

A must-read for every socialist

Mehring Yayınları publishes *The Historical and International Foundations of the Socialist Equality Party – the Fourth International*

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12 February 2026

We are delighted to announce that *The Historical and International Foundations of the Socialist Equality Party – the Fourth International* has recently been published by Mehring Yayınları. We encourage all readers of the *World Socialist Web Site* to purchase the book, which can be accessed [here](#).

This document, discussed and unanimously adopted at the founding congress of the Socialist Equality Party held on June 13–15, 2025, is the product not only of the decades-long struggle of Trotskyists in Türkiye, but also of their comrades in the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). It traces the important historical events and political experiences of the working class and the Marxist-Trotskyist movement, which stretch back over a century, and lays out the theoretical and political foundations of the struggle for socialism.

Today's world is marked by wars of aggression, neo-colonialism, genocide, dictatorship, fascism, social inequality, and capitalist attacks on the working class, all characterised by the volcanic eruption of US imperialism. Ultimately, all of these phenomena, stemming from the contradictions of the capitalist system, represent the resurgence of the major unresolved problems of the past century in an even more violent form. Every worker, intellectual, and young person seeking a solution to these problems must learn the necessary lessons from the historical experience of the Marxist movement and participate in the construction of a revolutionary leadership.

The 1917 October Revolution and Leon Trotsky's

Theory of Permanent Revolution, which guided it, are of particularly critical importance. *The Foundations* offers a unique insight into the connection between the 1917 October Revolution, the War of National Liberation in Anatolia (1919–1922), and the founding of modern Türkiye. This is critical not only for understanding the past century but also for understanding the present.

As stated in the document, “the Turkish bourgeoisie, by its very nature, was incapable of fulfilling the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution. It was not possible for this class to achieve full independence from imperialism, establish a democratic regime, provide a radical solution to the land question to the detriment of feudalism, and resolve the Kurdish question and other minority problems. Nor could they recognise the basic rights of the working class, such as the right to organise, engage in collective bargaining, and strike.”

These are, to a significant extent, among the main problems still facing the working class today. Türkiye's “democratic history” is riddled with anti-working-class laws; the denial of the rights of minorities, the Kurds, and the Alawites; coups and police-state practices. Türkiye's ruling class, like its counterparts around the world, is rapidly moving towards authoritarian rule as a whole. Attempts to “solve” the Kurdish question based on the interests of the Turkish and Kurdish bourgeoisie and subordinated to imperialism, far from fulfilling aspirations for peace and democracy, are leading to new disasters. While the living standards of the working masses decline and

social inequality grows, the interests of a handful of capitalist oligarchs dominate the economy and politics.

The Foundations, like its counterparts around the world, shows that the outcome of modern Türkiye's history requires the working class to secure its political and organisational independence from all representatives of the ruling class and to mobilise on the basis of an international socialist programme in the struggle for democracy and social equality. This means breaking away not only from pro-imperialist, capitalist "opposition" parties, but also from the various middle-class "left" political tendencies that line up behind them and prevent the development of a truly independent revolutionary alternative.

In this context, the document comprehensively addresses the shift of "left" politics, which developed under the influence of Stalinism in Türkiye from the mid-1920s onwards, towards Kemalism; the petty-bourgeois radicalism that emerged from the late 1960s onwards; and the historical role of Kurdish nationalism. It establishes an independent Trotskyist perspective.

One of the document's strongest aspects lies in its placing these historical and political experiences within an international context. This strong commitment to Marxist proletarian internationalism fundamentally distinguishes the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi from countless petty-bourgeois tendencies with a nationalist programme and orientation.

Topics discussed in detail in *The Foundations* include: the approach of the Communist International, led by Vladimir Lenin and Trotsky, to the issue of oppressed nationalities and colonies; the founding of the Turkish Communist Party (TKP) in 1920, its policy during the years of the national liberation war, and its subsequent evolution under the influence of the Stalinist theories of "socialism in one country" and "staged revolution"; the destructive role played by Stalinism, Maoism, petty-bourgeois radicalism, and Pabloism in the student and worker movements that developed in the 1960s and 70s; the globalisation of production and the dissolution of the USSR; and the ICFI's struggle for historical truth, as well as the Marxist revolutionary opposition to the pro-imperialist and middle-class identity politics of the pseudo-left today.

The Foundations is proof of the fact that the world Trotskyist movement, led today by the International

Committee of the Fourth International, represents the political continuity of the Marxist movement.

The document details the founding of the Left Opposition under Trotsky's leadership in response to the usurpation of power in the Soviet Union by the Stalinist bureaucracy; the Chinese Revolution of 1925–27; the call in 1933 to establish the Fourth International in response to the Comintern's bankruptcy, which paved the way for the Nazis to come to power; the development of liquidationist Pabloite revisionism within the Fourth International, founded under Trotsky's leadership in 1938; and the founding of the ICFI in 1953 to defend Trotskyist principles; as well as the victory of the orthodox Trotskyists and their subsequent achievements following the split between the ICFI and the Workers' Revolutionary Party (WRP) in Britain in 1985.

The Foundations powerfully links this history with the struggle for the development of Trotskyism in Türkiye and explains the decisive role played by Halil Çelik, who passed away untimely on December 31, 2018, in laying the theoretical and political foundations of the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi.

The following sentences from the document summarise its purpose: "The central issue is to construct a revolutionary leadership to raise the consciousness of the working class to its international and historic tasks. Only a party based on the most advanced scientific theory that has drawn the necessary lessons of the previous strategic experiences of the international working class is capable of fulfilling that role."

We call on workers, intellectuals, and youth seeking a revolutionary way out of the barbarism into which capitalism has plunged humanity to purchase this critical document, study it carefully, and join the Sosyalist E?itlik Partisi.



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