

Chapter 8

Multilevel Hydropolitics in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin

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The early transboundary water literature has tended to take a black-and-white approach to the study of transboundary water politics by framing water as an impetus for either conflict or cooperation, reflecting conventional realist and liberal approaches to International Relations (Naff and Matson, 1984; Gleick, 1993; Lowi, 1995; Wolf, 1998). Critical of this dichotomous approach, “London school” scholars have demonstrated that conflict and cooperation over transboundary water resources may coexist (Mirumachi, 2015; Zeitoun and Warner, 2006), and that an exclusively realist or liberal conception of hydropolitics runs the risk of overlooking the multi-scalar nature of hydropolitics (Harris and Alatout, 2010; Menga, 2016; Warner and Zawahri, 2012). The emphasis on interstate water conflict and cooperation has hindered an understanding of how institutions and actors who operate at domestic and transnational scales may influence transboundary water management processes. These processes are part of a broader “waterscape” in which the power dynamics and social relations between different water users shape and are shaped by water’s material flows and its constructed meaning. Furthermore, an examination of the multi-scalar nature of transboundary water interactions provides insight into how the politics of water happen beyond the scope of fixed territorial and administrative entities (Menga, 2016).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector entities, local and municipal governments, landowners and farmers are just a few of the many actors with an interest in the management of transboundary water resources. In addition to this assortment of stakeholders, domestic political pressures can influence hegemonic states to alter their behaviors, while non-state actors operating at the domestic and transnational levels, such as NGO's, can also impact a hegemon's behavior (Warner and Zawahri, 2012).

Transboundary water politics can be conceptualized as occurring at multiple scales that are continuously defined and redefined by political and power relations. An examination of the multilevel nature of hydropolitics in the Euphrates–Tigris (ET) basin provides an opportunity to understand how the management of transboundary water resources is influenced by actors who operate within, between, and across different socially and politically constructed scales. Capitalizing on its upstream position and mobilizing extensive technical and financial resources, Turkey has engaged in extensive hydraulic development through its Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP), which aims to bring irrigation, hydropower and enhanced socioeconomic development to the country's underdeveloped southeast (Kibaroglu, 2003; Warner, 2012). Given that Turkey has built over 60 dams on the Tigris and Euphrates despite the protests of downstream Syria and Iraq and that the three riparian states have signed several bilateral agreements relating to the cooperative management of the basin's waters, it would seem that Turkey is the basin hegemon. However, hegemony is a multilayered phenomenon (Warner, 2008), and a consideration of how Turkish hegemony is challenged and contested both at home and abroad can help us develop a more nuanced understanding of the basin's hydropolitics.

As Menga (2016) contends, large dams offer a unique insight into the multiscale nature of transboundary hydropolitics because they can be domestically regarded as national symbols of pride and progress while at the same time their construction yields repercussions for downstream states. Indeed, the GAP has been regarded with national pride as an integral part of Turkey's hydraulic mission to enhance socioeconomic development and solidify its standing as a regional power (Warner, 2008). In the same vein, the GAP has been contested at home and abroad by non-state actors. Some Kurds have viewed the GAP as an imperial project designed to forcibly integrate them into Turkish society, while domestic and international environmental NGOs have protested against the controversial Ilisu Dam on environmental and humanitarian grounds (Bilgen, 2018; Warner, 2012). European investment firms and regional actors such as the EU add another layer to the picture. Turkish hydro-hegemony is therefore played out and contested at multiple scales, from the domestic to the transnational, as non-state actors employ different strategies to pursue their own interests.

This chapter seeks to investigate the multilevel nature of hydropolitics in the Tigris–Euphrates basin by understanding how domestic and transnational actors influence interstate water management. Analyzing the nexus between domestic and international affairs can lead to a better understanding of how non-state actors

contribute to conflictual and cooperative interactions over transboundary water resources. To do so, this chapter is organized as follows. The next section will explore the multi-scalar nature of transboundary water politics by drawing on perspectives from international relations, political geography, and critical hydropolitics, highlighting the role of transnational, non-state actors. Next, the multi-level nature of hydropolitics will be connected with the Framework of Hydro-hegemony to demonstrate that hegemony is shaped and contested by actors who operate at the domestic, interstate, and transnational levels. The fourth section will utilize the ET river basin as a case study to explore the nexus between the domestic and international components of transboundary water relations. The dynamics of the Ilisu dam controversy will be fleshed out to show how the politicization and securitization of water at multiple levels led to the contest of Turkish dominance over regional hydropolitics by actors both at home and abroad. Furthermore, the weaponization of water in Syria and Iraq by ISIS will be used to illustrate how the lines between state and non-state actors are often blurred when both are competing for state sovereignty. The final section will conclude with a discussion on why taking a multi-scalar approach to the study of hydropolitics matters with implications for the broader field.

1. The Multilevel Nature of Hydropolitics

The nexus between domestic and international politics has been widely considered in the broader international relations literature (Fearon, 1998; Milner, 1997; Putnam, 1998); yet, this area of study is not as developed in the hydropolitics literature. Hydropolitical analyses tend to be approached from a realist or a neoliberal institutionalist perspective. Embedded within the water discourse is an either-or approach that emphasizes the role that transboundary waters play in engendering conflict or cooperation between states (Furlong, 2006). Neo-Malthusian realist perspectives link freshwater scarcity and other stressors such as population growth to violent conflict between states while institutionalists highlight the role of institutions in facilitating interstate cooperation. While the interstate level may be where decisions are made and legislation is implemented, interactions over transboundary waters take place within and across different levels (see Figure 1).

Indeed, the assumption that states behave as unitary actors unimpeded by domestic concerns in international water negotiations overlooks the fundamental fact that states are composed of different actors with different interests, all of whom exert some influence over decision-making processes (Milner, 1997). Transnational hydropolitics also needs to be taken into consideration as private sector actors and transnational advocacy networks can influence transboundary water management (Conker, 2014). Originating in the 1970s and gaining momentum two decades later (Keohane and Nye, 1972; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Sikkink, 1993), the transnationalist perspective highlights the interconnectivity of people and institutions across the borders of nation-states. Transnational

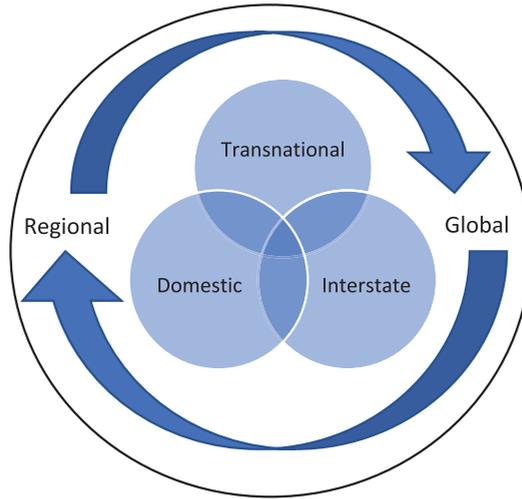


Figure 1. Layers of hydropolitics.

non-state actors include private foundations, domestic and international NGOs, and components of regional and global intergovernmental organizations. The fluid nature of water makes hydropolitics a pertinent field for the application of transnationalism, as the technical and transboundary nature of many water-related problems invites the participation of experts, NGOs, private firms, and epistemic communities to work together across political boundaries to craft solutions (Hale, 2020). As seen in Figure 1, the domestic and transnational layers are connected as actors within a country interact with outsiders. Interactions between different actors can occur horizontally, vertically, and diagonally, as increasing interdependence forces actors to interact across different levels (Conker, 2014). These interactions all take place within the broader context of regional and global politics.

1.1 *Moving beyond the territorial trap*

Much of the literature on transboundary water relations falls into what Agnew (1994) terms the “territorial trap” through a state-centric perspective that precludes an understanding of how interactions over transboundary waters occur within and across states, as well as between them. The defining of a state as a fixed unit of sovereign space precludes the inclusion of non-state actors into the analysis of international conflict and cooperation. This, along with the sharp polarity between the domestic and foreign spheres and the conception of the state as “existing prior to and as a container of society”, form the territorial trap that IR theories, and hydropolitical analyses, often fall into (Agnew, 1994: 59). In the literature on transboundary water cooperation, the focus on cooperation that occurs at the basin level

does not account for how domestic constituents and national and transnational non-state actors influence cooperative outcomes. While the literature may perceive states as unitary actors, the picture is more complex. In Turkey, for example, municipalities with representatives from the pro-Kurdish People's Democratic Party (HDP) tend to hold a much more critical view over dam construction in the country's southeast than other municipalities (BirGün, 2017). Non-state actors can also be influential players; in India and China, non-state actors held the state accountable for abiding by their own water quality policies (Zawahri and Hensengerth, 2012). The private sector represents another important sphere of influence operating within the umbrella of the state. While the International Monetary Fund successfully pushed Turkey to privatize, clientelist relations continued and most major tenders were snapped up by five holding companies, run by businessmen with close personal relations with the ruling coalition (Esen and Gümüşcü, 2018). When it comes to the privatization of infrastructure, the build-operate-transfer model can function as an invited space where private sector entities are invited by state elites to participate in decision-making and finance large infrastructure projects (Durdyev and Ismail, 2017).

The state-centric perspective is also predominant in the literature on hydro-hegemony, where the state is viewed as the hegemon (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006). This conception of the state as the main actor engaged in, and contesting, basin-wide management practices, is problematic for several reasons. First, it inhibits analysis of how the state's control may be contested from both within and without the state (Warner *et al.*, 2017). Second, it misses out on how the consequences of hegemony are also experienced by non-state actors, and that these actors may participate in contestations of hegemony (Selby, 2007). Third, the state-centric worldview emphasized by traditional hydro-hegemony theory is at odds with its supposed roots in Gramscian hegemony, which largely sought to analyze the struggles between the state and civil society (Selby, 2007). In sum, the state-centric view adopted by the literature on transboundary water conflict and cooperation makes it difficult to identify important non-state actors and leaves little room for an analysis of how transboundary governance networks can impact water relations.

1.2 Deconstructing scale

It is ironic that one of the most interconnected and mobile resources on the planet is governed by a series of fragmented, socially constructed systems. An understanding of the politics of scale and the extent to which scale is socially and politically constructed can help provide a more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted nature of transboundary water governance. The politics of scale underscores how conventional spatial domains such as the "local" and "regional" are not fixed repositories of space in which social processes occur but are rather constructed by people as a way to make sense of these social processes. Political geographers and ecologists have long debated the relationship between scale,

mobile natural resources like water, and the political constructs in their management (Brown and Purcell, 2005; Cox, 1998; Swyngedouw, 2007). Some scholars have argued that scale is an important analytical tool in the analysis of the social power dynamics embedded within human–environment relationships (Harris and Alatout, 2010) while others have suggested that the use of scale is problematic given its fixed, hierarchical connotations (Marston *et al.*, 2005). Toward this end, MacKinnon (2011) suggested that replacing the term “politics of scale” with “scalar politics” would more accurately highlight the processes and institutionalized practices that occur across different scales as the object of analysis. Within the hydropolitics literature, it is becoming increasingly recognized that a scalar perspective is important for fleshing out the dynamics of human–water relationships (Feitelson and Fischhendler, 2009; Harris and Alatout, 2010; Sneddon and Fox, 2006). The usefulness of a scalar approach to the study of hydropolitics is also underpinned by the fact that water is managed and governed by political boundaries that are socially constructed for the purpose of restricting water to a fixed territorial scale (Norman *et al.*, 2012).

Spaces in which humans and water interact are continuously constructed and reconstructed to craft a waterscape that advances a favorable pattern of socioecological arrangements that reflect the power relations from which they arose (Swyngedouw, 2007). Indeed, the term “waterscape” has been used to conceptualize water and the broader context in which it is contained as a socio-natural entity “in which social power is embedded in, and shaped by, both water’s material flows and its symbolic meanings, and which becomes embodied in, and manifested through, a wide array of physical objects and forms of representation” (Budds and Hinojosa, 2012: 124). As an analytical concept, waterscapes call attention to the inseparable linkages that exist between water, different actors, and the power dynamics and social relations that dictate their interactions. The emphasis is therefore on process rather than scale. Actors can occupy different spaces at different times; for example, environmental NGOs can operate at different levels as they work to protect water resources (Budds and Hinojosa, 2012). Their lawyers might push back against government decisions, their technical teams might produce environmental impact assessments to push back against proposed infrastructure, and their outreach staff might liaise with local communities to gain new perspectives. Utilizing the waterscape as the unit of inquiry enables analysis to extend beyond conventional scalar hierarchies and generate a more enriched understanding of how water is co-produced by the reinforcing relationships among people, water flows, institutions, practices, and social relations.

The construction of large dams is a prime example of how human–water arrangements shape and are shaped by broader power, social, cultural, and economic relations (Menga, 2016). Indeed, as this chapter will later show, the GAP in southeastern Turkey is an example of how political power and social relations shape our relationship with water and how water can shape these forces.

These relationships unfold at multiple scales as domestic concerns about national identity, security, and socioeconomic development mix with concerns about the dams' environmental and cultural impacts that are spearheaded by networks of domestic and international NGOs to influence the nature of the waterscape. Private investors and regional organizations such as the EU also exert influence at different scales. While each of these scales can be viewed in isolation, they are also inextricably linked to processes, actors, and institutions that exist within and across other scales that together produce and are produced by hydro–social relations.

2. Power, Scale and Hydro-Hegemony

In addition to providing nuance to the concept of scale and problematizing the state-centricity of conventional approaches to hydropolitics, this chapter also seeks to understand how the framework of hydro-hegemony (FHH) may be used as an analytical tool for examining how the dynamics of transboundary water interactions play out at different levels. Developed by Zeitoun and Warner (2006) and later refined by Cascão and Zeitoun (2010), Menga (2016), and Warner *et al.* (2017), hydro-hegemony as a framework seeks to shed light on the broader political context in which interactions over water take place. It also seeks to reveal the different tactics and strategies that are used to secure access to and utilization of water. Central to the framework of hydro-hegemony is the idea that power, in both its material and discursive forms, is instrumental in pursuing and contesting hegemonic agendas (Cascão, 2008; Zeitoun *et al.*, 2011). Taken together, power and hydro-hegemony have been used to explain the coexistence of conflict and cooperation in international river basins (e.g., Mirumachi, 2015; Zeitoun and Allan, 2008; Zeitoun and Mirumachi, 2008). Instead of being neatly written off as being either conflictive or cooperative, hydropolitical interactions are often characterized by simultaneous conflict and cooperation that is shaped by broader power relations. While the FHH was initially designed to help explain the nature of interactions between states, subsequent research has moved beyond the state-centric approach to explore how hydro-hegemony is produced and challenged by different actors at different scales (e.g., Hensengerth, 2018; Warner, 2012). The next section will flesh out the interrelated concepts of power and hydro-hegemony in the following three parts: (a) further developing the concept of hegemony and its application in the hydropolitical literature, (b) drawing on Lukes' (2005) three dimensions of power to outline how power is used to contest and reinforce hydro-hegemony, and (c) engaging with the idea of hegemony as a layered phenomenon (Warner, 2008) and connecting power to the concept of scale in an attempt to understand how non-state actors may be incorporated into hegemonic analysis.

2.1 The framework of hydro-hegemony

Hydro-hegemony draws its professed roots from the works of Gramsci, who saw the bourgeoisie as hegemonic in capitalist society due to their exertion of “power over others beyond that accounted for by coercion or law” (McLean and MacMillan, 2003: 239). Typically viewed as leadership grounded within authority (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006), hegemony itself isn’t necessarily a negative concept, although the empirical literature on hydro-hegemony tends to focus on instances where hegemony has led to destructive or inequitable outcomes (Warner *et al.*, 2017). What distinguishes hegemony from dominance is its dependence on both control and consent (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006). In addition to gaining and maintaining the upper hand, hegemonic actors also capture the consent of others. In other words, hegemonic leaders need to secure both control and followers (Prys, 2008).

Hydro-hegemony act to secure compliance through three main strategies: resource capture, integration, and containment (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006). They exercise these strategies through a variety of compliance-producing mechanisms, including the use of incentives, securitization of an issue, constructing knowledge about an issue so that it suits the interests of a particular party, and institutionalizing a favorable *status quo* with the signing of treaties. Hegemonic riparian states have a large arsenal of compliance-inducing tools at their disposal. It is important to note that these mechanisms do not exist in and of themselves; they are underpinned by factors such as international support, financial capacity, and geographical position (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006). Countries that enjoy large amounts of political and financial support in the international sphere typically have a favorable political position that translates into a favorable position when it comes to accessing water. On the other hand, states that are reliant on external donor money for funding water-related projects are likely to be constrained from development due to donor-imposed regulations. States that finance their hydraulic development projects with internal funding sources, such as Turkey, are in a better position to advance unilateral projects and policies. Finally, a favorable geographical position relative to the river’s headwaters provides riparians with the opportunity to essentially “control the tap” absent any downstream resistance.

At the surface it may seem as if hydro-hegemony can pursue their water-related interests without question. However, non-hegemonic actors can, and do, challenge and contest hydro-hegemony. Non-hegemonic actors may use different forms of power to counterhegemonic acts (Casção, 2008; Daoudy, 2009). Issue linkage, calling on international law, and obstructive tactics may be used to reduce the hegemon’s room for maneuvering. For example, in the Rhine river basin, upstream France and Germany were provided with compensation from the downstream Netherlands for reducing their chloride pollution (Dieperink, 2011). Within the ET basin, Turkish security concerns were linked with Syrian concerns over

unilateral Turkish development seeking to cajole Turkey into signing the first Turkish-Syrian water agreement (Daoudy, 2008). The fact that hegemony may be contested by acts committed by non-hegemonic actors begs the question of whether or not hegemony can still exist (Sumer, 2014). Selby (2007) and Naidoo *et al.* (2007) critiqued the hydro-hegemony framework from a critical studies perspective. They argued that its tendency to overlook the role of global elites as well as national and transnational actors is problematic given the dynamic nature of capitalism and globalization. Lopes (2011) gave a neo-institutionalist take on hydro-hegemony and found it wanting. Hydro-hegemonic arrangements do not always fit neatly into a Realist framework given the waning authority of state sovereignty and the increasing overlap between state and non-state actors. Counterhegemonic actors may mobilize helpful discourse and institutions to break the hegemonic pattern. Additionally, Tawfik and Rawia (2015) claim that the hydro-hegemonic approach underestimates the agency of non-hegemony, systematically “corroding” hegemony.

2.2 Conceptualizing power

Hydro-hegemonic analysis is often premised on the fact that hegemony occurs in situations of power asymmetry. Indeed, power makes up one of the pillars of hydro-hegemony in Zeitoun and Warner’s (2006) original framework. A contested concept within the social sciences, the role of power in determining hydropolitical outcomes and hydro-hegemonic arrangements has been the subject of numerous analyses (e.g., Daoudy, 2005; Lowi, 1993; Zeitoun and Allan, 2008; Zeitoun and Mirumachi, 2008). The common consensus is that in basins with extreme power asymmetries, such as the ET, Jordan, and the Nile, hydro-hegemony have been able to utilize various forms of power to pursue their interests and co-opt the cooperation of other basin states. Traditionally separated into “hard” and “soft” dimensions, power is important to study because it is a primary determinant of water management structures. In hydro-hegemony theory, the more powerful actor, both in terms of hard power (i.e., military capability) and soft power (i.e., the ability to use noncoercive means to further its interests), will maintain the most control over a given water resource, subordinating weaker riparians. While there is not a universally accepted way to define what power is, many analysts have used Lukes’ (2005) three dimensions of power — decision-making power, non-decision-making power, and ideological power — to guide their inquiry. A closer look at these dimensions of power is therefore merited.

Power is typically thought of in terms of guns, tanks, and money. The country with the largest army or the most money is likely going to be the last one to back down. Indeed, a country’s military and financial resources, along with its ability to access knowledge and mobilize political support, constitute a fundamental

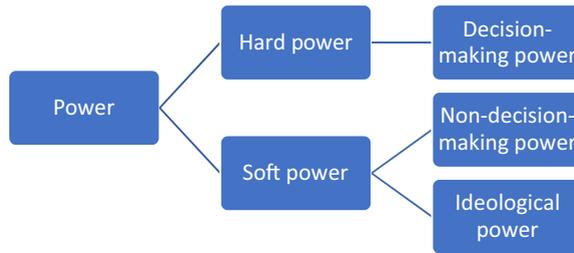


Figure 2. Lukes' three dimensions of power.

pillar of power (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006). This type of power is often referred to as “hard” or “material” power because of its visible nature (Zeitoun and Allan, 2008). However, a consideration of other, less visible forms of power is important, as these types of “soft” power are often what enable hegemony to be good at “getting others to want what [they] want”, (Nye, 1990: 31). Lukes' (2005) second and third dimensions of power are both concerned with these immaterial forms of power (see Figure 2).

In Lukes' second dimension of power, actors set the rules of the game through the use of bargaining power. The third dimension of power, ideational power, refers to a state's ability to shape discourse (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006), and is realized through processes of knowledge construction and securitization. This dimension of power is often used to conceal unfavorable aspects of water relations, such as inequitable distribution while highlighting more positive aspects. With ideational power, the *status quo* becomes so normalized that it is rarely challenged, even though it is clearly inequitable (Zeitoun and Allan, 2008). Furthermore, this type of power often has the effect of canceling out opposing viewpoints voiced by civil society, highlighting the need to more closely examine the linkages between power and scale.

2.2.1 Linking power to scale

Power is relative. Like scale, power arrangements are not fixed and change over time as social, political, and economic relations fluctuate. Indeed, changes in power configurations can result in changes to scalar dynamics, and *vice versa* (Swyngedouw, 2005). Gaventa's (2005) power cube is a useful tool for understanding the relationship between scale and Lukes' three dimensions of power. Embedded within Gaventa's power cube is the idea that Lukes' conception of decision-making power, non-decision-making power, and ideological power correspond to visible, hidden, and invisible forms of power, respectively. However, Gaventa goes beyond this conceptualization to argue that “power must be

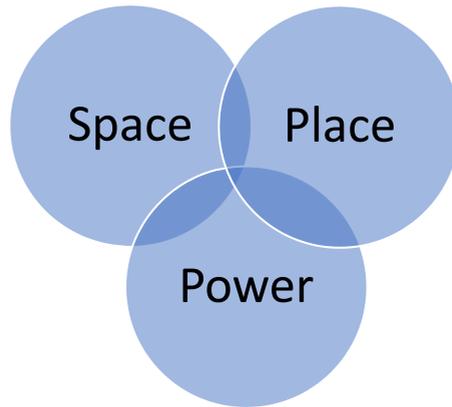


Figure 3. Gaventa's power cube reconceptualized.

understood in relation to how spaces for engagement are created, the levels of power (from local to global), as well as different forms of power across them" (2005: 6). The power cube links power to spaces through which people can exert power to influence policies and discourses. These spaces are socially constructed and both shape and are shaped by power relations. Such spaces can be closed to all but an elite group of decision-makers, inclusive to certain non-elites by invitation, or claimed by less powerful actors (Gaventa, 2005). The power cube also links power to places (e.g., global, national and local places) where different types of power reside and decision-making occurs. While typically conceptualized as a cube, we argue that these relationships are better depicted as an interconnected set of rings (see Figure 3).

Visualizing the relationships between power, space and place in this way emphasizes the interrelated nature of each of these domains. For example, actors may create new spaces of engagement by gaining or losing certain types of power, while new spaces may be opened or closed by changes in the place at which power is utilized. These dynamics are constantly playing out in interactions over transboundary water resources. Interactions between elite decision-makers or members of civil society establish different spaces while these interactions themselves occur within and across different places. Hydropolitics is therefore very much a multi-scalar phenomenon.

3. Incorporating Non-State Actors into the FHH

Power and hydro-hegemony involve different sets of actors who operate across interrelated scales. Why then has the majority of hydro-hegemonic analyses privileged the role of the state in perpetuating these interactions?

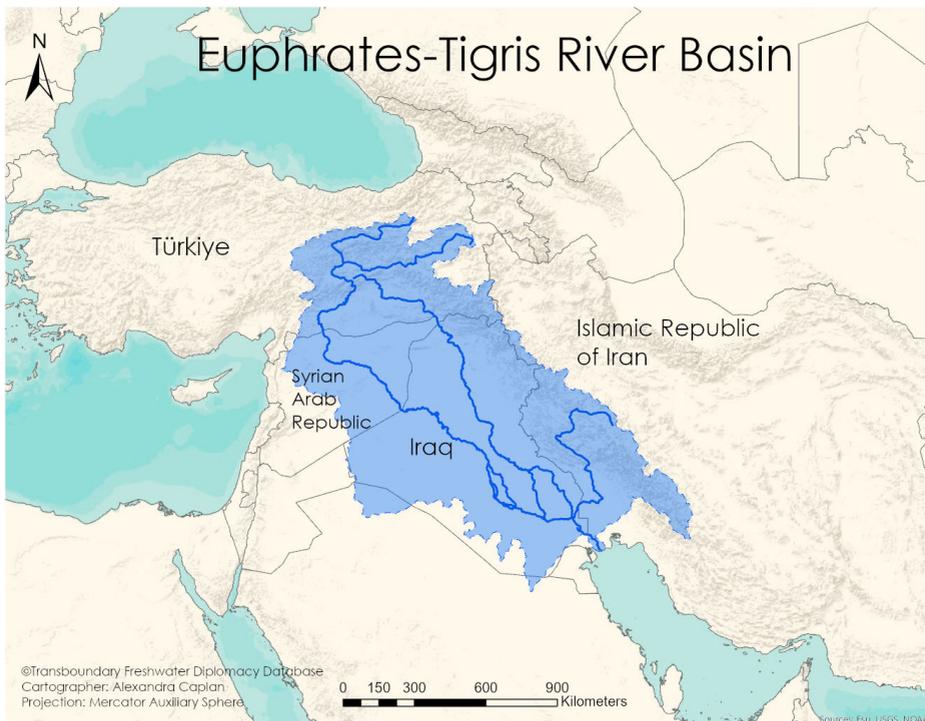
Traditionally, the concept of hydro-hegemony has overlooked the increasingly fuzzy boundary between state and non-state actors. As Suhardiman and Giordano (2012) note, the same actor can belong to both sectors. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, for instance, is an example. Seeking to develop their own state under an Islamic Caliphate, ISIS is a non-state actor who has taken the role of a state actor in various instances during their engagement in Iraq and Syria. The capture of key cities and hydraulic infrastructure, such as the Mosul Dam, enabled ISIS to control water supplies, levy taxes, distribute key food products such as subsidized bread, and occupy roles traditionally associated with states (Daoudy, 2020; Martínez and Eng, 2017). With its weaponization of water, however, ISIS pursued conflicting objectives (Von Lossow, 2016). Persistent threats to flood or dry out agricultural land in opposition areas indicated that ISIS was committed to pursuing its goals by carrying out acts of terror. However, any disruptions in water and electricity supply also impacted ISIS supporters living among the broader civilian population. Furthermore, every interference in water infrastructure and supply caused by ISIS undermined the legitimacy that the organization sought. Its bid for statehood was undermined by its reliance on violence to maintain authority, yet in the absence of the state, ISIS had provided vital public services. The distinction between who is a state actor and who is a non-state actor is therefore not as clear as it might have once been.

Hegemony as a state-centric concept is counter-intuitive because hegemons have to interact with actors across different scales and defend their interests across different scales (Warner and Zawahri, 2012). Furthermore, as Warner (2008) points out, hegemony itself is enacted and contested across different domains. In the hydropolitical literature, hegemony is typically depicted as a phenomenon that occurs at the level of the international river basin. However, hegemony can play out at the national, regional and even global levels as actors seek to present their interests as the general interest (Warner, 2008). To this end, power dynamics are constantly unfolding between actors who occupy different spaces and places. Even when power asymmetry exists, non-state actors such as NGOs, private sector entities and networks of experts can influence transboundary water management outcomes (Warner and Zawahri, 2012). These actors exert influence by utilizing the power available to them to support or contest arrangements imposed by “hegemonic” actors. For example, non-state actors may lobby government officials, enter into alliances with prominent international allies, catalyze public protests, leak reports to the media and take legal action against their opponents (Warner, 2008; Zawahri and Hensengerth, 2012). These interactions can be conceptualized as occurring on multilevel chessboards as actors operating locally, nationally and transnationally engage with one another.

4. Multilevel Hydropolitics in the ET Basin

Now that the multi-scalar nature of power and hydro-hegemony has been discussed, these concepts will now be applied to a hydropolitical analysis of transboundary water conflict and cooperation in the ET basin (Map 1). The dynamics of hydro-hegemony in the ET basin ensue at different scales just as Turkey’s hydropolitics play out at multiple, interlinked levels. Indeed, as this section will show, Turkish dominance over the basin’s water resources is contested and challenged by actors both at home and abroad.

The hydropolitics of the ET river basin is underpinned by the basin’s hydrography. The headwaters of both rivers originate in southeastern Turkey, with the Euphrates flowing southward into Syria for approximately 700 km before it flows into Iraq and the Tigris taking a more direct course into Iraq (FAO, 2009). The two rivers join just north of Basra, Iraq, to form the Shatt al-Arab before draining into the Persian Gulf. As seen in the map, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are also part of the basin’s catchment area. Of these countries, Iran is the only



Map 1. The Euphrates and Tigris.

significant contributor to the basin's waters, contributing about 10% of the Tigris' flow, and while generally not considered a main riparian, it can play a significant role in influencing the basin's hydropolitics.

From a hydrological and a hydropolitical perspective, it is important to note that Turkish officials and scholars emphasize the need to consider the Tigris and Euphrates rivers as forming a single, joint system (Bilen, 2000; Kibaroglu, 2002), while Iraq views the rivers as separate (Dolatyar and Gray, 2000). Considering the Tigris and Euphrates as a conjoint system highlights Turkey's status as a major contributor to both rivers, while considering the river separately would mark Iraq as the majority contributor to the Tigris. Given that some of the legal basis for claiming shares of transboundary waters rests on how much contribution a particular state makes to a transboundary basin, Turkey has a clear political interest in claiming to make a majority contribution to the joint Tigris–Euphrates system (Harris and Alatout, 2010). It would make it easier for Turkey to legitimize transferring water between the two rivers and export any “excess” water, as was the key idea behind the regional “Peace Pipeline” Turkey proposed in the 1980s, which did not materialize.

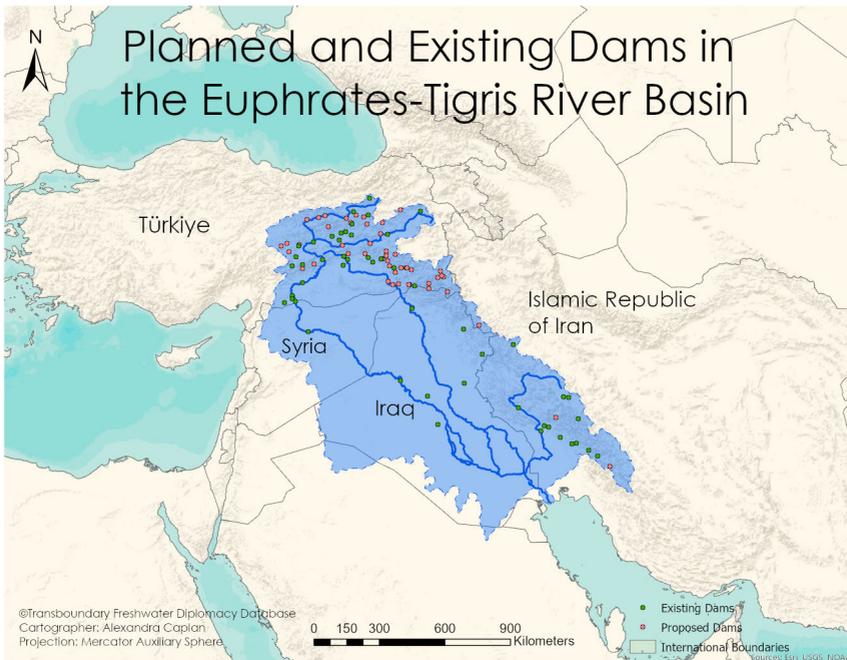
Hydropolitics in the Tigris–Euphrates basin has historically fluctuated in tandem with the dynamics of the broader political relations between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq and their political economies. As Turkey industrialized and transformed into a market economy, Iraq and Syria operate under mixed economies that are largely supported by agriculture and, in Iraq's case, oil (Daoudy, 2009). During the 1960s–1980s, the basin's hydropolitical climate was characterized by unilateral hydraulic development taking place against a backdrop of worsening political relations (Conker, 2014; Daoudy, 2009). The Southeast Anatolian Project (see Box 1), known by its Turkish acronym GAP, began in the 1970s to provide

Box 1. The GAP.

Turkey's *Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi* (GAP, Map 2) is one of the largest and most ambitious hydraulic development projects undertaken in the developing world. Energy price hikes and increasing domestic demand combined with a desire to turn Turkey's underdeveloped but agriculturally fertile southeast into the “breadbasket” of the Middle East provided the impetus for the initiation of the GAP in the 1970's. The construction of 22 dam projects (see inset figure in Map 2) and 19 hydroelectric power plants on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers would bring cheaper energy and irrigate 1.8 million hectares of arid agricultural land (Bilgen, 2018). Construction of the first dam, the Keban Dam, was completed in 1973, while the crownpiece of the GAP, the Atatürk Dam, was completed in 1992 (Kibaroglu, 2002). Over time, the GAP morphed into what Turkish officials labeled a “sustainable human development project” that was more concerned with people rather than water as the government

Box 1. (Continued)

sought to modernize rural southeast Anatolia and transform its political, cultural, socioeconomic, and environmental landscapes (Bilgen, 2018; Warner, 2012). The multisectoral nature of the GAP was codified in the GAP Master Plan of 1989, which outlined four key components of the project: (1) to efficiently manage the GAP region's soil and water resources for domestic, agricultural, and industrial purposes; (2) to encourage the adoption of better agricultural practices; (3) to build-up the region's private sector by encouraging private entrepreneurship; and (4) to reduce emigration from the southeast by enhancing education, employment, and social services (Kibaroglu, 2002). Turkey's aspirations to become a European Union member state also influenced the development of the GAP, as accession into the EU would require a restructuring of the Turkish economy (Bilgen, 2018). What had originally started as a technical project in the 1970s therefore transformed into a multisectoral project with ecological, humanitarian, cultural, socioeconomic and political ramifications.



Map 2. The southeastern Anatolia Project.

Source: Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive, reproduced with permission.

hydropower and irrigation water to the arid and underdeveloped southeast. In Syria and Iraq, a growing desire to promote food security and food self-sufficiency spurred irrigation projects (Kibaroglu, 2002). As the upstream country, the

implications of Turkey's GAP on regional hydropolitics have been significant. The simultaneous construction of the Keban Dam in Turkey and the Tabqa Dam in Syria sparked major concerns about a water shortage in downstream Iraq and fueled a significant water crisis between Syria and Iraq. This crisis was further exacerbated by worsening political relations between the two regimes, and violent conflict was avoided only through Saudi Arabian mediation (Kibaroglu and Scheumann, 2013). Reductions in downstream flow as the result of Turkish dam construction are a significant concern for Syria and Iraq. In a 1987 protocol with Syria, Turkey pledged to release an average of 500 m³/s across the border annually and has continued to uphold this obligation. Downstream concerns about water flow are therefore more focused on what could potentially happen with Turkish control over the water tap given that in the past Turkey has halted all Euphrates flow to fill reservoirs during dry periods (Warner, 2012).

Despite these tensions, water-related cooperation between all three countries persisted during this time period, mainly in the form of technical-related negotiations held between technical experts (Dolatyar and Gray, 2000). The Joint Technical Committee (JTC) remains the only institution in the basin with members from all three main riparian countries. Established in 1983 with the main purpose of determining methods for allocating water, the JTC represents a promising step toward multilateral cooperation (Kibaroglu, 2002). Tensions in broader political relations have continued to preclude agreements over water allocations, as bilateral Syrian-Turkish relations worsened during the 1980s and 1990s due to disputes over Turkey's Hatay province and Syrian support for PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan) insurgents (Conker, 2014). Syrian officials repeatedly linked water to the issue of security by refusing to sign security protocols with Turkey unless Turkey signed a formal water agreement (Dolatyar and Gray, 2000). However, relations between the two countries markedly improved with the signing of the Adana Protocol in 1998. Under this agreement, Syria agreed to closely cooperate with Turkey in security matters by expelling the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Ocalan, from Damascus and ceasing to act as a haven for PKK operatives. The Adana Protocol is exclusively concerned with security matters and the Turkish state did not provide water-related concessions as Syria had demanded. During this same time period, Iraq was predominately occupied with its war with Iran and internal turmoil. However, strong trade ties between Turkey and Iraq meant that bilateral water relations between the two countries remained less strained than those between Syria and Turkey.

In the past 20 years, six bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed, four between Turkey and Syria and one each between Iraq and Syria and Iraq and Turkey. These agreements, which cover issues relating to water quality and technical cooperation, have persisted despite the violence and political instability that has plagued the region since the turn of the century. The expulsion of Ocalan from Syria and the signing of the Adana Protocol has led to cooperation

between high-level Turkish and Syrian water authorities and created new spaces for decision-making (Conker, 2014). While Turkish-Syrian relations have deteriorated since the onset of the Syrian civil war and Turkey's support of the Syrian opposition, middle-level authorities have continued to express enthusiasm for maintaining networks and discussing issues covered in the Turkish-Syrian MoUs (Kirbaroğlu and Scheumann, 2013). Water relations between Turkey and Iraq, while never as contentious as those between Turkey and Syria, have also been affected by regional instability. The growth of Iranian-aligned Shia militias in Iraq (Jones, 2019) has the potential to sour Turkish-Iraqi hydropolitics, given that Turkey and Iran have supported opposite sides throughout the Syrian conflict and historically strong ties between Turkey and Iran have suffered a setback after Turkey's invasion of Syria. However, strong economic interdependencies between Turkey and Iraq may serve as a platform for cooperation in the future.

Thus far, most research exploring the water conflict in the Tigris–Euphrates basin has been limited to interactions that occur at the interstate level. However, non-state actors that operate at the subnational and transnational scales are able to utilize various forms of power to contest hydro-hegemonic strategies. For instance, protests engineered by anti-dam activists over the construction of Turkey's Ilisu Dam blocked external funding to the dam in 2001 and caused Turkey to be much more reliant on internal sources of funding in its hydro-development projects (Warner, 2012). These activists came from local and international NGOs who protested the dam on human rights and environmental grounds. While the construction of the Ilisu Dam was ultimately completed in 2018, their success in temporarily halting the dam's construction and altering the funding infrastructure suggests that non-state actors wield a power of their own that can resist and divert hegemonic interests. The Kurdish people are another group of non-state actors with the potential to wield significant influence over transboundary water relations in the Tigris–Euphrates basin. The GAP, which is located in the predominately Kurdish region of southeast Turkey, has been viewed as an attempt to integrate the Kurds into the Turkish economy and break up their aspirations for independent statehood (Bilgen, 2018). As a result, the GAP has encountered large amounts of resistance from Kurdish communities and their supporters, and the importance of the Kurdish question in Turkey's domestic politics may yet yield significant ramifications on Turkish water policy (Carkoğlu and Eder, 2001). Additionally, the current conflict in Syria leaves space for non-state actors such as ISIS to weaponize water infrastructure in order to further their own interests (Daoudy, 2020). The following sections will explore each of these three issues in more detail.

4.1 Domestic and transnational opposition to the Ilisu dam

The Ilisu dam, which is the first GAP dam constructed on the Tigris, has remained a contentious point of debate for the past two decades. With an operating capacity

of 7.5 billion m³, the reservoir created by the Ilisu dam accounts for approximately half of the Tigris' annual flow (Warner, 2012). Opposition to the dam is centered around the dam's ecological and humanitarian implications. Scientists and environmental activists worry about the downstream impacts that flooding caused by the dam will have on endangered species such as the Eurasian otter and the Euphrates soft-shelled turtle (Hockenos, 2019). Other opponents of the dam argue that the dam will precipitate a cultural and humanitarian crisis. The filling of the Ilisu dam necessitated the flooding of Hasankeyf, an ancient city dating back to the late Assyrian period that is home to numerous archaeological treasures. While the dam has since been filled, networks of anti-dam activists by a coalition of local Turkish NGOs and international NGOs (INGO) managed to delay construction of the dam and caused several private European funders to back out in the early 2000's (Hommes *et al.*, 2016; Warner, 2012). Unable to secure funding from major institutions such as the World Bank, who require the consent of downstream riparians before funding infrastructure projects, Turkey was forced to bank its hopes on the privatization of the water sector in the mid-1990s as a way of funding the Ilisu dam and other GAP projects. This privatization opened the door to private European enterprises such as Balfour Beatty, Impreglio, and Swiss UBS Bank (Warner, 2012). However, privatization also made foreign investors vulnerable to the pressure of INGOs calling for foreign companies to be accountable for their corporate governance practices. Indeed, private European companies such as Balfour Beatty and Swiss UBS Bank pulled out from the Ilisu dam venture shortly after the release of a 2001 environmental impact assessment that failed to meet credit guarantees (Warner, 2012). Furthermore, the portrayal of the Ilisu dam as an ecological and humanitarian disaster by anti-dam activists such as the Hasankeyf Volunteers Association helped internationalize the struggle against the Ilisu dam and even led to the involvement of the European Court of Human Rights when an application against the dam was submitted (Kart and Özerkan, 2006).

4.2 *The GAP and the Kurdish question*

Southeast Anatolia is home to a majority Kurdish population who have historically resisted calls for assimilation by the Turkish republic and have campaigned for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan. The "Kurdish question", which has been variously defined as a human rights issue, a terrorism problem, and an ethnic-identity conflict has occupied a large, and often prioritized, space in Turkish domestic and foreign policy (Ünver, 2015). As a result, it has also played a significant and controversial role in shaping regional hydropolitics. Specifically, the relationship between the GAP and the Kurdish question has been the subject of numerous analyses. Some scholars have argued that the Kurdish question is but one of many issues that characterize the complex network of interactions between

Turkey, Syria, and Iraq (Çarkoğlu and Eder, 2001), while others have made the case that the GAP is part of a broader strategy to integrate the Kurds into the mainstream Turkish state (Nestor, 1996). The emergence of the PKK, which has carried out attacks on water infrastructure and has been involved in violent conflict with Turkey on several occasions has added another layer to the picture. While a full analysis of the Kurdish question is beyond the scope of this chapter, a brief look at how the Kurds have influenced hydropolitics in the ET basin is merited.

The Kurdish question represents an important example of how hydro-hegemonic aspirations, manifested in this case in the construction of dams, can be contested at home and abroad. The securitization of the GAP and the elevation of water as a national security issue (Buzan *et al.*, 1998) has shaped the relationship between Turkey, the Kurds, and water at multiple scales. In the wake of attacks conducted by the PKK on the Atatürk Dam in 1984, dam construction was domestically promoted as a way of fighting back against Kurdish insurgents by blocking rebel movements (Warner *et al.*, 2014). Indeed, the discourse surrounding the construction of the Ilisu Dam in the 1990s highlighted the role of the dam in the “war on PKK terror” (Warner, 2010, quoted in Warner *et al.*, 2014: 474). At the international level, the linkage of the Kurdish question with water has enabled downstream Syria to negotiate water allocation agreements with Turkey. Until the end of the 1990s, Syrian support of the PKK had long been a thorn in Turkey’s side. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Syria acted as a home base for the PKK and its leader, Abdullah Öcalan, and utilized this support as a bargaining chip in negotiations with Turkey (Daoudy, 2009). For instance, in a bilateral 1987 protocol on economic cooperation, Turkey guaranteed a minimum allocation of 500 m³/s of Euphrates waters to Syria. A second protocol pertaining to Turkey’s concerns about the cessation of Syrian support to the PKK was signed in parallel to the water allocation agreement; although the two protocols are not officially connected, the linkage between the two seems clear. During the 1990’s, whenever Turkey reduced the flow of water below this amount, Syria intensified its support of the PKK to incentivize Turkey to honor the minimum quota (Daoudy, 2009). This escalation continued until 1998, when Syrian-Turkish relations reached a low point when Syria expelled Öcalan and the PKK. The implications of the Kurdish question on hydropolitics in the ET basin have also taken on a transnational dimension, as European-based Kurdish activists from organizations such as the Kurdish Human Rights Project were among the first to voice opposition to the construction of the Ilisu Dam (KHRP, 1999). Since then, domestic and transnational activist networks such as the Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive, have framed the Ilisu Dam as a human rights issue due, in part, to its perceived role in repressing Kurdish identity (Warner, 2012). In doing so, these activists have themselves securitized the GAP and have demonstrated that the role of the Kurdish question in shaping Turkish water strategy extends beyond conventional security concerns.

4.3 *Non-state actors and water in Syria and Iraq*

The presence of non-state “state challengers” such as ISIS in the Tigris–Euphrates basin demonstrates that non-state actors can have significant influence on trans-boundary water interactions and that an actor may be considered as both a state and a non-state actor. Daoudy (2020) and von Lossow (2016) show how non-state actors have deployed similar strategies to states in the weaponization of water. For instance, a comparison of the tactics used by the Syrian government and ISIS in their missions to legitimize their control over water resources illustrates that both actors used water as a tool of domination and legitimacy and as a military target/goal. Syria’s policy of “Arabizing” the Kurdish-populated northeast involved excluding the Kurdish people from the benefits yielded by a series of water infrastructure projects in the 1960s and 1970s, while the capture of the Taqba dam by ISIS in 2013 enabled them to restrict the provision of water and electricity services to Raqqa. Additionally, ISIS frequently weaponized water by cutting off water supplies to key areas and stalling enemy advances by threatening to destroy strategic water infrastructure (Daoudy, 2020). Daoudy’s (2020) analysis also reveals that cooperation over water took place between state and non-state actors, even during times of heightened conflict, throwing a spanner in conventional hydropolitical analysis that views conflict and cooperation as distinctive phenomena. The dual nature of ISIS as a non-state actor and as a state-like figure is also shown through an analysis of the water-related aspects of the Syrian conflict; in its quest to establish an Islamic caliphate, the group can also be seen as aspiring to perform state-like functions, including the provision of basic services such as water. Schaap (2016) notes that water resource management under ISIS was shaped by the group’s use of material and ideational power, both of which are traditionally associated with state actors.

ISIS is not the only non-state actor that should be considered in a hydropolitical analysis of the waters of the ET basin. Within the ET basin, the Kurdish-affiliated Democratic Union Party (PYD), which includes its two military wings, the YPG and the YPJ, also demonstrated significant control over water resources during the Syrian conflict. Not only did the American-PYD coalition recapture the Tishrin and Taqba dams from ISIS, enabling them to regain control over significant water and hydropower resources, they also cooperated with the Syrian regime to redirect water from Kurdish populated areas to regime-controlled Qamishli (Daoudy, 2020). These examples further illustrate that, while limited, non-state actors do influence hydropolitical relations, and emphasize the need for an analytical approach that moves beyond the so-called territorial trap.

5. Significance

Water and scale are closely related. Institutions for water management are often organized along local, provincial, national, and international lines, while water

itself flows through different scales during the hydrological cycle. Recognizing that water management and governance occur within a waterscape that shapes and is itself produced by power dynamics and social relations between multiple actors, this chapter explored the multilevel nature of hydropolitics in the ET river basin. Specifically, it sought to understand how non-state actors may be incorporated into a hydro-hegemonic analysis through an examination of the ways in which they (enable or) contest hegemonic behavior. Based on this analysis, three important observations about the nature of hydropolitics in the ET basin can be made.

First, the conflict over the Euphrates and Tigris rivers has fundamentally transformed in the past three decades. Until the 1990s, conflict played out within a conventional realist backdrop of state rivalry (Warner, 2012). Unilateral hydraulic development coincided with worsening political relations between Turkey and Syria, who were at odds over Syrian support of Kurdish insurgents, and Syria and Iraq, whose relations had been deteriorating since the Ba’ath party, ruling in both countries, split in 1966 (Kibaroglu and Scheumann, 2013). Fully engaged in fulfilling its hydraulic mission, Turkey faced opposition from downstream Syria and Iraq over fears that Turkish dams would significantly reduce downstream flow. While technical cooperation occurred between mid-level authorities from all three countries, hydropolitical interactions largely remained limited to the interstate level (Figure 4). However, the privatization of the Turkish water sector in the 1990s transformed water relations from a conventional realist rivalry into a network of state and non-state actors who are involved in water management (Figure 5). Unable to secure funding from major institutions such as the World Bank, and faced with increasing inflation at home, Turkey was forced to turn to private European investors to continue its development plans under the GAP (Warner, 2012).

As seen in Figure 5, privatization broadened the hydropolitical scene by attracting the attention of transnational actors who opposed Turkish dam construction and called for increased accountability from European investors. Domestically,

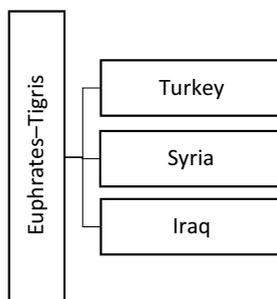


Figure 4. Hydropolitical actors prior to 1995.

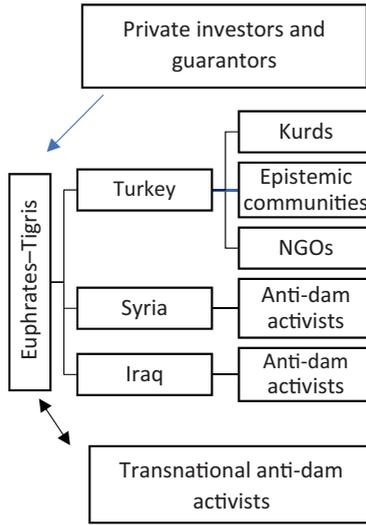


Figure 5. Hydropolitical actors after 1995.

pushback against dam construction had already been voiced by Kurdish insurgents in the 1980s, and the next two decades saw increasing involvement from anti-dam activists, epistemic communities, and other non-state actors protesting the GAP. While interstate negotiations have been constrained to mainly to technical issues and have stalled in recent years, cooperation on social, technical, and economic issues continues in the form of a Track-Two initiative established under the Euphrates–Tigris Initiative for Cooperation (Kibaroglu, 2017). The initiative, which is composed of water professionals and scholars alike, has conducted several capacity-building programs throughout the basin with a view to increase stakeholders’ knowledge of issues such as conflict management, dam safety, and hydrology.

A second observation that can be made from a multi-level analysis of hydropolitics in the ET basin is that non-state actors were, to varying degrees, able to utilize various forms of power to cause visible changes in hegemonic behavior. As previously noted, hydro-hegemonic analysis tends to privilege the state as the main actor in transboundary water relations. The framework of hydro-hegemony illustrates how states can draw on various forms of power to pursue hegemonic policies through resource capture, containment, or integration strategies (Zeitoun and Warner, 2006). As Cascão (2009) pointed out, however, non-hegemonic states can also employ similar strategies to resist and challenge basin hegemons. As the present analysis has shown, non-state actors also adopt various counter-hegemonic strategies to contest hegemonic behavior. For instance, Kurdish insurgents adopted a coercive counter-hegemonic strategy in 1984 when they staged a series of

violent attacks on the Atatürk Dam in an attempt to slow down its construction. Within the context of the Ilisu Dam controversy, networks of domestic and transnational anti-dam activists leveraged different bargaining power tactics to halt the flow of funding and delay construction. For example, anti-dam activists enlisted the support of prominent celebrities within and outside Turkey to increase awareness about the dam and publicize their efforts (Çonker, 2014). Perhaps most influential, however, was the use of ideational power to refute construction of the Ilisu Dam. By framing the Ilisu Dam as an environmental and human rights crisis, opponents of the dam challenged the sanctioned peace and development discourse put forward by Turkey to increase international scrutiny on the project and add an element of urgency to their protests. Indeed, anti-dam activists succeeded in politicizing the dam through several counter-securitization moves, such as depicting the Ilisu Dam as an existential threat to the environment and reframing it as a human rights issue. While construction of the dam moved forward, the counter-hegemonic strategies employed by non-state actors in protest of the dam continue to cast a significant shadow over it.

A final implication from the analysis conducted in this chapter is how the inclusion of non-state actors in hydropolitical analysis sheds light on how power and scale are socially constructed and mutually constitutive. Returning to Gaventa's (2005) power cube, we can see how different actors utilize different forms of power to influence the nature of spaces in which decision-making occurs and actors exert influence. At the interstate level, state governments tend to construct closed spaces in which they carry out relations without the participation of non-state third parties. However, pressure from non-state actors can result in the formation of what Gaventa terms "invited spaces" and "claimed spaces" in which less powerful entities exert power tactics to influence decision-making occurring in closed spaces. The appeal made to the European Court of Human Rights by anti-dam activists is an example of how non-state actors sought to create new scales at which they could exert influence. Indeed, changes in power configurations open up new scales of hydropolitical interactions. For instance, the formation of transnational anti-dam networks composed of domestic and international NGOs opposed to the Ilisu Dam added a new layer to the protests against the dam and established different spaces in which these activists interacted with state actors. In turn, the establishment of this scale and the social interactions that occurred within it gave rise to new forms of power that could be utilized in the struggle against the dam. In Syria and Iraq, the weaponization of water by ISIS, a non-state actor carrying out activities conventionally associated with the state, also opened new spaces for hydropolitical engagement in which power relations played out.

The analysis in this chapter has shown the utility of incorporating non-state actors into hydro-hegemonic analysis. It has demonstrated how non-state actors operating at the domestic and transnational scales may employ different power

tactics to contest hegemonic behavior and create new spaces of hydropolitical engagement that themselves reconfigure power relations. These spaces are part of a broader waterscape constructed by the mutual interactions between water's material flows, its constructed meanings, and power relations between different water users. These dynamics are rooted in competing hydrosocial territorial imaginaries surrounding dam construction and water management in the ET basin. The coexistence of these imaginaries in the same geopolitical space begs the question of if Turkey can really be considered a hegemonic power. If hegemony is premised upon uncontested control, then can the Turkish state be viewed as a true hydro-hegemon when its imaginary of the Ilisu dam as a politically neutral development is challenged by other actors? Some activists and Kurdish radicals view the dam as a symbol of Turkey's attempt to exert physical, discursive, and political power over Kurdish-majority regions (Hommes *et al.*, 2016). Anti-dam activists view the dam as an environmental disaster and a human rights violation and have adopted different power tactics to challenge Turkish primacy. Their usage of bargaining and ideational power created new spaces of engagement that in turn influenced the balance of power between the Turkish state and non-state dam opponents. Competing hydrosocial imaginaries shape the waterscape in other parts of the ET basin as well. The rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq and its use of water as a weapon against the state illustrates how non-state actors may dictate the rules of the game through the use of power. This chapter also demonstrated how a consideration of the nexus between domestic and international politics can refine our understanding of hydropolitical interactions by including non-state actors.

Future research further addressing the ways in which power is practiced by state and non-state actors alike may complement the analysis laid out here. Not all power is considered equal and plays out differently in different contexts (Cascão and Zeitoun, 2010). Since this analysis primarily focused on hydropolitical interactions concerning the role of Turkey as a basin hegemon, future analyses would also do well to consider how the nexus between domestic politics in Syria and Iraq and their foreign policies influence their hydropolitical relations.

6. Conclusion

This chapter has explored the multilevel nature of hydropolitics in the ET river basin. Specifically, it sought to understand how non-state actors may be incorporated into hydro-hegemonic analysis through an examination of the ways in which they (enable or) contest hegemonic behavior.

The analysis in this chapter has shown the utility of incorporating non-state actors into hydro-hegemonic analysis. It has demonstrated how non-state actors

operating at the domestic and transnational scales may employ different power tactics to contest hegemonic behavior and create new spaces of hydropolitical engagement that themselves reconfigure power relations. Anti-dam activists protesting the construction of the Ilisu Dam in Turkey adopted different power tactics to challenge Turkish primacy. Their usage of bargaining and ideational power created new spaces of engagement that in turn influenced the balance of power between the Turkish state and non-state dam opponents. Similarly, the rise of ISIS in Syria and Iraq and its use of water as a weapon against the state illustrates how non-state actors may dictate the rules of the game through the use of power. This chapter also demonstrated how a consideration of the nexus between domestic and international politics can refine our understanding of hydropolitical interactions by including non-state actors.

Future research into the ways in which power is practiced by state and non-state actors alike could complement the analysis conducted in this chapter. Not all power is equal, and power plays out differently in different contexts (Cascão and Zeitoun, 2010). Since this analysis primarily focused on hydropolitical interactions concerning the role of Turkey as a basin hegemon, future analyses would also do well to consider how the nexus between domestic politics in Syria and Iraq and their foreign policies influence their hydropolitical relations.

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