

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF TURKEY/MARXIST-LENINIST

PERIÓDICO MURAL



Prairie Fire Publishing

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<https://prairiefirepublishing.com/>

1st Edition

978-1-300-18338-9



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I.

PREFACE

The work that we publish below was first presented in *Periódico Mural* within a series of four installments entitled “Notes on the History of the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist (TKP/ML)”¹ as a contribution to the dissemination and defense of the People’s War in Turkey, which is about to turn 53 years old, going through various stages in its development facing the bloody machinery of the Old State.

In this regard, we consider the following clarification appropriate: this essay is merely an internationalist contribution. It is not the official, nor is it a complete, history of the TKP/ML. This task is the reserved right of the Turkish comrades who, at great expense, have dared to scale the heights, firmly assuming the following:

¹The four installments were published weekly during the month of October 2023 by *Periódico Mural*, a popular and democratic press, www.muralperiodico.wordpress.com.

He who is not afraid of being cut into a thousand pieces, dares to dismantle the emperor.²

Today, we present this essay in print so that the working-class and the popular masses of our country may learn a little more about the history of the TKP/ML, the organized vanguard of the Turkish proletariat waging People's War armed with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, an all-powerful science because it is true.

Periódico Mural
2025

²Mao Zedong, "Speech at the National Conference of the Communist Party of China on Propaganda Work," March 12, 1957.

II.

THE FOUNDING OF THE PARTY BY MUSTAFA SUPHI AND ITS RECONSTITUTION BY IBRAHIM KAYPAKKAYA

In 1920, Mustafa Suphi founded the Communist Party of Turkey (TKP) in Baku with the support of the USSR. The Party was part of the Communist International, but a year after its founding, Mustafa Suphi and the other members of the Central Committee were assassinated. The leadership that succeeded them developed an opportunist and revisionist line.

For the next 50 years, the Turkish proletariat and the popular struggles of the peoples in Turkey had no communist leadership. The TKP maintained a Kemalist³

³Kemal Atatürk, founder of the modern Turkish State, his politics were nationalist and reactionary, his thoughts are the basis of fascism in Turkey.

position against the Kurdish question and did not understand the Kurdish struggle as part of a revolution. With this limitation, the TKP did not support the Kurdish people, but rather the government against the Kurdish uprising.

Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, also affectionately known as “Ibo,” was the leader of the process for the reconstruction of the Communist Party and the initiation of the People’s War in Turkey. He founded the TKP/ML on April 24th, 1972. The TKP/ML is the successor to Musta Suphi’s TKP. The same year of its formation, the Party launched the People’s War. A year later, Comrade Kaypakkaya paid for this success of the working-class with his life. After torture in prison, Kaypakkaya was assassinated by fascist soldiers on May 18th in the Diyarbakir military prison. But his loss was only physical, for his thought lives on and radiates the path of the Turkish revolution. Through his writings, Kaypakkaya shaped this path of revolution; he broke with Kemalism and defended the Kurdish people’s right to self-determination in his work *The Kurdish Question in Turkey*. The TKP/ML and Kaypakkaya have always

maintained the path of armed struggle; the Party has never degenerated into an electoral stance.

In the midst of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Communist Parties and leaders of the stature of Chairman Gonzalo, Charu Majumdar, José Sison, and Ibrahim Kaypakkaya were formed all over the world. They all followed Chairman Mao in his struggle against the revisionism of the social-imperialist USSR. Ibrahim Kaypakkaya also broke with the pacifism of the revisionists in Turkey.

His life and deeds are closely linked to his class origins. He was the son of a poor peasant family in Çorum, a province in northern Turkey. Growing up in rural poverty deepened his connection to the peasantry and the struggle for land. In the mid-1970s, Ibo studied at Istanbul University and became part of the student movement.

By then, Yankee imperialism and other powers had penetrated the country with their military bases. The United States' Cold War plan against the social-imperialist

USSR was to develop a military base with nuclear weapons in Turkey, which is NATO's southern border. A large popular resistance developed in parallel against this plan. The student movement in Istanbul fought against the U.S. naval fleet base. The anti-imperialist struggle developed at a time of economic crisis, allowing the student movement to unite with the workers' movement and the struggles of poor peasants. Occupations of universities, factories, and farms took place throughout the country; the masses rebelled against the tyrants. Ibrahim Kaypakkaya played an active role in this entire process. He managed to organize and mobilize young students and founded their first organization, "Fikir Kulüp,"⁴ which functioned as a student debate organization.

The "Fikir Kulüps" carried out important work in the distribution of revolutionary ideas, and Kaypakkaya took advantage of this to strengthen the student organization.

⁴Debate clubs were very popular in the student movement and were part of a federation. At its first Congress, Kaypakayya initiated a two-line struggle against the pacifist and reformist positions within it.

At the same time, he wrote for newspapers such as *Türk Solu Dergisi*⁵ and developed his ideas. During this time, the magazine was the center of the student movement at the university.

Before founding the TKP/ML, Ibo was part of several revisionist parties such as the TİİKP.⁶ This allowed him to develop his Marxist positions in the struggle against revisionism. His work *The Origin and Development of the Differences Between Ourselves and Şafak Revisionism: A General Critique of the TİİKP* is important for understanding his ideological and political development.

At the same time as the founding of the TKP/ML, several armed forces were formed. Many of these forces no longer exist today or are in other forms. Despite all the difficulties, the TKP/ML and its army, the TIKKO,⁷ remain a steadfast force to this day.

⁵Turkish left-wing magazine. At the time, it was an important progressive publication.

⁶Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Party of Turkey.

⁷Liberation Army of the Workers and Peasants of Turkey. — PFP