

BREAKING THE LOOPING CHAIN:
THE ENVIRONMENTALISM OF PETRO-CULTURE

by

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Abstract

This thesis argues that the incentive structures engendered by petroleum-based export economies have a strong influence on the formation of domestic environmental movements. As a result, these movements display a set of similar characteristics, which distinguish them from other environmental movements. These movements are classified under the category of ‘the environmentalism of petro-culture.’

This concept is then applied to two of the environmental movements that have developed in Nigeria’s Niger Delta, concluding that these groups display characteristics that correspond to the environmentalism of petro-culture.

Furthermore, several other states with large petroleum-based export economies are briefly examined as case studies to determine whether environmentalism of petro-culture movements have developed there. Based on these brief studies, the conclusion is drawn that Ecuador and Aceh have environmental movements that display characteristics that fit the environmentalism of petro-culture concept. Furthermore, it seems likely that similar movements will develop in Cameroon and Chad.

Finally, the relationship between environmentalism of petro-culture groups and transnational environmental networks is examined. The conclusion drawn is that, due to the vague policy demands of the transnational groups, domestic environmentalism of petro-culture movements are able to find issues in common with them, despite a drastic difference in their demands.

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To George Orwell, for Homage to Catalonia.

*Ogoni is the land
The people, Ogoni
The agony of trees dying
In ancestral farmlands
Streams polluted weeping
Filth into murky rivers
It is the poisoned air
Coursing the luckless lungs
Of dying children
Ogoni is the dream
Breaking the looping chain
Around the drooping neck
Of a shell-shocked land*

-Ken Saro-Wiwa, Ogoni, Ogoni

Introduction

On May 22nd 1994, the Nigerian government of General Sani Abacha arrested nine men connected with the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). After being held incommunicado for nearly six months, the Nigerian playwright and poet, Ken Saro-Wiwa, along with eight other men, was executed on November 10th 1995. Saro-wiwa's execution is seen as nothing short of judicial murder in response to the pressure that Saro-Wiwa's MOSOP had brought on the Royal Shell oil company's activities in the Niger Delta.¹ MOSOP, under Saro-Wiwa's leadership, had "been at the forefront of the confrontation between the indigenous communities of the Niger Delta, the oil companies and the government, which [had] sent troops to crush local protest movements."² MOSOP activism had developed, as a response to "a blighted countryside, an atmosphere full of...carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon; a land in which wildlife is unknown; a land of polluted streams and creeks, a land which is, in every sense of the term, an ecological disaster."³ Academics and activists often cite the story of MOSOP and Saro-Wiwa as an ideal example of the struggle between ethnic environmental groups and western corporate capitalism.⁴ However, what is often left out of the story is that an end to the local oil production was not among the demands made by MOSOP.

This situation is not unique to MOSOP. For many of the environmental groups of the Niger Delta, including the Ijaw Youth Council, demands are not for the cessation of oil production, but simply a share in the wealth generated by the activity, so as to alleviate or escape many of the immediate negative externalities of the production. Their demands

¹ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 103

² Human Rights Watch "Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis" <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

³ Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 102

⁴ Naomi Klein No Logo: taking aim at the brand bullies (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2000)

include a more equitable transfer of revenues collected by the federal government and better compensation for the resulting environmental damage.

This poses somewhat of a challenge to the predominant view of environmental movements. Can a group be considered an environmental movement if it does not seek an end to the environmentally damaging activity? More importantly, what pressures influence these movements such that, in spite of the catastrophic damage inflicted on the regions by petroleum production, they still support the continuation of this practice? The goal of this thesis is to examine the Nigerian movements in the broader context of environmentalism and attempt to demonstrate how petroleum production and an oil-based economy engender these behaviors. To that end, the discussion is organized in the following manner.

In the first chapter, I present a discussion of the two fundamental themes of this thesis; the concept of petro-culture and the environmentalism of the poor, as well as a survey of the relevant literature.

The first half of Chapter One surveys the work of scholars such as Terry Lynn Karl, David K. Leonard and Scott Strauss, and their observations regarding the structural influence that petroleum-based enclave economies have on the incentive structures of political actors. One shortcoming of this body of literature, for the purpose of this study, is that the focus of these authors is on the social impact of oil at the political level, rather than the broader social level. That said many of the observations these authors make are equally applicable to the study of social movements, and therefore relevant to this investigation.

The second half of this chapter examines the broader context of environmentalism and discusses what the defining characteristics are of an environmental movement. This is followed by a discussion, which categorizes environmental movements, based to a large part on the work of Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier. This is accomplished by contrasting the environmentalism of the developed world with that of the developing world

(what Juan Martinez-Alier and Ramachandra Guha call the 'environmentalism of the poor'). This distinction is key because the environmental movements under examination in this work have more characteristics in common with other groups in the developing world than with those of the developed world.

The first chapter closes with the presentation of the environmental movement that this thesis studies; namely the environmentalism of petro-culture. This is accomplished by contrasting this sort of movement with the environmentalism of the poor defined by Guha and Martinez-Alier, focusing on the exceptional nature of the social, economic and environmental impact of oil production. In addition, this section highlights the often contrary demands made by the local environmental groups in the developing world and those made by their partner organizations, the international environmental activist groups (such as Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth).

The second chapter tests this theoretical model against the case studies of two Nigerian movements, MOSOP and the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC). This chapter begins by presenting a brief description of the historical, political and economic situation in Nigeria. Following this, I examine the political, economic and social contexts in which each movement emerged, and the demands made by each group. MOSOP and the IYC are, on the surface, quite different from each other, but I demonstrate in this chapter how the differences in the relative sizes and power of MOSOP and the IYC, and the historical circumstance in which they emerged, have impacted on the evolution of each group, highlighting the manner in which the influence of oil played a key role.

In the final chapter, I revisit the theoretical structure of the environmentalism of petro-culture presented in the first chapter and discuss a number of alternate case studies to which this model could hypothetically be applied in future studies, such as the environmental movements in Ecuador, Indonesia, Venezuela, Chad and Cameroon. In addition, this chapter

examines other petro-states that have not developed environmentalism of petro-culture-style movements. This is done to further clarify several of the necessary characteristics that lead to the development of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, such as the presence of geographically concentrated ethnic groups and onshore oil production. This final chapter closes with a discussion of the relationship that the emerging transnational environmental networks have with the movements discussed within this thesis.

Chapter One

The Environmentalism of Petro-Culture

The primary topic of this thesis is the social impact of oil, specifically examining how it can shape many of the characteristics of environmental movements, such as their demands and the relationship between them and their governments. This chapter makes the argument that this results in environmental movements which share a number of unique characteristics; which can be grouped together under the definition the 'environmentalism of petro-culture.' Put succinctly, the environmentalism of petro-culture is the category of social movements that develop in a society or state where the incentive structures of social and political actors are strongly influenced by the presence of significant petroleum-based export revenues. This sort of social movement is distinct from both the environmental movements of the developed world and the other types of environmental movements in the developing world.

The concept of environmentalism of petro-culture has its genesis in two distinct areas of scholarship; the research into the political impact of economic structures (and specifically the impact of oil on political structures) and the study of environmentalism. This chapter surveys both bodies of literature in order to present and situate a detailed definition of the environmentalism of petro-culture. It begins by focussing on the literature related to the concept of petro-culture and then examines the literature on environmentalism.

Petro-culture

The first aspect of the environmentalism of petro-culture that this chapter examines is the notion of petro-culture. In order to demonstrate the meaning of this term, the discussion in this section is organized in the following manner. First, it provides a definition of an enclave economy. Next, it discusses neopatrimonial regimes and relates these political

structures to enclave economies, demonstrating how enclave economies often lead to either the creation or strengthening of neopatrimonial structures in developing states. Third, it refers to the work of Terry Lynn Karl, who makes use of these concepts in her work The Paradox of Plenty, wherein she demonstrates how petroleum-based export economies have encouraged the creation and perpetuation of similar neopatrimonial structures in three case studies which she defines as 'petro-states'; Indonesia, Nigeria and Venezuela. Finally, it takes Karl's concept of the 'petro-state' and expands the concept from a political one to a wider social concept, suggesting that the incentive structures that Karl argues have influenced the behaviour of political actors in these states have a similar influence on other social actors. However, to get to his point, we must start by discussing the fundamental concepts of enclave economies and neopatrimonialism.

The literature on these terms and their relationship deals predominantly with the challenges this relationship presents to democratization, rather than the way in which it encourages certain forms of social organization (such as neopatrimonialism). Nonetheless, many of the observations made by the scholars in this field can be sufficiently inverted so that rather than seeing the social impact of oil as the barrier to democracy, it is seen as encouraging another form of social organization.

Enclave Economies

The term 'enclave economy' is used to provide a general description of the characteristics and social and political impact of economies based on lucrative geographically concentrated export-based economy.

In their work Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures, David K. Leonard and Scott Straus offer the following definition of an enclave economy:

Enclave production entails export of primary products (usually extractive) that are generated in a small area. In Africa, the prevalent forms of enclave production are mining, oil drilling, and agricultural production on the estates of large corporations. The enclave idea implies that production is geographically concentrated, that a large portion of the land or capital goods involved in export production cannot easily be assigned to other profitable purposes, and that labor (which always is mobile) is a small part of the cost of production. Most states on the continent have a tax base that is built overwhelmingly on exports, and many derive most of their export income from enclave production, making the latter “enclave economies.”⁵

Enclave economies demonstrate two additional general features: “first, that enclave economies are ‘rentier’ and second, that they do not depend on widespread productivity in the population.”⁶ By rentier, Leonard and Strauss mean that enclave economies lend themselves to the easy and extensive collection of taxes by the federal government. Furthermore, states are able to derive enormous incomes from the rents collected without the need for the popular support of the majority of the population. This form of state revenue collection therefore becomes the “foundation for personal rule,”⁷ with rulers largely insulated from dissatisfaction expressed by the majority of the populace, as the revenues collected from the enclave production are used to support the neopatrimonial networks in the military, which is, in turn, used to crush any popular dissent. In this way, enclave economies can be seen to be a strongly contributing agent in the formation of neopatrimonial regimes.

Neopatrimonialism

In the work of many scholars, neopatrimonialism and enclave economies are either used synonymously or are assumed to have a perpetually reinforcing relationship, but in this work, a clear distinction is made between the two. The reason for this distinction is to

⁵ David K. Leonard, Scott Straus Africa’s Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 12

⁶ David K. Leonard, Scott Straus Africa’s Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 13

⁷ David K. Leonard, Scott Straus Africa’s Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 13

demonstrate the impact of enclave economies on social as well as political incentive structures. Neopatrimonialism and neopatrimonial regimes can exist without the presence of enclave economies, but the presence of enclave economies in developing states contributes greatly to the likelihood and persistence of neopatrimonial regimes. An example of this is Nigeria, where neopatrimonial structures existed prior to the development of the domestic oil industry (itself due to a colonial form of enclave production). However, after Nigerian oil production began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the degree of neopatrimonialism and corruption in Nigeria was greatly exacerbated:

For the purpose of this study, I define a neopatrimonial regime as one in which those in political power remain in power through the creation and maintenance of elaborate political and social support structures, which are sustained by the selective distribution of state assets (such as government posts and state contracts). While this study uses this term exclusively, it can be considered synonymous with other terms used by other scholars for this type of governing paradigm (such as “clientelism,” “sultanism” and “personal rule”).

There is a great deal of literature on neopatrimonial regimes, but much of it dwells on the characteristics demonstrated by such regimes, rather than what spurs their formation and what enables their perpetuation. That said, two scholars whose work explores the definition of neopatrimonialism is, perhaps, an appropriate starting point.

Michael Bratton and Nicholas Van Der Walle’s article entitled “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa” is, perhaps, the most comprehensive study of African neopatrimonialism, and provides an excellent perspective on its characteristics.⁸ Bratton and Van Der Walle argue that neopatrimonial authoritarian regimes differ from bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in the types of barriers they create to democratization.

⁸ Michael Bratton, Nicholas Van de Walle “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa” *World Politics* Vol.46, No.4 (Jul.1994), 453-489

They write that “the prospects for democracy are better in transitions from regime types other than neopatrimonial ones...because greater progress has been made in other regimes in routinizing participation and (especially) competition in formal political institutions.”⁹ They argue that the formalized interplay of government officials within bureaucratic authoritarian regimes lays the social groundwork that democratic governments can be built on.

Neopatrimonial regimes have no such routine structure in place, instead being constructed according the prevailing circumstances, the ruler’s caprice and general ‘ad-hockery.’ A neopatrimonial ruler’s base of power is the network of client relationships he has made with other individuals of power within the state. The political fortunes of these individuals are subject to the vagaries of personal and power relations within the state, which sees their fortunes rise and fall over time. The successful neopatrimonial ruler must adapt to these changes in power; ever seeking to subordinate those whose star is on the rise under their own banner. This results in the aforementioned ‘ad-hockery’ that characterize the patterns of political power within the neopatrimonial state. In this way, neopatrimonial regimes can be seen to be exceptionally resilient to change, in the manner in which they regularize irregularity.

Furthermore, Bratton and Van Der Walle argue that there are circumstances and characteristics surrounding African neopatrimonialism, which makes it an exceptional phenomenon. These characteristics include primordialist ethnic organizational structures, the political impact of African-style colonialism and the influence of African-style extractive export economies¹⁰. However, Bratton and Van Der Walle only mention the latter characteristics in passing, without pursuing the matter in further depth. This limits the utility

⁹ Michael Bratton, Nicholas Van de Walle “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa” *World Politics* Vol.46, No.4 (Jul.1994), 487

¹⁰ Michael Bratton, Nicholas Van de Walle “Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa” *World Politics* Vol.46, No.4 (Jul.1994),453-489

of Bratton and Van Der Walle's work to this current study, in that they do not examine the relationship between the type of economy and neopatrimonial regimes in substantive depth, instead choosing to focus on "more proximate, political institutions."¹¹ However, their work does present a good picture of the characteristics of African neopatrimonialism.

In order to demonstrate the relationship between enclave economies and neopatrimonialism, we return to the work of Leonard and Strauss, as this is one of the main topics that they focus on in Africa's Stalled Development. They write that, "enclave economies...are a foundation for personal rule... [and furthermore that] an enclave economic base allows personal rule to sustain itself over the long run both because enclaves themselves are susceptible to state predation and because enclaves do not depend on widespread productivity for their sustenance."¹² In other words, enclave economies enable the development of neopatrimonial regimes because the leaders can take from the state for themselves, without being answerable to the people of the state. Leonard and Strauss close their book by noting "Africa's interactions with the international system [through enclave production] have created a set of incentives for African leaders that are deeply dysfunctional to the continent's development."¹³ In other words, the incentive structures in which African leaders operate are significantly (and negatively) influenced by enclave economies by the manner in which enclave economies enable to the establishment and perpetuation of personal rule regimes.

The emphasis that Leonard and Strauss place on the influence of the economic sphere upon politics is also found in the work of Terry Lynn Karl. In her work, The Paradox of

¹¹ Michael Bratton, Nicholas Van de Walle "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa" *World Politics* Vol.46, No.4 (Jul.1994), 457

¹² David K. Leonard, Scott Straus Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 13

¹³ David K. Leonard, Scott Straus Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 105

Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States, Karl argues that the oil-based enclave economies of Nigeria, Venezuela and Indonesia are the sources of the incentive structures in which policymakers operate and that these incentive structures are what influences the formation of neopatrimonial regimes.

What is significant about Karl's findings is the enormous amount of influence that she argues oil has had in the past on the development of these states. She therefore distinguishes them from other states with enclave economies with the name 'petro-states.' Karl argues that the oil economies of Nigeria, Indonesia and Venezuela have had a significant impact on the "capacity (or incapacity) of their respective states to guide development, even if their actual institutions are quite different in virtually all other respects."¹⁴ She writes that "in developing countries dependent on a single leading commodity policymakers acquire certain aims and goals, accept some values and paths over others, and prefer utilizing some institutions rather than others precisely because they operate in the incentive structure shaped by this commodity."¹⁵ These incentive structures encourage actors to support petroleum production above all other interests, for "as long as petroleum fulfills a fundamental need and yields a profit for powerful state and private interests, governments will choose to exploit it."¹⁶ Put another way, it creates a situation where even when there is a change in government it is largely a case of 'meet the new boss, same as the old boss,' as the incentive structure created by the commodity shapes the behaviour of the incoming group. In this way, the neopatrimonial characteristics of these states are seen to have a direct relationship to the nature of their economies.

¹⁴ Terry Lynn Karl The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 237

¹⁵ Terry Lynn Karl The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 239

¹⁶ Terry Lynn Karl The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 241

This observation is *the most* relevant to this current study. Karl argues that political behaviour is shaped by the incentive structures fostered by the oil economy. The behaviours of actors within these incentive structures are shaped more with the carrot than the stick, as they chase after the insidious allure of petroleum-derived state revenues. The drive to enjoy the profits associated with petroleum production acts as the positive reinforcement for activities that further the development of the petroleum production. If, in this scenario, the actors within these governments are seen as actors subject to the aforementioned incentive structures, it is not hard to imagine how these incentive structures can influence the behaviours of other actors, such as environmental movements.

The term petro-culture used in this thesis is derived from Karl's concept of a "petro-state."¹⁷ Petro-culture refers to the incentive structures created by an oil-based export economy, which Karl argues influence political actors, and which I argue likewise influence social actors. Petro-culture exists in the theoretical space between petroleum-based enclave economies and neopatrimonialism, acting as the influences derived from the enclave economy, which encourage the formation of the neopatrimonial-style social structures, both within and out of government. 'Petro-culture' does not exist as a regime, per-se but instead as a set of specific incentive structures which influence the behaviour of social and political actors. It is important to note that these structures are not deterministic and do not force actors to act in a certain manner, but instead encourage certain forms of at the expense of others, acting as more of a carrot than a stick. This concept is discussed in further detail at the end of this chapter.

¹⁷ Terry Lynn Karl The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 16

Environmentalism

The second half of the chapter situates the environmentalism of petro-culture within the wider literature on environmental movements, and demonstrates how this concept differs from the current literature on the classification of environmental movements. In addition, it discusses the problems associated with environmentalism's status as an essentially contested concept. The terms 'environmental movement' and 'environmentalism' are used extensively by authors of every political and academic stripe, who do so without first offering a clear definition of what these terms mean. While this may be the sign of a good trend (that it is assumed that everyone knows what 'environmentalism' is when they see it), it often leads to scholars talking past each other or competing in a sort of environmental one-upmanship as they present their own area of study as the most important or truest form of environmentalism. This section of this chapter attempts to cut through these arguments by presenting a broad, but concrete definition of environmentalism in general, with a subsequent sub-classification of the specific categories that exist within the overall concept, closing with a detailed definition of the environmentalism of petro-culture.

One thing that should be noted before preceding is the limitations under which this survey is conducted. While there is a great deal of literature written on the environmental movement, under the various categories of environmental politics, green politics, environmental sociology, etc...the body of work that attempts to systematically differentiate between such movements is practically non-existent. This is most evident in regard to the environmental movements of the developing world. The only scholars who have produced significant work in this field are Ramachandra Guha and Juan Martinez-Alier, whose most prominent work include Guha's Environmentalism: A Global History, Martinez-Alier's The Environmentalism of the Poor and their collaborative effort, Varieties of Environmentalism.

The concept of the environmentalism of petro-culture is closely related to the concept of the environmentalism of the poor, as presented by Guha and Martinez-Alier, with some key distinctions that will be addressed later in this chapter. Therefore this study draws heavily on these works but seeks to build on them and thus contribute to the emerging study of the environmental movements of the developing world. First, however, we turn to examine the broader concept of environmentalism.

What is Environmentalism?

Alan Frizzell, in Shades of Green: Environmental Attitudes in Canada and Around the World, wrote that “the variety of opinions within the environmental movement is considerable, ranging from those who would dramatically alter existing society and its power structure to those who seek only to reform policy.”¹⁸ Frizzell’s statement adequately covers the wide variety of social movements that make up environmentalism, but it does not provide a definition of what the movement is. This is a problem, because without a functioning definition of what an environmental movement is, it is impossible to set guidelines for what should and should not be considered an environmental movement. Yet such guidelines are important for this study, and one of the incidental questions that this thesis addresses is whether a social movement that emerges in response to environmental damage, yet does not demand an end to the source of that damage can truly be considered an environmental movement.

In the past three decades, the environmental movement has ingrained itself so strongly into the collective vernacular that scholars often presuppose an agreed upon definition. However, this unspoken understanding is not sufficient for the purpose of this

¹⁸ Alan Frizzell “Environmental Attitudes Around the World” in Shades of Green: Environmental Attitudes in Canada and Around the World, Alan Frizzell and Jon H. Pammett Ed. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1997), 1

thesis, as it seeks to challenge and expand the definition of environmentalism. An adequate definition of environmentalism has to encompass all facets of the environmental movement, from militant 'deep greens' to conservationists to environmental groups in developing countries. While there have been efforts by some to present definitions of aspects of environmentalism, too often these definitions are too narrow, a result of the inclusion of too much of their own bias done in an effort to distinguish their work from that of others.¹⁹ One example of such a definition is Brian Baxter's definition of ecologism, which criticizes other forms of environmental thought as 'anthropocentric.'²⁰ Another is Sheldon Kamieniecki's definition of 'environmental politics', which focuses its study on the "ecological parties, international organizations and regimes, international law, and the problems of policies of specific nations in different regions of the world."²¹ Both of these definitions are useful as concepts, which can help, categorize and organize the discussion of a very broad field of study. Where their use is inappropriate is when these definitions are presented as the starting point for conducting studies, for they have missed that crucial first step which defines the broader category of environmentalism.

One exception to this rule is Neil Carter, who makes an effort to present a holistic perspective on environmental politics. In his work, The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism and Policy, Carter situates all political movements within a two axis model, with the left/right political spectrum as the horizontal and the degree of 'greenness,' meaning the degree of environmental awareness, as the vertical.²² This model is an admirable attempt to reconcile many of the inconsistencies between environmentalism and the traditional left/right

¹⁹ Guha's article "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique", found in Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South (London: Earthscan, 1997)

²⁰ Brian Baxter Ecologism: An Introduction (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1999), vii

²¹ Sheldon Kamieniecki Environmental Politics in the International Arena: Movements, Parties, Organizations, and Policy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 1

²² Neil Carter The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 74

spectrum of politics, as environmentalism does not always go hand in hand with the leftist politics it is so often associated with (Carter uses the example of Marxism as a political ideology particularly hostile to environmentalism).²³ While Carter's model does provide an innovative manner in which to incorporate environmental awareness in our understanding of politics, its focus on politics is also its shortcoming. Carter's model offers no perspective on environmental movements outside the sphere of politics. As such, it is of limited use to this present study.

This leaves us with no prior definition of the environmentalism from which to launch this present inquiry. However, as mentioned previously, a functional definition of environmentalism is necessary before proceeding in this inquiry. To that end, I offer the following as a broad definition of environmentalism:

A social movement that has organized in response to ecological pressures and seeks to mitigate those pressures.

This definition is broad enough to include any sort of movement thought of as an environmental movement. Any group, from the aforementioned 'deep greens' to the Sierra Club to suburban families who operate their own composter, can all be included under the rubric of this definition. With this as our starting point, we now turn to the specific classifications of environmentalism.

Discussions on Environmentalism:

The next step in this thesis is to divide this broader definition into several smaller categories. In order to do this, we now turn to examine the various discussion of and in environmentalism.

²³ Neil Carter The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 74

Two fundamental problems characterize scholarship in the field of environmentalism. The first is the excessive specificity of the work of many scholars. One of the main reasons that no overall definition has been provided yet is that many of the works in these fields contribute a great deal to the academic realms of environmental politics, environmental sociology or environmental geography without situating themselves within the larger study of environmentalism. Instead of providing a common reference point from which they can situate their own work, authors write in relation to each other's seemingly arbitrary milestones, and thereby perpetuate many of the shortcomings of referenced works in their own work. By not providing a common starting point for their discussions, the authors of such works approach their studies with a myopic perspective; being unable to see the forest for the trees²⁴. Examples of this sort of specialized work are Luke Martell's Ecology and Society: An Introduction (which analyses the social development of western environmentalism), Sheldon Kamieniecki's Environmental Politics in the International Arena: Movements, Parties, Organizations, and Policy (which focuses on the development of environmental politics in North America, Western Europe and Scandinavia), Brian Baxter's Ecologism: An Introduction (which presents an argument supporting the intrinsic value of the Earth's ecology using Rawlsian political philosophy) and Leslie King and Deborah McCarthy's Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action (an application of sociology to the problem of environmental threats as social problems). Each of these works can be considered part of the literature on environmentalism or part of the environmental movement itself, yet it is difficult to situate them in relation to each other, as they do not position

²⁴ Citations for the above mentioned works are Luke Martell Ecology and Society: An Introduction (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), Sheldon Kamieniecki Environmental Politics in the International Arena: Movements, Parties, Organizations, and Policy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), Brian Baxter Ecologism: An Introduction (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1999) and Leslie King and Deborah McCarthy Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

themselves, academically, from a theoretical starting point represented by a common definition of environmentalism. However, for the purpose of this thesis, the tendency to overspecialize in the field is the lesser of the two major shortcomings in the scholarly field.

The second is the predominant Eurocentric (or more accurately, Western-centric) assumptions made by many scholars, based on their own limited cultural perspectives. Eric Hobsbawm wrote, "It is no accident that the main support for ecological policies comes from the rich countries and from the comfortable rich and middle classes (except for businessmen, who hope to make money by polluting activity). The poor, multiplying and under-employed, wanted more 'development,' not less."²⁵ This statement contains two remarkably sweeping assumptions. The first is that the poor do not care about environmental issues, being more preoccupied with the more pressing issues related to survival.²⁶ The second is that, just as environmentalism is an initiative of the rich in the developed world, only rich countries care enough about the environment to act on a global scale for its preservation. The falsity of these assumptions is demonstrated later in this chapter. What is important to understand for the present is the influence that these assumptions have both advertently and inadvertently had on the body of scholarship on environmentalism.

In the aforementioned Environmental Politics in the International Arena, Kamieniecki devotes a scant 37 pages of the 290 page text to the environmental movements and politics of Africa and Asia (in this case Asia includes South, South-East and East Asia).²⁷ Less than fifteen percent of the book is devoted to the issues and movements of over half the population of the planet.

²⁵ Eric Hobsbawm, The Age of Extremes (Publisher, 1994) as quoted in Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 98

²⁶ As any student of Maslow would support.

²⁷ Sheldon Kamieniecki Environmental Politics in the International Arena: Movements, Parties, Organizations, and Policy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), v

In King and McCarthy's Environmental Sociology,²⁸ only two chapters out of twenty-nine refer to environmental movements in developing countries, and in this case they both deal with forest conservation in Central and South America. I should note that I am not implying that this bias in King and McCarthy's work indicates any irresponsibility in their scholarship. On the contrary, Environmental Sociology does present a balanced perspective on the issues it does deal with. What I am implying in calling attention to this bias is that this Eurocentric bias is so deeply ingrained in much of the work on environmentalism, that it renders much of it of little help for understanding and classifying the environmentalisms of the developing world.

King and McCarthy write that for environmental sociologists, "the 'environment' encompasses the most remote regions of the earth as well as all the bits and pieces of our daily lives—from the cleaners we use to wash our carpets to the air we breathe on our way to work each day."²⁹ Unfortunately, the most remote regions of the earth (which in this case presumably means everywhere not within a 12 hour flight from New York) remain that way in their work. What is most unfortunate about this particular work is that, to King and McCarthy, it represents part of an ongoing effort by them to "not only educate students about environmental issues but also show them their potential role as facilitators of well-informed change."³⁰ They demonstrate a Eurocentric bias in this work and what is worse by presenting this as something that "reflects [their] vision"³¹ they are perpetuating that bias in the next generation of environmental scholars.

²⁸ Leslie King, Deborah McCarthy Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), v

²⁹ Leslie King, Deborah McCarthy Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), xi

³⁰ Leslie King, Deborah McCarthy Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), ix

³¹ Leslie King, Deborah McCarthy Environmental Sociology: From Analysis to Action (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), ix

Therefore, in summary, while there is a significant body of work on the subject of environmentalism, much of it is of little value to this current study due to its excessive specificity and its Eurocentric bias. One prominent exception, however, is the work of Guha and Martinez-Alier, to which we not turn.

Categories of Environmentalism

Guha and Martinez-Alier have done a great deal of work towards presenting a synthesis of the disparate approaches to the study of environmentalism, by dividing these movements into overall categories. These two scholars are India's Ramachandra Guha and Spain's Juan Martinez-Alier. In their work, they present three broad classifications of environmental movements; two from the developed world and one from the developing world. This section briefly presents the classifications presented by Guha and Martinez-Alier, culminating with a more thorough examination of their 'environmentalism of the poor,' which closely relates to the environmentalism of petro-culture, presented in this thesis.

Martinez-Alier writes that "the environmental movement worldwide continues to be dominated by two main currents, the cult of the wilderness and (increasingly) the gospel of eco-efficiency."³² Martinez-Alier defines the first as being "concerned with the preservation of wild Nature but without anything to say on industry and urbanization, indifferent or opposed to economic growth, most worried by population growth, backed scientifically by conservation biology."³³ The 'gospel of eco-efficiency' he defines as being "concerned with the sustainable management or 'wise use' of natural resources and with the control of pollution not only in industrial contexts but also in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, resting

³² Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), vii

³³ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 14

on a belief in new technologies and the 'internalization of externalities' as instruments for ecological modernization, backed up by industrial ecology and environmental economies."³⁴

It should be noted that Martinez-Alier and Guha do not see these categories as wholly discrete from each other, recognizing that "there are points of contact and points of disagreement among these varieties of environmentalism...that one single environmental organization may belong to more than one variety,"³⁵ pointing to the fact that Greenpeace was founded to both ban military nuclear testing and save the whales, and therefore can be considered to have a foot in each camp.³⁶

Returning to the discussion of categories of environmentalism, by adopting these two sub-classifications of environmentalism, we now have two fairly broad and sometimes overlapping (as in the case of the Greenpeace example) and sometimes antagonistic categories in which to situate the myriad perspectives on environmentalism. However, these two categories are insufficient to accommodate a truly global perspective on environmentalism.

On the topic of the global nature of environmentalism, Indian journalist Anil Agarwal wrote:

The first lesson is that the main source of environmental destruction in the world is the demand for natural resources generated by the consumption of the rich (whether they are rich nations or rich individuals and groups within nations)...The second lesson is that it is the poor who are affected the most by environmental destruction.³⁷

³⁴ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 14

³⁵ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 15

³⁶ I am well aware that the appellations that Guha and Martinez-Alier have chosen to give these two categories are fairly pejorative. One of the not-so-subtle themes of their bodies of work is that the 'environmentalism of the poor' that they study is, in some sense, the vanguard of the environmental movement, which, in a way, makes them guilty of the same academic elitism that they criticize the 'deep greens' of. That said, I choose to retain the titles they have given to these two categories of environmentalism, if only for the sake of continuity with their work.

³⁷ Agarwal quoted in Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 3

Anna Bramwell adopts a different perspective in The Fading of the Greens, arguing that “only the maligned Western world has the money and the will to conserve its environment...it is the ‘Northern White Empire’s’ last burden, and may be its last crusade.”³⁸ She implies that only the developed world has the wealth and will to tackle environmental problems. In an echo of Bramwell’s sentiments, Lester Thurow, in The Zero-Sum Society, wrote the following:

If you look at the countries that are interested in environmentalism, or at the individuals who support environmentalism within each country, one is struck by the extent to which environmentalism is an interest of the upper middle class. Poor countries and poor individuals simply aren’t interested.³⁹

If this is the case, the two categories presented earlier will likely suffice to describe these movements. However, Martinez-Alier and Guha demonstrate in their work that the developing world need not rely on the crusades of the developed world. Guha notes that if one studies the social movements in developing states, “there does in fact exist a vibrant and growing environmental constituency.”⁴⁰

Guha and Martinez-Alier argue that this form of environmentalism is distinct from both the ‘cult of the wilderness’ and the ‘gospel of eco-efficiency.’ As a broad definition, they write that “environmentalism of the poor originates as a clash over productive resources: a third kind of class conflict, so to speak, but one with deep ecological implications.”⁴¹ Furthermore, “the main thrust of [the environmentalism of the poor] is not a sacred reverence for Nature but a material interest in the environment as a source and a requirement for livelihood; not so much a concern with the rights of other species and of future generations of

³⁸ Bramwell as quoted in Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 98

³⁹ Thurow in Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 98

⁴⁰ Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 99

⁴¹ Ramachandra Guha, Juan Martinez-Alier Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South (London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 1997), 18

humans as a concern for today's poor humans."⁴² In this way, the 'environmentalism of the poor' can be seen to be a deeply pragmatic and often conservative approach. It concerns itself with the preservation of traditional forms of social and economic activity against the environmental impacts of modern productive practices, often formed in response to "shortages of, threats to and struggles over natural resources."⁴³

One goal of Guha and Martinez-Alier's work is to provide an aggressive retort to the sort of attitude expressed by scholars such as Branwell and Thurow; arguing for an expansion of the concept of environmentalism. Guha quotes Peruvian activist, Hugo Blanco here:

environmentalists or conservationists are nice, slightly crazy guys whose main purpose in life is to prevent the disappearance of blue whales or pandas. The common people have more important things to think about, for instance how to get their daily bread. Sometimes they are taken to be not so crazy but rather smart guys who, in their guise of protecting endangered species, have formed so-called NGOs to get juicy amounts of dollars from abroad...Such views are sometimes true. However, there are in Peru a very large number of people who are environmentalists. Of course, if I tell people, you are ecologists, they might reply, 'ecologist your mother,' or words to that effect. Let us see, however. Isn't the village of Bambamarca truly environmentalist, which has time and again fought valiantly against the pollution of its water from mining? Are not the town of Ilo and the surrounding villages which are being polluted by the Southern Peru Copper Corporation truly environmentalist? Is not the village of Tambo Grande in Piura environmentalist when it rises like a closed fist and is ready to die in order to prevent strip-mining in its valley? Also, the people of the Mantaro Valley who saw the population of Amazonia, who are totally environmentalist, and die defending their forests against depredation. Also the poor people of Lima are environmentalists, when they complain against the pollution of water in the beaches.⁴⁴

In addition to the conservative nature, Guha and Martinez-Alier argue that there are a number of characteristics that distinguish the environmentalism of the poor from the environmentalism of the developed world. Guha identifies three of these; "first and

⁴² Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 11

⁴³ Ramachandra Guha, Juan Martinez-Alier Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South (London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 1997), 5

⁴⁴ Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 104

foremost, it combines a concern for the environment with an often more visible concern for social justice; [secondly] the fact that environmental degradation often intensifies *economic* deprivation explains the moral urgency of these movements of protest,”⁴⁵ and finally that these movements are often organized along ethnic lines.

The groups they examine include a variety of conservation-minded groups in India (such as the Chipko and the Narmada Bachao Andolan), Malaysia (the Sahabat Alam Malaysia), and Kenya (the Green Belt Movement).

However, there is reason to think that not all environmental groups of the developing world can be considered to be part of a single common category. In the final section of this chapter I make the case for a fourth major category of environmental movements; the environmentalism of petro-culture.

The Environmentalism of Petro-Culture:

Guha and Martinez-Alier make a convincing case for the ‘environmentalism of the poor.’ By demonstrating the inability to include the environmental movements of the developing world in the ‘cult of wilderness’ and ‘gospel of eco-efficiency’ classifications, they justify the creation of a new category of environmentalism. However, I argue that it is a mistake to not further distinguish between the various environmental groups within the category of the ‘environmentalism of the poor.’ In this section, I present a model for the ‘environmentalism of petro-culture,’ a category of environmental groups found within

⁴⁵ Ramachandra Guha Environmentalism: A Global History (New York: Longman, 2000), 105 Emphasis by Guha.

developing countries that have strong petroleum-based export economies derived from onshore reserves.⁴⁶

The environmentalism of petro-culture is related to the environmentalism of the poor in that it shares the three characteristics that Guha presented as defining traits of the environmentalism of the poor. The first is a concern for the environment with an often more visible concern for social justice. This is seen in the language used by these movements, which include issues such as democracy, the right to traditional land and human rights. The second is that the environmental degradation intensifies economic deprivation (in this case by making an agrarian existence impossible in the affected peoples poisoned lands). The third is that these movements are organized along ethnic lines, which in the case of the environmentalism of petro-culture, are geographically centered. Guha argues that the movements of the environmentalism of the poor are deeply conservative; that they represent a clash between the traditional and the modern. The environmentalism of petro-culture represents a similar clash, in that their traditional way of life is rendered forever destroyed by the environmental impact of modern productive forces.

The key distinguishing feature of the environmentalism of petro-culture is that these movements are deeply affected by both the ecological and social impact of oil. These movements are founded in response to the catastrophic environmental impact of oil production, their evolution is shaped by the incentive structures inherent to petro-culture discussed in the first half of this chapter and their goals and demands are heavily influenced by the nature of oil.

The environmentalism of petro-culture has the following characteristics:

⁴⁶ The onshore aspect of this definition is key, as while offshore oil-production can have environmental impacts, it does not have as immediate an impact on societies as onshore production does. For this reason, we would expect to find 'environmentalism of petro-culture' groups in states such as Nigeria or Bolivia, but not in Angola.

- 1) It is founded in response to environmental damage
- 2) It is founded in a state with petro-culture
- 3) The source of the environmental damage is onshore oil production
- 4) The environmental damage intensifies economic deprivation
- 5) It combines a concern for the environmental with a wider concern for social justice
- 6) It is formed along geographically concentrated and politically marginalized ethnic lines
- 7) It does not demand an end to oil production, instead demanding a share in oil revenues so as to deal with the immediate negative environmental externalities.

The necessity of the first of these characteristics is self-evident. The second relates to the incentive structures discussed in the first half of this chapter, which shape the strategies and demands adopted by the environmental movements. The third characteristic is a necessary condition for the emergence of such movements, because the environmental damage of offshore oil production is not as damaging to human life as that of that caused by onshore oil production. While offshore oil production can have a negative impact on marine life, which can in turn impact economically on communities that rely on fishing for a large part of their diet or a form of commercial activity, it simply does not compare in scope to the level and varieties damage inflicted by onshore oil production. These impacts include the pollution of groundwater and air, the loss of arable land, the destruction of ecology, and the inadvertent explosion of oil pipelines.⁴⁷ This damage is a necessary condition for the formation of these movements, as it serves as the key *raison d'être*. The fourth and fifth characteristics have been mentioned previously.

The final two characteristics stem from petro-culture and the incentive structures that petroleum production creates in societies. In many of the states with petro-culture, as in many developing states, there is very little homogeneity of ethnicity. Instead, economic and political difficulties serve to magnify the nascent ethnic identities and exacerbate friction between ethnic groups. In addition, in many developing states, social organization features

⁴⁷ A more concrete example of the environmental impact of onshore oil production is found in the next chapter, when the impact of oil production in Nigeria's Niger Delta is examined.

the geographic concentration of certain ethnic groups in specific geographic areas, often as a result of economic or political marginalization. When environmental damage occurs in one of these regions (such as in Ogoniland in the Niger Delta), it helps strengthen the bond of ethnicity amongst the people living there, as they all undergo the same hardship together.

The seventh characteristic relates directly to the incentive structures created by petro-culture. Despite the environmental damage inflicted by the oil production, the wealth that can be generated by such production is often astronomically higher than anything these people could attain in their traditional forms of economic production, which serves as the positive incentive for them to demand a share in the revenues. The negative reinforcement of this behaviour comes in the form of the environmental damage inflicted by oil production, which largely renders their previous form of economic production impossible (through the poisoning of soil, water and air), thereby giving a double incentive to demand a fair share of the oil revenues.

Environmentalism of Petro-Culture and the Environmentalism of the Poor

To further demonstrate this concept's distinctiveness, it will prove useful to contrast these groups with the other movements within the environmentalism of the poor.

The environmentalism of petro-culture differs from the environmentalism of the poor in two key ways. As mentioned previously, one of the defining characteristics of the 'environmentalism of the poor' is that these groups often emerge in response to issues related to the management or access to natural resources, such as water and forests; and that they "are in a sense deeply conservative (in the best sense of the word), refusing to exchange a world they know, and are in partial control over, for an uncertain and insecure future."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Ramachandra Guha, Juan Martinez-Alier Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South (London: Earthscan Publications Ltd, 1997), 18

Such groups have fought against the introduction of foreign species of trees associated with logging, against the destruction of villages in response to the building of dams and combated desertification with the planting of saplings.⁴⁹ In this way, these groups can be considered to have been founded *a priori*, before the environmental damage is inflicted.

In contrast, 'environmentalism of petro-culture' groups are founded *ex post facto*, coming after the environmental damage has been done. Phrased another way, the 'environmentalism of the poor' can be understood to be preventative measures, while the 'environmentalism of petro-culture' seeks redress for harm already inflicted.

A related issue is the extent of environmental damage resulting from oil production. While the environmental threats that the 'environmentalism of the poor' movements are formed in response to are serious threats to the established social-structures of the peoples affected, they are not as catastrophic, pervasive and persistent as the environmental damage inflicted by oil. Onshore oil production does not simply pollute the surrounding land, it poisons water supplies, kills marine life if close to water, and renders soil incapable of sustaining any plant life. In addition, the flaring of natural gas that is an inevitable part of oil production saturates the air with methane, thereby doing further damage to the local ecology.

In the Niger Delta, for example, three decades of oil production had resulted in what one observer called "a blighted countryside, an atmosphere full of...carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon; a land in which wildlife is unknown; a land of polluted streams and creeks, a land which is, in every sense of the term, an ecological disaster."⁵⁰ In Ecuador, the "oilfields have left a legacy of deforestation and environmental damage"⁵¹ in the traditional homelands of several groups of indigenous peoples. In the Indonesian province of Aceh petroleum

⁴⁹ These refer to the Chipko and Narmada Dam movement in India, and the Green Belt Movement in Kenya, respectively.

⁵⁰ Ramachandra Guha *Environmentalism: A Global History* (New York: Longman, 2000), 102

⁵¹ BBC News "Ecuador Tribes Vow to Fight Oil Threat"

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4308537.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

production has “devastated local communities who depend on agriculture and fish farming” through soil erosion, pollution, and explosions.⁵² Once such damage has been inflicted, there is virtually no chance of recovery of the land, which means that once the damage is done, the land becomes, for all intents and purposes, permanently unable to sustain human life.

This influences the form of redress which these movement demand from the companies and governments who profit from the oil production. While it is perhaps possible that with intensive (and expensive) environmental clean-up activities, the land affected by oil production could be sufficiently cleaned so as to sustain human life again, there is very rarely the incentive, nor the money, to encourage such projects. In their place, the demands of environmentalism of petro-culture movements are for a share in the wealth of the oil production, with which to deal with the consequences of environmental damage.

Furthermore, as demonstrated by Karl in The Paradox of Plenty, the amount of wealth generated by oil production has an insidious and self-reinforcing effect on political and social mobilization. With very little possibility of returning to their previous ways of life, the groups affected by the environmental impact of oil production demand financial restitution in the form of a slice of the petroleum-based revenue pie. Most often the groups affected by oil production are agrarian societies, whose economic base has been destroyed by the local environmental damage. With their traditional productive base destroyed, this leaves oil production as the only source of revenue possible for those affected. For this reason, it is little surprise that they demand a share of money, rather than an end to the environmentally damaging, but incredibly lucrative, economic activity.

While many of these characteristics may also be found in response to other forms of environmentally damaging enclave production (such as copper or uranium mining), it is the exceptional nature of oil production that sets the groups of the ‘environmentalism of petro-

⁵² Aceh: the Untold Story, (Bangkok: FORUM-ASIA and SCHRA, 1999), 42.

culture' apart from the rest. Daniel Yergin wrote in his seminal work on the history of oil, The Prize: the Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power, that "the twentieth century rightly deserves the title, the century of oil."⁵³ This relates to the final defining characteristic of the 'environmentalism of petro-culture.' Oil production tends to generate more money, it results in more environmental damage and it has a more insidious effect on socio/political structures than any other form of production. While there are certain other forms of production that may exceed oil production in one of those categories (such as the money generated by diamond or gold mining), oil is exceptional in the overwhelmingly harmful nature of its overall impact. Oil production poisons the land, water, air and even (as Karl demonstrates) the incentive structures that govern social behaviour.

Conclusion

The 'environmentalism of petro-culture' can be defined as an environmental movement that has emerged *ex post facto* the environmental damage caused by onshore oil production, with a geographically concentrated ethnic base of support, which demands, not the end of oil production, but a share in the wealth generated by petroleum production so as to deal with the immediate negative externalities associated with that production, utilizing the language of social justice, in addition to that of environmental issues.

Furthermore, the environmentalism of petro-culture is a new model for describing the definitive characteristics of a specific category of environmental movements that have thus far been overlooked. The next chapter illustrates the utility of this model by examining the case study of two Nigerian environmental groups that emerged in the Niger Delta during the

⁵³ Daniel Yergin, The Prize: the Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1991), 15

1990s, Ken Saro-Wiwa's Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Ijaw Youth Council.

Chapter Two

Nigeria and the Environmentalism of Petro-Culture

This chapter applies the theoretical concept presented in the previous chapter to two environmental movements that emerged in Nigeria's Niger Delta. It is divided into three main sections. The first presents an overview of the history, politics and economy of Nigeria, with particular emphasis on the politics and economics of the Niger Delta. In this section, I demonstrate how Nigeria is characterized by a strong petro-culture, focussing on Nigeria's long experience with neopatrimonialism and enclave economies. I also assess the state of the environment in the Niger Delta, where 90% of the country's oil production takes place and where the Ogoni and Ijaw peoples live. The goal of this section is to demonstrate that the conditions in the Niger Delta correspond to the characteristics that give rise to the environmentalism of petro-culture, described in the previous chapter.

This discussion leads into the remaining two sections, which examine the two most significant environmental movements to develop within the Niger Delta; the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC). This section examines the history, structure and activities of each group, comparing them to the definition of the environmentalism of petro-culture presented in the preceding chapter. The chapter concludes by presenting a contrast of the two movements wherein I argue that, despite appearances, these two seemingly different movements share many fundamental characteristics, which derive from the influence of oil. Their remaining differences stem largely from circumstantial and environmental influences, rather than from any intrinsic difference. This contrast is also used to demonstrate the descriptive breadth of the environmentalism of petro-culture concept.

Petro-Culture in Nigeria

Nigeria is the largest African oil exporting country south of the Sahara, the most populous state in Africa and the one of the most influential powers on the continent.⁵⁴ It is the dominant power in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), has one of the largest and most active militaries in Africa and is the most ethnically diverse state in Africa with over 250 distinct ethnic groups.⁵⁵

Unfortunately, since independence in 1960 Nigeria has known fewer than 15 years of civilian rule. In addition to a catastrophic civil war lasting 30 months, from early 1967 until 1970.⁵⁶ Nigeria has experienced several military coups, and three separate attempts at civilian government. In 2004, Transparency International listed Nigeria as the second most corrupt country in the world in its Global Corruption Report, despite the efforts of current president, Olusegun Obasanjo to end government corruption.⁵⁷ Despite its power, wealth and influence, since independence, Nigeria has had very little stability at home.

This section argues that the most significant source of this instability and corruption has been the influence of Nigeria's petro-culture upon the domestic political structures. In 1990, Larry Diamond wrote that "*the relationship between the economy and the state and the resulting character of class formation* constitute the most basic reason for the failure of democracy in Nigeria and the most important obstacle to its future success."⁵⁸ Bearing in mind that Nigeria's economy is overwhelmingly based on petroleum exports, Diamond's assessment corresponds to the relationship between enclave economies and neopatrimonial

⁵⁴ As evidenced by its leadership role in ECOWAS, its numerous peacekeeping interventions in the region and its economic strength.

⁵⁵ CIA World Factbook "Nigeria" <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ni.html#People> Accessed August 17, 2005

⁵⁶ G. Oka Orewa *We Are All Guilty: The Nigerian Crisis* (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1997), 2

⁵⁷ Transparency International "Global Corruption Report" <http://www.transparency.org/> Accessed August 22, 2005

⁵⁸ Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, Seymour Martin Lipset *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), 387. Emphasis by Diamond.

structures presented in the preceding chapter. This portion of the chapter examines Nigeria's economy and history in order to demonstrate the relationship Diamond mentions, and highlight Nigeria's long history with enclave production and neopatrimonialism.

Nigeria at Independence

Nigeria has had a long history of enclave production, stretching back to the colonial period. The colonial economy established by the British in Nigeria was organized along a "sectoralised enclave economic structure,"⁵⁹ using a series of local rulers to manage the production of groundnuts, cotton, tin, cocoa, timber, rubber and palm oil for export to the British metropole.⁶⁰ This form of economic organization, while not a petroleum based, established a precedence for enclave economies, and their subsequent effect on political and social structures within Nigeria.

William Graf argues that this form of production fostered the development of the ethnic identities that were to subsequently become a dominant theme of Nigerian politics, by encouraging competition between groups that had not previously had contact⁶¹. Indeed, Nigerian scholar, G. Oka Orewa notes that before 1960, "about 252 separate nations (called by the colonial master as ethnic groups) were amalgamated for convenience by the British government."⁶²

Furthermore, Graf argues that this was not a by-product of clientelism, but instead a calculated attempt by the British to foster "an awareness of separate identity or ethnicity...for it placed a formidable ideological and psychological barrier in the way of the evolution of a

⁵⁹ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 16

⁶⁰ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 13

⁶¹ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 17

⁶² G. Oka Orewa We Are All Guilty: The Nigerian Crisis (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1997), 1

mass-based, supra-regional and unified anti-colonial movement.”⁶³ The ethnic character of social organization fostered by the British during the colonial period continued to be a dominant feature of Nigerian social organization. When Nigeria became independent in 1960, it was not after a prolonged independence struggle, but instead amounted to what Graf has called “a gentleman’s agreement—between the colonial elite and the emergent Nigerian elites.”⁶⁴ He also notes that “independence, by eliminating at a stroke the class of ostensibly impartial colonial administrators, greatly intensified the scope for ethnic competition.”⁶⁵

The first full-scale elections in Nigeria occurred in 1951, coinciding with the establishment of the Macpherson Constitution, which were intended to establish an electoral precedence in the state, and thereby help to ensure stability.⁶⁶ In order to further cement this stability, British officials retained the provincial divisions established by the colony, namely three regions and a capital territory.⁶⁷ This would ensure the dominance of the federal government by the three largest ethnic groups, rather than risk the splintering of politics into hundreds of separate ethnically based parties, which, at independence, seemed very likely. During the colonial period, the British had encouraged the formation of “ethnic communal associations,”⁶⁸ such as the Igbo State Union, the Yoruba self-help association and Urhobo Progressive Union. When electoral politics were introduced into the colony, it was natural that political parties would follow the trend set by other social organizations and pattern their support along ethnic lines. This resulted in a mixed blessing for the British Government.

⁶³ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 15

⁶⁴ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 12

⁶⁵ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 22

⁶⁶ Rotimi T. Suberu Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001), 19

⁶⁷ G. Oka Orewa We Are All Guilty: The Nigerian Crisis (Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited, 1997), 1

⁶⁸ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 22

In the 1957 pre-independence elections, “a strong ethnically based political party had won elections in each of the regions,”⁶⁹ which was exactly what the departing colonial power had wanted. Unfortunately, when federal elections were held two years later in preparation for independence, “the Northern and Eastern regions...made an alliance against the Western region through their respective political parties: the Northern People’s Congress (NPC) and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) against the [Yoruba dominated] Action Group (AG),”⁷⁰ signalling the beginning of over 30 years of conflict between Nigerian ethnic groups over politics.

This trend of ethnic/regional dominance of the federal government combined with a lack of structural change in the tax collecting structure of the Nigerian government. At independence, this resulted in a case of the Northern and Eastern Nigerian elites taking the places of the departing colonial officials within a state that already had many of the characteristics of a neopatrimonial regime (the most evident being the state revenue derived from the enclave economy).

Furthermore, the political structures in place at the time of independence conspired to make participation in government an “all or nothing affair” for Nigerians. The existing neopatrimonial structures in the state, combined with the tendency to organize socially along ethnic lines, resulted in a case where those ethnic groups whose parties controlled the federal government, benefited (for the most part) from the riches of the state, while those without political representation went without. This made having representation in government extremely important to ethnic groups and as well as ambitious politicians “who tended to foment ethnic resentments in order to enhance their bargaining positions at the centre.”⁷¹

⁶⁹ I. William Zartman The Political Economy of Nigeria (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983), 2

⁷⁰ I. William Zartman The Political Economy of Nigeria (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983), 2

⁷¹ William D. Graf The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era (London: James Curry, 1988), 23

Diamond writes that in Nigeria “the swollen state [had] turned politics into a zero-sum game in which everything of value is at stake in an election, and hence candidates, communities, and parties feel compelled to win at any cost.”⁷² With so much power and wealth vested in the elected government, the official populations of each of the regions, and therefore the number of voters upon whom parties can depend for support, is a matter of great importance. Unfortunately, any attempt to take an accurate census in Nigeria has resulted in widespread fraud and universal criticism.⁷³

This explains the roots of Nigeria’s long history with ethnically based neopatrimonial governments. In summary, even before the introduction of oil, Nigeria was a state with strong neopatrimonial political structures, which were nurtured by the enclave economic structures, both of which were legacies of the colonial period.

Nigeria’s Present Economy

The modern Nigerian economy is a near perfect example of a petroleum based enclave economy. An enclave economy, defined in the previous chapter, is one based on enclave production, with enclave production defined as a form of economic activity which that is by its nature, in a fixed geographic location, where the cost of labour represents a small percentage of the overall cost of production and which enables political elites to share in the revenues of the production, without having to be accountable to the general populace.⁷⁴

With this definition in mind, we turn to examine the Nigerian oil economy.

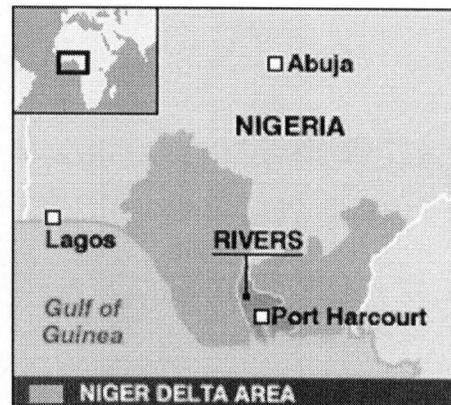
⁷² Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, Seymour Martin Lipset Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), 387

⁷³ I. William Zartman The Political Economy of Nigeria (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983), 2. It is interesting to note that aforementioned challenges related to the taking of an accurate census remain the same today. As of 2005, Nigeria still has not undertaken a national census.

⁷⁴ David K. Leonard, Scott Straus Africa’s Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 12-13

Oil exploration began in Nigeria in 1937, through a joint venture with Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum, but no significant deposits were discovered until 1956.⁷⁵ Oil was discovered in Nigeria in the early 1950s and commercial production began in 1958, prior to Nigerian independence.⁷⁶ What began as a relatively small production, yielding 257,000 tonnes in 1958, grew to 112,800,000 tonnes by 1974. Oil has grown as a source of total government revenue from 7.6% in 1961 to 84% in 1985.⁷⁷ Nigeria's current export market makes up 53.9% of its GNP, 92% of which comes from petroleum-based enclave production.⁷⁸ In addition, over 90% of contemporary state revenues are derived from taxes on oil production, making oil production, by far, the most lucrative economic activity in the state.⁷⁹

Oil production in Nigeria has been traditionally located in the Niger Delta, an area that "stretches about 80 miles from its apex at Aboh town into the sea and covers an area of some 10,000 square miles."⁸⁰ Compared to the country's overall size of 356,668 square miles, it seems clear that this constitutes a 'geographically concentrated area' described by Leonard and Strauss.⁸¹ As a consequence of the environmental



⁷⁵ Daniel Yergin *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1991), 257

⁷⁶ S. A. Madujibeya "Oil and Nigeria's Economic Development" *African Affairs*, Vol.75, No.300 (Jul.1976), 287

⁷⁷ William D. Graf *The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era* (London: James Curry, 1988), 219

⁷⁸ David K. Leonard, Scott Straus *Africa's Stalled Development: International Causes and Cures* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 77

⁷⁹ Terry Lynn Karl *The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 61

⁸⁰ William D. Graf *The Nigerian State: Political Economy, State Class and Political System in the Post-Colonial Era* (London: James Curry, 1988), 4

⁸¹ Attached map property of BBC News used without permission.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3709070.stm> Accessed August 13, 2005

damage that has resulted from the oil production, the land of the Niger Delta can no longer be assigned to other profitable purposes, such as farming (this damage is described in further detail in the next section).

In addition, since the introduction of oil to the Nigerian economy in the early 1970s, "access to, and manipulation of, the government spending process has become the golden gateway to fortune,"⁸² stunting entrepreneurial activity. Sayre P. Schatz writes "for the most vigorous, capable, resourceful, well-connected and 'lucky' entrepreneurs (including politicians, civil servants, and army officers), productive economic activity, namely the creation of real income and wealth, has faded in appeal."⁸³ Writing on a related phenomenon, Cyril I. Obi notes that "what accrues to the [Nigerian] state...are the oil rents paid to it by the oil multinationals, and receipts from oil exports...[which] reduces those who are able to capture state power to distributors of oil rents or worse still, sharers of oil booty."⁸⁴ In other words, the Nigerian state is, for the most part, simply an apparatus for the distribution of the vast wealth generated by the oil industry. This seems to fit the criteria described earlier of an enclave economy lending itself to 'rent-seeking' activity.

Finally, Nigerian oil production requires very few local workers as "the industry is very highly capital intensive, as illustrated by the size of the capital-labour ratio."⁸⁵ Nigeria's petroleum sector represents roughly 24,000 jobs out of a national population of close to 130 million, representing 0.018% of the population.⁸⁶ Of those jobs, less than 2500 are in

⁸² Sayre P. Schatz, "Pirate Capitalism and the Inert Economy of Nigeria" in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol 22, No. 1, (Mar., 1984), 55

⁸³ Sayre P. Schatz, "Pirate Capitalism and the Inert Economy of Nigeria" in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol 22, No. 1, (Mar., 1984), 58

⁸⁴ Cyril I. Obi "Oil and the politics of transition in Nigeria" in Browne Onuoha, M.M. Fadakinte *Transition Politics in Nigeria: 1970-1999* (Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, 2002), 115

⁸⁵ S. A. Madujibeya "Oil and Nigeria' Economic Development" *African Affairs*, Vol 75, No. 300 (Jul. 1976), 285

⁸⁶ African Technology Policy Studies Network "Technology Transfer and Acquisition in the Oil Sector and

management or professional capacities. Furthermore, what labour is involved with the Nigerian oil industry is notoriously underpaid, which has led to strikes and hostage takings by the oil workers.⁸⁷ The fact that such a small percentage of the population is employed in the oil industry fits the final criteria that Leonard and Strauss set for enclave economies, namely that labour is 'a small part of the cost of production.'

It is tempting to attribute the state of corruption and neopatrimonialism within the Nigerian federal government to the presence of such a large oil-driven export economy. As mentioned in the last chapter, Terry Lynn Karl has demonstrated how the presence of such an economy tends to encourage the development of such structures. However, unlike Venezuela and Indonesia, the roots of Nigerian neopatrimonialism predate the introduction of oil production to its economy. Nigeria has a long pedigree of enclave enterprises, which have fostered a legacy of neopatrimonialism. This makes attributing Nigeria's oil economy as the sole cause of its neopatrimonialism clearly false. However, what is likely is that the introduction of the vast revenues from oil production to the coffers of the federal government, helped to make a bad situation worse, as demonstrated by Obi's comments.

In summary therefore, Nigeria is a perfect example of a state imbued with petro-culture. It has a phenomenally lucrative oil-based economy, which employs a minute fraction of the population and generates vast revenues for the federal government. In addition, the political systems that have developed in Nigeria are deeply neopatrimonial, which causes political contests to be bloody affairs over access to, what Schatz calls, 'the golden gateway to fortune.' This demonstrates the presence and power of Nigeria's petro-

Government Policy in Nigeria"

<http://www.atpsnet.org/content/files/documents/working%20paper%20series%2032.pdf> Accessed August 13, 2005

⁸⁷ BBC News "Foreign Hostages Freed in Nigeria" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3252152.stm> Accessed August 13, 2005 and "Oil Production Restarts in Nigeria"

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3877681.stm> Accessed August 13, 2005

culture, satisfying the first half of the environmentalism of petro-culture. In order to satisfy the second portion, we now turn to examine the Nigerian environment.

A Shell-Shocked Land

The epigraph that opened this thesis was written by Ken Saro-Wiwa one year before his execution by the Nigerian military government for his environmental and human rights activism. It eloquently describes the impact that years of petroleum production have had on the ecology of the Niger Delta, and the resulting consequences on its inhabitants. The American based Energy Information Administration (EIA) reported in 2003 that:

Oil spills in the Niger Delta have been a regular occurrence, and the resulting degradation of the surrounding environment has caused significant tension between the people living in the region and the multinational oil companies operating there...gas flaring from oil extraction has resulted in serious air pollution problems in the area...[but] one of the most visible consequences of the numerous oil spills has been the loss of mangrove trees...[which] was once a source of both fuelwood for the indigenous people and a habitat for the area's biodiversity.⁸⁸

Since 1960, the Niger Delta has experienced over 4000 oil spills, which have resulted in "the loss of mangrove trees...[which were] once a source of both fuelwood for the indigenous people and a habitat for the area's biodiversity, but is now unable to survive the oil toxicity of its habitat."⁸⁹

While Nigeria is only one of forty-one countries in which Shell has oil interests, forty percent of Shell's global oil spills occur in Nigeria. A contributing factor to the high incident of oil spills is the lack of enforcement of Nigeria's confusing environmental protection laws

⁸⁸ Energy Information Administration "Nigeria: Environmental Issues"
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/nigenv.html>, Accessed November 30, 2004

⁸⁹ Energy Information Administration "Nigeria: Environmental Issues"
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/nigenv.html>, Accessed November 30, 2004

and reluctance by oil companies to self-monitor.⁹⁰ However, not all of Nigeria's oil spills are caused directly by the multinational corporations operating in the Niger Delta.

The illegal tapping of oil lines, known as 'bunkering' or 'scooping,' is common throughout the Delta, despite that fact that security guards have been known to shoot suspected looters on sight. In Nigeria it is estimated that up to ten percent of its oil production is lost to this 'bunkering,' bearing in mind that this is ten percent of the oil of the eighth largest producer of oil in the world.⁹¹ The profits that can be made from such activity act as more than enough incentive for poor groups to engage in this lucrative enterprise, despite the threat of government troops and the resultant environmental damage.

Unfortunately, this activity often results in oil spills or catastrophic fires, due to the lack of sophisticated tools employed in the 'bunkering' and the haphazard manner in which the theft is carried out.⁹² Between 1998 and 2003, more than 1500 people in Nigeria have died in explosions that have resulted from 'bunkering.'⁹³ Despite the risk, the incentive of profits that can be made selling the pilfered oil on the black market are too great for many Nigerians to resist.⁹⁴

Furthermore, despite an initiative by international oil companies to take financial responsibility for the environmental impact of oil production on local farmers, farmlands destroyed by oil spills associated with tapping are not eligible for compensation by the oil companies. Between 1998 and 2003 over 1400 people died in explosions associated with

⁹⁰ Human Rights Watch "Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria" <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

⁹¹ BBC News "Nigeria—Bursting at the Seams" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4602237.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

⁹² BBC News "Nigeria Pipeline Blaze 'kills 26'" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4122375.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

⁹³ BBC News "Will Nigeria Learn Pipeline Fire Lessons?" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3016786.stm> Accessed August 3, 2005

⁹⁴ BBC News "Will Nigeria Learn Pipeline Fire Lessons?" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3016786.stm> Accessed August 3, 2005

illegal tapping.⁹⁵ In spite of these risks, the poverty of the region, partly due to the loss of arable farmland to oil spills, forces inhabitants of the Delta to tap lines themselves or wade through ‘rivers of petroleum’ with buckets to gather leaked oil for sale on the black market.

In addition to the oil spills, gas flaring is a serious environmental concern. Gas flaring is defined as “the flaring of produced gas—the process of burning—off surplus combustible vapours from a well, either as a means of disposal or as a safety measure to relieve well pressure—[and it] is the most significant source of air emissions from offshore oil and gas installations”⁹⁶ as well as those in the Niger Delta.⁹⁷ While the threat from air pollution and acid rain is great from the flared gas, “if the gas is not flared and it escapes unburnt, the greenhouse effect from methane would be even greater.”⁹⁸

Furthermore, oil spills have “had an adverse effect on marine life, which has become contaminated, in turn having negative consequences for human health from consuming contaminated seafood.”⁹⁹ This water contamination has also had a devastating impact on local agriculture. Sweden’s Lund University conducted a study on the relationship between environmental degradation and poverty and reported the following:

Agriculture forms the most dominant economic activity in the Niger Delta. Federal Office of Statistics (F.O.S) in 1985 stated that Crop farming and fishing activities account for about 90% of all forms of activities in the area. The organic farming technique widely used in the Niger Delta is highly susceptible to environmental changes affecting the soil, water and or deforestation because it is not technologically inspired, but rather land and labour intensive. Oil extraction and production...has ultimately affected peasant agriculture in a variety of ways, which ultimately have caused problems of environmental refugees. Some of the landless farmers migrate to

⁹⁵ BBC News “Will Nigeria learn pipeline fire lessons?” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3016786.stm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

⁹⁶ The Oil and Gas Industry Forum <http://www.oilandgasforum.net/oefonline/gasflaring.htm> . Accessed November 30, 2004

⁹⁷ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 104

⁹⁸ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 104

⁹⁹ Energy Information Administration “Nigeria: Environmental Issues” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/nigenv.html>, Accessed November 30, 2004

other more fertile lands in other rural communities, putting pressure on scarce fertile lands.

The drastic fall in output of the agricultural product, lead to intensive exploitation of other fertile land. The long run effect of this is land degradation and immigration to other rural and urban areas, where pressure is exerted on the often inadequate and dilapidated infrastructure, leading to increase poverty.

The out-migration of the rural displaced farmers in the Niger Delta as a result of environmental degradation caused by oil extraction in the region has led a significant percentage of the local inhabitants to remain in cyclical poverty and penury. This has meant greater environmental degradation as a result of the intensive exploitation of the few remaining fertile land in the region by the residents.¹⁰⁰

What this demonstrates is the enormous economic impact of the environmental damage on the people of the Niger Delta. The economic base of 90% of the inhabitants of the Niger Delta is affected by oil spills, representing the most serious impact of the oil production. This is significant for the environmentalism of petro-culture concept, as one of the criteria leading to the formation of such movements is that the environmental damage to which they are responding intensifies economic deprivation. This is dealt with in further detail in a later portion of this chapter, but the degree to which the environmental damage of the region affects all aspects of human life in the region is important to emphasize here.

Thus Saro-Wiwa was not exaggerating when he wrote of the Niger Delta as a 'shell-shocked land.'¹⁰¹ Indeed, Ogoniland (the portion of the Niger Delta inhabited by the Ogoni), has been described as "a blighted countryside, an atmosphere full of...carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon; a land in which wildlife is unknown; a land of polluted streams and creeks, a land which is, in every sense of the term, an ecological disaster."¹⁰² A Nigerian government committee ruled in 2003 that Shell "was responsible for a number of oil spills and

¹⁰⁰ WAADO <http://www.waado.org/Environment/PetrolPolution/EnvEconomics.htm> Accessed August 13, 2005

¹⁰¹ It should be noted that Saro-Wiwa's use of 'shell-shocked' was deliberate and carries two meanings. The literal meaning implies a region traumatized by war and the implied meaning is that it is fault of Royal Dutch Shell.

¹⁰² Ramachandra Guha *Environmentalism: A Global History* (New York: Longman, 2000), 92

environmental incidents, including an epidemic in 1993-1994 in which 1,400 people were killed that was blamed on a Shell oil spill.”¹⁰³ Furthermore, the report found a connection between “the prevalence of cancer in the region...[and] exposure to the company's oil spills.”¹⁰⁴ It therefore seems little surprise that a movement developed to address these issues.

Nigerian Environmental Movements

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People

The first Nigerian case study studied in this section is the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). It was founded in response to the environmental damage experienced by the Ogoni people, who have traditionally lived in the Niger Delta and number roughly 500,000 individuals.¹⁰⁵ This section of the chapter examines the history of MOSOP and demonstrates that it can be considered an environmentalism of petro-culture movement.

MOSOP was founded by Garrick Leyton in 1990 in response to the environmental damage in Ogoniland, but it gained international support under the presidency of Ken Saro-Wiwa, which he assumed in 1993. Saro-Wiwa “used his connections with the media and international human rights and environmental protection organizations to pursue the Ogoni case.”¹⁰⁶ Human Rights Watch (HRW) wrote the following of MOSOP in July 1995:

MOSOP, under the leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa, has been at the forefront of the confrontation between the indigenous communities of the Niger Delta, the oil companies, and the government, which has sent in troops to crush local protest movements. Like other communities in oil-producing areas, the Ogoni contend that multinational oil companies, particularly the Shell Petroleum Development Company, with the active cooperation of the

¹⁰³ Energy Information Administration “Country Analysis Brief: Nigeria” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/nigenv.html> Accessed August 13, 2005

¹⁰⁴ Energy Information Administration “Country Analysis Brief: Nigeria” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/nigenv.html> Accessed August 13, 2005

¹⁰⁵ Claude E. Welch Jr. “The Ogoni and Self Determination: Increasing Violence in Nigeria” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol.33, No.4 (Dec.1995), 639

¹⁰⁶ Eghosa E. Osaghae “The Ogoni Uprising: Oil Politics, Minority Agitation and the Future of the Nigerian State” in *African Affairs*, Vol.94, No.376 (Jul.,1995), 332

Nigerian government, have ravaged their land and contaminated their rivers, while providing little, if any, tangible benefit in return.¹⁰⁷

In many respects, MOSOP was typical to environmentalism of the poor groups.

Under Saro-Wiwa's leadership, it used the language of human rights, territorial rights, and economic justice in its discourse, emphasizing these in the context of 'group rights.'¹⁰⁸ In addition, Saro-Wiwa stressed non-violence as the key strategy for achieving their goals.¹⁰⁹

Saro-Wiwa wrote that "in the 35 years, Shell have operated with such total disregard of the environment that the Ogoni people have come to the conclusion that the company is waging an ecological war on them."¹¹⁰

The 1990 Ogoni Bill of Rights, which has been drawn up by MOSOP members following their first major demonstration against Shell, "called for 'political autonomy' within the Nigerian federation, including the right to the control and use of a fair proportion of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development...and the right to protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation."¹¹¹ It detailed:

the sufferings of the Ogoni people on account of oil exploration activities, the neglect of their area by successive federal and Rivers state governments and the consequent lack of amenities and social services, as well their political marginalization in the country and defining themselves as 'a separate and distinct ethnic nationality,' ...[it] further asserted that this autonomy should guarantee the right to control their political affairs and to control and use a fair share of the economic resources derived from Ogoniland, the protection, use and development of Ogoni local languages, and the protection of their oil-producing environment from further degradation.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Human Rights Watch "Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria" <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹⁰⁸ Claude E. Welch Jr. "The Ogoni and Self Determination: Increasing Violence in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol.33, No.4 (Dec.1995), 640

¹⁰⁹ Joan Martinez-Alier *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 103

¹¹⁰ Claude E. Welch Jr. "The Ogoni and Self Determination: Increasing Violence in Nigeria" *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol.33, No.4 (Dec.1995), 641

¹¹¹ Human Rights Watch "Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria" <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹¹² Human Rights Watch "Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria" <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

The forms of protest employed by MOSOP included letter writing, public rallies and “on some occasions resorted to sabotage or seizure of property belonging to oil companies...[and] production has sometimes been brought to a halt.”¹¹³ In addition, MOSOP was organized as an Ogoni movement, founded to promote the interests of the Ogoni people, thus reflecting the ethnic component predicted in environmentalism of petro-culture movements.¹¹⁴

It is important to note that nowhere amongst the demands for territorial autonomy and a share of the oil revenues is a call for the cessation of oil production, nor is there in the entire document.¹¹⁵ Instead the primary demands are for control over the natural resources of Ogoniland and cultural and political freedom.¹¹⁶ It seems highly unusual for an alleged environmental organization to give tacit approval to an industry that had already caused such widespread and catastrophic ecological damage. I will return to this point shortly, but for now I focus on the government’s response to MOSOP.

While MOSOP was arguably one of the most important civil society groups to develop in Nigeria, it could not have emerged at a worse time in Nigerian history.¹¹⁷ General Abacha, who ruled Nigeria from 1993 until his death in 1998, was a ruthless dictator who alternatively imprisoned, tortured, and executed in threats to his authoritarian regime.¹¹⁸ When MOSOP’s activities began to threaten the largest source of state income and they

¹¹³ Human Rights Watch “Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria” <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹¹⁴ Although that is not to say that MOSOP spoke for all Ogonis. See Eghosa E. Osaghae’s article “The Ogoni Uprising: Oil Politics, Minortiy Agitation and the Future of the Nigerian State” in *African Affairs* for a thorough discussion of the politics involved in MOSOP’s campaigns.

¹¹⁵ Human Rights Watch “Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria” <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹¹⁶ Human Rights Watch “Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria” <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹¹⁷ This statement is debatable, as some of Saro-Wiwa’s critics argue that by appealing to an ethnic base for his movement, he was perpetuating the ethnic divisions that have been so volatile in Nigeria’s history.

¹¹⁸ BBC News “Horrors of the Abacha regime” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/989918.stm> Accessed November 30, 2004

advocated a boycott of the presidential elections to send a message regarding the legitimacy of the federal government, Abacha responded with vicious brutality. HRW reported incidents of soldiers entering Ogoni towns and opening fire on civilians, mass looting of money, food and livestock as well as arbitrary arrest and extrajudicial executions.¹¹⁹ The height of Abacha's brutality was the execution of Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP members, done in an effort to end the discussion of the Ogoni demands. It ended up having the opposite effect.

The international community was outraged by the execution of Saro-Wiwa and it led to intense criticism of the Abacha regime and economic sanctions by many states, including the European Union.¹²⁰ Thus roughly two months after Saro-Wiwa's execution, Abacha introduced a radical change to the system of allocating state revenues from oil, which greatly increased the share received by local regions.¹²¹ In the end, therefore, Abacha acquiesced to MOSOP's demands, making the execution of Saro-Wiwa a completely unnecessary act of retribution. However, it is unclear whether Abacha would have acquiesced to MOSOP's demands, had there not been the international pressure provoked by Saro-Wiwa's death. Abacha died in 1998 and his successor, Abdulsalam Abubakar, was quick to repeal many of the draconian measures that had been put in place, including the release from jail of many of the Ogonis arrested at the same time as Saro-Wiwa.¹²²

Nigeria's Fourth Republic was established in 1999 and there was great hope that this would result in the swift implementation of the revenue sharing scheme that had been promised by Abacha in 1995. However, it was not until late 2001 that President Obasanjo's

¹¹⁹ Human Rights Watch "Nigeria: The Ogoni Crisis A Case-Study of Military Repression in Southeastern Nigeria" <http://hrw.org/reports/1995/Nigeria.htm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹²⁰ BBC News "EU Set to Ease Nigeria Sanction" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/204464.stm>, Accessed August 15, 2005

¹²¹ Rotimi T. Suberu *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001), 67-68

¹²² BBC News "Ogoni Released in Nigeria" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/166984.stm>, August 15, 2005

government introduced the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) which was intended to redistribute the revenues to the appropriate recipients.¹²³ The most recent initiative of the NDDC has been the creation of the 2004 Development Master Plan, which is attempting to use the resources collected by the NDDC (derived for the most part from the federal government and the international companies involved in oil production in the region) to fund a wide variety of development projects in the region, including the building of roads, telephone lines and other key infrastructure projects.¹²⁴ However, at time of writing, the Ogoni people have yet to see any of these revenues materialize, with the NDDC seemingly fallen victim to the endemic corruption of the Nigerian state.¹²⁵ Indeed, in an interview with the BBC, the Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs dismissed the issues related to the effectiveness of the NDDC as ‘trifling’, which perhaps highlights the low priority these issues still have in the federal government.¹²⁶ Despite the apparent lack of impact on the federal government, however, MOSOP had one important legacy: it served as an inspiration for another environmental movement in the region; the Ijaw Youth Council.

The Ijaw Youth Council

Claude E. Welch Jr. stated in 1995 that the experiences of MOSOP are “a lesson sure to be followed elsewhere in Africa.”¹²⁷ In fact, this lesson was followed in Nigeria itself. In 1998, three years after Saro-Wiwa’s execution, the Ijaw people living in the same state as the

¹²³ Rotimi T. Suberu Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001), 45

¹²⁴ Niger Delta Development Commission “Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan” <http://www.nddconline.org/> Accessed August 15, 2005

¹²⁵ BBC News “Nigeria’s elections in the south” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2949809.stm>, Accessed November 30, 2004

¹²⁶ BBC News: Focus on Africa- August 3, 2005

¹²⁷ Claude E. Welch Jr. “The Ogoni and Self Determination: Increasing Violence in Nigeria” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol.33, No.4 (Dec.1995), 644

Ogoni in the Niger Delta demonstrated that the lesson of MOSOP had also been learned in Saro-Wiwa's homeland.

The Ijaw Youth Council was organized in early 1998 by a group of Ijaw men from Port Harcourt, the state capital, and the surrounding regions.¹²⁸ The presentation of their demands came in the form of the Kaiama Declaration, named after Kaiama, Bayelsa State in southeastern Nigeria, where the Declaration was signed in December 1998. The Declaration "attributed 'the political crisis in Nigeria' to 'the struggle for the control of oil mineral resources,' while asserting that 'the degradation of the environment of Ijawland by transnational oil companies and the Nigerian State arise mainly because Ijaw people have been robbed of their natural rights to ownership and control of their land and resources.'"¹²⁹ The language used by IYC was identical to that of MOSOP with regards to the issue of natural resource management, meaning that there were ethnically based links to land and the natural resources within in it. Both linked the solutions to the environmental problems experienced by their respective peoples to the ability to manage the oil resources of their lands as they saw fit. Additionally, like MOSOP, IYC points to a breakdown in the structure of government as a reason for their environmental problems not being addressed. The Declaration demanded for "the immediate withdrawal from Ijawland of all military forces of occupation and repression by the Nigerian State."¹³⁰

While there are many similarities between IYC and MOSOP, there is also one interesting difference between the two. While MOSOP relied heavily on the language of human rights, IYC has linked "the issue of global warming to local grievances against oil

¹²⁸ Human Rights Watch "Rivers and Blood: Guns, Oil and Power in Nigeria's Rivers State" <http://hrw.org/backgrounder/africa/nigeria0205/nigeria0205.pdf> Accessed, July 30, 2005

¹²⁹ Human Rights Watch "Background of the Kaiama Declaration" <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/nigeria2/Ngria993-02.htm> Accessed September 3, 2003

¹³⁰ Human Rights Watch "Background of the Kaiama Declaration" <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/nigeria2/Ngria993-02.htm> Accessed September 3, 2003

companies.”¹³¹ Using the language of global environmental change, IYC had launched ‘Operation Climate Change,’ the stated objective of this initiative being to bring about an end to gas flaring. The result of this campaigning has been a commitment by the Nigerian government to phase out gas flaring. The current date is set for 2008, but “the phasing-out of gas flaring has been consistently pushed back as Nigeria has focused on boosting oil exploration and production in order to generate much-needed revenue for the government, but the 2008 deadline now seems firm as infrastructure to monetize the associated gas from oil production is in place.”¹³² This represents an enormous success for the IYC, considering the fact that during military rule, the government answered such calls for reform with armed military reprisal. This is also a success for the Nigerian government, because “the end of gas flaring by 2008 should have a threefold positive effect, with a reduction in air pollution...an increase in natural gas available for domestic consumption and export, and an added source of revenue for the Nigerian government from the sale of the natural gas that will be produced rather than flared.”¹³³

In a further demonstration of the success of the IYC, in March 2003, “the Nigerian subsidiary of Shell was ordered to pay \$1.5 billion to the Ijaw tribe for the company’s actions in the state of Bayelsa over a 50-year period.”¹³⁴ This has been coupled with a new commitment by the Federal Minister of the Environment to enforce strict and clear new rules that will monitor the oil industry, under the auspices of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). A further concession by the government has been the aforementioned

¹³¹ Joan Martinez-Alier The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 104

¹³² Energy Information Administration “Nigeria: Environmental Issues” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/nigenv.html> , Accessed February 5, 2004

¹³³ Energy Information Administration “Nigeria: Environmental Issues” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/nigenv.html> , Accessed February 5, 2004

¹³⁴ Energy Information Administration “Nigeria: Environmental Issues” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/nigenv.html> , Accessed February 5, 2004

creation in 1999 of the Niger Delta Development Corporation (NDDC), a body intended to monitor oil production in the region.¹³⁵

Unfortunately, since IYC was founded in 1998, it has undergone a significant transformation. What had been founded as an environmental and human rights organization in 1998 has subsequently become an armed paramilitary group.

The major shift in focus came in 2001, when Mujahid Dokubo—Assari became President of the IYC and immediately adopted the slogan "Resource Control and Self Determination By Every Means Necessary."¹³⁶ By 2003, Dokubo-Asari had relocated deep in the mangrove swamps Niger Delta from the state capital, Port Harcourt and transformed the IYC into the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), in the process recruiting large groups of armed Ijaw youths. While the region had been subject to sporadic armed conflict between ethnic groups since the mid-1990s, "in late 2003, the center of violence shifted to Rivers State, principally in and around the "oil capital" of Port Harcourt."¹³⁷ The NDPVF absorbed several smaller groups, such as university fraternities, criminal organizations and the youths who were armed by the various contenders in the 2003 federal election.

Dokubo-Asari continued to gain power until, "on September 27, 2004, [he] threatened to launch an "all-out war" in the Niger Delta -- sending shock waves through the oil industry -- unless the federal government ceded greater control of the region's vast oil resources to the Ijaw people, the majority tribe in the Niger Delta."¹³⁸ Dokubo-Asari promised that this 'all-out war' would include the destruction of several oil facilities in the

¹³⁵ Rotimi T. Suberu *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001), 45

¹³⁶ BBC News "Profile: Nigeria's Militant" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3713664.stm> Accessed, July 30, 2005

¹³⁷ Human Rights Watch "Rivers and Blood: Guns, Oil and Power in Nigeria's Rivers State" <http://hrw.org/backgrounder/africa/nigeria0205/nigeria0205.pdf> Accessed, July 30, 2005

¹³⁸ Human Rights Watch "Rivers and Blood: Guns, Oil and Power in Nigeria's Rivers State" <http://hrw.org/backgrounder/africa/nigeria0205/nigeria0205.pdf> Accessed, July 30, 2005

Niger Delta.¹³⁹ The Nigerian government “first publicly dismissed Asari’s September 2004 threat of ‘all out war,’ calling him a “gangster” and “criminal...” [however] later in the month...Obasanjo invited Asari...to the capital, Abuja, to broker an agreement to end the fighting.”¹⁴⁰ These talks resulted in a tentative peace agreement, which remains in place at present. However, the NDPVF has not disarmed and remains an armed presence in the region.

This change in the nature of the IYC is important to note, as it may indicate a possible route of evolution for environmentalism of petro-culture movements, specifically, a route that moves away from environmentalism. For instance, while the NDPVF shares many of the same leaders that the IYC had, the demands have shifted away from the discussion of environmental issues, now focusing primarily on economic issues. It is important to note that this may represent a transformation that may be common to other case studies, which may suggest something about the evolution of such environmental movements. With that in mind, we now turn to a comparative examination of MOSOP and IYC.

Nigerian Movements and the Environmentalism of Petro-Culture

On the environmental movements of the Niger Delta, Cyril Obi had the following to say:

Those excluded from power and oil, have intensified their struggle for the expansion of political space. They have adopted both local and global idioms of the rights struggle, true federalism and social justice. In this way, oil and transition have dialectically fed into democratic struggles within the context of Nigerian federalism.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ BBC News “Profile: Nigeria’s Militant” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3713664.stm> Accessed, July 30, 2005

¹⁴⁰ Human Rights Watch “Rivers and Blood: Guns, Oil and Power in Nigeria’s Rivers State” <http://hrw.org/backgrounders/africa/nigeria0205/nigeria0205.pdf> Accessed, July 30, 2005

¹⁴¹ Cyril I Obi “Oil and the politics of transition in Nigeria” in Browne Onuoha, M.M. Fadakinte Transition Politics in Nigeria: 1970-1999 (Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited, 2002), 117

This excerpt calls attention to many of the characteristics common to both MOSOP and IYC; namely, the manner in which oil has influenced their formation and their use of social justice and human rights languages in addition to their environmental demands. This section presents a comparison between the two aforementioned movements, in an attempt to demonstrate the manner in which they each conform to the environmentalism of petro-culture concept presented in the preceding chapter. It concludes that, while there are certain key differences between the two movements (such as the development of the IYC into the more militant NDPVF), they each display all the characteristics of the environmentalism of petro-culture.

In order to demonstrate how the concept of environmentalism of petro-culture can be used to describe these case studies, it is, perhaps, useful to restate its characteristics. The model states that these groups emerge in states with strong petro-culture, they combine a concern for the environmental with social justice, they are organized along ethnic lines which are geographically concentrated, they are formed in response to existing environmental damage (not potential future damage), the source of the environmental damage is onshore oil production, and the environmental damage they respond to intensifies economic deprivation. Both MOSOP and the IYC fit this profile perfectly.

MOSOP used the language of human rights in its declarations and its correspondence with international environmental and human rights groups. It was organized along ethnic lines, appealing to the Ogoni ethnic identity (which has been criticized by some as damaging to Nigeria's national unity).¹⁴² It emerged in response to the environmental damage discussed earlier in this chapter. Finally, the environmental impact of oil production in the

¹⁴² Claude E. Welch Jr. "The Ogoni and Self-Determination: Increasing Violence in Nigeria" in The Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Dec. 1995), 635-650.

Niger Delta has devastated the Ogoni economy, which has had a traditional agrarian base, thereby fitting the final portion of the definition.¹⁴³

The case of the IYC is similar. They likewise emerged within the context of Nigerian petro-culture. In the initial 'Kaiama Declaration' they utilized the language of human rights, as well as appealing to the threat of climate change.¹⁴⁴ The IYC drew its support from a single ethnic base (the Ijaw), and emerged in response to environmental damage (citing MOSOP as an inspiration). Finally, like the Ogoni, the agrarian-based Ijaw economy has been deeply affected by the environmental damage in the region. In response to this damage, IYC declared that "all land and natural resources (including mineral resources) within the Ijaw territory belong to Ijaw communities and are *the basis of our survival*."¹⁴⁵

In both the case studies of MOSOP and that of IYC, we can see the influence of petro-culture. Both groups are from the same state in the Niger Delta, and both groups are faced with the same environmental challenges. Neither MOSOP, nor IYC called for an end to the oil production in these regions, despite their use of environmental language in their protest activities. In both cases, this is likely due to the prospect of wealth that can be obtained through access to the revenues the state derives from petroleum production. This drive to access the wealth of the federal government is nothing new in Nigeria, recalling Sayre Schatz's description of the government as the 'golden gateway to fortune.' This behaviour is a result of the Nigerian petro-culture, discussed in detail earlier in this chapter and MOSOP and IYC both demonstrate the influence of this petro-culture in their demands.

¹⁴³ BBC News "Oil: Nigeria's Blessing and Curse" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/782925.stm> Accessed July 30, 2005

¹⁴⁴ Human Rights Watch "Background of the Kaiama Declaration" <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/nigeria2/Ngria993-02.htm> Accessed September 3, 2003

¹⁴⁵ Joan Martinez-Alier *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 104 My emphasis.

Another key similarity between the two groups is the pressures and circumstances that influenced their creation. MOSOP and IYC can be understood to be unique in Nigeria, in that their demand for access to the power and wealth of the federal government does not stem from simple political exclusion (although that plays a large role as well). Instead, the impetus behind their formation is the environmental damage caused by the oil production in the Niger Delta. This is an important distinction, because it is crucial to see that while political exclusion likely intensified the urgency of their demands, the primary motivation for their formation is the environmental damage, which distinguishes these groups as environmental movements. Put another way, the environmental damage motivated them to seek redress from the government, and their political marginalization caused them to adapt a more radical form of protest.

While this demonstrates that both of these groups can be considered part of the environmentalism of petro-culture, there are some significant differences between the two that merit further comment. The key difference between the two is that the IYC transformed into an armed organization, while MOSOP remained, largely, a peaceful movement.

One of the most important sources of this difference is that MOSOP was founded during a military regime, while IYC's activities began during the transition to civilian rule in 1998. As mentioned previously, MOSOP was violently repressed by the federal government. However, following the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, international attention was focused on the movements in the Niger Delta, which prevented the government from responding in a similar manner to the IYC's activities. In addition, the change in government precluded the use of the same sort of repression, despite the more violent tactics employed by IYC, forcing the government to instead rely on diplomatic and conciliatory measures, rather than brute force.

A related issue is the difference in the populations of the Ogoni and Ijaw peoples. The Ogoni are an ethnic group made up of roughly 500,000 people which is "further divided into six clans- Nyo Khana, Ken Khana, Babbe, Gokhana, Tai and Elme."¹⁴⁶ This makes up roughly 0.39% of Nigeria's population. The Ijaw, on the other hand, number roughly twenty million, making up 16% of the population and establishing the Ijaw as the fourth largest ethnic group in the state (after the dominant Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo). With this in mind, it is easy to see how much easier it would be to repress the significantly smaller Ogoni ethnic group, than it would be to do the same to the Ijaw. Conversely, this would also explain why the IYC, with its larger numbers, would be able to make credible threats regarding the shutting down or destruction of oil facilities. This would make armed insurrection a viable tactic for them. On the other hand, MOSOP, would that it were inclined towards such sort of activities, would not likely be able to make a significant show of force, due to its relatively small numbers. In this way, for MOSOP, the most logical approach would be a non-violent method because a violent insurrection would have quite easily been put down by the military regime in the federal government.

In closing, I would like to highlight the most important observation to be drawn from these case studies, which is the overwhelming influence that oil has had on the formation and development of these movements. The environmental impact of oil served as the impetus behind these groups formation. In the face of such catastrophic environmental damage, these groups did not ask for an end to the production that was poisoning their lands and destroying their livelihoods, instead asking for what every other actor in petro-culture asks for; a piece of the pie. It is from this common origin, as movements born and shaped in petro-culture that their commonalities stem.

¹⁴⁶ Egoshae E. Osaghae "The Ogoni Uprisings: Oil Politics, Minority Agitation and the Future of the Nigerian State" *African Affairs* Vol.94, No.376 (Jul.1995), 340

The influence of oil can even be seen in the apparent differences between the two movements. The most significant of the differences between MOSOP and IYC discussed previously is the adoption of violent methods of protest by the IYC. Where Saro-Wiwa encouraged non-violent forms of protest, IYC has become an armed “ethnic militia.”¹⁴⁷ However, a recent Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism report on MOSOP stated that, despite Saro-Wiwa’s preference for non-violent protest; since his death, MOSOP has “acquired an arsenal that comprises a range of assault rifles, including AK-47s and M-16s, and a large quantity of ammunition.”¹⁴⁸

If MOSOP is stockpiling arms so as to carry out a more violent form of protest, similar to that waged by the NDPVF, it seems likely that the use of violent tactics by groups is at least partially related to its longevity. When MOSOP began to see its demands addressed following Saro-Wiwa’s execution (through the creation of the NDDC) the movement was only five years old, and followed a strict non-violence strategy. Similarly, the initial activities of the IYC were non-violent, consisting of declarations and demonstrations. However, as time progressed and their demands remained unsatisfied, the IYC evolved into the NDPVF, making use of much more violent forms of protest and now it appears that MOSOP is following the same course of evolution.

This transformation from non-violent to violent protest can be understood to be a result of the persistent influence of petro-culture. The incentive structures within petro-culture encourage the actors within to gain access to the ‘golden gateway to fortune’ and share in the revenues from the oil industry. However, if access to these revenues is frustrated, the actors must or at least are considerably tempted to adopt alternate strategies for

¹⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch “Rivers and Blood: Guns, Oil and Power in Nigeria’s Rivers State” <http://hrw.org/backgrounders/africa/nigeria0205/nigeria0205.pdf> Accessed, July 30, 2005

¹⁴⁸ Jane’s World Insurgency and Terrorism Report “The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP)” <http://www4.janes.com/K2/doc.jsp?t=Q&K2DocKey=/content1/janesda> Accessed February 20, 2005

seeing their interests satisfied. In this way, the failure of MOSOP and IYC to see their demands met by the federal government (itself influenced by petro-culture) has forced them to adopt these violent forms of protest to achieve the share in oil revenues, which are their stated goals. What is most unfortunate about this is by adopting such violent tactics, these groups give the federal authorities the justification they need to respond with force of its own.

In summary, therefore, we can see that both the common characteristics and the differences between MOSOP and IYC derive from the influence of oil. The degree of influence that oil has had on the formation and evolution of these movements is a testament to the insidious way in which the production of oil is itself a self-perpetuating process.

In the final chapter, I return to the concept of the environmentalism of petro-culture and offer four alternate case studies where the environmentalism of petro-culture groups either are, or will likely develop as well as discuss several other petro-states that lack one of the characteristics necessary to the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements.

Chapter Three

The Environmentalism of Petro-Culture as an International Phenomenon

It has been established in the previous chapter that the two main environmental movements of the Niger Delta fit the environmentalism of petro-culture concept presented in the first chapter. Two questions remain about the international applicability of the environmentalism of petro-culture. The first is the whether this kind of movement can be found in states other than Nigeria. Can it be applied to other petro-states or does it only serve to explain the movements of the Niger Delta? The second question relates to the recent emergence of transnational networks of environmental movements. The environmentalism of petro-culture model presents a challenge to the growing network of international environmental movements that act as coordinators between domestic groups, in that unlike all other forms of environmentalism in the globe, one of the key characteristics is that it does not seek an end to the environmentally damaging activity. What is the relationship between the environmentalism of petro-culture and the transnational environmental networks?

This chapter deals with these two questions, concluding that there are several environmental movements in other states that display the characteristics of the environmentalism of petro-culture as well as those where it seems likely that such movements will develop in the near future. With regard to the second question, argues that transnational networks of environmental movements are not truly transnational at all, but simply the movements of the developed world expressed on a larger scale. While they do claim to work in cooperation with the local environmentalism of petro-culture movements, there are significant differences between the demands put forth by environmentalism of

petro-culture movements and their international partners. In this manner, they are seen to be two distinct movements that, at best, share a common origin.

In essence, they are two very different environmental movements that have emerged in response to the same environmental stimulus. This supports the concept of the environmentalism of petro-culture as a distinct classification of social movement.

The Global Environmentalism of Petro-Culture

Environmentalism of petro-culture is not unique to the Nigerian, or even the African context. Instead it is a model that can accurately describe the characteristics of environmental movements in several of the world's petro-states as well as suggest states that may develop such movements in the future. This section briefly examines the situations in several petro-states in order to demonstrate that the model of the environmentalism of petro-culture has global applications. Several of the states used as case studies in this chapter have already developed environmental movements that fit the profile of the environmentalism of petro-culture, or have conditions that seem to suggest the future development of such movements. This chapter also describes, however, the case studies of several other petro-states that have not developed such movements, due to the lack one or several of the necessary characteristics that leads to the development of the environmentalism of petro-culture. Thus the presence of petro-culture is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the development of such movements. These brief studies also serve to clarify several of the other conditions for the development of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, such as the necessity of onshore, rather than offshore oil production, and the necessity of a geographically centred ethnic group.

A World of Oil

In order to conduct the case studies in this section, we must first identify states other than Nigeria that can be considered petro-states. Terry Lynn Karl lists “Mexico, Algeria, Indonesia, Venezuela, ... Iran, Trinidad-Tobago, Ecuador, Gabon, Oman, Egypt, Syria and Cameroon”¹⁴⁹ as “capital-deficient oil exporters.”¹⁵⁰ In other words, these states are all petro-states. This list is a good starting point, to which I add Chad, Angola and Azerbaijan,¹⁵¹ for the following reasons.

Chad will be a joint beneficiary with Cameroon in the new Chad-Cameroon pipeline, built under the supervision of the World Bank. The pipeline was expected to yield annual revenues of \$80 million for Chad when it became active in 2004.¹⁵² Chad also demonstrates many of the negative characteristics of petro-states already, including a high level of corruption¹⁵³ and an enclave economy (while the majority of state revenues derive from oil, gold and uranium exports, over 80% of the population relies on subsistence agriculture as their only form of economic activity).¹⁵⁴ These factors combine to present the picture of an ideal neopatrimonial petro-state.

Angola likewise displays many of the characteristics of a petro-state. Angola is the second largest exporter of petroleum in Africa, after Nigeria.¹⁵⁵ In 2004, Transparency International listed Angola as the fifth most corrupt country in the world, tied with the

¹⁴⁹ The one country that has been removed from the list is Nigeria, as it has been discussed previously.

¹⁵⁰ Terry Lynn Karl The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 17

¹⁵¹ BBC News “Poor Azerbaijan Prepares to Get Rich” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/4508621.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁵² BBC News “Africa’s Mammoth Oil Project Come of Age” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3063647.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005. Given the high price since the American invasion of Iraq, these revenues may be even higher.

¹⁵³ Transparency International “Global Corruption Report 2003” <http://www.globalcorruptionreport.org/gcr2003.html> Accessed August 3, 2005

¹⁵⁴ CIA World Factbook “Chad” <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cd.html#Econ> Accessed August 3, 2005

¹⁵⁵ Angolan Embassy UK “Province of Cabinda” http://www.angola.org.uk/prov_cabinda.htm Accessed August 4, 2005

Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia and Turkmenistan.¹⁵⁶ In some ways, Angola seems to be following the same historical path that Nigeria travelled. Similar to the Nigerian persecution of the Ogoni in the Niger Delta, the Angolan military is charged with multiple human rights abuses against the native Cabindans in the oil-rich Cabinda province.¹⁵⁷ The Cabindans have been fighting a war of independence for over 25 years, and Cabinda remains the only province still at war after the end of the 27 year Angolan Civil War.¹⁵⁸

Finally, Azerbaijan is included in this list as a developing petro-state. Oil production is relatively new in this former Soviet republic, but it is estimated that by 2007, it “will be receiving at least \$7bn in oil revenues annually from Caspian energy deposits.”¹⁵⁹ The fact that this amount of money will be flowing into a country where “corruption is ubiquitous,”¹⁶⁰ and the average annual income of around \$1000 is worrying to say the least.

Ecuador and Indonesia: Cases of the Environmentalism of Petro-Culture

The first section examines states that have developed movements that correspond to the environmentalism of petro-culture model. The first state that appears to have developed domestic groups that fit the model of the environmentalism of petro-culture is Ecuador. 40% of Ecuador’s export earnings are derived from petroleum production,¹⁶¹ which qualifies it as a petro-state. Beginning in the late 1990s, a series of powerful environmental movements

¹⁵⁶ Transparency International “Corruption is rampant in 60 countries, and the public sector is plagued by bribery, says TI” Press Release.

http://www.transparency.org/pressreleases_archive/2004/2004.10.20.cpi.en.html Accessed August 3, 2005.

¹⁵⁷ BBC News “Angolan Army ‘Abuses Cabindans” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4228785.stm> Accessed August 4, 2005

¹⁵⁸ IDP Project “Angolan Army Still at War With Cabinda Separatists (September 2003)”

<http://www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/IdpProjectDb/idpSurvey.nsf/wViewCountries/8A686BDEA0BC7B80C1256E5500319357> Accessed August 4, 2005

¹⁵⁹ BBC News “Poor Azerbaijan Prepares to Get Rich” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/4508621.stm> Accessed August 4, 2005

¹⁶⁰ CIA World Factbook “Azerbaijan” <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/aj.html#People> Accessed August 4, 2005

¹⁶¹ CIA World Factbook “Ecuador” <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ec.html#Econ> Accessed August 2, 2005

have developed amongst the indigenous populations, which have managed, at times, to bring “the country's oil production to a virtual standstill”¹⁶² These movements have drawn their membership from the Achuar, Shuar and Kichwa tribes living in the Sucumbios and Orellana provinces in the north east of Ecuador.

In the traditional homelands of these peoples, the “oilfields have left a legacy of deforestation and environmental damage.”¹⁶³ Like the Ogoni and Ijaw in the Niger Delta, the indigenous peoples of Ecuador have relied on subsistence agriculture as their primary mode of economic production. In Ecuador, as in Nigeria, the environmental damage of oil has been exceptionally damaging to this form of agriculture, thereby eliminating the primary mode of production for these peoples.

However, despite this damage, the protestors do not ask for an end to oil production, “they want more money from oil revenues spent directly on them.”¹⁶⁴ In addition, their protest rhetoric utilizes the language of human rights, demanding the government “pay \$10m for development projects, ranging from construction of roads and hospitals to providing running water.”¹⁶⁵

Another worrying parallel to the conditions in the Niger Delta is the rise of violence in Ecuador's oil producing regions.¹⁶⁶ Ecuador is suffering under the burden of a significant amount of foreign debt.¹⁶⁷ The Ecuadorian government has been encouraged by the International Monetary Fund to further expand its petroleum production in the eastern and

¹⁶² BBC News “Protest Threat to Ecuador Oil” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1843051.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁶³ BBC News “Ecuador Tribes Vow to Fight Oil Threat” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4308537.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁶⁴ BBC News “Protest Threat to Ecuador Oil” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1843051.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁶⁵ BBC News “Protest Threat to Ecuador Oil” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1843051.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁶⁶ BBC News “Protest Threat to Ecuador Oil” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1843051.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁶⁷ BBC News “Protest Threat to Ecuador Oil” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1843051.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

northeastern provinces in order to service this debt, which has put it at odds with indigenous groups. The BBC has reported that “there have been clashes with the army in Kichwa territory, while in a separate incident, a group of oil exploration workers were kidnapped and held for several days by the Achuar.”¹⁶⁸ While nothing is inevitable, these trends are remarkably similar to those found in the Niger Delta, which may indicate an escalation of violence in Ecuador’s eastern and northeastern regions in the near future.

In summary, this group would appear to be a clear example of an environmentalism of petro-culture movement. It is organized along ethnic lines, it is geographically located, it is located within a petro-state and these groups were organized in response to the environmental damage from onshore oil production, yet does not seek to have the production end. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the case of Ecuador’s environmental movements in further detail, the evidence does suggest that it would present an ideal case study for future explorations of the environmentalism of petro-culture model.

The second state that appears to have developed social movements that fit the environmentalism of petro-culture model is Indonesia. Several of the movements that have emerged in Indonesia’s province, Aceh, display characteristics that conform to the environmentalism of petro-culture model. Indonesia makes for a more complex case study than Ecuador, as Karl herself notes that it is not really a petro-state, as it has a fairly diversified economy, relative to other petro-states.¹⁶⁹ However, if the Northern Aceh region of Indonesia is considered on its own, a different picture of the local environmental movements emerges. While Indonesia is not considered a petro-state, taken on its own the province of Aceh can be considered a separate social/political unit that displays many of the

¹⁶⁸ BBC News “Protest Threat to Ecuador Oil” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/1843051.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁶⁹ Terry Lynn Karl *The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 208

characteristics common to petro-states. The Lhokseumawe Industrial Plant, or ZILS, located in North Aceh district, has contributed upwards of 13% of Indonesia's GDP¹⁷⁰ and represented the largest economic activity in the region, before violence related to the activities of Aceh's separatist movement encouraged the departure of several foreign companies in the early 21st century.¹⁷¹ Interestingly, the wealth generated by the ZILS is part of the reason for the ongoing struggle for independence in Aceh.¹⁷²

However, the Lhokseumawe operations have "devastated local communities who depend on agriculture and fish farming" through soil erosion, pollution, and explosions.¹⁷³ In 1991, chemical waste from an EXXON-Mobil plant spilled into nearby shrimp ponds; only 72 of the 240 farmers received compensation from the American multinational.¹⁷⁴ In December 1991, a series of ammonia gas leaks from natural gas plants poisoned hundreds of families.¹⁷⁵ In 1992, an underwater oil pipeline burst, contaminating nearby beaches; this was especially troubling because villagers were unaware that the line existed.¹⁷⁶ Another pipeline fractured months later, this time flooding a village with oil and catching fire, burning houses, crops, and livestock.¹⁷⁷ In 1993, 80% of villagers near industrial zones relied on well water, which is easily contaminated by oil pollution.¹⁷⁸

A number of environmental groups have been formed in response to this damage, including the Aceh Environment Defence Institute (LPLH), and the Empowering Circle for

¹⁷⁰ Martin P.H. Panggabean, "Economic Fallout of Aceh War Will Spread," *Jakarta Post* (22 May 2003).

¹⁷¹ Tim Kell, *the Roots of the Acehese Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 17.

¹⁷² Conversation with Shane J. Barter, FORUM Asia.

¹⁷³ *Aceh: the Untold Story*, (Bangkok: FORUM-ASIA and SCHRA, 1999), 42.

¹⁷⁴ Tim Kell, *the Roots of the Acehese Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 17.

¹⁷⁵ Tim Kell, *the Roots of the Acehese Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 18.

¹⁷⁶ Tim Kell, *the Roots of the Acehese Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 18.

¹⁷⁷ Tim Kell, *the Roots of the Acehese Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 18.

¹⁷⁸ Tim Kell, *the Roots of the Acehese Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 17.

Society Movement (YAPDA).¹⁷⁹ These groups, like Ecuadorian movements, are organized along ethnic lines, have formed in response to environmental damage, utilize the language of human rights and democracy in their protest and yet do not ask for an end to oil production, only a share in the resultant revenues.¹⁸⁰

These two case studies seem to indicate that groups that correspond to the environmentalism of petro-culture model have developed outside Nigeria. The movements discussed above conform to environmentalism of petro-culture's defining characteristics, demonstrating that petro-culture is not a geographically specific manifestation, but instead the result of economic-derived structural influences.

Chad and Cameroon: Future Cases of the Environmentalism of Petro-Culture

The second group of case studies includes states that have many of the conditions that lead to the development of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, but do not yet face the environmental damage that engenders the creation of such movements. Chad and Cameroon¹⁸¹ both fail to meet the requirements for the environmentalism of petro-culture in that their oil economies are too new to have resulted in significant environmental damage. That said, there are two reasons to suggest that this damage may yet result and be ignored by the federal government, whether the multinational corporations involved attempt to prevent it or not.

The first reason is related to the level of corruption already present in these states. As discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, environmentalism of petro-culture movements

¹⁷⁹ LPLP "Homepage" http://www.lp3es.or.id/direktori/data/aceh/aceh_007.htm Accessed August 2, 2005 and YAPDA "Homepage" http://www.lp3es.or.id/direktori/data/aceh/aceh_024.htm Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁸⁰ Conversation with Shane J. Barter, FORUM Asia.

¹⁸¹ CIEL "The Chad Cameroon Pipeline Project Summary of Concerns" <http://www.ciel.org/Ifi/chadcamsummary.html> Accessed August 2, 2005

emerge in states with the neopatrimonial structures that are characteristic petro-culture. These structures enable the groups in the federal government to enjoy the wealth derived from petroleum production, while remaining insulated from the demands of the wider populace with the security bought with the aforementioned wealth. This indifference by the federal government towards the people plays a large part in the organization of protest movements. Those affected by the environmental damage rally together under a common feeling of alienation when the federal government shows no interest in dealing with any of their local-level concerns (including local environmental damage). In this way, the corrupt neopatrimonial aspects of petro-culture are a necessary condition for the emergence of the environmentalism of petro-culture.

In a 2004 press release, Transparency International listed Cameroon and Chad near the bottom of its corruption perception index 129th and 142nd respectively out of 145 states, indicating extremely high levels of corruption. The report demonstrates that in these states, “public contracting in the oil sector is plagued by revenues vanishing into the pockets of western oil executives, middlemen and local officials.”¹⁸² This pattern of resource misappropriation is the exact sort of behaviour that leads to the creation and perpetuation of neopatrimonial regimes. With the presence of an oil-based enclave economy and neopatrimonial structures in government, these states fit the criteria for petro-culture.

However, as mentioned earlier, the presence of petro-culture is not a sufficient criterion for the inclusion of a state in the environmentalism of petro-culture. Significant environmental damage that affects a geographically concentrated ethnic group is likewise necessary. While the current focus on ‘corporate social responsibility’ seems to preclude the sort of callous treatment of the environment by oil companies that was seen in Nigeria in

¹⁸² Transparency International “Corruption is rampant in 60 countries, and the public sector is plagued by bribery, says TI” Press Release.
http://www.transparency.org/pressreleases_archive/2004/2004.10.20.cpi.en.html Accessed August 3, 2005

previous years, environmental damage from oil spills may come from another, domestic, source, which relates to the second reason to expect the such damage to result.

In Nigeria, the eighth largest producer of oil in the world, it is estimated that up to ten percent of its oil production is lost to 'bunkering,' the local name for illegal oil tapping.¹⁸³ Unfortunately, this activity often results in oil spills or catastrophic fires, due to the lack of sophisticated tools employed in the 'bunkering' and the haphazard manner in which the theft is carried out.¹⁸⁴ Between 1998 and 2003, more than 1500 people in Nigeria have died in explosions that have resulted from 'bunkering.'¹⁸⁵ The profits that can be made from such activity, act as more than enough incentive for poor groups to engage in this lucrative enterprise, despite the threat of government troops and the resultant environmental damage. The incentive of profits that can be made selling the pilfered oil on the black market are too great for many Nigerians to resist.¹⁸⁶

The likelihood of domestic groups adopting such tactics in Chad and Cameroon seems high, given the level of poverty in each of these states. Chad is consistently listed by the UN as one of the least developed states in the world,¹⁸⁷ while nearly half of Cameroon's population lives below the poverty line.¹⁸⁸ While the emergence of 'bunkering' in Cameroon and Chad is not a certainty, there are reasons related to this poverty that suggest it is likely. The presence of strong neopatrimonial structures in each state likely indicates that only those in power will enjoy the wealth from the petroleum sector. Combined with the poverty

¹⁸³ BBC News "Nigeria—Bursting at the Seams" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4602237.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁸⁴ BBC News "Nigeria Pipeline Blaze 'kills 26'" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4122375.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

¹⁸⁵ BBC News "Will Nigeria Learn Pipeline Fire Lessons?" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3016786.stm> Accessed August 3, 2005

¹⁸⁶ BBC News "Will Nigeria Learn Pipeline Fire Lessons?" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3016786.stm> Accessed August 3, 2005

¹⁸⁷ United Nations "UN-OHRLLS: Chad" <http://www.un.org/special-rep/ohrls/ldc/LDCs-List/profiles/chad.htm?id=148> Accessed August 16, 2005

¹⁸⁸ CIA World Factbook "Cameroon" <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cm.html#People> Accessed August 16, 2005

already present in these countries, this will result in an even greater gap between those who have and those who have not. This poverty, combined with the wealth that can be made from the illegal sale of oil, could serve as enough incentive for groups living near the oil lines to engage in 'bunkering.' This, in turn, would result in the sort of local-level environmental damage that encourages the emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements.

To summarize, there are two reasons to expect the emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements in Chad and Cameroon. The first is the presence of neopatrimonial petro-culture structures in both Chad and Cameroon, which encourage and, with the help of the enclave economy, enable the federal government to ignore any incidental environmental damage that does occur from oil production. The second is the likelihood of environmental damage occurring from illegal tapping of oil lines by local-level actors. These two factors, suggest that the future emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements in these states is likely. However, not all states with strong petro-cultures will develop environmentalism of petro-culture groups. The remaining case studies examine groups of states which have not seen the development of such movements, due to the lack of one or more necessary conditions.

Trinidad-Tobago, Gabon, Mexico, Azerbaijan and Angola: The Role of Onshore Production

The first group of states without environmentalism of petro-culture movements to examine is those whose oil production is largely derived from offshore reserves. One of the defining characteristics of the environmentalism of petro-culture is that the environmental damage that it is formed in response to is caused by onshore oil production. The onshore nature of the oil production is key, because people living at the local level feel the full impact

of the environmental damage that results from such production. Conversely, while offshore oil production can have negative impact on the livelihood of groups living on the coast, the damage is not sufficiently localized to impact on all aspects of the everyday lives of these groups. For this reason, several of the petro-states listed earlier have not, and likely will not see the development of environmentalism of petro-culture movements.

Trinidad-Tobago, Gabon, Mexico, Azerbaijan and Angola,¹⁸⁹ rely largely on the exploitation of offshore reserves, which violates one of the defining criteria for the environmentalism of petro-culture. Without a significant presence of onshore oil production, the sort of environmental damage that engenders the environmentalism of petro-culture does not occur.¹⁹⁰

It may seem, at first glance, that striking Angola from the list is a mistake, in light of the aforementioned conflict between the Cabindans and the forces of the Angolan federal government in the province that supplies 60% of the country's oil.¹⁹¹ However, the causes of the conflict in Cabinda do not stem from oil. Cabinda is a province that is separated from the rest of Angola by a narrow strip of land that is part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Cabinda was never a Portuguese colony, only a protectorate and "was therefore subjected to only 90 years of colonial rule, in contrast to the 500 years experienced by Angola."¹⁹² The Frente de Libertação do Enclave de Cabinda (FLEC - Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda

¹⁸⁹ Energy Information Administration "Gabon: Oil and Gas Industry" <http://www.mbendi.co.za/indy/oilg/af/ga/p0005.htm>; Energy Information Administration "Mexico Country Analysis Brief" <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/mexico.html>
Energy Information Administration "Angola Country Analysis Brief" <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/angola.html> Accessed August 4, 2005

¹⁹⁰ The possible exception to this is the impact of offshore oil production on nearby fishing communities, which can devastate the economic base of these villages. However, this sort of impact is still not as pervasive as onshore oil, as it does not often result in the other negative externalities of onshore oil production, such as the poisoning of groundwater, air pollution, and illegal oil tapping.

¹⁹¹ Human Rights Watch "Angola: In Oil-Rich Cabinda, Army Abuses Civilians" <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2004/12/23/angola9922.htm> Accessed August 4, 2005

¹⁹² UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs "IRIN Web Special on Cabinda" <http://www.irinnews.org/webspecials/cabinda/cabinda031007.asp> Accessed August 4, 2005

Enclave) was founded to combat the Portuguese colonial presence in the early 1970s, but after independence in 1975, transformed into a separatist movement.¹⁹³

The presence of oil off the coast of Cabinda has likely played a large role in Angola's reluctance to agree to Cabindan separation, and it has figured prominently in the literature of the separatist movement. It is quite likely that the introduction of oil production to the region had an effect on the nature of Cabindan separatism after it had been founded. However, the lack of any significant environmental damage in Cabinda province and more importantly, the lack of environmental language in the demands of the separatist movement, excludes this movement from the category of the environmentalism of petro-culture. In addition, Cabinda serves to demonstrate how one of the most common activities to onshore oil production, namely the illegal tapping of oil lines, does not occur in offshore production. Despite the presence of vast oil resources, Angola sees none of the 'bunkering' that is so common to Nigeria. What this seems to confirm is that the illegal tapping of oil lines, that is so common to Nigeria, does not occur in states with predominantly offshore oil production, and therefore lacks yet another cause of environmental damage.

To summarize, the predominantly offshore nature of the oil production in Trinidad-Tobago, Gabon, Mexico, Azerbaijan and Angola has failed to produce the conditions that lead to the development of environmentalism of petro-culture movements. Furthermore, there seems little likelihood, given the nature of their oil production, that this will change in the near future.

¹⁹³ Human Rights Watch "Angola Backgrounder: Summary"
http://hrw.org/backgrounder/africa/angola/2004/1204/1.htm#_Toc91076337 Accessed August 4, 2005

Algeria, Oman, Egypt, Syria and Iran: The Ethnic Component

Another reason why environmentalism of petro-culture movements may not form despite the presence of petro-culture is a lack of geographically concentrated ethnic divisions in the state. This is the case in the fourth category of petro-state case studies discussed in this chapter. Specifically, they lack the necessary ethnic divisions that encourage the formation of social movements along ethnic lines. As mentioned previously, Algeria, Oman, Egypt, Syria and Iran are, with their large oil-based export economies, quite obviously petro-states. However, they have not seen significant environmental movements develop. One of the reasons these have not developed is because they lack the aforementioned necessary ethnic divisions. Algeria and Egypt have a 99% ethnic majority and Oman is predominantly Arab.¹⁹⁴ As a result of these strongly homogenous ethnic characteristics, these states lack the ethnic divisions that play such a strong role in the formation of the environmentalism of petro-culture.¹⁹⁵ As mentioned in the first chapter, the use of ethnic identities as a rallying point for mass support is a key characteristic of both the environmentalism of the poor and the environmentalism of petro-culture. Without these divisions, there is little opportunity to have social organization along ethnic lines. Instead, social movements organize along religious or class lines, common in most developing states.¹⁹⁶

The remaining two states in this category, however, do have significant domestic problems related to internal ethnic divisions. Both Iran and Syria have significant populations of Kurds (23% in Iran and 10% in Syria)¹⁹⁷ but the Kurdish movements that

¹⁹⁴ All statistics taken from the CIA World Factbook. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/> Accessed August 3, 2005 and Library of Congress "A Country Study: Oman" <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/omtoc.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

¹⁹⁵ Library of Congress "Country Studies- Public Order and Internal Security: Algeria, Egypt and Oman" <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

¹⁹⁶ Library of Congress "Country Studies- Public Order and Internal Security: Algeria, Egypt and Oman" <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

¹⁹⁷ Library of Congress "Country Studies- Kurds: Iran and Syria" <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/irtoc.html> and <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/sytoc.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

resulted from these divisions differ in one important way from those which lead to the development of environmentalism of petro-culture. They are not formed in response to environmental damage, but instead in response to political marginalization and a demand for a Kurdish homeland.¹⁹⁸ A full discussion of the Kurdish movements of Iran and Syria is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is sufficient to note that the Kurdish protest and insurrectionist groups in Iran and Syria are not environmental groups.¹⁹⁹

What is more, whether through good luck or good management, there is relatively little environmental damage resulting from the oil production that has a direct impact on the lives of any of the citizens of these states, nor on their predominant mode of economic production.²⁰⁰ Without environmental damage significant to impact on the economic prosperity of geographically localized ethnic groups, these states lack one of the necessary conditions for the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements.

In summary therefore, the petro-states discussed in this category lack the necessary form of ethnic divisions that lead to the development of the environmentalism of petro-culture.

¹⁹⁸ Library of Congress "Country Studies- Kurds: Iran and Syria" <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/irtoc.html> and <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/sytoc.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

¹⁹⁹ Library of Congress "Country Studies- Kurds and Internal Security: Iran and Syria" <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/irtoc.html> and <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/sytoc.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

²⁰⁰ Energy Information Administration "Country Briefs" <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/contents.html> Accessed August 16, 2005. An exception is made here for the environmental damage sustained in the Persian Gulf, indirectly, from the Iraq invasion of Kuwait and the marine oil spills that threaten coral reefs off the coast of Egypt.

Venezuela: The Aberrant Case Study

The final case study discussed in this chapter is that of Venezuela. Venezuela is described by Karl as an ideal petro-state in the Paradox of Plenty.²⁰¹ Venezuela is the sixth largest exporter of oil in the world, and one of the founders of OPEC.²⁰² Unfortunately, this wealth has come at a cost, as “fossil fuel extraction has contributed significantly to the degradation of Venezuela's natural environment, and oil pollution along the country's Caribbean coast is particularly bad.”²⁰³ The US-based Energy Information Administration, reports that “the environmental damage from the oil spills has affected the local fishing and farming industries.” However, no significant environmental movements have emerged to protest the oil production. This is not to say that no environmental movements have developed in Venezuela. However, what ecological protest groups have developed in Venezuela have been in response to the damage inflicted by coal mining.²⁰⁴ Why have movements to protest the mining of coal have developed yet none have developed to protest the production of oil? This final category examines this apparent contradiction and discusses its impact on the wider application of the environmentalism of petro-culture model.

One of the main reasons that significant protest movements against the oil industry have not developed has been that “the Ministry of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare [have sought] to address air and water quality problems in urban areas in a joint program.”²⁰⁵ In this way, the Venezuelan

²⁰¹ Terry Lynn Karl The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 17

²⁰² Energy Information Administration “Country Analysis Brief: Venezuela” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/venez.html> Accessed August 2, 2005

²⁰³ Energy Information Administration “Venezuela: Environmental Issues” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/venenv.html> Accessed August 2, 2005

²⁰⁴ Venezuela Analysis “Venezuela's Indigenous Peoples Protest Coal Mining” <http://www.venezuelanalysis.com/articles.php?artno=1414> Accessed August 2, 2005

²⁰⁵ Energy Information Administration “Venezuela: Environmental Issues” <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/venenv.html> Accessed August 2, 2005

government pre-emptively deals with many of the problems that would lead to the creation of such movements, such as air pollution that results from flaring and water pollution that results from oil spills.

In addition, coal mining and oil production have not had an equal impact on the groups living in Venezuela. In April 2005, the International Press Service reported that “bare-chested, clad in traditional dress and wielding bows and arrows, hundreds of representatives of the Barí, Yukpa and Wayúu indigenous peoples from the westernmost region of Venezuela marched on the capital to demand a halt to coal mining near their lands in the Sierra de Perijá mountain range.”²⁰⁶ In language that remarkably parallels that of MOSOP and the IYC, they stated that “President Hugo Chávez...can't continue granting land concessions in the Sierra and in Guajira (a neighbouring region along the Venezuelan-Colombian border) without consulting us first, as required by the constitution,” and that as a result of the coal production “the water is polluted, waterways are obstructed, the air breathed by humans, animals and plants is contaminated, the habitat of the aboriginal peoples is disturbed and peasants and indigenous peoples are forced off the land they have traditionally farmed.”²⁰⁷ This protest is but one example of a number of movements that have developed in Venezuela as a result of the environmental impact of coal.²⁰⁸ This pattern seems to initially fit many of the criteria of the environmentalism of petro-culture (the presence of environmental damage, the geographically-centred ethnic characteristic of the movement, environmental damage intensifying economic deprivation, the presence of petro-culture). The key difference is that the source of the environmental damage is coal and not oil.

²⁰⁶ International Press Service “Indigenous Peoples Protest Coal Mining”
http://www.ipsnews.net/new_notas.asp?idnews=28150 Accessed August 4, 2005

²⁰⁷ International Press Service “Indigenous Peoples Protest Coal Mining”
http://www.ipsnews.net/new_notas.asp?idnews=28150 Accessed August 4, 2005

²⁰⁸ Mines and Communities “The Environmental Cost of Coal Mining in Venezuela”
<http://www.minesandcommunities.org/Action/press572.htm> Accessed August 4, 2005

For one, oil is much more profitable than coal, which gives groups less incentive to tolerate the environmental damage that comes with the local production of coal, even if they get a share in the profits. Profits from oil production make up roughly 80% of Venezuela's export revenues, while coal makes up less than 15%.²⁰⁹ The profits from oil production are so great that a share in them helps local groups to overcome the environmental damage that has resulted from the production. With coal production resulting in such a comparatively smaller amount of profit, it seems "that the cost of coal mining far outweighs the economic benefits that it provides."²¹⁰

In addition, coal production does not lend itself to the same sort of theft that oil production does for two reasons. For one, coal is not collected and shipped in the same manner as oil, and therefore physically does not lend itself to the same sort of 'bunkering.' Secondly, there is not a strong enough economic incentive for locals to undertake such activities. While individuals in petro-states can collect and sell oil for large profits, the same cannot be said for an individual who collects himself a bag of coal and attempts to sell it to his neighbours.

With regard to the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, it is quite possible that the proliferation of these anti-coal groups has served to occupy the societal 'protest-space' that anti-oil movements would. The anti-coal movements have been the most vocal environmental groups in Venezuela and the most active in the international sphere, making it the predominant environmental issue in the country and subsuming all other

²⁰⁹ World Coal "Regional Briefing: Latin America"
http://www.worldcoal.com/Coal/CL_regional_report_sept04.htm Accessed August 4, 2005

²¹⁰ Mines and Communities "The Environmental Cost of Coal Mining in Venezuela"
<http://www.minesandcommunities.org/Action/press572.htm> Accessed August 4, 2005

environmental concerns beneath it.²¹¹ For these reasons, Venezuela has not seen the emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements.

There are two important lessons to be drawn from the Venezuelan case study. The first relates to the environmental movements that have emerged in response to coal production. They demonstrate that there is something unique in the sheer profitability of oil production that makes certain groups willing to tolerate the environmental damage associated with it, even though, all other things being equal, they would not if it were a different commodity. Furthermore, as in Venezuela, it is possible that other, less profitable forms of production, could engender environmental movements that occupy the 'societal space' that anti-oil movements would otherwise.

The second lesson to be drawn from the Venezuelan case study relates to actions by the Venezuelan government to deal with the environmental damage caused by oil production. By taking the steps to address one of the key factors that lead to the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, they make the formation of such movements unnecessary. Furthermore, by dealing with the environmental damage before it spawns a movement, they create a different result than that which environmentalism of petro-culture groups call for. Recall that one of the key characteristics of the environmentalism of petro-culture model is that these groups do not seek an end to oil production, only a share in the revenues generated, thereby perpetuating the environmental damage. By dealing preemptively with these issues, the Venezuelan government acts in a more environmentally friendly manner, acting to preserve the ecology. While this is not to suggest that Venezuelan oil production is completely environmentally friendly (the contrary has been demonstrated earlier in this section). The fact that they are acting at all is an important change from the

²¹¹ If one does a 'Google' search for the term 'Venezuelan Environmental Movements' nearly all the sites returned deal with anti-coal and anti-logging, without a single mention of the environmental impact of oil.

traditional pattern of behaviour in petro-culture; one which may indicate a precedence that the governments of other petro-states may be encouraged to follow.

Summary of Case Studies

As can be seen from these case studies, while the environmentalism of petro-culture model may not be found in all petro-states, there is evidence of its applicability beyond Nigeria. Movements in Ecuador and Aceh presently display all the characteristics of environmentalism of petro-culture. Furthermore, conditions in Chad and Cameroon suggest the future emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements.

The other studies discussed in this chapter have demonstrated how the absence of certain of the defining characteristics of the environmentalism of petro-culture, such as the presence of onshore oil production or significant ethnic divisions, can prevent the development of such movements. The final case study discussed in this chapter, Venezuela, has demonstrated how the efforts of a government to pre-emptively address the environmental pressures caused by oil production, combined with the presence of another environmental threat can suppress the development of these movements. In addition, further study of the Venezuelan case study may yield insights on how states could overcome the incentive structures created by petro-culture and address the needs of those ethnic groups affected by oil production before protest movements are formed.

International Environmentalism

The final question that this chapter addresses is the relationship that environmentalism of petro-culture movements have with the transnational environmental networks. Over the last twenty years, a series of such networks have developed, such as the

Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, and Greenpeace, which claim to “campaign [on a global scale] on the most urgent environmental and social issues of our day.”²¹² These groups attempt to coordinate with local environmental groups so as to give wider exposure to their issues²¹³. With such coordination between groups, is there a conflict between the transnational environmental networks and the demands of the environmentalism of petro-culture, which do not call for an end to the environmentally damaging practices, which caused them to found in the first place? I argue that, due to the nature of transnational environmental groups, this dichotomy between the goals of the environmentalism of petro-culture and those of their international partners is largely a non-issue and results in no conflict.

The first characteristics of the transnational environmental networks relates to the manner in which they gain exposure for issues. With a global audience in mind, transnational environmental groups often have to select one or two issues to focus on, so as to maximize the impact of their campaigns (such as Greenpeace’s current focus on climate change and genetically modified organisms).²¹⁴ Unfortunately, this narrow focus, while drawing a great deal of attention to the chosen issues, necessarily ignores other issues and movements. For instance, when Ken Saro-Wiwa was executed by the Nigerian government for his environmental activities, “European environmentalists were focusing on the Greenpeace victory over Shell in the Brent-Spar case.”²¹⁵ What this results in is a tendency for domestic groups to categorize themselves, according to larger issues, rather than tailor demands specific to their situation. An example of this was demonstrated in the previous

²¹² Friends of the Earth International “About FOEI” <http://www.foei.org/about/index.html> Accessed August 2, 2005

²¹³ Friends of the Earth International “About FOEI” <http://www.foei.org/about/index.html> Accessed August 16, 2005

²¹⁴ Greenpeace “What We Do” <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns> Accessed August 2, 2005

²¹⁵ Joan Martinez-Alier *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 105

chapter, when the Ijaw were shown to have used the language of climate change to connect their issues to those of the international organizations, despite the fact that the Kaiama Declaration had no mention of climate change issues.²¹⁶ This was done by the IYC specifically to tie their issue to one of the 'buzzwords' of the global environmental movement. What is important to note here is that, as mentioned in the previous chapter, despite the use of the language of global climate change, it did not appear to be one of their major demands. This points to the differences that can exist between the demands of the local and international levels of environmental movements.

Another example of the differences that can exist between the demands of the local and international movements can be found in the case of MOSOP. As mentioned previously, Saro-Wiwa had coordinated the activities of MOSOP with groups such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. However, the slogans and demands adopted by Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth were very different from those of MOSOP. While MOSOP asked for a share of the oil revenues, international activists were shouting "get the Shell out of Nigeria."²¹⁷ In this case, MOSOP was behaving like an environmentalism of petro-culture movement, while the international groups were acting at best, more like an environmentalism of the poor in their demand for respect of the Ogoni's rights, or at worst, like a cult of the wilderness group, wanting to save the poor farming people. This difference in the messages between the local and international can even exist within state, such as the difference in demands between LPLH, in Aceh and the Indonesian Friends of the Earth Organization (WALHI). Similar to MOSOP, LPLH demands a share in oil revenues, while WALHI calls for a cessation of oil production altogether in the ZILS.

²¹⁶ Joan Martinez-Alier *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2002), 106

²¹⁷ An example of this campaign can be seen here: <http://www.cs.earlham.edu/~paulsjo/NonViolence.html> Accessed August 2, 2005

However, these differences between the demands of the local and the international (or national in the case of WALHI) movements do not represent insurmountable barriers to the cooperation of these movements. As mentioned previously, the tendency in transnational environmental networks is to adopt broad issues as the focus of their activities. Domestic groups that wish to take associate themselves with these movements phrase their demands within the context of these larger issues and thereby gain international exposure their cause might not otherwise get. One the important reasons that domestic groups are able to achieve this is because transnational environmental networks tend to focus their efforts on raising awareness of the issues themselves, rather than on specific policy outcomes. In this way, the networks rally international support of certain issues, such as climate change or deforestation, but leave the specific policy demands to the local groups. Because the policy demands of the transnational environmental networks remain necessarily vague it is easier for domestic groups to find common ground to link their own issues to.

What these examples demonstrate is that, despite the interaction between the transnational environmental networks and environmentalism of petro-culture movements, they are really pursuing separate courses, in relation to a common environmental influence. One way this expresses itself is the adoption of the language of transnational environmental networks by domestic environmentalism of petro-culture movements (such as the IYC's use of global climate change). It has also been suggested in this final section that such adoption need not necessarily mean a unity of thought between the transnational and domestic actors, as the ultimate goals of the local groups (such as IYC) may run contrary to those of the transnational environmental network. Nevertheless, this represents one of the ways in which these movements interact.

A second way this relationship between the local and the international movements expresses itself is the adoption of a position in response to environmental damage by the

transnational environmental network that is based on their own understanding of 'environmentalism,' which may be contrary to that of environmentalism of petro-culture movements. An example of this is the aforementioned difference between the international and domestic protest movements in response to Saro-Wiwa's execution.

In these ways, it appears that despite significant differences between transnational environmental networks and the environmentalism of petro-culture model, the structure of the international movements permit the creation of a sometimes indistinct ideological common group that each group can use for their own purposes. In this way, the local and international movements can maintain connections, despite significant differences in their demands.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the applicability of environmentalism of petro-culture model beyond Nigeria. The case studies in Ecuador and Aceh presented environmental movements, which conform to the characteristics of the environmentalism of petro-culture. Also shown, however, is that the presence of petro-culture is not a sufficient condition for the emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements. The majority of the case studies discussed in this chapter feature petro-states that, due to a lack of one or several of the key generative factors, have not developed environmentalism of petro-culture movements. However, these case studies should not be understood as indicating any shortcomings in the environmentalism of petro-culture model, but instead, as a way of clarifying many of the nuances inherent to the model presented in chapter one. By demonstrating how the lack of one or more of the key characteristics has affected the formation of such movements, it permits us to apply the model with more conviction to those case studies that do display these

characteristics. This added conviction lends greater weight to the predicted emergence of environmentalism of petro-culture movements in Cameroon and Chad, given that all they lack is the sufficient environmental damage that leads to the formation of such movements.

Finally, this chapter has demonstrated the way in which domestic environmentalism of petro-culture movements interact with the emerging transnational environmental networks. By taking advantage of the vague or non-existent policy demands made by transnational environmental networks, domestic groups can find common ideological ground on which to form cooperative relationships.

Conclusion

May God preserve us from this curse of oil.

- Youssef Abassallah, Chad Oil Minister²¹⁸

The stated goal of this thesis was to examine two Nigerian environmental movements in the broader context of environmentalism and to demonstrate how the incentive structures engendered by Nigerian petro-culture have shaped the demands and strategies adopted by these movements. To that end, I have presented the environmentalism of petro-culture as a concept for describing the common characteristics of these movements. The environmentalism of petro-culture concept distinguishes itself from other categories of environmentalism by several specific conditions that lead to its development and by several key characteristics that it displays. The conditions that lead to its development include the presence of a strong petro-culture within their state or society, the presence of geographically defined ethnic divisions and the presence of environmental damage caused by onshore oil production, which intensifies economic deprivation in the region. These serve as the formative base for environmentalism of petro-culture movements. The characteristics displayed by environmentalism of petro-culture movements include a concern by the movement for social justice and, most importantly, a demand for a share in oil revenues, but not an end to oil production. These characteristics are a result of the incentive structures engendered by the domestic petro-culture. In this way, the environmentalism of petro-culture movements have been created and shaped by the influences of oil.

In the case studies examined in Chapter Two, MOSOP and IYC were demonstrated to be ideal examples of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, from the conditions

²¹⁸ BBC News "Profit & Loss: The Story of African Oil" Transcript
http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specials/1216_oil/africanoil4.doc Accessed August 2, 2005

that led to their formation, through to the demands made by each group. Furthermore, in shorter case studies presented in Chapter Three, Ecuador and Aceh were seen to have domestic environmental movements that corresponded to the environmentalism of petro-culture. This demonstrated that the environmentalism of petro-culture concept is not limited to Nigerian or African cases studies, but is applicable to any case study where the necessary conditions for its emergence are present. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that there is good cause to expect environmentalism of petro-culture movements to emerge in Chad and Cameroon in the near future.

In addition, this thesis has demonstrated that the presence of a petroleum-based enclave economy and petro-culture are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements. This point was clarified by a series of case studies each of which demonstrated some, but not all of the necessary conditions for the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements. It was demonstrated how the lack of onshore oil production and the lack of geographically concentrated ethnic divisions have prevented the emergence of such movements in other petro-states, such as Iran, Mexico, Angola and Gabon.

The most intriguing case study discussed in Chapter Three was Venezuela, which demonstrated all of the conditions necessary for the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, yet no such domestic movements were founded. It was speculated that one of the reasons for this could be the overshadowing of the pressures that normally lead to the development of environmentalism of petro-culture movements by alternate pressures stemming from domestic coal production. The other reason given for the lack of environmentalism of petro-culture movements was the efforts by the government to address the environmental damage done by Venezuelan oil production before it affected people to such a degree that they would mobilize in protest. In this way, the Venezuelan government

has pre-empted the formation of these movements. What is most interesting about this is the way in which the Venezuelan government has achieved this goal.

According to the models presented in this thesis, petro-culture tends to engender neopatrimonial structures in government, which are unresponsive to the demands of the masses. Furthermore, when environmental movements are founded in response to this damage, they tend to ask for a share in the oil wealth, rather than an end to the environmentally damaging oil production. However, in Venezuela the federal government has acted in a manner contrary to what the incentive structures of petro-culture would predict, and have attempted to address the needs of the masses. Furthermore, rather than giving these groups a share of the oil revenues directly (which is the common demand of environmentalism of petro-culture), they are instead attempting to mitigate the environmental damage caused by the domestic oil production. It is worth restating that by focusing its efforts on environmental cleanup, rather than oil revenue allocation, the Venezuelan government is granting what a traditional environmentalism of the poor movement would ask for, and not an environmentalism of petro-culture movement.

This presents an interesting puzzle for future study. What is the exceptional aspect of the Venezuelan case study that has led to such an unusual situation? How is it that the incentive structures of petro-culture, seen in so many other states, seem to have little influence over the actors in this state?

However, it should be noted that of all the cases studied in this thesis, Venezuela remains the exception, not the rule. In all other states that demonstrated the conditions necessary for the formation of environmentalism of petro-culture movements, such movements have developed. Furthermore, there is evidence that in at least one of the states presented as a possible future location of other environmentalism of petro-culture movements, we may already see the influence of the environmentalism of petro-culture.

One of the criteria set by the International Monetary Fund on the Chad/Cameroon pipeline was that “5% will be used to benefit the local population of the Doba basin, where the oil is drilled [in Chad].”²¹⁹ While this is an important step towards avoiding the sort of problems that Nigeria has experienced in the Niger Delta, where the people living in the region that supplies nearly all the wealth of the country are the poorest, it does nothing to address the environmental problems that will come with oil production. In contrast to Venezuela’s response, the International Monetary Fund and the government of Chad are granting what an environmentalism of petro-culture movement would demand, namely a share of the wealth. This does little to address the environmental damage that will no doubt result from oil production, but it does go some distance towards addressing the economic deprivation that will face the ethnic groups in Chad, living on the Doba Basin. For the groups living in Chad and other petro-states, there seems little other choice, but to take what money is offered and accept the inevitable change to their traditional way of life.

As Daniel Yergin wrote, we live in the century of oil and as long as oil remains such a valuable and profitable commodity, poor countries will accept the environmental damage that comes with such production. Unfortunately, there are negative influences associated with petroleum production that go beyond the environmental impact, many of which have been discussed in this thesis. Juan Pablo Perez Alfonzo, one of OPEC’s founders, speaking of Venezuela’s experience with petroleum production, called oil “the devil’s excrement.”²²⁰ However, as long as oil remains so valuable, it is perhaps the fate

²¹⁹ BBC News “Africa’s Mammoth Oil Project Come of Age”
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3063647.stm> Accessed August 2, 2005

²²⁰ Terry Lynn Karl *The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 4

of all poor states 'cursed' with oil to be subject to the insidious social influence of oil, trapped within the incentive structures of petro-culture and unable to break the looping chain.

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