

# From Poverty in Turns to New Poverty: A Scrutinize to Changing Dynamics of Urban Poverty in Turkey<sup>1</sup>

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**Özet:** Türkiye’de kentsel yoksulluk dinamikleri farklı dönemler boyunca değişim göstermiştir. Göç ve kentleşmenin ilk itici gücü 1950’lerde gerçekleşmiştir. 1960’lı ve 1970’li yıllarda, kentleşme süreci ve yoksulluk sadece devletin formal refah mekanizmalarıyla değil, aynı zamanda akrabalık ve/veya hemşerilik dayanışması ağlarıyla desteklenen enformel mekanizmalarla ele alınmıştır. Bu enformel mekanizmalar, kent yoksullarının enformel işgücü piyasasına katılımına ve yeni kamu arazileri üzerinde yerleşmelerine imkân tanımıştır. 1980’lerde de enformel mekanizmalar etkinliklerini korumuş ve yoksulluk sürekli bir nitelik kazanmamıştır. 1990’lı yıllardan itibaren, enformel mekanizmaların temelini oluşturan unsurların geçerliliğini kaybetmesi ile Türkiye’de kentsel bağlamda yoksulluğun nitelikleri değişmeye başlamıştır. Enformel arsa ve işgücü piyasasındaki imkânlar büyük ölçüde sınırlandırılmıştır. Bu değişimler; toplumsal dışlanma, ekonomik ve sosyal yaşamla bütünleşememe riskinin artışı, yoksullukla başetmenin zorlaşması gibi durumlarla kavramlaştırılan yeni bir yoksulluk türünün ortaya çıkışını göstermektedir. Aynı zamanda yeni yoksulluğa ilişkin bu tür dinamikler bizlere Türkiye’nin geleneksel refah rejiminin çözülüşünü göstermekte ve bu süreç ülkemizin toplumsal bütünleşme imkânlarını büyük ölçüde ortadan kaldırmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kentsel yoksulluk, yaşamı sürdürme stratejileri, yeni yoksulluk, Türkiye

## **Yoksulluktan Yeni Yoksulluğa: Türkiye’de Kentsel Yoksulluğun Değişen Dinamikleri Üzerine Bir İnceleme**

**Abstract:** Dynamics of urban poverty in Turkey have changed throughout different periods. The first impulse of migration and urbanization has occurred in 1950s. In 1960s and 1970s, urbanization process and poverty have been dealt with not only by

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*formal welfare mechanisms of the state but also through informal mechanisms which were mostly undergirded by kinship or townsmanship solidarity networks. These informal mechanisms enabled the urban poor to participate in informal labour market and to find new public lands to occupy. In 1980s, informal mechanisms sustained their effectiveness and poverty did not gain a persistent character. The characteristics of poverty in the Turkish urban context became to alter since 1990s as the underlying factors of the informal mechanisms lost their validity. Mainly the opportunities in the informal land market and labour market were narrowed down. These changes signify a new form of poverty which could be conceptualized through social exclusion, increasing risk of inability of integration and increasing challenge of overcoming poverty. At the same time, such dynamics of new poverty show us the fall of the traditional welfare regime of Turkey and this process, to a large extent, undermines the possibilities of societal integration in our country.*

**Keywords:** *Urban poverty, survival strategies, new poverty, Turkey*

### **Introducing the Story: Migration and Urbanization in the 1950s**

The aim of this article is to scrutinize the changing dynamics and features of poverty in Turkey beginning from the 1950s until today, focusing particularly on the period after 1980s through tracing the new attempts in conceptualization and evaluation of the term. Although the authors sincerely believe that particularly in poverty studies, theoretical attempts mostly become meaningful when they are evaluated and supported with research findings, in this study only the change in the concept of poverty mainly after the 1980s will be evaluated. This period has importance by not only defining a sharp transformation in the economic and social characteristics of the country but also a change in the notion of poverty and *the poor*. Especially with end of 1980s, new dynamics of urban poverty became more apparent as the informal solidarity mechanisms became more weakened and a new generation of urban poor gradually emerged feeling excluded from social networks (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık, 2008: 1367).

In fact, poverty has always been one of the essential themes particularly during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a period in which Turkey witnessed a considerably accelerated industrialization and a rapid urbanization as a consequence of its economic and social development. Within this period poverty was a remarkable issue of research for social scientists on the way of understanding the change in society which was under the heavy influence of rural-to-urban migration.

In the analysis of poverty in Turkey, actually urban poverty, one of the crucial determinants is the urbanization process with accommodating specific country-based features and the fact of migration particularly recognized as rural-to-urban until recently. In this respect, the matter of poverty in the Turkish case is argued out both in the socioeconomic and political spheres along with the problem of relocated rural migrants who come to settle in urban areas. Thus, development of poverty as an important fact with its associated subjects advanced together with the matters in the process of urbanization caused by a rapid migration.

The 1950s when are mostly accentuated as the beginning of the main story were characterized by a geographical mobility due to the considerable transformations in the traditional economic structure. During this period, the increasing mechanization in agriculture resulted in rapid migration from villages and at the same time demand for labour force of newly developing industries acted as a pull factor promising an economic vitality concentrated in cities. The urban population, which was 5.3 millionss in 1950 (out of a total of 20.9 millions) increased to 33.3 millions in 1990 (out of a total of 56.5 millions) and reached 44.1 millions (out of a total of 67.8 millions) according to the latest census in 2000. This signifies that in the last fifty years the population in Turkey living urban areas reached more than 65% of the total while this ratio was only 25% in 1950.

As the first migrants settled in the periphery of urban areas they were not regarded as urban-dwellers. In this respect, the initial debates and researches in order to understand the life patterns and characteristics of new migrants or poor, were intensively concentrated on the adaptation and integration of these new groups into the urban environment. Erman (1998) states that in 1950s and 1960s, the rural migrations that constituted large majority of the *gecekond* population were regarded as a homogenous mass differentiated according to their cultural values and living styles from the urban residents (Erman, 1998:317). According to her, the studies in this period to a large extent were embracing the approaches of modernization theory and *its bipolar conceptualization of social change which tends to situate the rural migrants or the gecekond population vis-à-vis the established modern urbanities* (Erman, 2001:991). They were not regarded as villagers but also exactly not urban dwellers. Erman (2001) names this position of migrants as the *rural others* where their otherness will disappear as their characteristics formed around rural values will be dissolved. The first studies acknowledged the differences among this population in terms of origin, ethnicity, and kinship but these were not regarded as considerable and permanently determining factors capable to develop solidarity mechanisms and networks among themselves in order to survive in cities and cope with their poverty. On the one hand, it could be noted that the first migrants were also not intently attempting to benefit from these mechanisms which later became important and effective. On the other hand, the internal differences among the rural migrants were mostly ignored as they were not presumed to be permanent and rather considered to lose their importance gradually as they become a member of urban population in every manner.

The new migrants began to participate to the labour market as a work force in the small-scaled manufacturing and service sectors, and their growing position in economic sphere opened a path for the migrants to become settled in the periphery of cities through the formation of *gecekond* neighbourhoods. In the following periods, these settlements gradually began to take share from the urban infrastructure investments and advance in the way of obtaining a legal status.

### 1960s and 1970s: *Protected adaptation of the urban poor*

After the 1960s Turkish economy was restructured on the basis of an import-substitution regime which basically defines a national economy protected with high import tariffs in order to promote development through industrialization and constitute a domestic market. In this structure; state plays the crucial role by determining the course of development, regulating the market, assuring the stability and realizing the redistribution. In accordance with characteristics of this period the total labour demand increased due to the expansion in manufacturing and service sectors. However, the new labour force mainly comprised of the new migrants could not be absorbed by growing labour market due to the slow pace of industrialization. In this conjuncture, informal sectors find an opportunity to enlarge and take the advantage of the inactive labour force. In fact, this development provided a crucial dynamic to formal economic sphere which remained limited. In this period, informal sector supplied cheap labour force of the import-subsidized industries.

**Table 1: Structural Indices in Turkey (1960-1980)**

Variables	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980
Labor force participation rate (%)	77,94	72,07	68,91	66,24	62,71
Unemployment (%)	3,01	3,54	6,44	7,73	8,52
Population (1950=100)	127	143	161	182	206
Adult population Index (1950=100)	134	155	179	207	239
Labor force index (1950=100)	129	138	152	169	185
Active labor force index (1950=100)	127	135	145	159	173
Inactive labor force index (1950=100)	154	226	291	365	466
Unemployment index (1950=100)	277	346	677	892	1069

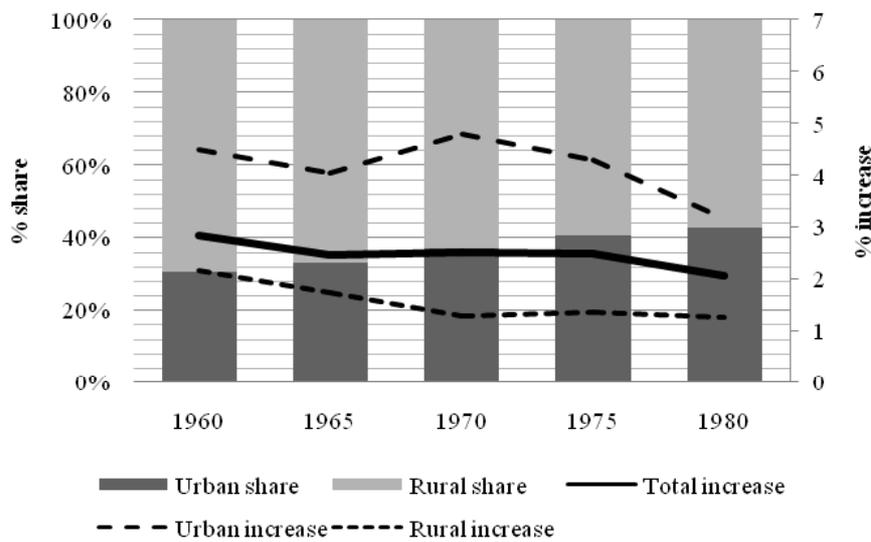
Data source: (Dansuk, 1997: 81)

The position of informal sectors within the import-substitution regime increased its importance in economic space and a concrete consequence of this development is that the squatter settlements began to become permanent elements of urban spaces. In this regard, the relation of informal sector with this urban development should not be neglected.

The position of the state within this process was to maintain populist policies compatible with the traditional corporatist structure and particularly through employment opportunities in the public sector and keeping the ways of social mobility open in order to go upwards. But here, it would be misleading to claim that state policies were intently formed to improve the social position and condition of the poor within the society. On the contrary, although the basic social policies which were approved to be delivered by the state, the role of the state was mostly passive and also limited in terms of making an intervention. In this respect, ways of coping with poverty and surviving in the cities are left out to the informal mechanisms developed by

the poor themselves. These mechanisms were mostly spontaneously developed and aiming to resist the conditions exposed within the struggle of surviving in the city. There were two main purposes of the migrants arriving to the cities: to obtain a dwelling to settle and to find a job in order to maintain the lives in the city. *Gecekondu* came out as a solution to the first one. They came out and be a specific way of obtaining dwellings for the rural-to-urban migrants. In the first years, they were constructed by the migrants themselves mostly on occupied public land situated in the periphery of urban areas. It could be noted that the occupation of public land and construction of *gecekondu* settlements became a fact as a consequence of existing urban land patterns and legislations and inactive position of state preferring not to make an intervention to prevent this development.

**Graph 1: Population Growth Rates and the Shares of Urban and Rural Population**



Data source: (Işık, 1996: 784)

Amongst the strategies of the poor either to obtain a dwelling or participate in the labour market, the existence of kinship and solidarity networks and their function played a crucial role. By taking the advantage of these networks, the migrants, after a relatively temporary condition of poverty, could find jobs in the industrial sector (Yılmaz, 2003) and could participate in (informal) labour market. These networks not only gave rise to the expansion of informal labour market but also constituted the basis of the unauthorized real estate market of squatter housing additionally created an

opportunity for the poor in order to go upwards in the social mobility (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık, 2001). From this point, as Yılmaz (2003:2) states that the period which lasted until the second half of the 1970s represented not only a geographical mobility, but also a social mobility for the poor in order to survive in the city, cope with poverty and take the advantages of different either formal or informal mechanisms. These mechanisms provided a *protected adaptation process* for the urban poors until the end of 1970s.

### **1980s and 1990s: the rise and the fall of informal networks in urban survival strategies**

*Gecekondu* settlements as mentioned above constitute a specific form of informal housing developed particularly in the process of chains of rural-to-urban migration. They could not be regarded only as a subject of irregular urban development or a consequence of migrants' aim to acquire informal housing in the urban areas. Besides these basic components, the formation and diffusion of *gecekondu* settlements could be conceived as an important fact of urban development process in Turkey and furthermore it comprises different economic and social dimensions, complex political mechanisms and relations and different forms of interactions and networks. The meaning and consequences of this structure would be different. But from the aspect of the urban poor, opportunities of irregular patterns of access to urban land and obtaining housing through informal manners were main strategies to survive in the city and then a way of going upwards in social mobility. Considering the whole structure, informal housing could be defined as a strategy used by the poor, but on the other hand another factor underpinning this development was the existence of solidarity networks mainly depending on kinship and townsmanship relations. As mentioned above, these networks not only constituted the basis of illegal urban land market but also gave rise to the expansion of informal labour market. As a considerably important mechanism for the urban poor the functions and the forms of these networks inevitably passed through changes akin to the transformations occurred in *gecekondu* settlements. Particularly amongst the poverty studies after 1980s the importance of these informal networks were increasingly recognized as a factor accommodating a dynamism inside, which went beyond the classical categorization of formal and informal spheres. Before focusing on the structure of these networks, it could be noted that the effectiveness of these networks continued to be significant in the 1980s in different forms and they constituted the main factors preventing the urban poor to be the *passive witnesses* within the city until the beginning of 1990s (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık, 2001).

As one of the studies focusing on the solidarity patterns and kinship networks in *gecekondu* settlements, Ayata (1991) notes that beginning from the initial period, rural-to-urban migrants were not regarded as groups comprising isolated individuals whose relations with their place of origin were

ruptured. In addition they attempted to act as organized complements (Ayata, 1991) in order to build up cooperation networks together with the migrants and existent urban residents from the same origin. According to Ayata, there are three main features of networks depending on origin (or townsmanship). First, within these networks townsmanship could not be regarded as a factor that just facilitates acquiring a house and a job, it is also a mechanism of obtaining an identity for the migrants; second, this identity does not fade away by itself within the city life, on the contrary, townsmanship relations are strengthened as a protective instrument against the others and the life experience within gecekondu settlements consolidates this identity; and third, townsmanship or origin based relations play a significant role in the formation of gecekondu settlements (Ayata, 1991). Ayata's considerations from a culturally oriented perspective would be helpful to expose general characteristics of solidarity networks. According to her analysis, depending on a field research carried out in Ankara, the migrants usually preferred to settle in a nearby place where their townsmen had settled before. Majority of them acquired the land and built their house through their kinship or townsmanship relations with or without any payment. The effectiveness of these networks asserts itself also in finding jobs and participation in the labour market (Ayata, 1991).

However, according to Erder (1996) in an urban climate where the informal mechanisms play a significant role, it is quite difficult to comprehend to which groups these mechanisms generate new opportunities and to which they do not. The characteristics and effectiveness of these mechanisms and rules arise and take shape during the settling (Erder, 1996:86). Hence, this type of settlement constituted through informal procedures creates its *sui generis* system of relations, public spaces, local leaders and market conditions in itself. And from the initial periods of constitution to the advanced level of development among the settlers the main goal is to articulate with the formal regime.

The distinctive aspect of Erder's analysis seems to be the emphasis put on the interior structure of informal (townsmanship) networks and their relation with the process of migration and urban development. These networks are not always founded on trust, solidarity and assistance but also sometimes on political power and patronage relations. The second one became clearly observable particularly after the second half 1980s, in the changing conditions of urban structure and strategies of the poor. Erder (1996:291; 1998:112; 2000:204) emphasizes that the networks based on townsmanship do not expose the same impact on persons even if they come from the same origin. The relation patterns within these networks do not generate a form of solidarity as known in rural regions. These networks are constructed within an urban context where pecuniary-oriented and commercial relations became more common and kinship and townsmanship gained different meanings (Erder, 1996:244). In some cases, they could function contrary to their main goal (enhancement of solidarity) by relying on

ethnicity and different power relations. Hence, while some groups find the opportunity to be a part of these networks and take benefit from advantages that these networks provide, some others could be pushed out of these networks. At this juncture, it could be difficult to claim that there is a single type of informal network pattern which would be functional for all rural migrant groups.

In this sense, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu (2001) state a comprehensive explanation on dynamics of urban poverty through employing the concepts like solidarity networks, informal urban development and chain-migration process. Their approach could be regarded as an attempt of taking different components of informal mechanisms into account which were mentioned before in different studies in an unrelated manner and reinterpret them totally as a way of survival strategies of the urban poor. The claim of Işık and Pınarcıoğlu is that the informal mechanisms of the migrants and the poor within the urban context could be conceptualized through a systematic strategy mainly developed in the post 1980 era where the formal domain was passing through a sharp transformation and informal mechanisms found a way to become more effective. This strategy conceptualized as *poverty in turns* signifies informal mechanisms and networks which give opportunities to the early-arrived immigrant groups and the groups with a privileged position existing in the city to become wealthier by standing upon the latter migrant and unprivileged groups. Hence, through these informal strategies the poverty is transferred to the latter arrivals and as long as the underpinning sources of these mechanisms are not exhausted this process continues to be active as chains of migration carry new masses to the city (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık, 2001).

The conditions enabling the functioning of the strategies forming the mechanisms of *poverty in turns* mainly depend on two necessary constituents. As mentioned above, first is the finding out of new valued lands to occupy and sell which constitutes the essential source of gain. The second is the continuation of the migration flows which carries new poor masses to the city and they constitute the possible participants of the informal networks to be exploited by the former and privileged groups. Hence, the maintenance of the strategies forming the mechanisms of *poverty in turns* is possible under conditions of growth both in new masses and lands within the urban context (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu, 2001).

At this juncture, the developments after the 1990s signify a new period with exposing recent observations about the diminishment of former informal mechanisms. According to Işık and Pınarcıoğlu (2001: 81), mainly the decrease in the flow of migration and diminishing availability of land to occupy, make the system harder to continue on its own dynamics and this course could result in the emergence of a new form of poverty and a new kind of poor in a more desperate condition with less opportunities to overcome. In addition, the informal networks, as being one of the main strategies amongst the informal mechanisms of the urban poor, could no

longer be able to maintain their protective structure and promises since the two dynamics (*land occupation* and *new migrants*) providing their effectiveness and legitimization lost their ground. At this point, it could be stated that the population that migrated in an enforced manner from South East Anatolia to main metropolises in the last decade are situated at the bottom of the chain (or pyramid) with significantly less opportunities (Şen, 2007) in finding a job, settling in a certain region and coping with poverty. This process also shows that the former survival strategies which had a considerable effect in distinct ways began to lose their sense and existence, indicating a new period for the cities with unprecedented difficulties and problems in economic, social and political meanings.

The process of weakening in the informal mechanisms of the poor could be investigated together with the spatial and social transformations realized in the cities. During the 1990s most of the metropolitan areas – particularly Istanbul- witnessed a rapid development in urban geography and an increasing segregation becoming apparent in urban space. The differentiation indicated itself through the emergence of new living environments, life styles and places for individual leisure activities and consumption. The vacant lands in the inner city zones and outskirts of the city became sites for the development of new housing estates, gated communities and residences. The former industrial buildings transformed into places of consumption and business with a rapidly growing process in which de-industrialization continued to be effective and the geographical limits of the city unceasingly expanded (Keyder, 2000; Öncü and Weyland, 1997).

According to Güvenç and Işık (2002:213) after 1990s the intensified effects of globalization have become to be observed more obviously through its associations with local dynamics and revealing itself with an increasing urban segregation and tension. Keyder (2005) defines this process resembling the changes in other global cities with similar consequences without much difference and states that "*the economic and social polarisations these changes caused are those that are to be found in the rest of the world*" (Keyder, 2005:128). According to Keyder (2000:36) in the case of Istanbul, a part of the city either through formal or informal mechanisms benefits from the advantages of globalization and favourable consequences that could be observed in terms of new financial flows, consumption patterns and employment opportunities. But another part of the city is almost broken off from these developments. People living in this part try to continue their lives in the spaces where the spatial influence of globalization is not felt. Hence, Keyder (*ibid.*) defines Istanbul as a *segregated city*. Similarly, Güvenç and Işık (2002:213) emphasize that in this period, income distribution has gone worse, gaps between different income groups have widened, a significant fall became evident in the share of wages among total urban incomes while at the same time the share of wages in some high-income groups has increased. And additionally these groups tended to isolate

themselves from the rest of the society in spatial and social manners in a period promoted with the rise of fortified enclaves (Güvenç and Işık, 2002).

In this context, through investigating the recent period, it is possible to identify a more drastic picture about urban poverty and inequality. The indications of a significant decomposition and segregation seem to become concrete more than ever before. In a general look, on the one side there is an increasing relative wealth and conspicuous culture accompanied by a growing withdrawal and isolation from common urban life patterns while forming an alternative on the basis of a distinguished exclusiveness; on the other side, there is a worsening in life conditions with an attempt to generate new survival strategies in a situation where the possibilities for social integration and opportunities of the informal sector narrowed down and traditional social protection mechanisms lost their significance. From the aspect of the poor, these circumstances would indicate the emergence of a new form of poverty and its exclusionary consequences involving changes in labour market and livelihood as well as the spatial transformation of urban life (Wacquant, 2008:258; Buğra and Keyder, 2006:219).

### **The context of new poverty**

As a developing country, in Turkey, the context of new poverty with its exclusionary aspects have arisen as a fact mainly in the decade of the 1990s and due to its concern with social policy domain, it became a more debatable matter in the academic circles in the early 2000s. By some researchers the changing characteristics of urban poverty is evaluated as a development as a form of social exclusion referring to the recent debates arising in the EU in order to form a new social policy framework in the era of post-industrialism.

The fundamental consideration for the emergence of this debate is the rapid transformation occurred not only in the formal domain and institutions beginning from the 1980s, but more significantly in the informal sphere and its mechanisms. Until 1980s one of the main integration strategies were to find a stable work either in public sector providing a social protection through the formal system of social security. For those who were unable to obtain these opportunities attempt to take the advantages of informal mechanisms which were considerably maintained to be effective and generated a protective sphere until recently. These were out of the formal security system (or only could benefit through a family member working in the formal sector) since the formal social protection only covers the formal sector workers and is fragmented according to the status at work.

In the formal side what occurred in the post-1980 era was a significant decline in the formal employment opportunities, in line with the transformation of the economic structure. This development was accompanied by increasing outsourcing and subcontracting practices on the one hand, and privatization of state-owned enterprises on the other. The

sharp decline in the employment of formal sectors accommodating opportunities for a stable job with social security consequently resulted in the diminishment of an integration mechanism which also proves the fall of the formal sphere and its limited opportunities without being capable of encompassing large segments of the population (Buğra and Keyder, 2003). In the informal side since the formal employment and formal protection opportunities were in an inaccessible position the informal channels were constituted as an effective mechanism of integration and survival. As Buğra and Keyder state these mechanisms are faced with a heavy pressure under the consequences of economic, social and political developments "*which have been instrumental in undermining the ability of former institutions and relationships to provide social protection to the individual*" (Buğra and Keyder, 2005:21). These developments also constitute the underpinning factor in the emergence of new forms of poverty.

The genesis of the concept of new poverty in a way signifies a transformation in the traditional welfare regime of Turkey which somehow accomplished to maintain its effectiveness and validity until the end of 1990s (Buğra, 2001; 2003; 2007, Buğra and Keyder, 2003; 2005; 2006 and Keyder, 2005). Here, the term *welfare regime* is a conceptualization developed by Esping-Andersen (1990; 1999) as a more extensive approach in the provision of welfare services compared to *welfare state* which is defined as a system of stratification and as an active force in the ordering of social relations through social policies (Esping-Andersen, 1990). In the welfare regimes approach he defines three spheres that could have responsibility in the process of provision which are the (welfare) state, the market (particularly labour) and the family (and voluntary support). These elements and their priority alter according to the countries' welfare models and social structure. From this point, he defines three different types of welfare regimes all of which witnessed different economic, social, demographic changes in the last decade: a conservative model characterized by the dominance of the family and small family-based entrepreneurship or self-employment, division of labour according to employment status and a traditional state rather than a full-market orientation, that can be defined as the "*area of householding, kinship community and reciprocal support system*" (Mingione, 1996: 20-21); a liberal model characterized by a higher level of market orientation and dependence on waged employment (*proletarianized*), that can be defined as the "*area of individualistic competition and market sources*" (Mingione, 1996: 22) and a welfarist North-European model characterized by a state orientation in the development and provision of services, that can be defined as the "*area of the comprehensive welfare state and directs services supply*" (Mingione, 1996: 22). However the neglected heterogeneous features of this typology have attracted various criticisms, the liberal model has different aspects changing according to the country and furthermore the conservative model comprises considerable eternal differences which deserve to be classified separately.

At this juncture, one of the expressed claims was that the welfare regime of Southern European countries would constitute a distinct group from conservative model comprising specific features (Mingione, 1996; Ferrera, 1996; Buğra and Keyder, 2003) that are in resemblance with the Turkish welfare system. Karamessini (2007) indicates fundamental features of the Southern European welfare regime as follows:

(a) the family is the primary locus of solidarity whose role is both social and productive; (b) the male breadwinner enjoys high employment protection and job stability, while other labour force groups (women, young people) suffer from high unemployment and are disproportionately involved in irregular forms of work; (c) social security is based on occupational status and around the male breadwinner/female carer family model; (d) labour market segmentation creates gaps and inequalities in both employment and social protection; (e) jobs in the public sector or cash benefits are selectively distributed through clientelism and patronage networks; (f) welfare-state institutions are highly inefficient (Karamessini, 2007: 5).

Some studies accepting the existence of a distinctive "Southern European social model" refer that Turkey could also be evaluated as part of the southern model and this evaluation is backed up in some recent studies focusing on the Turkish case. For instance, the social assistance regimes of these countries (including Turkey) display similarities that all of them are in a way characterized by the existence of multiple categorical schemes and by the low level of benefits. However, this would be misleading. The mentioned Southern European countries are full members of the EU and in the last two decades have engaged in a process of catching up with the advanced Western European welfare states. During this period like other welfare regimes the elements of employment and welfare model of southern welfare regimes also faced with challenges and passed through a severe transformation process. Particularly after 1990s, as the social concerns within Europe region have begun to be expressed and as a consequence of variant social policy reforms, changes have been realized in the fields of industrial relations, wage-setting and employment protection in order to increase wage and labour flexibility and improve competitiveness in an open economic atmosphere.

In the case of Turkey, as Buğra and Keyder (2003: 18) state, social policy measures were truly limited to the benefits obtained through formal social security system and some other additional support mechanisms. However, poverty has always been one of the prominent problems in society. According to a report prepared by Buğra and Keyder for UNDP (2003), the reason that poverty was not evaluated as a problem requiring necessary political intervention in Turkey was a consequence of the welfare regime existing in Turkey comprising mechanisms preventing poverty to become persistent and turn into a form of social exclusion (Buğra and Keyder, 2003:

19). Hence, it would not be misleading to put forward that the welfare regime in Turkey owes this configuration to the informal networks and solidarity mechanisms that played a particular role in integration and coping with poverty. By this way participants of these networks, particularly immigrants, founded opportunities to incorporate to a growing informal labour market and more importantly to acquire an informally built dwelling through illegal land appropriation. These networks and strategies continued and widened with the rising acceleration of rural-to-urban migration and economic growth, additionally by providing immigrants opportunities for upward mobility and protective mechanisms for a relatively safety adaptation to the urban conditions (Işık and Pınarcioğlu, 2001; Keyder, 2005). During this period nearly half of the active labour force was employed in agriculture and this sector was supported by high state subsidies. This figure and the generated strategies of immigrants in order to survive in urban areas facilitated both the control of migration and the level of poverty at a certain level. However, particularly after the second half of the 1980s first signs of the decomposition of this scheme began to be revealed with undermining the position of the former institutions and mechanisms.

### **Conclusion: Sketches for a Darker Future**

The changing dynamics of poverty particularly in urban areas notify mainly a different scene that we are not familiar with. Putting it differently, common formal and informal mechanisms, implicitly a part of Turkish welfare regime, are not capable to cope with the new features of poverty as they mostly lost their effectiveness although there is not a significant change on the population living under the poverty line (Pınarcioğlu and Işık, 2008: 1367). However, poverty became a kind condition that could be related with the feeling of exclusion (Adaman and Ardiç, 2008: 57). We believe this course could not be reversed through charity or populist social assistance policies. At this point, it would be necessary to emphasize the different aspects constituting the context of a new form of poverty that could be summarized as follows:

*First*, except for a few cases, opportunities for informal housing and land appropriation significantly diminished in the new economic and urban structure. Additionally, the informal networks lost most of their effectiveness in order to generate opportunities in labour market participation and social protection mechanisms (Pınarcioğlu and Işık, 2008: 1364-1365). *Second*, the structural changes in the agricultural sector, and the demographic transitions over the last twenty years gave rise to a rapid increase in the working age population which creates new pressures in the labour market. According to a World Bank report, in Turkey the working age population grew by 23 million from 1980 to 2004; however, only 6 million new jobs were created (World Bank, 2006: 12). Considering the stable unemployment rates nearly in the same period, it is possible to expect that the gap between number of workers

and jobs is covered by the informal sector. However, there is an increasing tendency in the unemployment rates both for the formal and informal labour market after the crises in 2001 and the jobs created in the informal sector are no longer capable of absorbing the growing demand for work. *Third*, it should be noted that both the formal and informal labour market could not obtain the opportunities resembling the former periods. The formal labour market began to narrow down since the market-oriented development strategy was in practice from the beginning of 1980s and economic relations like outsourcing and subcontracting increasingly became more significant. These developments on the one hand rendered the separations between formal and informal labour market cloudier and on the other hand destroyed the hopes of informal workers pursuing the possibilities of participating formal labour market in the future in order to acquire a stable and secure job. Besides, the informal employment in the urban context is increasingly becoming the sphere of precarious jobs without any social security and sometimes with wages below the official minimum level. *Fourth*, labour force participation rates for women in urban Turkey seems to be quite low, however, the increasing feminization particularly in informal work force either in the form of home works or flexible and precarious jobs should not be overlooked, mostly in the conditions in which the male is unemployed. This development also reveals a change in the position of woman as another breadwinner in the family where regular family incomes have become increasingly rare. *Fifth*, in the demographic composition, the weight of 65+ age-groups is proportionally increasing but the labour market indicators display that dropping out from the labour force begins from the age of 55. This could give rise to the emergence of another risk group deprived of social protection where family solidarity no longer provides sufficient care and the scope of formal social protection system is limited with retirement pensions for the old workers of the formal sector. *Sixth*, the immigrants of the late 1980s displayed a different kind of typology, signifying a change in the nature of rural-urban migration. Their migration was not voluntary and the decisions to emigrate were depending on the tensions and conflicts in South East Anatolia (Şen, 2007; Yüksek, 2006). Besides the cultural and political tensions they had to face, their incorporation to informal networks in job finding and housing, additionally the mechanisms for adaptation and integration were truly limited.

These could be evaluated as the main characteristics of the factors which in some way constitute the features of a changing welfare regime and point out the domains where the new forms of poverty are possibly going to be manifested. Keyder (2005) summarizes these factors with emphasizing the features of the former period and the new circumstances generating a condition that can be defined as social exclusion:

Of all the non-formal dimensions of the welfare regime, the most effective during the entire developmentalist era had been the implicit

policy permitting land occupation and construction of informal housing for the new immigrants. In the particular case of Istanbul the acquiring of land and housing, and the networks accessed through this process, were crucial elements of social integration at economic, political and cultural levels. The emergence of social exclusion was, therefore, in large part due to the collapse of these mechanisms through changes that made access to land and housing difficult — both because of the new nature of the land market, and because of the changing composition of the new immigrants. Without the grounding accorded by being situated in the place of a socially constituted neighbourhood, the new immigrants could not count on the information, the mutuality and generalized reciprocity enjoyed during the process of urbanization in the earlier era (Keyder, 2005: 131).

In this respect, the concept of new poverty is defined as a consequence of the conditions that on a large extent destroy the possibilities of social integration (Buğra and Keyder, 2003: 23). Besides the conditions and causes which inevitably generate poverty, the subsequent years may witness the new circumstances of poverty with its exclusionary aspects that could not be easily eradicated. In the absence of former and informal mechanisms and in a condition where the elements of formal protection system are limited and insufficient, new vulnerable at-risk groups could gradually emerge.

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