

Geopolitics Of Energy Transformation (– The Cuban Case)

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Cuba - Location



IRIS

- The ‘Cuban Energy Transformation’ (IRIS) project develops new tools and methods for planning the energy system. The project concentrates on aspects related to the integration of intermittent renewable energy sources, mainly wind and solar, in the Cuban electricity system and the problems and advantages related to it.
- The target is to develop renewable energy scenarios which take into account the global development context and the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and cultural (PESTEC) dimensions of development.
- The project looks at the interlinkages of these different aspects in the context of the transformation processes taking place in Cuba.
- Development of the local research capacity in participating Cuban universities and research centers is one target.
- Dissemination and utilization of the research results will take place via stakeholder workshops and the active contacts of the partner institutions to Cuban ministries and other organizations.
- 1.1.2019-31.12.2022

The International Dimension of any Economic Performance in Cuba

- Cuba is since 60 years one of the countries following politically, socially and economically its own development path (the Cuban revolution had from the very beginning in 1953 a specific "anti-us" aspect)
- Embargo/boycott/sanctions of the USA (and de facto many allied!) and international companies (Kennedy 1960 - Torricelli Act 1992 - Helms-Burton Act 1996 – Trump 2019)
- Outside of the "normal" global world market relations
- Cuba was in deep economic crisis after 1989/90 due to the collapse of the Soviet Union
- Continuing since the 1990s the socialist path with new allies with Venezuela in a central role – also as a provider of oil



The International Dimension of any Economic Performance in Cuba

- 2017/8: political reforms and new constitution. "Post-Castro" modernizations and opening.
- Serious energy crisis in 2019 – rough consequences for economy and population.
- Current political and economic situation results in the need to provide any energy sources. Renewables be come a secondary issue.

My Programme Today

- Geopolitics in IR – critical perspective
- Geopolitics of energy transition – the need for new perspectives
- Energy security – the need for a reformulation of the concept
- (The case of Cuba – the example for anti-mainstream policies)

Geopolitics I – The Concept ...

Geopolitics is according to the Theory of International Relations:

- The analysis of the geographic influences on power relationships in international relations. (Britannica.com)
- the distribution of political and military power – related to foreign policy behaviour basing on location and physical terrain (Kegley-Wittkopf). Closely related geo-economics (distribution of wealth, relationship between geography and economic conditions and behaviour of a state;
- "A method of foreign policy analysis which seeks to understand, explain and predict international political behaviour primarily in terms of geographical variables, such as **location, size, climate, topography, demography, natural resources** and **technological development** and **potential**. Political identity is thus seen as a to be (more or less) determined by geography" (Penguin Dictionary of International Relations)



...and its history

Rudolf Kjellén, (1905) Swedish political scientist

Friedrich Rätzels (1882/1897) (*Lebensraum*/ living space and social Darwinism); one of the founding fathers of *Anthropogeographie*/Human Geography. Ideological basis of National Socialists and their expansionist strategy.

Karl Haushofer (1928): „*Die Geopolitik ist die Lehre von der Erdgebundenheit der politischen Vorgänge.*“ (Geopolitics is the doctrine of the earth-boundness of political processes.)

After WWII in Germany strict distance to these concepts, in U.K. and USA the emerge of different sub-schools of geopolitics as synonyms to foreign policy analysis or International politics. Mostly related to power politics and especially the "scientific" justification of political activities.

Backyard policy of the USA – Monroe Doctrine -Truman Doctrine
US interventionism

Geopolitics II - Use

Energy Studies Institute

Energy Geopolitisch:



“Energy geopolitics refers to the **study of national security and international politics** in the context of the global energy scene.

The world today is marked by a number of factors affecting the **international energy market**. Key factors **include instability in oil-producing regions** due to domestic, regional and international factors, the **rise of national oil companies**, **resource nationalism**, **reserve depletion among traditional suppliers**, and **the opening of new sea routes**, to name a few.

Energy security is regarded as an integral part of a state’s political and economic survival. It is important for policy-makers to understand how energy diplomacy, resource competition and unfolding developments in the energy markets shape the **behavior of states**, and the **implications for the international system and regional orders.**”

(Source: <https://esi.nus.edu.sg/research/energy-geopolitics>)

Geopolitics II - Use

GEOPOLITICS OF ENERGY

“Geopolitics of Energy is published by the Canadian Energy Research Institute through an editorial board, accessing a network of writers and contacts around the world.

Geopolitics of Energy (GoE) is the leading monthly journal on geopolitical developments affecting global energy markets. It provides analysis, information, perspectives and fresh ideas on the **political and economic factors affecting energy** and their **impact on national energy policies**, the **international environment** and **prices**. Geopolitics of Energy reports on developments in producer and consumer countries and provides critiques and analyses of **current events as they affect these countries** now and in the future.

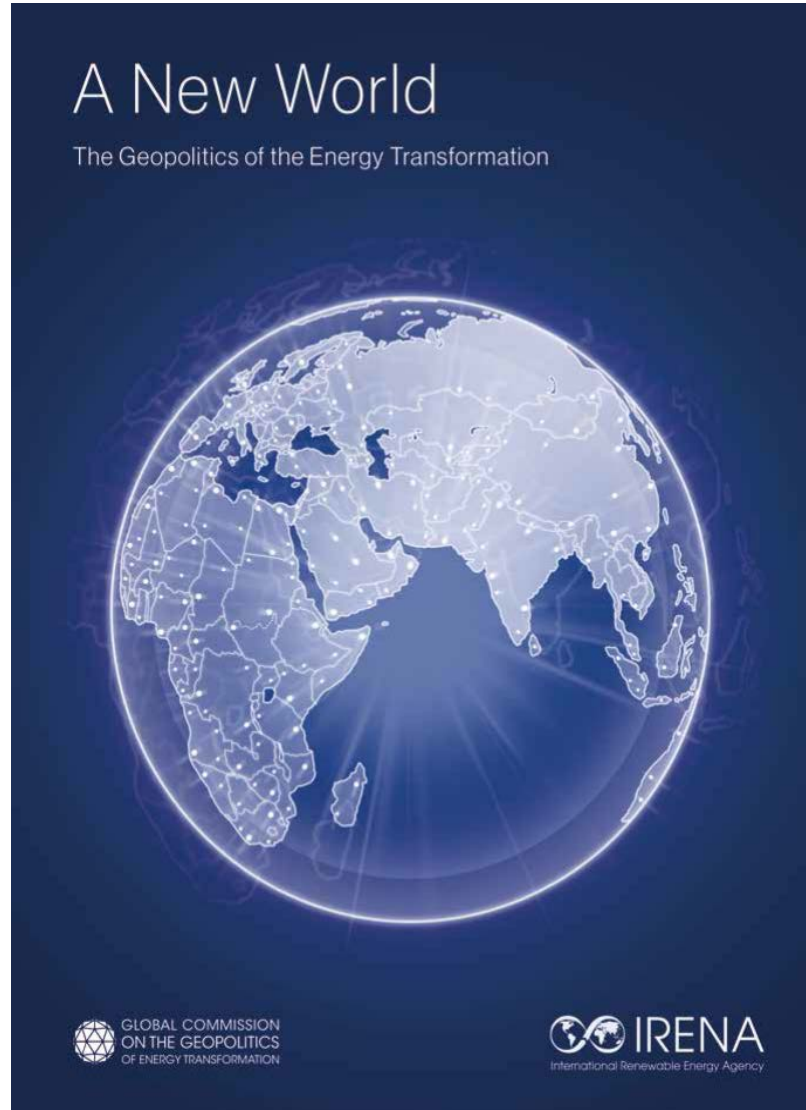
Regular features include:

- **national energy profiles**
- special reports on the Middle East, FSU, USA, Canada, Asia, and Africa
- **assessments of energy options and security issues**
- **regional perspectives** on emerging issues”

- (Source: <https://ceri.ca/geopolitics-of-energy>)



Geopolitics II - Use



Geopolitics II - Use

“Redrawing the geopolitical map

Power shifts

For two centuries, the geographic concentration of oil, natural gas and coal reserves has helped configure the international geopolitical landscape. Coal and steam power drove the Industrial Revolution which, in turn, shaped geopolitics in the 19th century. Since then, control over the production of and trade in oil has been a key feature of 20th century power politics. A transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy could transform global power relations no less than the historical shifts from wood to coal and from coal to oil.” (p. 26)



Geopolitics III – A Critical Perspective

We are back in the traditional thinking of

- state-centered thinking,
- (great) power politics of states,
- assumed security deficits --> need for "defense" of the own territory and "our oil" and transport venues
- Colonialist / imperialist policies as a consequence ("blood for oil", "defense of Germany at the Hindu Kush", events of summer 2019 in Venezuela ...
- Competition for scarce resource dominates thinking – cooperative elements only if they are favoring the own, particular (state-) interest:
- A need for cooperative, not antagonistic thinking

Energy security – the need for a reformulation of the concept

Global conditions for energy production, consumption: General interest of humankind vs. partial interests of states/societies/companies

Need for cooperation instead of competition and conflict

Renewables – carbon neutrality – climate neutrality – sustainability

Solutions not against the nature and against other states/blocs

Need for multilateralism and international institutional agreements

Like in (military) security: no lasting solutions possible against others.

System logic: current international system calls for antagonistic attempts for solutions

