The France of Macron, the 'New' Neoliberal Reforms and the Left
Analyses and Reportbacks from the 2017 Election
Stefan Kipfer • Nathan Rao

 The 2017 Presidential and Parliamentary elections produced a paradoxical result: the victory of a youngish Emmanuel Macron who is a pure product of the discredited social democratic François Hollande presidency (as well as the typical institutions of the French ruling class) and a leader of a brand-new political formation (La République en Marche) that managed to marginalize the parties (the Républicains and the Parti Socialiste) that have, under different names, governed France since 1958. Macron's victory blocked the advances of the neo-fascist Front National, the President of which, Marine Le Pen, garnered a record 10.5 million votes in the Presidential election. In turn, Macron threatens to deepen the very conditions that have led to the recurrent surge of neo-fascist politics in France. He wants to radicalize the policies of the Hollande government by making the state of emergency a permanent feature of French law, implementing a new set of neoliberal labour reforms, entrenching austerity to shrink public sector employment and deconstructing the French welfare state all the while defending a central and aggressive role for the French military sector Euro-American imperialism. A force of 'continuity-in-discontinuity', Macron's En Marche thus expresses the ongoing crisis of rule in France as well as the wider systemic uncertainties about French capitalism and the future of the European Union. What are the political implications of the French elections for the future of left and popular forces in France?

Stefan Kipfer just returned from a sabbatical year in France doing research on fascism and anti-fascism.

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