

The Turkish Anti-Nuclear Platform: A Counter-Hegemonic Struggle

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Abstract : The Justice and Development Party (AKP) government has included nuclear power as a major component of Turkey's new energy strategy by promoting it as the only alternative for Turkey to diversify energy resources, trigger economic growth, and boost competitiveness of the country. The effective promotion of such a framing has created a hegemonic discourse around nuclear energy in Turkey. However, fiercely opposing the nuclear initiative of the government, the Turkish anti-nuclear platform (ANP) composed of more than 50 civil society groups has challenged the hegemonic discourse of the AKP government by presenting nuclear energy as dangerous for human health, human rights, and the protection of environment. Based on an engagement between Gramscian perspective and Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, this paper considers the discourses of the Turkish anti-nuclear platform and its associated activities as a counter-hegemonic strategy to change the 'common sense' on nuclear energy in Turkey. Analyzing the data from interviews with the representatives of the anti-nuclear platform coupled with primary sources, such as Parliamentary Records and official statements by civil society organizations, the paper highlights how the anti-nuclear platform exercises power through counter-hegemonic discourses in terms of the delegitimization of nuclear energy in Turkey.

Keywords : counter-hegemony, discourse, nuclear energy, Turkey

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