

Reading Capital Louis Althusser

First published in 1987, Althusser, *The Detour of Theory* was widely received as the fullest account of its subject to date. Drawing on a wide range of hitherto untranslated material, it examined the political and intellectual contexts of Althusser's 'return to Marx' in the mid-1960s and proclaimed a 'crisis of Marxism'. It concluded with a balance-sheet of Althusser's contribution to historical materialism. In this second edition, Gregory Elliott has added a substantial postscript in which he surveys the posthumous edition of the French philosopher's work.

In 1980, at the end of the most intensely political period of his work and life, Louis Althusser penned *Philosophy for Non-philosophers*. Available here for the first time in English, *Philosophy for Non-philosophers* constitutes a rigorous and engaged attempt to address a wide reading public unfamiliar with Althusser's project. As such, the work is a concentration of the most fundamental theses of Althusser's own ideas, and presents a synthesis of his sprawling and disparate philosophical and political writings. Nowhere else does Althusser push the distinction between philosophy and other disciplines as far, or develop in such detail the concept of 'practice'. Rather than a work of 'popular philosophy', *Philosophy for Non-philosophers* is a continuation and conglomeration of Althusser's thought; a thought whose radicality is still perceptible in those that have followed since. *Philosophy for Non-philosophers* thus provides a vivid encapsulation of Althusser's seminal influence on the leading thinkers of today, including Rancière, Badiou, Balibar, and Žižek.

Jacques Rancière's first major work, *Althusser's Lesson* appeared in 1974, just as the energies of May 68 were losing ground to the calls for a return to order. Rancière's analysis of Althusserian Marxism unfolds against this background: what is the relationship between the return to order and the enthusiasm which greeted the publication of Althusser's *Reply to John Lewis* in 1973? How to explain the rehabilitation of a philosophy that had been declared 'dead and buried on the barricades of May 68'? What had changed? The answer to this question takes the form of a genealogy of Althusserianism that is, simultaneously, an account of the emergence of militant student movements in the '60s, of the arrival of Maoism in France, and of how May 68 rearranged all the pieces anew. Encompassing the book's distinctive combination of theoretical analysis and historical description is a question that has guided Rancière's thought ever since: how do theories of subversion become the rationale for order?

Throughout the course of the twentieth century communism has enjoyed direct competition with all other governmental and economic systems. Often, communist countries produced their own special brand of party intellectual. These figures rightly occupied their place within their own national context and within the context of the International. Some communist intellectuals, through the high level of erudition exhibited in their writing, have received a wider reception, despite their direct linkage to party politics e.g. Antonio Gramsci, Georg Lukacs, and, Victor Serge are good examples. After 1956, when Khrushchev exposed Stalin's atrocities to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and, as a result, to the entire world, Marxist philosophy was widely discredited. It had been assumed that Stalin's excesses were somehow encouraged or supported through Marx's thought. When, in the mid 1960s, Louis Althusser first offered his re-readings of Marx's philosophy it, and communist political practice, were in ruin. However Althusser was in a unique cultural and historical position. Thinking and writing concomitant with the structuralists and poststructuralists in France and also having access to certain theoretical tools while, simultaneously, committing himself entirely to Marxist thought-Althusser was, conceivably the last of his tradition. He was a Marxist philosopher who, unlike Sartre at the end of his life, did not abandon communism to, for instance existentialism. In *Louis Althusser and the Traditions of French Marxism* William Lewis gives readers a striking example of intellectual biography and critical theory. His approach, considering the work and life of Althusser within French Marxism and French intellectual culture, fills a void in contemporary scholarship. But, much more importantly, Lewis is able to show how Althusser's thought is the result of and a response to specific French intellectual and political traditions of reading Marx. It is through this combination of concerns that *Louis Althusser and the Traditions of French Marxism* offers us a contemporary and poignant Althusser whose ideas, under the weight of Lewis's pen, can help us better understand what resources it may hold for philosophy, political thought, and cultural thought today.

This is the work in which Louis Althusser formulated some of his most influential ideas. *For Marx*, first published in France in 1968, has come to be regarded as the founding text of the school of "structuralist Marxism" which was presided over by the fascinating and enigmatic figure of Louis Althusser. Structuralism constituted an intellectual revolution in the 1960s and 1970s and radically transformed the way philosophy, political and social theory, history, science, and aesthetics were discussed and thought about. *For Marx* was a key contribution to that process and it fundamentally recast the way in which many people understood Marx and Marxism. This book contains the classic statements of Althusser's analysis of the young Marx and the importance of Feuerbach during this formative period, of his thesis of the "epistemological break" between the early and the late Marx, and of his conception of dialectics, contradiction and "overdetermination." Also included is a study of the materialist theater of Bertolazzi and Brecht and the critique of humanist readings of Marxism. Since his death in 1990, Althusser's legacy has come under renewed examination and it is increasingly recognized that the influence of his ideas has been wider and deeper than previously thought: reading *For Marx*, in its audacity, originality and rigor, will explain why this impact was so significant.

An accessible, higher-level introduction to a key selection of continental European thinkers from Spinoza to Žižek. Covering 'classical' exponents of the tradition such as Hegel and Marx, 'moderns' like Gramsci and Habermas and 'postmoderns' like Lacan and Deleuze, the volume introduces the main ideas of each thinker and reflects on their enduring theoretical relevance. The impressive breadth and contemporary angle make this a unique, up-to-date collection that will be invaluable to students and teaching staff alike.

Why do people work for other people? This seemingly naïve question is at the heart of Lordon's argument. To

complement Marx's partial answers, especially in the face of the disconcerting spectacle of the engaged, enthusiastic employee, Lordon brings to bear a "Spinozist anthropology" that reveals the fundamental role of affects and passions in the employment relationship, reconceptualizing capitalist exploitation as the capture and remolding of desire. A thoroughly materialist reading of Spinoza's Ethics allows Lordon to debunk all notions of individual autonomy and self-determination while simultaneously saving the ideas of political freedom and liberation from capitalist exploitation. *Willing Slaves of Capital* is a bold proposal to rethink capitalism and its transcendence on the basis of the contemporary experience of work.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, Louis Althusser endured a period of intense mental instability during which he murdered his wife and was committed to a psychiatric hospital. Spanning this period, this fourth volume reveals his wrestling with a series of theoretical problems to produce some of his finest work.

Consists of papers which were presented at a seminar on Marx's "Capital" at the Ecole Normale Supérieure early in 1965.

A radical new history of a dangerous idea Post-Modernity is the creative destruction that has shattered our present times into fragments. It dynamited modernism which had dominated the western world for most of the 20th century. Post-modernism stood for everything modernism rejected: fun, exuberance, irresponsibility. But beneath its glitzy surface, post-modernism had a dirty secret: it was the fig leaf for a rapacious new kind of capitalism. It was also the forcing ground of the 'post truth', by means of which western values got turned upside down. But where do these ideas come from and how have they impacted on the world? In his brilliant history of a dangerous idea, Stuart Jeffries tells a narrative that starts in the early 1970s and continues to today. He tells this history through a riotous gallery that includes David Bowie, the iPod, Frederic Jameson, the demolition of Pruitt-Igoe, Madonna, Post-Fordism, Jeff Koon's 'Rabbit', Deleuze and Guattari, the Nixon Shock, The Bowery series, Judith Butler, Las Vegas, Margaret Thatcher, Grand Master Flash, I Love Dick, the RAND Corporation, the Sex Pistols, Princess Diana, the Musée D'Orsay, Grand Theft Auto, Perry Anderson, Netflix, 9/11 We are today scarcely capable of conceiving politics as a communal activity because we have become habituated to being consumers rather than citizens. Politicians treat us as consumers to whom they must deliver. Can we do anything else than suffer from buyer's remorse?

Establishing a rigorous program of "symptomatic reading" that cuts through the silences and lacunae of *Capital* to reveal its philosophical core, Louis Althusser interprets Marx's structural analysis of production as a revolutionary break—the basis of a completely new science. Building on a series of Althusser's conceptual innovations that includes "overdetermination" and "social formation," Étienne Balibar explores the historical and structural facets of production as Marx understood them, scrutinizing many of the most fundamental points in *Capital*, as though for the first time.

On November 16, 1980, Louis Althusser, while massaging his wife's neck, discovered that he had strangled her. The world-renowned French philosopher was immediately confined to an insane asylum where he authored this memoir—a profound yet subtle exercise in documenting madness from the inside.

This thoroughgoing reevaluation of Louis Althusser's philosophical project shows that the theorist was intensely engaged with the work of his contemporaries, particularly Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, and Lacan.

What is to be done? This was the question asked by Lenin in 1901 when he was having doubts about the revolutionary capabilities of the Russian working class. 77 years later, Louis Althusser asked the same question. Faced with the tidal wave of May '68 and the recurrent hostility of the Communist Party towards the protests, he wanted to offer readers a succinct guide for the revolution to come. Lively, brilliant and engaged, this short text is wholly oriented towards one objective: to organize the working class struggle. Althusser provides a sharp critique of Antonio Gramsci's writings and of Eurocommunism, which seduced various Marxists at the time. But this book is above all the opportunity for Althusser to state what he had not succeeded in articulating elsewhere: what concrete conditions would need to be satisfied before the revolution could take place. Left unfinished, it is published here in English for the first time.

The author presents his interpretations of Marxism, and Lenin's philosophy as well as discussing his ideas on ideology and the state.

First published in French in 2010, *Equaliberty* brings together essays by Étienne Balibar, one of the preeminent political theorists of our time. The book is organized around *equaliberty*, a term coined by Balibar to connote the tension between the two ideals of modern democracy: equality (social rights and political representation) and liberty (the freedom citizens have to contest the social contract). He finds the tension between these different kinds of rights to be ingrained in the constitution of the modern nation-state and the contemporary welfare state. At the same time, he seeks to keep rights discourse open, eschewing natural entitlements in favor of a deterritorialized citizenship that could be expanded and invented anew in the age of globalization. Deeply engaged with other thinkers, including Arendt, Rancière, and Laclau, he posits a theory of the polity based on social relations. In *Equaliberty* Balibar brings both the continental and analytic philosophical traditions to bear on the conflicted relations between humanity and citizenship.

This collection of some of Louis Althusser's major essays on psychoanalytic thought documents his relationship with Jacques Lacan and presents aspects of his personal and intellectual life

This major voice in French philosophy presents a classic study of how particular political and cultural ideas come to dominate society. Spanning the years 1964 to 1973, *On Ideology* contains the seminal text, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus" (1970), which revolutionized the concept of subject formation. In "Reply to John Lewis" (1972–73), Althusser addressed the criticisms of the English Marxist toward *On Marx and Reading Capital*. Also included are "Freud and Lacan" (1964) and "A Letter on Art in Reply to André Daspre" (1966).

With the verve and bite of Ottessa Moshfegh and the barbed charm of Nancy Mitford, Marlowe Granados's stunning debut brilliantly captures a summer of striving in New York City Refreshing and wry in equal measure, *Happy Hour* is an intoxicating novel of youth well spent. Isa Epley is all of twenty-one years old, and already wise enough to understand that the purpose of life is the pursuit of pleasure. She arrives in New York City for a summer of adventure with her best friend, one newly blond Gala Novak. They have little money, but that's hardly going to stop them from having a good time. In her diary, Isa describes a sweltering summer in the glittering city. By day, the girls sell clothes in a market stall, pinching pennies for their Bed-Stuy sublet and bodega lunches. By night, they weave from Brooklyn to the Upper East Side to the Hamptons among a rotating cast of celebrities, artists, Internet entrepreneurs, stuffy intellectuals, and bad-mannered grifters. Resources run ever tighter and the strain tests their

friendship as they try to convert their social capital into something more lasting than precarious gigs as au pairs, nightclub hostesses, paid audience members, and aspiring foot fetish models. Through it all, Isa's bold, beguiling voice captures the precise thrill of cultivating a life of glamour and intrigue as she juggles paying her dues with skipping out on the bill. Happy Hour is a novel about getting by and looking great in a system that wants you to do neither.

Louis Althusser's renowned short text 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' radically transformed the concept of the subject, the understanding of the state and even the very frameworks of cultural, political and literary theory. The text has influenced thinkers such as Judith Butler, Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek. The piece is, in fact, an extract from a much longer book, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism*, until now unavailable in English. Its publication makes possible a reappraisal of seminal Althusserian texts already available in English, their place in Althusser's oeuvre and the relevance of his ideas for contemporary theory. *On the Reproduction of Capitalism* develops Althusser's conception of historical materialism, outlining the conditions of reproduction in capitalist society and the revolutionary struggle for its overthrow. Written in the afterglow of May 1968, the text addresses a question that continues to haunt us today: in a society that proclaims its attachment to the ideals of liberty and equality, why do we witness the ever-renewed reproduction of relations of domination? Both a conceptually innovative text and a key theoretical tool for activists, *On the Reproduction of Capitalism* is an essential addition to the corpus of the twentieth-century Left.

The publication of *Reading Capital*—by Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, Roger Establet, Pierre Macherey, and Jacques Rancière—in 1965 marked a key intervention in Marxist philosophy and critical theory, bringing forth a stunning array of concepts that continue to inspire philosophical reflection of the highest magnitude. *The Concept in Crisis* reconsiders the volume's reading of Marx and renews its call for a critique of capitalism and culture for the twenty-first century. The contributors—who include Alain Badiou, Étienne Balibar, and Fernanda Navarro—interrogate Althusser's contributions in particular within the context of what is surely the most famous collective reading of Marx ever undertaken. Among other topics, they offer a symptomatic critique of Althusser; consider his writing as a materialist production of knowledge; analyze the volume's conceptualization of value and crisis; examine how leftist Latin American leaders like Che Guevara and Subcomandante Marcos engaged with Althusser and *Reading Capital*; and draw out the volume's implications and use for feminist theory and praxis. Retrieving the inspiration that drove Althusser's reinterpretation of Marx, *The Concept in Crisis* explains why *Reading Capital's* revolutionary inflection retains its critical appeal, prompting readers to reconsider Marx's relevance in an era of neoliberal capitalism. Contributors: Emily Apter, Alain Badiou, Étienne Balibar, Bruno Bosteels, Adrian Johnston, Warren Montag, Fernanda Navarro, Nick Nesbitt, Knox Peden, Nina Power, Robert J. C. Young

The 6th set of the renowned philosophy series: beautiful covers, bargain price, classic theory.

Althusser dissects the leading Enlightenment philosopher Althusser delivered these lectures on Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* at the *École normale supérieure* in Paris in 1972. They are fascinating for two reasons. First, they gave rise to a new generation of Rousseau scholars, attentive not just to Rousseau's ideas, but also to those of his concepts that were buried beneath metaphors or fictional situations and characters. A new way of coming to terms with Rousseau's theoretical rigour, beneath his apparent reveries and sentimental flights of fancy, was here put to work. Second, we are now discovering that the 'late Althusser's' theses about aleatory materialism and the need to break with the strict determinism of theories of history in order to devise a new philosophy 'for Marx' were being worked out well before 1985 - in this reading of Rousseau dating from twelve years earlier, which introduces into Rousseau's text the ideas of the void, the accident, the take, and the necessity of contingency.

In *How to Be a Marxist in Philosophy* one of the most famous Marxist philosophers of the 20th century shares his concept of what it means to function fruitfully as a political thinker within the discipline and environs of philosophy. This is the first English translation to Althusser's provocative and, often, controversial guide to being a true Marxist philosopher.

Althusser argues that philosophy needs Marxism. It can't exist fully without it. Similarly, Marxism requires the rigour and structures of philosophy to give it form and focus. He calls all thinking people to, 'Remember: a philosopher is a man who fights in theory, and when he understands the reasons for this fight, he joined the ranks of the struggle of workers and popular classes.' In short, this book comprises Althusser's elucidation of what praxis means and why it continues to matter. With a superb introduction from translator and Althusser archivist G.M. Goshgarian, this is a book that will re-inspire contemporary Marxist thought and reinvigorate our notions of what political activism can be.

A milestone in the development of post-war Marxist thought.

"We do not publish our own drafts, that is, our own mistakes, but we do sometimes publish other people's," Louis Althusser once observed of Marx's early writings. Among his own posthumously released drafts, one, at least, is incontestably neither mistake nor out-take: the text of his lecture course on Machiavelli, originally delivered at the *École Normale Supérieure* in 1972, intermittently revised up to the mid-1980s, and carefully prepared for publication after his death in 1990. Though only appearing as an occasional reference in the Marxist philosopher's oeuvre, Machiavelli was an unseen constant presence. For together with Spinoza and Marx, Machiavelli was a veritable Althusserian passion. *Machiavelli and Us* reveals why, and will be welcomed for the light it sheds on the richly complex thought of its author. A classic work of Marxist analysis, available unabridged for the first time 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.

The publication in 1965 of *For Marx* and *Reading Capital* established Louis Althusser as one of the most original and

controversial figures in the Western Marxist tradition; a thinker whose renewal of Marxism was to enjoy great influence over the next decade. Collected here are Althusser's most significant philosophical writings from 1965 to 1978; the majority previously untranslated. Intended to contribute, in his own words, to a "left-wing critique of Stalinism that would help put some substance back into the revolutionary project here in the West," they are the record of a shared history. At the same time they chart Althusser's critique of the theoretical system unveiled in his own major works, and his developing practice of philosophy as a "revolutionary weapon." The collection opens with two lucid early articles—"Theory, Theoretical Practice and Theoretical Formation" and "On Theoretical Work." The title piece—Althusser's celebrated lectures in the "Philosophy Course for Scientists"—is the fullest exploration of his new definition of philosophy as politics in the realm of theory; a conception which is further developed in "Lenin and Philosophy." "Is it Simple to be a Marxist in Philosophy?" provides an invaluable account of Althusser's intellectual development. The volume concludes with two little-known late pieces—"The Transformation of Philosophy," in which the paradoxical history of Marxist philosophy is investigated; and "Marxism Today," a sober balance-sheet of the Marxist tradition. Attesting to the unique place which Althusser has occupied in modern intellectual history—between a tradition of Marxism which he sought to reconstruct, and a "post-Marxism" which has eclipsed its predecessor—these texts are indispensable reading.

Best Book of Fall (Esquire) and a Most Anticipated Book of 2021 (Lit Hub) What Has Happened to Fiction in the Age of Platform Capitalism? Since it was first launched in 1994, Amazon has changed the world of literature. The "Everything Store" has not just transformed how we buy books; it has affected what we buy, and even what we read. In Everything and Less, acclaimed critic Mark McGurl explores this new world where writing is no longer categorized as high or lowbrow, literature or popular fiction. Charting a course spanning from Henry James to E. L. James, McGurl shows that contemporary writing has less to do with writing per se than with the manner of its distribution. This consumerist logic—if you like this, you might also like ...—has reorganized the fiction universe so that literary prize-winners sit alongside fantasy, romance, fan fiction, and the infinite list of hybrid genres and self-published works. This is an innovation to be cautiously celebrated. Amazon's platform is not just a retail juggernaut but an aesthetic experiment driven by an unseen algorithm rivaling in the depths of its effects any major cultural shift in history. Here all fiction is genre fiction, and the niches range from the categories of crime and science fiction to the more refined interests of Adult Baby Diaper Lover erotica. Everything and Less is a hilarious and insightful map of both the commanding heights and sordid depths of fiction, past and present, that opens up an arresting conversation about why it is we read and write fiction in the first place.

Best known for his theories of ideology and its impact on politics and culture, Louis Althusser revolutionized Marxist theory. His writing changed the face of literary and cultural studies, and continues to influence political modes of criticism such as feminism, postcolonialism and queer theory. Beginning with an introduction to the context of Marxist theory, this book goes on to explain: * how Althusser interpreted and developed Marx's work * the political implications of reading * ideology and its significance for culture and criticism * Althusser's aesthetic criticism of literature, theatre and art. Placing Althusser's key ideas in the context of earlier Marxist thought, as well as tracing their development and impact, Luke Ferretter presents a wide-ranging yet accessible guide, ideal for those new to the work of this influential critical thinker.

Presents previously untranslated texts by the influential philosopher and French Communist Party intellectual, including his critique of Lâevi-Strauss's structuralism, his theory of discourse and its relationship to psychoanalysis, writings on the tasks of Marxist philosophy, and the famous "humanist controversy."

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