

SWAN case study: a sociological approach



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“Rivers & Dams of the American Empire”

- General objectives of the research

Analysis of water policies in an arid land: Western United States

How water policies contribute to the domination of determined socio-economical groups (water & power)

- Key research questions

i- How does the economic development of the West determine the implementation of water policies and the process of decision-making

ii- What is the structure of the field of power associated to this socio-hydrological definition of water policies

“Rivers & Dams of the American Empire”

- Map/define the scale of research: challenges, opportunities

Western states => Arizona => Tucson

Multi-level analysis: what happens in Tucson is not totally defined in Tucson

Water management has to be replaced in a broader field of environmental regulation

- Stakeholder map

Water lobbies, lawyers, local communities, water managers (utilities, administrations), engineers, etc.

- Advances of the research

Article written and evaluated by peers

“Rivers & Dams of the American Empire”

- Methodological approaches/theoretical frameworks

Sociology of fields (Bourdieu)

Environmental history (Worster)

Political analysis of coalitions (Sabatier) and of state action in water policies (Watson, Espeland)

Socio-ecological systems analysis (Ostrom)

- What information is requested (geophysical, socioeconomic, institutional, etc.)

Characteristics of the social agents involved in the struggles for the definition and implementation of water policies

History of the implementation of water projects

Legal frames for water policies

Hydrologic description of the area