



Who turns the tap?

The impact of non-state actors on the hydro-hegemony of Turkey



Who turns the tap? The impact of non-state actors on the hydro-hegemony of Turkey

Thesis MA Modern Middle East Studies
Leiden University

Personal information

Rosa Valèry Schinkelshoek
Student: 1259725
22-08-1994
rvschinkelshoek@gmail.com

Supervisor: Dr. R. Meijer
Second reader: Prof. Dr. E.J. Zürcher
Word count: 21.488
Date: 09-07-2017

Cover photographs

“Atatürk Dam,” *Atatürk Barajı* <http://www.ataturkbaraji.com/en/> last accessed 07-07-2017.

“Save Hasankeyf, Stop the Ilisu dam,” *Corporate Watch*, 18 September 2015
<https://corporatewatch.org/news/2015/sep/18/save-hasankeyf-stop-il%C4%B1su-dam> last accessed 07-07-2017.

Julia Harte, “Rare Footage of Ilisu: The Dam That Will Flood Homes and History Across Southern Turkey,”
National Geographic, 22 August 2013 <http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/files/2013/08/Dam-protest.jpg> last accessed 07-07-2017.

Content

Introduction	- 3 -
Theory- Hydro-hegemony and the position of non-state actors	- 11 -
1. In control of the flow	- 15 -
- Attempts at riparian cooperation	
- Turkey as hydro-hegemon	
- Rise of non-state protest	
2. The challengers	- 27 -
- NGOs and civil society	
- Kurdish resistance	
3. The hegemon strikes back	- 41 -
- The securitization of water politics	
- Changing the demographic structure	
Conclusion	- 53 -
Bibliography	- 59 -

Introduction

The South-eastern Anatolia Project (GAP) is a significant regional development programme that exhibits the regional potential of Turkey and contributes to national economy in real terms with welfare it brings along. It is a project that sets local initiatives in motion and it has attainable targets. The GAP is the largest project ever in Turkey and also one of the largest throughout the world. As such, it is the indicator of determinedness to walk ahead in unity and openness to further development.¹

GAP Administration, 2016

This statement by the administration of the Southeastern Anatolia Project, known by its Turkish acronym *Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi* (GAP), demonstrates the ambitious character of this water development project that was formally created in 1980. During Atatürk's reign the idea that the waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris could be utilized to advance the development and modernization of Turkey caught on.² Throughout the following decades the Turkish government and specialists worked on ambitious projects that aimed to increase available arable land and generate energy, hereby improving the autarkic ability of the Turkish state.³ These initiatives merged together in 1980 and formed the GAP. The goal of the GAP was to build 22 dams, contribute to 22% of Turkish hydroelectric power and irrigate 1.7 million hectares of land.⁴ Although originally the water development projects had economic goals, the GAP over time became a much larger project that was aimed at sustainable human development in the Southeast region. According to the organization itself its 'primary goal is the happiness of people'.⁵ The GAP was and is promoted as a method to improve health and education services, the position of women, transportation, infrastructure and employment in the Southeast region. Despite this seemingly social character of the GAP, the project was controversial from the start for several reasons and with several parties.

The first critical response to the Turkish plans came from across the borders. The transboundary flow of the Euphrates and the Tigris naturally connects Turkey to Syria and

¹ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "Action Plan GAP," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/action-plan-page-5.html> last accessed 13-06-2017.

² Leila M. Harris, "Water and Conflict Geographies of the Southeastern Anatolia Project," *Society & Natural Resources* 15-8 (2002): 743-759, 748.

³ Jeroen Warner, "The struggle over Turkey's Ilisu Dam: domestic and international security linkages," *International Environmental Agreements* 12 (2012): 231-250, 235.

⁴ Kenneth Cushner, Linda Robertson, Suheyra Kirca, Melek Cakmak, "A cross-cultural material development project to train Turkish development personnel in the Southeastern Anatolia Regional Development Project (GAP)," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 27 (2003): 609-626, 610.

⁵ "What is GAP," *GAP administration*, accessed December 28, 2016, <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/what-is-gap-page-1.html>.

Iraq and so whenever one of the riparian states sets up an ambitious water developing project the other riparian states want to make sure their access to the water supply is safeguarded. Throughout the twentieth century the relations between the riparian states of the Euphrates and Tigris basin went through difficult times and the issue of water often intensified the strains.⁶ Although Syria and Iraq were not on great terms, they were able to unify in their protest against the GAP. Not only were the Syrian and Iraqi government concerned that the implementation of GAP projects would lead to lower water quantity and quality but they also feared that the GAP dams would give Turkey the power and instruments to control the water flow in the region.⁷ The second group that opposed the ideas of the GAP consisted of NGOs and local activists that took a stance based on environmentalist, ethnic, humanitarian or cultural arguments.⁸ Although the propagated aims of the GAP talk about human development and human happiness, activist groups quickly realized that the GAP would have serious consequences for the environment and the cultural heritage of the region and that the sustainable human development would exclude certain parts of the population. The third group that was involved in the GAP and that had to be critical of the proposed projects consisted of international funders.⁹ Due to the magnitude of the GAP Turkey was in need of funding. Traditional international funders, such as the World Bank and UNDP, supported some socio-economic activities of the GAP but refused to finance projects that did not include a tripartite agreement between Turkey, Syria and Iraq.¹⁰ As an alternative the GAP looked at European enterprises for funding and found some willing partners. However, after a while the controversy about human rights and environmental threats reached its pinnacle and as a response many European funders withdrew their support of the GAP.¹¹

Despite the opposition to the GAP, Turkey has been steadily implementing its projects in the last decades. It has built dams, has flooded certain areas and has relocated parts of its population. So how can the continuous development of Turkey's water projects be explained? How have the Turkish government and the GAP administration been able to circumvent all these oppositional groups? Researchers Mark Zeitoun and Jeroen Warner have created a framework that can help explain the developments of water politics around the world and

⁶ Aysegül Kibaroglu and Tugba Evrim Maden, "An analysis of the causes of water crisis in the Euphrates-Tigris river basin," *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences* 4 (2014): 347-353, 349.

⁷ Warner, "The struggle over Turkey's Ilisu Dam," 236.

⁸ Ibid, 235.

⁹ Harris, "Water and Conflict Geographies," 746.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Warner, "The struggle over Turkey's Ilisu Dam," 243.

especially in the Middle East.¹² With the use of the ‘hydro-hegemony’ concept they explain the asymmetric power relations in water politics and the effect of these power relations. Zeitoun and Warner argue that between the riparian states of a certain basin one state is able to dominate the others. The state that is most successful in combining its riparian position, power and exploitation potential has the highest hydropower potential of the basin.¹³ In the case of the Euphrates-Tigris basin Turkey has been able to act as the hydro-hegemon and has throughout the twentieth century dominated water politics over Syria and Iraq.¹⁴ Although the framework that is created by Zeitoun and Warner is useful, it presupposes that water politics take place in a stable or at least organized (inter)national setting and that the involved actors are state-actors. This might have been the case throughout the twentieth and at the start of the 21st century but this assumption is now no longer matching to the reality of the region and the situation of the riparian states.

The developments over the last decade, first political turmoil and destruction of institutions in Iraq followed by a civil and proxy war in Syria, have disturbed the balance between the riparian states of the Euphrates-Tigris basin. Although the relation between the riparian states developed over time, with highs and lows characterizing their political relations and cooperative water initiatives, there were no drastic changes in the actors involved. The traditional parties such as national governments, technical specialists and international funders worked together or worked against each other to create or block water cooperative initiatives on a national or transnational scale.¹⁵ During the twentieth century water management and development became politicized and it changed from being a technological issue to a more political and diplomatic matter.¹⁶ This shift was significant but it did not alter the power balance that was prevalent amongst the riparian states. The political instability of the last couple of years does have the potential to drastically alter the regional order and the balance of power that has lasted throughout the past decades. Regimes have collapsed in Syria and Iraq, the Islamic State (IS) has risen as a regional power, the Kurdish political movement has reinforced its mission and the presence of foreign powers has increased. Taking these diverse developments in the region into account, it is not difficult to conclude that the organized structure of water politics between riparian states in the Euphrates-Tigris basin suffered some

¹² Mark Zeitoun and Jeroen Warner, “Hydro-Hegemony- a Framework for Analysis of Trans-Boundary Water Conflicts,” *Water Policy* 8-5 (2006): 435-460, 435.

¹³ Zeitoun and Warner, “Hydro-Hegemony,” 460.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Kibaroglu and Maden, “An analysis of the causes of water crisis,” 349-350.

¹⁶ Ibid, 351.

damage.

Water in the Middle East is a topic that has been extensively covered in literature, whether viewed from a historic, environmental or political perspective. Turkey's ambitious GAP is no exception to this tendency. However, the impact of recent events in the region on water politics has not been explored. This essay aims to complement existing understanding of Turkey's water politics and its relations to involved actors by analyzing the role of non-state actors in water politics and by incorporating recent events and power shifts. The question central in this essay is: To what extent have non-state actors challenged the Turkish hydro-hegemony in the period 1980-2017? The term hydro-hegemony in this essay means that Turkey has been able to utilize most of the water resources from the Euphrates and Tigris and has been able to set the agenda and dominate riparian states Syria and Iraq in water cooperative talks and water politics from the 1960s till today.¹⁷ It also means that Turkey has been able to implement the GAP without having to alter its plans due to opposition from other states. Although the GAP does not cover the entire field of water development in Turkey, it is by far the largest project and has most impact on the other riparian states. For this reason the GAP and its various subprojects are central in this analysis. Although the definition that was coined by Zeitoun and Warner is used, this article does challenge the framework that these authors created alongside this definition of the hydro-hegemony. Their article has proven to be very useful in analyzing the power relations between riparian states but their conclusions will be challenged throughout this essay due to the fact that this analysis centers non-state actors instead of state actors and so offers an alternative perspective on water politics in the region.

The non-state actors that are central in this essay are (I)NGOs, Kurdish political movements and militant Kurdish groups, civil society and international funders. The focus on non-state actors does not mean that the actors are non-political. The Kurds, or the various Kurdish movements and parties in the riparian states are of great importance to this analysis and they have clear political goals. This essay will not speak of Kurdish separatists or separatist movements because the major Kurdish parties have developed their political aims over time and have abandoned the wish for an independent Kurdish nation state.¹⁸ Instead they have adopted the idea of democratic confederalism, a political solution that can be

¹⁷ Zeitoun and Warner, "Hydro-Hegemony," 442.

¹⁸ Till F. Paasche, "Syrian and Iraqi Kurds: Conflict and Cooperation," *Middle East Policy* 22-1 (2015): 77-88, 80.

implemented without challenging the existence of the Turkish, Syrian and Iraqi states.¹⁹ Although this essay examines the roles of various non-state actors, it also aims to show that the non-state actors at times cooperate and unite in their opposition or support of water projects. An example of this is the cooperation between Turkish campaigns and European NGOs to stop the flooding of Hasankeyf as a consequence of the Ilisu Dam on the Tigris.²⁰

The first chapter of this essay will give a historic overview of the development of the GAP, the consolidation of Turkey as the hydro-hegemon and its relations to other involved actors. This chapter is not only necessary to place the developments in a historic context but will also demonstrate the shift in power dynamics between state and non-state actors in Turkish water politics. It will cover the first wave of protest against the GAP and will include a case study on the Ilisu Dam on the Tigris, the most controversial part of the GAP that caused an increasing involvement of national and international non-state actors in Turkish water politics. This dam, that is almost complete, will result in the flooding of 200 towns and villages, including the ancient town of Hasankeyf.²¹ The combined historic, ethnic and cultural significance of the town has made the Ilisu Dam part of national and international debate that started in the 1990s but gained momentum in the first years of the 21st century.²² Despite the fact that the Ilisu Dam controversy has been extensively covered in the literature, it is of vital importance for this essay to include it because it was the first time that national and international non-state actors, from various backgrounds and ideologies were able to cooperate and challenge the dominance of the Turkish government over water issues. The Ilisu Dam affair also marked the beginning of open, environmental and cultural protest from local activists. The environmental education and awareness in Turkey was somewhat lacking at the turn of the century but the initiatives that were set up in protest against the Ilisu Dam helped spread awareness about the consequences of these hydraulic projects.²³ Although the Ilisu Dam was the topic of debate during the first decade of the 21st century, it is still at the core of many protest movements and activist resistance against the GAP today.

The second chapter is focused on the current hydro-hegemony challengers, the non-state actors that lead the protest against the GAP in Turkey. The period between 2012-2017

¹⁹ Ibid, 81.

²⁰ C. Eberlein, H. Drillisch, E. Ayboga and T. Wenidoppler, "The Ilisu Dam in Turkey and the Role of Export Credit Agencies and NGO Networks," *Water Alternatives* 3-2 (2010): 291-312, 299.

²¹ Lena Hommes, Rutgerd Boelens and Harro Maat, "Contested hydrosocial territories and disputed water governance: Struggles and competing claims over the Ilisu Dam development in southeastern Turkey," *Geoforum* 71 (2016): 9-20, 9.

²² Eberlein, et.al., "The Ilisu Dam in Turkey," 304.

²³ Berin Golonu, "Activism Rooted in Tradition," *Third Text* 27-1 (2013): 54-64, 55-56.

will be discussed. Due to several reasons, which will be explained in the first chapter, Turkey was able to act as the most powerful state actor. The Syrian and Iraqi governments opposed this dominance of Turkey and both parties tried throughout the twentieth century to challenge this hegemony of Turkey. Sometimes Syria and Iraq came together to voice their opposition; at other times they used legal or international institutions to try to stop Turkish water plans.²⁴ Despite their effort to challenge the hydro-hegemony of Turkey, they were unable to enforce considerable changes to Turkish water policy. Over the last decades the idea that the Euphrates and the Tigris were national resources from Turkey, instead of transnational rivers, was normalized.²⁵ Due to the political instability of Syria and Iraq, the outbreak of a major war and the rise of terrorist organizations, the limited state power over water politics of Syria and Iraq has now disappeared completely. A potential consequence of this shift in power dynamics is that Turkey is now able to implement its own water development plans without being held accountable or being challenged by any other party in the region. This is not an unlikely scenario considering the accumulation of chaos and misery within the Syrian and Iraqi borders and the preoccupation of state actors. It is however not the only scenario and that is why the second chapter demonstrates what role non-state actors are currently playing in the region and what their impact is or can be on the Turkish hydro-hegemony. The analysis reveals what actors are still involved in the resistance against the Turkish water development plans, what mechanisms they use to challenge the hegemony and how successful they are in challenging the position and plans of the Turkish state. The actors central in this section are NGOs, Turkish and Iraqi civil society and Kurdish militant groups.

The third and final chapter analyses the response of the Turkish authorities to these hydro-hegemony challengers. The actions of non-state actors in challenging the position of the Turkish state naturally trigger a reaction of the hegemonic power. Whereas the second chapter focuses solely on the tactics and tools used by protest movements, the third chapter examines what counter tactics the Turkish government and the GAP administration use. The separation of action-reaction of non-state and state actors helps understand the power asymmetries between the involved parties and measure the final impact of non-state actors on the hydro-hegemony of Turkey in the period discussed.

The amount of literature and research on the topic and the fierce opposition against projects and dams that threaten to harm the quality or availability of water show that water, water management or water politics are crucial and can have serious implications, especially

²⁴ Kibaroglu and Maden, "An analysis of the causes of water crisis," 350.

²⁵ Hommes, Boelens and Maat, "Contested hydrosocial territories," 11.

in the Middle East. The GAP is a very large, expensive and ambitious project that will not only have an impact on Turkey and its population but also on the lives of people in Syria and Iraq. It is important to demonstrate how Turkey deals with its water politics in times of crisis, especially considering that the absence of strong riparian states has lasted for quite a few years and might last for years to come. By analyzing the role of non-state actors this essay gives agency to actors on a different level, actors that might otherwise be neglected. This provides a perspective on water politics that can be useful for other cases where there is a dominant hydro-hegemon that is not successfully challenged by other state-actors, e.g. Israel and Palestine.

The availability of sources, or more specifically the availability of neutral sources is a potential limitation to this work. The information available, especially when it concerns the Kurdish question or environmental consequences, is rather black or white. Turkish governmental sources contain very different information from Kurdish human rights reports or environmentalist organizations. The same disunity of information can be found in interviews of local populations. Turkish authorities point to interviews that demonstrate the support of locals whereas NGOs use interviews to support their claim that the local population opposes the GAP.²⁶ Different opinions about the Turkish water plans clearly exist but it is safe to say that organizations use information or sources to support their argument. Because this topic is not without controversy sources will be critically assessed and different perspectives or standpoints will be addressed if necessary. Due to a lacking proficiency of the Turkish language, most sources used in this essay are in English. This can be seen as problematic but fortunately most primary sources used, e.g. GAP reports, news articles and human rights reports, are available in English. The Turkish newspapers *Daily Sabah Turkey* and *Hurriyet Daily* are used for an insight into media coverage on the topic.²⁷ Both these newspapers are digitally available, in English and represent different political ideologies. *Daily Sabah Turkey* is a pro-government newspaper whereas *Hurriyet Daily News* is a liberal, central-left newspaper that is more critical of the current Turkish government. Another limitation is formed by the fact that other issues in the region, such as security and political instability, have overshadowed water politics in the Euphrates and Tigris basin. Mark Dohrmann and Robert Hatem for instance argue that the importance of water in the region has

²⁶ Ibid, 17.

²⁷ *Hurriyet Daily News*: Leading News Source for Turkey and the Region, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/> last accessed 27-05-2017, *Daily Sabah*: Breaking and Latest News from Turkey, <https://www.dailysabah.com/> last accessed 27-05-2017.

decreased because other issues have become much more urgent.²⁸ Although there are plenty of humanitarian, economic and political challenges in the region that have the ability to overshadow water politics, other authors argue that the importance of water during this times of crisis only increases. Tobias Von Lossow has demonstrated how and why IS has used the water resources it has captured in Syria and Iraq as a weapon in war.²⁹ This weaponization of water can have terrible consequences and Von Lossow shows that it is not only IS that makes use of it but that all other parties in Iraq and Syria tend to use water as an instrument in war.³⁰ Jeroen Warner in an article written in 2012 concluded that the issues of water and national security are often linked in water poor states.³¹ Oppositional groups to the controversial Ilisu Dam on the Tigris have made the argument that the dam is a tool to stop Kurds in Turkey from connecting with and traveling to the Kurdish population in Syria and Iraq.³² Although the GAP administration clearly does not acknowledge these types of accusations it is believed that the increase of infrastructure in the Southeast region is supposed to increase border control and security.³³ Chapter 3 analyzes this idea of the securitization of water issues. Arguably the instability within and across Turkish borders makes these issues of securitization and control even more urgent. Without trying to diminish the urgency or relevance of the crises within the region, this essay wants to demonstrate that water politics is not just about water but is connected to issues of security, economy and politics and so continues to be important in these chaotic times.

²⁸ Mark Dohrmann and Robert Hatem, "The Impact of Hydro-Politics on the Relations of Turkey, Iraq, and Syria," *The Middle East Journal* 68-4 (2014): 567-583, 583.

²⁹ Tobias Von Lossow, "The Rebirth of Water as a Weapon: IS in Syria and Iraq," *The International Spectator* 51-3 (2016): 82-99, 87.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 91.

³¹ Warner, "The struggle over Turkey's Ilisu Dam," 233.

³² *Ibid*, 239.

³³ Harris, "Water and Conflict Geographies," 755.

Theory- Hydro-Hegemony and the position of non-state actors

The scarcity and importance of water resources in the Middle East have intensified the interaction and cooperation between riparian states of river systems. The transboundary flow of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers through Turkey, Syria and Iraq has connected these three states since their creation. The relation between these riparian states concerning water recourses has been complex and other river basins across the globe have dealt with similar issues. To increase the understanding of the complex nature of riparian state relations frameworks have been created. Throughout this essay the framework that has been created by Mark Zeitoun, researcher at the Geography department at the University of East Anglia, and Jeroen Warner, researcher of Disaster Studies at Wageningen University, in 2006 will serve as a theoretical basis. In their article ‘Hydro-Hegemony- a Framework for Analysis of Trans-Boundary Water Conflicts’ Zeitoun and Warner explain how one riparian state gains the position of Hydro-Hegemon and is able to overpower other states in the river basin.³⁴ According to the theory Turkey is the hydro-hegemon of the Euphrates and Tigris basin and dominates water agreements, cooperative initiatives and conflicts in the basin. Zeitoun and Warner claim that power asymmetries between riparian states result in unbalanced outcomes and persistent low-intensity conflicts.³⁵ Although the framework that Zeitoun and Warner presented in 2006 provides a clear insight and understanding into the historical development of riparian relations in the Euphrates and Tigris basin in the 20th century, it is less workable in the current political climate of the region. The hydro-hegemony framework is based on the presence of state structures within the basin. It includes state actors only and measures compatibility and conflict between governments and state authorities. The aim of this essay is to analyze the role and impact of non-state actors in water affairs. The theory of Zeitoun and Warner will consequently not be completely discarded but will be altered by including non-state actors. Before this altered framework is presented, it is necessary to look into the hydro-hegemonic framework in a little more detail.

The reason that Turkey is able to dominate the Euphrates and Tigris River Basin is due to its geographical location, its exploitation potential and its *power*. Power is a term that can contain various definitions and meanings so it is crucial to be very clear about its value and

³⁴ Zeitoun and Warner, “Hydro-Hegemony,” 452.

³⁵ Ibid, 441.

implications for this particular case. According to the hydro-hegemony theory power has three particular forms that combined work to shape the hydro-hegemon. The first form of power includes the material and immaterial capabilities of a state, e.g. military force, economic capacity or national and international political support. The second form of power is often less visible and refers to the ability to set the agenda, dominating joint cooperative talks or international treaties. The third and final dimension of power is control over the knowledge structure. This form of power goes beyond the other two power dimensions and refers to impacting and determining the dominant ideas of e.g. water affairs and international water cooperation.³⁶

Table 1. Dimensions of power of hydro-political actors

Power	Meaning	Example
Dimension 1	Material & immaterial capabilities	Riparian location, international (financial) support, military strength
Dimension 2	Agenda setting	Favorable treaties for Turkey i.c.t. Iraq and Syria
Dimension 3	Determining knowledge structure	Convince the international community to accept Tigris and Euphrates as national instead of international waters

Accumulating this power is not necessarily enough to safeguard ones position as the hydro-hegemon. The hegemon, or aspiring hegemon, needs tactics and tools to successfully use its power to dominate the other riparian actors. Zeitoun and Warner distinguish between coercive, utilitarian, normative and hegemonic mechanisms used to impact hydro-politics. It is clear from this distinction and the table down below that the hegemonic power has a multitude of tactics available to secure its position within the basin. Every state actor in a river basin has coercive, utilitarian and normative mechanisms at their service. It depends on the power position of the state whether these mechanisms can be successfully utilized. Military power for instance can be used by most states but the success rate depends on the quality and quantity of this power. The hegemonic power has additional mechanisms that it can utilize in order to control water resources, agreements and cooperation. The tactics of knowledge

³⁶ Ibid, 442-443.

construction and sanctioned discourse both have to do with the creation of a discourse by the hegemonic actor and the adoption of this discourse by the international community or funders.³⁷ Hegemonic actors can e.g. highlight their effort in regional cooperative initiatives but ignore their oppressive measures against citizens of riparian states. This is a mechanism used frequently by the Israeli state.³⁸

Table 2. Hydro-political mechanisms

General mechanisms for riparian states			Hegemonic mechanisms
Coercive	Utilitarian	Normative	Hegemonic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military force - Covert action - Coercion/pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incentives (diplomatic or economic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treaties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securitization - Knowledge construction - Sanctioned discourse - International support - Coercive resources - Financial mobilization - Riparian position

Although the mechanisms are in this case presented as state tools, they to a certain extent can also be applied to non-state actors. Although non-state actors cannot use direct diplomatic incentives, they are able to put pressure on countries and diplomatic staff. The same applies to the mechanism of closing treaties. Military power might be of a different nature for non-state actors but the use of violence and force is in reality not restricted to state authorities. Non-state actors can, in theory, utilize the hegemonic tools of securitization, knowledge construction, sanctioned discourse and international and/or financial support.

The objective of this essay is to analyze the tactics and coercive mechanisms of non-state actors in challenging the hydro-hegemony of Turkey in the Euphrates-Tigris basin. The chapters below give a clear understanding of the complexity of water politics in Turkey and the role of involved state and non-state actors. The analysis will not only provide insight in this particular case but adds to the general understanding of hydro-politics. The actions and reactions of actors in Turkey will be connected to the aforementioned tactics and coercive mechanisms and will be added to a new hydro-hegemony framework that includes non-state actors.

³⁷ Ibid, 448.

³⁸ Ibid.

Table 4 shows what the schematic display of this new framework will look like. The tools of non-state actors will be categorized along the lines of the coercive, utilitarian and normative mechanisms. This is done in order to facilitate a comparison between state and non-state hydro-political tactics and tools.

Table 3. Hydro-political mechanisms of state and non-state actors

	Non-hegemonic state actors	Hegemonic state actor	Non-state actors
Coercive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military force - Covert action - Coercion/pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military force - Covert Action - Coercion/pressure - Riparian position 	-
Utilitarian	Incentives (economic and diplomatic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial mobilization - International support 	-
Normative	Treaties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Securitization - Knowledge construction - Sanctioned discourse 	-

Although this framework will be based on the case study of Turkey and the Euphrates-Tigris basin, it can provide insight into the functioning of hydro-politics globally. Especially in basins with a high degree of power asymmetry, e.g. Israel and Palestine or Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia, it is useful to look at the potential power of non-state actors. The hydro-hegemony framework will not only be altered at the end of this analysis but the success rate of hydro-political mechanisms by non-state actors in Turkey will be measured. In other words, were non-state actors successful in challenging the Turkish hydro-hegemony and if so, what tactics did or did not work? Although every river basin system has a different economic and political context, the case study of Turkey and the resistance against the GAP can provide a valuable example for other hydro-hegemony challengers.

The framework presented here runs like a red thread throughout this essay. It will be at times addressed or mentioned but the final completion and presentation of the new framework takes places at the end of the analysis. Before there can be any attempt at a successful framework alteration, it is necessary to submerge into the historic and political context of

riparian relations in the Tigris-Euphrates basin and of the non-state resistance against Turkish hydro-politics.

Chapter 1- In control of the flow

In order to gain a full understanding of water politics within Turkey and between the Tigris and Euphrates river basin riparian states, it is essential to look at the development of water affairs in this region throughout the twentieth century. The analysis below will explain the tensions between the riparian states, the position of Turkey as the hydro-hegemon of the basin and highlight the opposition from (non) state actors to the implementation of the Turkish water development program in the period 1980-2010. It includes a detailed analysis of the Ilisu Dam project, the most controversial project of the GAP, and provides the basis for the analysis of contemporary opposition in Turkey. This chapter provides a historic and theoretical understanding of the complexities of water affairs in the Tigris and Euphrates basin.

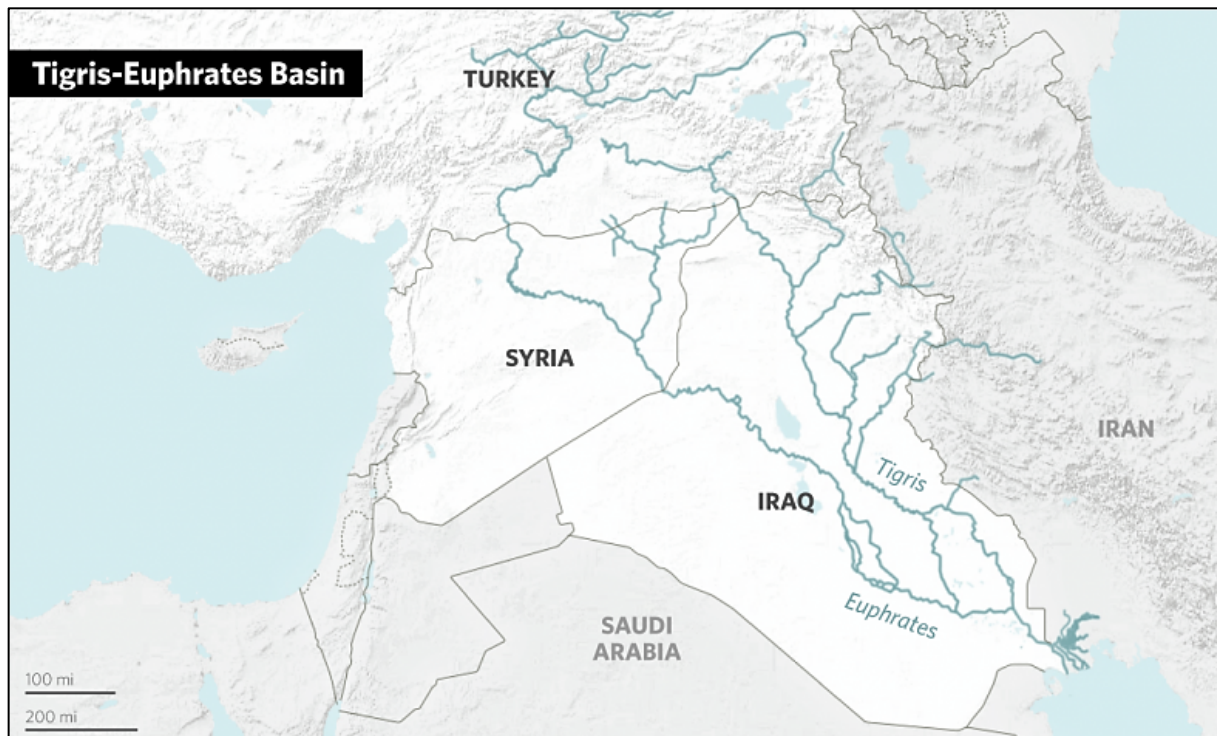
Attempts at riparian cooperation

Although the Euphrates and the Tigris spring in Turkey, they are border-crossing rivers that both flow through Turkey, Syria and Iraq. The transnational flow of these major rivers have naturally connected these three riparian states throughout the twentieth century and have forced them to find ways to manage water affairs on a national and international level.³⁹ The interaction between the riparian states on water affairs went through different phases in the twentieth century. Water became an important issue in Turkey in the 1920s under the leadership of president Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). After the disaster of the Great War and its troubled aftermath Atatürk was determined to work towards Turkish development, independence and growth. In the 1930s he initiated plans to divert the major rivers of Turkey, the Tigris and the Euphrates, to enhance the economic development of the country.⁴⁰

³⁹ Kibaroglu and Maden, "An analysis of the causes of water crisis," 348.

⁴⁰ Jeroen Warner, "The struggle over Turkey's Ilisu Dam: domestic and international security linkages." *International Environmental Agreements* 12 (2012): 231-250, 235.

Image 1. Tigris and Euphrates River Basin



“Mesopotamian Vitality Falls to Turkey,” 5 January, 2015, *Stratfor* <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/mesopotamian-vitality-falls-turkey> last accessed 04-07-2017.

The water development plans that were initiated in Turkey in the first half of the twentieth century had no serious implications for Syria or Iraq. At that time the water resources in the riparian states were sufficient for their respective populations. Disputes between the states about the allocation of water therefore did not occur.⁴¹ During this period of relatively harmonious relations between the riparian states the first agreement between Turkey and Iraq that included water management was set up. In 1946 Iraq and Turkey signed the Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbourly Relations.⁴² The treaty included a special protocol for the regulation of water of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The protocol mainly concerned itself with the control of floods by both countries and specifically mentioned that facilities within Turkish borders would have the capacity and power to regulate the flow and have a positive impact on the water control in Iraq.⁴³ The content of the treaty demonstrates that the relations between Turkey and Iraq concerning water were friendly and that there was mutual trust between the parties. The treaty also indicates that the issue of water was not very

⁴¹ Kibaroglu and Maden, “Water crisis in the Euphrates and Tigris river basin,” 348.

⁴² “Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbourly Relations Iraq-Turkey,” 29 March, 1946 http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/regionaldocs/Iraq-Turkey-Friendship_1946.pdf, last accessed 28-03-2017.

⁴³ *Ibid*, 580.

political during this period. The actors mentioned in the 1946 treaty are all technical specialists and the treaty speaks of a collaboration between Turkish and Iraqi experts in order to collect hydraulic and geological information needed for the construction of dams and other works.⁴⁴ It does not mention the involvement of political actors.

In the second half of the century the relations between the riparian states started to change, mainly due to the fact that Turkey, Syria and Iraq started developing large-scale water projects that could potentially impact their neighboring countries. The recent independence of Iraq and Syria contributed to the need for a quick industrialization and modernization of water utilization.⁴⁵ Each riparian state started working on the construction of one major project, respectively the Keban Dam in Turkey, the Thartar Canal Project in Iraq and the Euphrates Valley Project in Syria. The Keban Dam was one of the three major dams that were built in Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s and it became one of the precursors for the GAP project. The Thartar Canal Project in Iraq was completed in 1956 and opened the Thartar Canal that connected the Tigris and Euphrates rivers via Lake Thartar and worked to stop flooding of the Tigris River and divert access water into the Euphrates.⁴⁶ The Syrian Euphrates Valley Project was centered on the construction of the Tabqa Dam. The project started in 1963 and became operational in 1973. The aim of the project was large-scale irrigation of the land and electric energy generation.⁴⁷ The projects of the riparian states were all aimed at development of the national economy, the energy supply and the agricultural sector. This pursuit of own development put some pressure on the relations between the riparian states. Iraq especially was concerned that the construction of the Keban and Tabqa Dams would impact the water flow within the Iraqi borders.⁴⁸ Even though technical experts from the riparian states came together several times during the years to discuss these issues, they were unable to come to a final agreement.⁴⁹ This period between 1950-1970 marked the beginning of strained relations between the states of the basin.

A few years after the completion of the large-scale water projects the riparian states set up a formal cooperative initiative to discuss water issues. In 1983 the Joint Technical Committee for Regional Waters (JTC) was created, consisting of technical members from the

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Kibaroglu and Maden, "Water crisis in the Euphrates and Tigris river basin," 348.

⁴⁶ Gun Kut, "Burning Waters: The Hydropolitics of the Euphrates and Tigris," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 9 (1993): 1-17, 10.

⁴⁷ Peter Beaumont, "The Euphrates River—an International Problem of Water Resources Development," *Environmental Conservation* 5:1 (1978): 35-43, 40.

⁴⁸ Kibaroglu and Maden, "Water crisis in the Euphrates and Tigris river basin," 349.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

three countries. The aim of the JTC was to discuss management methods and come to a definition for an adequate allocation of water between the member states involved.⁵⁰ Although the JTC met over a dozen times it was unable to come to concrete results and agree on the meaning of *fair* water sharing between the riparian states.⁵¹ Even though most participants of these meetings were technical experts, they did not take place in a vacuum and were in fact influenced by the political reality. The relations between the riparian states during the JTC period actually worsened. Turkey and Syria were not on good terms, mainly due to the support of the Syrian government to the Kurdistan's Workers Party (PKK). These tensions between the riparian states had an effect on their joint effort to manage water politics and water became more and more a political issue instead of just a technological issue. Despite these difficulties new treaties between the riparian states were set up in the years that followed. In 1987 Syria and Turkey came to an agreement and three years later Iraq and Syria signed a water accord. In the Turkish-Syrian Protocol on Economic Cooperation Turkey promised Syria a certain amount of water whilst Syria made promises concerning the security issues that had been at the basis of the tenuous political relations between the two states.⁵² Although these accords may sound like a genuine attempt at cooperation, due to their limited content, their bilateral character and a lack of implementation and control, they did not amount to much.⁵³ In the late 1990s and during the first decade of the new century the political relations between the riparian states improved and so did their willingness to cooperate and create a working framework for joint water management. This led to two new agreements in 2009 between Syria and Turkey and between Iraq and Turkey.

Turkey as hydro-hegemon

The analysis above shows that the riparian states were mostly concerned with the utilization of the water resources for their national benefit and that the political climate between the states gained an increasingly impact on the joint effort to manage water affairs. Even though a full-blown conflict concerning water between Turkey and the other states did not erupt during this period, there was a conflicted relationship between the states. Despite the fluctuations in cooperation-efforts one aspect remained constant: the dominance of Turkey over Syria and Iraq. In the case of the Tigris and Euphrates basin Turkey, due to its combined geographical

⁵⁰ Christina Leb, "The Tigris-Euphrates Joint Technical Committee," *IUCN* (2008): 2-3.

⁵¹ Leb, "The Tigris-Euphrates Joint Technical Committee," 2-3.

⁵² Yuksel Sezgin, "The October 1998 Crisis in Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Prospect Theory Approach," *Turkish Studies* 3:2 (2002): 44-68, 47.

⁵³ Kibaroglu and Maden, "Water crisis in the Euphrates and Tigris river basin," 351.

position, power and exploitation potential, was able to act as a hydro-hegemon over Syria and Iraq and demand the most during these cooperative initiatives.⁵⁴

The dominance of Turkey became very clear from the 1980s onwards, after the formal launch of the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP). The seeds that Atatürk had planted in the 1930s grew out to be the biggest and most ambitious water development plan in Turkey and the surrounding region. The *Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi* is the full-grown version of the initial plan by Atatürk and although the scale has drastically increased, the intention remains the same. The aim of the GAP is to alter, use and store the water resources of the rivers to contribute to the development of Turkey and to increase the autarkic ability of the country. It was calculated that the implementation of this project would have serious implications for the water resources and water quality in Iraq and Syria. The direst estimates concluded that the flow of the Euphrates River could be reduced up to 40% for Syria and even 80% for Iraq.⁵⁵ On top of that the salination and pollution levels of the rivers would increase drastically.

The announcement of this major Turkish project naturally resulted in a fierce response and opposition from the Iraqi and Syrian governments.⁵⁶ The governments even temporarily surpassed their mutual disagreements to unite in their opposition to this Turkish project. Despite this opposition and the serious consequences that were connected to the implementation of the GAP, the riparian states were unable to halt the project. Due to a lack of a legal framework on international water issues and the vague accords and agreements that did exist, Syria and Iraq had no instruments to obstruct the construction of the dams and hydropower plants. Turkey on the other hand, thanks to its upstream riparian position and its relative financial and political strength, was hegemonic in the early years of the GAP implementation. Turkish water politics did however not go completely unchallenged. Other actors, non-state actors, that were not included in official treaties or accords did challenge or tried to challenge the hydro-hegemony of Turkey in the 20th and beginning of the 21st century.

The role of funders

The reason that other actors got involved with the implementation of the GAP in the first place was the need for financial support of the project. The ambitious project came with a serious price tag. Instead of trying to finance the entire project with national means, the

⁵⁴ Zeitoun and Warner, "Hydro-Hegemony," 460.

⁵⁵ Leila M. Harris, "Water and Conflict Geographies of the Southeastern Anatolia Project," *Society & Natural Resources* 15-8 (2002): 743-759, 745.

⁵⁶ Warner, "Turkey's Ilisu Dam," 236.

Turkish government turned to international funders to collect the necessary resources.⁵⁷ This however quickly became difficult because of the unwillingness of the Turkish government to come to an agreement with Syria and Iraq and make promises concerning their water security.⁵⁸ The absence of a tripartite agreement was a deal breaker for several of the more traditional international funders, such as the European Union, the World Bank and the United Nations, to give financial support for the GAP.⁵⁹ The GAP administration realized that in order to gain financial support from the international community it had to make some alterations to its proposed plans.

The original GAP project was mainly focused on economic development of the Southeastern Anatolia region, although it did already include marginal promises for educational and health sector improvement.⁶⁰ This was not enough to convince foreign investors of the good nature and sustainable value of this project, especially considering the negative consequences for the other riparian states. The demand for funding was so high that the GAP administration decided to alter the original project by adding sustainable development goals. The happiness and development of the people instead of just the economic growth was put at the center of the GAP and programs concerned with gender equality, environmental improvement and educational progress were added.⁶¹ The adoption of this broader program made international funders much more willing to offer their support to the GAP. According to the GAP administration:

Adopting the innovative philosophy of sustainable humanitarian development, the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) has attracted an international interest while technical and financial contributions from foreign countries and institutions has risen therewith since 1995.⁶²

Besides this financial reason to alter the program there was also a political motive to adopt changes. The talks between the EU and Turkey about admission of Turkey to the union were taking place and the international criticism on the GAP did not benefit the Turkish case.⁶³ In the years that followed several international funders, such as the World Bank, the European

⁵⁷ Harris, "Water and Conflict Geographies," 746.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP Master Plan 1989," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/master-plan-page-2.html> last accessed 24-05-2017.

⁶¹ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP Action plan 2014-2018," December, 2014 <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/action-plan-page-5.html>, last accessed 24-05-2017.

⁶² Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "Internationally funded projects," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/internationally-funded-projects-page-15.html>, last accessed 12-04-2017.

⁶³ Dohmann and Hatem, "Impact of Hydro Politics," 573.

Union and the UNDP, gave grants or loans to support projects that specifically targeted the living conditions of the people of the Southeastern Anatolia region.⁶⁴ They did remain hesitant to provide financial support for the actual construction of dams and hydropower plants that potentially damaged Syria and Iraq. The World Bank for instance, due to the sensitive nature of the project, was only willing to give a loan for the Health Services and Management Development project and two grants for the development of the urban and rural infrastructure in the region.⁶⁵ These projects were strictly concerned with Turkish development and did not impact the riparian states in any negative way. The GAP administration had to turn to other partners to find funding for more controversial projects.

The period between 1980 and 2000 was characterized by fierce resistance to the GAP project by riparian states Syria and Iraq and an unwillingness of international funders to get involved in such a controversial project. In the 1990s Turkey realized that the success of the project was dependent on foreign investment and loans and that it could, by adopting sustainable human development goals, improve the reputation of the project and attract more money. The direct power of Syria and Iraq to influence the project was very limited but by expressing their grievances to an international audience they were able to halt some funding for parts of the project. The GAP administration was however quick in countering this development. By using popular language and trends about sustainable development and progress the GAP administration was able to appeal to western financial supporters and sideline the opposition of the riparian states. This period is a conformation of the hydro-hegemony theory as Zeitoun and Warner present it. With the inclusion of non-state actors however it becomes clear that Turkey was in fact challenged in its hegemony. The opposition did not stop the GAP but the aims of the project were quite drastically changed or at least broadened due to the pressure of the international community and funders.

The rise of non-state protest

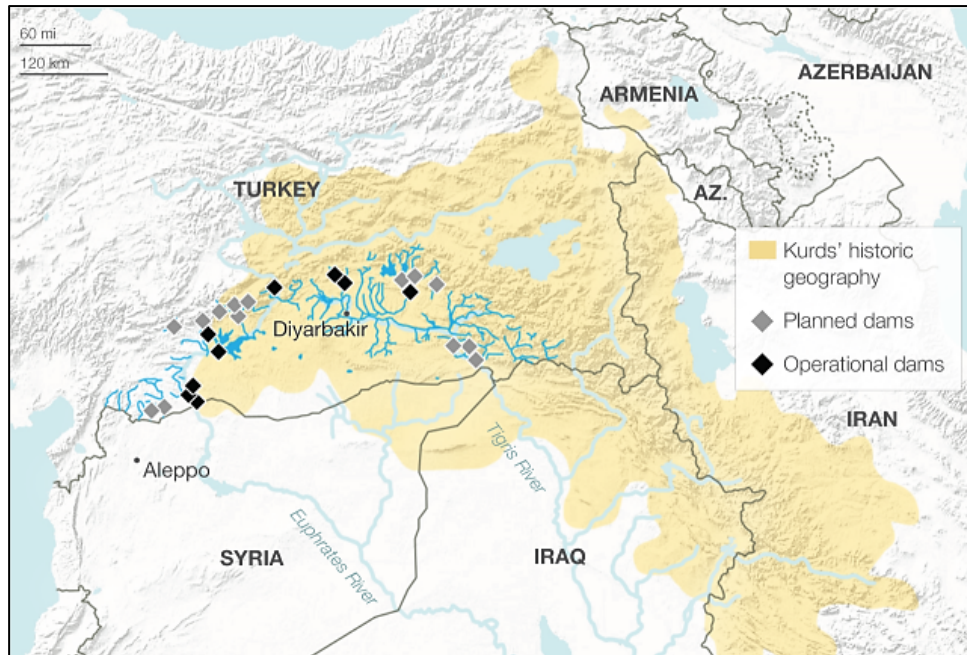
The water development plans of Turkey did not only receive criticism from international opponents. The domestic opposition to the GAP was strong and widespread. The earliest opposition to the GAP came from Kurdish organizations and protectors of Kurdish human rights within Turkey. Due to the location of the planned dams and constructions, it was

⁶⁴Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP finance," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/gap-finance-page-27.html>, last accessed 22-04-17.

⁶⁵ World Bank "Health 2 Project," Projects and Operations, <http://projects.worldbank.org/P009076/health-2-project?lang=en> last accessed 11-04-2017 and GAP Administration "Internationally funded projects" <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/internationally-funded-projects-page-15.html> 12-04-2017.

believed by opponents that the project was aimed at undermining the Kurdish region and increase state control over Kurdish territory.⁶⁶ Besides this Kurdish opposition, the resistance against the GAP came from environmentalists, human right activists, academics and protectors of cultural and historical heritage. The project that became the center of protest of non-state actors in Turkey was the controversial Ilisu Dam.

Image 2. Planned and operational dams of the GAP



“Dams power Turkey’s conflict with the Kurds,” 23 June, 2016, Stratfor <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/dams-power-turkeys-conflict-kurds> last accessed 03-07-2017.

The Ilisu Dam

The Ilisu Dam was planned to be the first dam on the Tigris river and the most expensive and perhaps most ambitious project of the GAP.⁶⁷ There were several attempts to start the construction of the Ilisu Dam in the 1990s but due to its controversial nature the GAP administration was unable to gather the financial means necessary. In 1996 there was a lack of investors and two years later the European funding that was promised was pulled back due to international pressure.⁶⁸ For the third attempt Turkey again looked at European partners for support. Although Turkey did find some willing partners, under pressure of international and national campaigns, the Export Credit Agencies of Austria, Switzerland and Germany

⁶⁶ Hommes, Boelens and Maat, “Contested hydrosocial territories,” 10.

⁶⁷ Warner, “Turkey’s Ilisu Dam,” 232.

⁶⁸ Eberlein et.al., “Role of Export Credit Agencies,” 295.

withdrew their approval of the project.⁶⁹ It was a massive blow to the Ilisu Dam when in 2001 the British Balfour Beatty, one of the biggest European supporters of the Ilisu Dam, withdrew its financial support. *Impregilo*, the Italian partner of Balfour Beatty followed the British example and also decided to drop the project. The reasons for the withdrawal were the commercial, social and environmental concerns.⁷⁰ The British government, under Tony Blair, had till that moment been a leading supporter of the Turkish GAP project but the international and national opposition to the dam had become so extensive that they could no longer ignore it. The involved NGOs and cooperative initiatives from Turkish and international activists had worked tirelessly to obstruct the European finance of the Ilisu Dam. It was the first major success of non-state actors to challenge the hydro-hegemony of Turkey.

So what made this particular project so prone to protest? There had been allegations against the GAP administration about its discriminative nature from the very start of the project. It was not until the Ilisu Dam however that the negative consequences of GAP projects became clear to a much larger audience. As a result of the construction of the Ilisu Dam approximately 200 towns would disappear, several thousand people would be forced to move, the biodiversity of the region would be damaged and the ancient Assyrian settlement of Hasankeyf would be flooded.⁷¹ So the consequences of the Ilisu Dam appealed to activists with an environmental, cultural or ethnic conviction. This diversity in impact resulted in much stronger campaigns against the dam. Because of the involvement of European money in this project, European NGOs got involved as well. One of the biggest campaigns against the Ilisu Dam, the Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive, was set up in 2006. Another example of opposition came from the Ilisu Dam Campaign, set up to stop British involvement in the project that was created as a cooperative initiative of the Corner House and the Kurdish Human Rights Project.⁷² These campaigns did not only voice their opposition but conducted fact finding missions to reveal the effects of the Ilisu Dam.⁷³

The fact finding missions that were carried out by the British NGOs concluded that the impact of the GAP project and the Ilisu Dam was significant on the population of Turkey as well as on the people of Syria and Iraq. Even before the construction of the Ilisu Dam, the

⁶⁹ Ibid, 307.

⁷⁰ Paul Brown, "Ilisu Dam in jeopardy as Balfour drops out," *The Guardian*, 14 November, 2001 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2001/nov/14/politics.politicalnews> last accessed 13-05-2017.

⁷¹ Hommes, Boelens and Maat, "Contested hydrosocial territories," 9.

⁷² Ilisu Dam Campaign <http://www.ilisu.org.uk/> last accessed 02-04-2017.

⁷³ "Joint Report of Fact-Finding Mission to Syria and Iraq," Kurdish Human Right Project, Ilisu Dam Campaign and The Corner House (2002).

GAP projects had caused increased salinity of the rivers.⁷⁴ The NGOs also concluded that Turkey was in violation of several principles and legal regulations by continuing its GAP implementation without the consultation with the other riparian states.⁷⁵ The report stated that collaboration between the riparian states was indeed possible and that Syria and Iraq already had a well-working system of consultations on water affairs. It reinforced the conclusions of the World Commission on Dams (WCD) that water conflicts were based on imbalanced power relations. In the year 2000 the World Commission on Dams, which was initiated in 1997 by a joint cooperation of the World Bank and the World Conservation Union, published a final report about the decision-making and management of dams on a global scale.⁷⁶ One of the issue concerning international water affairs was and still is the fact that there is a lack of global regulations and a legal framework. The World Commission on Dams did not provide this either but their published report was used as a basic framework for decision-making on water and dam issues in the years that followed. The WCD of course mentioned the controversy that surrounded the Ilisu Dam and was particularly critical at the European Credit Agencies (ECA) for lacking environmental and social conditions.⁷⁷ The protests surrounding the Ilisu Dam were an example of public discontent with the lack of regulations and environmental standards of the ECA's.⁷⁸ The WCD report's recommendations emphasized the importance of gaining acceptance of the public and recognizing the rights of the indigenous people as well as environmental protection and sustainable ecosystems.⁷⁹ Although the report only mentioned the Ilisu project a few times, its focus was on other case studies, the criticism and conclusions could be directly applied to the Turkish case.

The period from the 1990s onwards was characterized by a rise of local, national and international opposition to the GAP. The efforts of these non-state actors to oppose the plans were not without success. The cooperation between local and European activists became a powerful tool to prove the environmental and human rights consequences that were connected to the GAP. The withdrawal of financial support from the British, Austrian, German and Swiss governments and banks was celebrated as an important victory for NGO cooperative

⁷⁴ Ibid, 20.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 40-41.

⁷⁶ World Commission on Dams, *Dams and Development: A new framework for decision-making* (Earthscan Publications: 2000).

⁷⁷ Ibid, 188.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 189.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 234.

initiatives.⁸⁰

This victorious joy did however not last long. Despite the great effort of various oppositional groups the Turkish government continued to implement the GAP projects without any alterations. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs the impacts of the Ilisu Dam were overrated and misleading information about the dam was being spread.⁸¹ The Turkish state concluded that the Ilisu Dam would only flood lower Hasankeyf and that most of its historical value would be preserved. It also argued that around 15.000 people of various ethnicities would be resettled but that they would get full support of the officials. The government claimed that this was a small price to pay for further economic and sustainable development of the region that would improve the lives of all people of the region.⁸² Because the global institutions and international state actors were unwilling or incapable of publicly supporting the project, the GAP administration turned to public-private funding that was less tight to international regulations and objections.⁸³ Currently the construction of the Ilisu Dam is well underway thanks to co-finance by Austrian company *Andritz* that has 340 million euros invested in the Ilisu Project.⁸⁴ The completion of the dam is however still facing difficulties. Attacks on dams and hydropower plants claimed by the PKK are widespread and the deadline of the Ilisu Dam has been pushed back several times due to local protests and attacks of militant Kurdish groups.⁸⁵ Even though the possibility of obstructing the completion of this particular project is very small, some oppositional groups are still trying to resist. The continuation of this oppositional movement will be analysed in the next chapter.

So what can be concluded about the impact of non-state actors on Turkish water policy in the period before 2010? The involved non-state actors, funders, NGOs and local activist were not completely without power in this period. They were able to mobilize a substantial group of people and gather support for their case outside the borders of the basin. The issues they were facing had an international appeal and thanks to the involvement of

⁸⁰ Peter Bosshard, "Victory: European Governments Backing Out of Ilisu Dam Project in Turkey," *International Rivers*, 22 June, 2009 <https://www.internationalrivers.org/resources/victory-european-governments-backing-out-of-ilisu-dam-project-in-turkey-3535> last accessed 17-05-2017.

⁸¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, "Ilisu Dam," <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/ilisu-dam.en.mfa> last accessed 11-04-2017.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Erica Gies, "A Dam Revival, Despite Risks: Private funding brings a Boom in Hydropower, With High Costs," *The New York Times*, 19 November, 2014 <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/20/business/energy-environment/private-funding-brings-a-boom-in-hydropower-with-high-costs.html> last accessed 17-05-2017.

⁸⁴ Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign, "Ilisu Dam and Legal Considerations in Iraq," *Iraqi Civil Society* (2014): 1-8, 7.

⁸⁵ "Dams power Turkey's conflict with the Kurds," *Stratfor*, 23 June, 2016 <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/dams-power-turkeys-conflict-kurds>, last accessed 14-05-2017.

European NGOs the international community became aware of the Ilisu Dam campaigns. The focus of the non-state protestors was however not really directed at the Turkish government or the GAP administration but mainly concerned itself with convincing European actors to withdraw their financial support. Their efforts were backed by the international organizations and reports that supported the environmental and social arguments of the protestors. Influencing the European parties was a relatively successful undertaking and their success delayed the construction of the dam for several years. Nevertheless their inability to influence the GAP administration itself was their downfall. Although the hydro-hegemony of Turkey was for a brief period challenged by the absence of money, the GAP administration was able to overcome this obstacle and continue the implementation of the Ilisu Dam as planned.

Table 4. The impact of different actors on Turkish water politics period 1980-2010

Actor	Impact	Positive	Negative
International community	Alterations to GAP	Responsible for broader approach of the GAP/adopting sustainable and human development goals	Alterations remained superficial and the project remained controversial
NGOs	Causing delay	Able to withdraw European financial support and raise international awareness	Unable to convince the Turkish GAP of an alteration in their plans.
Kurdish militant groups	Causing delay	Direct impact on the construction progress of dams	Reinforced the idea that Turkey is dealing with security issues.
Funders	Causing delay	Cause serious setbacks to the implementation of GAP plans	The Turkish government decided to finance the project itself

Although the momentum of the Ilisu Dam controversy was lost after 2009, the opposition to the Turkish GAP remained in place and new actors emerged that would further complicate the relations between the Turkish state and oppositional groups. The following chapters will analyze contemporary non-state resistance against the hydro-hegemony of Turkey and addresses the complex relations between Kurdish opposition and the water development projects.

Chapter 2- The challengers

‘The Kurdish movement has decided not to accept this treatment any more, and to mobilize all means necessary, including the guerrilla forces, to stop the construction of all dams.’⁸⁶

Kurdistan Communities Union, July 12 2015

The previous chapter revealed how the Turkish state secured its hydro-hegemonic position vis-à-vis Syria and Iraq and how various civil groups, international NGOs and foreign funders tried to challenge this hegemony in the period 1980-2010. This chapter builds on this analysis and focusses on contemporary non-state resistance against the Turkish hydro-hegemony, hereby concentrating on the implementation of the GAP. By analyzing the tools and mechanisms used by non-state actors in challenging the Turkish authorities, this chapter provides the basis for the proposed alteration of the hydro-hegemonic theoretical framework. The focus on period 2010-2017 is chosen due to its relevance, its complexity and its academic rarity. The collapse of the Syrian state, the eruption of war and chaos in Iraq and the resurgence of a militant conflict between the Turkish government and the PKK have created a vastly different political context within the Tigris-Euphrates river basin. These changes have opened up some - and closed other opportunities for non-state actors to challenge the hydro-hegemony. The analysis below will reveal the scope and intensity of current-day resistance, whereas the following chapter will research the response of the Turkish government to these hegemony-challengers.

A part of this chapter is devoted to the resistance of militant Kurdish groups because they currently are the most persistent and active non-state actors. Although the actions of the groups discussed are regarded as extreme and are rejected, the aim of this chapter is to show that the argumentation that is behind the actions aimed at the GAP is not unfounded but rooted in the historical and political context of the Turkish state. The resistance that is discussed below is often not just directed towards the GAP or Turkish water development plans but includes dissatisfaction with state control, economics and politics. Despite this broadened discussion, the emphasis in this analysis remains on Turkey as the hydro-hegemon and the implementation of the Southeastern Anatolia Project. All measures and protests that are analyzed can be linked to water development plans or specifically the GAP but many are

⁸⁶ “PKK threatens to attack dams, one killed in fresh clashes in Turkey’s northeast,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 12 July, 2015 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/pkk-threatens-to-attack-dams-one-killed-in-fresh-clashes-in-turkeys-northeast-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=85322&NewsCatID=338> last accessed 14-05-2017.

obviously part of a wider (inter)national political struggle. Although these political circumstances are not at the heart of this research, they are incorporated to a certain extent in order to reveal the complex connections between issues of water and security, politics and economics within Turkey.

NGOs and civil society

The resistance against the GAP in the beginning of the 21st century was often a joint effort by national and international NGOs. The involvement of European NGOs was aimed at the withdrawal of European finance in the GAP projects. Although there is still a large sum of European money involved in the GAP, e.g. €14 million EU funding for ‘Project of Mitigating Flood Risk in Flooded Areas in GAP Region’ or €43,5 million for the ‘GAP Regional Development Programme’⁸⁷, the funding for the controversial Ilisu Dam was largely halted. This success also had a downside to it. The momentum around the Ilisu Dam and the GAP in 2002-2009 in Europe came to an abrupt end. Involved organizations such as the Ilisu Dam Campaign, Kurdish Human Rights Project and Corner House are still in existence but became rather passive after 2010. The necessity for active participation of these organizations diminished when a majority of European money was withdrawn. This loss of active participation by European NGOs was substituted by regional cooperative campaigns. In March 2012 a new campaign was launched by a coalition of Turkish, Iraqi and Iranian civil society organizations. The campaign, named *Save the Tigris and the Iraqi Marshes*, is an advocacy campaign battling against the construction of large projects and dams on the Tigris and Euphrates.⁸⁸

The campaigns have been directed towards various actors and aspects of the GAP but the core has been and remains centered around the Ilisu Dam and the flooding of Hasankeyf. A few years ago the protest aimed at getting the town of Hasankeyf on the UNESCO World Heritage List.⁸⁹ This was rejected in 2016 because a formal application by the Turkish state was not achieved. Another, more official, form of protest that the campaigners took on concerned the legality of the Southeastern Anatolia Project. Already in the early 2000s activists turned to the European Court of Human Rights to stop the construction of the dam

⁸⁷ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, “Internationally funded projects,” <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/internationally-funded-projects-page-15.html> last accessed 12-04-2017.

⁸⁸ Save the Tigris campaign <http://www.savethetigris.org/> last accessed 15-05-2017.

⁸⁹ “Hasankeyf not submitted to UNESCO,” *Hurriyet Daily*, 4 February, 2016 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/hasankeyf-not-submitted-to-unesco-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=94758&NewsCatID=375> last accessed 08-07-2017.

because of the irrevocable damage to archeological sites. This case is still ongoing.⁹⁰ In 2013 the highest Turkish administrative court ruled in favor of the opposition movement when it declared that the environmental impact assessment requirements for the construction were not met and called for an immediate halt of the construction.⁹¹ In 2014 the construction resumed nevertheless.

Zeynel Bey Tomb

In recent months the campaign has directed its arrows towards the relocation of the Zeynel Bey Tomb in Hasankeyf. The mausoleum of Zeynel Bey was erected in 1474 and is a unique part of the cultural and historic heritage of the area. Its relocation was seen as the start of the destruction of Hasankeyf as a heritage site. The *Save the Tigris* campaign and other local NGOs tried to stop the relocation and urged Dutch company Bresser Eurasia and the Greek company Korres Engineering to halt their involvement in the project.⁹² In an open letter to the companies, involved civil society organizations asked for complete withdrawal.

Your firms' assistance in the relocation of the Zeynel Bey Tomb provides critical support to the Ilisu Project, one of the most controversial dam projects in the world and the subject of extensive domestic and international criticism. [...] To continue your involvement in this project, would, in our view, leave Bresser Eurasia and Korres Engineering open to the charge of being party to the destruction of a monument with outstanding cultural value, with consequent reputational risks.⁹³

The letter was signed by the representatives from the Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive, Mesopotamian Ecology Movement, Hasankeyf Matters, Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign, Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative, The Corner House, Peace in Kurdistan Campaign, Counter Current, International Rivers, Riverwatch, Xarxa per una Nova Cultura de l'Aigua, Un Ponte Per and Both ENDS.⁹⁴ The list of signatories did not only include Turks and Iraqis but also included several Dutch and British directors of organizations.

Despite this long list of involved NGOs in this protection campaign for the Zeynel Bey Tomb the project was implemented. On May 12th 2017 a team of over 50, mostly Turkish and Dutch, specialists, successfully moved the Zeynel Bey Tomb. Veysel Eroğlu, Minister of

⁹⁰ European Court of Human Rights, "Information Note on the Court's case-law no 198," *Article 8* (July 2016): 14-15.

⁹¹ Susanne Güsten, "Construction of Disputed Turkish Dam Continues," *The New York Times*, 27 February, 2013 <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/28/world/middleeast/construction-of-disputed-turkish-dam-continues.html> last accessed 06-07-2017.

⁹² "Open letter to the Dutch company Bresser Eurasia and the Greek company Korres Engineering both of whom are joining the project to relocate the Zeynel Bey Tomb in Hasankeyf," *Peace in Kurdistan Campaign*, <https://peaceinkurdistancampaign.com/2016/12/05/7059/> last accessed 17-05-2017.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Forestry and Water affairs responded to the successful operation by saying: ‘Europe was against this dam. But we will move eight other artifacts. This will set a model for the world’.⁹⁵ Although this operation was successful in the sense that the Tomb suffered no damage, it remained controversial. Vahap Kusen, mayor of Hasankeyf, was more critical in his response to the move. He compared the operation to ‘a flower that was broken off from its twig’ and shared his disappointment about the fact that not all artefacts could be rescued.⁹⁶ The Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive responded to the move by stating that: ‘this step is clear disrespectfulness and a crime against history and cultural heritage. We will follow up this case with all legal and democratic means’.⁹⁷

Although the opposition was unsuccessful in stopping the Zeynel Bey Tomb relocation, it has not given up on its campaign directed towards Dutch company Bresser. In late June 2017 a group of protesters affiliated with several national and international NGOs came together at the headquarter of Bresser in ‘s-Gravendeel to demand withdrawal.⁹⁸ Bresser is planning to assist in the relocation of five other cultural heritage artefacts in the Hasankeyf region. According to the Save The Tigris campaign ‘their relocation would be an unforgivable act of cultural heritage destruction and a violation of the human rights of the local people, and facilitate far-reaching and irreversible impacts along the Tigris basin’.⁹⁹

In addition to these specific campaigns the local NGOs try to provide transparency around the GAP. The campaigns in the region are mainly focused on advocacy and awareness. Although this might sound like an easy undertaking, the reality in the Southeast Anatolia region makes it rather difficult. The authorities are not keen on transparency when it comes to the Ilisu project and the developments around Hasankeyf. On May 8 2017, a photographer from National Geographic was detained because he tried to take pictures of New Hasankeyf, the settlement that is supposed to house the people that are forced to move. The photographer, Mathias Depardon, was arrested because he was suspected of terrorist propaganda.¹⁰⁰ The area around Hasankeyf has become increasingly militarized and closed

⁹⁵ “550-year-old shrine moved before being inundated in Turkey’s Hasankeyf,” *Hurriyet Daily*, 12 May, 2017, <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/550-year-old-shrine-moved-before-being-inundated-in-turkeys-hasankeyf.aspx?pageID=238&nID=113024&NewsCatID=375> last accessed 23-06-2017.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ “Relocation of Zeynel Bey Tomb has started – Struggle continues,” *Initiative to keep Hasankeyf Alive*, 12 May, 2017 <http://www.hasankeyfgirisimi.net/?p=454> last accessed 25-06-2017.

⁹⁸ “Protest against Bresser at its Dutch Headquarters: withdraw from relocation of Hasankeyf monuments,” *Save The Tigris*, 28 June, 2017 <http://www.savethetigris.org/protest-against-bresser-at-its-dutch-headquarters-withdraw-from-relocation-of-hasankeyf-monuments/> last accessed 02-07-2017.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ercan Eyboga, “Statement on arrest of National Geographic Photographer Mathias Depardon and the imminent move of the Zeynel Bey Tomb,” *Save The Tigris* <http://www.savethetigris.org/statement-on-arrest-of->

off. The security personnel in the area have frequently interfered with photographers and journalists in the region, denying them access.¹⁰¹ The lack of official information of the process of the projects makes it impossible to judge the legitimacy of the undertakings. That is why the NGOs work towards complete transparency around the implementation of the GAP.

It is interesting to look at the participating organizations in the Save the Tigris campaign. Despite the relevance of the issue at hand for Turkish citizens, there is an underrepresentation of Turkish organizations involved. The majority of the parties involved in the joint initiative are from Iraq. The Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive is the only Turkish organization represented. Although this initiative includes 86 different member organizations, e.g. municipalities, local women organizations or cultural centers, and is one of the broadest environmentalist movements in the Turkish Kurdish region, its reach remains small.¹⁰² The core of this NGO resistance movement can be found in Iraq. In Iraq the relation between the non-state actors and governmental authorities concerning water affairs is less tense. At the end of May 2017 representatives of Iraqi activist groups were given the opportunity to discuss water affairs with Hassan Al Janabi, the Iraqi minister of Water Resources.¹⁰³ During this meeting Al Janabi and the representatives of the Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign discussed the organization of a regional water forum in April 2018 to debate on regional water concerns and potential solutions.¹⁰⁴ Al Janabi showed great willingness to discuss water affairs and was pleased with the interest in - and enthusiasm for solving water-related conflicts and questions among activist groups. This amicability between government and civil society, the ministry of Water Resources even has a special department for cooperation with civil society and communities, is very different than the relation between these parties in Turkey. This can be explained by the fact that the non-state and state actors in Iraq are both non-hydrohegemonic powers and share their opposition against the GAP, even though the government is less open in voicing its disapproval. Al Janabi and Turkish minister Veysel Eroğlu recently had a private meeting to discuss water affairs that was seen as a diplomatic

[national-geographic-photographer-mathias-depardon-and-the-imminent-move-of-the-zeynel-bey-tomb/](#) last accessed 10-05-2017.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² “About us,” *Hasankeyf’I Yasatma Girisimi* http://www.hasankeyfgirisimi.net/?page_id=2 last accessed 19-05-2017.

¹⁰³ “Water activists in a private meeting with Dr. Hassan Al Janabi of water resources,” *Save The Tigris*, 2017 <http://www.savethetigris.org/water-activists-in-a-private-meeting-with-dr-hassan-al-janabi-minister-of-water-resources/> last accessed 24-06-2017.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

effort to come to an agreement about water sharing after the completion of the Ilisu Dam and diminish the negative effects of the dam on the Iraqi river flows.¹⁰⁵

Civil society tradition in Turkey

In a series of interviews conducted in 2014 by Leila Harris, one of the leading scholars on environmental issues in Turkey, it became clear that these issues in Turkey and especially the Southeastern Anatolia region are fundamentally connected to social issues. The respondents naturally connected issues of water and the environment to issues concerning East-West relations both within and outside of Turkey and Kurdish-Turkish problematics.¹⁰⁶ The interconnection between environmental issues and human rights and violence was particularly dominant in the interviews with Kurdish citizens.

Despite this emotional undertone of the issue, there is a serious lack of organized protest or resistance against the GAP. This does not necessarily have to do with a lack of interest or opinion but is based on the historical development of the region. For a long time it was prohibited in the Southeast to demonstrate and have public gatherings and it was dangerous to have organized protests.¹⁰⁷ The lacking tradition still has implications today. According to one respondent: ‘Participating in civil rights organizations still builds fear in people. ... I think this is the difference of Diyarbakır.’¹⁰⁸

The fear to openly voice environmental issues is not completely groundless. In 2013 when a protest in Turkey broke out because building plans were introduced on one of the last green spaces in Istanbul, the response by the authorities was fierce. *Daily Sabah Turkey* responded to the protests by stating that: ‘A small group of ordinary citizens seeking to raise environmental concerns started the protests. Erdoğan's opponents, ultra secular elitists, ultra nationalists and marginal leftist groups hijacked it.’¹⁰⁹ Media outlets gave different accounts of the Gezi protests, some focusing on the police brutality and peaceful nature of the protestors, others emphasizing the extreme nature of the demonstration and the fitting governmental response to the outbreak.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Leila M Harris, “Imaginative Geographies of Green: Difference, Postcoloniality, and Affect in Environmental Narratives in Contemporary Turkey,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104:4 (2014): 801-815, 804-805.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 806.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 807.

¹⁰⁹ “#Occupygezi Myths and Facts,” *Daily Sabah Turkey*, 11 June, 2013
<https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2013/06/11/occupygezi-myths-and-facts>, last accessed 09-05-2017.

¹¹⁰ “#Occupygezi Myths and Facts,” *Daily Sabah Turkey*, 11 June, 2013
<https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2013/06/11/occupygezi-myths-and-facts>, last accessed 09-05-2017 or

The current political climate in Turkey has resulted in a limited freedom of expression for journalists and activists, especially concerning human- and cultural rights violations.¹¹¹ Although this development is beyond the scope of this essay, it is clear that there is not a favorable climate in Turkey for people to voice their critical remarks. The tightening grip of the Turkish government on civil society is likely to increase the fear in people for participating in protest movements.

The NGOs responsible for the resistance against the GAP in and around Turkey are small but persistent and have combined their forces to increase their impact. Despite this joint effort their power is limited. The NGOs have very limited resources to seriously challenge the hydro-hegemony of the Turkish state. The letter sent to involved companies was unable to prevent the relocation of the Zeynel Bey tomb.¹¹² The NGOs were also unable to realize a quick release of the photographer Mathias Depardon. Depardon was released on June 9th, after President Macron personally discussed the matter with President Erdoğan.¹¹³ The tendency to arrest journalists and photographers working in the region because of terrorist propaganda or connections to the PKK makes it more difficult for people to raise awareness and address issues concerning the GAP. The NGOs are in that sense successful because they still provide news and information about the projects and developments. The already limited tradition in Turkey of civil- and environmentalist movements is obstructed by the tense political climate in Turkey and the continued conflict in the Southeast region. So although there is peaceful resistance against the GAP in and around Turkey, it is currently unable to bring about serious changes. The next section will discuss the impact of more violent approaches in the region, but first gives a short introduction to the complexity of Kurdish-Turkish relations.

Kurdish resistance

As previously mentioned, Kurdish organizations in Turkey took on a leading role in protesting the GAP from the start. The relation between the Turkish government and the Kurdish citizens is too complicated to fully explain in this essay but a short overview of the

“Timeline of Gezi Park Protests,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 6 June, 2013

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/timeline-of-gezi-park-protests-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=48321&NewsCatID=341> last accessed 09-05-2017.

¹¹¹ “Amnesty International Report 2016/17: The State of the World’s Human Rights,” *Amnesty International* (2017): 369-370.

¹¹² Joris Leverink, “Verplaatsing tombe: redding cultureel erfgoed of vernietiging ervan?” *One World*, 16 May, 2017 <https://www.oneworld.nl/water/verplaatsing-tombe-redding-cultureel-erfgoed-vernietiging-ervan> last accessed 16-05-2017.

¹¹³ Menno Sedee, “Franse fotograaf vrijgelaten in Turkije,” *NRC*, 9 June, 2017 <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/06/09/franse-fotograaf-vrijgelaten-in-turkije-a1562392> last accessed 07-07-2017.

Turkish-Kurdish conflict is necessary in order to understand the dominance of Kurdish opposition against the GAP.

Kurds and the AKP

After the founding of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 a policy of Turkification was installed by the national elite. Convinced that the European-style nation state was the way forward, parties became convinced that an ethnic-homogeneous state was necessary. Turkification policy was directed towards ethnic minorities in Turkey, such as the Kurds, the Circassians and Arabs.¹¹⁴ This policy basically aimed to assimilate minorities and diminish the rights of certain groups. Throughout the 20th century the intensity of this policy fluctuated depending on the party in charge. When the AKP came to power in 2002 it was the first time that an active new process was started to halt assimilation politics and grant minorities and especially the Kurds more rights.¹¹⁵

Although the AKP promised to make changes during its victory in 2002, the reality did not show any significant alterations or improvements. In 2005 Erdoğan gave a famous speech in Diyarbakir, in which he distanced himself from historic ill treatment of Kurds in Turkey and proclaimed a new policy directed towards protection and expansion of Kurdish cultural rights. It was not until the elections of 2007 however that the government adopted formal policy aimed at improving regional-ethnic cultural rights.¹¹⁶ Under the header 'Democratisation Package' the AKP government introduced several reforms that gave more cultural rights to minorities in Turkey. The reforms allowed for the return of Kurdish names of towns and people, the use of the Kurdish language in private schools and the approval of Kurdish for political purpose and propaganda.¹¹⁷ Although not all regulations worked in reality, there were vast improvements in Kurdish media and broadcasting and a rise in Kurdish names.

There seems to be a strong contrast between the abovementioned achievements of the AKP and the opposition against the party and the GAP. So how can this paradox be explained? When the GAP adopted its human development program people were very skeptical. Promises had been made before but real improvement was rarely the outcome. Although some came to be in favor of the GAP and the economic benefits it brought, other

¹¹⁴ Hakan Kolcak, "A more but not fully constructed arena: a critical analysis of the AKP's policy toward Kurdish Ethno-Cultural Rights 2002-2014," *The Age of Human Rights Journal* 5 (2015): 63-97, 64.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 65.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 69.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 74.

feared that the economic improvement was just a tool to pacify the region and undermine the regional, political opposition.¹¹⁸ Economic hardship was often seen as the main cause for Kurdish opposition, by taking this away people feared that the region would become compliant. But the complains were not only about the sudden economic interest in the region. The opposing groups were mainly worried about the increasing presence of the state in the region. Although most Kurdish opposition groups have abandoned the ideal of an independent nation state, they do still strive towards increasing autonomy and rights within the Turkish state. So even though some of the proposed and implemented plans legally protect Kurdish cultural rights, it is seen as a state interference. The involvement of the GAP, and thereby the government, in education, health and the labor market is seen as a way to legitimize state authority in the region and increase the dependency of the Kurdish population in the Southeast region.¹¹⁹ The infrastructure of the GAP is seen as a way to destroy cultural heritage and relocate the Kurdish population in order to undermine historic and communal links to the land in the Southeast region.¹²⁰ With the arrival of the Syrian refugees and the statement of the GAP administration that the need for development in the region is only increasing, the control of the government over the region is growing whilst the voice of the Kurdish opponents is overshadowed by other problematics.

Resurgence of PKK violence

The conflict between the Turkish government and the militant Kurdish groups in the Southeast of the country has had highs and lows in the 20th and 21st century. After the second insurgency between 2004-2012 it looked like the situation between the opposing parties stabilized. In 2013 and 2014 the tensions decreased and efforts to come to a more sustainable solution were resumed. This semi-stable period was however short-lived. A resurgence of the militant conflict between the Turkish authorities and the PKK erupted in late 2014. Because of the conflict in Syria and Iraq the actions of the Turkish authorities against Kurds across the borders were closely examined and criticized and they provoked protests.¹²¹ When the Turkish state refused to defend Kobani, a Syrian Kurdish town, against attacks from IS in June 2015, the Kurdish resentment against the state grew. The solidarity between Kurds

¹¹⁸ Hommes, Boelens and Maat, "Contested Hydrosocial Territories," 10.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Gilberto Conde, "Water and counter-hegemony: Kurdish struggle in the Tigris and Euphrates in Turkey", *Revista de Paz y Conflictos* 9:2 (2016): 43-58, 51.

¹²¹ Hommes, Boelens and Maat, "Contested Hydrosocial Territories," 17.

across the region was reinforced.¹²² Abdullah Ocalan, PKK leader, still tried to save the situation in early 2015 by calling for a unified struggle against IS but a few months later the resurgence of military conflict between the Turkish state and militant Kurdish groups was a fact.¹²³

Although clearly not all violence that erupted in the region was directed towards the Turkish water development plans, the insurrection in the region did coincide with attacks on the GAP and its personnel. Between August and December 2014 the PKK attacked the Ilisu Dam construction site, spread anti-dam propaganda and kidnapped two subcontractors working on the GAP.¹²⁴ The construction work in the region had to be put down for a couple of months because of these militant actions.¹²⁵ After this break the work was resumed but it continued with a few alterations. A majority of the personnel involved with the construction had resigned out of fear. The kidnapped subcontractors were replaced and the new personnel that were hired came from other parts of the country and were not Kurdish.¹²⁶ The PKK attacks also provoked a fierce military response by the Turkish state. Over 600 soldiers were sent to the region to assist the 1000 soldiers that had been there before in supervising and protecting the Ilisu Dam construction site and the surrounding area.¹²⁷ The militarization of the area also included the use of local militias and the deployment of tanks in safeguarding the construction and the involved employees.¹²⁸

Many in the region viewed the response by the Turkish authorities in horror. Ercan Ayboga, one of the leading opponents of the Ilisu Dam and head of the Initiative to keep Hasankeyf alive, stated that the militarization of the region would lead to an increase in human right violations and called for a joint effort by civil society and policy makers within and outside of Turkey to stop the completion of the projects.¹²⁹

While in the past years we emphasized the social, cultural and ecological impacts, the latest developments show us what potential the Ilisu Dam can create in terms of increasing the

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ “Turkish President Erdoğan mum on gov’t criticism, PKK leader’s call,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 21 March, 2015 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-mum-on-govt-criticism-pkk-leaders-call.aspx?pageID=238&nID=79993&NewsCatID=338> last accessed 23-04-2017.

¹²⁴ “Ilisu Dam construction site militarized,” *Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative*, 16 February, 2015 <http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/archives/3969> , last accessed 29-04-2017.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

existing political and social conflicts. We would now need political pressure on Turkey more than ever.¹³⁰

The actions of the PKK in late 2014 against the GAP were not incidental. When the peace-effort between the Turkish government and the militant Kurdish groups came to an official end in mid-2015 the rhetoric of the opposing group sharpened. In July 2015 the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), an umbrella organization that includes the PKK, released a statement that made clear that the fight against Turkish authorities and the Southeastern Anatolia Project would be intensified.¹³¹ The statement confirmed the KCU's view that the goal of the dams was to displace Kurdistan's people, that the increasing control and militarization was a preparation for war and rejected claims that the dams were in favor of the Kurdish population. According to the KCU: 'even if there is a referendum held on the issue, 90 percent of the Kurdistan people will say no to the dams which are being turned into a graveyard for the Kurdish people'.¹³² The KCU stated that the Turkish authorities had misused the ceasefire period by increasing their military presence in the region:

The Turkish state took advantage of the cease-fire conditions not for a democratic political resolution but to gain an advantageous position in preparation for war by building dozens of guard posts, roads for military purposes and dams in order for a cultural genocide.¹³³

The KCU also warned for increasing attacks on dams as a direct response to the mistreatment of the ceasefire conditions by the Turkish authorities. The language used and the actions propagated are rather extreme. Speaking of 'cultural genocide' is a hefty accusation and ties to the development of securitization of the discourse that will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter.

Although the case of the Ilisu Dam attacks and militarization can be seen as a response from the Turkish government to radical attacks, other examples show that the timeline of the (re)actions are more complicated. In May 2014 protests broke out in the area surrounding the Silvan Dam in the province of Diyarbakir. In late 2013 the state started constructing a

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ "Kurdish Movement: We Will Not Accept Violation of Ceasefire by Turkey Anymore," *Kurdish Question*, 12 July, 2015 <http://kurdishquestion.com/oldarticle.php?aid=kurdish-movement-we-will-not-accept-violation-of-ceasefire-by-turkey-anymore> last accessed 24-04-2017.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

gendarmerie post in the region to provide security for the Silvan hydroelectric plant.¹³⁴ Although some of the protestors came from radical groups, others had full support from regional representatives. Zübeyde Zümürüt, local head of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) responded to the activities of the Turkish authorities in a similar manner as the KCU, although she used a more toned down rhetoric. She stated: ‘The gendarmerie posts that are currently being built are contrary to the dialogue and negotiation process launched with the democratic process a year-and-a-half ago. Post constructions should be halted and the village guard [system] abolished.’¹³⁵ The Silvan protestors were especially concerned about the reestablishment of the village guard system that many believed was a continuation of historic control and subversion of the region.¹³⁶

The statement of the KCU was not just tough rhetoric but predicted a resurgence of violence in the region. According to data research by the International Crisis Group over 2700 people were killed since the resurgence of the conflict between the PKK and the Turkish government.¹³⁷ This includes more than 900 security personnel, e.g. police officers, soldiers and village guards, and over 1200 PKK militants. The majority of these attacks took place in Diyarbakir, Sirnak and Hakkari. Although these attacks are not all connected to the GAP, they do include attacks on construction sites, dams and security personnel surrounding the GAP projects. In Dargecit, the location of the Ilisu Dam, 24 people were killed. In Silvan, home of the Silvan Dam, 39 people lost their lives. In the area surrounding the Batman Dam over 15 were killed.¹³⁸ Haci Bayram Tonbul, who is the head of the energy workers union, stated that the delays of the Ilisu Dam cost the Turkish government around 1 million dollars a day. According to Tonbul: "The terrorist group abducts workers and engineers, sets fire to the construction equipment and lays explosives on the dam roads, in order to block the construction of the dam projects."¹³⁹ This is not only causing delay to the projects and so leads to extra costs but also results in an increasing fear amongst involved partners and

¹³⁴ “Protesters hang PKK and Öcalan flags on gendarmerie post construction site near Silvan dam,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 13 May, 2014 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/protesters-hang-pkk-and-ocalan-flags-on-gendarmerie-post-construction-site-near-silvan-dam-.aspx?pageID=549&nID=66397&NewsCatID=341> last accessed 10-05-2017.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ “Turkey’s PKK Conflict: The Rising Toll,” *International Crisis Group*, 2017 <http://www.crisisgroup.be/interactives/turkey/> last accessed 20-05-2017.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ugur Serhan Ozcan, “Turkey: PKK threatens dam project in Southeast,” *Anadolu Agency*, 21 September, 2015 <http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-pkk-threatens-dam-projects-in-southeast/292177> last accessed 17-04-2017.

personnel. The Silvan and Ilisu Dam construction were temporarily shut down because 34 governmental officers handed in their resignation due to safety issues.¹⁴⁰

Cooperation civil society and the PKK

The resistance by non-state actors against Turkey as the hydro-hegemon can be divided into two main groups, the NGOs and civil society and the resistance led by Kurdish militant groups. The involved NGOs are collaborative initiatives combining the forces of human rights advocates and environmental and cultural organizations, but they are completely separated from the militant branch of resistance. The overall objectives of these two groups do not always match but they do share a similar opposition against the implementation of GAP projects. There is very little information available about the relations between the involved NGOs and the militant groups. The organizations do not mention the PKK or any militant groups as ‘relevant actors’ in the discussion of water affairs.¹⁴¹ The Save The Tigris campaign only states that the construction of the Ilisu Dam will lead to extra political instability in Turkey because of the militant responses of the PKK to the dam construction. The construction of the Ilisu Dam ‘may affect negatively the ongoing negotiation process between the Turkish government and the PKK’.¹⁴² The resistance of the PKK is used as another reason to shut down the Ilisu Dam project. In fact, the campaign of the NGOs loses legitimacy because of the militant resistance against the GAP. The Turkish authorities use the violence in the region to increase the militarization and securitization of the region and undermine the overall opposition against the GAP. This process will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter.

The actions and tools used by the NGO opposition can be described as soft power-based. Its objectives are concrete but its use of normative, awareness creating mechanisms set it apart from the militant opposition. The PKK uses hard power tools, coercion and violence, but aims in this particular case to achieve similar objectives. This dichotomy between the main opposing forces undermines the power of the non-state actors, especially because the actions of the one are undermining the legitimacy of the other. Due to the extremist nature of the PKK actions and the governmental war on the party and its supporters it is unlikely and not advisable that the actors join forces and unite in their opposition against the GAP.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ “Who we are,” *Save The Tigris* <http://www.savethetigris.org/#whoweare> last accessed 05-07-2017.

¹⁴² “Stop Ilisu: Destruction and instability!” *Save The Tigris*, 5 December 2014 <http://www.savethetigris.org/stop-ilisu-stop-destruction-and-instability/> last accessed 05-07-2017.

The role of the international community and international funders, that was important during an earlier period, has largely disappeared. Because Turkey itself now largely finances the GAP, its dependency on approval of the international community has decreased. Although the momentum that the oppositional movement had during the first decade of the 21st century was lost, the resistance remained in place. The tools used by NGOs to challenge the hydro-hegemony are largely normative of nature. Their campaign to provide transparency and spread awareness is aimed at creating normative pressure. Despite these soft-power tools and a lack of coercive mechanisms, such as military force or economic sanctions, the involved NGOs do try to enforce change by appealing to external partners, e.g. Bresser Eurasia or the European Court of Human Rights. The approach of the other main actor in challenging the hydro-hegemony is rather different. The tactics used by militant Kurdish groups in Turkey can easily be placed under the denominator of coercive mechanisms. The use of military force to obstruct the completion of certain GAP projects is a very direct attack against Turkey as hydro-hegemony but the PKK also makes use of more indirect attacks. The kidnapping of GAP personnel and the spread of anti-dam propaganda are threatening actions and create a feeling of unsafety surrounding the Turkish water development plans. Although the impact of their actions is substantial, it at the same time causes a backlash. The violent approach to resistance used by these militant groups alienates other opponents and undermines the legitimacy of the protest.

Table 5. Impact of non-state resistance in Turkey

Actor	Action	Impact
NGOs and civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocacy campaigns for funders and involved parties - Demonstrations - Offer transparency - Legal measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unite local opposition and transnational opposition - Provide transparency about GAP development - Continue peaceful resistance - Legal process to stop the Ilisu Dam
Kurdish militant groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attacks on construction sites - Kidnapping personnel - Anti-dam propaganda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causing delay - Increasing costs - Fear amongst employees and resignation of employees - Alienation of other GAP opposition

The opposing groups and actions analyzed in this chapter are, at least according to their view, reactions to actions of the Turkish government. The resistance of NGOs and civil society movements are a direct response to the GAP and Turkish water development plans but in the case of the militant Kurdish groups it is more difficult to conclude about what came first. Often the actions and reactions of supporters and opponents are intertwined. Whereas this chapter was solely focused on actions of the non-state resisting movement, the following chapter will analyze the (re)actions of Turkish authorities towards oppositional groups. This is not at all times a chronological continuation on this chapter but runs throughout, or parallel with the developments discussed above.

Chapter 3- The hegemon strikes back

A group that call themselves academics has emerged and spewed hatred against their state and nation by publicly taking sides with the terror organization [PKK]. My brothers, do you know who, which group, is the biggest enemy of these dams? It is the separatist terror organization and politicians and academics who support it.¹⁴³

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

The Southeastern Anatolia Project suffers from recurring physical and ideological attacks from opposition groups in and around Turkey. The Ilisu Dam remains the most controversial project of the GAP but other projects are targeted as well. The analysis above showed how and by whom the hydro-hegemony of Turkey is challenged. This however is not the end of this story. The Turkish state, hereby meaning the government and the GAP administration, is not passively watching these developments unfold. It has its own response mechanisms to these attacks and allegations. This chapter focuses specifically on the measures taken by the Turkish state in response to, or in order to counteract, the non-state resistance against the GAP. As mentioned above, the order of actions and reactions is not always clear. It partly depends on one's political stance whether the actions of the government are seen as offensive or defensive. This chapter places the initiative with the Turkish government and the GAP administration and will explain how they have used the resistance of non-state actors to strengthen their belief in the need for a large-scale water development program and the implementation of GAP projects. Key to this analysis is the term 'securitization' and this

¹⁴³ "PKK and their supporters, academics, against new dams, says Turkish president," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 14 January, 2016 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nid=93864> last accessed 19-05-2017.

chapter will show how the Turkish government has connected the issues of water to (inter)national security. The securitization and militarization of the region will be discussed as well as the alteration of the demographic structure, the arrival and settlement of Syrians in Turkey and the impact of this development on the ethnic tensions and Kurdish opposition. The use of Syrian refugees for political benefits and ethnic rebalance in Turkey is a highly controversial topic. Although it is not the central aim of this analysis, it is interesting and necessary to include because the migration- and settlement policy of Turkey is by many opponents seen as interconnected with the ethnic instability of the Southeastern Anatolia region. The results of this chapter provide an insight into the responsive mechanisms of the hydro-hegemon and will help understand the overall power relations between the involved state and non-state actors in Turkish water politics.

The securitization of water politics

According to the hydro-hegemony framework securitization is one of the mechanisms used to influence relations by the hegemon of the river basin.¹⁴⁴ A government can bring water issues into the realm of security and can thereby increase the importance of water development and management.¹⁴⁵ Zeitoun and Warner state that: ‘Promoting a project to a national-security concern equates criticism to treason, thus silencing critical voices in the bureaucracy and maintaining a form of hegemonic thought control.’¹⁴⁶ In reality this would mean that opposition to Turkish hydro-politics is seen as a subversion of national security. This, not surprisingly, could alienate people from the GAP opposition. A securitization policy can also be used to distract attention from other internal and external problems. The analysis below will look into the use and misuse of securitization policy by the Turkish government and will examine how, why and when issues of security and water are intertwined.

International security

At the initiation of the Southeastern Anatolia Project security was not a priority. The political climate of Turkey was not yet marked by conflicts based on ethnic diversity and inequalities amongst citizens. This however started to change quite rapidly after 1984 with the emergence of the PKK and activist attacks in Turkey. Gary Winslett has shown how security was a priority for Turkish and Syrian water policies. He concludes that in the period between 1980 and 1998 the riparian relation between Turkey and Syria was strained because of the emphasis

¹⁴⁴ Zeitoun and Warner, “Hydro-Hegemony,” 448.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

on securitization by both parties.¹⁴⁷ The issue of water sharing and management was continuously incorporated into talks about the political difficulties between the riparian states. Water resources were used by the Turkish state as a pressure tactic. The Turkish government threatened to cut off the water flow to Syria in order to enforce extradition of PKK leadership. This was only resolved by mediation of foreign partners and the surrender of Syria to Turkish demands.¹⁴⁸ The power imbalance between the states was clearly used during this period by the hegemonic power but both parties resorted to a securitization discourse and the use of narrative based on terror, threat and instability.¹⁴⁹

From 2000 onwards, after the reconciliation with the Syrian government and the stabilization of relations with Kurdish activist groups, the Turkish government was able to de-securitize its water policy and show a bit more flexibility and generosity towards Syria concerning its water resources.¹⁵⁰ Both states accepted new agreements that obliged Turkey to send 500 cubic meters of water an hour across the Turkey-Syrian border.¹⁵¹ Part of the success of this period and the agreements that were made can be explained by the separation of water issues from political and economic issues. The political stability made concentrated talks about sharing and caring for water resources possible without involving other criteria or conditions.¹⁵² In the past water had been used as part of a threatening rhetoric to enforce change or surrender. With the major political obstacles out of the way, Turkey and Syria were more willing to look towards mutual-benefit sharing and management of the water resources of the Euphrates and Tigris basin.¹⁵³ It should come as no surprise that with the return of political instability, ethnic conflicts and international turmoil, the various actors involved in the water conflict wholeheartedly embraced the securitization discourse again.

Domestic security

A securitization campaign can often be used to legitimize actions that are exceptional and not condoned under normal circumstances.¹⁵⁴ By placing measures under the heading of internal or external security, a government can silence any opposition to its policy. Due to the

¹⁴⁷ Gary Winslett, "Substitutability, securitisation and hydro-hegemony: ontological and strategic sequencing in shared river relations," *Conflict, Security and Development* 15:3 (2015): 283-309, 290.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, 296.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 289.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 299.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 295.

¹⁵² Aysegul Kibaroglu and Waltine Scheumann, "Evolution of Transboundary Politics in the Euphrates-Tigris River System: New Perspectives and Political Challenges," *Global Governance* 19:3 (2013): 279-305, 290.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 291.

¹⁵⁴ Zeitoun and Warner, "Hydro-Hegemony," 448.

perceived top-priority of security, criticism to the governmental policy can be equated to treason.¹⁵⁵ In this particular case the involvement of security and control with water management and development by the Turkish government is a method to undermine existing opposition. The quote at the beginning of the chapter shows how such a security discourse is used. President Erdoğan equates support for the opposition to the construction of dams to ‘hatred against their state and nation by publicly taking sides with the terror organization.’¹⁵⁶ The reason that such rhetoric can be successful is because it does have some legitimate argumentation behind it. Whenever the relations between the government and the PKK turns violent, dams and GAP construction sites get involved. Assaults on GAP projects increased after 2014 and the responses of the Turkish government and the GAP administration were fierce. Sadrettin Karahocagil, president of the GAP administration, responded to the troubling times in an interview in 2015. In his answers the dominance of a security discourse cannot be missed. He mentions several times that the terrorist assaults damage the implementation of the GAP projects and the development of the region at large. Karahocagil makes a clear distinction between Kurds in the region that benefit from the Southeastern Anatolia Project and that are in support of it and the terrorist groups that cause socio-economic damage to the people of the region.¹⁵⁷

Unfortunately, the restart of terrorist assaults aiming to disrupt peace and stability in the country has caused many fatalities and destruction started to be experienced again. [...]I regret to say that GAP investments have also been disrupted to a considerable extent by the economic and social damage and the security gap caused by terrorist assaults in the region. The construction of some dams and hydroelectric plants as part of the project has come to a halt due to assaults and sabotage.¹⁵⁸

Official discourse

This section will analyze the GAP action plans and programs over the last decades, in order to see if and how the official discourse of the Turkish government and the GAP administration was securitized.

At the start of the GAP program the goal of the project was to improve the economic

¹⁵⁵ Barry Buzan, Ole Weaver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Lynne Rienner Publishers: London, 1998).

¹⁵⁶ “PKK and their supporters, academics, against new dams, says Turkish president,” *Hurriyet Daily News*.

¹⁵⁷ Mehmet Solmaz, “PKK targets economic projects, hits Kurds with unemployment, insecurity,” *Daily Sabah Turkey*, 20 October, 2015 <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2015/10/21/pkk-targets-economic-projects-hits-kurds-with-unemployment-insecurity> last accessed 15-05-2017.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

position of the Southeastern region and increase the energy supply of the Turkish state. The main objectives was the ‘rectification of inter-regional disparity in the Nation’s socio-economic development.’¹⁵⁹ Although the initial GAP Master Plan does mention the potential contribution to social stability, the language used is very technical and based on water development, agricultural progress and an increase of the export rate.¹⁶⁰ There is no mention of terms such as peace, security or human development. It has already been mentioned in the first chapter that at the end of the 1990s the GAP administration made quite a drastic change to its overall objectives and the character of the project. This change in direction was paralleled by a change in the use of language. The new Action Plan that was created for the period 2002-2008 introduced new objectives. The GAP administration aimed ‘to enhance the level of welfare, peace and happiness of our citizens living in the region.’¹⁶¹ The critique that the GAP administration received in the 1990s about being undemocratic and unsustainable was incorporated in the new Action Plan. It talks about the involvement of local representatives of region’s provinces and the ‘participation of representatives from local governments, government agencies including central ministries, local professional organizations and non-governmental organizations as well as deputies from these provinces.’¹⁶² Involving new actors challenged the idea that the GAP lacked regional support.

In the newest Action Plan, that is set up for the period 2014-2018, the main objective of the GAP program is rephrased to ‘ensure peace and stability in the GAP region’.¹⁶³ Although the core of the program, social and economic development of the region and positive contribution to the national economy, is still in place, the objectives have become much broader and centered around sustainable human development. According to the new Action Plan: ‘Our aim is to make completed projects lasting, maintain peace by improving welfare and strengthen brotherhood.’¹⁶⁴ Including a term such as brotherhood is unusual. It seems to indicate that the improvement of the relation between the Southeastern region, read the Kurds, and the rest of Turkey is part of the GAP program. It might be relevant to note that there is no single mention of the Kurds or the Kurdish presence in the region in this Action

¹⁵⁹ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, “Southeastern Anatolia Project Master Plan Study,” <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/master-plan-page-2.html> last accessed 21-05-2017.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, “Southeastern Anatolia Project Action Plan (2002-2008),” 2.

¹⁶² Ibid, 9.

¹⁶³ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, “GAP Action plan 2014-2018,” December, 2014 <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/action-plan-page-5.html> last accessed 24-05-2017.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Plan or any of the other official documents. The reference to brotherhood seems to be an implicit recognition of the struggles within the region.

With the analysis of the official GAP narrative throughout the last decades it can be concluded that there is a change in tone and language and that issues of security are increasingly incorporated into the official discourse. Although the mentions of stability and peace are still subtle, they do reveal the tendency to securitize the GAP program. The aim to strengthen the ‘brotherhood’ that is adopted in recent plans highlights the development that connects the GAP to internal stability and peace. Although it is not mentioned explicitly, this language connects to the political struggles within Turkey.

Changing the demographic structure

With a policy of securitization and militarization the Turkish government is able to increase its visible and ideological control over the GAP opposition. These are however not the only mechanisms used by the state authorities to undermine the resistance of non-state actors. The use of demographic alteration for political benefits is controversial but is included in this essay because the GAP does affect the demographic structure of the region, has made alterations to its programs because of the arrival of Syrians and because oppositional groups specifically mention demographic alteration as a tool of the GAP administration to undermine autonomy and human rights.¹⁶⁵

There is no consensus about the demographic impact of the GAP on the Southeast region. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs the Ilisu Dam will result in the resettlement of 15.000 people, of various ethnic origins.¹⁶⁶ Other sources mention numbers that rise up to 78.000, hereby excluding an extra 30.000 nomadic people, and emphasize the Kurdish majority.¹⁶⁷ These are the estimated numbers of just one of the GAP dams. Corporate Watch conducted several interviews in late 2015 with residents in and around Hasankeyf. The interviews highlight the main concerns of the people that had to leave their homes: the lack of compensation, little job opportunities because of a decrease in tourism and the difficulties of protesting because of the presence of the military police.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Conde, “Water and counter-hegemony,” 51.

¹⁶⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Ilisu Dam.”

¹⁶⁷ “Save Hasankeyf, Stop Ilisu Dam,” *Corporate Watch*, 18 September, 2015

<https://corporatewatch.org/news/2015/sep/18/save-hasankeyf-stop-ilisu-dam> last accessed 08-07-2017.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

After the dam is completed we won't have a home. I don't know where we will go. We do not have the money for a new house in New Hasankeyf. We get very little money for the houses here. They have offered 60,000 lira but houses in New Hasankeyf are 120,000 lira.¹⁶⁹

Asya Okay (Hasankeyf resident) Interview 2015

The demographic alteration does not only include the physical resettlement of people but also involves control over mobility and transportation. According to interviews conducted by Gilberto Conde, scholar on water politics and the impact of asymmetric power relations, leaders of Kurdish movements are convinced that the GAP is a tool to displace mass groups of Kurds from the region, hamper the mobility of people and divide the population.¹⁷⁰ According to the interviewed the disappeared villages are no longer able to hide militants because the GAP infrastructure has increased the visibility of fighters in the region. As a result of the constructed dams and hydropower infrastructure lakes have emerged in the region. These new lakes obstruct free movement in the region of militants but also of Kurdish citizens.¹⁷¹

Syrian guests welcome

When President Erdoğan in the summer of 2016 proposed to give the Syrians citizenship he received fierce opposition. The hashtag *#UlkemdeSuriyeliIstemiyorum*, translating to 'I don't want Syrians in my country', became trending worldwide.¹⁷² Even migration experts were surprised by Erdoğan's announcement. Many believed that his surprising promise was based on his desire to alter the outcomes of the referendum that would give him more constitutional power.¹⁷³ Member of parliament Veli Ağbaba responded by saying that: 'The governing party clearly showed that they're not thinking about the future of these people, but rather their own political gain.'¹⁷⁴

The International Crisis Group (ICG), an independent organization aimed at preventing war and conflict, published a report at the end of November 2016 about the presence and impact of Syrians in Turkey.¹⁷⁵ The ICG concluded on the basis of interviews in the region that various minorities in the Southeastern region fear that the resettlement of

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Conde, "Water and counter-hegemony," 51.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Selin Girit, "Turks hit back at Erdogan plan to give Syrians citizenship," *BBC News*, 5 July, 2016 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36704791> last accessed 27-05-2017.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ International Crisis Group, "Turkey's Refugee Crisis: Politics of Permanence," *Europe Report 241* (2016) <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-s-refugee-crisis-politics-permanence> last accessed 03-07-2017.

Syrians is used to alter the demographic balance and election-outcomes in favor of President Erdoğan.¹⁷⁶ It is interesting to see that several population groups shared this sentiment. The Turkish Alevi's, the Turkish Kurds and secularists all shared the concerns about the arrival and resettlement of Syrian newcomers in Southeastern Anatolia region.¹⁷⁷ Although their specific concerns can differ, they all agree that the relocation of Syrians into the region can harm their, already limited, representation.

Historical memories are evoked by the systematic relocation plans of the political leadership. There are many examples in our history of forced movements of political nature. In the '50s and '60s, Kurds were moved to the [western] provinces and tensions with residents erupted.¹⁷⁸

Ayhan Bilgen, HDP parliamentarian

Kurdish activists have been very worried about the plans of the government. Because of a history of relocation concerning Kurds in Turkey, the situation is extra sensitive. The distrust in the region has resulted in an anti-refugee sentiment amongst certain parts of the populations. The violence against Syrians has increased in the southeastern region.¹⁷⁹ The political consequences connected to the arrival of Syrians are overshadowing the humanitarian aspects of the crisis and so people who are generally in favor of a welcoming immigration-policy have changed their point of view.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, 15.

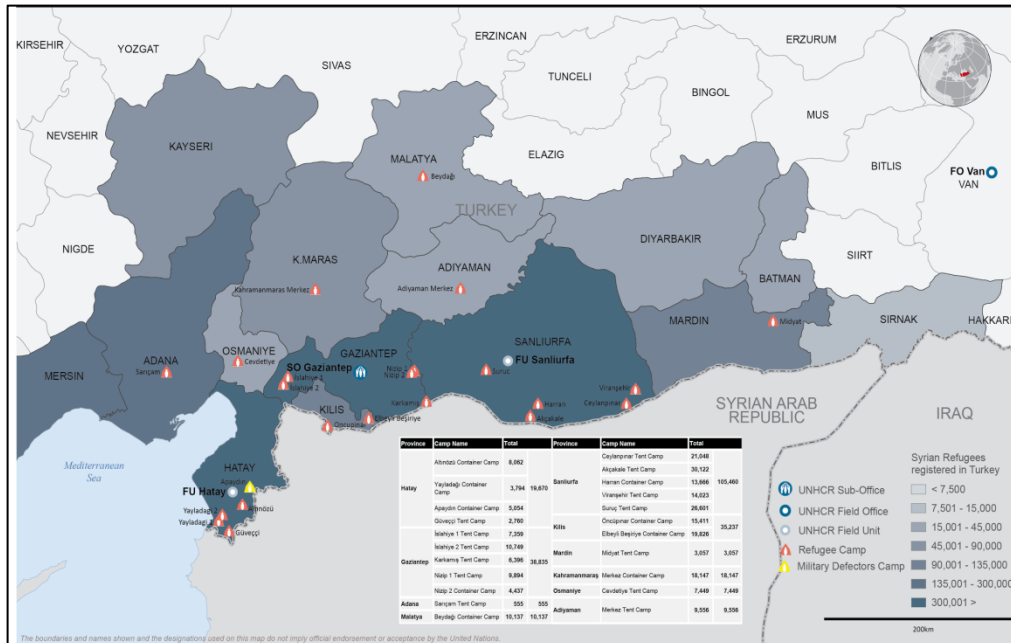
¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 16.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 15.

¹⁷⁹ Burcu Togrul Koca, "Syrian refugees in Turkey: from 'guests' to 'enemies'," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 54 (2016): 55-75, 66.

¹⁸⁰ International Crisis Group, "Politics of Permanence," 16.

Image 3. Settlement of registered Syrian refugees in the Southeastern region of Turkey



“UNHCR Turkey: Syrian Refugee Camps and Provincial Breakdown of Syrian Refugees Registered in South East Turkey - May 2017,” UNCHR <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/settlement.php?id=59&country=224®ion=38> last accessed 06-07-2017.

Image 4. Percentage of total population



“Turkey is taking care of refugees, but failing to integrate them,” *The Economist*, 29 June, 2017 <https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21724413-if-syrians-become-permanent-underclass-country-headed-trouble-turkey-taking-care> last accessed 07-07-2017.

The provinces Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Adana, Mersin and Hatay house the largest group of registered Syrian refugees and refugee camps. It is very clear from the statistics that a large majority of the Syrian newcomers is residing in the Southeastern Anatolia region. Although Syrians are staying in every district in Turkey, the national imbalance is striking. The Turkish authorities do not openly communicate about the settlement of Syrians, their integration process or the demographic shifts and so it is unclear whether the resettlement of Syrians is part of a bigger governmental plan. Ersoy Dede, a journalist who writes for the pro-government news outlet *Star*, wrote in response to the refugee debate that the permanent settlement of Syrians in the Southeast could be a solution to ethnicity-based conflicts and he claimed that the Turkish government had created a plan for demographic transition decades ago.¹⁸¹ This statement was however quickly denied by Dr Murat Erdogan, head of the Centre for Migration and Politics at the University of Hacettepe, who stated that the war in Syria and the successive refugee flow towards Turkey came as a complete surprise and that the Turkish government had no premeditated plan to alter the demographic composition of the country.¹⁸²

It is debatable whether there was a premeditated plan in place but it is fair to say that the magnitude and the longevity of the Syrian conflict and the refugee influx were not foreseen. Turkish authorities, much like European governments, believed that Assad and his regime would quickly be defeated and replaced.¹⁸³ That is also why the Turkish state had from early on a welcoming open door policy towards Syrian ‘guests’. The term ‘guests’, which was and often is still used in Turkey, indicates that people believed that the presence of these Syrians would be temporary. When it became clear that there was no short-term solution to the conflict, the authorities had to come up with a policy aimed at integrating the newcomers.

Alterations to the GAP

In response to the arrival of the Syrian refugees the GAP administration made some alterations to its plans. The Action Plan 2014-2018 notes that the arrival of Syrian refugees has an impact on the Southeastern Anatolia region and has resulted in an ‘additional needs in

¹⁸¹ Tulay Cetingulec, “Syrian shifting demographics in Turkish Kurdistan Region,” *Al-Monitor*, 10 Augustus, 2016 <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/08/turkey-syria-syrian-refugees-kurdish-region.html> last accessed 27-04-2017 or Ersoy Dede, “Suriyeliler’i Diyarbakır’a yerleştirelim,” *Star News*, 6 July, 2016 <http://www.star.com.tr/yazar/suriyelileri-diyarbakira-yerlestirelim-yazi-1123362/> last accessed 29-04-2017.

¹⁸² Benzu Kaplan, “Suriyeliler, Kürt nüfusu dengelemek için kullanılıyor,” *Haber Versaire*, 22 December, 2015 <http://haberversaire.com/suriyeliler-kurt-nufusu-dengelemek-icin-kullaniliyor/> last accessed 29-04-2017.

¹⁸³ Koca, “Syrian refugees in Turkey,” 62-63.

the GAP region in terms of food, nutrition, housing, health, education and infrastructure'.¹⁸⁴ In the official presentation of the GAP regional development administration of 2016 a special section is dedicated to the impact of Syrians on the region and the projects under the header 'The activities carried out for Syrian guests'.¹⁸⁵ The programs presented are set in the Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Hatay and Kilis provinces of the Southeast and aimed at strengthening social stability, empowerment of youth and women and improving work conditions and possibilities for Syrians and their host communities.¹⁸⁶ All the projects that are presented are co-financed by international actors, e.g. the Japanese government, the European Union, government of Kuwait and UNICEF. The presentation does not explicitly mention ethnic tensions in the region but does express the will to 'contribute to the strengthening of social stability in Southeastern Anatolia Region.'¹⁸⁷ The GAP administration does not elaborate on the meaning of this regional social stability but it seems to refer to the political and military instability in the Southeast.

The arrival of millions of Syrians in Turkey and predominantly in the GAP region clearly had its effects. On the side of the opposition the open door policy of the Turkish government was received with suspicion. The fear of a demographic shift and a resulting decrease in representation caused animosity towards the Syrian refugees amongst the Turkish minorities. For the government and the GAP administration the arrival of the Syrians reinforced their belief in the necessity of the GAP program and the development of the Southeastern region. The rapid growth in population in the region increased the already existing needs but also increased the development potential, especially because the GAP was able to gain new financial support. It is not possible to conclude about the potential plans to use the Syrians to alter the demographic composition of the region but it is clear that the arrival of over 3 million Syrians will have a big impact on the sparsely populated Southeast region and that the Turkish authorities will try to utilize this situation to benefit their support base.

The Turkish state actors are not powerless in their response to GAP opposition. The unrest in the region, that is not only based on water development plans but is interconnected with water politics, is managed by an increasing physical and ideological presence. The resurrection of control posts, village guards and military personnel surrounding GAP projects

¹⁸⁴ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP Action Plan 2014-2018."

¹⁸⁵ Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP Powerpoint," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/gap-general-presentation-page-31.html> last accessed 13-04-2017.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

increases the visibility of the state. The securitization policy that is implemented is not only physical, in the sense that military force and threats occur, but also ideological. The narrative that links issues of water to security is propagated by the Turkish authorities and can be subtly found in the official Southeastern Anatolia Project discourse. Equating opponents of dams and hydropower plants to the support of terrorist organizations seems far-fetched but is a rather successful tool to undermine legitimacy of opponents. The recurring PKK attacks on dams and employees actually strengthens the message of the state authorities that the resistance is led by radicals and has no civilian support. Another mechanism that can potentially be used by the hegemonic actor to influence resistance is demographic alteration. The forced eviction of people from the region, the GAP infrastructure that divides and restricts mobility, and the reception of Syrians in the region all have the ability to undermine Kurdish presence and resistance in the Southeast. Although it is unclear whether the welcoming position towards refugees in Turkey is connected to ethnic rebalancing, the arrival of millions of Syrians to the Southeast region has the potential to make drastic changes to the region.

Table 6. Response mechanisms of Turkish government

Action	Directed towards	Impact
Securitization	All non-state resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undermine legitimacy of opponents - Link resistance with terrorism - Create support for militarization of the Southeast region
Militarization	Kurdish militant groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restrict violence against GAP projects and personnel - Increase physical and mental control over the region
Demographic alteration	Kurdish militant groups/civil unrest of the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Potential long-term ethnic stability - Silence the voice of Kurdish opposition

Conclusion

The objective of this essay was to analyze to what extent non-state actors were able to challenge the hydro-hegemony of Turkey in the period 1980-2017. The case study on Turkey served as an example for regional water politics and the actors involved in water politics. With the hydro-hegemony framework at its basis, this essay wanted to add to current understanding of hydro-politics and the impact of power asymmetries between hegemonic and non-hegemonic actors.

Around 1980 Turkey established itself as the hydro-hegemon of the Euphrates-Tigris river basin. Its competitors, Iraq and Syria, were unable to enforce equal sharing treaties or control over the water resources of the region. Due to Turkey's riparian position, its economic and military power, its material and immaterial infrastructure and its connections to the international community, the country was able to dominate regional water politics and cooperation. This hydro-hegemonic position was quickly put to use with the creation of the Southeastern Anatolia Project. This massive water development program was controversial from the start and sparked national and international opposition. Although the riparian states tried to challenge the hegemony of Turkey during this period, e.g. by addressing the international community and trying to come to treaties, they were unable to have a significant impact on the dominance of Turkey. It was therefore up to the non-state actors to challenge the hydro-hegemon. Their efforts were not without success. In the 1990s the international community was successful in encouraging the GAP to alter its objectives. As a response to the controversy surrounding the project, the administration decided to broaden the scope of the project and embrace, at least on paper, a program that included social and sustainable developments. For a while this switch seemed to satisfy the opposition but the controversy returned quickly hereafter. The new wave of protest was not solely based on the impact of the project on the water resources of Syria and Iraq but included environmental and cultural heritage concerns. The collaboration between international and national/local NGOs was partly successful. The objective of involved European NGOs, to halt European financial support for the projects, was reached but the broader objectives of local NGOs were not. The Turkish state was able to circumvent financial obstacles by using its own resources. Their dependency of foreign partners decreased whereas the freedom of the GAP administration increased.

The continuation of the Ilisu Dam construction after the perceived success of NGOs was a severe setback and it altered the activist momentum surrounding the GAP. Although

press- and academic coverage of the GAP controversy diminished, the opposition stayed in place and continued its resistance against the water development plans of Turkey. The NGOs and civil society movements, in a combined national, regional and international consortium, continued to resist the implementation of GAP projects. The opposition booked a few successes along the way but was unable to achieve drastic changes.

The other non-state actors that challenged the Turkish hydro-hegemony from 1980s onwards were Kurdish militant groups. The revival of violence between the PKK and the Turkish government in late 2014 was paralleled by attacks and threats aimed at the GAP and its dams. These groups had a lasting impact on the hegemony of Turkey. Their attacks caused great delay and thus high costs. For now the Turkish state is able to continue the implementation of its projects but it is possible that continuous attacks will result in shutting down construction work. In the past the tactics of the PKK temporarily halted the implementation of the Southeastern Anatolia Project. This ‘success’ however was not left unanswered. In the case of Turkey the hydro-hegemon responded to the hegemony challengers with securitization of water politics and militarization of the Southeast region. The government is also accused of using demographic alteration to silence opposition. With the arrival of millions of Syrians, most of them settling or being settled in the Southeast region, the Turkish government is even more convinced that a full development program of the region is a necessity. The fact that the arrival of refugees can provide an outcome for ethnic tensions could potentially drastically alter the position of the non-state opponents. With the mechanism of securitization the Turkish government equates opposition to water development plans to terrorism and national treason.

The discourse that is used by official authorities continuously connects resistance concerning water to radicalism and extremism. The limited tradition in Turkey of environmental activism is blocked by this development. This securitization is not only an ideological change, as in that the language that is used contains more terms connected to security and stability, but has a direct impact on the region and the response to GAP critics. The arrest of journalists and photographers covering the GAP is a sign that the hegemonic actor does not welcome opposing voices. The militarization of the region runs parallel to the securitization discourse. The presence of military posts, village guards and new infrastructure increases the visibility of state control over the Southeast region. The dams are by some opponents seen as a component of the military presence by the Turkish state and they see a connection to state preparations for large-scale conflict.

Measuring the impact of non-state actors on the hydro-hegemony of Turkey is

difficult, especially because the Turkish government refuses to acknowledge the extent and nature of the opposition. It is however clear that the Southeastern Anatolia Project has undergone several changes since its creation. The first major adaptation of the project was in the 1990s when the GAP came to include broader, sustainable and social development objectives. This change happened under pressure from the international community, read European Community, but was encouraged by environmental NGOs and state actors from Syria and Iraq. The second peak of opposition was in 2000-2009 and in this period the NGO collaboration between Turkish and European organizations was successful in not only gaining substantial media coverage but also in discouraging European funders to finance the controversial project. This did have a severe impact on the GAP because Turkish authorities decided that the state would now finance a majority but it did not massively alter the proposed plans. The third and final peak of opposition started in 2012 and continues until now. Both violent and non-violent measures are taken to stop or change the construction of dams. The PKK is currently most successful in damaging the GAP projects and administration but its tactics are radical and rejected by other oppositional movements.

Table 7. Process of non-state resistance against Turkish hydro-hegemony

	Period		
Actor	1990s	2000-2009	2011-2017
International community	- Pressure to alter plans - Refuse funding	- Research GAP and its consequences - Withdraw support	- Legal measures
NGOs and civil society	- Raise concerns for social and environmental consequences - Address international community and funders	- International campaigns - Legal measures - Address funders	- Demonstrations - Awareness creation - Addressing funders and supporters - Legal measures
Kurdish Militant Groups	- Attacks on dams and hydropower plants	- Ceasefire till 2004 - 2004-2009 no specific campaign targeting GAP	- Attacks on construction sites - Threats to involved personnel
Impact GAP	Loss of international support, conflict with riparian states, lack of investment	Reputational damage, withdrawal of investments	Delay and obstruction

Decisive actor	International Community	NGOs and civil society	Kurdish militant groups
Response GAP	Alteration objectives of GAP	Refuse foreign investment	Securitization and militarization

The decision of the Turkish government to refuse foreign investment in certain GAP projects became a key moment in the development of water politics in Turkey. Before this decision the dependency of the GAP on foreign money was extensive and consequently the vulnerability of the GAP was relatively high. The European funders involved were sensitive to environmental critique and allegations of human rights violations. These companies, especially the ones aligned with national governments, cannot afford reputational damage. With the withdrawal of European money in 2008/2009 the Turkish state and the GAP administration regained its freedom.

Table 8. Power dimensions of state and non-state actors in hydro-politics (Turkish case)

Actor	Power	Meaning	Example
Hydro-hegemonic actor	Dimension 1	Material & immaterial capabilities	Riparian location, international (financial) support, military strength
	Dimension 2	Agenda setting	Favourable treaties for Turkey i.c.t. Iraq and Syria
	Dimension 3	Determining knowledge structure	Convince the international community to accept Tigris and Euphrates as national instead of international waters
Non-state actor	Dimension 1	Material & immaterial capabilities	Financial mobilization, military attacks
	Dimension 2	Agenda setting	Trying to create legal framework to reject Ilisu Dam
	Dimension 3	Knowledge structure	Damaging international reputation

One of the aims of this essay was to add to the hydro-hegemony framework. In order to achieve such a framework alteration, the findings are schematized along the lines of non-state,

state and hegemonic actors. The table below shows a comparative analysis of hydro-political mechanisms of state and non-state actors.

Table 9. Hydro-political mechanisms of state and non-state actors

	Non-hegemonic state actors	Hegemonic state actor	Non-state actors
Coercive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military force - Covert action - Coercion/pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military force - Covert Action - Coercion/pressure - Riparian position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Military force - Financial coercion - Coercion-pressure
Utilitarian	Incentives (economic and diplomatic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial mobilization - International support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International (economic) incentives
Normative	Treaties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treaties - Securitization - Knowledge construction - Sanctioned discourse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exposing hegemonic knowledge construction - Alternative discourse - International law/accords

Looking at the success rate of non-state resistance throughout the decades, a few interesting points can be made. First of all, every non-state actor was relatively successful at one point. The international community and international funders were able to alter GAP plans and objectives in the 1990s, the (I)NGOs and civil society succeeded in convincing partners to withdraw in the beginning of the 21st century and the Kurdish militant movement is currently effective in obstructing and delaying the construction of proposed projects. Despite these successes the Turkish hydro-hegemon was able to circumvent these attacks. It broadened the objectives of the GAP to appeal to foreign partners, it used its own resources to finance the controversial projects and it adopted a policy of securitization and militarization to undermine the legitimacy of non-state opposition. The second conclusion is that the role of funding was and remains extremely important in the case of Turkey. To succeed in challenging a hydro-hegemon it is necessary to involve investors. Although Turkey for now is able to continue the GAP implementation, the risings costs make this increasingly difficult. Thirdly the lack of cooperation between non-state actors undermines the potential impact. The fact that the Kurdish militant groups fight their own fight against the dams and do not unite with NGOs and civil society weakens the power of the non-state actors. Collaboration between the two in this case is highly unlikely and not recommended because of the extremist

nature of the PKK, but in general collaboration between non-state actors that excel in different power dimensions multiplies the potential impact.

It was not the aim of this essay to encourage water-conflicts between state and non-state actors. The analysis only shows how non-state actors can potentially balance power asymmetries between actors in water politics. The scarcity and importance of water resources in the region call for a cooperative effort between parties. If the hydro-hegemony of one party prevents such an effort, collaboration between non-state and non-hegemonic parties might offer the solution.

Bibliography

- Beaumont, Peter, "The Euphrates River—an International Problem of Water Resources Development," *Environmental Conservation* 5:1 (1978): 35-43.
- Bosshard, Peter, "Victory: European Governments Backing Out of Ilisu Dam Project in Turkey," *International Rivers*, 22 June, 2009 <https://www.internationalrivers.org/resources/victory-european-governments-backing-out-of-ilisu-dam-project-in-turkey-3535> last accessed 17-05-2017.
- Brown, Paul, "Ilisu Dam in jeopardy as Balfour drops out," *The Guardian*, 14 November, 2001 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2001/nov/14/politics.politicalnews> last accessed 13-05-2017.
- Buzan, Barry, Ole Weaver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Lynne Rienner Publishers: London, 1998).
- Cetingulec, Tulay, "Syrian shifting demographics in Turkish Kurdistan Region," *Al-Monitor*, 10 August, 2016 <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/08/turkey-syria-syrian-refugees-kurdish-region.html> last accessed 27-04-2017.
- Conde, Gilberto, "Water and counter-hegemony: Kurdish struggle in the Tigris and Euphrates in Turkey", *Revista de Paz y Conflictos* 9:2 (2016): 43-58.
- Cushner, Kenneth, Linda Robertson, Suheyra Kirca, Melek Cakmak, "A cross-cultural material development project to train Turkish development personnel in the Southeastern Anatolia Regional Development Project (GAP)," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 27 (2003): 609–626.
- Daily Sabah: Breaking and Latest News from Turkey, <https://www.dailysabah.com/> last accessed 27-05-2017.
- Daou, Marc, "Mathias Depardon détenu en Turquie : 'C'est au nouveau gouvernement français de jouer'," *France 24*, 22 May, 2017 <http://www.france24.com/fr/20170522-detention-mathias-depardon-turquie-liberte-presse-diplomatie-drian-arrestation> last accessed 17-05-2017.
- Dede, Ersoy, "Suriyeliler'i Diyarbakır'a yerleştirelim," *Star News*, 6 July, 2016 <http://www.star.com.tr/yazar/suriyelileri-diyarbakira-yerlestirelim-yazi-1123362/> last accessed 29-04-2017.
- Dohrmann, Mark and Robert Hatem, "The Impact of Hydro-Politics on the Relations of Turkey, Iraq, and Syria," *The Middle East Journal* 68-4 (2014): 567-583.
- European Court of Human Rights, "Information Note on the Court's case-law no 198," *Article 8* (July 2016).
- Eyboga, Ercan, "Statement on arrest of National Geographic Photographer Mathias Depardon and the imminent move of the Zeynel Bey Tomb," *Save The Tigris*, <http://www.savethetigris.org/statement-on-arrest-of-national-geographic-photographer-mathias-depardon-and-the-imminent-move-of-the-zeynel-bey-tomb/> last accessed 10-05-2017.

- Gies, Erica, "A Dam Revival, Despite Risks: Private funding brings a Boom in Hydropower, With High Costs," *The New York Times*, 19 November, 2014
<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/20/business/energy-environment/private-funding-brings-a-boom-in-hydropower-with-high-costs.html> last accessed 17-05-2017.
- Girit, Selin, "Turks hit back at Erdogan plan to give Syrians citizenship," *BBC News*, 5 July, 2016
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36704791> last accessed 26-04-2017.
- Golonu, Berin, "Activism Rooted in Tradition," *Third Text* 27-1 (2013): 54-64.
- Güsten, Susanne, "Construction of Disputed Turkish Dam Continues," *The New York Times*, 27 February, 2013 <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/28/world/middleeast/construction-of-disputed-turkish-dam-continues.html> last accessed 06-07-2017.
- Harris, Leila M., "Water and Conflict Geographies of the Southeastern Anatolia Project," *Society & Natural Resources* 15-8 (2002): 743-759.
- Harris, Leila M., "Imaginative Geographies of Green: Difference, Postcoloniality, and Affect in Environmental Narratives in Contemporary Turkey," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104:4 (2014): 801-815.
- Hommes, Lena, Rutgerd Boelens and Harro Maat. "Contested hydrosocial territories and disputed water governance: Struggles and competing claims over the Ilisu Dam development in Southeastern Turkey." *Geoforum* 71 (2016): 9-20.
- Hurriyet Daily News: Leading News Source for Turkey and the Region,
<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/> last accessed 27-05-2017.
- International Crisis Group, "Turkey's Refugee Crisis: Politics of Permanence," *Europe Report* 241 (November 2016) <https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/western-europemediterranean/turkey/turkey-s-refugee-crisis-politics-permanence> last accessed 17-05-2017.
- Kaplan, Benzu, "Suriyeliler, Kürt nüfusu dengelemek için kullanılıyor," *Haber Versaire*, 22 December, 2015 <http://habervesaire.com/suriyeliler-kurt-nufusu-dengelemek-icin-kullaniliyor/> last accessed 29-04-2017.
- Kibaroglu, Aysegül and Waltine Scheumann, "Evolution of Transboundary Politics in the Euphrates-Tigris River System: New Perspectives and Political Challenges," *Global Governance* 19:3 (2013): 279-305.
- Kibaroglu, Aysegül and Tugba Evrim Maden. "An analysis of the causes of water crisis in the Euphrates-Tigris river basin." *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences* 4 (2014): 347-353.
- Koca, Burca Togrul, "Syrian refugees in Turkey: from 'guests' to 'enemies'," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 54 (2016): 55-75.
- Kolcak, Hakan, "A more but not fully constructed arena: a critical analysis of the AKP's policy toward Kurdish Ethno-Cultural Rights 2002-2014," *The Age of Human Rights Journal* 5 (2015): 63-97.
- Kut, Gun, "Burning Waters: The Hydropolitics of the Euphrates and Tigris," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 9 (1993): 1-17.

- Leb, Christina, "The Tigris-Euphrates Joint Technical Committee," *IUCN* (2008).
- Leverink, Joris, "Verplaatsing tombe: redding cultureel erfgoed of vernietiging ervan?" *One World*, 16 May, 2017 <https://www.oneworld.nl/water/verplaatsing-tombe-redding-cultureel-erfgoed-vernietiging-ervan> last accessed 16-05-2017.
- Lossow, Tobias Von, "The Rebirth of Water as a Weapon: IS in Syria and Iraq," *The International Spectator* 51-3 (2016): 82-99.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Turkey, "Ilisu Dam," <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/ilisu-dam.en.mfa> last accessed 11-04-2017.
- Ozcan, Ugur Serhan, "Turkey: PKK threatens dam project in Southeast," *Anadolu Agency*, 21 September, 2015 <http://aa.com.tr/en/turkey/turkey-pkk-threatens-dam-projects-in-southeast/292177> last accessed 17-04-2017.
- Paasche, Till F., "Syrian and Iraqi Kurds: Conflict and Cooperation," *Middle East Policy* 22-1 (2015): 77-88.
- Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign, "Ilisu Dam and Legal Considerations in Iraq," *Iraqi Civil Society* (2014): 1-8.
- Save the Tigris campaign <http://www.savethetigris.org/> last accessed 15-05-2017.
- Sedee, Menno, "Franse fotograaf vrijgelaten in Turkije," *NRC*, 9 June, 2017 <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/06/09/franse-fotograaf-vrijgelaten-in-turkije-a1562392> last accessed 07-07-2017.
- Sezgin, Yüksel, "The October 1998 Crisis in Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Prospect Theory Approach," *Turkish Studies* 3:2 (2002): 44-68.
- Solmaz, Mehmet, "PKK targets economic projects, hits Kurds with unemployment, insecurity," *Daily Sabah Turkey*, 20 October, 2015 <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/2015/10/21/pkk-targets-economic-projects-hits-kurds-with-unemployment-insecurity> last accessed 15-05-2017.
- Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP Action plan 2014-2018," December, 2014 <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/action-plan-page-5.html> last accessed 24-05-2017.
- Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP Powerpoint," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/gap-general-presentation-page-31.html> last accessed 24-05-2017.
- Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "Southeastern Anatolia Project Master Plan Study," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/master-plan-page-2.html> last accessed 21-05-2017.
- Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "Internationally funded projects," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/internationally-funded-projects-page-15.html> last accessed 12-04-2017.
- Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "GAP finance," <http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/gap-finance-page-27.html> last accessed 22-04-17.
- Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration, "Southeastern Anatolia Project Action Plan (2002-2008)."

- Warner, Jeroen, "The struggle over Turkey's Ilisu Dam: domestic and international security linkages," *International Environmental Agreements* 12 (2012): 231-250.
- Winslett, Gary, "Substitutability, securitisation and hydro-hegemony: ontological and strategic sequencing in shared river relations," *Conflict, Security and Development* 15:3 (2015): 283-309.
- World Bank "Health 2 Project," Projects and Operations, <http://projects.worldbank.org/P009076/health-2-project?lang=en> last accessed 11-04-2017.
- World Commission on Dams, *Dams and Development: A new framework for decision-making* (Earthscan Publications: 2000).
- Zeitoun, Mark and Jeroen Warner, "Hydro-Hegemony- a Framework for Analysis of Trans-Boundary Water Conflicts." *Water Policy* 8-5 (2006): 435-460.
- "Amnesty International Report 2016/17: The State of the World's Human Rights," *Amnesty International* (2017).
- "Joint Report of Fact-Finding Mission to Syria and Iraq," Kurdish Human Right Project, Ilisu Dam Campaign and The Corner House (2002) <http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/sites/thecornerhouse.org.uk/files/IraqSyri.pdf> last accessed 04-04-2017.
- "Open letter to the Dutch company Bresser Eurasia and the Greek company Korres Engineering both of whom are joining the project to relocate the Zeynel Bey Tomb in Hasankeyf," *Peace in Kurdistan Campaign*, <https://peaceinkurdistancampaign.com/2016/12/05/7059/> last accessed 17-05-2017.
- "Protest against Bresser at it its Dutch Headquarters: withdraw from relocation of Hasankeyf monuments," *Save The Tigris*, 28 June, 2017 <http://www.savethetigris.org/protest-against-bresser-at-its-dutch-headquarters-withdraw-from-relocation-of-hasankeyf-monuments/> last accessed 02-07-2017.
- "PKK and their supporters, academics, against new dams, says Turkish president," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 14 January, 2016 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/Default.aspx?pageID=238&nid=93864> last accessed 19-05-2017.
- "Protesters hang PKK and Öcalan flags on gendarmerie post construction site near Silvan dam," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 13 May, 2014 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/protesters-hang-pkk-and-ocalan-flags-on-gendarmerie-post-construction-site-near-silvan-dam-.aspx?pageID=549&nID=66397&NewsCatID=341> last accessed 10-05-2017.
- "Hasankeyf not submitted to UNESCO," *Hurriyet Daily*, 4 February, 2016 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/hasankeyf-not-submitted-to-unesco-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=94758&NewsCatID=375> last accessed 08-07-2017.
- "Turkey's PKK Conflict: The Rising Toll," *International Crisis Group*, 2017 <http://www.crisisgroup.be/interactives/turkey/> last accessed 20-05-2017.

- “Kurdish Movement: We Will Not Accept Violation of Ceasefire by Turkey Anymore,” *Kurdish Question*, 12 July, 2015 <http://kurdishquestion.com/oldarticle.php?aid=kurdish-movement-we-will-not-accept-violation-of-ceasefire-by-turkey-anymore> last accessed 24-04-2017.
- “Ilisu Dam construction site militarized,” *Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative*, 16 February, 2015 <http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/archives/3969> last accessed 29-04-2017.
- “Save Hasankeyf, Stop Ilisu Dam,” *Corporate Watch*, 18 September, 2015 <https://corporatwatch.org/news/2015/sep/18/save-hasankeyf-stop-ilisu-dam> last accessed 08-07-2017.
- “Turkish President Erdoğan mum on gov't criticism, PKK leader's call,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 21 March, 2015 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-mum-on-govt-criticism-pkk-leaders-call.aspx?pageID=238&nID=79993&NewsCatID=338> last accessed 23-04-2017.
- “#Occupygezi Myths and Facts,” *Daily Sabah Turkey*, 11 June, 2013 <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2013/06/11/occupygezi-myths-and-facts> last accessed 09-05-2017.
- “Stop Ilisu: Destruction and instability!” *Save The Tigris*, 5 December 2014 <http://www.savethetigris.org/stop-ilisu-stop-destruction-and-instability/> last accessed 05-07-2017.
- “Timeline of Gezi Park Protests,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 6 June, 2013 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/timeline-of-gezi-park-protests.aspx?pageID=238&nID=48321&NewsCatID=341> last accessed 09-05-2017.
- “About us,” *Hasankeyf'I Yasatma Girisimi*, http://www.hasankeyfgirisimi.net/?page_id=2 last accessed 19-05-2017.
- “PKK threatens to attack dams, one killed in fresh clashes in Turkey's northeast,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 12 July, 2015 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/pkk-threatens-to-attack-dams-one-killed-in-fresh-clashes-in-turkeys-northeast.aspx?pageID=238&nID=85322&NewsCatID=338> last accessed 14-05-2017.
- “Dams power Turkey's conflict with the Kurds,” *Stratfor*, 23 June, 2016 <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/dams-power-turkeys-conflict-kurds> last accessed 14-05-2017.
- “Water activists in a private meeting with Dr. Hassan Al Janabi of water resources,” *Save The Tigris*, 2017 <http://www.savethetigris.org/water-activists-in-a-private-meeting-with-dr-hassan-al-janabi-minister-of-water-resources/> last accessed 24-06-2017.
- “Turkey presents Ilisu Dam Benefits to British Authorities,” *Hurriyet Daily News*, 19 February, 2000 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-presents-ilisu-dam-benefits-to-british-authorities.aspx?pageID=438&n=turkey-presents-ilisu-dam-benefits-to-british-authorities-2000-02-19> last accessed 06-04-2017.
- “Joint Report of Fact-Finding Mission to Syria and Iraq,” Kurdish Human Right Project, Ilisu Dam Campaign and The Corner House (2002)

<http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/sites/thecornerhouse.org.uk/files/IraqSyri.pdf> last accessed 04-04-2017.

“Treaty of Friendship and Good Neighbourly Relations Iraq-Turkey,” 29 March, 1946
http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/documents/regionaldocs/Iraq-Turkey-Friendship_1946.pdf last accessed 28-03-2017.