

Paddy Kinyera

The Making of a Petro-State

Governmentality and Development Practice
in Uganda's Albertine Graben



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To my mother – Angelina Akulu Utobi of Acholibur, Pader

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List of Acronyms

ACODE	Advocates Coalition on Development and Environment
AFIEGO	African Institute for Energy Governance
AGODA	Albertine Graben Oil Districts Association
AIGP	Assistant Inspector General of Police
BAPENECO	Bunyoro Albertine Petroleum Network on Environment and Conservation
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BP	British Petroleum
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
BUKITAREPA	Bunyoro-Kitara Reparations Agency/Association
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CPF	Central Processing Facility
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DFID	Department for International Development
DGF	Democratic Governance Facility
EACOP	East African Crude Oil Pipeline
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOU	Government of Uganda
HDI	Human Development Index
IEMP	Ideological, Economic, Military Political
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LC	Local Council
MBC	Mubende-Bunyoro Committee
MEMD	Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development
MIRAC	Mid-west Region Anti-Corruption Coalition
MLHUD	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development
MOES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MOH	Ministry of Health (Uganda)

List of Acronyms

MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPs	Members of Parliament
MPS	Ministerial Policy Statement
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NDP-II	National Development Plan (II)
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NHPC	National Housing and Population Census
NOGP	National Oil and Gas Policy
NORAD	Norwegian Development Agency
NPPB	National Physical Planning Board
NRGI	Natural Resource Governance Institute
NRM	National Resistance Movement
ODK	Open Data Kit
ORRA	Oil Refinery Residents Association
PAPs	Project Affected Persons
PAU	Petroleum Authority of Uganda
PFOG	Parliamentary Forum on Oil and Gas
POM (Act)	Public Order Management (Act)
PLS	Progressive Licensing Strategy
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
RDC	Resident District Commissioner
SEZ	Special Economic Zones
SFI	Strategic Friends International
SI	Social Investments (alt. Corporate Social Responsibility)
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SPA	Special Planning Area
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
STOIIP	Stock-Tank Oil Initially in Place
TPP	Ten-Points Programme
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNCST	Uganda National Council of Science and Technology
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UPIK	Uganda Petroleum Institute – Kigumba
URA	Uganda Revenue Authority
USD	United States Dollar

List of Acronyms

USH	Uganda Shillings
WHO	World Health Organization

Preface

In October 2006, Uganda announced the discovery of oil in the Albertine basin. This announcement sent different signals to both the international and the local public. Ugandans started anticipating several but two things: either the country will start producing oil such that we Ugandans can become wealthy with petro-dollars; or, such that we begin to experience the negative impacts of producing oil. October 2006 was just about two months after I had joined Makerere University for a Bachelor's degree in Education. I was not interested in the oil debate as for me, it really never mattered whether the country produced any minerals at all. My concern, the concern that I later realised was that of many other Ugandans was what that oil would mean to me individually. In 2012, I joined the University of Cologne for a Master's degree in structured program of the Cologne African Studies Center (CASC) at the Institute for Ethnology, as an Albertus Magnus Programme scholar. In one of the courses of taught by we interacted with texts on agriculture production—one specific case being the transformation of the of Lake Naivasha (Kenya) area into a flower farm. As a result, many of the fishing communities were transformed into workers in the flower farm as a means of livelihood because fishing was no longer acceptable or viable. The lake gradually became intoxicated. We argued over this change: many of the African students in the room supported the argument that the flower farm was a careless investment that did not pay attention to the local farmer who had become dependent on handouts and wages paid by the investor.

Some of the European students, however, argued that people who lived “under a dollar-a-day” could now earn some money. I personally got into an argument with one of the students. The dollar is not the problem because many people in Africa do not depend on money. The expanding geography of capitalism and the dollarization of life is a misconception – I argued. The tutor seemed to suggest that I was getting emotional and not understanding the “politics of agrarian change”. To me one did not necessarily have to read the works of Esther Bosuop or Max Webber to see the social problems associated with changing livelihood from fishing and agriculture to daily earnings from labouring in the flower farm. At the same time that semester, we were attending a course in resource struggles in Africa. We read Paul Collier's “Greed and Grievance” theory in relation to

the resource conflicts in Africa and a series of other related texts. That is when I began to think about Uganda and the oil industry. I never pictured Uganda in conflicts (or war) over oil, but I pictured the possibility of “politics of agrarian change” in the Albertine Graben, similar to the Lake Naivasha flower investment. I started developing my thoughts around oil, and eventually wrote my Master thesis (unpublished) under the title: “Assessing a Future with Oil: The Implication of Oil Exploration to Smallholder Farmers in the Albertine Basin”. With a very limited scope, I got to learn a lot about the oil industry to the extent that the MA thesis would not adequately express. I developed my thoughts further. Thanks to Prof. Dr. Michael Bollig, I got introduced to the Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies (BIGSAS) where he was sure, my aspirations would fit.

I collected a lot of reading materials to prepare a comprehensive PhD proposal: In engaging with the reading materials, I came to appreciate the different ways in which the oil literature is “traditionally” written. There seems to be a clear way of writing about oil in Africa, different from how to write about oil elsewhere. I got the impression that to write about oil in Africa, one has to think about the “resource-curse”; one had to reflect on potential conflicts, think about how governments would eventually become authoritarian; see the greed of the politicians and the grievances that the local so-called host-communities hold against the politicians and the profit-minded multinational corporations. At best, one had to provide a clear political economy analysis that maintains an exclusively negative tone that never goes against the traditional optics of seeing oil as an African. I came to learn that the oil-curse for countries like Uganda begin on paper. The challenge for me was to do something different from this tradition. It is in pursuit of this challenge that I started by controversially framing my title with an impressionistic term “petro-state”.

The literature on Uganda’s oil was relatively scarce. Even those that were available were prescriptive narratives that urged the government to do this and that and avoid plunging into the said curse. This offered limited theoretical rigour. The task to write about Uganda’s oil became increasingly challenging. I was puzzled about how I can work my way into the oil debate without sounding too simplistic and some sort of a prophet of doom. The common line in the oil debate in Africa as well as those writings that were at that time emerging on Uganda was the question of institutions of government: gradually, I started shifting my attention from “Politics of Oil in Uganda” as a general framing, to the Government of Oil in Uganda. I simply wanted to study the country’s oil industry in a different manner. I

stumbled over several debates about the idea of government. I suddenly ended up encountering a fascinating framing of government as the “conduct of conduct” (Foucault). This point on, my study of and writing about Uganda’s oil became a novel way of seeing oil as a substance around which the behaviour of the population was being shaped in reflection of the government’s will to make oil the source of highly desired development. In a number of ways, the country was turning its focus to oil production—what I have loosely framed as a “petro-state”—a state that seeks to use its petro-dollars to make the population better. It is from this that the final title of this work became “The Making of a Petro-state: Governmentality and Development Practice in Uganda’s Albertine Graben”. This work is therefore a product of deep and careful multiphase reflections on methods, approaches and theory that could offer alternative ways of expressing the dynamics of an oil industry whose making is significantly crucial to the country as a function of forms of power mobilised to be called government. It is this government that to me, is axiomatic to the different ways of seeing oil.

Paddy Kinyera

Acknowledgment

This dissertation is a product of a great deal of commitment on my part to engage with the dynamic realities of the oil industry at national and international levels. Given the scale of the task that spanned close to four years, it is unthinkable that I would have produced this work in its rich details as it is now without support of different kinds from different people. To this effect, it is courteous to acknowledge the unique contributions of some of the stakeholders in their varying capacities. To start with, I am heavily indebted to my mentoring team: Prof. Dr. Martin Doevenspeck (University of Bayreuth); Prof. Dr. Matthew Hannah (University of Bayreuth) and Class of 63 Professor, Prof. Michael Watts (University of California, Berkeley) for seeing me through this endeavour. Your critical guidance from different angles helped me see things in unique ways, giving me multiple options to express myself. You encouraged me to make a choice which way I wanted to go, and all of you were available to help my choice and pursuit. Thank you. Sincere thanks also go to Dr. Frank Muggaga (Makerere University), Prof. Julius Kiiza (Makerere University) Dr. Barbara Meier (University of Münster) and Dr. Rebecca Nambi (Makerere University). Your different kinds of support have not been in vain. Fruitful conversations with some experts at different stages of this project aided the progress of the endeavour in different ways. I am particularly grateful to Prof. Tania Murray Li, Prof. Padraig Carmody, Prof. Mitchell Dean, Prof. Dr. Eberhard Rothfuß, Dr. Festus Boamah, among others.

Without financial support, it would not have been possible to commit to and accomplish this task. In this regard, I recognise the role of the German Research Foundation (DFG), through Bayreuth International Graduate School for African Studies (BIGSAS) for the generous support. In equal measure, I am thankful to the DAAD for the scholarship and other kinds of mentorship support that was extended to me during the project. I am heavily indebted to the people who offered me support each time I conducted fieldwork. My research assistants, the respondents, and the local leaders who helped me in different ways are part of this group. Although I cannot mention your names here, I will forever be grateful. My colleagues at BIGSAS were very important to the development of this work. Many thanks go colleagues, particularly to Shillah Memusi, Rogers Hansine, Asaf Augusto, Kamal Donko, Adeyemi Balogun, Benedict Arko, Najoum Al-

Acknowledgment

Hassan and others. Together, we all came through. My family offered me the moral courage to manage to be away from home for a long period of time. Special thanks to Princess Lindah Charlotte Nalinya: there are not many like you. Thank you. The list of people and entities who contributed to this work is endless. For those that I have not mentioned here, bear it in mind that I am wholeheartedly grateful to the unique roles you played in making this happen. May you all be abundantly rewarded for your acts of goodness!

I. Introduction

The Making of a Petro-state

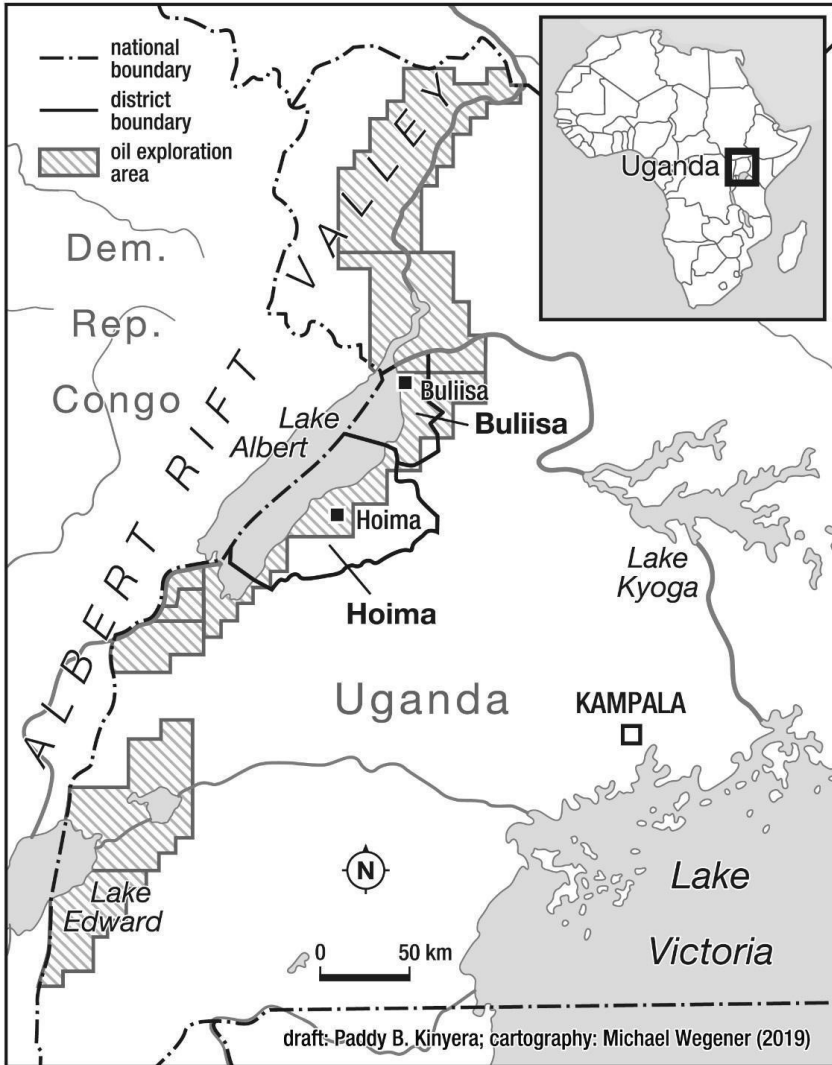
This work is about the making of a “petro-state” in Uganda, following successful discovery of commercially viable quantities of hydrocarbons in the Albertine Graben, the country’s western border along the escarpments of Lake Albert (*Map 1*). Let me start by placing this discovery and the rest of the associated activities into the broader perspective of global petro-capitalism: Oil remains an influential part of the global economy with unique effects particularly to socio-political and socioeconomic fabrics of societies in which the resource is extracted. Over the last three decades, the resource has been a critical part of the configuration of the dynamics of inter-state as well as inter-continental relations. A particularly important dimension of these relations reflect and underscore alarmist concerns regarding energy security, dwindling reserves and climate change (Clarke, 2008; Yates, 2012; Scholvin, 2015). The somewhat contentious global quest for oil that features what has been accurately framed as ‘rising powers’ on the inevitably ‘shrinking planet’ (Klare, 2008) is a key architecture of the complex oil landscape. In his elaborate exploration of emerging power configurations in the new global energy order, Michael Klare believes that the “the race for what’s left” has been triggered by a realisation of what is regarded a mismatch between increase in consumption, and the available, and secure potentials for energy supply (Klare, 2008; *see also* Watts, 2012). At the heart of this race for what is left is the practice of resource politics that defines the nexus between people, power and resources.

This nexus is represented differently. To some scholars, the quest for oil is a sort of a game that entangles the powerful, in which each of the participants seeks a piece of the “candy” (Behrends *et al*, 2013). To others, this quest is a configuration of power infrastructure that mirror some sort of “new scramble” (Frynas & Manuel, 2006; Yates, 2012; Scholvin, 2015; Carmody, 2016). In each of these perspectives, the involvement of industrialised Euro-Asian and American economies in the predominantly remote and categorically under-developed oil frontiers is salient. The new scramble, or the race for what is left is triggered by predictions and idealisation of the global energy future, to be a time of high demand with low possibilities for supplies. One of such predictions was made by British Petroleum

(BP), projecting the likelihood that the global energy consumption could increase by 36% by 2030 (BP, 2013; Scholvin, 2015: 1). With such predictions, it is a compulsion for particularly the industrialised hi-tech countries that steer the global economy to seek adequate energy security. This has to be done through different means. The uncertainty around future energy supply was compounded by the 9/11 terror attack on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the United States (Owen, 2004; Watts, 2009; Mitchell, 2011). Not any longer is the uncertainty only about ensuring energy security, but also about ensuring a *secure* quest for energy security.

If one follows the debate around oil and other energy resources, one could come to the conclusion that the quest for “secure” energy security is a quest for survival of the increasingly energy-driven (particularly oil-driven) human behaviour. UC Berkeley Professor Michael Watts stated many years ago that oil is the “lifeblood of just about everything” which goes beyond the issue of national development, to the fundamental exercise of individual liberties and freedom (Watts, 2012: 439). These oil-driven individual liberties are subject, on the one hand, to the value of oil; and on the other, to the volatility associated with the exploitation and appropriation of the resource. On a positive note, the extraction of oil is at the centre of the social welfare stability in countries like Norway, the industrialisation in Canada and the United States, and the emergence of global cities such as Dubai in the United Arabs Emirates (Karl, 2003; Bannon & Collier, 2003; Gupta, 2008; Thurber *et al*, 2011). On a negative note, however, oil is attributed to catastrophic effects to the physical environment and socio-economic and political systems of many parts of our world. Countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Iraq, among others are good examples. In oil-producing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the resource has been a source of many socio-economic, political and environmental problems (Basedau & Lacher, 2006; Le Billon, 2010; Appel, 2012a). These problems are the embodiment of the so-called “resource-curse”, a hypothesis that emerged in the 1990s (Sachs & Warner, 1995; Karl, 1997), and later constituted a predominant part of the oil scholarship in the decade of the 2000s (Ross, 2001; Robinson, *et al*, 2006; Collier & Hoeffler, 2006). Thinking about new oil discoveries brings these two binaries to the fore, demonstrated by the direction to which pre-production discussions point towards.

Map 1: The Albertine Basin, Uganda's oil-rich western region



In 2006, following years of exploration, the Ugandan government confirmed the discovery of hydrocarbons in the western region in commercially viable quantities. With just about 40% of the Lake Albertine Basin (commonly known as the Albertine Graben) having been adequately explored, it has been confirmed that an estimated 6.5 billion (BN) barrels of Stock-

tank oil initially in place (STOIIP) and, about 500 billion cubic-feet of gas form the current hydrocarbon deposits in Uganda. The country boasts a successful prospection and drilling record of 88%, implying that the possibilities for more discoveries in the future are high. With the current deposit levels, it is anticipated that basic extraction technology could recover between 1.4 and 1.7 billion barrels. Among key pointers to Uganda's commitment to becoming an oil-producing and exporting country (a petro-state) include the development of physical infrastructure in the oil-rich Albertine region—the so-called “critical oil roads”; an airport facility in Hoima, and a pipeline facility for evacuating the oil to the international markets—the EACOP. These developments point to Uganda potentially joining the subcontinent's leading players in the hydrocarbon industry such as Angola, Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, and Chad.

Let us bring these statistical estimates above to bear on a time-frame assumption: if Uganda's oil remains at the estimated recoverable potential of, say, 1.4BN barrels, with a potential peak production of the estimated 60.000 barrels per day (estimated to be evacuated by the EACOP), Uganda could produce oil for about half a century. But if peak production goes up to 100.000 barrels per day, this time frame could be reduced by about half. It is possible to speculate on the quantities to be produced, but it is rather difficult to make realistic assumptions on what revenue the country could earn due to volatility in oil prices. Nonetheless, there is just enough about which to be excited with Uganda's oil—and the prospect that the country is treading towards an era of “petro-dollars”. These prospects have sent a mixed but two kinds of signals to Ugandans. There is, on the one hand, the Ugandan government's perspective, also the hope of the general population that the country, with its newly found resource, is likely to undergo rapid development with an oil-driven industrialisation. This perspective which alludes towards effective utilisation of expected oil revenues, has been a dominant development narrative of the regime-leaning political class over the past decade. On the other hand, there is what I would like to refer to as the “dooms narrative”: the view that the pre-production oil situation in Uganda represents recipes for failures, and a high propensity for the occurrence of the familiar resource-curse phenomena (Bategeka & Matovu, 2011; Mbabazi, 2013; Olanya, 2012). These fears which have characterised the nature of the country's oil literature are dominant among the ordinary citizens, the political elite opposed to the establishment, and sections of civil society and non-governmental organisations.

Not only are these fears founded on the subcontinent's perpetual negativities drawn from the leading players, such as Nigeria, Angola, and Chad,

they are also reflective of the political situation in Uganda. Viewed critically, both the pessimist and the optimist perspectives on Uganda's oil revolve around the question of *how well the government* is prepared to manage the oil resource. The one commonality between both perspectives is the fact that oil is viewed from the lens of the likely revenues that could accrue from it; and government is viewed as the role of authorities of the state. The expectations of the Ugandan population in regard to the oil revenues and, how the revenues will be used to move the country forward are at the centre of the oil country's oil debate. This is because oil is quickly translated into money; and the management of the process of translating oil into fortunes of the future is viewed as a sphere of the state. So what is there beyond oil revenue and the part to be played by the state to mis-/appropriate it? In order to find out what is more than just the revenues and the work of the Ugandan authorities, this work views the Ugandan oil situation in ways that transcend the revenue aspect; and the conduct of government beyond the function of the state. This is not to belittle the revenue component, as it is the lynchpin of the global oil complex, but to move new motions for debate: since Uganda is yet to produce oil, why is it important to care about what *does not* exist? This is a mind-boggling question, but an important one to show that oil—the substance—is not the problem but the assortment of speculations, hopes and aspirations; narratives and practices that make it a problematic subject. In this sense, oil is and should be understood in terms of much more than just the oil itself, and its monetary aspects.

Moreover, governing oil should also go beyond the conventional work of the state as is often the case. Since Watts suggests that oil is the lifeblood of just about everything, studying oil situations should reflect this complexity. That way, governing human conducts around critical substances such as that which anchors individual liberties and freedoms ought to be viewed as actions upon actions. This way, our understanding of oil in new frontiers such as Uganda should be in relation to diverse sets of materialities that should generally be viewed as the inculcation of petro-mentalities in the population—the configuration of neoliberal petro-capitalistic attitudes among the oil exploration and extraction communities and the state authorities. These petro-mentalities should among others, include setting the stage for involving in oil business: from developing the infrastructure of producing oil, to allocating and sharing of oil revenues; the mitigation of environmental impacts; and the avoidance of resource conflicts, and finally, in the case of Uganda, viewing the oil situation from this perspective allows for an in-depth analysis of the process in making the future when

actual oil begins to flow. In other words, one has to think about socio-spatial and politico-economic traditions that are poised to encounter and interface with oil-related activities; the kinds of interactions that are likely to ensue, and how these interactions are governed to make oil production possible or impossible.

Viewed this way, not only is the burden of scholarship to think about oil in terms of its possibilities, but also its impossibilities; the burden to examine the way social attitudes are re-configured to reflect the new critical spatial thinking about oil; the burden to explain processes of planned and unplanned transformations among the Ugandan population, particularly the communities living in proximity to the prospective oil fields; such that they are amenable to the complexities of oil extraction. On taking a close look at the extensive body of the literature on oil in sub-Saharan Africa, one could argue that Uganda is treading a path similar to other oil-producing countries in the sub-continent. This path has a rather predictable, consistent and familiar pattern with a glaring image of oil-linked problems: the presumption that there can never be a win-win situation with the resource. One such perspective is depicted in the work of Eshita Gupta, which places the sub-continent's top oil producers—Nigeria and Angola—among the top five highly politically risky environments compared to the traditional models, such as in Norway and Canada (Gupta, 2008: 1196). This daunting representation does not only concretise the resource-curse thesis that underlines what is characterised as petro-states, it also more generally illustrates a dimension of the so-called “Afro-pessimism”—a pessimism that is linked to the character of being petro-states. I would like to coin the notion: “afro-petro-pessimism” to offset a way of thinking about oil and the fear-factor it brings to new oil fields on the African continent. The idea underpinning the notion of the petro-state reflects grids of reasoning that are predominant around oil production in Africa, on the one hand, of dependency on oil revenues, and on the other, the institutional failures that make the utilisation of these revenues problematic.

As defined by former director of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives—Bruce Campbell, a petro-state is a country that is dependent on petroleum for up to 50 per cent or more of export earnings, and petroleum constituting at least a quarter of its Gross Domestic Products (GDP). It is also explained by situations where the sector accounts for at least a quarter of government revenue. By this standard, we could argue that Norway, Canada, and Saudi Arabia are as petro-states as are Venezuela, Nigeria, Chad or Angola. The difference between these oil-dependent countries is the relative difference in the way revenue from oil has been used. What

this means is that we can view and categorise petro-states at two levels: the first level being that of sector dominance—i.e. dependency on petroleum; and the other is the level of value utilisation. The most dominant categorisation of petro-states, at least for the case of countries in the global south has been at the level of revenue utilisation. This has become a stable convention that is difficult to go against. With this in mind, there is an enormous temptation to think about Uganda's emerging oil situation in ways that recall the familiar approaches of reiterating the potentials for these multidimensional failures that have characterised the petro-states of the global south. However, heeding to this temptation would call for narrowing the optics of viewing the ways in which Ugandans (should) anticipate oil. To take this line of argument to a different direction, we have to critically re-examine the idea of failure that is genuinely represented by the resource-curse thesis.

Going through conventional ways of reasoning, there is a relatively stable consensus among scholars that the petro-failure of petro-states particularly in the global south have their origin in what can be understood as regimes of (proper or improper) resource management (see for example: Colom-Jaén & Bidaurratzaga-Aurre, 2015; Watts, 2010, 2009; Oyefusi, 2007). More vividly, the failures are part of the broader question of government. The one critic that can render this way of reasoning debatable refers to what I have already stated above: thinking of petroleum in economic terms, and viewing government as a unit of resource allocation. Drawing on the logic of my idea of a petro-state, I urge that attention ought to be paid to the pre-existing or re-/created structures and institutions that manage both the revenue aspect of the resource, as well as the non-revenue components. There is an elaborately clear line of argument that institutions through which oil production is governed are at the heart of the recurrent petro-failures. Moreover, it is the character of these institutions that have attracted the categorisation of nations as “weak”, and therefore prone to failing (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2013; Khan, 2010; Mehlum *et al*, 2006). In all states generally, and in petro-states particularly, institutions are, as a matter of principle, expected to create some forms of order that should enable effective practice of government to be undertaken. However, we ought to remain mindful of the fact that categories such as order and/or disorder can be subjectively perceived. Moreover, in practice, while in some situations disorder is deplorable, in others, disorder could be influential tools for governing conducts.

There are a series of institutional problems of government that genuinely belongs to the realms of *accidental disorder*—that is to say, disorder that