing; the Japanese characters were accompanied by “Imperial Hygienic Laboratory” and “Billiken Brand- Nippon Yakuhin Yoko.”<sup>666</sup> As the owner or smuggler of the bottles could not be determined, it is difficult to say whether the bottles were actually of Japanese origin or labeled as such in order to deflect suspicion from the actual manufacturers.<sup>667</sup>

In October 1932, an undercover narcotics officer at the Seattle port was told by Phillip Concepcion, an interpreter on the *President Madison*, that he had drugs for sale. Concepcion and the undercover officer agreed that Concepcion would deliver 20 ounces of morphine and 5

---

<sup>666</sup> Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1932, on the *Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1933) pp.22-23.

<sup>667</sup> Report by the Government of the United States of America, 1932, p.22.

pounds of smoking opium the next time the *President Madison* docked in Seattle from Manila, at \$35 per pound of smoking opium. As \$35 in 1932 was the equivalent of approximately \$670 today, the incentive for Concepcion to risk arrest is clear. During the initial conversation with the undercover officer, Concepcion stated “he had taken the position as interpreter to place himself in a position to make large sums of money by smuggling narcotic drugs.”<sup>668</sup> Once the *President Madison* returned to Seattle in November 1932, Concepcion delivered the drugs in question, but had only managed to obtain 5 tins of opium and no morphine. Evidently he had planned to source the morphine from distributors in Kobe, Japan, en route from Manila to Seattle but was hindered by the *President Madison* leaving Kobe before the morphine could be procured. The five tins were disguised with labels of “Peacock Condensed Milk, General Milk Co., Inc., New York, U.S.A.”<sup>669</sup> This was apparently quite an effective disguise, as the opium “to all appearances looked like commercial 1-pound milk tins.”<sup>670</sup> Concepcion was finally arrested in January 1933. Phillip Concepcion’s case is helpful in illustrating the traffic between the Philippines and the US. While such reports of trafficking from the Philippines to US ports were relatively rare, this case certainly suggests that enterprising individuals had identified the potential profits to be made from smuggling drugs alongside legitimate shipping routes from the colony to the metropole.

This lack of reference to narcotics trafficking via voyages between the Philippines and the US is also true for the 1932 Bureau of Narcotics report to the League of Nations on *Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* for the Philippines, which made no mention of the *President Madison*. As in previous reports, the report acknowledged the ongoing illicit trade into the

---

<sup>668</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America*, 1932, p.26.

<sup>669</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid.*, p.27.

Philippines but added the unconvincing caveat that “smugglers, however, *at times* fall into the hands of the police and constabulary as can be seen from the tabulated cases of violations of the narcotic drug laws.”<sup>671</sup>[emphasis added] The report also claimed that “every possible effort is being made to eliminate this vice [of trafficking].”<sup>672</sup> This tacit admission of the ongoing illicit traffic in the Philippines was also reflected in media coverage of the subject. The *Daily News* in Perth, Australia quoted Professor H. Duncan Hall, described as a “senior member of the opium section of the Secretariat of the League of Nations,” in citing the Philippines as an example of an alternative to government monopolies.<sup>673</sup> Hall added the caveat that prohibition “does not remove the menace of the illicit traffic, nor necessarily prevent smokers from obtaining large quantities of illicit opium.”<sup>674</sup> Moreover, Hall claimed in regards to opium smoking generally that “there is a constant danger that the habit will spread to the indigenous populations.”<sup>675</sup>

From a more narrative standpoint, the *World's News* in Sydney in April of 1932 ran an article describing the illicit activities of an opium smuggler in the Philippines, identified as a Norwegian sailor named Peter Johnson. This was told through the medium of Johnson's associate, Bill Bright, supposedly describing their smuggling exploits. Bright claimed that Johnson built a boat, the *Minnie Johnson*, with the assistance of Japanese carpenters. With a crew comprised of “an evil-looking little Ilocano named Pedro” and a “wizened old [Japanese]...by the name of Kashio,” Johnson and Bright eventually succeeded in smuggling a cargo of opium and morphine into Luzon.<sup>676</sup> The *World's News* claimed that “at the prices then

---

<sup>671</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1933) p.5.

<sup>672</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1932, p.5.

<sup>673</sup> *Daily News*, “Illicit Traffic in Drugs: International Organization Fights Evil,” 13 May 1932.

<sup>674</sup> *Daily News*, “Illicit Traffic in Drugs,” 13 May 1932.

<sup>675</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>676</sup> *World's News*, “The Opium Smugglers,” 6 April 1932.

prevailing in Tondo, Binondo, Intramuros, Quiapo and the other ‘tough’ sections of Manila, one successful trip would pay for the boat, and half a dozen would make Johnson rich.”<sup>677</sup>

It is not entirely clear from the article whether this was a fictional depiction of opium trafficking in the Philippines or the product of an interview with a real smuggler named Bright. In the event of the latter, it is also entirely possible that the details of Bright’s account were embellished in some way.<sup>678</sup> However, it does give an idea of the nature and prevalence of illicit trafficking in the Philippines by the 1930s. Bright’s account of a small-scale operation smuggling opium from Hong Kong to the Philippines, carried out by a multiethnic crew collaborating with native Filipinos, is corroborated by judicial proceedings from the time. Moreover, the tone of the article effectively normalized the trade, describing the run-ins of the smugglers with the police in the vein of daring exploits rather than criminal activity.

Not all illicit traffickers and consumers were as purportedly successful in evading detection as Johnson and Bright claimed to have been. The previously-mentioned Bureau of Narcotics 1932 report for the Philippines stated 364 individuals were arrested for drug violations during that calendar year.<sup>679</sup> Moreover, despite the standard disclaimer that the Chinese were overwhelmingly responsible for smuggling, distribution and consumption of narcotics in the Philippines, the individuals included by name in the report encompassed several examples of Filipino defendants. Margarita Ramirez was one of the defendants mentioned by name, and was arrested in Pulupandan, Negros Occidental, for possession of thirty tins, or approximately 280 ounces, of prepared opium. The manufacturer is unclear; each tin contained “a label on which appeared certain Chinese characters,” which the authorities were apparently unable to

---

<sup>677</sup> *World’s News*, “The Opium Smugglers,” 6 April 1932.

<sup>678</sup> For more on this genre of smuggling exploits, see Mills, *Cannabis Britannica*, pp.193-195.

<sup>679</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1932, p.8.

decipher.<sup>680</sup> Her arrest illuminates the internal narcotics traffic of the Philippines, as she had just disembarked from the inter-island steamship *Venus* from Manila via Iloilo. Another Filipino woman, Damasa Ravena y Aguilar, was arrested in Manila after disembarking from the *Anking*. The *Anking* had just returned to the Philippines from Amoy [Xiamen]. Upon inspection, her luggage was found to contain a double-bottomed trunk concealing 12 tins, or approximately 2.7 kilograms, of morphine. These “bore a label printed in Chinese characters and the brand ‘Horse.’<sup>681</sup>

This was a rare find. As with the morphine hydrochloride seized on the *President Madison*, large scale busts of smuggled narcotics in Philippine ports were often impossible to trace back to the original owner or trafficker. Illicit supplies were transported using predictable routes, as in a similar manner to the *President Madison*, the *Anking* was also referred to multiple times as utilized to convey contraband. 1,800 one tael tins of opium were discovered on board the *Anking* in March 1932 after arriving in Manila from Xiamen, China. Half of these tins were branded “Tonggee” and the other half as “Lion,” a brand frequently found on seized opium. The opium was discovered in a packing case labeled A.L.C., which was supposed to contain vermicelli. Unlike the case of Damasa Ravena y Aguilar, the report noted “it is impossible to ascertain definitely who was responsible for this attempted unlawful importation and no arrest was made.”<sup>682</sup> The customs officials sometimes were aided by the crew on steamships, as the captain of the *Empress of Japan* upon arrival in Manila in May 1932 turned over 1,565 one tael tins of opium, which he alleged were discovered in cabin No. 422. This could likewise not be traced to either the smuggler or the manufacturer; ‘none of the tins of opium bore indicia and no

---

<sup>680</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1932, p.4.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

arrest was made.”<sup>683</sup> Overall, in 1932 customs officials seized a total of 249,404 grams of prohibited drugs. The largest individual seizure was a shipment of 2,700 tins of opium in March.<sup>684</sup> The statistics for confiscated “opium and other dangerous drugs”, in the parlance of the League of Nations, were oddly recorded alongside a number of more innocuous items, including salted and dried turnips, flour and rice vermicelli, and “65 cases of salted pickles.”<sup>685</sup>

The following year, according to the customs report of 1933, the amount of prohibited drugs seized grew to 317,166 grams. The majority of these were prepared opium, with smaller amounts of morphine and cocaine hydrochloride.<sup>686</sup> The Bureau of Narcotics stated in their report to the League of Nations that upon “examination of the circumstances connected with seizures effected in the Philippine Islands during the calendar year 1933 leads to the conclusion that the illicit traffic in both prepared opium and manufactured drugs is being regularly supplied by contraband dispatched from Amoy and that prepared opium is also smuggled in by steamers from Hongkong and, possibly, Shanghai. These two routes are apparently the ones which the illicit traffic generally follows.”<sup>687</sup>

Existing licit networks of transportation and commerce evidently facilitated the bulk of the illicit traffic of the 1930s, particularly the aforementioned steamships stopping at various ports before arriving in Manila or other Philippine coastal cities. Four packages of opium were discovered in unclaimed baggage unloaded from the S.S. *President Grant* in January 1933. The packages were all labeled with Chinese characters spelling Yuan Tung Co. The *President Grant*

---

<sup>683</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1932, p.3.

<sup>684</sup> *Tribune*, “Customs Sleuths Made 690 Arrests In 1932, Chief’s Report Discloses,” 20 July 1933.

<sup>685</sup> *Tribune*, “Customs Sleuths,” 20 July 1933.

<sup>686</sup> *Manila Tribune*, “1933 Opium Seizures Larger Than Those of 1932, Reyes Reports,” 17 February 1934, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>687</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1933* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1934) p.3.

had docked in Havana, Cristobal, Balboa, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Honolulu, Yokohama, Kobe, Shanghai and Hong Kong. Given the frequency of smuggled shipments from Hong Kong, it is entirely possible that they were brought on board at the last port before arriving in the Philippines. However, as they were not discovered until arrival in Manila, it is impossible to say exactly which point during the voyage they entered the ship. The packages were referred to as “attempted unlawful importation.”<sup>688</sup> However, as the owner could not be determined, it is equally unclear whether they were intended for personal use or were part of a larger narcotics smuggling operation.<sup>689</sup>

The former seems more likely, as illegal shipments carried out by larger operations demonstrated much greater ingenuity in efforts to evade detection. In February 1933 four hundred one-tael tins of “Lion” brand smoking opium were discovered concealed within machinery parts, similarly to Louis Grant’s thwarted smuggling attempt over two decades earlier. The drugs were hidden within hollow spaces in wooden platforms for the machinery and were registered on the *Anking*’s cargo manifest as “five cases of second-hand machinery marked ‘W & Co.’” Investigation revealed W & Co. referred to Worder and Co., which was found to be a pseudonym employed for these illicit shipments. As their presence on the *Anking* attests, these were smuggled in from Amoy [Xiamen], and apparently sent by Chuan Bee Hang of Amoy. Despite knowing the identity of the exporter, the recipient was only described by the Bureau of Narcotics as “a local Chinese.” This anonymous Chinese inhabitant of Manila was apparently not apprehended.<sup>690</sup>

---

<sup>688</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1933, p.2.

<sup>689</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>690</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1933, p.3.

This was more information than the authorities often had to go on, however, even when drugs following the same illicit trafficking routes were confiscated. Other seizures of opium conveyed from Amoy to Manila via the *Anking* could not be traced back to a specific exporter in China or linked to a recipient in the Philippines. This was also true of drugs transported through other trafficking routes, often under English pseudonyms. Two trunks were confiscated in December 1933 after being searched in the Chinese Baggage Inspection Room in Manila after each was found to contain 1,700 one-tael tins of smoking opium of the “Lion” brand. The trunks were labeled “T.E. Williams” and “T.K. Williams.” Neither Williams was listed among the passengers or crew of the S.S. *Empress of Canada*, which had transported the drugs to Manila after stopping at Victoria, Honolulu, Yokohama, Kōbō, Shanghai and Hong Kong. In a similar manner to the opium found earlier that year on the *President Grant*, it was “not possible to ascertain the person responsible for this attempted unlawful importation.”<sup>691</sup>

There were naturally exceptions to the anonymity of many confiscated imports of opium. Tang Hang was arrested at the Manila port and detained by the police after customs seized a trunk “of which he was endeavoring to obtain delivery and in which were found 90 large and 8 small cylindrical tins of smoking opium of a total weight of 2,850 grams.”<sup>692</sup> Tang Hang had taken a steamship from Hong Kong and had concealed the opium in a false wall of the trunk. It was not specified if he comprised part of a larger smuggling operation, although the quantity of opium seized implies it was for distribution rather than personal consumption. In a similar fashion, Chuah Engki was arrested after attempting to claim his baggage at the Chinese Baggage Inspection Room. Upon arrival from Amoy, via the *Anking*, his belongings were found to contain

---

<sup>691</sup> Ibid.

<sup>692</sup> Ibid, p.2.

“10 tins of smoking opium weighing 3,225 grams and 71 one-tael tins of smoking opium, the one-tael tins being labeled "Dragon" brand.”<sup>693</sup>

Trying to prevent smuggling into the Philippines was only a small part of enforcing prohibition, however. Drugs that were brought into Manila were also re-exported to other areas of the archipelago. In March 1933, the customs warehouse in Cebu seized three cases labeled “China Tea, T.Y.C. Cebu” containing 900 tins of prepared opium of approximately 55 kg. These tins were labeled with the familiar “Tonggee” brand. Following investigation, the tins were determined to have originated in Amoy and were smuggled into Manila via the *Anking*. Having initially evaded the customs officers, the opium was then smuggled on board the S.S. *Panay*, which then docked in Cebu. The exporter in Amoy was alleged to be Bun Chuan. The owner of the opium was identified as Ting Yao Ching, who was detained and charged with illegal importation. An associate of Ching “accused of being implicated in this transaction” was not identified by name but described only as “a fugitive from justice.”<sup>694</sup> Iloilo was another frequent destination for re-exported contraband. In November 1933, Quo Fi Yok was arrested for illegal possession of opium after 100 one-tael tins of the “Tonggee” brand were discovered on the property of the Compania Maritima in Iloilo City. However, he was acquitted after a trial in the Court of First Instance.<sup>695</sup>

The same year, the *Journal of the American Chamber of Commerce* published an article on the state of prohibition in the Philippines. The Chamber of Commerce article was significantly more optimistic regarding the effects of prohibition than the Bureau of Narcotics reports from the time. Entitled “Philippines Have Narcotics Under Control,” it essentially

---

<sup>693</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1933, p.3.

<sup>694</sup> *Ibid*, p.2.

<sup>695</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1933, p.3.

reiterated the arguments of the 1920s that illicit trafficking was being successfully quelled by the authorities. The Chamber of Commerce claimed, albeit without citing supporting evidence, that prohibition was effective; “not to the exclusion of all abuses, but with...such eminent success, that little fault could be found.”<sup>696</sup> It also echoed Brent’s speech in 1923 before the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium in citing statistics of imported narcotics as evidence of decreased consumption in the Philippines. Unlike Brent, it did add the caveat that “so far as the field extends *outside of smuggled narcotics that can’t be traced*, use of narcotics in the Philippines is declining.”<sup>697</sup> [emphasis added] Moreover, “criminal administration of morphine does take place and is not altogether preventable.”<sup>698</sup> The Chamber of Commerce emulated the standard claims of American colonial officials in attributing this ongoing illicit consumption of morphine to the Chinese minority, “who now resort to morphine as cheaper and less noticeable to the authorities than the use of opium.”<sup>699</sup>

With regard to the “criminal administration of morphine” in question, the article also noted the recent death of Dr. Dominador Gomez. As discussed in the previous chapter, a controversial ruling had acquitted Dr. Gomez of providing illicit morphine injections to habitual consumers and subsequently his clinic had been closed. The Chamber of Commerce viewed him as an “amoralist,” describing his activities as follows:

Rather accounted a good fellow than a bad one, he seemed unable to distinguish between right and wrong and was always thought to administer morphine to people habituated to its use, especially to Chinese whom it served in lieu of opium. He was cunning in ways to evade the law and no air-tight case was ever made against

---

<sup>696</sup> “Philippines Have Narcotics Under Control,” *Journal of the American Chamber of Commerce*, October 1933, BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>697</sup> “Philippines Have Narcotics Under Control,” BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>698</sup> Ibid.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid.

him, but after the internal revenue collector's patience was exhausted the genial doctor's clinic [emphasis in original], as he styled it grandiloquently, was closed and he was threatening to have the law on the collector when he died. Such abuses do occur, despite the fact that all opiates dispensed by wholesalers and importers are only sold on permits approved at the internal revenue bureau showing amounts and names of purchasers as well as the specific character of the drug purveyed.

This description of Gomez illuminates the racial and, to a lesser extent, class prejudices very much at work in the American Philippines of the 1930s. Gomez was essentially given the benefit of the doubt as to his character; it is very unlikely a Chinese distributor of illicit morphine injections would have been accounted rather “a good fellow than a bad one.”<sup>700</sup> The paternalistic attitudes of the American colonial state towards the indigenous Filipino population are also evident. Gomez's actions are considered the result of his “inability to distinguish between right and wrong,” in the language one would use in reference to a young child.<sup>701</sup> Rather than being found innocent in the eyes of the law, his acquittal was the result of his “cunning.” The Chamber of Commerce failed to consider the possibility that Gomez may have viewed the distribution of morphine as a legitimate medical practice, regardless of its legality. In continuing to give “morphine to people habituated to its use” he may have felt that preventing withdrawal symptoms in his patients took priority in terms of ethics.<sup>702</sup>

The piece has undertones of skepticism towards the legitimacy of Gomez's access to pharmaceuticals in the first place, as a Filipino doctor in an American colony. Despite being a qualified medical practitioner, insofar as the Chamber of Commerce was concerned Gomez's workplace was not a proper surgery but “grandiloquently” styled as a clinic. The public health

---

<sup>700</sup> “Philippines Have Narcotics Under Control,” BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>701</sup> Ibid.

<sup>702</sup> Ibid.

system exhibited similar suspicion towards Filipino medical practitioners accessing drugs without credentials deemed sufficient by the colonial state. The Bureau of Health had previously stated that *cirujano ministrantes* “are not found among the professionals authorized to prescribe and sell opium.”<sup>703</sup> *Cirujano ministrantes* literally translates as administrator of surgery but refers to dentists whose qualifications were issued under the Spanish regime. Despite having training in dentistry, this medical background was summarily dismissed by the colonial public health service in a similar manner to unskilled peddlers, “who are neither grocers nor merchants, and, therefore, the peddling of medicines is not permitted.”<sup>704</sup>

Gomez was obviously not the only illicit purveyor of morphine, or even the only one known to the authorities. Manila Chief of Police Columbus E. Piatt wrote “Regarding narcotics, there are four clinics in the city where morphine injections are administered to drug addicts. These clinics have been raided, arrests made, and several of the persons apprehended have been convicted. As to smuggling of narcotics, there have been rare cases since 1931.”<sup>705</sup> The *Manila Tribune* had noted the previous year in June 1932 that a “local physician, well-known in commercial circles, is being watched with interest by the authorities, for alleged extensive dealing in morphine.”<sup>706</sup> Alleged to be “in league with Chinese opium smugglers with headquarters in Amoy, China,” the *Tribune* did not name the physician in question.<sup>707</sup> It is unlikely the article referred to Dr. Gomez without naming him directly, given his notorious status by the time of his death in 1932 or early 1933; it may be one of the four clinics cited by Piatt. It is clear nonetheless that physicians’ legal access to morphine supplies facilitated a role in illicit

---

<sup>703</sup> *Report* [1916] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.12.

<sup>704</sup> *Report* [1911] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing) p.55.

<sup>705</sup> “Philippines Have Narcotics Under Control,” BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

<sup>706</sup> *Tribune*, “Police Notes,” 5 June 1932.

<sup>707</sup> *Tribune*, “Police,” 5 June 1932.

distribution of the substance, and this was a known phenomenon in the Philippines by the early 1930s.<sup>708</sup>

In addition to morphine, reports of seizures indicate the market for manufactured pharmaceuticals such as cocaine had also grown by the early 1930s. There were a number of advantages to cocaine from a distributor's perspective, being easy to transport and potent enough to sell in small quantities. However, media sources from the time also demonstrate that seizures of cocaine were rarely made in isolation. In May 1933, baggage from the *Anking* was once again found to contain illicit drugs:

There were seized in the Chinese Baggage Inspection Room at Manila, on May 14, 1933, four cases containing Chinese preserved fruit, having concealed therein 3,830 one-tael tins of smoking opium; 2 packages with a total of 440 grams of morphine and one package containing 235 grams of cocaine. Those drugs and merchandise were part of the cargo of the SS. ANKING, which had arrived at Manila on May 13, 1933, coming directly from Amoy. None of the packages of morphine or cocaine bore marks or labels, but 1,902 tins of opium bore labels purporting to be the "Lion" brand and the remaining 1,928 tins bore label;; with the "Tonggee" brand. It was not possible to determine who was the consignor in China nor the person responsible for this attempted unlawful importation.<sup>709</sup>

While morphine and prepared opium were known to have previously been smuggled from Amoy [Xiamen] to the Philippines via the *Anking*, cocaine was not mentioned on this particular trafficking route until the 1933 report. An additional shipment of cocaine from Xiamen

---

<sup>708</sup> Ibid.

<sup>709</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1933, p.2.

to Manila was discovered in the belongings of Fermin Ponce, alias Tan Hiang Pua, in June 1933.<sup>710</sup> Ponce had attempted to disguise cocaine hydrochloride in a five-gallon container filled with Chinese salted beans, in which the cocaine receptacle was soldered to an upper corner. This was not smuggled via the *Anking* but the *S.S. Kwantung*, implying a number of steamships between Xiamen and Manila were likely to have been utilized for illicit trafficking. Unlike most seizures of cocaine, the 655 grains were not smuggled alongside opiates, indicating that there was a sufficient market for the substance coexisting with demand for opium and morphine.<sup>711</sup> The evidence for this market is further substantiated by the total of 1,050 grams of cocaine seized during the calendar year of 1933 by “officials charged with the enforcement of the narcotic laws.”<sup>712</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the market for illicit drugs was still apparently limited to opium and manufactured pharmaceuticals in the early 1930s. The government of the Philippines stated in regard to marijuana, described as “Indian hemp,” that “the government of the Philippine Islands has nothing to report with respect to this drug. Philippine hemp or abaca (a plant commercially produced in the Islands) is *musa textilic*, a plant not related to *cannabis sativa*.”<sup>713</sup>

Cocaine was not unique to seizures made during the course of 1933. In February 1934, the *New York Times* reported that the steamer *President Wilson* had docked in Manila from New York City. En route from Manila to San Francisco, it was subsequently discovered that several packages containing about \$10,000 worth of cocaine [the equivalent of approximately \$194,000 today] were hidden in two lifejackets on board the ship.<sup>714</sup> In addition to the packages of cocaine,

---

<sup>710</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1933, p.2.

<sup>711</sup> *Ibid*, pp.2-3.

<sup>712</sup> *Ibid*, p.6.

<sup>713</sup> *Ibid*, p.4.

<sup>714</sup> *New York Times*, “Guards Put on Liner After Narcotic Find: Trunk of Opium on Manila Pier and Cocaine in Hold of President Wilson Seized,” 25 February 1934.

a trunk of opium had also been uncovered in the hold at Manila, worth about \$40,000, or \$775,000 today. The trunk was labeled as belonging to C.B. Miller, and aroused suspicion when no passengers of that name were recorded on the ship's manifest. The trunk containing opium was found alongside the belongings of a passenger who had boarded at Shanghai and was determined to be "a Chinese." The passenger was later identified as Ning Eng Kian and held for questioning.<sup>715</sup>

Similarly to previous cases, the Dollar Steamship Line owning the *President Wilson* avoided conviction for the illicit drugs on board. Approximately two decades prior in 1913, the ship *Rubi* was found to have carried 13,380 kg of opium and 2,620 kg of morphine from Hong Kong to Manila. The Insular Collector of Customs seized the ship and fined the company 500 pesos, the standard penalty. The company owning the *Rubi* appealed and the Manila Court of First Instance overturned the judgement of the Insular Collector of Customs. The colonial government appealed and the Court of First Instance's decision was upheld by the Supreme Court on the grounds that the owners and officers on board ship were unaware of the drugs. Only the crew members involved in smuggling them (who were caught when they tried to deliver the opium and morphine to undercover customs agents) were convicted.<sup>716</sup> In the case of the Dollar Steamship Line and the *President Wilson*, it likewise could not be proven that the owners or ship's captain or other officers were aware of the presence of the drugs on the ship or involved in smuggling. Ultimately, no one was charged for possession or trafficking of the cocaine and the ship's owners were not penalized for the smuggled opium.<sup>717</sup> The lack of charges indicates that

---

<sup>715</sup> *New York Times*, "Guards Put on Liner After Narcotic Find," 25 February 1934.

<sup>716</sup> *The United States of America and the Insular Collector of Customs, plaintiffs-appellants, v. The Steamship "Rubi," represented by Warner, Barnes, & Co (Ltd.)* (17 November 1915) G.R. No. L-9235 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1915).

<sup>717</sup> *New York Times*, "Guards Put on Liner After Narcotic Find," 25 February 1934.

by the mid-1930s, the colonial state was less zealous about pursuing cases against vessels used for smuggling than in previous decades.

Seizures made during the course of 1934 consisted of opium and morphine, with no mention of cocaine.<sup>718</sup> It is unlikely a demand for cocaine vanished entirely from one year to the next, implying instead that the authorities charged with tackling smuggling were unsuccessful in locating it. However, both cocaine and heroin were included in the list of drugs that had been confiscated and destroyed by the colonial government that year. In addition to opium and morphine, a table of the drugs in question included 84 grams of cocaine powder, 4 cubic centimeters of cocaine solution and one package of cocaine in an unspecified form, as well as 10 grams of heroin.<sup>719</sup> There was no explanation for the apparent discrepancy in the report.

As previously stated, despite being touted as evidence of the success of customs officials in tackling smuggling, seizures of large quantities of drugs did not necessarily contribute to preventing illicit trafficking itself. Drugs like the cocaine discovered on the *President Wilson* that could not be traced to an individual or an organization merely entailed the confiscation of that particular shipment, rather than breaking up the smuggling ring involved. The authorities were evidently more successful in attempting to contain illicit distribution at the municipal level. In November of 1934, the *Manila Tribune* reported “Doctor Taken in Dope Raid: Detective injured as Chinese guards put up stiff fight.”<sup>720</sup> The physician in question was identified as Dr. Ramon Donato, who was arrested along with “26 supposed morphine addicts and a Filipino woman.” The case essentially mirrored that of Dominador Gomez, in that a Filipino licensed medical

---

<sup>718</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Year Ended December 31, 1934* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1935).

<sup>719</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands*, 1934, p.4.

<sup>720</sup> *Tribune*, “Doctor Taken in Dope Raid: Detective injured as Chinese guards put up stiff fight,” 20 November 1934.

professional was determined to be providing morphine injections to habitual consumers, evidently all Chinese. This was clearly a well-established practice rather than an impromptu arrangement. The building was on Calle Madrid, part of a neighborhood in Manila where opium and later morphine were easily accessible before and after prohibition went into effect. Moreover, the location itself was described as “situated in the upper parts of a 3 story house and was closely barricaded,” presumably in order to defend against incursions by the police. In order for them to apprehend Donato and his clientele, after overpowering two guards at the gate “the raiding party had to break down four doors and climb three flights of narrow, steep and darkened stairs to reach the supposed den.” Escape proved to be impracticable; “the detectives found eight Chinese jammed in the bathroom, ten groping down the fire escape, several crawling on the adjoining roofs and the rest in the room.” One of the policemen, Detective Palmer, was injured in the process of pursuing the suspects trying to escape via the adjoining roofs. The article emphasized the identities of the people involved, as the other officers were named as Detective Goodrick and Detective Buenaventura, and the 26 Chinese suspects were all identified individually by name as well. Dr. Donato was later released on a bail of 1,000 pesos awaiting trial.<sup>721</sup>

The description of the raid and arrests give a good idea of the measures that could be taken to safeguard sites of illicit narcotics consumption from the authorities. For reasons which are unclear, the *Manila Tribune* goes into great detail for what would have been fairly routine for a narcotics raid. Given the identities of the people involved, the depiction of a corrupt Filipino doctor providing morphine to Chinese consumers before being forced to cease operations primarily through the efforts of American detectives bolstered the narrative of the presence of the

---

<sup>721</sup> *Tribune*, “Doctor Taken in Dope Raid,” 20 November 1934.

US colonial state as a ‘civilizing’ influence. In light of the readership of an English-language newspaper in 1930s Manila, this depiction was not accidental. It is unclear if this was the same doctor the *Tribune* had reported in 1932 as being suspected of “extensive dealings in morphine.”<sup>722</sup> Biases aside, it is evident nonetheless, as previously stated, that Filipino doctors in Manila were both legal dispensers and illicit distributors of morphine, with some medical professionals utilizing their legal access to pharmaceuticals for proscribed purposes. Unlike in the case of Dominador Gomez, Ramon Donato seems not to have been given the benefit of the doubt regarding his motives. Finally, it is also unclear if the Filipino woman apprehended by the police was an associate of Donato or a consumer of the morphine he supplied.

#### The Philippine Commonwealth to WWII, 1935-1939

The primary political development of the 1930s in the Philippines was not a change in drugs regulations but rather the advent of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 established the Commonwealth as a transitional form of government until full independence scheduled for 1945. As the name implies, this effectively signified home rule for the Philippines, with the US government retaining control over foreign affairs. This also meant the replacement of the US-appointed Governor-General with a popularly elected Filipino president as chief executive, who still annually reported to the US government. A survey of reports by the Philippine Commonwealth government from 1935-1942 demonstrates they do not directly refer to prohibition in the Philippines or efforts to suppress illicit trafficking.

---

<sup>722</sup> *Tribune*, “Police Notes,” 5 June 1932.

Reports by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in the US to the League of Nations indicate that customs officials in the Philippines during the Commonwealth period were still overseen, at least nominally, by officials in Washington. Rather than significant legislative reform, the Commonwealth government simply the state apparatus charged with enforcing drug laws. The Commissioner of Health and Welfare, José Fabella, was now apparently responsible for reporting on opium regulations to the Permanent Central Opium Board at the League of Nations following Executive Order 107 by the Commonwealth President. Several other agencies collaborated on overseeing various aspects of prohibition, resulting in a complicated array of government officials with overlapping jurisdictions. The information in the Commissioner of Health's report to the League of Nations was provided by "the Chief of the Philippine Constabulary and the Chiefs of Police with respect to illicit traffic in the interior; the Insular Collector of Customs for Confiscations on account of illicit import and export; the Collector of Internal Revenue relative to legitimate trade in the interior, importation and exportation; and the Secretary of Justice with respect to prosecutions."<sup>723</sup> This was augmented by the assistance of "Provincial Commanders and Chiefs of police of municipalities...reporting from time to time individual cases of illicit traffic."<sup>724</sup>

Police tactics regarding enforcement of drug laws within the Philippines do not appear to have changed significantly following the advent of the Commonwealth. Despite the known involvement of Filipinos in narcotics distribution, ethnic Chinese individuals seem to have been more likely to be targeted for drugs violations by the police. Small-scale seizures in Manila were

---

<sup>723</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs for the Year Ended December 31, 1938* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1939) p.6.

<sup>724</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, pp.6-7.

frequently reported in local newspapers. These accounts give an idea of both the nature of narcotics consumers and of colonial policing and prohibition by the fourth decade of its enforcement. Details of arrests like these also indicate that drugs remained a widely available commodity by the 1930s and accessible by individuals of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including those with few resources. For example, in July 1936 a raid on a suspected site of morphine distribution on 542 Calle Madrid resulted in the arrests of Lim Hong and Ng Eng. Hong and Eng were both in their early 30s and described respectively as “laundryman” and “jobless.”<sup>725</sup> They nonetheless appear to have secured a certain quantity of morphine and were subsequently detained. An article describing the raid stated that “several addict suspects were found in the place but the raiders picked Lim Hong...and Ng Eng,” but did not specify why these two were singled out.<sup>726</sup> However, evidence of racial bias in policing remained apparent, as anecdotes like this arrest in December 1936 imply: “Two Chinese were arrested in a raid conducted by the vice squad under Sergeant Velasco last evening at nine o'clock. Koy Bay and Soy Hok were arrested in 542 Madrid, San Nicolas, at nine o'clock last evening for illegal possession of a bottle and package of what is supposed to be morphine.”<sup>727</sup> Calle Madrid was a street in the Chinatown section of Manila that was frequently linked to the illicit commerce in narcotics in Manila. The bottle and package were not confirmed to be morphine at the time of arrest, implying the ethnicity of their erstwhile owners was the primary reason for initially attracting the attention of the officers. Arrests were frequently made in the vicinity of Calle Madrid and Chinese individuals were usually targeted. Another arrest for possession of morphine took place under similar circumstances in April 1937, when Chua Dy was caught with six

---

<sup>725</sup> *Tribune*, “Hi Officer! What’s Up?” 9 July 1936.

<sup>726</sup> *Tribune*, “Hi Officer!” 9 July 1936.

<sup>727</sup> *Tribune*, “Hi Officer! What’s Up?” 3 December 1936.

Piedmont cigarettes in which he had hidden morphine on the corner of Madrid and Jaboneros.<sup>728</sup> It is unclear if this was a common practice for concealing morphine at the time or simply resourcefulness on Dy's part. It is also unclear whether the cigarettes were intended for smoking the morphine or merely purposes of hiding them from the eyes of the police. Either way, it can be seen to represent a modernization of an older cultural practice of smoking opium. Morphine was by now a common, affordable commodity- Chua Dy's occupation was listed as cook- and a much more potent derivative of opium. Piedmont cigarettes were imported into the Philippines from the US and, in the 1930s, symbolized the modern age in comparison to the traditional cigars and opium pipes.

Nonetheless, it is unlikely that an American citizen living in a wealthy neighborhood of Manila would have been subjected to similar inspection. It is thus difficult to tell whether the Chinese community being overrepresented in convictions for drug violations was due to this being a genuine part of illicit traffic and consumption of drugs in the Philippines or simply racial profiling on the part of the police. The racial prejudice directed by the colonial state towards the Chinese community was apparent, as the contempt for Chua Dy in the article is obvious. Entitled "The Police Were Smarter," the tone is that of an adult referring to the exploits of a badly behaved child.<sup>729</sup>

Despite the complicated apparatus of law enforcement and contrary to the statements of observers like the American Chamber of Commerce in the first half of the 1930s, the Commissioner of Health and Welfare admitted that smuggling "displayed a very marked increase" from 1937 to 1938.<sup>730</sup> "A very marked increase" was an understatement, given that the

---

<sup>728</sup> *Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 6 April 1937.

<sup>729</sup> *Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 6 April 1937.

<sup>730</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.8.

same report noted that the quantity of seized prepared opium had risen from 67 kilograms in 1937 to 468 kilograms in 1938. As stated previously, official statistics reflected the extent of the government's awareness of smuggling from arrests and seizures rather than an accurate depiction of the volume of illicit traffic. However, the increase in confiscated narcotics from 1937-1938 may be the result of growth in the overall amount of drugs smuggled in the Philippines as well as augmented government activity in pursuing traffickers. The Commissioner of Health and Welfare attributed the substantial rise in seizures to "partly the extensive anti-smuggling campaign started by Mr. James Keefe, Chief of the Customs Secret Service, and partly to the disturbed conditions in China as a result of the Sino-Japanese War."<sup>731</sup>

"Disturbed conditions" was a very euphemistic term for the second Sino-Japanese War's impact on China, as postwar records from the Tokyo Trials indicate. While the history of Japanese drug trafficking via occupied China is obviously outside the scope of this dissertation, a brief recounting of some of the evidence presented in the Tokyo Trial is useful for explaining why this conflict contributed to an increase in smuggling in the Philippines.

In North China, particularly in Hopeh and Shantung, after the Tangku Truce of 1933, and the establishment of a demilitarized zone the Chinese were unable to control the drug traffic...the distribution of the drugs being handled by various companies and associations controlled by Japanese. After the occupation of Tientsin in 1937 there was a notable increase in the use of narcotics...it was stated before the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium in May 1937 that it was common knowledge that almost 90% of all illicit white drugs in the world were of Japanese origin manufactured in Tientsin, Dairen and the other cities of Manchuria and North China...it is sufficient to say that in Shanghai, in Fukien [Fujian] Province and Kwantung Province in South China after 1937, upon occupation of each province and large centre by the Japanese, the traffic in drugs

---

<sup>731</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.8.

increased on a scale corresponding to that in other parts of the country which has already been described.<sup>732</sup>

Along with Xiamen and Hong Kong, Shanghai and Fujian Province had been frequent sites of origin for illegal shipments of opium and morphine into the Philippines. The increase in the drug trade described above, in addition to the breakdown of any attempts to prevent it by the Chinese authorities, facilitated both a greater supply of narcotics and the removal of impediments to exporting them. Accusations regarding the official trade in narcotics by imperial Japan were prevalent prior to the war. H. Hessel Tiltman claimed in *The Uncensored Far East* (1938) that “in the reckoning which China holds against Japan is an item deserving only less prominence than the current orgy of mechanised slaughter.” This was in reference to “the trade in death-dealing narcotics- morphine, cocaine, heroin, and the rest- conducted beneath the eyes of the Japanese police...rotting the moral fibre of the Chinese race.”<sup>733</sup> As the Tokyo Trials report later corroborated, Tiltman claimed the trade was essentially headquartered in Tientsin [Tianjin], but also noted the impact on the surrounding region, including the Philippines.<sup>734</sup>

The Philippines had yet to feel the full impact of Japanese expansion, as a short piece in the *Manila Tribune* indicates. The *Tribune* reported, apparently as a human interest article: “Laurel and Hardy triumphed over China's immediate sorrows when Ng Piao, 27, patriotic citizen of the embattled republic, was seized a fit of hysterical laughter while inside a downtown showhouse at 9 o'clock last night, his convulsions of mirth ending only about an hour later at the

---

<sup>732</sup> *Judgment of 4 November 1948*: International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Washington: Bureau of Printing, 1948), p.386.

<sup>733</sup> *Newcastle Sun*, NSW Australia, “Drugs and Bullets Threaten Chinese,” 24 January 1938.

<sup>734</sup> *Newcastle Sun*, “Drugs and Bullets,” 24 January 1938

Philippine General Hospital when he was lulled to sleep with a shot of morphine.”<sup>735</sup> Piao’s condition received the uncommon diagnosis of “male hysteria.”<sup>736</sup> This was a rare instance of a Chinese inhabitant of the Philippines being reported in connection with narcotics without being arrested for illegal possession, which also indicates the versatility of morphine for the medical profession at the time.

Despite Piao’s innocence, the police in the Philippines had no shortage of suspects in the second half of the 1930s, as newspaper reports from the time make clear. As previously stated, the *Manila Tribune* frequently noted arrests for alleged narcotics violations in the capital. These arrests were so commonplace that they often only merited a line or two in a larger column on recent police activity. The 2 February 1937 edition reported “Two suspected morphine addicts who gave their names as Marcelo Dy Pac and Jacinto Qng. were nabbed by plain-clothesmen at the corner of Camba and Lavezares at 7:45 o'clock last night.”<sup>737</sup> Two months later, “Ong Chang Sy, 21, was run in by the police last night in front of 725 Juan Luna for illegal possession of drugs...three packages of morphine in powder was [sic] found on his body.”<sup>738</sup> By May 1937, the market for morphine had grown to the extent the police initiated a crackdown on morphine consumers specifically, rather than conflating them with ‘opium habitués’. After “launching a campaign against morphine addicts,” an unspecified “large quantity of morphine” and eight alleged morphine consumers were detained by police after a raid on 432 Caballeros, which was “reputedly owned by a Chinese.”<sup>739</sup> The morphine was then turned over to the school of hygiene

---

<sup>735</sup> *Tribune*, “Laughing Movie Fan Lands in Hospital,” 5 August 1938.

<sup>736</sup> *Tribune*, “Laughing Movie Fan,” 5 August 1938.

<sup>737</sup> *Tribune*, “Hi Officer! What’s Up?” 2 February 1937.

<sup>738</sup> *Tribune*, “Hi Officer! What’s Up?” 27 April 1937.

<sup>739</sup> *Tribune*, “Drug Den Raided: Eight Suspected Addicts Found in Morphine Drive,” 14 May 1937.

and public health of the University of the Philippines.<sup>740</sup> Medical researchers at the University also contributed to anti-morphine consumption efforts by attempting to develop alternatives to medicinal morphine. In September 1937, it was reported that “production of cobra serum on a commercial scale will shortly be started by the government bacteriological laboratory at Alabang, which is operated by the University of the Philippines.”<sup>741</sup> Cobra serum was intended to replace morphine as a painkiller, in particular for cancer, as it lacked morphine’s habit-forming properties.

Cobra serum substitutes notwithstanding, the high volume of illicit distribution of narcotics in the Philippines obviously predated the increase around the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, and upon occasion government officials charged with enforcing prohibition were evidently incompetent or implicated themselves. An internal investigation was carried out after Sy King, who was “arrested for trying to slip in some contraband drug into a...station cell where a Chinaman was locked up yesterday morning [and] seeing that no one was looking...bolted for the door and ran out.”<sup>742</sup> More significantly, in January 1937, it was discovered that 200 tins of opium that had been seized by customs in 1927 and held by the Opium Custodian Committee of the Philippine Constabulary had been replaced by molasses and sand. This was leaked to the media, as the *South China Morning Post* stated “the mysterious disappearance of the contents of 200 tins of opium...may result in investigation of officials responsible for the safe-keeping of seized contraband.”<sup>743</sup> The disappearance of the opium obviously resulted in an internal inquiry, which was communicated to the Bureau of Insular Affairs in DC by the Philippine President himself. This in turn revealed details of an earlier investigation in 1934, when “serious

---

<sup>740</sup> *Tribune*, “Drug Den Raided,” 14 May 1937.

<sup>741</sup> *Tribune*, “Cobra Serum Production,” 16 September 1937.

<sup>742</sup> *Tribune*, “Hi Officer! What’s Up?” 23 January 1937.

<sup>743</sup> *South China Morning Post*, Missing Opium: Contents replaced with sand at Manila, ” 23 February 1937.

irregularities in the manner of handling opium exhibits deposited with the Opium Custodian Committee were discovered.”<sup>744</sup> During the course of this investigation, the clerk of the Opium Custodian Committee, Sergeant Major W.M. Macatangay committed suicide by gunshot. Before dying, he signed a statement in which he assumed “all responsibility for the irregularities which had been discovered, thereby clearing the members of the Opium Custodian Committee of any complicity.” This rather convenient deathbed confession resulted in an end to any further investigation. Three years later, the authorities decided that the opium tins must have been substituted for molasses and sand by Macatangay before 1934 in light of his ante-mortem statement and previous access to the facilities containing the opium in question.<sup>745</sup>

In April 1937, the seizure of 430 tins of prepared opium off the coast of Pasay by the local police resulted in another internal investigation. This one was directed at Customs, rather than the Opium Custodian Committee. Delfin Hampton and Nicolas Velaya were arrested for trying to row five bags containing 140 taels of opium and 5 taels of morphine to shore from the *Nanking*, later claiming that they had no knowledge of smuggling. Hampton insisted that he and Velaya had simply been paid thirty pesos “by a Chinese, whose name he did not know,” to transport the bags without knowing their contents.<sup>746</sup> This seemingly straightforward arrest and defense then led to the internal customs inquiry. Given the ease with which the drugs had left the *Nanking* despite the customs officials on board, the local customs officials were suspected of being complicit in the flow of narcotics into the Philippines rather than attempting to stem them.

---

<sup>744</sup> Assistant Secretary, Treasury Department to the Secretary of War, 17 May 1934, BIA Box 204 Folder 1023/338.

<sup>745</sup> Assistant Secretary, Treasury Department to the Secretary of War, Bureau of Insular Affairs, 17 May 1934, BIA Box 204 Folder 1023/338.

<sup>746</sup> *Manila Tribune*, “Customs Men Aboard Ships Face Inquiry: Alas Orders Opium Seizure Probed,” 24 April 1937.

The customs officials and the late Sergeant Macatangay were not the only ones to purportedly exploit their legal access to narcotics. Dr. Ramon Donato's clinic was raided once more on 18 October 1938. Similarly to Donato's previous encounter with the customs secret police in 1934, illicit narcotics and drug paraphernalia such as hypodermic syringes were confiscated. Donato and "thirty-nine Chinese, who upon subsequent examination were found to be opium addicts" were arrested.<sup>747</sup> This was approximately an increase of 33% from the 26 Chinese arrested in the 1934 raid, perhaps suggesting that Donato's clientele had increased since his previous offense. Donato was again subsequently charged with "maintaining an opium dive or resort and for prescribing opium unnecessarily for a patient in violation of articles 190 and 194 of the Revised Penal Code" and plead not guilty.<sup>748</sup> Police sergeant Beltran had stated the previous year that the vice squad had a suspected den under surveillance, which was thought to be run by a physician. It is unclear whether the physician in question was Dr. Donato or if other doctors had emulated his example in illegally distributing morphine.<sup>749</sup>

On December 14, 1938, Martin and Amada Nubla were also apprehended by agents of the Division of Investigation, while in the process of selling morphine to a Chinese man identified as Lim Cui Suy. The Nublas represented another distribution point between Filipinos and Chinese morphine consumers. The morphine, money made from the transaction and the individuals themselves were all detained.<sup>750</sup> The cases of Donato and the Nublas were some of the few reported seizures of contraband that resulted in an arrest of the individual allegedly responsible for distributing illicit pharmaceuticals. In a similar manner to the first half of the 1930s, James Keefe's campaign to crack down on smuggling seems to have resulted in

---

<sup>747</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.12.

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>749</sup> *Tribune*, "Drug Den Raided: Eight Suspected Addicts Found in Morphine Drive," 14 May 1937.

<sup>750</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, pp. 13-14.

significant quantities of narcotics being confiscated but frequently limited success in determining the individuals or entities responsible for importing them. In April 1938 alone, 500 tins of prepared opium were found on board the *Empress of Asia*, “four horn tubes and one porcelain jar containing a total weight of 147 grams of prepared opium, and one tin can containing 62 grams of opium dross” were discovered concealed in a pair of shoes on the *Changte*, and 2,500 tins of opium were seized from the *President Adams*. 2,998 tins of opium were found on the *Tjisadane* in August.<sup>751</sup> No arrests were made for any of these seizures, as none of the erstwhile owners could be determined.

However, the Philippine Commonwealth government did take further action following the seizure on the *President Adams*. The *President Adams* had come from the US and stopped at a number of ports before arriving in Manila, the last port of call being Hong Kong. Hong Kong was a well-known port of origin for opium smuggled into the Philippines, but the customs report noted in regard to the seizure that “although possibly loaded in Hongkong, the two cases [within which the opium was smuggled] had the appearance of having come from the US, as they were recognizably American.”<sup>752</sup> The opium tins themselves did not have any identifying marks to determine place of manufacture. Despite being unable to identify the smuggler, there was “a certain Chinese exporter,” whose name was listed on the export certificate as the owner of the two cases.<sup>753</sup> The Bureau of Customs subsequently contacted the British colonial government of Hong Kong to request their assistance in identifying the unnamed exporter. The outcome of the request was not specified, but it nonetheless indicates the ad hoc communications between

---

<sup>751</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, pp.9-10.

<sup>752</sup> *Ibid.*, p.9.

<sup>753</sup> *Ibid.*

colonial governments even in the absence of formal arrangements between them regarding drug control.

Occasionally, customs officials located a suspect but could not prove who owned the illicit goods. In August 1938, James Keefe and his agents found several boxes with 2,300 tins of opium in an empty water tank on the *Flintshire*, mostly due to the ship's Chief Officer who alerted them to the mysterious containers. Apparently, the customs agents "had suspicion as to who is the owner of the contraband [but] they did not make any arrest as there was no concrete evidence to warrant such a step."<sup>754</sup> Even when the owners of illicit narcotics were supposedly identified, legal technicalities sometimes intervened. After the British steamship *Adrastus* docked in Manila in November 1938, the captain immediately reported the discovery of 200 tins of opium on board to the Customs Secret Service. The alleged owners Zai King San and Liu Ah Tsan, who were both employed on the *Adrastus* as a lamp trimmer and sailor respectively, were turned over to the authorities in Manila for prosecution. However, the City Fiscal's office declined, claiming that under Philippine law they "lacked jurisdiction to prosecute."<sup>755</sup>

It is also possible that new routes of illicit trafficking began to expand in the late 1930s, further complicating the task of the customs authorities. When the steamship *Silverbelle* arrived in December 1938 in Manila from the Dutch East Indies [modern-day Indonesia], the captain turned over to Insular Customs 25 opium pills, or approximately 13 grams of opium, that he had discovered on board. The specific port of origin was not mentioned, merely that the *Silverbelle* came "from Java ports."<sup>756</sup> Smuggling from British North Borneo, to the north of Java, was a

---

<sup>754</sup> Ibid, p.10.

<sup>755</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.10.

<sup>756</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1939, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1940) p.39.

frequent and contentious phenomenon during the 1920s. However, smuggling from other regions of the Indonesian archipelago to the Philippines was not well-documented. There was nonetheless an existing informal agreement between the Philippines and the Dutch Indies dating from the Bangkok Convention of 1931, wherein “the Philippine Constabulary exchanges information with the Government of the Netherland Indies as to the importation, consumption, prices, and traffic in opium.”<sup>757</sup> It is unclear whether the pills in question were for personal consumption or represented part of an expansion of illicit traffic of narcotics in the region, as the owner could not be identified.

The *Silverbelle*'s involvement in illicit transport of opium did not end upon arrival in Manila, however. The subsequent voyage from Manila to San Francisco ended in US customs officials uncovering “one package of raw opium, weighing 440 gm. [grams], one 454 gm. brick of raw opium and 454 gm. of opium dross.”<sup>758</sup> Unsurprisingly, the following investigation was influenced by preconceived images of narcotics traffickers on the part of the authorities concerned. The Bureau of Narcotics noted that “a Chinese crew member” on the *Silverbelle* was interrogated in connection with the seizure. No reason for questioning that particular sailor was given, and the only identifying factor included in the description of the investigation was his ethnicity. There was evidently insufficient evidence linking him to the opium found on board, as the crew member was later released without charges.

Additional instances of drugs smuggled into the US via maritime traffic from the Philippines during that era include the case of the crew of the steamship *Don Jose*. *Don Jose* arrived in Portland, Oregon in September 1938 from Manila, carrying 1,579 one-tael tins of

---

<sup>757</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.8.

<sup>758</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America*, 1939, p. 39.

prepared opium. The opium was discovered in the midship and starboard coal bunkers on board the ship, buried in the coal, and promptly seized by customs. The subsequent investigation resulted in a confession by the machinist of the ship, Alberto Formentos. Perhaps seeking to lessen his sentence, Formentos implicated several other members of the crew. These included the third engineer, Jose Clemente, chief engineer Pedro Deleon, and the head coal stevedore for the ship's owners in the Manila port, identified only as Chia, as well as his sons, Manuel and Amoyo. Formentos, Clemente, and Deleon were Filipinos, while Chia and his sons were Chinese-Filipinos. Formentos claimed the opium was purchased from two Chinese men originally from Hong Kong named as Soo Lip Chip and Lou King Yue.<sup>759</sup> Further investigation revealed that while Formentos and Clemente had purchased the opium from Soo Lip Chip and Lou King Yue in a hotel room in Hong Kong, both Chinese men had addresses in the vicinity of Manila. The implication was that they regularly smuggled opium between Hong Kong and the Philippines. Clemente was also found to have a history of opium smuggling, and was on the "Customs Black List" of Manila.<sup>760</sup> The arrival of the opium in the US was supposedly inadvertent; the opium was apparently intended to be delivered to Chia and his sons in Manila but "circumstances at the...port prevented unloading."<sup>761</sup>

A later communication elaborating on the Bureau of Narcotics seizure report explained the circumstances in question: "The machinist on the Don Jose, Alberto Formentos...states that shortly after the ship arrived at the pier in Manila from Hong Kong, the third engineer [Clemente] told him, 'Chia is going to take the opium.' At approximately noon on the same day,

---

<sup>759</sup> "Narcotics Seizure Report," 12 September 1938, Federal Bureau of Narcotics, Secretary of State to Secretary of War, 22 September 1938, BIA, Entry 5, Box 204, File 1023/338.

<sup>760</sup> Acting Deputy Commissioner of Customs, Memorandum to the Chief, Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Dept., 8 December 1938, BIA, Entry 5, Box 204, File 1023/338.

<sup>761</sup> Ibid.

the chief engineer [Deleon] also told him that Chia was going to take the opium in Manila.” Chia apparently delegated his sons to collect the opium in person; “Manuel Chia and Amoyo Chia boarded the boat while anchored near the buoy and approached Alberto [Fermentos] and asked him ‘where is the opium?’ to which he replied ‘in the bunker’...The machinist states they were unable to take the opium ashore because of the heavy guard placed on the ship...also the coal barges were exiting the ship at the pier when it arrived and immediately began loading coal aboard.”<sup>762</sup> In addition to the issue of timing, Formentos and his co-conspirators failed to deliver the opium in Manila- leading to its discovery and seizure in Portland- due to the vigilance of the Customs Secret Service on ships arriving in Manila from Hong Kong. Despite the inability of the authorities to stem all illicit trafficking, the security apparatus was clearly capable of restricting the flow of illicit narcotics in some instances.

The adaptability of the illicit traffic in response to this security illustrates the difficulty the authorities had in keeping up. Commissioner of Health and Welfare Jose Fabella stated that as a result of the increased surveillance of the Customs Secret Service, illicit traffickers were now jettisoning opium into Manila Bay rather than smuggling through the piers. The opium was then “picked up by boatmen, with fast motor launches, in connivance with the smugglers.”<sup>763</sup> Opium manufacturers had adapted to this by packaging opium in tin cans which could float attached to buoys. The colonial state in turn found themselves forced to adapt by finally improving their logistical capabilities and technology. Ever since Francis Harrison’s tenure as governor-general in the 1910s, successive heads of customs had complained that budget constraints prevented them from purchasing sufficiently fast ships to confront smugglers off the

---

<sup>762</sup> Acting Deputy Commissioner of Customs, Memorandum to the Chief, Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Dept., 8 December 1938, BIA, Entry 5, Box 204 Folder 1023/338.

<sup>763</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.8.

coast. In July 1938, the *Manila Tribune* noted “it is difficult to think of a harbor in the world that offers better natural facilities for smugglers than Manila Bay...only by the most unremitting vigilance can the customs authorities even approximate anything like a satisfactory curb on the smugglers.”<sup>764</sup> The *Tribune* supported James Keefe’s renewed efforts as head of customs to deter smuggling, but stated pragmatically “the greatest watchfulness will not avail unless it is backed by equipment not only as good as, but better than that at the disposal of the smugglers...he would have to be superhuman to succeed completely in his task of preventing the smuggling of opium into Manila with the pursuit equipment he has pitted against the superior vessels of the smugglers.”<sup>765</sup>

In 1938, the Commonwealth government finally decided to address this disadvantage. Fabella admitted “for a time, due to lack of adequate facilities, the Customs Secret Service was crippled to counteract the activities of the smugglers of Manila Bay.”<sup>766</sup> However, he claimed that following the long-needed acquisition of modern speed boats by the Bureau of Customs, “smuggling offshore has been curtailed to a big extent.”<sup>767</sup> Nonetheless, geography again proved a hindrance to stamping out illicit traffic. After Manila Bay became less accessible, the smugglers relocated to less closely patrolled regions. Investigation of the inland illicit traffic by the Philippine Constabulary revealed that “a great portion of the opium smuggled into the country gained entry through the unguarded places of the Southern Luzon and the Visayan coasts.”<sup>768</sup> As a Spanish governor of Mindanao and Sulu had noted in the 1890s, a coast guard

---

<sup>764</sup> *Tribune*, “Opium Smuggling in Manila,” 22 July 1938.

<sup>765</sup> *Tribune*, “Opium Smuggling,” 22 July 1938.

<sup>766</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.8.

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>768</sup> *Ibid.*

stretching the length of the Philippines was not practicable, and smuggling was impossible to prevent entirely otherwise.

Unusually, legal exports of drugs from the Philippines were also recorded in 1938, due to the ongoing situation in China. The Government of the Philippines noted in their report to the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium that pharmaceuticals for medicinal use had been sent to China. These were admittedly very small quantities, as the report stated that “.0699 kilogram of morphine, .027 kilogram of cocaine and 0.105 kilogram of codeine were exported to China, through the Hongkong government.”<sup>769</sup> In order to prevent any doubts about their legality, the report clarified further that “the export certificate was issued by the Superintendent of Imports and Exports of Hongkong and the drugs were intended for medical relief purposes in China.”<sup>770</sup>

#### The outbreak of war, 1939-1942

The Commonwealth government, including the police and court system, seem to have initially attempted to carry on as normal regarding drug laws in the face of an increasingly unstable regional context. A brief statement was released by customs officials in July 1940, claiming that consumption of opium in the Philippines had fallen 42 per cent since 1929.<sup>771</sup> It did not state the basis for this assertion. Previous claims of this nature had been derived from statistics of legal imports of drugs without considering the volume of illicit traffic, rendering the accuracy of this statement equally suspect. The statement also insisted there had been a “steady

---

<sup>769</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*, 1938, p.7.

<sup>770</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>771</sup> *Tribune*, “Opium Consumption,” 7 July 1940.

fall in attempts to smuggle opium into the Islands.”<sup>772</sup> Nonetheless, “opium smuggling is being closely watched by both the customs secret service and harbor police [and] several attempts recently were frustrated by customs sleuths.”<sup>773</sup>

Arrests and trials for drug violations continued. The price of morphine was evidently still very low; in June 1939, Uy Siam, who was described as unemployed, was arrested for illegal possession of “two small packages of morphine.”<sup>774</sup> In September 1940, Eladio “Adiong” Reyes, a “mayor’s informer” on illicit narcotics distribution, reported eight Chinese men to the police in Manila for illegal morphine injections.<sup>775</sup> The police initially told him they had no authority to break into the alleged distribution site and referred him to the secret service. The secret service followed Adiong to the site, where Adiong’s associates Jose Custodio and Atilano Jimenez were “guarding eight Chinese.” The eight Chinese men in question were subsequently arrested and charged. In the course of the trial, defendant Co Kim Sang testified that “he was pulled by Adiong into the room at 853 Ylaya and told not to leave the place until detectives arrived.”<sup>776</sup> He denied that he had come to the site in question for morphine injection but was instead looking for a friend to ask if he had written to Co’s brother in Iloilo, and that Adiong had subsequently dragged him into the room where he found the seven other defendants. Co admitted to receiving morphine injections in China, as evidenced by old injection scars on both arms, but claimed to never have used morphine in the Philippines. While the trial of the eight Chinese men was still ongoing, Adiong in turn was charged by the secret service along with his two other “mayor’s informer” associates, Jose Custodio and Atilano Jimenez with “illegal possession of opium,

---

<sup>772</sup> Ibid.

<sup>773</sup> Ibid.

<sup>774</sup> *Tribune*, “Police Notes,” 21 June 1939.

<sup>775</sup> *Tribune*, “Adiong Denounced at Probe,” 1 September 1940.

<sup>776</sup> *Tribune*, “Adiong Denounced,” 1 September 1940.

unlawful arrest, and trespass to dwelling.” Essentially, the secret service believed Adiong, with the assistance of Custodio and Jimenez, to have distributed the morphine himself and then attempted to turn his customers over to the authorities for a reward. Adiong attempted to implicate the police in turn by claiming that the alleged distribution site at 853 Ylaya was in fact “owned by a policeman, who lives on the first floor and leases the ground floor to Chinese.”<sup>777</sup> Unfortunately, the outcome of the proceedings was not recorded but the affair further hints at corruption among the agencies and individuals tasked with enforcing prohibition. Opium was also still a valuable commodity, despite the increasing consumption of morphine. The largest seizure of opium in US territory in 1940 was in the Philippines, in the form of 500 one-tael tins of prepared opium. This was a considerable quantity, as the total net weight was 552 ounces 325 grains, or 15,670 grams.<sup>778</sup> 1940 also marked the first mention of illicit cannabis in connection with the Philippines. None was seized within the islands themselves, making the Philippines the only US territory to evidently still lack a substantial market for the substance by the eve of the Second World War.<sup>779</sup> However, a brief note in the 1940 report by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics stated that “customs officers at Wilmington, California, on July 6, 1940, seized marihuana [sic] cigarettes from a crew member of the Philippine steamship *Don Jose*, coming from Manila.”<sup>780</sup> It is unclear whether the cannabis was obtained in Manila or en route, and equally unclear if the crew member in question was originally from the Philippines. Nonetheless, it clearly signifies the beginnings of a link between cannabis and the Islands.

---

<sup>777</sup> *Tribune*, “Adiong Denounced,” 1 September 1940.

<sup>778</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1940, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1941) p.10.

<sup>779</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America, 1940*, p.14

<sup>780</sup> *Ibid*, p. 51.

Meanwhile, the encroachment of the Japanese in southeast Asia led to a growing sense of vulnerability in the Philippines. In December of that year, the *New York Times* noted the exodus of Americans from the vicinity of areas controlled by the Japanese, including the families of servicemen: “The wives and families of officers and men of the United States Asiatic Fleet have been told to go home- not just to Manila. So have the wives and families of...United States Marines stationed at Shanghai, Peking and Tientsin, and it is expected that the wives and families of the personnel of the American Army in the Philippines will soon follow suit.”<sup>781</sup> Needless to say, the general population of the Philippines did not have the option of leaving for calmer waters in the United States. Belmon Morin, formerly an Associated Press correspondent in Japan, was one of these American émigrés. In his book detailing the growth of the Japanese Empire, *Circuit of Conquest*, published at the height of the war in 1943, Morin included a conversation with a Navy officer in Manila in late 1940. Morin inquired if “we intended to defend the Philippines against a Japanese attack. ‘Damned if I know,’ was the officer’s slow reply.”<sup>782</sup> In the face of the threat of Japanese invasion, drug violations seem to have become an increasingly low priority for the Commonwealth government. In April 1941 a Chinese man identified only as Tan was discovered passed out next to the seawall along Dewey Boulevard in Manila, evidently after receiving an illegal injection of morphine. Instead of carting him off to the police station, he was instead taken to the Philippines General Hospital where he apparently died. Records of arrests and seizures in 1941 are otherwise very limited.<sup>783</sup>

---

<sup>781</sup> *New York Times*, “The Great American Exodus from the Orient,” 8 December 1940.

<sup>782</sup> *New York Times*, “How Japan Reached out for Loot,” 30 May 1943.

<sup>783</sup> *Tribune*, “Police Notes,” 25 April 1941.

The Japanese finally launched an assault on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 7 December 1941. An attack on the Philippines began ten hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Three years of brutal occupation by the Japanese and guerrilla warfare by Filipinos followed. Despite the war effort being the primary focus, drug policy still featured in the backdrop of the American international agenda. The 1942 Federal Bureau of Narcotics report cited several publications on drug control; “for an excellent expose of the illicit Japanese dope trade, the Bureau recommends the reading of an article by James Monahan contained in the May 1942 issue of *The Elks Magazine*...describing how ‘the wily Jap the first belligerent in this war to find a new but effective weapon- narcotic drugs.’”<sup>784</sup> C.G. Hambro, the chairman of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs wrote in *Collier’s Magazine* that “war has made the League of Nations an orphan, and Japan’s vicious enslavement through narcotics made a mockery of its most constructive program.”<sup>785</sup> Despite the dismal state of drug control and clear inefficacy of international agreements in a time of open conflict, Hambro maintained that the work of the Advisory Committee was more important than ever. Moreover, the situation in the Philippines was noted as cause for particular concern. Hambro praised the precedent for prohibition established there by the US- presumably why the Bureau of Narcotics chose to include the article in their report- stating “the first step to create an international front to fight narcotics was taken by President Taft in 1909, on the initiative of Bishop Brent of the Philippines.”<sup>786</sup> However, this precedent could not transcend the dire conditions of Japanese occupation, in that “today we are back at the starting point...once

---

<sup>784</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1942, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1943) p.6 [Also note that the archaic racial terminology in direct quotes does not reflect the views of the author]

<sup>785</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America, 1942*, p.6.

<sup>786</sup> *Ibid.*

more the drug situation in the Philippines is a menace to the whole population.”<sup>787</sup> Essentially, the US believed Japan to have set up an opium monopoly in the Philippines throughout occupation.

This scenario seems plausible. given that the charges laid out in the postwar International Military Tribunal’s report describe the role of narcotics in Japanese imperial expansionism in the years leading up to and throughout the conflict. While the Philippines are not specifically referred to in the report in connection with the trade or manufacture of narcotics, the wealth of detail regarding other occupied territories indicates the importance of drugs in funding Japan’s military:

The principal source of opium and narcotics...was [initially] Korea, where the Japanese Government operated a factory in the town of Seoul for the preparation of opium and narcotics. Persian opium was also imported into the Far East. The Japanese Army seized a huge shipment of this opium, amounting to approximately 10 million ounces and stored it in Formosa in 1929; this opium was to be used later to finance Japan's military campaigns. There was another source of illegal drugs in Formosa. The cocaine factory operated at Sinei by Finance Minister Takahashi of Japan until his assassination in 1936, produced from 200 to 300 kilos of cocaine per month. This was one factory that was given specific authority to sell its produce to raise revenue for war. [Moreover] wherever the Japanese Army went in China, Korean and Japanese drug peddlers followed closely upon its heels vending their merchandise without hindrance from the Japanese authorities... Even the Japanese soldiers and their officers at times indulged in this lucrative business of vending opium and narcotics. The Japanese Special Service Organization was charged with the duty of regulating the opium and narcotic traffic in territories immediately following their capture...<sup>788</sup>

---

<sup>787</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America*, 1942, p.6.

<sup>788</sup> *Judgment of 4 November 1948*: International Military Tribunal, p.321.

The military conflict in the Philippines ended with the unconditional surrender of Japan in August 1945.<sup>789</sup> On 4 July, 1946, the Philippines officially became independent from the United States, formally bringing an end to the American colonial era. It also ended foreign occupation for the first time in nearly four hundred years.

### Conclusion

Throughout the last decade of the American colonial era, there was little innovation in the regulations controlling narcotics themselves, as the last major international conferences on the subject before the Second World War took place in 1931. Smuggling continued to be rampant throughout Philippine ports and coastal areas, which was exacerbated by the increasingly unstable situation in China. After the beginning of the Commonwealth government in 1935, there was a renewed focus on enforcement of prohibition, largely from individual agencies like Customs Secret Service. The Commonwealth government continued to enforce the existing narcotics laws, perhaps in a bid to demonstrate the merit of Filipino political autonomy. However, the absence of prohibition efforts from Commonwealth reports to Washington attest that drug control was not the primary focus of the Commonwealth government. All drug control efforts by American or Filipino officials, who were sometimes themselves implicated in the illicit traffic, were interrupted and then ceased during the Japanese occupation. Following the independence of the Philippines in 1946, the newly sovereign nation continued to enforce prohibition which by now had become an international consensus, a legacy from the international drug diplomacy of the American era in the Philippines. Moreover, the racialized legacy of the

---

<sup>789</sup> Given the language barrier and lack of access to Japanese sources, a thorough discussion of the drug trade during the Japanese occupation apart from the above brief summary is unfortunately outside the scope of this dissertation.

drug regulations of the American colonial era post-independence is evident in cases like that of Rafaela Castro. In 1947, Rafaela Castro, who operated a pharmacy, was charged with illegally possessing large quantities of cocaine and morphine. Castro's defense was that she did in fact have a permit that had been issued by the Collector of Internal Revenue in order to legally to possess the prohibited drugs seized from her, however "with the exception of 70 tablets of morphine sulphate which, she claims, had been left in her drugstore by an unknown Chinaman shortly before the detectives arrived on October 30, 1947."<sup>790</sup> Despite the well-documented insistence by authorities upon the Chinese being primarily responsible for illegal narcotics smuggling, her defense of an "unknown Chinaman" being responsible for the illicit drugs found in her possession did not prove satisfactory and she was convicted. The fact that she considered this to be a plausible defense speaks to the influence of four decades of American drug control largely targeted at the Chinese diaspora of the Philippines.

---

<sup>790</sup> *Rafaela G. Castro v. Jose P. Bengzon, City Fiscal of Manila, Ambrosio Lorenzo, Manuel de la Fuente, Manila Chief of Police, and Bibiano L. Meer, Collector of Internal Revenue* (20 September 1948) G.R. No. L-1985 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1948).

## Chapter Six: Conclusion

### The United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961

On 24 January 1961, Philippine diplomat Eduardo Quintero testified before the assembled representatives of seventy-three countries at the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. On behalf of the Philippines delegation to the Convention, Quintero stated that the production of psychoactive crops in the Philippines was not a concern. Instead, the country's primary issue in confronting criminalized narcotics was "the illicit traffic in opium, which was smuggled in from the mainland of China via Hong Kong and North Borneo."<sup>791</sup> His colleague, Mrs. S.D. Campomanes, the head of the Narcotic Drugs Division of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, claimed that "excessive supply was one of the principal causes of illicit drug traffic."<sup>792</sup> Consequently, despite the revenue that the Philippines could have gained from producing narcotics, the Philippine Government had recently denied a manufacturing firm's petition to begin operating in the Philippines, as the global supply of drugs was deemed "already sufficient."<sup>793</sup> Another Philippines representative, E.D. Espinosa- Chief Drug Inspector for the Bureau of Health- corroborated his colleagues' statements. Espinosa asserted that despite the aforementioned "illicit traffic," the prevalence of drug addiction in his native country was not unduly concerning. Espinosa also stated that the Philippine Government was nevertheless committed to furthering "the interests of international co-operation" regarding drug control.<sup>794</sup>

---

<sup>791</sup> *United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, New York, 24 January-25 March 1961, Official Records*, New York, United Nations, 1964 (Volume I; Volume II, UN E/CONF 34/24; E/CONF/34/24(1), Vol. I, p.16.

<sup>792</sup> *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, Vol I, p.56-57.*

<sup>793</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid, p.108.*

Similarly, the Philippines permanent representative to the UN and plenipotentiary delegate F.A. Delgado rather grandly declared that “although his country did not produce or manufacture drugs, he would vote in favor of the Convention in the interests of all mankind.”<sup>795</sup>

According to Espinosa, the commitment of the Government of the Philippines to controlling the supply of illegal narcotics was essentially due to the intrinsically dangerous nature of drug addiction. Even if this illicit traffic allegedly posed little threat to the Philippines, the “dangers of addiction were well-known...apart from the moral and physical degradation it entailed, addiction also had far-reaching social and economic consequences...causing increasing concern to governments.”<sup>796</sup> Furthermore, “addiction was *always a problem, whatever its incidence.*”<sup>797</sup> [emphasis added]

While these diplomatic exchanges took place nearly fifteen years after the official declaration of the independence of the Philippines from the United States, the enduring colonial legacy of prohibition is clear. The claims of the Philippine representatives that drug addiction posed little threat to the archipelago but that they were nonetheless prepared to forgo potential revenue given the importance of drug control worldwide echoed similar statements from former colonial officials. So, too, did the characterization of illicit narcotics as an external threat from the surrounding nations rather than an internal problem, which made supply control imperative in order to stem the flow of illegal drugs from without the Philippines. Finally, Brent himself would have been gratified to hear Delgado’s description of the “moral degradation” as well as the economic problem of addiction.

---

<sup>795</sup> *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, Vol I, p.216.*

<sup>796</sup> *Ibid, p.108.*

<sup>797</sup> *Ibid.*

## American Philippines, 1898-1946

“Every empire, however, tells itself and the world that it is unlike all other empires, that its mission is not to plunder and control but to educate and liberate.” –Edward Said

As I stated in the introduction, this thesis is a narrative of the impact of regulations on commerce and consumption of drugs; in short, what the end of the Spanish colonial era and subsequent five decades of American occupation entailed for the drugs market and regulations of psychoactive substances in the Philippines. During late Spanish colonization of the Philippines, there was a strict but legal opium farm system in place, catering solely to the Philippines’ Chinese inhabitants.<sup>798</sup> Purveyors of recreational narcotics were thus considered a valid entrepreneurial sector of the colonial economy. By the time of the American conquest, recreational opium sales and consumption were considered inherent to the Chinese community by American and Filipinos alike. The success of the American colonial experiment there was framed as contingent upon stamping out opium distribution and consumption before it could spread to the indigenous Filipino population. The colonial state viewed this course of action as necessary to demonstrate their own moral superiority as a colonizing presence, safeguard the morality of the colonized population from a Protestant American religious perspective and to

---

<sup>798</sup> See Wong Kwok-Chu, *Chinese in the Philippine Economy, 1898-1941*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999); Carl Trocki, *Opium, Empire, and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950*, (London: Routledge, 1999); Ricardo Zarco, “A Short History of Narcotic Drug Addiction in the Philippines”, *Philippine Sociological Review*, 43.1/4, (1995), pp. 1-15; Ferdinand Victoria, “The Most Humane of Any that Could be Adopted”: The Philippine Opium Committee Report and the Imagining of the Opium Consumer’s World in the Colonial Philippines, 1903-1905.” in *Towards a Filipino History: A Festschrift for Zeus Salazar* (BAKAS, 2015); Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898*, (University of Hawai’i Press (1965, 1999); Phillip Ginsberg, “The Chinese in the Philippine Revolution,” *Asian Studies* (1965).

preserve their economic productivity as a colonial workforce. After an initial tariff on opium imports and a proposal to reinstate the monopoly system, generating colonial revenue from opium sales was permanently rejected by the United States in favor of unprecedented prohibition of recreational opiates. The colonial state sought to enforce this prohibition by eradicating opium from the bodies of consumers, initially through medical means and finally through incarceration, isolating drug consumers from the general population. Vy Can Siu in the opening of this thesis was one of the first individuals to find himself imprisoned for a lifelong cultural practice of smoking opium. At the time of his sentence, this activity was only recently illegal in the Philippines and still permissible in the surrounding polities. The immediate impact of the ban on opiates in the Philippines was the creation of a binary system of licit and illicit substances and modes of consumption, with 'illicit' distributors and consumers at risk of imprisonment. The broader impact of the colonial prohibition was the efforts made by the United States to extend this regime to the international community. Their success entailed that Vy Can Siu would be joined in carceral surroundings by many other distributors and consumers by the end of the American colonial era of the Philippines. The 1961 Philippines delegation's support for international drug control despite claims that illicit drugs posed little threat to the Philippines is included here as evidence of the profoundly transformational approach to drug regulation by the US colonial state. Their statements should not be taken at face value any more than those of their predecessors but are important markers of the lasting legacy of American imperialism for drug control.

The significance of the 1961 Philippine delegation thus lies not only in their statements but the fact of their presence at a multilateral summit on narcotics. The process of international diplomacy in relation to mechanisms for controlling transnational drug commerce and supply-

the reason for the Philippine delegation's visit to the United Nations- is the most significant impact of the American colonial era of the Philippines. My thesis has argued that this process spread outward from the Philippines through the transformation of colonial drug restrictions into international regulations. American attempts to confine opium and manufactured pharmaceuticals to medicinal and scientific use in their new colony developed into a global restrictive approach to the regulation of psychoactive substances, establishing an international drugs regulatory regime based on controlling supply. The Philippines were later cited as a case study of prohibition in both challenges to and defenses of this regime on an international stage, in particular the League of Nations after its founding. Both advocates and detractors utilized the Philippines to argue either that the alleged success of prohibition there meant it would be possible to enforce similar laws in other jurisdictions or that the alleged failure of prohibition to prevent illicit commerce and consumption of drugs demonstrated the impracticality of prohibition as a form of regulation. While unsanctioned commerce in opium and other drugs certainly continued after prohibition, this thesis is more interested in the motives behind and the effects of the prohibitory regime on the trade in psychoactive substances in the Philippines, rather than simply arguing it flourished or failed in achieving its objective.

While this process of the transformation of colonial prohibition to international regulation seems clear in hindsight, the issue of drug regulations was not at all a foregone conclusion at the beginning of the American occupation of the Philippines, much less on an international scale. Questions of colonial revenue, political expediency, ideology and religion, public health, and public and private economic interests- American, Filipino-Chinese and foreign producer states- all contested for prominence in policymaking. Despite imperialist rhetoric that claimed 'our little

brown brother' had to be protected physically and morally from the scourge of opium, as Anne Foster has argued, one of the strongest factors in the eventual choice of prohibition was American self-image, in addition to racist perceptions of the colonized population.<sup>799</sup> The Spanish had left a substantial historical precedent of a colonial project over three hundred years in the making. While the Spanish opium monopoly system in the Philippines only dated to the mid-19th century, the idea that the American colonial state was transforming the *Ancien Regime* of the Spanish Philippines to a modernized twentieth-century nation underpinned drug regulatory decisions. American colonial officials such as Francis Harrison claimed that the decision to ban non-medicinal opium sale and consumption and forgo the erstwhile revenue from legal commerce- despite facing similar fiscal limitations to the Spanish- demonstrated the enlightened nature of US imperialism. Prohibition was, in Charles Brent's words, the policy that was "the most humane of any that could be adopted."<sup>800</sup> This 'humane' decision was presented by a succession of American missionaries, governors-general, and diplomats in contrast with the supposed exploitative inhumanity of the former Spanish state.

The US did not limit their self-serving comparison to the allegedly outdated superstition of the Catholic Spanish and their own modern, rational policies grounded in Protestant morality. Other imperial powers, more successful by late nineteenth-century standards, found themselves the targets of American rhetoric seeking to justify their own colonial project in the Philippines.

---

<sup>799</sup> Anne Foster, "Prohibition as Superiority: Policing Opium in South-East Asia, 1898-1925," *The International History Review*, 22.2 (2000), pp.253-273.

<sup>800</sup> *Report of the Committee Appointed by the Philippine Commission to Investigate the Use of Opium and the Traffic Therein*, 1905 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905) p.13. [POC]

Heiser stated in response to the supposedly “constant reiteration of the British, the French, and the Dutch that it was [a] waste of time and money to bring hygiene to the Orientals” that the United States could “never sanction such an attitude toward our ‘little brown brother.’”<sup>801</sup> As Warwick Anderson states in relation to this aim, “hygiene reform...was intrinsic to a ‘civilizing process’, which was also an uneven and shallow process of Americanization.”<sup>802</sup> Heiser claimed that this was indicative of both the humanitarian and the practical nature of US colonialism. While “you cannot let people suffer if you have the means to relieve them,” a forward-thinking imperial power also had to acknowledge that in the context of a colonial workforce “human life had a direct monetary value.”<sup>803</sup> The American colonial state ultimately determined that the opium ban would secure both ends, preventing purported moral and physical degradation and protecting both the moral wellbeing and economic productivity of their colonized population.

While the Protestant concern for ‘moral wellbeing’ as a factor in the prohibition of opium is well established, the concern for colonial economic productivity is less so.<sup>804</sup> In addition to the focus on ideological motives, scholarly attention to economic factors as part of colonial drug policymaking has referred primarily to American concerns regarding access to the Chinese market. David Musto, Tim Madge, William McAllister, Jim Mills and Arnold Taylor contextualize American opium policy in the Philippines within the desire to gain further access

---

<sup>801</sup> Victor Heiser, *A Doctor's Odyssey*, (Jonathan Cape Ltd 1936, 1937), pp.46; 44.

<sup>802</sup> Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), p.1.

<sup>803</sup> Heiser, *Odyssey*, p. 46.

<sup>804</sup> See Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority”; Jerry Mandel, “Protestant Missionaries: Creators of the International War on Drugs” in Jefferson M. Fish, (ed.), *Drugs and Society: US Public Policy*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006); Kenton Clymer, “Religion and American Imperialism: Methodist Missionaries in the Philippine Islands, 1899-1913,” *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (1980); Daniel Wertz, “Idealism, Internationalism, and Imperialism: Opium Politics in the Colonial Philippines, 1898-1902,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 47.2 (2013) pp.467-499 ; Tim Madge, *White Mischief: a cultural history of cocaine*, (London: Mainstream,2001)

to the Chinese market and ensure the stability of China in the interests of continued trade.<sup>805</sup> In Taylor's words, "since the opium traffic in the islands was related to that in China, the Philippine problem provided the US with a diplomatic instrument for the pursuit of the...material objectives encompassed in its Open Door policy in regard to China."<sup>806</sup> However, preventing Filipino access to opium due to concerns for its purported impact on the colony's labor force has hitherto been little remarked on. As Greg Bankoff demonstrates, the colony's labor force, specifically the availability of labor, was of great concern to American colonial officials.<sup>807</sup> Homer Clyde Stuntz, one of the Protestant missionaries who were instrumental in the ban stated his opposition in part due to its supposed effects on opium on the workforce, asserting "it destroys the morals and the economic value of its victims to society."<sup>808</sup> In further reference to China, Foster claims "US officials hoped that prohibition might help make the whole ethnic Chinese problem, as they saw it, literally go away."<sup>809</sup> However, contrary to this assertion, Stuntz's more influential contemporary Charles Brent argued that prohibition would instead safely facilitate the migration of Chinese laborers into the Philippines in the service of the American colonial project.<sup>810</sup>

---

<sup>805</sup> Tim Madge, *White Mischief*, p.92; William McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Routledge, 2012) p.27; James Mills, *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade, and Prohibition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) p.153; Arnold H. Taylor, "American Confrontation with Opium Traffic in the Philippines," *Pacific Historical Review* 36.3 (1967) pp. 307-324.

<sup>806</sup> Arnold H. Taylor, "American Confrontation," p.309.

<sup>807</sup> Greg Bankoff, "Wants, Wages, and Workers: Laboring in the American Philippines, 1899-1908," *Pacific Historical Review* 74.1 (2005), pp. 59-86.

<sup>808</sup> John B. Devins, *An Observer in the Philippines: Or, Life in our New Possessions* (Boston: American Tract Society, 1905), p. 140.

<sup>809</sup> Anne Foster, "Models for Governing: Opium and Colonial Policies in Southeast Asia, 1898-1910" in *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) p. 95.

<sup>810</sup> Charles H. Brent, "American Democracy in the Orient," *The North American Review*, 181.586 (1905) pp.321-342.

The grand designs for prohibition obviously proved easier said than done, which was true of much of the imperial agenda, as Resil Mojares, Julian Go, Foster and others have argued.<sup>811</sup> Mojares asserts that “writ large, America tried to remake Philippine society by implanting ‘democracy’ through a process of guided self-government.”<sup>812</sup> However, as Mojares and Patricio Abinales discuss, American attempts to replace the elite *ilustrados* of the Spanish regime with a new political class chosen through local elections were thwarted by “local and factoral rivalries” that still “mainly involved members of the local elite.”<sup>813</sup> The pragmatic arrangement with the local elite that the US developed in order to implement their colonial agenda mimicked other imperial contexts, as Anand Yang demonstrates in relation to British India.<sup>814</sup> As Wertz notes, similarly to “guided self-government”, the end of the opium monopoly and later tariff system backfired by democratizing the drug trade, removing it from elite control rather than destroying it.<sup>815</sup>

In addition to democratizing the drug trade, the ban on opium changed the nature of the drugs market itself, as the revisions to the initial ban indicate. Previous works nearly all refer only to opium or its derivatives in the context of drugs in the Philippines, with the exception of a passing mention of cocaine by Wertz.<sup>816</sup> However, my research demonstrates cocaine in the American Philippines was in greater demand and more accessible than previously assumed. The

---

<sup>811</sup> Resil B. Mojares, *The War against the Americans: Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu 1899-1906*, (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999); Julian Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during U.S. Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Anne Foster & Julian Go (eds.), *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

<sup>812</sup> Mojares, *The War against the Americans*, p.209.

<sup>813</sup> Mojares, *The War Against the Americans*, p.149, Patricio Abinales, “American Rule and the Formation of Filipino ‘Colonial Nationalism,’” *Japanese Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 39.4 (2002), pp. 604-621.

<sup>814</sup> Anand Yang, *The Limited Raj: Agrarian Relations in Colonial India, Saran District, 1793-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

<sup>815</sup> Daniel Wertz, “Idealism, Internationalism, and Imperialism: Opium Politics in the Colonial Philippines, 1898-1902,” *Modern Asian Studies*, 47.2 (2013), pp.467-499.

<sup>816</sup> Wertz, “Idealism,” p.470.

initial ban stated that after 1 March 1908, “it shall be unlawful to import into the Philippine Islands opium, in whatever form, except by the Government, and for medicinal purposes only, and at no time shall it be lawful to sell opium to any native of the Philippine Islands except for medicinal purposes.”<sup>817</sup> However the *Act to amend the tariff laws of the Philippines* did not refer to the importation and consumption of psychoactive substances that were not opiates. The market adapted accordingly, and the Bureau of Health warned in 1907 that “certain unscrupulous persons” had begun to “teach systematically the use of cocaine to the opium habitués, and for a long time it appeared as if one bad habit might be supplanted by another one of greater danger.”<sup>818</sup> The Philippine Commission in October 1907 consequently repealed the initial opium law (Act No. 1461) and replaced it with Act No. 1761. The second Act now stated that after 1 March 1908, it would be “unlawful for any person to hold or to have in his possession, or under his control, or subject to his disposition, any opium, cocaine, alpha or beta eucaine, or any derivative or preparation of such drugs or substances.”<sup>819</sup> [emphasis added] This addendum was too late to stop the impact of the original ban on the drugs market however, as illicit supplies of cocaine would be discovered and seized throughout the remainder of the American colonial era.<sup>820</sup>

The thriving clandestine commerce spurred on by financial incentives, access to novel substances like cocaine, longstanding cultural practices of smoking opium and the logistical difficulties of preventing smuggling in an archipelago of nearly 7,000 islands proved troublesome to the colonial state from the moment the ban took effect in March 1908. The

---

<sup>817</sup> *An Act to amend the tariff laws of the Philippines, and for other purposes*, 1905 (Washington DC: Division of Printing, 1905), p. 1.

<sup>818</sup> *Report* [1907] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1907), p. 73.

<sup>819</sup> *Report* [1907] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing), p. 73.

<sup>820</sup> See Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5.

supposed hygienic modernization described by Anderson underscored the colonial government's initial efforts to enforce prohibition through coercive medical treatments of drug consumers. This was in keeping with the overall martial nature of the colonial public health system in the Philippines, as described by Reynaldo C. Ileto and David F. Rubio Quintero.<sup>821</sup> The Bureau of Health's use of the reduction method- laxatives to purge the body of physical traces of opium- novel treatments such as the Towns method, and "the stimulus of moral encouragement" by Protestant missionary volunteers, did not succeed in eradicating the demand for illegal psychoactive substances.<sup>822</sup> This was attributed to the defiance of the patients, in that "the victims themselves were opposed to being cured."<sup>823</sup>

The failure of initial attempts to 'cure' opium consumers through modern medicine meant that the colonial state then largely turned to the efforts of legal enforcement by customs and constabulary officers. The Bureau of Health noted that individuals convicted of violating prohibition "come under compulsory treatment in the hospital of the prison, and it will be interesting to observe the outcome."<sup>824</sup> Nathaniel Smith notes that Bilibid Prison eventually became known for its specialization in 'treating' inmates convicted of drug violations.<sup>825</sup> Similarly to the isolation of leprosy patients on the island of Culion, separating drug consumers

---

<sup>821</sup> Reynaldo C. Ileto, "Cholera and the origins of the American sanitary order in the Philippines," in *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies*, ed. David Arnold, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp.125-148; Reynaldo C. Ileto, "Outlines of a Non-Linear Emplotment of Philippine History," in *Reflections on Development in Southeast Asia* (ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 1988), pp.130-159; David F. Rubio Quintero, "El fenómeno de las Drogas en Filipinas, características Históricas y Debate actual," *Trans-pasando Fronteras* 11 (2018), pp.145-167.

<sup>822</sup> Bureau of Health, 1907, p.74.

<sup>823</sup> Ibid p.75

<sup>824</sup> Philippines Bureau of Health, 1907, 75.

<sup>825</sup> Nathaniel L. Smith, "*Cured by the Habit of Force*": *The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970*, PhD thesis, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2007) p. 55.

before they could ‘contaminate’ their surroundings was effectively another “biosocial concern” and “medico-carceral approach.”<sup>826</sup> The imprisonment of drug consumers by the colonial state was consequently intended to isolate drug consumers from the general population.

It soon became clear to even the staunchest advocates of prohibition that it would take more than ‘modern’ medical practices, the efforts of law enforcement, and a belief in their own moral superiority to successfully enforce the ban. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the responsibility for suppressing the opium trade was successfully recast as a fellow burden carried by other members of the international community, rather than the windmill being tilted at by the Don Quixote-like figure of the United States. In correspondence, private meetings with other imperial powers and finally the multilateral summits of Shanghai and The Hague, the US lobbied opium-producing countries to play their part in reducing the supply of illicit narcotics flowing into the ports of Manila, Cebu City, Davao, Iloilo and Zamboanga. However, despite the American self-perception of serving as a model for other imperialist nations to emulate, the timing of the American push for drug control meant that it more broadly formed part of an era of colonial reform. Foster notes that “the United States became a colonial power in Asia at the time when the other colonial powers were rethinking both the methods and the purpose of their colonial rule...by 1900, officials everywhere were preoccupied with policing behavior as well as borders.”<sup>827</sup> The British, believed by Americans to be their foremost opponent in suppressing the opium trade, had taken steps like the Anglo-Chinese Agreement in 1907 before the American

---

<sup>826</sup> Aaron Rom O. Moralina, “Hidden Lives, Concealed Narratives: A History of Leprosy in the Philippines ed. by Maria Serena I. Diokno (review)” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 65.4 (2017), pp. 523-526.

<sup>827</sup> Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority” p.254.

opium ban in the Philippines had even taken effect. The British were not the only producer state to have second thoughts about the wisdom of government involvement in the drug trade. In the words of John Collins, “imperial powers were at once conflicted and ambivalent about opium’s role within the economic systems and societies they managed.”<sup>828</sup>

Nonetheless, the impetus for international action was grounded in American concerns for enforcing colonial regulations in the Philippines, as fellow imperial powers did not move with quite the speed the US had in mind for the implementation of drug control measures. As Collins further states, other powers were “ultimately reluctant to attempt grand experiments with social engineering such as prohibition.”<sup>829</sup> Moreover, other imperial powers were far from the only obstacles to successfully executing prohibitory policies. The existing networks for trade, transport, and sale of opium created under the Spanish moved underground rather than dissipate under American rule. Similarly to Eric Tagliacozzo’s discussion of the West Indies under the British and Dutch, resistance to the American colonial drugs policy agenda was facilitated by Chinese immigrant consumers, Filipino elites, smuggling contacts in foreign producer states such as China and British North Borneo and sometimes Americans themselves.<sup>830</sup> These sources of opposition to suppressing the trade were a perennial thorn in the side of the colonial agencies charged with preventing, in the words of the Philippine Opium Committee, “one of the gravest moral problems of the Orient.”<sup>831</sup>

---

<sup>828</sup> John Collins, “Imperial Drug Economies, Development, and the Search for Alternatives in Asia, from Colonialism to Decolonisation,” *International Development Policy*, no. 12(2020) p.54.

<sup>829</sup> Collins, “Imperial Drug Economies,” p.54.

<sup>830</sup> Eric Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

<sup>831</sup> POC p.12.

The ongoing difficulty of enforcing prohibition in the Philippines thus necessitated American advocacy for an increasingly complicated international drugs regulatory regime. Following the multilateral summits in 1909 and 1912, the US maintained its diplomatic push for foreign producer and manufacturing states to restrict exports of drugs to countries permitting their entry and to work towards restricting their use to medical purposes. The scope of the impact of these summits was expanded by the Paris peace treaties in 1918, as Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and the former Ottoman Empire were compelled by the victorious Triple Entente and the United States to adhere to the Hague agreement.<sup>832</sup> The drugs regulatory regime was further solidified with the 1925 Geneva Conventions.

This nascent regime was not implemented without conflict, however, as the American delegation's walkout from the second Geneva Convention demonstrated. The United States and the United Kingdom were both signatories to the drug control agreement of The Hague Convention, which the United States hoped would induce the UK to end the sale of opium in their own possessions and take action against international trafficking. The failure of the British to stem the tide of opium smuggled from their colonies caused tensions between the authorities of the two colonial powers, particularly within the colonies in question. Francis Harrison fumed in his autobiography, published very shortly after the end of his tenure as governor-general, that the legal opium monopoly in British North Borneo stymied the Philippine colonial government's efforts to stamp out illicit trafficking. This served a dual purpose of maintaining the mythos of American colonial exceptionalism regarding their colonized population and drug regulations as well as conveniently providing a foreign scapegoat for the ongoing difficulties enforcing

---

<sup>832</sup> McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy*, p.264.

prohibition which the US colonial state in the Philippine experienced. Harrison's strategy of incriminating the British is consistent in a colonial context with what David Bewley-Taylor refers to as the American tendency to "locate the source of domestic problems beyond the boundaries of American society."<sup>833</sup>

Repeated protests against the situation in Sandakan were made to our home Government; I asked them to invoke the good offices of the Government of Great Britain to the end that the Government of British North Borneo should show some respect for our laws... The protest was presented in London by our Ambassador, John W. Davis, with no result...It has already been noted that one half of the revenues of the British North Borneo Government comes from profit on the official sale of opium. Finally, I asked that President Wilson call another International Opium Congress to deal with this matter; it was pointed out that this was one of the subjects reserved for the League of Nations. The policy of "not interfering with the customs of the people" certainly cannot be extended to cover the facilitating of the spread of this odious vice among a neighboring people who are now comparatively free of it!<sup>834</sup>

As Harrison noted, the United States could no longer unilaterally call for further international drugs diplomacy. Ironically, the international structures the US had been instrumental in developing in order to combat smuggling also hindered the scope of their capacity to take action against the illicit narcotics trade. This exacerbated existing conflicts with producer states, as meant that the success of American efforts to enforce prohibition in the Philippines were partially reliant on the willingness of foreign powers to control the traffic in

---

<sup>833</sup> David Bewley-Taylor, *The United States and International Drug Control, 1909-1997* (Continuum, 2001) p.6.

<sup>834</sup> Francis Harrison, *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence: My Seven Years in the Philippines* (New York: The Century Company, 1922), p. 337.

their own territories. This newly restricted influence post-World War I may explain why the US subsequently chose to refocus their interests on drug control in the metropole in their international dealings regarding the formation of drug regulations. Despite their previous advocacy, American appetite for international drugs diplomacy in regards to their colonial interests had waned by the beginning of the 1930s. The US attended and ratified the 1931 Geneva Convention on the Limitation of Manufactured Drugs but agreed to attend the Bangkok Conference of 1931 on the Suppression of Opium Smoking only in an observational capacity and specified afterwards they had not signed the agreement.

Pragmatism may also explain the diplomatic retrenchment of the US, as the resolution of the situation regarding smuggling between British North Borneo and the Philippines in the late 1920s indicates. Malcolm Delevingne and his American counterpart John Caldwell came to a verbal agreement at the April 1928 meeting of the League Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium that the illicit traffic had been stemmed. Delevingne claimed that due to the “greatest vigilance” on the part of the Government of North Borneo, customs officials in the Philippines for the previous two years had not recorded any seizures of opium originating in British Malaya. John Caldwell confirmed this. However, this resolution was due more to political expediency than a demonstrable end to illicit trafficking in the region. Independent reports from external observers such as investigative committees from the the League of Nations and Herbert May of the Foreign Policy Association claimed that opium was still a widely accessible commodity throughout the Philippines, smuggled in from Hong Kong, China and (unsurprisingly) British North Borneo. American assertions that the Philippines were an example of the practicability of prohibition were thus met with skepticism, if not outright derision, from the international

community. American colonial attempts at enforcing prohibitory drug regulations thus serve as a framework for examining the differences between the rhetoric and reality of US empire, similarly to Mojares, Foster, Go, Abinales and other existing analyses of the limits of the impact of American colonialism on the Philippines.

The racialized nature of colonial drugs enforcement also demonstrates this limited colonial impact. The Philippine government claimed throughout the American colonial era that illicit trafficking and consumption of narcotics was due to the activities of the Chinese diaspora. These claims were contradicted by the statistics provided in their own reports regarding the ethnicity of individuals charged with violating the opium ban. By 1932, the ethnic ratio of offenders was listed as 39% of defendants listed as Filipino and 60.7% as Chinese, an increase of 11% in the proportion of Filipinos charged with opium ban violations in just five years.<sup>835</sup> The reports claimed nonetheless “very few Filipinos smoke or eat opium. The majority of opium smokers in the Philippine Islands are Chinese.”<sup>836</sup> A further caveat asserted that “almost all of the natives arrested were found illegally possessing opium (ie not in the act of smoking) and were charged accordingly.”<sup>837</sup> More to the point, “many natives are employed in the distribution of the drug.”<sup>838</sup> The American hegemonic narrative of drugs consumption in the Philippines in the face of contradictory circumstances is attributable to both ingrained racial bias against the

---

<sup>835</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1928, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1928); *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1932).

<sup>836</sup> *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1932)

<sup>837</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>838</sup> *Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands, 1928, pp.4-5; Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Six Months' Period from July 1- December 31 1928 and for the Calendar Year 1929* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1929).

Chinese community and political expediency in formulating and enforcing drug regulations. The American colonial authorities sought to portray the tiny proportion of Chinese residents of the Philippines as predominantly responsible for the supply and consumption of drugs in order to simplify their own task in enforcing the ban, rather than admit the indigenous population also resisted colonial drug laws and, more broadly, ‘civilization and Christianization’.

The limits of the American colonial regime in relation to enforcement of prohibition were highlighted further by the increasingly destabilized situation in Eastern Asia during the 1930s. The longitudinal focus of my thesis throughout the American colonial era underscores this in comparison to previous works on the subject of or referencing drugs in the Philippines, which focus on the beginning of prohibition rather than its long-term trajectory.<sup>839</sup> The efforts of individual Philippines customs officials notwithstanding, the concerns of the government in Manila throughout the 1930s were increasingly centered on external threats in the form of Japanese military expansion in Asia rather than the illicit trade in opium. The two were in fact linked, however, as the progressively destabilized situation in China exacerbated the extent of already rampant smuggling into Philippine ports and coastal areas. The advent of the Philippine

---

<sup>839</sup> See Wertz, “Idealism”; Foster, “Prohibition as Superiority”; Foster, “Models for Governing”; Richard Davenport-Hines, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Global History of Narcotics 1500-2000* (Orion Press 2001) p.154; Paul Gootenberg, *Cocaine*, (London: Routledge 1999) p.131; Carl Trocki, *Opium, Empire, and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950*, (London: Routledge 1999), p.89; Ricardo Zarco, “A Short History of Narcotic Drug Addiction in the Philippines”, *Philippine Sociological Review*, 43.1/4, (1995), pp. 1-15; Ferdinand Victoria, “The Most Humane of Any that Could be Adopted”: The Philippine Opium Committee Report and the Imagining of the Opium Consumer’s World in the Colonial Philippines, 1903-1905.” in *Towards a Filipino History: A Festschrift for Zeus Salazar* (BAKAS, 2015); Steffen Rimner, *Opium’s Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2018) pp. 167-177; 180-190; David Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: A History of Opiate Addiction in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) p.79.

Commonwealth in 1935 effectively granted home rule to the Philippines but did not substantially affect drug laws, given that the Federal Bureau of Narcotics in Washington, DC still retained nominal authority. It is worth noting that support for expanding the autonomy of the Philippines as part of a process of preparation for independence was due in large part to bipartisan perceptions of the colony as an unremunerative burden, rather than an ideological commitment to self-determination for Filipinos. This decline in enthusiasm for ‘civilizing and Christianizing’ the archipelago thus affected zeal for continuing the struggle to enforce drug laws in the Philippines from the perspective of the metropole. However there was a renewed colonial focus on enforcement of prohibition following the beginning of the Commonwealth government, largely from particularly zealous individuals such as James Keefe who was appointed head of the Customs Secret Service.

The show of force by Keefe and other colonial officials against smugglers would nonetheless be undone by arrival of the imperial Japanese forces. With the exception of prisoners of war, Americans would flee the archipelago in the face of the Japanese advance until MacArthur’s troops landed in 1944. Details for the market for psychoactive substances and the experience of the Filipino population during World War II are sketchy at best, but the existing documentation indicates a similar situation to other regions occupied by Japanese troops.

Using this principle of gradual suppression to their advantage, the Japanese promulgated Opium Laws in the territories occupied by them in China; these laws ostensibly followed the principle of gradual suppression by licensing known addicts to smoke in licensed shops. However, these laws were merely a blind or cover for Japan’s real intention... [and] created government controlled monopolies for the distribution of opium and narcotics to licensed shops; and those monopolies were

nothing more than revenue collection agencies, which encouraged the use of the drugs in order to increase the revenue therefrom. In all areas occupied by the Japanese the use of opium and narcotics increased steadily from the time of occupation until the surrender.<sup>840</sup>

In the postwar final act of the American colonial vision of a Filipino nation remade in the image of the United States, the US formally recognized the independence of the Philippines on 4 July 1946. Filipino national sovereignty entailed the continued enforcement of prohibition, by then an international presupposition and one of the most lasting legacies of the American colonial era of the Philippines.

Returning to the 1961 convention, the structural as well as the rhetorical legacy of colonial drug regulations is also evident. Campomanes noted that in the Philippines “several agencies were responsible for the trade in narcotic drugs and others with measures against smuggling.”<sup>841</sup> The structures created to manage drug control in the Philippines under the US colonial state had remained to carry on the former administration’s mission of stamping out the illicit traffic in narcotics, an enduring physical manifestation of the ideals and aims of Brent and his compatriots. Moreover, the enduring nature of the market for psychoactive substances in the Philippines is evident from Campomanes’ discussion of opium traffic as late as 1961.

---

<sup>840</sup> *Judgment of 4 November 1948*: International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Washington: Bureau of Printing, 1948), p. 321.

<sup>841</sup> *Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961*, Vol. II p.250.

## Colonial drug laws past and present

"The past is never dead. It's not even past." -William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*

While the American campaigners for drug control may have won the battle, it remains to be seen whether they will win the war. In many of the countries which previously spearheaded international drug control efforts, in particular the US, the twenty-first century has so far been characterized by increasingly successful challenges to the paradigm of prohibition.<sup>842</sup>

Campaigners for legalization of medical and recreational cannabis, as well as advocates for decriminalization of more potent drugs like heroin, have sought to redefine the binary categorizations of legitimate and illegitimate use. Supporters of recreational cannabis legalization have successfully argued in many US states that this categorization and consequent War on Drugs has clearly failed to prevent 'illegitimate' sale and consumption. Criminalization of narcotics has been replaced by public health-focused harm reduction approaches in multiple jurisdictions ranging from Portugal to some municipalities in the United States.

This phenomenon oddly mirrors the Philippine Bureau of Health's grudging admission in 1903 prior to the opium ban that "if opium divans are permitted to exist the business can be forced out of laundries and tiendas into the divans, where it can be so supervised and controlled as to reduce to a minimum the resulting evil effects...the Board of Health deplors the existence of such establishments; nevertheless they exist, and...it would seem to be wiser to recognize them

---

<sup>842</sup> D.C. Des Jarlais, "Harm reduction in the USA: the research perspective and an archive to David Purchase," *Harm Reduction Journal* 14.51 (2017).

for what they are than to ignore them for sentimental reasons.”<sup>843</sup> In a reversal of the first half of the twentieth century, supervised injection sites and syringe exchange programs have thus begun to supersede prison cells and forced detox treatments. Efforts for drug laws reform have also demonstrated the colonial legacy of racial bias regarding the enforcement of drug regulations in the racist profiling that underpinned domestic efforts to stamp out illicit drug use in the US.<sup>844</sup> The trend towards harm reduction rather than criminalization is still being met with “fierce political resistance to implementation and scale-up of harm reduction in the USA... rooted in historical demonization of particular psychoactive drugs that were associated with stigmatized racial/ethnic groups.”<sup>845</sup> Moreover, in light of the violence of the current administration of the Philippines towards individuals suspected of involvement in drug sale, commerce or consumption, renewed scrutiny of the US imperial precedent for prohibition and the long-term social and political impact is necessary.

My thesis examines the nature and origins of this imperial precedent. Unfortunately, what my research does not address is the events that transpired in between E.D. Espinosa’s claim in 1961 that drug addiction did not unduly threaten the Philippines and Rodrigo Duterte’s 2016 campaign vow “to fatten all the fish” in Manila Bay with slain drug distributors.<sup>846</sup> The history of drugs in the Philippines in the second half of the twentieth century is outside the scope of this thesis. However, this is a significant area of historical inquiry that should be explored further. This thesis does nonetheless demonstrate that the origins of the current environment regarding

---

<sup>843</sup> Bureau of Health, 1903, p.82.

<sup>844</sup> Des Jarlais, “Harm reduction in the USA.”

<sup>845</sup> Ibid.

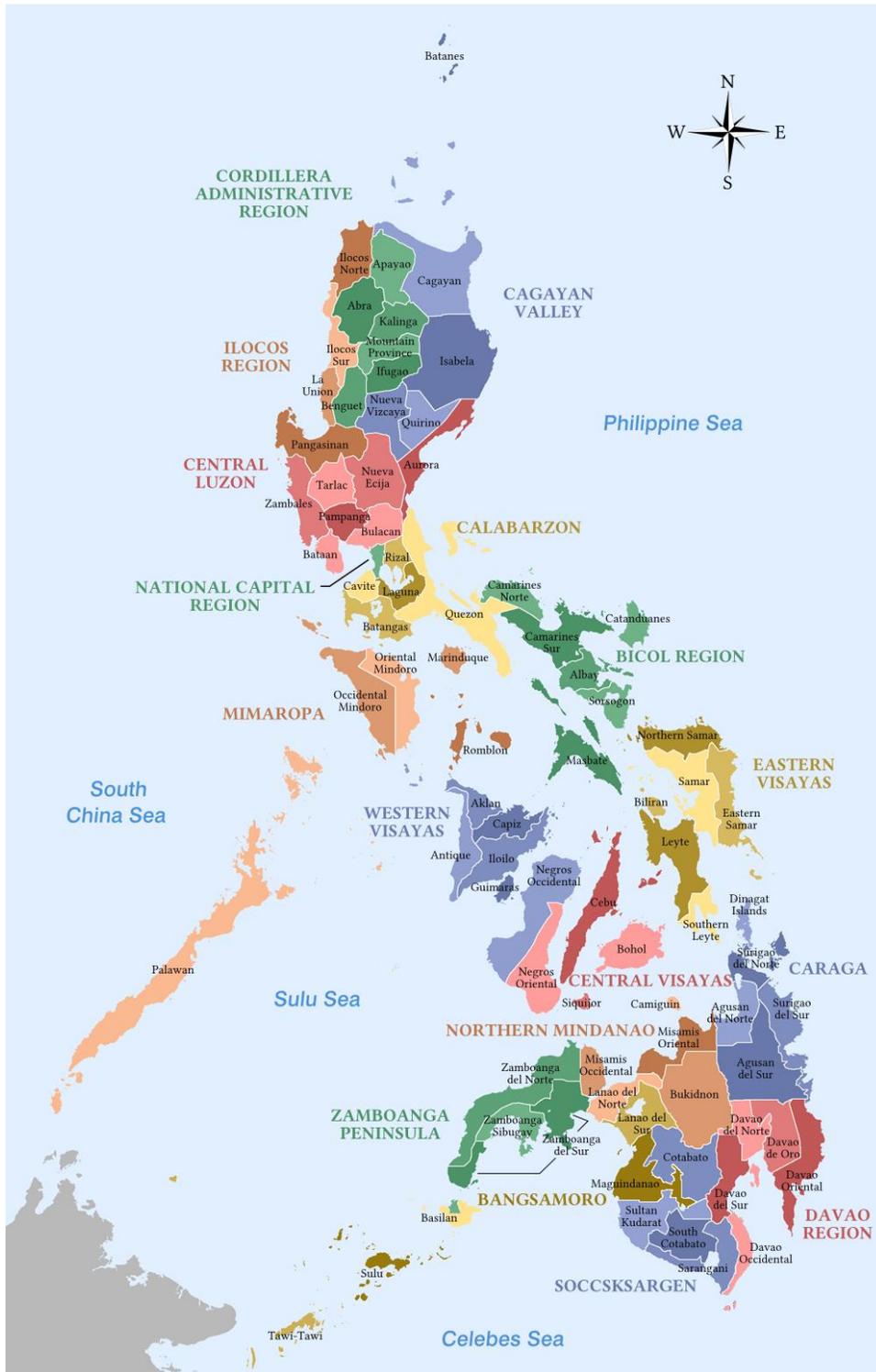
<sup>846</sup> “Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte in quotes,” 30 September 2016, BBC News <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-36251094> (consulted 25 August 2021).

drug regulations in the Philippines date back much farther than Duterte’s presidential campaign, and argues the significance of drugs history for properly contextualizing both the study of American imperialism and Filipino history. The belief that unrestricted narcotics consumption is a threat from which society must be protected by force underpinned the first American War on Drugs in the same manner that it forms the basis of the policies of the current government of the Philippines. Just as recreational consumption of more efficacious manufactured drugs such as morphine and cocaine developed from older precedents of opium smoking, contemporary drug laws in the Philippines are a more potent distillation of earlier controls on use of intoxicants rather than a new creation. American colonial officials in 1905 could not have imagined the extent of the forces they would set in motion and the violent processes of stigmatization and coercive suppression that would result, but the effects of the policy deemed “the most humane of any that could be adopted” are felt still.<sup>847</sup> The brutal enforcement of prohibitory drugs policies in the Philippines and challenges to the dominant paradigm of prohibition in the US call for greater analysis of the racialized American colonial legacy of drug control and its consequences for human rights, at home and abroad. I hope this thesis will contribute to a better understanding of this colonial legacy.

---

<sup>847</sup> POC, p.13.

## Appendix A: Map of the Philippines, Modern Day



**Image attribution:** “Map of the Philippines, showing its component 17 regions and 81 provinces” User: Sanglahi86 [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

## **Bibliography**

### **Primary Sources**

LawPhil Project, digitized, Arellano Law Foundation, University of the Philippines School of Law; Supreme Court Issuances and Jurisprudence.

*Dominador Gomez, petitioner, vs. Hon. Pedro Concepción, Judge of First Instance of Manila, Ricardo Summers, Sheriff of Manila, and Guillermo B. Guevara, City Fiscal, respondents* (30 March 1925) G.R. No. L-23921 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1925). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*Rafaela G. Castro v. Jose P. Bengzon, City Fiscal of Manila, Ambrosio Lorenzo, Manuel de la Fuente, Manila Chief of Police, and Bibiano L. Meer, Collector of Internal Revenue* (20 September 1948) G.R. No. L-1985 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1948). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States, plaintiff-appellee, v. Vy Can Siu, defendant-appellant* (19 January 1909) G.R. No. L-4915 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1909). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States v. Louis T. Grant and William Kennedy* (29 December 1910) G.R. No. L-5786 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1910). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States v. Valeriano de los Reyes and Gabriela Esguerra* (16 November 1911) G.R. No. L-6800 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1911). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States v. Pow Sing et al.* (12 November 1912) G.R. No. L-7424 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1912). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States, plaintiff-appellee, vs. Ngan Ping, defendant-appellant* (2 August 1916) G.R. No. L-11425 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1916). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States v. Ignacio Aztigarraga (alias Sia See Send) and Lim Tiong Tim* (21 September 1917) G.R. No. 12596 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1917). (accessed 20 September 2019)

*The United States of America and the Insular Collector of Customs, plaintiffs-appellants, v. The Steamship "Rubi," represented by Warner, Barnes, & Co (Ltd.)* (17 November 1915) G.R. No. L-9235 (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 1915). (accessed 20 September 2019)

British National Archives, Kew, London, United Kingdom

“Minute by Basil Cochrane Newton,” 5 March 1925, Foreign Office [FO] 371/10966.

League of Nations Records, Category XI, The Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs;  
Andersonian Library, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom.

League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs  
Proces Verbal of First Session May 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 1921, Geneva, Switzerland, “Correspondence on  
Opium Questions” p.12. C.77.M.39. 1921 [XI]

The International Anti-Opium Association, Peking [Beijing] China, to the League of Nations  
Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs Geneva, Switzerland,  
21 February 1921, p.1. C21/68/105 [XI]

League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs  
Proces Verbal of First Session May 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> 1921, Geneva, Switzerland, “The competence of the  
Committee,” pp.22-23. C.77.M.39. 1921 [XI]

Report of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other  
Dangerous Drugs to the Council of the League, 3 April 1922, p.2. A.15.1922 [XI]

Minutes of the second session of the League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in  
Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs April 19-29, 1922, p.5. C.416.M.254.1922.XI

Dossier Concerning Proces-Verbaux of the Fourth Session of the Opium Advisory Committee,  
Geneva, January 1923 p.7. C.52.M.20.1923.XI

League of Nations Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, Minutes of the Fourth Session  
held at Geneva from January 8th to 14th 1923, Tenth Meeting held on Friday, January 12th 1923  
at 3 pm, p.42. C.155.M.75.1923. XI

Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington D.C., USA

Charles Henry Brent Papers [CHB]

General Correspondence,

Box 10, Folder 3.

Conferences on Opium, 1860-1931,

Box 38, Folder 2;

Box 41, Folder 10;

Box 41, Folder 12;

Box 41, Folder 16.

William Cameron Forbes Papers 1904-1935,

Diaries (Transcribed Copy), Set A Volume II; Set B Volume I.

United States National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland, USA;

Record Group 350, Records of the Bureau of Insular Affairs (BIA).

BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/225.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/232-A.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/232-B.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/236.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/244.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/273.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 200, File 1023/288.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 202, File 1023/338.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 205, File 1023/401.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 205, File 1023/415C (6).

BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 15541/80.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/104.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/117.

BIA, Entry 5, Box 847, File 18492/117-A.

Philippine Diary Project, digitized, Manuel L. Quezon III:

Diary of John E.T. Milsaps, 21 March 1899 (accessed 5 May 2020).

Newspapers (digitized)

*Advertiser*, Adelaide, Australia, "The Opium Convention," 20 March 1912. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Barrier Miner*, New South Wales, Australia, "Opium Smuggling in the Philippines: Traders Also Sell Rifles to Natives," 4 April 1910. (accessed 11 July 2020)

*Daily News*, Perth, Australia, "Illicit Traffic in Drugs: International Organization Fights Evil," 13 May 1932. (accessed 11 July 2020)

*Donaldson Chief*, Donaldsonville, Louisiana, USA, "Opium in the Philippines: In Manila the Traffic is Principally in the Hands of Chinese Merchants," 18 February 1905. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Evening Journal*, Adelaide, Australia, "Fighting Opium," 29 February 1908. (accessed 11 July 2020)

*Newcastle Sun*, New South Wales, Australia, "Drugs and Bullets Threaten Chinese," 24 January 1938. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*New York Times*, NYC, USA, "The Situation at Manila: General Otis Reports that He Has a Sufficient Force; Position of the Insurgents," 17 September 1898. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, "Philippines Very Fertile: Report by General Whittier on General Conditions and Trade Possibilities in the Islands," 12 November 1898. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Admiral Evans’s Memoirs: Reviewed for the New York Times Saturday Review by Rufus F. Zogbaum,” 27 April 1901. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “The Canteen in the Philippines,” 13 June 1901. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Cholera in the Philippines,” 4 July 1902. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “General Amnesty for the Philippines: Proclamation Issued by the President,” 4 July 1902. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Oppose Philippine Opium Monopoly,” 14 June 1903. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Oppose Opium Bill: Chinese Merchants and Evangelical Union Argue Against the Measure at Manila,” 9 July, 1903. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Our Government May Sell Opium to Filipinos,” 22 September 1904. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Topics of the Times,” 12 December 1904. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Girls Traded for Opium: One for an Ounce the Price in Portion of Philippines,” 18 November 1909. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Move Against Opium Trade: Bishop Brent Presses on Britain Carrying Out of Shanghai Agreement,” 9 July 1910. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Opium Conference To-day: Twelve Countries Represented in the Deliberations at the Hague,” 1 December 1911. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Babel at Conference,” 17 January 1912. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Special to the New York Times,” 23 October 1912. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Filipinos Making Good: Replace Americans in Revenue Service; Opium Traffic Dwindling,” 14 October 1913. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Filipinos Give Up Opium: Use of the Drug Almost Stamped Out Among the Natives,” 21 April 1914. (accessed 3 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “To Deport 3,000 Chinese: Philippine Authorities Accuse Them of Smuggling Opium,” 10 September 1920. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “League Aid Asked to Curb Opium Evil: Restriction of Poppy Growing the Only Cure, Says Mrs. Hamilton Wright,” 29 May 1921. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Opium Evil Up to League: Challenge as to Whether Real Control is to Be Exercised Follows Geneva Report,” 3 July 1921. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Where The Strange Trails Go Down: A Review by Frederick O’Brien,” 13 November 1921. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Formosa the Centre of Opium Trade in East; League Notes Big American Exports,” 29 May 1923. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Geneva,” 30 May 1923. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Says He Slew Girl to Save Himself: Filipino Houseman Confesses Strangling Doctor’s Secretary but Pleads Self-Defense,” 10 June 1923. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “\$100,000 in Opium Seized: Three Raids Also Net Three Chinese and Three Filipinos,” 6 January 1924. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Opium Trade Spreads With Powers At Odds: Why the American Delegates Withdrew From International Conference That Met to Find a Way to Curb Drug Habit in Far East,” 15 February 1925. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Mrs. Wright Drops Opium Complaint: Message From General Wood Denies Smuggling From Borneo to Philippines,” 1 September 1925. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Discuss Opium Traffic: League Advisory Committee Sessions Open in Geneva,” 19 January 1927. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Wood Orders an Opium Inquiry,” 6 March 1927. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Bishop Brent,” 28 March 1929. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “Opium Conference Counted a Failure: Meeting at Bangkok Reached No Decision on Main Points, Geneva Hears,” 20 December 1931. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, NYC, USA, “Guards Put on Liner After Narcotic Find: Trunk of Opium on Manila Pier and Cocaine in Hold of President Wilson Seized,” 25 February 1934. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “The Great American Exodus from the Orient,” 8 December 1940. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*New York Times*, “How Japan Reached out for Loot,” 30 May 1943. (accessed 4 July 2020)

*South China Morning Post*, Missing Opium: Contents replaced with sand at Manila, ” 23 February 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, Manila, Philippines, “Police Notes,” 5 June 1932. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, “Customs Sleuths Made 690 Arrests In 1932, Chief’s Report Discloses,” 20 July 1933. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, Manila, Philippines, "Turning Back: 5 Years Ago- May 3, 1929," 3 May 1934. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Doctor Taken in Dope Raid: Detective injured as Chinese guards put up stiff fight," 20 November 1934. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 9 July 1936. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 3 December 1936. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 23 January 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 3 February 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 6 April 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Customs Men Aboard Ships Face Inquiry: Alas Orders Opium (accessed 14 July 2020) Seizure Probed," 24 April 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Hi Officer! What's Up?" 27 April 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Drug Den Raided: Eight Suspected Addicts Found in Morphine Drive," 14 May 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Cobra Serum Production," 16 September 1937. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Opium Smuggling in Manila," 22 July 1938. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Laughing Movie Fan Lands in Hospital," 5 August 1938. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Police Notes," 21 June 1939. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Opium Consumption," 7 July 1940. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Adiong Denounced at Probe," 1 September 1940. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Tribune*, "Police Notes," 25 April 1941. (accessed 14 July 2020)

*World's News*, Sydney, Australia, "The Opium Smugglers," 6 April 1932. (accessed 14 July 2020)

## Contemporary Sources

*An Act to amend the tariff laws of the Philippines, and for other purposes, 1905* (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) (accessed 16 August 2020)

Brent, Charles H., "American Democracy in the Orient," *The North American Review*, 181.586 (1905) pp.321-342. (accessed 16 August 2020)

Brent, Charles H., "The Use and Abuse of Opium," in *Sanitation and Hygiene for the Tropics*, J. Woodside Ritchie & M. Anna Purcell (eds.) (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1916). (accessed 16 August 2020)

Buencamino, Felipe, "Statement before the Committee on Insular Affairs on Conditions in the Philippine Islands," 31 May, 3-4 June 1902 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) (accessed 16 August 2020)

*Census of the Philippine Islands: Taken under the Direction of the Philippine Commission in the Year 1903*, in four volumes; Volume I: Geography, History, and Population (Manila: Bureau of Printing). (accessed 16 August 2020)

*Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs*, 13 July 1931, Geneva, League of Nations, C.69(a).M.35(a).1932.XI.

"Correspondence respecting the Opium Question in China," No. 2, Sir Edward Grey to Sir Mortimer Durand, 17 October 1906, Foreign Office, FO 415: Correspondence Respecting Opium, PRO., 6 vols (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1974).

Forbes, W. Cameron, *The Philippine Islands*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926, 1945).

Harrison, Francis, *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence: My Seven Years in the Philippines* (New York: The Century Company, 1922). (accessed 16 August 2020)

Hearings before the Committee on the Philippines, US Senate: *Affairs in the Philippine Islands*, 1902, Part 1; Part 2 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) (accessed 16 August 2020)

Hearings before the Committee on Ways and Means, US House of Representatives: *Philippines Tariff*, December 13-16, 18 1905 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) (accessed 16 August 2020)

Hearings before the Committee on the Philippines, US Senate on H.R. 18459, "An act to declare the purpose of the people of the United States as to the future political status of the people of the Philippine Islands and to provide a more autonomous government for the Islands", Part 1 December 14, 1914 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) (accessed 16 August 2020)

Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs On H.J. Res 195, *Authorizing an Appropriation for the Participation of the United States in the Two International Conferences for the Control of the*

*Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs*, Feb. 21, 1924 (Division of Printing, Washington D.C.) (accessed 16 August 2020)

Heiser, Victor, *A Doctor's Odyssey*, (Jonathan Cape Ltd 1936, 1937).

*Judgment of 4 November 1948*: International Military Tribunal for the Far East (Washington: Bureau of Printing, 1948). (accessed 3 March 2021)

LaMotte, Ellen N., *The Opium Monopoly* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1920). (accessed 16 August 2020)

LaMotte, Ellen N., *The Ethics of Opium*, (New York: The Century Company, 1924). (accessed 16 August 2020)

LeRoy, James, "The Opium Question in the Philippines," *The Medical News*, (New York, February 1905), pp.1-16. (accessed 16 August 2020)

May, Herbert, *Survey of Smoking Opium Conditions in the Far East*, (New York: Foreign Policy Association, 1927).

McCulloch Story, R. "The Problem of the Chinese in the Philippines," *The American Political Science Review*, 3.1 (1909), pp.30-48. (accessed 16 August 2020)

Pelletier, Thomas, *Opium: The World Menace* (Massachusetts: self-published, 1921). (accessed 16 August 2020)

*Report* [1903] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1904). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1904] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1905). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1905] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1906). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1906] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1907). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1907] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1908] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1909). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1909] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1910). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1911] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1912). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1912] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1913). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1913] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1914). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1914] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1915). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1915] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1916). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1916] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1917). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1920] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1921). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1921] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1922). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1922] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1923). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1923] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1924). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report* [1925] Philippines Bureau of Health, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1926). (accessed 12 October 2020)

*Report by the Government of the United States of America with respect to the Philippine Islands for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1928, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1928). (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1932, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1933). (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1939, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1940). (accessed 3 March 2021)

*Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1940, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1941). (accessed 3 March 2021)

*Report by the Government of the United States of America for the calendar year ended December 31, 1942, on the Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1943). (accessed 3 March 2021)

*Report of the Committee Appointed by the Philippine Commission to Investigate the Use of Opium and the Traffic Therein, 1905* (Manila: Bureau of Printing). (accessed 20 July 2019)

*Report of the governor of Mindanao and Sulu, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1916).* (accessed 14 July 2020)

*Report of the Philippine Commission, 1900* (Manila: Bureau of Printing). (accessed 8 July 2020)

*Report of the Philippine Commission, 1914* (Manila: Bureau of Printing). (accessed 8 July 2020)

*Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1915 (Manila: Bureau of Printing). (accessed 8 July 2020)

*Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1916 (Manila: Bureau of Printing). (accessed 8 July 2020)

Rizal, José, *Noli Me Tangere* (Berlin, 1887). (accessed 13 July 2020)

Rizal, José, “The Indolence of the Filipinos” (Madrid: *La Solidaridad*, 1890). (accessed 13 July 2020)

Rizal, José, *El Filibusterismo* (Ghent, 1891). (accessed 13 July 2020)

Rutter, Owen, *British North Borneo: An Account of its History, Resources, and Native Tribes* (London: Constable and Company, 1922). (accessed 16 August 2020)

Saleeby, Najeeb, *The History of Sulu*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908). (accessed 16 August 2020)

Stuntz, Homer Clyde, *The Philippines and the Far East* (Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye, 1904). (accessed 16 August 2020)

*The Traffic in Habit-Forming Narcotic Drugs: Statement of the Attitude of the Government of the United States with Documents Relating Thereto* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1923) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Six Months' Period from July 1- December 31 1928 and for the Calendar Year 1929* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1929) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1930* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1930) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1933) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Calendar Year 1932* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1933) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Year Ended December 31, 1933* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1934) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs with Respect to the Philippine Islands for the Year Ended December 31, 1934* (Division of Printing: Washington D.C., 1935) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs for the Year Ended December 31, 1938* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1939) (accessed 22 February 2021)

*United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, New York, 24 January-25 March 1961, Official Records*, New York, United Nations, 1964 (Volume I; Volume II, UN E/CONF 34/24; E/CONF/34/24(1).

Worcester, Dean, *A History of Asiatic Cholera in the Philippine Islands*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1908). (accessed 16 August 2020)

## **Secondary Sources**

### Books, Book Chapters and Journal Articles

Abinales, Patricio, “American Rule and the Formation of Filipino ‘Colonial Nationalism,’” *Japanese Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 39.4 (2002), pp. 604-621.

Agoncillo, Teodoro, *A Short History of the Philippines*, (Dublin: Mentor Books, 1969).

Anderson, Warwick, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

Arnold, David, *Science, Technology and Medicine in Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Arnold, David, *Everyday Technology: Machines and the Making of India’s Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Bankoff, Greg, “Wants, Wages, and Workers: Laboring in the American Philippines, 1899–1908,” *Pacific Historical Review* 74.1 (2005), pp. 59-86.

Berridge, Virginia, *Opium and the People: Opiate Use and Drug Control Policy in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century England*, (London: Free Association Books, 1999).

Booth, Martin, *Opium: a history*, (London: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

- Boquet, Yves, *The Philippine Archipelago*, (Springer International Publishing, 2017).
- Brady, Maggie & McGrath, Victor “Making Tuba in the Torres Strait Islands,” *The Journal of Pacific History*, 45.3 (2010), pp.315-330.
- Brody, David et al, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).
- Charbonneau, Oliver, *Civilizational Imperatives: Americans, Moros, and the Colonial World* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020).
- Clymer, Kenton, “Religion and American Imperialism: Methodist Missionaries in the Philippine Islands, 1899-1913,” *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (1980), pp.29-50.
- Collins, John, “Imperial Drug Economies, Development, and the Search for Alternatives in Asia, from Colonialism to Decolonisation,” in Julia Braxton, Mary Chinery-Hesse, and Khalid Tinasti (eds.) *Drug Policies and Development: Conflict and Coexistence, International Development Policy Series* (Leiden: Brill Nijhoff, 2020), pp. 43-63.
- Courtwright, David, *Dark Paradise: A History of Opiate Addiction in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982, 2001).
- Courtwright, David, *Forces of habit: Drugs and the Making of the Modern World*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press London, 2002).
- Cullinane, Michael, “A Chinese Life in Late Spanish Era Cebu City,” *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, 43.3/4 (2015), pp.258-321.
- Davenport-Hines, Richard, *The Pursuit of Oblivion: A Global History of Narcotics 1500-2000* (London: Orion Press, 2001).
- Des Jarlais, D.C., “Harm reduction in the USA: the research perspective and an archive to David Purchase,” *Harm Reduction Journal* 14.51 (2017).
- Foster, Anne, “Prohibition as Superiority: Policing Opium in South-East Asia, 1898-1925,” *The International History Review*, 22.2 (2000), pp.253-273.
- Foster, Anne, “Models for Governing: Opium and Colonial Policies in Southeast Asia, 1898-1910” in Anne Foster and Julian Go (eds.), *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp.123-152.
- Foster, Anne, “The Philippines, the United States, and the Origins of Global Narcotics Prohibition,” *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 33.1 (2019), pp.13-36.
- Gamella, Juan, et al, “Las Rentas de Anfión: El Monopolio Español del Opio en las Filipinas (1844-1898) y su Rechazo por la Administración Norteamericana,” *Revista de Indias*, 52.194 (1992), pp.62-106.
- Gealogo, Francis A. “The Philippines in the World of the Influenza Pandemic of 1918–1919,” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 57.2 (2009), pp.261-292.

- Ginsberg, Philip, "The Chinese in the Philippine Revolution," *Asian Studies* (1965), pp.143-159.
- Go, Julian, "Colonial Reception and Cultural Reproduction: Filipino Elites and United States Tutelary Rule," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12.4 (1999), pp. 337-368.
- Go, Julian, "Introduction: Global Perspectives on the U.S. Colonial State in the Philippines in Anne Foster and Julian Go (eds.), *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp.10-60.
- Go, Julian, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during U.S. Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).
- Gootenberg, Paul ed., *Cocaine*, (London: Routledge, 1999).
- Gray, Elizabeth K., "The Trade-Off: Chinese Opium Traders and Antebellum Reform in the United States, 1815-1860," in *Drugs and Empires: Essays in Modern Imperialism and Intoxication, c. 1500-c. 1930*, eds. James H. Mills and Patricia Barton (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp.220-242.
- Guha, Ranajit, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," in Ranaji Guha and Gayatri Spivak ed., *Selected Subaltern Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp.37-45.
- Hall, Catherine, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
- Hawkins, Michael C., *Making Moros: Imperial Historicism and American Military Rule in the Philippines' Muslim South*, (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013).
- Ileto, Reynaldo C., "Cholera and the origins of the American sanitary order in the Philippines," in *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies*, ed. David Arnold, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp.125-148.
- Ileto, Reynaldo C., "Outlines of a Non-Linear Emplotment of Philippine History," in *Reflections on Development in Southeast Asia* (ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 1988), pp.130-159.
- Immerwahr, Daniel, "The Greater United States: Territory and Empire in U.S. History," *Diplomatic History*, 40.3 (2016), pp. 373–391.
- Jay, Mike, *Emperors of Dreams: drugs in the nineteenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
- Kramer, Paul A., *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States and the Philippines*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).
- Kuperavage, Jessica, "Petitioning Against the "Opium Evil": Economic Policy as Humanitarian Intervention in Early Antidrug Rhetoric," *Southern Communication Journal* 79.5 (2014), pp. 369-386.
- Kwok-Chu, Wong, *Chinese in the Philippine Economy, 1898-1941*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

Lockard, Craig, “‘The Sea Common to All:’ Maritime Frontiers, Port Cities and Chinese Traders in the Southeast Asian Age of Commerce, ca. 1400-1750,” *Journal of World History*, 21.2 (2010), pp. 219-247.

Madge, Tim, *White Mischief: a cultural history of cocaine*, (London: Mainstream London, 2001).

Mandel, Jerry, “Protestant Missionaries: Creators of the International War on Drugs” in Jefferson M. Fish (ed.) *Drugs and Society: US Public Policy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), pp. 19-42.

McAllister, William, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, (London: Routledge, 2012).

McCoy, Alfred, *Policing America’s Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 2009).

Mendoza Cortes, Rosario, “La experiencia filipina bajo el dominio español: la cristianización como cambio social” in David N. Lorenzen (ed.) *Cambio religioso y dominación cultural: el impacto del Islam y del cristianismo sobre otras sociedades*, (Mexico City: Colegio de Mexico, 1982), pp. 125-135.

Mills, James, *Cannabis Britannica: Empire, Trade, and Prohibition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Mills, James, “Decolonising Drugs in Asia: The Case of Cocaine in Colonial India’, *Third World Quarterly* (2017), pp.1-14.

Mills, James and Barton, Patricia ‘Asian Cocaine Crisis: Pharmaceuticals, Consumers and Control in South and East Asia, c.1900-1945’, Wellcome Trust Investigator Award Application, 200394/Z/15/Z, 2016-2020.

Mojares, Resil B., *The War against the Americans: Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu, 1899-1906*, (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999).

Moralina, Aaron Rom O., “State, Society, and Sickness: Tuberculosis Control in the American Philippines, 1910–1918,” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 57.2 (2009) pp. 179–218.

Moralina, Aaron Rom O., “Hidden Lives, Concealed Narratives: A History of Leprosy in the Philippines ed. by Maria Serena I. Diokno (review)” *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 65.4 (2017), pp. 523-526.

Musto, David, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973, 1987, 1999).

Musto, David, ed., *Drugs in America: A Documentary History*, (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

Postler, Mark A. & Waisel, David B., "An Historical Perspective on Opium and its Therapeutic Uses throughout the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Bulletin of Anesthesia History*, 15.2 (1997), pp. 3-5.

Potter, Simon; Saha, Jonathan, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire," *Journal of Colonialism & Colonial History* (2015). pp 1-34.

Prakash, Gyan, "Science between the Lines," in Shahid Amin and Dipesh Chakrabarty ed., *Subaltern Studies IX* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) pp.59-83.

Pursell, Carroll, *The Machine in America: A Social History of Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

Rafael, Vicente, *White Love and Other Events in Filipino History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000).

Ragsag, Anabelle, *Ethnic Boundary Making at the Margins of Conflict in the Philippines: Everyday Identity Politics in Mindanao*, (Springer International Publishing, 2020).

Richards, John F., "Opium and the British Indian Empire: The Royal Commission of 1895," *Modern Asian Studies*, 36.2 (2002), pp.375-420.

Rimner, Steffen, *Opium's Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2018).

Rubio Quintero, David F., "El fenómeno de las Drogas en Filipinas, características Históricas y Debate actual," *Trans-pasando Fronteras* 11 (2018), pp.145-167.

Spillane, Joseph, *Cocaine: from medical marvel to modern menace in the United States, 1884-1920*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins London, 2000).

Tagliacozzo, Eric, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

Taylor, Arnold H., "American Confrontation with Opium Traffic in the Philippines," *Pacific Historical Review* 36.3 (1967) pp. 307-324.

Taylor, Arnold H., *American Diplomacy and the Narcotics Trade, 1900-1939: A Study in International Humanitarian Reform*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1969).

Thai, Philip "Old Menace in New China: Coastal smuggling, illicit markets, and symbiotic economies in the early People's Republic," *Modern Asian Studies*, 51.5 (2017) pp. 1561-1597.

Trocki, Carl *Opium, Empire, and the Global Political Economy: A Study of the Asian Opium Trade, 1750-1950*, (London: Routledge, 1999).

Tyrrell, Ian, "The regulation of alcohol and other drugs in a colonial context: United States policy towards the Philippines, c. 1898- 1910," *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 35.4 (2008), pp.539- 571.

Victoria, Ferdinand, "The Most Humane of Any that Could be Adopted": The Philippine Opium Committee Report and the Imagining of the Opium Consumer's World in the Colonial Philippines, 1903-1905." in *Towards a Filipino History: A Festschrift for Zeus Salazar* (BAKAS, 2015), pp.89-157.

Wertz, Daniel "Idealism, Internationalism, and Imperialism: Opium Politics in the Colonial Philippines, 1898-1902," *Modern Asian Studies*, 47.2 (2013) pp.467-499.

Wickberg, Edgar, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898*, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1965, 1999).

Wolff, Leon *Little Brown Brother: How the United States Purchased and Pacified the Philippine Islands at the Century's Turn*, (London: Lowe and Brydon Ltd, 1961).

Wright, Ashley, *Opium and Empire in Southeast Asia: Regulating Consumption in British Burma* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Yang, Anand, *The Limited Raj: Agrarian Relations in Colonial India, Saran District, 1793-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

Zarco, Ricardo, "A Short History of Narcotic Drug Addiction in the Philippines", *Philippine Sociological Review*, 43.1/4 (1995), pp. 1-15.

### Journalism

"Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte in quotes," 30 September 2016, BBC News (consulted 25 August 2021).

### Unpublished Works

Smith, Nathaniel L., "*Cured by the Habit of Force*": *The United States and the Global Campaign to Punish Drug Consumers, 1898-1970*, PhD thesis, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2007).