UAB
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HARD REVISIONISM: TURKISH "FORWARD DEFENCE" IN SYRIA AND IRAQ

Introduction

- This research revolves around the question about **international order**, **revisionism**, and **how exactly can these be discerned.** This is accompanied by the case analysis of Turkish military interventions in Syria and Iraq.
- In order to answer the question, a literature review on revisionism and Turkish foreign policy has been undertaken, together with the critical linking of both aspects through an application of the theoretical approach to the case.

International order

Consists of **norms** and **institutions:** prescriptions and actions manifesting shared understandings of what is legitimate.

- Use of violence restriction, non-intervention, international law...

    (Bull, 1995; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998).
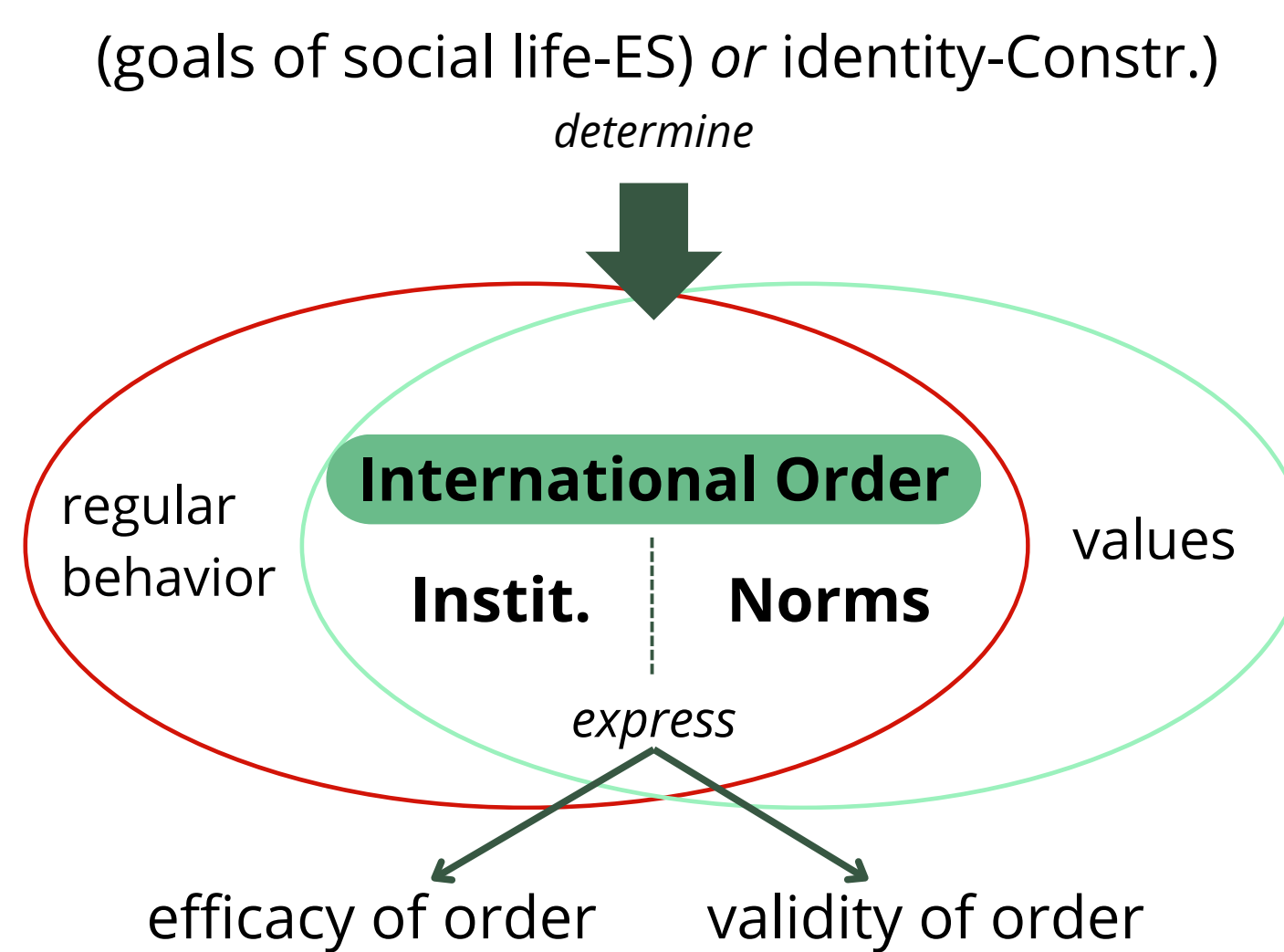
The two reigns of order:

efficacy ≠ **validity**
(norm realized in behavior) (norm is believed to be binding)

(Kelsen, 1979)

Theoretical Framework

(goals of social life-ES) *or* identity-Constr.)

determine

International Order

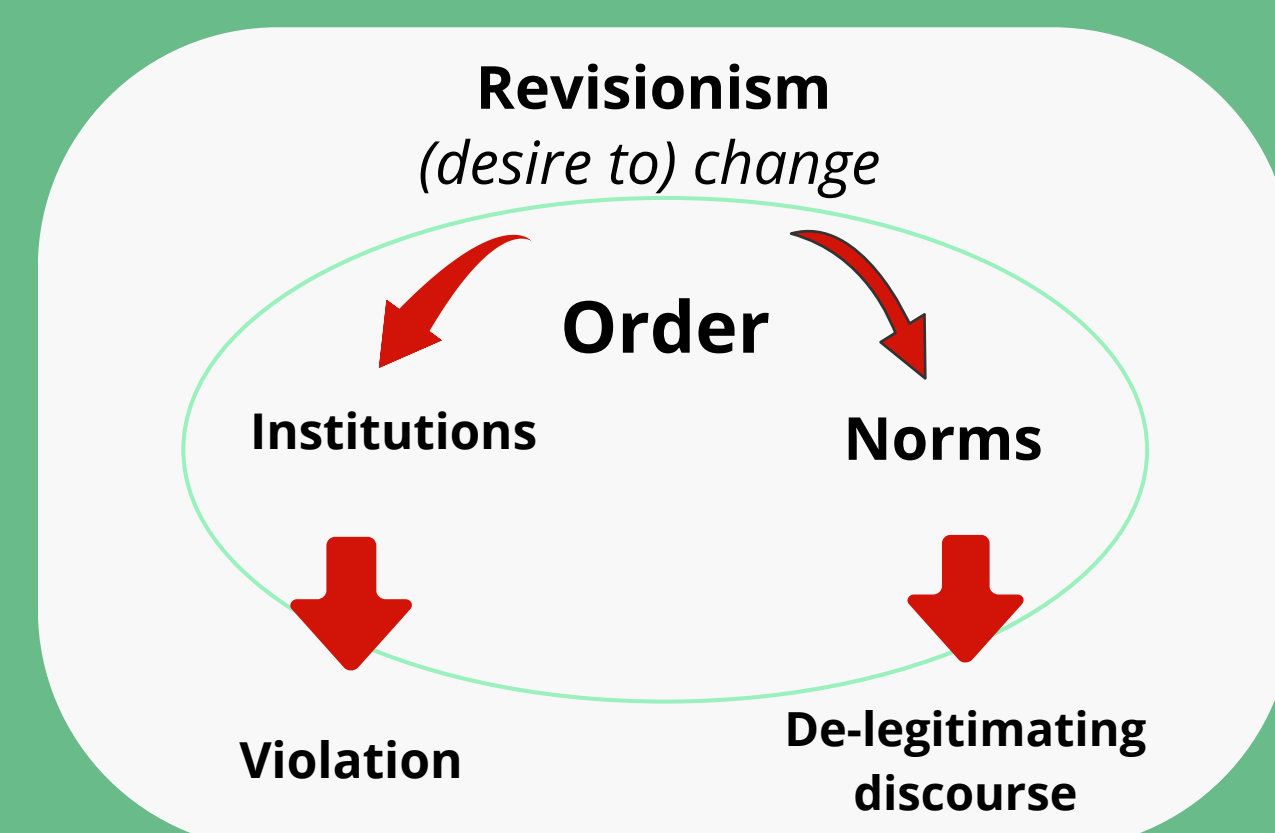regular behavior — **Instit.** | **Norms** — values

express

efficacy of order   validity of order

Revisionism

Desire and intentions to **change** the **fundamental norms and institutions** of the international order > alter the sphere of legitimacy.
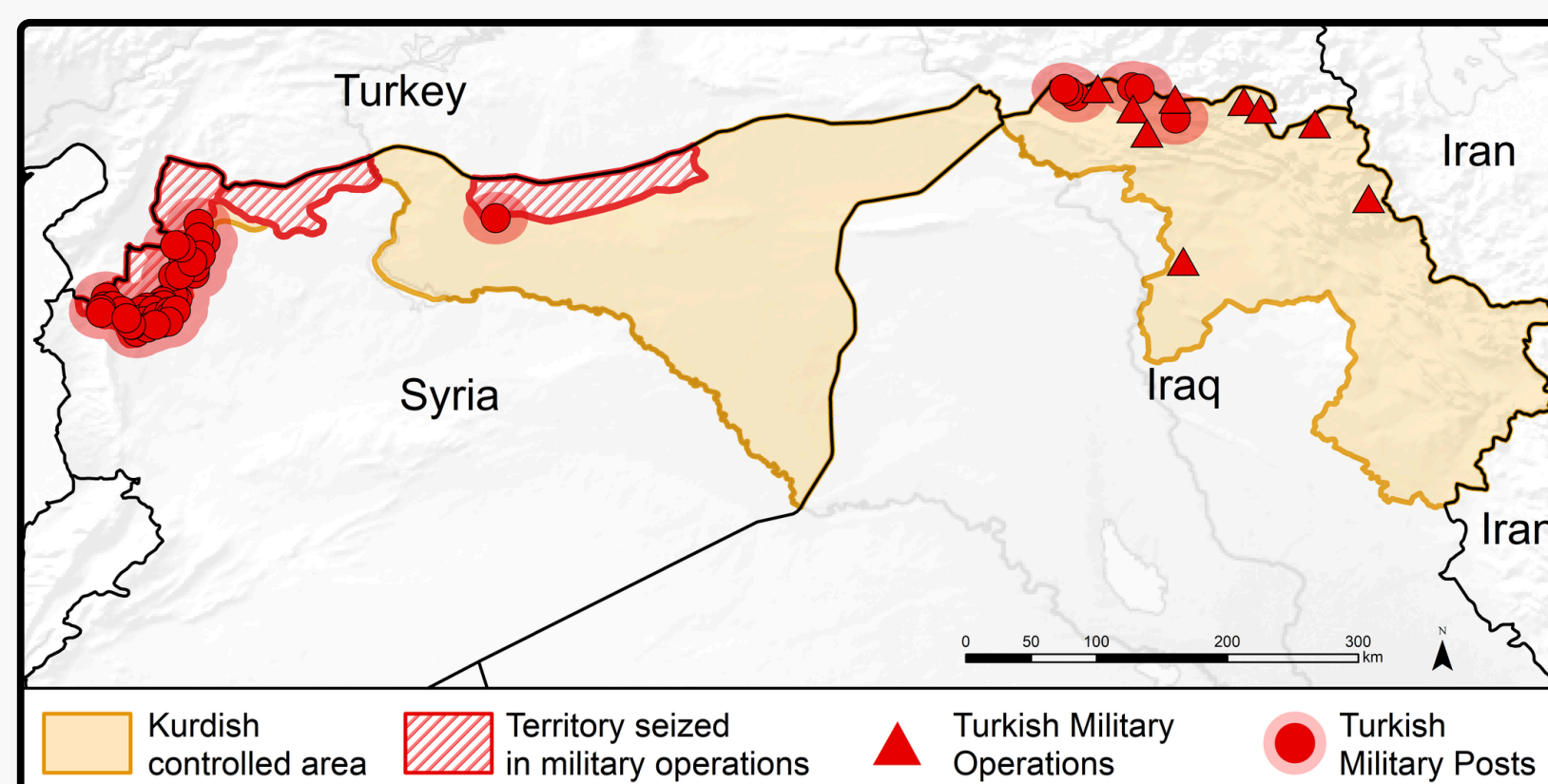
Hard revisionism: resort to military force to advance such change (Chan et al., 2021).

Revisionism
(desire to) change

Order

Institutions   **Norms**

Violation   **De-legitimating discourse**

Case Analysis

Case: Forward defence

After 2016, Turket launches unilateral military operations in Syria (2016) and Iraq (2019), resulting in the extrastate seizure of territory and establishment of military bases.

Kurdish controlled area | Territory seized in military operations | Turkish Military Operations | Turkish Military Posts

Normative structure:

- Rules of coexistence: legitimate use of violence, (causes, objectives), non-interference...
- Codification:
  - UN Charter Art. 2, Art. 39, 41, 42 and Art. 51.

Turkish revisionism?

Assault to efficacy?

- Violation of norms regarding legitimate use of force and state jurisdiction preservation: failure to submitt proves of armed attack, stretching of UNSC mandates, absence of consent by invaded states.

Assault to validity?

- Transgression has been accompanied by legitimating discourses that amunted to different understandings of the norms validity and binding characters, so as to make licit what was formerly illicit (delegitimation of Iraqi complaints, advance proves of armed attack as expendable to self-defence, allow state-building efforts...).

Conclusions

- The social approach to revisionism, defining it as the dissatisfaction of state with norms and institutions and the desire to change them proves to be a useful way to discern a state position regarding the international order.
- With an international political arena in a perpetual state of flux, it can help to determine foreign policies supporting the fundamental norms that enable or challenge social life.

Essential Bibliography

- Bull, H. (1995). The Anarchical Society.
- Chan et al. (2021). Contesting revisionism.
- Finnemore and Sikkink (1998). International Norm Dynamics and Political Change
- Kelsen, H. (1979). Compendio de teoría general del estado