

Book Review in Political Geography: Rereading “The New Map” by Daniel Yergin

مراجعة كتاب في الجغرافيا السياسية: إعادة قراءة "الخريطة الجديدة" بقلم دانيال يرغين

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Abstract:

Objectives: The study aims to reevaluate the core issues presented in Daniel Yergin's “The New Map” from a political geography standpoint. Our objectives include analyzing the relationship between geographic factors, energy distribution, and their impact on international relations. We seek to uncover how political geography influences energy policy, trade patterns, and alliance formation, ultimately shaping the balance of power among nations. Through this alternative perspective, we aim to enhance comprehension of the book's findings.

Methods: Our approach involves a thorough analysis of Yergin's work, specifically focusing on key topics such as energy, climate, and geopolitics. We examine the connections between geographic dynamics and the global energy sphere as illustrated in “The New Map”. By employing political geography as our lens, we investigate how geographical factors play a pivotal role in shaping the complex interactions within the energy sector and their geopolitical consequences.

Results: Our research highlights the significant impact of political geography on energy-related issues and international dynamics, as portrayed in Daniel Yergin's book. We demonstrate the intricate relationships between geographic factors, energy distribution, and global geopolitics. Our analysis sheds light on how political geography influences energy policies, trade flows, and the formation of alliances among nations. These findings enhance the understanding of the book's insights and contribute to the existing literature on political geography.

Conclusions: Through our reevaluation of “The New Map” from a political geography perspective, we conclude that geographic factors are fundamental in shaping the global energy landscape and its geopolitical implications. Political geography plays a pivotal role in determining energy policies, trade patterns, and the balance of power among nations. By placing Yergin's work within the context of political geography, we offer valuable insights that benefit geography scholars and students, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between geography, energy, and geopolitics on the global stage.

Keywords: Global energy landscape; Geopolitical implications; New map; Political geography; Review.

الملخص:

الأهداف: تهدف الدراسة إلى إعادة تقييم القضايا الأساسية المعروضة في كتاب دانيال يرغين "الخريطة الجديدة" من منظور جغرافي سياسي. تشمل أهدافنا تحليل العلاقة بين العوامل الجغرافية وتوزيع الطاقة وتأثيرها على العلاقات الدولية. نسعى إلى كشف كيفية تأثير الجغرافيا السياسية على سياسات الطاقة وأنماط التجارة وتشكيل التحالفات، مما يؤثر في النهاية على توازن القوى بين الدول. من خلال هذه الرؤية البديلة، نهدف إلى تعزيز فهم القراءة لنتائج الكتاب.

المنهجية: تتضمن الدراسة منهجاً تحليلياً شاملاً لأعمال يرغين، مركّزاً بشكل خاص على مواضيع رئيسية مثل الطاقة والمناخ والجيوسياسية. نحن نفحص العلاقات بين ديناميات الجغرافيا والمجال العالمي للطاقة كما هو موضح في "الخريطة الجديدة". من خلال استخدام الجغرافيا السياسية كعدسة لدينا، نحقق كيفية ألعاب العوامل الجغرافية دوراً بارزاً في تشكيل التفاعلات المعقدة داخل قطاع الطاقة وتداعياتها الجيوسياسية.

النتائج: تسلط الدراسة الضوء على التأثير الكبير للجغرافيا السياسية على قضايا الطاقة والديناميات الدولية، كما هو موضح في كتاب دانيال يرغين. نقدم العلاقات المعقدة بين العوامل الجغرافية وتوزيع الطاقة والجيوسياسية العالمية. تلقي تحليلاتنا الضوء على كيفية تأثير الجغرافيا السياسية على سياسات الطاقة وتدفعات التجارة وتشكيل التحالفات بين الدول. هذه النتائج تعزز فهم التوصيات في الكتاب وتسهم في الأدب القائم على الجغرافيا السياسية.

الخلاصة: من خلال إعادة تقييمنا لـ "الخريطة الجديدة" من منظور الجغرافيا السياسية، نختتم أن العوامل الجغرافية أمر أساسي في تشكيل المشهد العالمي للطاقة وتداعياتها الجيوسياسية. تلعب الجغرافيا السياسية دوراً حاسماً في تحديد سياسات الطاقة وأنماط التجارة وتوازن القوى بين الدول. من خلال وضع أعمال يرغين في سياق الجغرافيا السياسية، نقدم رؤية قيمة تعود بالفائدة على علماء الجغرافيا والطلاب، مساهمين في فهم متداخل بين الجغرافيا والطاقة والجيوسياسية على الساحة العالمية بطريقة معقدة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المشهد العالمي للطاقة؛ التداعيات الجيوسياسية؛ الخريطة الجديدة؛ الجغرافيا السياسية.

Introduction:

Writing more than half a century ago in his book *"Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time"*, Arnold Toynbee (1966) offered insights into the strategies civilizations employ when faced with adversity. One of these strategies is zealotry and fanaticism, an ominous warning of potential problems in certain regions, including Afghanistan, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia (Elekes, 1969). Historians possess the unique ability to look backward into the future, much like influential writers who can forecast forthcoming events. Toynbee argues that humans have dangerous habits that are not instinctive but habitual. The most dangerous of these is the inclination to war – a choice for which he believes there are alternatives, but which are often overlooked, leading to unnecessary violence and incompetence. His critique of tribalism or nationalism, of the "us" versus "them" mentality (refer to Berreby, D. 2005), becomes a central concern, highlighting the dangers of such narrow views (Juraev & Ahn, 2022). To combat these dangerous habits, virtue theory encourages the adoption of new habits and inspires hope in man's capacity to change. In this vein, Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), another visionary, expressed that a single person can draw attention to impending doom but is unable to single-handedly save an entire age, drawing parallels to the Cassandra problem from Greek Mythology, where Cassandra's warnings went unheeded (Kaufman et al. 1977; Makolkin, 2002).

Against the background of these historical findings, Daniel Yergin's *"The New Map"* proves to be an extraordinary and indispensable contribution to geography. Daniel Yergin (born in 1947) is a preeminent authority on energy and has received acclaim for his works such as *"The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power"* (1991) and *"The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World"* (2011). This latest work – *"The New Map: Energy, Climate, and the Clash of Nations"* (2020) is a colorful overview that meticulously examines a wide range of geopolitical developments encompassing both contemporary and historical events ¹(Yergin, 2020). In this fascinating work, Yergin artfully weaves together energy dynamics, national rivalries, technological metamorphoses, and the ever-present spectra of climate change. A prominent figure at the helm of IHS Markit (Ibid, p.359, see also Figure 2 on p.351), a respected energy research and information company, Yergin's acumen shines through his incisive analysis of oil and gas – a fundamental bedrock of the global energy landscape that exerts an indelible influence on the future trajectory of our world (Ibid, p.359). This study, *"The New Map"* reveals unprecedented insights into the pioneers of the transformative US *"shale gale"* responsible for reshaping energy dynamics (Ibid, pp.25-33).

In his quest to understand contemporary geopolitics, Yergin deftly dissects Russia's "maneuvers", seamlessly drawing connections to its historical use of Marxist-Leninist ideology as a geopolitical tool (Ibid, p.125). The book also looks at China's strategic energy "maneuvers", with a particular focus on its activities in the highly contested South China Sea – a crucible of utmost importance in today's geopolitical fabric. At the heart of the narrative is an exploration of power – a multi-layered concept that encompasses the literal energy that drives transportation, industry and urban centers (Ibid, p.346), as well as the political power nations wield to shape their economies, international trade patterns and global interactions (Ibid, pp.91-123). *"The New Map"* deftly navigates the delicate balance between open market paradigms and protectionist impulses, illuminating the intricacies of cooperative relationships and confrontations on the world stage. This work addresses the interplay of energy, politics, and climate change – an intricate web that unfolds a comprehensive examination of the evolving energy landscape and its profound impact on geopolitical structures (Ibid, pp.301-306). Scholars, policymakers, and attentive readers will find these pages invaluable insights into the labyrinthine forces shaping global geography in the 21st century. Daniel Yergin's masterful prose, fortified by rigorous research, gives this book undeniable significance and elevates it to an indispensable addition to the corpus of political geography and global energy studies. In *"The New Map"*, Yergin skillfully illuminates the profound interactions between energy and politics, charting the course of evolving world order in the crucible of the 21st-century geopolitical arena (Ibid, p.15 and refer to Yergin's "The Prize").

Methodology:

¹ The new map: energy, climate, and the clash of nations. New York, Penguin Press. LCC HD9502.A2 (ebook). LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020002300>.

* Note: In this article, we will adopt the abbreviation "The New Map" for the book to address its lengthy title. Consequently, when referencing the work in subsequent citations, "The New Map" will be represented as "Ibid".

This book review utilizes a comprehensive methodology to analyze Daniel Yergin's book "The New Map" from various angles. This analysis explores the complex relationship between geopolitical dynamics, energy landscapes, and climate change, drawing inspiration from Arnold Toynbee's historical insights and Søren Aabye Kierkegaard's thought-provoking perspectives. The review starts by providing a historical context for the work. Arnold Toynbee's observations on how civilizations face challenges serve as the foundation. The relevance of these insights is underscored by his work "Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time" (1966). Historical events in regions like Afghanistan, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia (Elekes, 1969) highlight the ongoing importance of the issues discussed.

The concept of predicting, but not preventing, crises is introduced by Søren Kierkegaard. By drawing a parallel with the Cassandra problem, the author highlights the difficulties individuals encounter when trying to bring about social change. This philosophical foundation serves as the basis for evaluating Yergin's work in comprehending and tackling global challenges. Daniel Yergin's background is thoroughly examined to establish his authority in the field of energy geopolitics. References to well-regarded works like "The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power" (1991) bolster his standing as an energy specialist. This context adds credibility to his latest work, "The New Map."

The main method used in this study is a thematic analysis of "The New Map" by Yergin. The analysis delves into various issues such as energy dynamics, national rivalries, technological changes, and the impact of climate change. The issues are considered in a global political and geographic context, taking into account international relations, power dynamics, and economic paradigms.

The methodology includes direct references to "The New Map" for key arguments. Specific page citations and references to illustrations enhance the analysis and ensure a thorough engagement with the primary source material. The analysis summarizes the findings from the thematic exploration. Yergin's deft handling of the connections between energy, politics, and climate change is highlighted. The book's importance in illuminating the evolving global energy landscape and geopolitical implications is underscored. The conclusion of the methodology highlights the book's significance in the fields of political geography and global energy studies, establishing "The New Map" as essential reading for scholars, policymakers, and anyone interested in understanding 21st century geopolitics and energy dynamics.

Discussion:

One of the most pressing challenges we face today is the continued existence of the "war economy", a concept Dwight David Eisenhower (1890-1969) forcefully warned against at the end of his dedicated military service. During his career, he witnessed first-hand the symbiotic relationship between the military and the arms industry, which led him to warn us about the rise of the military-industrial complex (refer to Cohn, 2012). This intricate connection has resulted in an exorbitant military budget for our nation, diverting resources that could be used for far more useful endeavours (refer also to "Farewell address by President Eisenhower, January 17, 1961"). The roots of this staggering military spending can be traced back to the aftermath of the devastating air raids in Germany that helped create the situation we face today. It is crucial that we recognise that we must break away from the archaic reliance on war as a means of resolving conflicts. As Carl Philipp Gottfried von Clausewitz (1780-1831), the famous European war strategist, noted, the war in the past was seen as a continuation of politics by alternative methods. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the use of force to achieve political goals is no longer effective and its historical effectiveness remains questionable at best. Currently, military spending is a widespread issue (refer to Juraev & Ahn, 2022). Some countries, such as Pakistan and certain Gulf states like Saudi Arabia, allocate significant budgets to their defence sector (refer also to Hasbani, 2006). Interestingly, despite these substantial military investments, some countries hardly use these resources themselves. Instead, they seem to "subsidise" Western industries, which raises questions about the reason for these immense budgets. During the Gulf War, for example, these countries did not actively use their armed forces and relied on outside intervention, particularly from the United States (refer to Hyams et al. 1996).

Reflecting on such analyses, we have to face the reality that these excessive budgets are being used inefficiently. It is unfortunate, however, that society often avoids addressing this problem directly. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the fact that this unsustainable situation cannot last forever. I personally believe that we must take action to correct this situation. Daniel Yergin's works, including "The Prize" and "The New Maps", are reminiscent of the wars fought over oil in the 20th century. There is no doubt that oil has become the "lifeblood" of our modern technological society, and for many its value even surpasses that of "human blood". It is also imperative that we question the war economy and re-evaluate the enormous military expenditures that are

common today. As a species, we must recognise that war is outdated and ineffective as a solution to the conflict. Instead, we should promote diplomatic and peaceful means of resolving differences and focus on investing resources in ventures that truly benefit humanity. In this way, we can strive for a more harmonious and prosperous future for all.

So when we turn to Daniel Yergin's Book, "*The New Map*", we embark on a compelling journey through political geography. Examining the shale revolution in the United States offers invaluable insights into the transformative power of energetic progress to reshape global energy dynamics and geopolitical realities. This new landscape has given the US a prominent position in the global energy arena, transforming traditional energy relations and geopolitical dynamics internationally. Yergin boards on a compelling journey through the realm of political geography, illuminating the intricate interplay between global energy dynamics and geopolitical realities. The introductory examination of the shale revolution in the United States offers valuable insights into the ways in which advances in energy can trigger seismic shifts in traditional power structures (Ibid, pp.9-12). The *shale boom* has not only bolstered oil and gas supplies but also catapulted the US into a prominent position in the global energy arena, reshaping traditional energy relations and geopolitical dynamics. From a geographical perspective, this phenomenon reflects the profound impact of energy resources on the national and international balance of power (see also Mocarquer et al. 2009). The book takes an in-depth look at the geopolitical complexities of Russia and China and uncovers their different energy strategies and alliances (Ibid, pp.10-11 & pp.63-67). Russia's strategic orientation towards the East, driven by unresolved border disputes following the collapse of the Soviet Union, is a critical factor in its energy aspirations (Ibid, pp.35-46). Yergin's nuanced examination shows how Russia strategically uses its oil and gas resources as geopolitical tools, influencing regional and global dynamics. In parallel, the spotlight on China's ambitious "Belt and Road" Initiative offers a compelling geographical perspective on the transformative nature of energy-driven investment strategies (refer to Ibid, Chapter 25). This initiative has far-reaching implications for global political geography as it reshapes economic cooperation and strategic partnerships across regions.

The book's focus on the energy transition and climate change makes for lively debates that also touch on critical geographical aspects. Yergin acknowledges the undeniable progress made in the field of renewable energy, but also offers a perspective on the gradual transition to a green energy paradigm. From a geographical perspective, this argument stimulates discussions on the complexity of reconciling ambitious net-zero targets with the evolving geopolitical landscape (Ibid, Chapter 42). Geographical approaches such as energy geopolitics and environmental determinism come into play when analysing the complicated relationship between energy transition, climate change and policy choices. Critics raise concerns about the urgency of climate action and its potential impact on political geography and international relations in light of the changing geopolitical landscape. "*The New Map*" is a timely and important contribution to political geography that sheds light on the emergence of a new global order shaped by energy revolutions and *geopolitical manoeuvres*. The concept of an unfolding "*energy cold war*" between China and the US provides a compelling context for understanding the geopolitics of energy competition (Ibid, Chapter 29). Moreover, Russia's skilful use of energy as a political lever highlights the powerful influence of energy resources on statecraft and regional power dynamics (Ibid, Chapter 9).

So, "*The New Map*" is an erudite and comprehensive exploration of the intricate connections between energy transition, geopolitics and climate change from a geographical perspective. Yergin's masterful prose serves as a scholarly compass for scientists, policymakers and readers alike, enabling a deeper understanding of the profound implications for political geography in the 21st century. As the world navigates the dynamic forces shaping the global energy map, Yergin's work offers invaluable geographical insights and fosters critical discussions about the geopolitical implications of energy developments in an ever-changing world. Therefore, "*The New Map*" is a comprehensive and compelling analysis of the connections between global energy trends, geopolitics, and climate change. This review acknowledges the importance of Yergin's work but also addresses the criticisms of the book, particularly the perceived focus on the US and the limited consideration of developing country perspectives. Overall, Yergin's timely exploration of the dynamic energy landscape and its geopolitical implications is a valuable addition to the literature on political geography and global energy studies.

Main Points in "*The New Map*":

Yergin's "*The New Map*" focuses on the complicated interplay between energy resources, geopolitics and climate change. As a geography enthusiast and student, reading this book will provide you with invaluable

insights into the evolving geopolitical landscape related to the global energy paradigm. To highlight the important political geography issues covered in this book, we have compiled a table summarizing the key points and their implications Table (1).

Table (1): Key Political Geographic Points

Key Point in the Book	Geographical approaches
The Shale Revolution	"Energy Geopolitics": e.g. how energy resources and their distribution can influence, etc.
Russia's Energy Geopolitics	"Geopolitical Leverage": e.g. Russia's strategic pivot to the East, etc.
China's Belt and Road Initiative	"Geo-economic Strategy": e.g. how countries use economic policies, such as investment in infrastructure and trade initiatives, etc.
Climate Change Policy and Geopolitical Implications	"Environmental Determinism": e.g. how environmental challenges, global power, etc.

This table summarises the main political-geographical points discussed in "The New Map" and offers invaluable insights to students of geography. By examining the shale revolution, students gain a comprehensive understanding of how energy innovation can change global power dynamics (see also Blondeel et al. 2021). Analysis of Russia's energy geopolitics highlights the importance of energy as a geopolitical tool and shows how nations can use their resources for influence (refer also to Casier, 2011).

China's Belt and Road Initiative demonstrates the importance of energy-driven investment strategies and allows students to examine the geopolitical implications of infrastructure projects and their impact on global trade and politics. Finally, the book's examination of climate policy links climate action to geopolitical shifts and promotes a deeper understanding of how environmental concerns relate to international relations (see also Colombo & Soler i Lecha, 2021). "The New Map" presents a rich picture of political geography and highlights the profound connections between energy, politics and climate change. By absorbing these key points and pedagogical insights, students of geography can develop a nuanced understanding of the forces shaping today's geopolitical landscape and contribute meaningfully to discussions about the evolving global energy order.

The intersection of climate change and geopolitical significance:

In Daniel Yergin's book "The New Map: Energy, Climate, and the Clash of Nations," the complex relationship between climate change and geopolitics is a central and significant theme. Yergin thoroughly explores global energy dynamics and uncovers the transformative impact of climate change on geopolitics. Yergin's examination of climate change within the framework of geopolitics aligns with the ongoing global conversation about the pressing requirement for sustainable practices and environmental stewardship. Yergin emphasizes the interconnectedness of energy policy, climate policy, and their influence on diplomatic negotiations, economic strategies, and power dynamics among nations, as energy sources and their distribution significantly shape international relations.

The book emphasizes that climate change is not only an environmental issue but also a geopolitical phenomenon. The changing climate landscape impacts national security priorities, migration trends, resource availability, and the global balance of power. Yergin emphasizes the importance of nations strategically navigating and adapting their policies to address vulnerabilities and capitalize on new opportunities. Yergin's research demonstrates that climate policy can either foster international cooperation or create tension among nations. The allocation of resources to renewable energy projects, setting emission reduction targets, and participating in international climate agreements can have a significant impact on diplomatic relations and alliances. These dynamics demonstrate the complex relationship between environmental politics and geopolitical strategies, which ultimately shape the global power structure.

"The New Map" also highlights how climate change can worsen current geopolitical conflicts. Climate-related challenges, such as extreme weather events, water scarcity, and food insecurity, are increasing and can worsen regional tensions and contribute to social unrest. Yergin's analysis emphasizes the role of climate change in either promoting cooperation or worsening instability. It underscores the significance of proactive diplomatic efforts in addressing these challenges. Yergin's "The New Map" effectively highlights the significance of climate change in the geopolitical sphere. Yergin provides a comprehensive perspective on the interconnections between energy, politics, and climate change, highlighting how environmental challenges have become an integral part of global politics. This analysis highlights the importance of recognizing climate change as both an environmental issue and a catalyst for geopolitical changes. It emphasizes the necessity of coordinated international efforts to ensure a sustainable and secure future.

Rationale:

The choice to focus on Daniel Yergin's "The New Map" in this book review article is based on its significant relevance in the field of political geography. The book provides a thorough analysis of the changing global energy landscape, with a focus on the relationship between energy resources, geopolitics, and climate change. Understanding the impact of energy on national and international power relations is crucial in today's political and economic landscape. Taking a geographical perspective is essential in comprehending this dynamic relationship. Energy resources play a central role in shaping the dynamics of nations and regions. The book describes the shale revolution in the United States as a prime example of how the country's abundant domestic oil and gas resources have transformed its standing in the global energy market. This transition from importing energy to exporting it has had significant geopolitical implications. Understanding these changes is crucial for comprehending the impact of energy on geopolitical power dynamics and shaping policy decisions at the national and international levels. Additionally, analyzing Russia's strategic focus on the East and its utilization of energy as a means of geopolitical influence underscores the complex connection between energy resources and political maneuvering. The case of China's Belt and Road Initiative illustrates how energy-driven investments can transform global economic cooperation and political influence, providing valuable insights into the geopolitical implications of energy strategies. This study aims to address gaps in the literature regarding the connections between energy, geopolitics, and climate change from a geographical standpoint. While many studies analyze energy markets and political events, few provide a comprehensive geographical assessment of how energy developments impact global power dynamics and international relations. Incorporating geographical theories and approaches enhances our understanding of the spatial aspects of energy policy. Concepts like energy geopolitics can help us understand how energy resources serve as geopolitical capital and shape the actions of states. The application of environmental determinism can offer insights into how access to specific energy resources impacts a nation's vulnerability to climate change and how this vulnerability can influence geopolitical strategies.

The book also offers a detailed analysis of the geographical distribution of energy resources and how this distribution affects regional and global political landscapes. The abundance of shale resources in the US has significantly altered the country's energy landscape, resulting in changes to regional and international energy trade. Russia's extensive energy reserves in the East have had a significant impact on its geopolitical interests and alliances in the region. Real-world examples of energy-driven geopolitics can be seen in Russia's use of its oil and gas supplies to exert influence over neighboring states, as well as China's strategic investments in securing vital commodity trade routes through the Belt and Road Initiative. These examples demonstrate the strategic importance of energy resources, which can have implications for regional stability and global power dynamics. The reason for focusing on "The New Map" in this book review is its significant relevance to political geography. The book examines the relationship between energy transformations, geopolitics, and climate change, addressing gaps in geographical literature and providing insights into the spatial aspects of global power dynamics. The incorporation of geographical theories and analyses enhances the study and provides a holistic understanding of how energy resources influence political strategies and shape international relations in the 21st century.

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