

The Political Economy of Tenancy: A Review of the Housing Problem in Türkiye

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Abstract

This study examines residential tenancy in Türkiye from historical, legal, and political economy perspectives. It conceptualizes housing not merely as a physical space that fulfils the need for shelter, but as a social domain shaped by property relations, the rental market, financing models, social policy instruments, and social inequalities. To this end, the study investigates the economic value of housing, the process of financialization, the functioning of the rental market, rent control, social housing policies, housing finance, and the changing structure of tenancy in Türkiye through the existing literature. The study traces the historical trajectory of tenancy from waqf properties and the icâreteyn system in the Ottoman period to rent regulation, informal housing, the build-and-sell model, mass housing, and the contemporary private rental market in the Republican period. It also analyzes the provisions of the Turkish Code of Obligations concerning residential and roofed workplace leases in terms of the legal balance between tenants and landlords. The study is designed as a narrative literature review. The study's main conclusion is that tenancy in Türkiye cannot be regarded as a temporary housing status. Rather, it constitutes a structural problem that must be considered in relation to income distribution, housing supply, the credit system, the shortage of social rental housing, rising rents, and security of tenure.

Keywords

Residential Tenancy, Housing Problem, Financialization of Housing, Rent Control, Social Housing

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