

Book Review

Ali Tekin and Paul Andrew Williams
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Geo-Politics of the Euro-Asia Energy Nexus: The European Union, Russia and Turkey

Basingstoke: Palgrave

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One of the most debated issues of European Union (EU) is the European energy security. Particularly, the Union's strategy to ensure energy security through the diversification of sources has drawn the interest of scholars and policy-makers, who tend to show special attention to the role of Russia and Turkey in this strategy. Russia is the biggest supplier of gas and oil to Europe and it has been suspected of using energy for political means, while Turkey is the main energy bridge between Europe and non-Russian sources, which uses its geopolitical role for promoting its candidacy to the Union. All these elements are linked, outlined and analysed in the book by Tekin and Williams. In fact, as it is becoming clear in the introduction, the book aims to analyse the EU's efforts to ensure the security of energy supply in connection with the EU-Turkish relations and the progress of the latter towards EU membership.

To do so, the book is divided into three parts that correspond to three core objectives outlined by the authors. The first part (Chapters two and three) describes the instruments and types of power that EU uses for implementing its energy policy and provides the framework for the analysis. The second part (Chapters four to six) explores in detail the interdependence between EU and Russia and the complexity of the regional energy relations. The analysis covers all the aspects of energy security, including the environmental challenges of Europe and external actors such as Africa and China. The last part (Chapters seven and eight) covers the Turkish role in the European Energy Policy in a connection with Turkey's accession progress towards EU membership. The book is well written and structured. Each chapter starts with an introductory paragraph and then in a deductive manner it covers the whole topic in discussion. In that way the narration of the argument is easy followed and provides the space for extracting meaningful conclusions.

However, this very structure depicts a main weakness of the book. Some parts of the narrative are over-detailed and look too descriptive. In addition, some parts of the narrative are repeating among chapters, for example on pp. 52-63 and pp. 171-172, and this gives the impression that it is written by different contributors. To this one could add the 'marginalisation' of Turkey's role and candidacy in the last two chapters, which prevents a more coherent and in depth analysis of these issues.

The treatment of the Turkish candidacy to the EU is another shortcoming of the manuscript. The analysis of that subject tends to reflect the official Turkish view, which put the blame for the slow progress of the accession negotiations, to the attitude of certain EU member states, notably France and Cyprus. Indicative is the position that '[a] total of 18 chapters of the EU *acquis* are closed for negotiations due to various EU and national vetoes, including those by France and the Republic of Cyprus' (p. 178). However, the authors avoid to illustrate the Turkish responsibilities for the fate of the negotiations and to explain why some member states are having this attitude. For example, on p. 169 Cyprus receives the blame for the veto on energy chapter without reference to the paradox of the Turkish diplomacy that seeks to join the single market without recognising one of constituent markets! Despite these limitations, there is an accurate projection of Turkish role as a key geopolitical actor for the energy security of Europe, with well targeted recommendations for the proper use of the energy card by the Turkish diplomacy.

The weaknesses are balanced by accurate and thorough analysis of the field. Both authors are experts on the field and this is evident from the presentation of the topic and from the analysis and the policy recommendations that they are providing. For instance, on p. 14, they perfectly pointed the lack of coherence of EU policy and the tendency of key players such as Germany and France, for bilateral actions. Perhaps the best aspect of the narrative is the conception of the *Gas Wars* between Europe and other actors through the angle of market competition, which seeks to better reflect the situation, away from the neo-realist exaggerations that are the case in the relative literature. The following quote is characteristic:

'our concept is not meant to connote that producing, transit and consuming states are poised to engage in military struggle over gas or the terms of its delivery...it implies that many energy-centric international tensions have arisen in large part from strong resistance to attempts to acquire ownership and operational control of different segments of the value chain that are located outside the initiating firms home jurisdictions' (p. 97).

Hence, the authors manage to include in the analysis the role of the European companies in the implementation and promotion of the energy projects such as the Nabucco pipeline. In addition, the authors are connecting the European Energy Policy with environmental aspects, which are having crucial role for understanding the policy making in regards to energy and which are often neglected by the relative literature. Moreover, the analysis of Gazprom tactics in distance from Kremlin's political considerations is added to the description of the geopolitics of energy from a more economic perspective. A final positive element is the existence of theory. There are few books in this field that are using theoretical interpretations and particularly non neo-realist approaches, for analysing the geopolitics of energy. In fact, the authors, by presenting liberal and realist approaches, with clear preference on the former, are capturing the real dimension of the European Energy Policy.

To sum up, it is a book that could be used by scholars and students who are interested on the field of EU energy security and to be a reference point for further research and debate.