

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF A COUP D'ÉTAT ON INEQUALITY

EXAMINING CIVIC- MILITARY RELATIONS

Alexander M.R. Royall

This paper will attempt to investigate the dynamics that constitute the differing outcomes of a coup d'état. Earlier research has only sporadically explored the probable effects of a coup on economic inequality. This paper will use a statistical test to observe whether the outcome of a coup causes a variation concerning the effect on economic inequality. The main premise in this paper is that civic-military relations are predictive in determining whether the economic inequality increases or decreases in the post-coup period. In order to test this hypothesis, the case of the Turkish coup in 1980 will be examined and compared with the Honduran coup in 2009. On the one hand, the Turkish coup shows us that a positive civic-military relationship can lead to a decreasing level of inequality, and on the other hand, the Honduran coup shows us that a negative civic-military relationship would generally lead to an increasing level of inequality.

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF A COUP D'ÉTAT ON INEQUALITY: EXAMINING CIVIC-MILITARY RELATIONS

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This paper will attempt to investigate the dynamics that constitute the differing outcomes of a coup d'état. Earlier research has only sporadically explored the probable effects of a coup on economic inequality. This paper will use a statistical test to observe whether the outcome of a coup causes a variation concerning the effect on economic inequality. The main premise in this paper is that civic-military relations are predictive in determining whether the economic inequality increases or decreases in the post-coup period. In order to test this hypothesis, the case of the Turkish coup in 1980 will be examined and compared with the Honduran coup in 2009. On the one hand, the Turkish coup shows us that a positive civic-military relationship can lead to a decreasing level of inequality, and on the other hand, the Honduran coup shows us that a negative civic-military relationship would generally lead to an increasing level of inequality.

INTRODUCTION

Aristotle, Machiavelli and Rousseau have all been occupied with the subject of inequality during their lifetimes. Furthermore, the topic of inequality finds itself at the forefront of many political science studies and debates until the present day. However the connection between inequality and coups has received little attention by scholars. It is my opinion that this possible relationship should be investigated. The use of a coup d'état has been one of the most controversial tools for regime change since it has first occurred. To understand whether the international community should support the act of a coup or whether it should be condemned at all times, we should know the general consequences of a coup for the people in the affected country. The reason for looking at the effect of a coup on income inequality is a clear one. In the case of an unequal economic outcome, it generally says something about the equality of opportunity. The importance of whether a country is equal or unequal in its opportunity and outcome is because it determines whether the next generation starts on a level playing field or falls into an unequal, unfair and disadvantaged society. This is important because in order to build a country in which democracy can be sustained and human rights will be respected, the foundations have to be fair and solid. This means that everyone should have equal opportunities which can be achieved with a more equal outcome of economic distribution.

In this paper I will argue that the removal of an incumbent regime through the use of a coup does effect the level of economic inequality because it is either a tool for the new regime to correct the economy in favour of the state, or it is a way for the military to fall into corrupt practices and to cause the economy to further deteriorate due to a lack of political experience and/or political will.

I will use secondary data regarding income inequality and analyse whether inequality significantly changes when differences are observed between pre-coup d'état and post-coup d'état periods. My findings will partially support my hypothesis that a coup d'état does not have a general effect when all coups are taken together, but rather it is explainable case by case. The specific dynamics will be observable through looking at the singular cases. I will emphasise the importance of the civic-military relations and claim that there is a distinction between a military institution that prioritises the interests of the nation as its primary task and a military institution that is more prone to corruption and patronage activities.

What is a coup d'état? A coup d'état is a French expression which literally means a "*blow against the state*". It is also common to just use the word *coup* or *purge*. In this article I will therefore interchange between the three variants. To understand what a coup d'état means, the word *état* (meaning *state*) is essential in defining a coup. With the occurrence of a coup, the state has been challenged. This is however a specific type of challenge, which Luttwak (1969) describes as a;

"much more democratic affair. It can be conducted from the "outside" and it operates in that area outside the government but within the state which is formed by the permanent and professional civil service, the armed forces, and police. The aim is to detach the permanent employees of the state from the political leadership, and this cannot usually take place if the two are linked by political, ethnic, or traditional loyalties."

I will use the definition set out by Powell and Thyne (2011) as I will also use their dataset of coups that have taken place in the time-period of 1950 to the present day. To arrive at a definition of a coup, they focus on five aspects. Firstly, the target has to overthrow the chief executive. Secondly, the perpetrators should, on the one hand not be limited to the *armed forces*, and on the other hand should not be seen too broadly. That is to say that non-military elites, civilian groups and mercenaries should not be included as possible coup perpetrators. Thirdly, Powell and Thyne enounce that coups may be undertaken by any elite who is part of the state apparatus. Fourthly, the tactics of the coup must be illegal, violence does not have to be present, and they must consist of eliminating plots and rumours. Finally, there must be a threshold of one week to determine whether a coup has been a successful attempt. In this they have followed Thompson (1973, in Powell and Thyne, 2011) who chose the one week-threshold. That means that the coup plotters should be ruling the country for at least one week. The conclusive definition of a coup according to Powell and Thyne is as follows:

"A coup d'état is an illegal and overt attempt by the military or other elites within the state apparatus to unseat the sitting executive."

To test my hypothesis I will analyse the available data of inequality before and after the coup d'état. The indicator for economic inequality will be the Gini coefficient. For the inequality indicator I will analyse the equality of outcome and not the equality of opportunity. Even though the equality of opportunity should be seen as an important aspect of equality and the concept is generally preferred over equality of outcome by writers and organisations, it is much more practical and achievable to gather and analyse outcomes than opportunities (World Bank 2005: 4 in Greig et al. 2007). I will also make use of the Deininger and Squire (1996) dataset in which they complement the Gini data with income shares of population quintiles. The Gini coefficient is based on the Lorenz curve and it plots the share of the population against the share of income received (Deininger & Squire, 1996). A

country with a perfectly even distributed income has the value of 0 and a country where one person possesses all of the income has the value of 100 (Greig et al. 2007).

Furthermore in this paper I will sometimes use the concepts of democracy and autocracy. For the concept of democracy I will use the definition of Przeworski et al. (2000). This definition consists of 4 rules. The first rule is that the chief executive must be elected by the people. The second is that the legislature must be elected by the people. The third rule is that there must be more than one party and the final rule is that there must have been at least one alteration in power through elections. An autocracy is defined as a regime where one or more of these conditions have not been met. An important side note regarding the concept of democracy in this paper is that the legislature must be elected by the people, but that the legislature should also be able to legislate independently, without any laws forced upon them by the military institution. Countries that have undergone a coup are generally not democratic mainly because of this aspect. However a coup might be a useful tool in establishing a democracy. In the section below I will summarise more closely the different opinions about the possible effects of a coup and to what extent they will lead to democracies or just another autocracy. I will hypothesize that a coup could also be a useful tool in restoring the balance of the economy, specifically the economic equality within a country. I will test this hypothesis by investigating two cases, the coup of 1980 in Turkey and the coup in 2009 in Honduras. These are similar due to the fact that they have both experienced coups, but have different civic-military relations and a contrasting post-coup equality level. Before I will examine these two cases and test my hypothesis, I will analyse earlier scientific research concerning the causes and outcome of coups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

When starting to study the literature about coups and seeking an answer to the question whether it has, in theory, a significant impact on the economic inequality within a state, it is probably the case that you will encounter a lack of research concerning the specific effect of a coup on economic inequality. You will however, come across a substantial number of political scientists who have done research about the probable causes and effects of a coup.

One idea which seems to be shared among most scholars is that a coup will generally take place in a poor country (Londregan & Poole, 1990; Miller, 2011). Londregan and Poole (1990) have performed an empirical analysis examining the relationship between coups and income and they have found that coups are 21 times more likely to occur among the poorest countries in their sample. Powell (2012) in a likeminded way refers to economic turmoil as one of the important conditions that could potentially serve as a window of opportunity for attempting a coup d'état. Public discontent about the economic performance could lead to instability and a loss of legitimacy of the incumbent regime and a coup could be considered as a useful tool in altering the status quo. Miller (2011) describes the situation in Niger (coup d'état in 2010) as an example of where the incumbent regime had lost its legitimacy due to inadequate economic performance.

“This transparent power grab, coupled with languishing socioeconomic conditions in the country, meant that there was little dismay among Nigeriens when a group of military officers arrested the president-turned-strongman on 18 February 2010.”

The idea of economic turmoil leading to a loss of legitimacy, and thus the opening of a window of opportunity for a coup, fits the dynamic of my hypothesis. If it is the case that a coup would generally happen in a country where the economy is in a negative spiral, it would mean that the post-coup regime would have the opportunity to improve the economic conditions as these are at a low point at

the time the coup takes place. If a coup would happen while the country is experiencing economic prosperity, it would make it harder for the new regime to further improve the economic conditions. In the case of a country where the economy is in a negative spiral, the window of opportunity could be used to either improve the economic conditions through the use of a coup, or the window of opportunity could be misused by another possible authoritarian actor. If a coup would generally occur in prosperous countries, the military would have less incentives to intervene in order to improve the conditions of the country. Therefore the nature of a coup would generally be one of replacing the incumbent regime with an authoritarian regime.

Belkin and Schofer (2003) argue that economic disarray is not a structural cause for a coup d'état to happen, but merely a triggering cause. They portray regime legitimacy as a structural asset of a regime. Legitimacy ought to be connected with the history of the state and the legitimacy that the state has gained over the years through political stability and peaceful political transitions. Coups therefore happen in a country which is conceived to have high coup risk in the sense of a

“function of deep, structural attributes of government, society, political culture and state-society relations (Belkin & Schofer, 2003).”

Belkin and Schofer accentuate the condition that it is a function which can be found in the roots of a country. They see it as being distinct from associated triggering causes such as an economic downturn. This theory is strengthened when applying the idea in practice. Take for example the United States, the Netherlands, France or other countries that are aligned with a recent history of political stability and peaceful political transitions. If economic turmoil would reach relatively devastating levels, of which it could be claimed that it did during the financial crisis (The Guardian, 2011), the occurrence of a coup would still not be a conceivable risk. The idea of economic disarray as a trigger cause coincides with the earlier mention of Powell (2012) who claims that economic turmoil is a window of opportunity in order to attempt a coup d'état. In this context, it could be said that economic turmoil could lead to a coup, but only in the case where the state is subjected to coup risk in a structural manner, as emphasised by Belkin and Schofer. It is further argued by Belkin and Schofer that the actual incidence of a coup is related to the effectiveness of coup-proofing measures, but that the practice of coup-proofing is a risky business because it might strengthen the military which would in turn make the military more competent to successfully carry out a coup.

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) claim that coups are more likely in societies where there is a greater level of inequality. Acemoglu and Robinson focus on the interplay between the median voter, the elite and the level of redistribution. They argue that in a democracy the median voter gets to set the redistribution level. In the case of a highly unequal society, the median voter would want the elite to redistribute more of their wealth in order to achieve a more equal society. In this case the elite would want to secure low taxes. In order to do this, they must regain control over the power and bring a halt to the democratic regime through the use of a coup. In this case however it is assumed that a coup would happen in a democratic country. However this is generally not the case, as the plurality of coups happen in authoritarian regimes (Powell & Thyne, 2014), or as Acemoglu & Robinson (2006) claim that coups mostly happen in semi-consolidated or unconsolidated democratic regimes.

A semi-consolidated democratic regime can prevent coups in the short-term by adjusting the taxes in such a way that the elite is satisfied with democracy. This could also be seen as a way of coup-proofing. The elite accepts a limited democracy as long as they get their economic advantages. When the state reaches levels of uncontrollable high inequality, the elite might change their tactics and decide to attempt a coup anyway. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) portray these states as *“living under the shadow of a coup”*. The other possible origin of a state that experiences a coup d'état is an unconsolidated democracy (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006) or rather an autocratic regime. Powell and

Thyne (2011) agree that while it is clear that a coup d'état confounds the principles of a democracy, it is also notable that the vast majority of coups d'états do not happen in democracies. If they would occur in democratic countries, Houle (2009) shares the similar expectation that inequality would threaten the duration and consolidation of the democratic regime and that it would lead more often to a breakdown of the system through the use of a coup.

It can be therefore concluded that coups generally happen in authoritarian regimes with some exceptions in semi-consolidated democratic regimes. The shared aspect among states that undergo a putsch seems to be a malfunction of the economic system and in most cases also a high level of inequality. Coup perpetrators could see the economic mismanagement of the regime as a window of opportunity for change. Whether this change is generally of good nature or just a switch of an authoritarian regime will be discussed in the section below.

There are different theories about the general outcome of a coup. It might have long-lasting influences in the political sphere due to the established structures of the military regime when they were in power in the post-coup period (Hague & Harrop, 2013). Miller (2011) argues that in the case of coups in African states, there has been a failure to address core political and economic issues, engender long-term political stability and install durability. Marinov and Goemans (2013) have argued that since the end of the Cold War, coups have generally been of good nature. They have more often led to a positive regime change, that is a change from an autocratic regime to a democratic regime.

The reason for observing more good coups in the post-Cold War period is possibly because of two reasons. First, Marinov and Goemans argue that major players in international affairs, i.e. the United States and the European countries have committed themselves to defending and promoting democracy all over the world. These major players came out of a cold war with the former Soviet Union which was mainly based on the prevalence of democracy and capitalism versus the distinctive communist model of the former Soviet Union. They are therefore committed to defend the democratic principle. The second reason for the increase in good coups is that there was a high number of *bad coups* during the Cold War, meaning coups that installed autocratic regimes. In fact, this was the period of the highest number of coups recorded in history. It could be claimed that the reason for this is that the major powers were not as concerned as to whether they were actually democratic or communist, as long as they could portray themselves as saviours of one of the systems then they would get the support of the major powers, the US and/or the former Soviet Union. Marinov and Goemans are not the only ones that have been observing a wave of good coups. Collier (2008) attempts to see the upside of a coup d'état:

"I find it a little awkward to be writing in praise, however faint, of coups. They are unguided missiles, as likely to topple a democracy as a dictatorship. But there is still something to be said for them."

Powell and Thyne (2011) also argue in defence of the possible aftereffects of a coup d'état. They have tested whether coups in authoritarian regimes bring about democratic transition and their results have indicated that:

"Both strongly authoritarian leaders and leaders who have maintained power for a long time – those least likely to democratise otherwise – become the most likely to democratise when their leader is challenged with a coup."

According to Powell and Thyne, this democratisation would, in turn, lead to the achievement of economic prosperity. They argue that this is the case because liberalising the market is an inseparable part of becoming a democracy. Aid flows and the removal of sanctions are also linked to democratisation (Cox & Drury, 2006; Wright, 2009 in Powell & Thyne, 2011) and ways of improving

economic conditions following a coup d'état. Collier and Hoeffler (2005, in Powell and Thyne, 2011) connect this with the need to be legitimate as a coup d'état leader after ousting the former regime. To prevent being overthrown themselves, the new regime has to build up political legitimacy as quickly as possible.

In practice the theory of a good coup does not always hold up. An example of a state that has endured a hard economic hit after a coup is Honduras. Johnston and Lefebvre (2013) have established that, after the coup in 2009, Honduras is now the most unequal country in Latin America. Even though the rates of inequality before the coup were decreasing, the increase after the coup was large enough to reach the status of having the most unequal distribution of income in the region. In this case the newly installed regime after the coup ignored the task of building up political legitimacy through improving the economic conditions. Johnston and Lefebvre have observed a continuously declining rate of social expenditures by the government, resulting in over 43 percent of the labour force working full-time but earning less than minimum wage. This case coincides more with the perhaps more realistic observations of Derpanopoulos et al. (2016). In an empirical study they found that from 1950 to 1989 it was indeed rare that coups would lead to democracy with the percentage of 14%. However the argument of Marinov and Goemans does find support in the study as 40% of the coups from 1990 to 2015 led to democracy.

When we look at the literature that has investigated the specific relationship between coups and inequality, we find again contrasting theories. Przeworski (2000) also claims that inequality may motivate movements attracted by the egalitarian promise of democracy in attempting a coup d'état. Inequality is thus generally seen as an important explanatory variable for instability (Lichbach, 1989; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006). Instability measured as government collapse, according to Alesine et al. (1996), generally leads to lower economic growth. The focus in this empirical analysis has been on all types of government collapses, not only through a coup d'état, but also through elections, death and other possible causes. Londregan and Poole (1990) have examined the effect of specifically a coup on economic performance and conclude that it has no effect. This, however, is not specifically economic inequality, but economic performance in general. With regard to Latin America, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) claim that distributive conflict has been behind most of the democratic collapses and coups in Latin America. Stepan (1985, in Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006) has analysed the coups in Chile, Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil and wrote:

“The new authoritarianism in all four countries... was installed in an atmosphere of growing class conflict. In each country the bourgeoisie provided the social base for the new authoritarian regime, whose first political acts were the use of the coercive apparatus of the state to dismantle ...working class organizations.”

Drake (1996, in Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006) claims a similar trend in his study arguing that most of the dictatorships arose out of the distributive struggle between capital and wages. The situation is different when a society is highly egalitarian. Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) claim that, in this case, it would be more likely for the state to consolidate a democracy. This is an argument that I have illustrated before. It assumes that the elite holds the decision whether a coup is necessary based on the level of distribution they are committed to, a level which is set by the median voter. Calvo, Torre and Szwarcberg (2001, in Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006) have empirically investigated the case of Argentina in trying to confirm their framework which stated that;

“democratization leads to the incorporation of poorer groups into polity and, consequently, would result in policies designed to favour such groups.”

They observe that the basic trend of inequality has hardly changed over the last century, but that the fluctuations are coinciding with the occurrence of a coup (attempts). Inequality has stagnated or risen dramatically after the occurrence of a coup d'état and the instalment of an autocracy, and fell after the establishment of a democracy through elections.

THEORY

I expect that coups have no consistent effect on income inequality in the post-coup period. The emphasis in this matter is on the idea that it is not a consistent effect. The effect ought to be positive in some cases and negative in others. I will argue that it depends on the nature of the civic-military relations within a country. In the case of a positive relationship between the public and the military, I argue that a post-coup period would generally mean positive economic change and a lower level of inequality. If it is the case that the civic-military relationship is one of mistrust and where the public views the military institution as one that is characterized by corruption and other malfunctions, I argue that the post-coup period would generally be detrimental for the economic conditions and it would lead to a higher level of inequality.

Previous literature about the causes and consequences of coups have taught us several different things. There seems to be a consensus about coups occurring in states which are not only poor or experiencing economic turmoil, that they must also be structurally in danger of a coup due to a lack of political legitimacy and a history of peaceful transitions. Concerning the outcomes of a coup, there have been contrasting ideas of a whether a coup will generally have a good or a bad effect. Though there are definitely cases where democracy triumphs after a coup, especially in the post-Cold War period (Marinov & Goemans, 2013; Collier, 2008; Powell & Thyne, 2011; Collier & Hoeffler, 2005), the majority of coups happen in autocracies, and these remain autocracies, and are detrimental for economic conditions (Miller, 2011; Johnston and Lefebvre, 2013; Alesine et al. 1997; Derpanopoulos et al. 2016; Calvo, Torre & Szwarberg, 2001 in Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006).

I am claiming a middle-way by agreeing with Collier and Hoeffler (2005, in Powell and Thyne, 2011) that a newly installed regime after a coup might seek legitimacy of the people and thus provide beneficial laws and measures. I argue however that this is not always the case. I will make a distinction between the cases where the coup plotters are taking over out of self-interest (or rather elite-interest) and cases where coup plotters will take over in order to improve the conditions of their country. To examine this I will look at the civic-military relations as explained above.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

The data on coups was gathered by Powell and Thyne (2011). They started their observations in 1950 and they update their data regularly. I will only look at successful coups. My argumentation for choosing this strategy has two reasons. Firstly, failed coups mean that the coup-proofing measures by the incumbent regime were effective enough to prevent a successful coup. As a consequence, the regime will feel that the coup-proofing measures are effective enough to withhold future coup attempts. For this reason, the regime will not feel the need to gain legitimacy and it will continue as it did before. Also we are just looking at coups where the military ousted the incumbent regime as the focus is mainly on the civic-military relationship. A coup might fail in some cases, but the military institution is the most important actor in perpetrating a coup. It is nearly impossible for a coup attempt to fail when the military institution as a whole supports the coup, as they are generally the strongest

force within a country with the arms and strength to suppress the opposition. Secondly, it is empirically proven by Derpanopoulos et al. (2016) that regime change is less likely to follow a failed coup than a successful coup.

“6% of the failed coups d’états were followed by democratisation and 3% by the establishment of a new dictatorship. In summary, coups fail frequently, and when they do, regime change rarely follows.”

I have constructed my statistical analysis by, firstly, filtering all the successful coups from the dataset of Powell and Thyne. Subsequently I went through the Deininger and Squire dataset to check whether there was sufficient data of a case for the years before and after the coup. The result was 10 countries of which 3 countries have experienced 2 coups (for which there was sufficient data available), which resulted in 13 cases which could be studied. After constructing the means of the Gini coefficient of the years before the coup of a case and the years after, I had 26 means ready for analysis; 13 pre-coup averages and 13 post-coup averages. I analysed these means using a dependent t-test to see whether the difference between the two groups of means has a significant difference. The paired samples test gave a significance outcome of .860 which is a highly insignificant number (figure 1).

Figure 1

Significance of difference between pre-coup and post-coup income inequality		Paired Samples Test						t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
Pair 1	GIN preCoup - GIN postCoup				Lower	Upper				
		-.27154	5,44226	1,50941	-3,56026	3,01719	-,180	12	,860	

This confirms my hypothesis in so far that it shows that there is not one consistent outcome when the effect of a coup on income inequality is observed. It does not show whether a coup has significant effects on singular cases. For this I would have to look at the difference between singular cases. Looking at the data, it shows that in seven out of thirteen cases the post-coup inequality is higher than the pre-coup inequality. In five out of thirteen cases the pre-coup inequality is higher than the post-coup inequality. This confirms my hypothesis that it differs for every case, depending on the specific circumstances of the coup.

In the next section, I will set up a qualitative comparison between two cases. The case of Turkey will illustrate that after the coup of 1980 the economic equality took a positive turn due to the decision of the military regime, as they ruled the country for the first three years after the coup, to install a liberal economic policy. To illustrate how a coup can have a detrimental effect on income inequality I will investigate the case of Honduras. It is important to note that I have not included Honduras in my statistical analysis. The reason for this is that Honduras is not included in the Deininger and Squire dataset, which made me decide to not include this case, because I wanted to be consistent in my statistical analysis. The article of Johnston and Lefebvre however points out that Honduras is a good example of how a coup had a devastating effect on specifically the economic inequality.

THE CASE OF TURKEY; 1980 COUP D’ÉTAT

To understand the outcome of a coup, we must look at the nature of the coup. More specifically I will argue that the civil-military relationship plays a crucial role in the understanding of the differing outcomes of a coup. The case of Turkey is a good example of where the military is viewed as an important, even the most important, preserver of the nation and the principles on which the nation has

been built. In the following section, I will explain why this is the case and I will argue why this element is explanatory in whether a coup will positively or negatively affect economic inequality in the aftermath of a coup. In explaining why the military institution is deemed with so much credit and sympathy by the Turkish public, I will adopt the four points that were set out by Jenkins (2001).

In examining the relationship between the Turkish military and the Turkish society, Jenkins focuses on four arguments which seek to explain why the military plays such a pivotal role in Turkey. First of all he observes that there is a general feeling of mistrust of the public towards Turkish politicians. Explanations that are set out by Jenkins for this lack of trust are a culture of being rewarded in the political sphere grounded on loyalty rather than ability, corruption, nepotism and a failure of successive governments to provide either stability or prosperity.

“Most Turks expect the military not only to protect them against foreign threats, but also to intervene to check excesses or restore order from the chaos created by inept and corrupt civilian government (Jenkins, 2001).”

The perception of security in Turkey is of a dynamic and broad nature and protecting Turkey from these security threats is a second reason for why the military has much credit with the public. Due to the geographical position of Turkey as a bridge between the European and Asian continents, and as the overseer of the important Bosphorus straits, they play a crucial role concerning regional and world geopolitics. It has thus been the case since the era of the Ottoman Empire that the perception of security plays a dominant role in the Turkish and Ottoman culture. The general suspicion has always been that they stand alone and must protect themselves from possible invasions from the north, west and east. This security perception fits the interests of the military and, as is the nature of the military, they have hardly held back in securitizing an actor, abroad or domestically.

It might be said that the birth of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, under the guidance of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, has institutionalised this importance of the military. Mustafa Kemal (later called Atatürk; Turkish for *father of the Turks*) transformed the former Ottoman Empire into a homogenous, Western-style modern nation state using his authority as a military hero which he gained after the War of Liberation (Jenkins, 2001). Although he insisted that all officers who wished to participate in politics should resign from the armed forces, the fact of the matter was that all the leading politicians at that time were former military colleagues of Atatürk (Jenkins, 2001). Even though Atatürk aimed for Turkey to be a western-style modern nation state, a political ideology set out by Atatürk was called *Kemalism*, Turkish history shows that a strong dedication to this ideology has, ultimately, been the main pitfall in trying to achieve the same western-style modern nation state. Ever since the monopoly of power of the Republican People’s Party (RPP), established by Atatürk, ended in 1950 due to the victory of the Democrat Party (DP) in general elections, the military has been serving as a watchdog to preserve the main ideas of the Kemalist ideology. Every possible threat to Kemalism, domestic or international, would be deterred by the military. The principles of Kemalism have been enshrined in the Turkish constitution and now;

“the Turkish military does not differentiate between internal and external threats or between threats to the country’s territorial integrity and to the Kemalist principles (Jenkins, 2001).”

And the military regards itself as the;

“guardian of the Turkish state with a moral and legal obligation to protect the Turkish Republic against every kind of threat or danger which might threaten the existence of the state (Jenkins, 2001).”

Atatürk himself also did not hold back in giving importance to the Turkish military as he described the military as;

“the armoured statement of Turkish unity, Turkish strength and ability and Turkish patriotism (Ilkogretim Soysal Bilgiler 5, p. 66 in Jenkins, 2001).”

The legacy that was left behind by Atatürk is one in which the military is the main defender and preserver of the nation and the national ideology, Kemalism. Atatürk’s legacy of glorifying the military has not only created this type of culture, but it also played into the already existing Turkish culture of idolizing military achievements and warriors of the battlefield (Jenkins, 2001). This part of the culture is strongly connected with other aspects of Turkish culture, for example, where in Turkish culture the emphasis is on the collective rather than the individual and hierarchy plays an important role in Turkish society (Jenkins, 2001). This is essential for the future, both on a family level and also on national level. The Turkish nation is generally seen as the most important thing and it would be an honour for a Turkish citizen to protect it through serving in the military. This standard has endured through the use of education systems, media and daily conversations (Jenkins, 2001). Schoolchildren are told:

“Every Turkish citizen is a willing, fearless soldier in our army which protects the independence and integrity of the country... Our army is the symbol of our national unity and the guarantee of our future, which fulfils its duty to the letter (Ilkogretim Soysal Bilgiler 5, p. 66 in Jenkins, 2001).”

The 1980 coup that took place on the morning of 12 September led to strict and harsh measures in the spirit of a purge in an attempt to save democracy in Turkey (Zürcher, 2004).

“It was not only suspected terrorists who were hunted down and arrested. Respectable trade unionists, legal politicians, university professors, teachers, journalists and lawyers, in short anyone who had expressed even vaguely leftist (or in some cases Islamist) views before September 1980, was liable to get into trouble (Zürcher, 2004).”

This purge is a good example of the self-acclaimed importance of the military in protecting the Republic of Turkey. The Turkish state was weakly governed and on the brink of a possible civil war due to an intensified conflict between the leftist and rightist movements. Besides solving this conflict and bringing back stability to the country, the military junta also had the priority of restoring economic growth and stability (Hale, 1988 in Laciner, 2009). Because of a lack of knowledge of the military about economics, they appointed Turgut Ozal as Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs (Laciner, 2009). This move was remarkable because all the other politicians and political parties were banned from taking part in the political arena for a determined time. It showed that the military saw it of high importance that the economy should stabilise and grow and they saw Ozal as the right man to make sure that it would. Ozal heavily liberalised and industrialised the economy in the 1980’s and thanks to that the Turkish economy grew significantly together with its export, import, industrial products and the increase of the tourism sector (Laciner, 2009).

Despite the initial economic growth due to liberalisation and industrialisation, the income inequality eventually increased significantly. By the end of the 1980s, a whole new wealthy class came to existence which profited from the Ozal revolution and at the same time the purchasing power of the majority of the population had been drastically reduced and poverty severely increased (Zürcher, 2004). Thus, the liberalisation project of Ozal might have led to positive economic outcomes in the short run, but it led to increased inequality in the long run. Furthermore, it faced the same experience as other western countries in that period where liberalisation was perceived as the ultimate way to achieve economic growth, but only before realising the detrimental effect it has on economic equality. Despite this backlash in the late 1980s, the fact that the military decided to appoint Ozal as the man

responsible for the economic policy proves that it was their higher goal to strengthen their nation rather than to stubbornly let it drown in economic disarray.

THE CASE OF HONDURAS; 2009 COUP D'ETAT

The case of Honduras differs from the case of Turkey in many ways. In the following part I will explain the crucial differences in the civic-military relations between Honduras and Turkey and thereby I will attempt to explain why the outcomes of the two selected coups have had such a contrasting effect on the economic equality.

Firstly, there are some aspects that Turkey and Honduras have in common. They were both subjected to economic turmoil before the coup took place. The politicians that were in power before the coup had proven to be mired in corruption and failed to enact the necessary reforms. In both cases, the military institution saw itself as the saviour of the state and promised better times.

The crucial difference is the way the public viewed the military in Honduras and the interrelated issue of whether the military serves the state or has different priorities resulting in corruption and mismanagement. The status of continuous popularity of the military institution of Turkey does not resemble the case of Honduras. The military started ousting leaders through the use of a coup d'état in 1956 when, after being a professional military institution that devoted their mission to defending the national sovereignty and public order of Honduras for only two years, they removed the unpopular and increasingly authoritarian leader Julio Lozano (Ruhl, 1996). After this coup, they made sure that the institution would formally guarantee the role of the military as a political actor and that they would be insulated from further partisan interference (Ruhl, 1996).

At first sight, this chain of events is already distinct from the way the Turkish military gained its status. The military of the Republic of Turkey was a crucial player from the birth of the nation-state as the military fought for independence under the guidance of General Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk). As the Turkish nation-state was born, the role as preserver of it had been associated with the military from the start. This gave the military the opportunity to shape the Turkish culture through teaching and inculcation.

The coup of 1956 was followed by more coups, coup attempts and internal coups. The 1970s were marked by popular support in favour of the military reformism.

“Many high-ranking officers were influenced by reformist concepts as they related to national development and security. In the context of spreading unrest and the more confident posture of organized labour, the 1972-1975 phase of military rule evolved into a so-called populist government emphasizing economic and social reforms (Morris, 1984).”

This popular support was only short-term when, due to corruption and economic mismanagement, the demobilisation of this popular movement ended (Ruhl, 1996; Sieder, 1995). This corruption and other misbehaving carried on in the 1980s. Democracy at the time was formally restored, but only after the presidential candidates had to accept that the military could not be investigated into military corruption or charges of human rights violations (Schulz and Schulz, 1994: 71-72 in Ruhl, 1996). In this period the Honduras military also agreed to cooperate with the United States (US) in fighting its wars against Nicaragua and El Salvador (Ruhl, 1996). Brutal laws that were installed in order to fight communism were accepted by a submissive government. The Honduras civil society was *“too paralyzed with fear to attempt any meaningful resistance (Meza, 1988: 16 in Ruhl, 1996).”* In the following years, the

Honduras military continued to receive full financial support from the US in exchange for fighting their battles. This was coupled with extreme levels of military corruption (Ruhl, 1996).

At the beginning of the 1990s, the military supremacy started to be challenged by both inside and outside forces. As the Cold War was over, they lost the communists as security threat. This was followed by the loss of support from the US and, as they no longer needed the help of the Honduran military to fight the communists, they even became their greatest critics (Ruhl, 1996). However, the groundwork had already been laid in the formation of a corrupt, untrustworthy military and hence their institutional legitimacy was destroyed. The Honduran people were tired of the military's abuses and corruption (Taylor-Robinson & Ura, 2012). The 1990s were the starting point for the rising of civil society in Honduras and, line by line, they started to politically attack the military institution under the guidance of the Honduran mass media (Ruhl, 1996).

Taylor-Robinson and Ura (2012) summarise the following period as the beginning of a military that followed the civilian leadership and a time in which the democratic regime of Honduras scores high on the democratic scale. However, in 2009, a coup takes place.

Fasquelle (2011), in a North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) report on the coup in 2009, described the coup and the after-period as follows:

“We are still living through the consequences of the coup and of the lies that justified it, and we will continue to experience the aftermath of the coup's turmoil in the years ahead.”

Fasquelle (2011) explains the coup as a combined effort by the traditional parties, large employers' organisations and the media that was controlled by both to oust the, at the time, President Manuel Zelaya after trying to protect the modest social advances he had achieved since 2006 and which threatened to fall apart due to the economic crisis of 2008. This coup was definitely not supported by Honduran society as they were;

“Parting with the past, when Hondurans suffered through so many coups with indifference and total silence, they now reacted angrily and bravely, singing out against the oppressor in massive marches that were repressed with murderous force. (Fasquelle, 2011)”

The international community also condemned the coup and reported numerous atrocities.

“All the national and major international independent human rights organizations have documented the repression of peaceful protesters with weapons of war, tear gas, and police batons; the selective elimination of opposition voices, journalists, professors, labor leaders, and politicians (including a minister and the brother and brother-in-law of another minister), and their intimidation through the assassination of close relatives; the executions at the hands of death squads trained by foreign agents and financed by businessmen; the thousands of illegal detentions, and the sexual violence and torture carried out against jailed protesters; the intimidation and threats to the opposition that Honduran authorities and their foreign allies deny in lockstep (Fasquelle, 2011).”

The post-coup period has been characterised by high murder rates (UN, 2013), an extremely dangerous climate for journalists (Human Rights Watch, 2010), and disastrous high levels of economic inequality (Lefebvre & Johnston, 2013). Investigations into these post-coup abuses have regularly been obstructed by the military (Human Rights Watch, 2010). The Honduran army continues to receive funding from the US, although now it is in order to fight the war on drugs, and the failure of the Honduran elite and the US to condemn the coup has strengthened the military's hand (Perry, 2012). Even though the international community and many domestic actors have criticised the coup,

the US failed to do so and even protected the new regime and the military. Institutions financed by the US were part of the minority of actors that supported the status quo and did not boycott or protest against the new government of President Lobo (Frank, 2012).

This friendly relationship between the Honduran military and the US has thus been reinstated after a period where it seemed that Honduras was about to progress after the military lost its legitimacy in the post-Cold War period and civil society in Honduras grew stronger in their capability to unify and grow towards a more stable and progressive democracy. Just like in the 1980s, when the military received financial support from the US in order to fight wars against Nicaragua and El Salvador, the economic interests of the US and the greed of the Honduran military led to the, for the time being, paralysis and downturn of Honduran democratic practice and the continuation of economic predicament.

It is clear that the main difference between the cases of the 1980 military coup in Turkey and the military coup in Honduras in 2009 is the position of the military in society. It is fair to say that the military in Turkey at the time of the coup had a strong support-base founded on the national ideology and other factors. The principal priority of the Turkish junta was the higher goal of satisfying the core values of Kemalism and making the country prosper in this regard, economic development being one crucial part of this project. The case of Honduras reflects a military institution that has less constant popular support due to, compared with Turkey, a lack of cultural education and historical importance of the military. The Honduran military certainly had its phases of popular support, the reformist-period in the 1970s being one of them. This support however has proved to be a policy-based anomaly as the majority of the Honduran civil society have viewed their military as an institution which is characterized by corruption, economic mismanagement, patronage networks, and a failure to respect their human rights. It is therefore not implausible to conclude that the differing outcomes concerning the level of economic inequality, and thus the economic policy, is related to the civic-military relationship.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have examined whether a coup generally affects the level of economic inequality in the after-period. As previous literature remained inconclusive about the probable consequences of a coup, I have hypothesised that it does have an effect on the level of economic inequality, though it is not one of a consistent nature. After having examined the singular cases of the Turkish coup in 1980 and the Honduran coup in 2009, I have concluded that the nature of the civil-military relations plays a crucial role in predicting whether the economic inequality will rise or fall after a coup. The case of Turkey shows that a military institution that is respected by the public and trusted to act for the interests of the state can have a positive effect on the economic inequality. The case of Honduras is quite different as the military institution was characterized by corruption practices and economic mismanagement, leading to a detrimental effect on the level of equality.

In order to measure economic inequality, I used the dataset of Deininger and Squire. Even though the dataset of Deininger and Squire (1996) is one of the most well-known datasets, I first wanted to make use of the variable capital share which was constructed by Ortega and Rodriguez (2006). This dataset was strongly recommended and used by highly regarded scientists (Houle, 2009; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006; Przeworski et al. 2000). The Gini index as it is constructed in the Deininger and Squire dataset has a limited number of observations of countries that have been subject to one or more coups. However, because I was not able to gather the capital share data of Ortega and Rodriguez, I have therefore used the data set of Deininger and Squire.

Future research about the relationship between coups and economic inequality could attempt to make use of the dataset of Ortega and Rodriguez in achieving a more representable picture of economic inequality within a country. Future research could also consider making use of more cases to further investigate the relationship between coups and economic inequality. The fact of the matter is that a coup remains a very specific event in any case. I have attempted to find a mechanism for predicting whether economic inequality would prosper or suffer following a coup, but it would be stronger if more cases were included in future research.

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