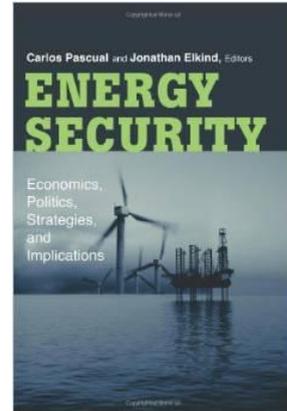




Carlos Pascual and Jonathan Elkind (eds.), *Energy Security, Economic Politics, Strategies and Implications*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC, 2010.

By Arthur Lakatos

This volume, which deals with very timely subjects of International Politics: Geopolitics and Environmental Sciences. It is edited by two active US Diplomats – Carlos Pascual, US Ambassador to Mexico, previously in Ukraine, and Jonathan Elkind, currently principal deputy assistant secretary for policy and international energy at the US Department of Energy.



It contains several studies which are dealing with contemporary issues of Energy Politics. Most of the contributors are experts currently working at the Brookings Institution and their combined writings offer the reader not only an enjoyable lecture, but also an interdisciplinary image of the current issue of fossil-based energy.

The volume is structured in three parts and ten studies. The first part, *Geopolitics*, consists of four studies dealing with certain issues of Geopolitics - Energy Production and Supply relationship. The first study, signed by Carlos Pascual and Evie Zambetakis, *The Geopolitics of Energy: from Security to Survival*, has a general character and is also an introductory synthesis, which is dealing with key issues of contemporary Energy Politics on Great Power level from a global perspective. Suzanne Maloney's *Energy Security in the Persian Gulf: Opportunities and Challenges* presents the evolution of historical context of the Middle East's oil resources having a special focus on changes brought by Khomeini's religious revolution and its consequences. *The Road Ahead* formulates several suggestions for US foreign policy in securing the supply from this region using "soft" (diplomatic) tools. Michael O'Hanlon's writing, *How much does the United States Spend Protecting Persian Gulf Oil*, is complementary to the previous chapter, but it is much more an economic analysis, which operates with lots of statistical data. A very compelling work

is Arica S. Downs's study, *Who's Afraid of China's Oil Companies?*, based on a previous study of the author's, *The Fact and Fiction of Sino-African Energy Relations*, published in "China Security Journal" in 2007. The first statement of this study is that lots of people are fearing the competition of Chinese oil companies worldwide, but – in her opinion – "contrary to conventional wisdom, China's NOCs are not merely puppets of the Chinese party-state" and they are far from being a real danger regarding monopolization of the world's oil resources. Even in many regions, like Africa and Central Asia, they are taking some serious advantage in front of Western Corporations. This study is especially well-documented and illustrated by tables, statistics and diagrams.

The second thematic part of the volume, *Understanding Energy Interdependence*, consists of three studies written in an interdisciplinary manner. The first, *Making Sense of Energy Independence*, beside being well illustrated by statistics (for example, the statistics of Global Forecast of Oil Consumption), has a major theoretic-philosophic accent. Jonathan Elkind's *Energy Security. Call for a Broader Agenda* is not only a scientific study, but a policy-making one too: it synthesizes the author's ideas regarding how the energy policy of the Obama government should manifest itself, which goals have to be set and through what strategies they can be reached. A similar structure, but a different approach, can be found in Ann Florini's *Global Governance and Energy*. It is also about energy-economy-strategy relations, but in a global approach and having strong environmental aspects.

Part three, *Climate Change*, also consists of three studies. *Features of Climate-Smart Metropolitan Economies* deals with the equation of urban energy consumption - environmental health. *Understanding the Interaction between Energy, Security and Climate Change Policy* approaches the rise of fossil-fuel consumption, its impact over the environment and the possible future directions of energy security politics. And finally, the study of William Antholis, *Five "G's Lessons from World Trade for Governing Global Climate*, gathers some moderate critical comments to the WTO's energy politics.

This book is centered around the idea that most of the global energy production still comes from fossil fuels. In the present environment of International Relations and Environmental Politics and Strategies, there exists a real need for having a coherent, global energy security. It is remarkable thatm even if most of the authors are committed to the US governmental structures, the style and terminology used is very analytic, distant, objective, rather than a “patriotic” one. And since it also contains some problem-solving prescriptions, while mainly at a theoretical level, the book is also a useful policy guide.