**Title**: TBD

**Longline**: A hydrological engineer – an eager problem-solver - is devoted to increasing the electricity production in Yugoslavia that was troubled by energy shortages, and by doing that he demonstrates how water gets overused beyond the socio-environmental limits.

**The pitch:**

In 1984, Yugoslavia is facing serious blackouts and the country begs for quick and cheap solutions. The story follows an energy engineer who is eager to make small rivers and streams useful for electricity production. He departs to a mountain to study the small waterways and create precise designs for future projects. Up in the hills, he is challenged by the unruly properties of the streams. He starts his imaginary battle with the water, looking for ways to make it tamed and efficient. Step by step, he finds a way to achieve that, and he returns to his colleagues to present his solution: the kilometers-long pipelines and series of small plants, which connect numerous streams and maximizes the production of energy. His colleagues congratulate him, but something haunts him – it is the crying landscape.

**The characters**:

**The engineer:** a devoted professional, rational in his approach, and persistent when facing issues. He is a devoted member of his professional community and a patriot who helps his homeland.

**Water** (still to decide whether to include and how): unpredictable and strong; stubborn when tried to be controlled; enmeshed in the web of dependency with other creatures and the landscape.

**The expert public**: the community which knows its social function, always in search of cheaper and abundant energy.

**Summary:**

**1st act**: The energy engineers are meeting to propose solutions for the energy shortages. The meeting is held under candles – the venue has no electricity due to a blackout. Around the podium are national flags, between them the banner “Overcoming the national electricity shortage – The annual meeting of hydrological engineers”.

The atmosphere is grim, everything around is greyish, and everyone works to their best abilities to find cheap and domestically available sources of energy. One of them stands up and speaks loudly – he says that OUR country is in trouble, it needs all OUR best efforts to overcome the problem. The country still has plenty of unused water potentials in mountainous areas, and it would be irrational to waste them, he adds. Others resent his idea, some are even covertly laughing, ridiculing the proposal. They chat among themselves or comment loudly - small rivers are useless, totally inefficient, and alike. The engineer is dissatisfied with the reception of his idea and decides to demonstrate its feasibility and economic viability.

**2nd act**: He goes to one of the mountains to study the properties of the rivers and streams in order to make such designs of hydropower plants that would be convincing to others. Up in the hills, he is challenged by the character of streams. They are too small, dispersed like capillaries, with unpredictable torrents, and inconsistent flows.

We follow several sub-acts in which the engineer encounters these unfavorable properties of rivers and tries to overcome them in his thoughts through more advanced design. Therefore, this section switches back and forth between the reality of the streams on the one hand, and his thought experiments and designs, on the other. The focus is on the challenges and his attempts to overcome them with an ever-improved design.

1. It is raining heavily, torrential water is full of stones and branches, strong, even dangerous. The engineer thinks: it is difficult to use such water, it would easily damage and stop any power plant. In his thought he thinks about possible solutions and realizes that a metal grid could stop all the deposits.
2. Days after the storm, it’s sunny weather. No more deposits, but level of water is significantly lower now. The engineer hikes by the river and sees how the flows are inconsistent (water dives in and out, moving between surface and underground), and how the downstream river is formed by numerous capillary-like flows upstream. How to use this dispersed and inconstant river, he wonders? He thinks of a system of pipes which would gather water directly from the source and direct it downstream, giving it direction and pressure. No water is lost, he thinks and smiles.
3. (Wide shot) The engineer is on the top of the hill; the view is amazing. He sees endless hills, valleys, and many small streams flowing from tops of hills and forming the single river. This is the first time that he has this panoramic view. He realizes that an isolated power plant is not enough, that if several plants were built as depicted under the step B, they would all form a system of interconnected plants. He smiles proudly, produced electricity is maximized. But he thinks, the whole area would benefit from this system, since locals could use small water accumulations for tourism, sport, irrigation. He thinks, the country as a whole would benefit from both increased electricity production and rural development. (this imagination of rural development is another aspect of patriotism)

(Observed and imagined terrains can be differentiated if I represent his thinking process happening on a map. Because he doesn’t see the terrain in all its environmental complexity but in the simplified form of a map).

**3rd act**:(continuation of the engineer’s thinking process but now while presenting his achievement to his colleagues).

…”In this way, through the system of pipelines and interconnected plants, produced electricity would be multiplied because a single molecule of water would pass through several plants and turning several turbines. And this is not all: local communities benefits as well, as this design will revive our depopulated, underdoped hinterlands”.

The audience applauds him, congratulate him, approving his work and slightly envying his capabilities. His design will serve as a blueprint for hundreds of other projects across the country.

**4th act**:

The engineer sleeps, it is dark again, only the medal he got from the country shines. Despite all the praise, something haunts him. He has nightmares and wakes up in the dark to interchangeable sounds: screams of fish, curses of the locals, and deep silence by riverbeds that lost all the water to the pipelines. He is not entirely sure what he feels, but he starts to realize the consequences of his work and his approach to nature.

COMMENTS:

This is a well-developed subject, it has a clear argument that you want to make and a nice division in acts. There are however a few big questions

1. How are you gonna represent the FIGHT between the engineer and the rivers?
2. How will you sense of patriotism of the engineer come across and be represented? Graphically with something in the engineer house, or on his dress when he travel or flags or whatever? Or also verbally in the conversation?
3. Your work is really in 4 acts (act 4 being the conclusion) in this way you could think about how the theme of patriotism is represented and develops along those acts. As it is you have a classic AB AB structure in which A (act 1 and act 3 set the stage for the social dimension of the engineer work . i.e. energy, need of the nation, receiving accolade, maybe a new medal or something like that) and B \*act 2 and 4) are more oneiric setting describing the fight with water and the nightmares. Are these B sections somehow developing the theme of patriotism as well? Do they see it crumble? How do they relate graphically to each other?

Here I would also suggest that you start to create your how archive as you are in a specific historical moment.