In March 1871, in the aftermath of France’s defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, ordinary Parisians rose up and took control of their city for themselves. The Paris Commune only lasted for a little over two months, but during that time the Communards enacted a remarkable number of far-reaching democratic measures.

The Commune was eventually drowned in blood by the old regime, but it had an enormous impact on the international socialist and working-class movement. Marx wrote The Civil War in France praising the Commune’s achievements, which remained inspirational for generations of later socialists. On its 150th anniversary, join us for a discussion of the Commune’s accomplishments and weaknesses, and the lessons it holds for the radical left today.

Speakers:
Gilbert Achcar teaches at SOAS, University of London. He is the author of many books and a contributor to many publications. He wrote the chapter on the Paris Commune in Revolutions (Haymarket, 2020).

Carolyn J. Eichner is a feminist historian at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and author of the forthcoming The Paris Commune: A Brief History (Rutgers, 2021) and Feminism’s Empire (Cornell, 2022). Her book, Surmounting the Barricades: Women in the Paris Commune (Indiana, 2004), has been translated as Franchir les barricades: les femmes dans la Commune de Paris (Editions de la Sorbonne, 2020).

Phil Gasper is co-editor of New Politics and a member of the Tempest Collective. He is the editor of an annotated edition of The Communist Manifesto (Haymarket, 2005) and of Imperialism and War: Classic Writings by V.I. Lenin and Nikolai Bukharin (Haymarket, 2017).


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