

OIL POLITICS AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS IN GALEANO'S OPEN VEINS OF LATIN AMERICA: FIVE CENTURIES OF THE PILLAGE OF A CONTINENT

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Abstract

The politics of oil has played a vital role for the massive exploitation of Venezuela's natural resources such as the petroleum products. When the European colonizers entered into the Latin American countries in the sixteenth century, initially they took hold of the land and the people; later, they pillaged and exploited their natural resources together with the American capitalist cartels. This paper analyzes the petroleum politics that includes the European and American oil cartels that has adversely affected environment in the region. In this paper, I have explored the western capitalists' petroleum politics in Eduardo Galeano's book Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent. Mainly I have focused on the case of Venezuela's Lake Maracaibo, where a continuous spilling of oil has brought a huge damage to different water species; for instance, fishery is on the verge of collapse and the surrounding is severely affected. The craving of capitalist alliances for the petroleum products has ignored the fact that humans have to pay the cost of environmental destruction as a result of the oil politics. The paper sheds light on the environmental crisis, which is caused by continuous extracting and spilling of oil in Lake Maracaibo. Subsequently, the Venezuelan prosperity has got threatened as it totally relies on the 'oil culture'. To explore the widespread ecological damage on Lake Maracaibo and its surroundings, I have used the deep ecological concept of Arne Naess, which argues that there is the connectedness and dependency of living and nonliving things with each other so that any disturbance can hamper the whole ecosystem. Besides Naess's ecological concept, I have also drawn ideas from the insights of ecocritics Cheryll Glotfelty and Val Plum wood to support Naess's ecological concept and to clarify the conceptual framework of this paper.

Keywords: Capitalist cartels, Lake Maracaibo, petroleum politics, environmental crisis, ecology

Introduction

The capitalist cartels' petroleum politics has immensely exploited Latin American natural resources when European and American colonizers reentered into their previous colonies as multinational oil companies in the 1920s. The only purpose of those oil alliances was to extract and exploit petroleum resources. Since Venezuela has got ample petroleum sites, oil cartels swarmed in and took hold of the resources. Immediately, they started extracting and transporting oil using their latest technology and never-ending pipelines. Nonetheless, all the profit longing companies deliberately ignored massive environmental destructions they have done. Moreover, they kept on quenching their thirst for petroleum at the cost of innocent Venezuelan natives and the whole ecosystem. This paper explores and analyzes petroleum politics of the capitalist cartels, which has resulted into huge environmental crisis of the Latin

American country, Venezuela. Specifically, I have focused on the case of Lake Maracaibo, where the oil cartels have erected innumerable towers and connected pipelines to extract oil. More importantly, continuous oil leakage has done unimaginable damage to the water species and affected overall environment. I have taken Eduardo Galeano's *Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent*(2009) as a primary text and analyzed from ecocritical perspective. I have drawn the insights envisioned by critics Arne Naess (2015), Cheryll Glotfelty (1996), and Val Plum wood(2002) as the theoretical parameters to analyze the text.

Europe and America have continuously exploited Latin American countries since the sixteenth century. Initially they colonized these countries and took control over natives using their weapons; later they seized their resources and excavated using their latest technology. In this regard Jarred Diamond elucidates, "... the immediate factors that enabled Europeans to kill or conquer other peoples- European guns, infectious disease, steels tools, and manufactured products" (23). As Diamond has pointed out, European invaded the Latin America with their gun and gradually used their tools and the modern technology to penetrate their resources. They evacuated minerals, gold, silver, nitrate, iron, and copper using their latest technology. They enslaved the locals and transported all the valuable minerals to their countries. Galeano has vividly illustrated plights of the Latin American countries where Portuguese looted gold and silver of Brazil and left them with empty mines; and Spanish colonizers emptied silver of Cerro Rico, the rich mountain of Potosi, Bolivia. The colonizers had entered into Latin America with their insatiable hunger of wealth and power; they filled their belly exploiting natural resources and also towered their ego murdering lots of innocent natives. As Galeano claims, "Potosian society, a sick with ostentation and extravagance, left Bolivia with only a vague memory of its splendor, and of eight million Indian corpses" (32). European's greed inflicted immense sufferings, pain, and caused for the death of naive locals. They used millions of innocent native Bolivians to work in the mines just to fill their life with extravagance. When they were enjoying luxurious life in Potosian society, lots of indigenous people were being killed in the mines. Eventually, colonizers took away everything and left them their empty mines and the faint memory of the splendid past.

Physical prosperity accomplished through insensitive human measures turns fatal since nature-human primordial relation gets shuddered by such moves. It is contextual to internalize Cheryll Glotfelty's insights as she claims, "Human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it" (xix). Her statement unfolds complex human-nature relationship, even the slight carelessness of human world can result into environmental depletion. Moreover, any adversity in nature equally affect human since they are interconnected, nevertheless, human world is more dependent on nature while nature has rejuvenating inherent characteristics: in this sense, human world is more vulnerable. While analyzing the Venezuelan case, it can be said that the capital Caracas has embraced glittering material prosperity and pocketful of petrodollar that has been accomplished by the massive exploitation of nature. Since Venezuela has leased its resource sites to the capitalist oil cartels, they have been continuously drilling and extracting oil without deeming the sensitivity of nature-human primeval attachment. Such, human intrusions, more or less, multiply environmental nemesis and human sufferings. Hence, a continuous exploitation of the Lake Maracaibo has not only enhanced environmental damage, but also intimidated the human world. In this regard, the paper portrays intricate relationship between the oil politics and enormous environmental degradation of Venezuela.

Latin America, Petroleum Politics and Ecological Issues

The European and the American colonizers re-entered into their previous Latin American colonies to execute their petroleum politics. This time, they stepped inside as multinational companies and took hold over oil concession sites, only to exploit the natural resources. Galeano harks back to the 1920s when euphoria began in Venezuela: at the end of 1922 the La Rosa well started gushing 100,000 barrels a day(168). The capitalistic oil cartels' hidden interest of expanding their oil wealth did not take long as it started showing result within couple of years. Petroleum politics got more comprehensible after the birth of cartels in 1928. Uruguay attempted to control over state resource and installed first Latin American state refinery; however, they were compelled to stop their project and make secret agreement with the oil cartels. Galeano unfolds the bitter reality behind the agreement:

...the state contracted to buy cheap petroleum from the USSR. The cartel immediately financed a campaign of calumny against the Uruguayan state concern and began threatening that no one would sell Uruguay machinery, it would find itself without any crude petroleum, the state was incompetent to run such a complicated business. (160)

The alliances were so powerful that they could easily manipulate the situation and started several campaigns against their competitors. Similar thing had happened against Uruguayan state refinery that they were compelled to surrender in front of foreign oil cartels. History shows that oil companies like Standard Oil, Atlantic, Texaco and Shell used to manipulate not only the oil price but also play the decisive role in Latin American politics. As Galeano claims, "Standard Oil and Shell seat and unseat kings and presidents, finance palace plots and coups d'état, have innumerable generals, ministers, and James Bonds at their command, and make decisions about peace of war in every field and every language" (157). His claim reveals the fact that multinational oil companies are powerful enough to create a ripple in the political scenario of Latin America. As a matter of fact, they implement their grand plans so wisely that no one even doubts about their position and the possible benefits they grab from these countries. Many Latin American countries including Venezuela got victimized by the petroleum politics of the oil cartels.

The capitalist oil investors rushed towards Venezuela when they discovered that the petroleum investment could be a lucrative business. Rocketing petroleum demand around the globe in the 1920s had already hinted for the possibility of oil profitability. To cash the best opportunity, when the American and the European investors hoarded in Venezuela, Juan Vicente Gomez was in power; he is anointed as a reputed leader who modernized Venezuela. Nevertheless, his reign was coincided with the discovery and exploitation of oil by the foreign companies as Terry Lynn Karl has claimed (67). There onward begins the new era of exploitation of Latin American petroleum resources, which in long run turns fatal for Venezuela's social, economic, and environment issues. Having largest oil reserves among Latin American countries, Venezuela totally depends upon oil-induced economy. Bernard Mommer defines Venezuelan economy as "rent capitalism" and argues, "In rent capitalism the state appears as the national landlord who seeks to maximize ground rent of a natural resource which is subject to an international exploitation..." (418). State landlordism created proper space for the oil alliances to exercise their power and exploit Venezuela's resources to maximum level. Furthermore, rentier economy gradually led Venezuelan society towards complicated social, economic, and environmental chaos.

Venezuela's oil-initiated material prosperity ended into agricultural stagnation. Each trickle of oil brought excessive petrodollar to Venezuela that completely transformed their social and economic life. However, petroleum-induced economy fueled for unprecedented socio-cultural circumstances. One of the important areas affected by oil money was agriculture; petroleum-led prosperity attracted young people to work in oil fields rather than doing peasantry that accelerated agricultural stagnation. In this context James F Petras and Morris H. Morley highlight agricultural decline and towering food importation in Venezuela. They present the bitter reality about food import:

The explosion of food imports underscored the persistence of stagnation in the agricultural sector...The value of total food imports increased from Bs.2,021 million in 1973 to Bs.3,500 million in 1976, excluding the vast illegal smuggling of cattle, coffee, etc. across the Colombian border into Venezuela. Between 1974 and 1976, imported food stuffs increased from 11 per cent to approximately 20 per cent of total food requirements. (12)

The jaw-dropping rise of Venezuela's food import points towards alarming situation about their food dependency. At the core of agricultural decline lies abundance of oil resources which they could not handle properly. Xian- Zhong Mu and Guang-Wen Hu takes this situation as "Resource Curse". They analyze the developing scenario and opine, "The "Resource Curse" has trapped Venezuela for decades and resulted in severe development trouble due to its extremely high oil dependency" (200). In fact the petrodollar prosperity has not only drifted Venezuelans away from their agricultural production but also entrapped them in the world of import consumerism. Consequently, in the culmination of petroleum boom, productive Venezuelans turned to be the mere consumers of foreign products, which has apparently exposed oil-money taint.

Oil-induced culture and handful of petrodollar gradually dragged the Venezuelans towards consumerist quagmire, which is a part of petroleum politics implanted by the capitalistic cartels. I have inter-connected petroleum politics with Venezuelan's consumerism since it is said that there underlies the grand design of foreign capitalistic power for each Latin American move. Isabel Allende sheds light on military coup of Chile and several Latin American countries as Washington's design which more or less, applies to their newly developed consumeristic attitudes as well. As she argues, "Similar coups followed in other countries, ... This was a strategy designed in Washington and imposed upon the Latin American people by the economic and political forces..." (8). Allende's opinion underpins the idea that the capitalistic superpowers can play any game for their benefits: Venezuelans' consumer behavior can be a distinct example. Petroleum-mediated economic strength on the one hand has supported Venezuela for infrastructural development, whereas on the other hand has enabled people to buy and consume imported goods. In this regard, Galeano portrays grim reality of the Venezuelans plight in the zenith of petroleum explosion:"...Venezuela is still the top petroleum export. ... It boasts of Latin America's highest per-capita income and most complete and up-to-date highway network, and no country consumes as much Scotch whiskey per inhabitant" (165). His view discloses the fact that how Venezuelans have been engrossed by the physical prosperity and consumer culture. Nonetheless, the glittery progress has entered into their life only at the cost of massive exploitation of oil resources and environmental degradation.

Multinational companies influence innocent natives to consume their products and to be a part of whole consumeristic circle. They trickily enforce their interest over underdeveloped countries and the innocent people; they use sugarcoated words and mesmerizing promises as their weapon. The Venezuelans received capitalist cartels in 1920s and swept away by their sweet words. They had hoped for prosperity and progress of their country. However, the cartels dried their resources and gifted them consumer culture in return. In this context, Galeano points out: "... Venezuela was one huge oil well,... importing everything from the United States: cars, refrigerators, condense milk, eggs, lettuce laws and decrees" (169). The Venezuelans used to produce almost everything for them before oil cartels entered into their land. Gradually, the self-sufficient people turned to be passive consumers not only of American products but also of the enforced law and regulations. They cornered their productive self and began importing from cars to vegetable from America; they became important part of consumer culture. In fact, they fell prey to the grand design of capitalistic world. About consumerism Sambhunath argues that it is the world of mask that imprisons consumers' psychology with its product (119). Likewise, the Venezuelans got captivated by capitalistic products that they kept on importing and using them. Unknowingly, they came under the trap of consumer culture set by multinational capitalist companies. In the end, they were compelled to sell their labor in cheap price to buy expensive American products. In this way, the capitalist oil alliances pocketed all the profits and left them totally dependent on their hi-tech capital goods. Furthermore, the oil cartels have turned to be the renewed version of colonizers who have been consistently exploiting the Latin American countries and their natural resources.

Venezuela's oil prosperity has not benefitted everyone equally, rather, it has brought huge disparity between rich and poor. Oil money allows some of the privileged groups to buy, spend, and use the latest technology, however, millions of poverty-ridden people stay peeping the shining capital city from their huts. As Galeano postulates, "Its fever to buy, consume, spend, use, get hold of everything leaves it no time to sleep. From the surrounding hillside hovels made of garbage, half a million forgotten people observe the sybaritic scene" (166). Caracas's oil prosperity on the one hand has increased cosmopolitanism which perfectly complies with consumer culture. Notwithstanding, millions of peripheral people shiver in their hillside tattered hut throwing helpless gaze towards the capital's shiny life. Amidst such contradiction, city dwellers, who are in haste of consuming everything they have bought by petrodollar, give indifferent glance towards unprecedented oil price. Mu and Hu have asserted that over-reliance on oil can trigger a series of economic chain reaction when there will be any price fluctuation (200). Apparently, there lies the high chances of economic crisis due to unpredictably volatile oil price. Venezuela's petroleum-induced economy seems unstable as there is always the possibility of inflation and economic crisis along with environmental hazard.

Oil-induced economic explosion of Venezuela was backed by multifarious circumstances. Karl claims that the soaring demand of petroleum in the postwar period, the Iranian crisis of 1954, and the closing of the Suez Canal, initiated for Venezuela's phenomenal economic boom that literally between 1950 and 1957 they accumulated more foreign exchange; Venezuelan treasury reserves tripled and oil exports increased two and a half times, creating an immediate impact on the domestic economy (71). Amidst petrodollar upsurge, Venezuela not only gained international investors' attention but also enjoyed the up-to-date highways, infrastructural

development, and high life standard. However, price fluctuation can always lead towards unprecedented downfall of oil-oriented economic system. Inexperienced Venezuelan government could not predict the possible price fall of petroleum and kept on celebrating the overflow of petrodollars. In this regards Mu and Hu argues:

The government believed oil had made the promise that prosperity is in sight with oil in hand. ... in 1976, the oil price reached over \$100/bbl but then plunged to \ \$20/bbl until 2000. ... The sluggish economy because of the fall in the oil price led to commodity price shocks, local currency devaluation, and necessities in short supply, which created serious unrest and unease among society. (203)

The dramatic petroleum price fall initiated difficult situation was the outcome of shortsightedness and money craving of the political leaders whose act equally threatened the environmental balance. Galeano uncovers the truth that greedy dictator Vicente Gomez favored Shell or Standard or Gulf, to fill his pocket, and deceived his own people (168). Because of his greed, native communities suffered a lot; they were suppressed, coerced, and chased away from their own land. The following section highlights the case of Lake Maracaibo where excessive extraction of oil and continuous leakage have caused huge damage to the aquatic life as well as the ecosystem.

Exploitation of Lake Maracaibo

Venezuela's the most productive oil field, Lake Maracaibo, attracted lots of oil cartels when oil sites were discovered in the 1920s. Many multinational companies swarmed in since oil business was the most lucrative one. Galeano portrays nineteen twenties Venezuela when helmeted foreigners entered and started using their machine to dig out hidden black jewel of Lake Maracaibo. He harks back in such a way:

Lake Maracaibo sprouted rigs and derricks and was invaded by helmeted men; peasants swarmed in to build plank-and-oilcan huts on the bubbling ground and offer their muscles to petroleum. Plains and forests resounded for the first time with Oklahoma and Texas accents, and in the bat of an eye seventy-three companies were born. (168)

Lake Maracaibo and its indigenous surroundings, the untrodden territory till then, got echoed by persistent cacophony of foreign accents. It means, lots of new people entered into the serenity of the lake to start their oil drill. In the blink of eyes seventy-three companies started hovering over Lake Maracaibo like vultures targeting their prey, which lucidly indicates the possibility of ample petroleum economic gain as well as exploitation of the resources and nature.

Human intervention to nature has resulted into huge environmental degradation. Our ambition for prosperity has led us to the path of our own destruction as we have adopted wrong developmental models. As Arne Naess argues, "Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive and the situation is rapidly worsening" (50). Human activities have speeded against nature day by day. They have already shown their wildness while searching and penetrating each nook and corner for the profit. The Venezuelans have caught the same tempo, which has turned Lake Maracaibo into the forest of towers. The endless pumping of oil is drying

off the natural resource. In the same context Galeano claims that everyday Venezuela produces 3.5 million barrels of petroleum to move the capitalist world's industrial machinery (166). The capitalist cartels are continuously taking out oil from Maracaibo to appease their industrial thirst. Petroleum greed has worsened the environmental condition of the lake and its surroundings. Each and everything, from the people, houses, street, to food nearby the lake are all stained black with oil. Natives are breathing the smell of oil, swallowing the black stain of oil and living and dying with oil without their knowledge. Galeano has presented plethoras of examples to justify his claim that human misconduct has hampered the ecosystem of Lake Maracaibo. He highlights the bitter truth that continuously burning carefree natural gas is immeasurably polluting the atmosphere (167). Constantly burning natural gas above Lake Maracaibo has revealed our misdeeds upon nature, which we ourselves have to be accountable of. The capitalist cartels are busy enough to extract oil and count their money that they turn reluctant to acknowledge the power of natural world. Their mounting ambition has led Venezuela towards environmental crisis. Moreover, the greedy alliances have dragged all the innocent people to take equal share of other's misconduct. As a matter of fact, everywhere the indigenous communities are 'othered' and mistreated by the powerful foreign companies. It turns contextual to talk about Belizean indigenous community who suffered tremendously when U.S. Capital Energy got control over oil resource. As Kenneth A. Gould claims, "Belizean government allowed U.S. based oil company, U.S. Capital Energy to access the area in 2014. Cutting of palm fronds by indigenous people were restricted, but the cutting of seismic lines by foreign investors through unique ecosystems was permitted" (5). The local Belizean were denied to use their own resources by the authority; however, the foreign oil cartels were free to use and abuse the resources. Furthermore, petroleum power play and the authoritative power center's unfair decision have always inflicted irrecoverable harm to the Latin American natives as well as the natural world.

Since living and non-living things are intricately connected to each other, we cannot escape our deeds that have caused massive destruction to the natural world. Jeanfreddy Gutierrez Torres's has unfolded the reasons behind collapse of fishery and huge environmental destruction of Lake Maracaibo in his article published in *Mongabay* (2016). Torres reminds that 25000 kilometers of crumbling oil pipeline at the bottom of the Lake Maracaibo has recent major spill in 2015, which has caused for the elimination of 51 species of mollusks, anthropoids and annelids and largely destroyed aquatic life that includes fishery (np). Continuous oil spill in the lake has unimaginably harmed aquatic life that one way or other affects human world. Barry Commoner's one of the four laws of ecology captures the reality that everything is connected to everything else (33). Our inter-relatedness encompasses strength as well as weakness: nature-human connection has carried the same spirit. The oil leakage has brought immense damage to the nature where Venezuelans' harmonious relation to nature has been broken down. Commoner's law also claims that there is no such thing as free lunch (45). Everything we impose on nature comes back to us, however, human beings take nature as granted. The soaring ambition has taken people far away from their responsibility towards nature. Consequently, Lake Maracaibo's disturbed and imbalanced ecosystem has turned threatening to the world.

Human beings have become more anthropocentric and insensitive towards nature. We disregard the power of nature and attempt to bring everything under our control, which is the

result of our master-slave attitude. We take ourselves as superior master and the other beings as our servants. We think that the nature is there to serve us; such useless human ego has encouraged them to consistently exploit other. In this regard, Naess opines, “Humans have no rights to reduce this richness and the diversity except to satisfy vital needs” (50). Nature’s gift is there to fulfill our mandatory needs; however, human beings are continuously encroaching the natural resources to quench their ambition. These days, they bulldoze and evacuate natural resources not only to satisfy their basic needs but to get material prosperity. Powerful multinational oil companies have erected their oil plants in Lake Maracaibo for continuous extraction of oil. They have scattered their money and power just to grab more and more wealth. Consequently, their oil greed has done great harm to the Venezuelan’s land, mines, and lives. Moreover, capitalist alliances’ money-mongering has led Lake Maracaibo’s ecology in the verge of collapse.

The primal human-nature inter-relationship remains harmonious as long as human beings respect the natural world. The moment they ignore their responsibility and start dominating nature, their smooth relationship diverts towards the path of destruction. It is relevant to remember environmentalist Rachel Carson, who talks about the importance of “web of life” in her celebrated book *Silent Spring* (2002). She has highlighted symbiotic relation among different living things, animals, and vegetables. If the strong bond among them gets ruptured, that can bring environmental misbalance. Similarly, never-ending oil spill in Lake Maracaibo has turned lethal for water species as well as for humans. The human centric framework has created a grave threat to the humans and the other species as Val Plumwood has pointed out (121). Human’s needs and atrocious attitudes have done massive damage to nature that can lead us towards our absolute downfall.

Amidst oil-centric economic boom and petrodollar surge, Venezuela is heading towards ecological nightmare. Continuous extraction as well as spilling of oil has done far more damage on Lake Maracaibo’s environment than anyone can imagine. In such circumstances Mommer posits: “It is noteworthy that throughout the Venezuelan oil literature a post-oil Venezuela is repeatedly seen as nightmare situation- of course, we would call it post-rentier Venezuela which would supposedly emerge after the exhaustion of the natural resource” (435). When we meditate on Venezuela’s post-oil period, it does not look promising. Apparently, prosperity and affluence of Venezuela depend on petroleum economy which is sure to come to the end. Furthermore, Lake Maracaibo’s environmental issue has already turned more intimidating. Needless to say that soaring human ambition for materialistic gain has already done lot of damage to the environment of Latin American countries including Venezuela and its Lake Maracaibo, which is quite urgent to be addressed. In this regard, Salvador Garmendia’s letter to Galeano visualizes heart wrenching image of Lake Maracaibo’s environmental degradation:

Have you seen the apparatus that extracts crude petroleum? It looks like a big black bird whose sharp-pointed head rises and falls heavily day and night without stopping for a second: it is the only vulture that doesn't eat shit. What do we do when the characteristic sound of the sipper tells us there isn't any more oil? The grotesque overture is already beginning to be heard over Lake Maracaibo. The smell of death and decay overpower the smell of oil. (170)

As Garmendia has depicted, currently, Lake Maracaibo spews oil; it also discharges the smell of destruction and death. The oil stained towns and greasy lake carry the wound inflicted by human world. Naturally, we have to pay for the harm we have caused to the nature. Even though lot more damage has already been done, we can make this biosphere livable by our immediate efforts and actions. Our obstinacy and anthropocentric behavior can lead us towards horrific time as Garmendia has foretold. Hence, we must take immediate initiation to maintain harmony between the human and the natural world so that we can leave safe world for the future generations.

Conclusion

European and American oil cartels entered into Latin American countries when oil sites were discovered in the 1920s. Venezuela's oil abundant site, Lake Maracaibo became one of the important resource areas for multinational oil companies to hover over. No sooner the capitalistic alliances took hold over oil reserve sites, they started excessive drilling and extracting oil. However, their immense exploitation of nature and indifferent attitude towards oil spill have caused tremendous environmental damage and decline of aquatic life. This paper has analyzed Lake Maracaibo's adverse environmental situation consulting Eduardo Galeano's *Open Veins of Latin America* which vividly portrays the intricate relationship between capitalist oil alliances 'petroleum politics and the exploitation of Venezuela's oil resources.

The oil companies have not only extracted oil, but also inflicted tremendous environmental harm to Venezuela's Lake Maracaibo and its surroundings. Continuous spilling of oil has resulted into the loss of biodiversity, displacement of people, threat to aquatic life, and decline of traditional fishery of the locality. Furthermore, consistently burning natural gas has polluted the atmosphere that has affected both, human and natural world. Extreme exploitation of Lake Maracaibo has turned to be a serious threat for all living organisms. These days, Lake Maracaibo discharges the smell of oil, death, and destruction. Petroleum politics has shoved Venezuela into the black hole of environmental crisis. If it continues, we cannot escape upcoming environmental disaster, which is sure to bring immeasurable harm to the human world. In fact, powerful capitalistic oil cartels have initiated grave threat for human world through their insatiable thirst of petroleum and excessive exploitation of natural world.

Since environmental issue has become one of the major challenges of today's world, we have to take strong step to halt further deterioration. This paper has attempted to analyze dwindling ecosystem of Lake Maracaibo caused by American and European oil cartels' petroleum politics; nonetheless, enthusiastic researchers can explore specific environmental issue of anywhere where ecological problem has been realized.

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