

The final thesis Factor of Water in Central Asia presents an analysis of the phenomena of trans-boundary water interaction in the Aral Sea basin. Particular attention is given to the emerging political inter-state and regional affairs, connected to international management and security at Syr Darya and Amu Darya rivers.

Global hydro-politics debates offer various theoretical frameworks of approaching the inter-state water relations. Theories such as Integrated Water Resource Management, Environmental Security and Hydro-Hegemony are explored with the ambition to find a comprehensive research background for our case studies.

Thereafter, the theory is applied to the particular negotiating constellations in the Central Asian water basins. The case studies at Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers illustrate several interesting cleavages, for example between: (1) upstream and downstream riparian states; (2) irrigation and hydropower; (3) water and energy; (4) geopolitics and international law; (5) national and regional affairs.

Central Asian water situation is perceived in the context of geopolitics; economic and human development; culturally-historical background and future potential challenges. Further we present, the overall tendencies in the Newly Independent States, consequences of the Aral Sea catastrophe and the recent “compound water-energy-food crisis” (winter 2007/08).