HYDRO-HEGEMONY

a Framework for Analysis of Transboundary Water Conflicts

Water Conflict, Security and Cooperation
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“without a good water conflict theory, we are doomed to myopia - no matter how insightful the occasional analysis”  
(Frey and Naff, 1985).

(incomplete) list of theory relevant to Transboundary Water

Frey and Naff  Power/Interests/Position Matrix (1985)
Lowi  Theory of Hegemonic Cooperation (1993)
Homer-Dixon  Environmental Determinism (1996, 1999)
Allan  Virtual water (2001)
Gleick  Water as a means / tool / target of conflict (2001+)
Wolf +  Water Conflict Prevention, Water Dispute Database
Turton +  Hydropolitical Complex Theory / Securitisation (2002)
Allouche  Hydro-Nationalism (2005)
How Important is…

Riparian Position?

Catchment Area?

Law or Treaties?
How Important is...

Riparian Position?

Catchment Area?

Law or Treaties?
FRAMEWORK OF HYDRO-HEGEMONY

considers two features:

A. Intensities of Conflict and Cooperation
   - The absence of war does not mean the absence of conflict
   - Existence of a treaty does not mean cooperation

B. Influence of Power
   - Power determines the outcome of the conflict, its intensity, and its nature
   - Power is the reason water conflicts linger unresolved
A. Intensity of Conflict

The absence of war does not mean the absence of conflict

(building on Yoffe et. al.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water Event Intensity Scale (Yoffe 2001)</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Voluntary Unification into one nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Major Strategic Alliance (International Freshwater Treaty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Military, Economic or Strategic Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Non-military Economic, Technological or Industrial Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cultural or Scientific Support (non-strategic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Official Verbal Support of goals, values, or regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minor Official Exchanges, Talks or Policy Expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Neutral or non-significant acts for the inter-nation situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>Mild Verbal Expressions displaying discord in interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>Strong Verbal Expressions displaying hostility in interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>Diplomatic-Economic Hostile Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>Political-Military Hostile Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>Small Scale Military Acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>Extensive War Acts causing deaths, dislocation or high strategic costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>Formal Declaration of War</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A. (cont.) Qualifying Cooperation

The existence of a treaty does not mean ‘cooperation’

(Wolf → Conca → Gleditsch → Kistin)
What is the **utility** of treaties on the Ganges? on the Jordan? Tigris?

Is a ‘joint committee’ the same as ‘partnership’?

What is the **influence** of a treaty over transboundary resource management?

Is ‘cooperation’ even the goal?

(😊 ➔ 😞)
B. Influence of Power
Three Dimensions of Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Features*</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural Power</td>
<td>Coercion, Force</td>
<td>ability to mobilize capabilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am talking of millions of men who have been skilfully injected with fear, inferiority complexes, trepidation, servility, abasement...  

Aimé Césaire

Is it not the supreme exercise of power to get ...others to have the desires you want them to have – that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires?  

Lukes
Multiple layers of hegemony  (Warner)

- Global level:
  - Control of discourse, institutions, rules
- Regional level
- Basin level
- State level
  - Territorial control, identity
  - Resource control
  - Control of population, unity
Potential Interactions over transboundary waters:

Methods of CONTROL:
Resisting Hegemony

Some options available to ‘weaker’ states:
Abstract Model of Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony

Hegemony

Consent

Sanctioned Discourse

External backup

Status quo maintenance

Co-option

S

Power Relations

Asymmetries/Inequity

Status quo - challenge

Alternatives

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ETHIOPIA Challenging Hegemony

*Inverted Triangle* – How to challenge Hydro-Hegemony?

**Goal**: SHARED CONTROL

**Strategies**
- Water infrastructures construction
- Economic and institutional development
- Social and political adaptive capacities

**Tactics**
- Reactive and Active Diplomacy
- Reinforced cooperation
- Desecuritisation
- Financial mobilisation

**Political feasibility**
- Knowledge/expertise construction
- Claim for legal principles
- Discourse alternatives
- Needs-approach

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CASE STUDY

The Palestinian – Israeli Water Conflict
**Structural Power**

*Power as might: capability*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISRAEL</th>
<th>PALESTINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Support</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Mobilization</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Capital</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riparian Position</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bargaining Power**

*Power as a relationship: legitimacy*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISRAEL</th>
<th>PALESTINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreements / Obligations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral High Ground / Law</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda-Setting</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ideational Power**

*Power in the realm of ideas*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISRAEL</th>
<th>PALESTINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to shape issues</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to shape perceptions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to sanction the discourse</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Power Reputation' / deterrence</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map adapted by Zeitoun (2003) from the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA), Center for Economic and Social Rights, Executive Action Team (USGS Overview of MidEast Water Resources).
1996 "Oslo II" Agreement

Steps taken to gain control over groundwater...

1967

Military Conquest

- 3 military orders (resource capture strategy)

1967–96 Occupation

- Dual development of West Bank: min. for Palestinians, max. for settlers (resource capture strategy)

72% of West Bank

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Joint Water Committee
License Issuing Procedures

ISSUING LICENSE

IDF Civ. Admin. approval - Area C

JWC approval for Area A, B

Israeli prelim. approval

Palestinian prelim. approval
STRATEGIES and TACTICS used for Control of Transboundary Waters

- **Shared Control** → **Consolidated Control** → **Contested Control**

**Goal**

**Strategies**
- A. RESOURCE CAPTURE
- B. CONTAINMENT

**Tactics**
- (I) MILITARY FORCE
- (II) COVERT ACTIONS
- (III) COERCION-PRESSURE
- (IV) ACTIVE STALLING
- (V) INCENTIVES
- (VI) TREATIES
- (VII) SECURITISATION
- (VIII) KNOWLEDGE CONSTRUCTION
- (IX) SANCTIONING THE DISCOURSE

**Coercive Resources**
- INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT
- FINANCIAL MOBILIZATION
- HUMAN CAPITAL
- RIPARIAN POSITION

**International Context:** weak International Water Law; global political trends
CONCLUSIONS OF CASE STUDY:

a) Current utilisation is ‘inequitable’ and ‘unreasonable’

b) Conflict exists, even if it is hidden

c) Intensity and outcome of conflict is determined in large part by power (not law or fair sharing)

d) The situation of hegemony may be obscuring our analysis as much as it prevents resolution of the conflict.

e) ‘Domination dressed up as cooperation’ (Selby)
Summing-up
the HH Analysis
• POWER (3 dimensions) has influence over:
  • Outcome
  • Analysis
  • Perception
  • Cooperative processes

• Conflict and Cooperation exist simultaneously (but extent of each is determined by hegemon)

• Cooperation must be qualified (existence of a treaty does not mean cooperation)

• Conflicts linger unresolved
Policy Implications / Future Areas of Research:

- Other Water Conflicts / Other *Types* of Water Conflict (*large n study...*)

- Towards Water ‘cooperation’:
  - International Water Law (levelling the playing field)
  - Unpacking ‘cooperation’
  - Hydropolitical Complex Theory
  - Counter Hegemony / Resisting Hegemony

*Thank-you.*