



The Problems of Articulation of Migrants into the Urban Life and the Future of Cities in Developing Countries: The Turkish Case

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Recent developments arising as a result of globalization force countries that have not fully modernized to cope both with novel problems and preexisting ones that are complicated by each country's particular experience of globalization. While global cities – or world cities – struggle with increasing levels of foreign migration, domestic migration continues to constitute one of the major social problems faced by peripheral societies.

In this regard, the Turkish case is not an exception. The urban population has risen from 50% in 1980 to 66% in 2000. During the period between 1970 and 1990, population growth in settlements bigger than 10,000 residents increased 2.65 times more than national population growth. Between 1990 and 2000 the urban population increased 30%, whereas the national population increased only 12%. Despite decreasing population growth rates, the percentage of the population that is urban is expected to increase. Despite the expected decrease in the relative weight of rural migration in the urban population, it is safe to assume that domestic migration will continue to be an important problem for urban areas.

This presentation will analyze the outcomes of domestic migration in urban areas, focusing on housing problems as well as the process of articulation of the new population into the existing urban population. In the first part of my presentation, I will explain the various theoretical paradigms on migration and its effect on the urban landscape. This will be followed by an evaluation of the data collected in two empirical studies referring to the theoretical paradigms explained before. I would like to stress that these two examples of migration are intentionally selected due to their different geographical position, social structures, causes and social outcomes. Under this framework, I will evaluate the experience of two rather different stories of migration; firstly migrants from the town of Iskilip to Ankara, the capital city of Turkey and secondly, the forced migration in the 1990's from villages to urban areas in the east and southeast regions of Turkey. The final section will be a general evaluation.

2.0. A THEORETICAL PRELUDE

In the first part of my presentation I would like to focus on several macro-level paradigms on migration. Despite countless empirical studies on migration, there are a limited number of studies that focus on migration within a macro-level theoretical framework [An attempt has been made by the following studies: Lewis, W.A., (1956); Todaro, M.P. (1969); Arrighi, G., (1970); Portes, A., (1978); Standing, G., (1981); Browett, J., (1984); Ersoy, M. (1985); Massey D.S., (1993)]. No consensus has been reached to validate a paradigm on domestic and international migration.

I would like to begin with the modernization paradigm. With its popularity after World War II, the modernization school provided the ideological background for many studies on migration. Modernization theories assumed a structural functionalist approach to the problem while employing the tenets of neo-classical economics. According to this paradigm, an unregulated market would create the required balance within a system through laws of supply and demand. The supply of and demand for labor, hence its market value, is unequally distributed at national or international scale. Therefore, the modernization school expects a balancing movement of labor from areas of low labor demand to areas with a high demand for labor.

In this regard, migration is treated as a mechanism that assists the balancing of labor prices among different geographical areas. Migration from areas with lower levels of economic growth, such as small towns and rural areas, to those with higher levels of growth would increase efficiency by decreasing unemployment levels in the former while regulating the labor prices in the latter. Over time, the urban labor markets will become saturated and the migration flow will decrease. Thus the imbalance between different areas with regards to labor demand and supply would be remedied over time. According to this approach, as long as markets remain unregulated migration is regarded as a positive movement of balance.

The macro-level approach of the modernization paradigm is supported at the micro level with orthodox economic theories that emphasize the rational choice of individuals. According to these theories, individuals make rational decisions based on calculating the costs and benefits of migrating. The labor market conditions of the destination are an important parameter in the decision-making process. As long as the benefits of migration outweigh the costs, individuals will migrate and the whole process of migration becomes an aggregate of individual choices.

The “new migration economy” theory of 1980’s, which criticizes several assumptions and outcomes of neo-classical economics, can be also be included within the modernization school. New migration economics emphasizes that the decision of migrating is not necessarily an individual choice but rather a decision taken at family or household level. The decision is not based on mere maximization of income but aims at minimizing the risks caused by an ill-operating market mechanism. In this regard migration is treated as a strategy of the poor that decrease risks by dispersing them. Migration of one or two members of the family, who will create extra income for the rest, is preferred to the migration of the whole family. The spatial units that receive and send migration do not have to have an asymmetrical relation regarding labor processes and levels of employment. Therefore, policies that would remedy the unequal distribution of income and decrease social and economic risks would result in a decrease of migration.

The modernization paradigm thesis that migration is a balancing mechanism has been slowly but effectively criticized after the 1960’s. The notion of balance that is put forward by orthodox economics that praise capitalism has been criticized as a concept that conceals the inequalities created by the capitalist system. Critics have argued that the movement of capital and labor between regions and countries increase the inequalities of development among these regions rather than remedy them. In a similar fashion, it is argued that the mechanism of migration would reinforce similar inequalities among urban and rural zones. This approach, later named the “dependency school”, argued that the source of migration is found within the market mechanism itself, which operates in favor of developed metropolises. Unless regulated through state policies, the structural mechanisms of capitalism that create inequalities among nations and regions result in unbearable conditions. In brief, dependency school regarded the inequalities between different regions as a necessity for the production, reproduction and accumulation of capital.

Within this framework, I would like to focus briefly on two theories: dual labor market and world system. In contrast to the neo-classical approach, with its emphasis on individual choice, both of these theories focus on structural features and regard individuals as the carriers of these

features. According to the dual labor market theory what triggers migration is not the problems in the migration sending region, but the demand for labor in the industrialized societies. The social structures of these societies create flexible low paying, low status jobs without security or chance of advancement. The lack of demand for these jobs leaves low skilled migrant labor as the only solution as long as wage levels are kept at the same level.

On the other hand, world system theory examines this structural relationship at a global level. According to this theory, migration is caused by the entry of capitalist relations into the non-capitalist economies of peripheral countries. This process, which began under colonialism, is perpetuated by neo-colonial governments with the support of the comprador bourgeoisie and multi-national corporations. According to world systems theory, migration is the inevitable outcome of the destruction of existing structures by capitalist accumulation processes.

I do not want to discuss the critiques of modernization and dependency schools. However, I would like to focus on another paradigm, which aims to answer these critiques. Articulation of modes of production theory rose to prominence at the end of 1970's and early 1980's but ceased to attract attention due to postmodern philosophy and the debates on globalization. Contrary to the other two approaches, this theory did not limit its analysis solely to either domestic or international mechanisms. Instead, it focuses on new structures in peripheral countries that are shaped by the interaction of domestic and international forces. The emphasis is on the form and processes that rise out of the articulation of various modes of production. Thus, it criticizes the individual-oriented rational choice theories, while examining the effects of the articulation of the capitalist mode of production with existing modes of production on the producers in rural areas. In contemporary peripheral societies, where capitalism is the dominant mode of production, the rural population, without access to any means of production, is forced to migrate into urban areas where they more easily sell their only capital, their labor. In other words, rural to urban migration should be regarded as a mechanism of capitalism that ensures the material conditions of its expanded reproduction by destroying and dissecting already self-sufficient units of production.

Before proceeding to the second part of my presentation, I would like to briefly focus on another aspect of the aforementioned theories; namely, their views on the interaction of migrants with the urban life and the ways in which they are articulated to it. The modernization paradigm emphasizes the concept of integration. What is meant by integration is that modernization, or the process through which rural migrants climb the social ladder and become more like the urban bourgeoisie. Undoubtedly the nature and level of human capital brought by the rural migrants would have an effect on the character and speed of this process. Like migration itself, the problems created by migration are temporary, and as the system balances itself over time the migrants will become urbanized. It should be noted that the assimilative character of migration hardly bothered modernization theorists. On the contrary it was something that was desired.

The dependency paradigm, with its structuralist emphasis, totally opposes this approach. It argues that the modernization expectation of integration would not take place in peripheral social formations. According to the dependency school, the vast difference among different social groups in urban areas of peripheral nations is a product of the exploitation and dependency relationship between core and peripheral countries. The dual labor market is not a temporary phenomenon; on the contrary it is a structural outcome of capitalist relations and is inevitable for their survival. As long as capitalist relations exist, the gap between different social groups will widen and marginalization will spread to larger sections of the society as a permanent phenomenon. As in the case of European Union, the economic and social inequalities among the populations of member states, which are intensified by neo-liberal policies, cannot be remedied by national or supranational policies. The only difference is that the carriers of these mechanisms are no longer the citizens of EU but illegal migrant laborers [Lawrence, C., (2005)]. In this case, economic exploitation and social injustice is strengthened and perpetuated

by racism and xenophobia. In other words, as long as the existing mechanisms are not questioned, the process leads to marginalization rather than integration.

Articulation theories' approach and emphasis is different. Articulation theory focuses on the nature of the combination between migrants and the urban population, instead of employing macro-level totalizing assumptions. It is evident that this interaction would not be easy since each group will try to transform the other. Although the urban culture and ideology will be dominant in this new union, the ideological and economic values that migrants bring with them will persist, resulting in a new urban structure out of the interaction and articulation among these social groups. The new urban structure will be a synthesis that includes both elements albeit at different levels and weight. I believe that examining migration and the experiences of migrants in urban areas through this lens would prove to be fruitful for the development of a more comprehensive theoretical framework.

3.0. A STORY OF TWO EMPIRICAL STUDIES

After describing the perspectives of different paradigms on the process of articulation of migrant populations we can analyze the empirical findings within this framework. In the second and third parts of my presentation I would like to evaluate the validity of the aforementioned theories by examining the outcomes of recent studies on two very different migration processes.

The first study I would like to analyze focuses on the migrants from the small town of Iskilip and its surrounding villages in the province of Corum, who migrated to Ankara over the last fifty years. This study is in the only one in Turkey that has followed the same migrants over an extended time period [Such follow-up studies are quite rare in migration studies. See Pooley, C.G. ve Whyte, D. (1990) for an evaluation]. Here I will base my analysis on the findings of the most recent of a series of interviews carried out in 1970 [Kapil, İ., Gençağa, H. (1972)], 1980-1981 [Ersoy, M. (1985)] and 2003 [Ersoy, M. ve Balaban, O. (2005)], while citing the findings of the first two.

In the 2003, the study included 307 respondents. About half (44%) of the subjects migrated to Ankara before 1980 and the other half (56%) migrated after 1980. The average length of time this first group had been living in the city is 36 years while those in the second group averaged 13 years in Ankara. 73% of all subjects migrated from the town of Iskilip, while the rest are migrants from the surrounding villages. It is important to note that the socio-economic data regarding these groups are quite different from each other. On average migrants from the town of Iskilip have higher levels of human capital indicators such as education, income and profession.

At a glance, the data collected contradicts modernization theory assumptions since the migrants do not necessarily represent a pool of low skilled laborers. Also, other studies on the Turkish experience of migration demonstrated a positive correlation between level of education and tendency to migrate. Supporting these findings, the majority of the subjects interviewed for our research had higher level of education than Ankara's or the whole country's average education levels. Fifty-five percent of the respondents have achieved a middle school education or higher.

Another point of inquiry in migration research is a comparison of migrants' incomes to the average income of those living in their region of origin. In this regard 70 % of our subject migrants have income average or higher than average income levels for their hometown. The findings based on the town of Iskilip, reveals that tendency to migrate is higher among the educated middle classes.

When we look at the current occupations of Iskilip migrants in Ankara we find that 25% of them working in qualified jobs. (defined by TUIK –Turkish Statistical Institute- as scientific and

technical staff, entrepreneurs, directors and high level administrators) This percentage is higher than the average of both Ankara and Iskilip.

The aforementioned indicators tend to increase with the number of years spent in Ankara and also tend to be higher among migrants from Iskilip compared with migrants from the villages. On the other hand migrants from Iskilip, who surpass the Ankara average in education and economic indicators, tend to experience a cultural lag with regards to the people they interact in Ankara and their relations with their relatives in Iskilip. They tend to retain their social and cultural ties with their fellow townsmen.

In brief, the results of this research demonstrate that migrants from Iskilip tend to have higher than average levels in several indicators compared to averages in their town of origin. In this regard, supporting the arguments of dependency school, migration does not balance the inequalities among different regions but rather reinforces the underdevelopment of the town of origin by eliminating the skilled labor.

On the other hand, according to the data, migrants from Iskilip do not experience marginalization in Ankara – if one disregards the effects of cultural lag - since their levels of education, status of occupation, income and familial structures are not far from average for the Ankara population. Moreover, in some instances they hold higher levels of human capital than the Ankara average and they do not, therefore, experience severe problems of articulation. These findings support the optimistic expectations of the modernization school, while the perseverance of strong cultural ties with their home town support the thesis of articulation school.

Experiences of housing, neighborhood, and spatial activity in urban zones are important indicators for both social mobility and integration models. The first and most important desire of migrants in urban areas tends to be ownership of a house. This tendency is quite understandable in a country with a social welfare system that is poor or hard to access. House ownership enables the transfer of funds from one area or consumption to others, and modifications to the buildings in shantytown areas provide another source of income for the family in the form of rent. Moreover, the urban areas slowly expand to the outskirts, where shantytowns are located, increasing property values dramatically. Therefore, home ownership also enables the owners to benefit from rent speculation.

Several studies on Turkey have argued that, since the majority of shantytown residents are migrants, the shantytown population is representative of the migrant population in urban zones [Alpar, İ., Yener, S., (1991)]. However, several scholars have argued that this generalization is not necessarily valid for the whole migrant population. As an example Kartal, [Kartal, K. (1978)] in his research on migrants from Cankiri, demonstrated that migrants who increase in their income over years tend to prefer middle class areas. Another finding of this research demonstrated a positive correlation between house ownership and time spent in urban areas.

Our research in 1980 showed that 40% of Iskilip migrants owned houses in Ankara. This number increased to 65% in 2003. About 75% of the subjects lived in apartment buildings. However this percentage changes dramatically considering the number of years migrants have spent in Ankara; as time spent in the city increased the chance that the respondent owned a house or lived in higher quality housing, according to the data.

Both the 1980 and 2003 data also demonstrates that as the years spent in the city increases, so does the chance that migrants live in the developed parts of the city. According to the 1980 data, only 8% of initial houses of respondents who migrated before 1951 was in developed areas, while by 2003, 63% of these same migrants resided in their third house, now in a developed area. The percentage of migrants who choose their first house in developed areas of the city also increased over time. While it was only 8% among the migrants before 1951, after the 1970's this number grew to 42%. 2003 data supports the continuation of this trend. While 57% of the

migrants from Iskilip had their first houses in undeveloped areas, this number drops to 29% in their current houses. As the amount of time spent in the city increases, the tendency to move to the developed areas with apartment buildings increase among migrants [Ersoy, M., 1994].

In addition, the amount of time spent in the city increases the chances of living in better housing. While only 20% percent of Iskilip migrants had electricity and water in their houses in 1970, this number increased to 93% in 1980 for the same group. By the 2003 study, all of the houses of respondents had have electricity and water. Moreover, more than half of the houses had central heating.

Although all of these indicators support the optimistic projections of modernization theory, the figures change drastically when groups with different socio-economic backgrounds from the Iskilip town and villages are compared to each other. In terms of quality of first and last housing, neighborhood, house ownership and number of people per room, migrants from villages are in worse condition than migrants from the town. It took a longer time for migrants from the villages to enjoy the same status with migrants from the town. In other words, a total analysis and an analysis based on different socio-economic clusters reveal two different stories. These findings are in line with the theses of articulation theory and similar to those of our second research on forced migration.

The second study that I would like to mention was carried out in 2003 by a group of researchers from METU under the project titled “Return to Village Rehabilitation,” funded by the GAP – Southeastern Anatolia Development Project- administration [Ersoy, M. (2003), Keskinok, H.Ç. (2006)]. For this study we interviewed 1,097 heads of households among 400.000 villagers who are living in 54.000 households. The population includes the inhabitants of 820 villages and 2345 hamlets in 11 provinces. They were forced to migrate and leave their villages due to security reasons. Based on estimates, the sample of this research represents between 1-2 percent –around 9-10.000 people- of the whole population that were subjected to forced migration.

Forty percent of respondents, most of who migrated between the years 1990-1995, are illiterate. The majority of them are only elementary school graduates, and the average household size is twelve. According to the data, 21% of the home villages of the migrants do not have an elementary school, while 84% do not have an infirmary. Half of the villages either have only one schoolteacher or none at all. Eighty-eight percent of the villages do not have any medical personnel, and thirteen percent of the villages do have an infirmary but lack any personnel.

Eighty-four percent of the villages did have electricity and most of them had running water before the migration. Fifteen villages (5%) did not have any roads or were accessible only by a simple pathway. While two out of three villages were connected to the center by stabilized roads, only seven (2.4%) of them have built asphalt roads. In brief, while most of the villages had sufficient technical infrastructure yet most of them lacked basic social infrastructure.

Sixteen percent of the migrants expressed that they had no stable source of income in their home villages. Of the migrants who were farmers before migration, 57% had owned less than 10 acres of land, and three out of four had landholdings smaller than 25 acres. Most of the producers (90%) farmed grains, and the average number of cattle per household was thirteen.

Twenty-seven percent of the houses in the villages had three rooms. Only 1.7% had running water within the house, only 9.2% had indoor toilettes, and only 4.6% had telephones. In brief, considering the size of households, it is evident that most of the houses that were left behind were lacked basic comforts.

As it will be observed, the experiences of articulation into urban life of these migrants, who had lived in the city for more than 10 years, has been quite different from the experiences of Iskilip migrants. Although the average household population decreased from twelve to nine in the city,

as expected by urbanization literature, it is hard to talk about any improvement in the economic conditions of the migrants.

The subjects were asked for the number of people in their household who can work and the actual number of those who work; 141 (17%) households did not have anybody who was working, and therefore had no household income. Furthermore, 72% of the households did not have regular jobs or income. The percentage of migrants who had regular income with jobs was only 7%.

When the subjects were asked about their experiences upon arriving in the city, 82% said that they either could not find a job or had to work in seasonal irregular jobs. In addition, 83% of the subjects reported that they still had no permanent jobs. Among the families, who reported to have a regular monthly income, three out of four families had an income of less than 40% of the official minimum wage. This is not surprising that when the position of migrants within the labor market is considered. This data also demonstrates the fact that migrants constitute a new class of urban poor, thus intensifying already existing urban poverty.

About half of the subjects reported to have no social security, while among those who had social security, 43.4% had a green card which is given to the poorest people by the State. Thus, migration created a flow of uneducated, unskilled labor, with low human capital and no place in the labor market into the urban center, increasing urban poverty to unbearable levels. About 80% of the migrants, including the ones without an income, struggle to survive extremely harsh conditions in the city.

Forty-five percent of the heads of households owned the house they are living in. Thirty-seven percent of these houses are in shantytowns. However, the houses those are not in shantytowns also poorly constructed and in degraded neighborhoods. The houses owned in the city, however, are not smaller than the houses left in the villages. This can be regarded as an improvement, considering the fact that average household population decreased in the city. Nevertheless, it has been observed that ten people were still occupying two-room houses and in most cases adults and children had to share the same room.

Regarding electricity and water, household standards improved compared to those in the villages. All of the houses had electricity and the use of illegal electricity was common. Ninety-one percent of the houses were connected to the city's water system, three out of four had sewage, and 90% of the houses were connected to services by city roads.

In brief, in terms of household comfort and environmental services, city houses prove to an improvement over the village houses. However, the quality of the services accessed in the city is quite low; with occasional blackouts and deteriorated roads. The neighborhoods constitute the major problematic areas of the city. The quality of space is very low in comparison to the other parts of the city. Coupled with the high spread unemployment, these zones are bound to transform into new slums in the city.

Supporting the new migration economy theses, these migrants tend to pursue strategies of risk dispersion and minimization when presented with an opportunity to return to their villages. According to this strategy, elder members of the family return to their villages whereas the younger members stay in the city to provide a second source of income to the whole family.

At this stage, forced migration becomes an urban problem as much as a rural problem. Since the subject population has been living in urban areas for more than ten years, owning houses in the cities, with a significant number of them having urban jobs. It is obvious that this process is a problematic one. Compared to the rest of the city the migrant populations have major problems with regards to their standard of living and quality of jobs. Although the migrant population had lost its rural quality it is hard to argue that they have acquired an urban character. At this point

they represent a group in absolute poverty. The lack of job opportunities in the city, coupled with the lack of professional skills, transformed migrants into the most problematic section of the urban population.

4.0. CONCLUSION

As seen from the data presented above; the subjects of two migration processes -- which are different from each other in terms of magnitude, conditions, causes and outcomes -- articulate into city life in different ways. We encounter a picture that can neither fit into the optimistic expectations of the modernization school nor into the empirically supported pessimism of the dependency school. While migrants from Iskilip town center experienced a quite successful process of articulation in Ankara, the same cannot be said for the migrants from Iskilip villages or forced migrants from eastern and southeastern Anatolia. Similarly, dependency school's expectation that migrants will be marginalized is not true for the migrants from Iskilip town. In other words, theories that treat the migrant population as homogenous masses without examining their original class positions, fail to explain and understand the diversity of the real experience of migration.

In this regard, the articulation of modes of production approach should be considered as an approach that solely focuses on the structural articulation of different modes of production. This same approach can be employed to analyze the synthesis arising out of the interaction between two or more social classes or strata with different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. The relation and interaction of two different groups includes the struggle of each groups to impose its own social, economic and cultural values. Over time, this interaction can result in integration, separation, assimilation or marginalization.

In this regard, the cases of Iskilip and the forced migration from the east and southeast are valuable examples. Migrants from the Iskilip town center employ their existing economic and cultural capitals to articulate themselves into the dominant socio-economic structures of the new habitus. Whereas, migrant from the villages of Iskilip and the forced migrants in the east and southeast, are articulated into the marginal sections of the city population due to the lack of necessary human capital.

Thus it is important to focus not only on the difficulties that arise with migration to urban areas, but on the possible opportunities as well. It is problematic to assume outcomes without examining the economic and cultural capitals brought by the migrants. In this regard "migrant" as a category in itself can be abandoned altogether. The category of "migrant," in this form, attributes too much importance to spatial movement, leading to a type of fetishism of space. The socio-economic groups into which the migrant will be articulated is more important in this regard than the sole act of migration.

On the other hand, regardless of its nature, the articulation of a new population into an existing one brings change to the existing structure based on a synthesis. The outcome is a dynamic entity that is shaped by the interaction of different groups and reproduces itself. Depending on the nature of articulated groups, various syntheses and forms of struggle will result. Thus, the outcomes will not be the homogenous ones predicted by utilizing generalizations. Therefore, in shaping the future of cities in developing countries, socio-economic and cultural capital brought by the migrants becomes determinant. Governments should intensify their efforts to develop the most suitable public policies to increase the capital stocks of the inhabitants of out-migration prone settlements in order to protect the future of big cities.

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