

Reading Capital  
*The Complete  
Edition*

Louis Althusser,  
Étienne Balibar,  
Roger Establet,  
Pierre Macherey  
and Jacques  
Rancière

# Reading Capital: The Complete Edition

By Louis Althusser

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Originally published in 1965, *Reading Capital* is a landmark of French thought and radical theory, reconstructing Western Marxism from its foundations. Louis Althusser, the French Marxist philosopher, maintained that Marx's project could only be revived if its scientific and revolutionary novelty was thoroughly divested of all traces of humanism, idealism, Hegelianism and historicism. In order to complete this critical rereading, Althusser and his students at the École normale supérieure ran a seminar on *Capital*, re-examining its arguments, strengths and weaknesses in detail, and it was out of those discussions that this book was born.

Previously only available in English in highly abridged form, this edition, appearing fifty years after its original publication in France, restores chapters by Roger Establet, Pierre Macherey and Jacques Rancière. It includes a major new introduction by Étienne Balibar.

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### Review

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—**Fredric Jameson**

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—**Michael Hardt, co-author of the *Empire* trilogy**

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### Language Notes

Text: English, French (translation)

### About the Author

**Louis Althusser** (1918–90) taught philosophy for many years at the École normale supérieure in Paris. He was a leading intellectual in the French Communist Party.

**Étienne Balibar** is Anniversary Chair at Kingston University and Professor Emeritus at the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense.

**Jacques Rancière** is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Paris VIII.

**Pierre Macherey** is Emeritus Professor at the University of Lille III.

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