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Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract <p>The British gas industry has experienced a massive structural reorganisation since the 1980's with the privatisation of the national monopoly company British Gas in 1986 and the ensuing market liberalisation. These developments were largely driven by logic of economic efficiency, and traditional energy policy concerns, such as managing the balance of energy sources and ensuring security of adequate supplies, were not a major concern (Helm, 2005; Stern, 2004). The new approach thus represented a paradigmatic shift from the state monopoly model of the post-war period in which control over energy resources and self-sufficiency took priority.</p> <p>Helm (2005, p.3) argues that since the turn of the millennium another structural break has taken place amounting to a 'paradigm shift' as supply security considerations entered the energy policy discourse. The reason is mainly the realisation of the dawning depletion of the UK's domestic resources.</p> <p>The aim of this paper is two-fold: Firstly, to attempt to explain the move to the liberal market paradigm and how it resulted in a structural tendency for a continued opening towards the international markets. A historical institutional perspective will be adopted to account for the liberalisation developments in the 1980's. Particular attention will be given to the role of ideas in the process. The objective is to demonstrate how the existing institutional arrangements in interplay with ideational currents facilitated the structural change that took place in the gas industry. Furthermore, they necessitated an opening up to the outside, namely towards the European Union (EU). Thereafter, the ideational paradigm shift has had a long-lasting effect on later developments.</p> <p>Secondly, the paper will aim to assess the implications of the new 'security paradigm' and to what extent it can be considered a change from the 'liberalisation paradigm'. It will be argued that it cannot – at least as yet – be considered a paradigmatic shift in the same sense as liberalisation in the 1980s. The entering of security in the discourse amounts to little more than a defence of the liberalised market structure. The securitisation theory developed by Buzan (1991) and Waever (1995) will be introduced here to be applied on a study on the British government's position on security of supply issues since 2000, as expressed in various government reports on energy policy. It will be shown that market logic and non-interference is justified on security grounds. Lack of European and global liberalisation is presented as the real security problem, thus externalising responsibility.</p>			
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