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Oil (PRS - Polity Resources series)

Gavin Bridge, Philippe Le Billon



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Oil pulses through our daily lives. It is the plastic we touch, the food we eat, and the way we move. Oil politics in the twentieth century was about the management of abundance, state power and market growth. The legacy of this age of plenty includes declining conventional oil reserves, volatile prices, climate change, and enduring poverty in many oil rich countries. The oil sector is now in need of reform. Yet no one seems at the helm, leaving a vital source of energy at the whim of dictators, speculators and corporate operators, and our societies locked into unsustainable growth models.

In this in-depth primer to the world's wealthiest industry, authors Gavin Bridge and Philippe Le Billon take a fresh look at the contemporary geopolitics of oil. Going beyond simple assertions of peak oil and an oil curse, they point to an industry reordered by internationalized state oil companies, Asian consumerism shifting demand, the insecurities and violent assertiveness of declining powers, and the dilemmas of post-oil energy transition.

As a new geopolitics of oil emerges, the need for effective global oil governance becomes imperative. Praising the growing influence of civil society and attentive to the institutionalization of producer-consumer cooperation, this book identifies challenges and opportunities to curtail price volatility, curb demand and the growth of dirty oil, de-carbonise energy systems, and improve governance in oil producing countries.

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