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## **Guide to the Etienne Balibar Papers MS.C.023**

Finding aid prepared by Audra Eagle Yun

Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries

The UCI Libraries

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**Title:** Etienne Balibar papers

**Identifier/Call Number:** MS.C.023

**Contributing Institution:** Special Collections and Archives, University of California, Irvine Libraries

**Language of Material:** French

**Physical Description:** 2.6 Linear feet(8 boxes)

**Date (inclusive):** 1963-2001

**Language of Collection Materials:** Collection materials are in French and English.

**Abstract:** This collection is comprised of manuscripts and research materials from philosopher and political theorist Etienne Balibar.

**Creator:** Balibar, Étienne, 1942-

**Access**

The collection is open for research. Writings not authored by Etienne Balibar may not be photocopied or duplicated.

**Publication Rights**

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**Preferred Citation**

Etienne Balibar Papers. MS-C023. Special Collections and Archives, The UC Irvine Libraries, Irvine, California.

**Acquisition Information**

Gift of Etienne Balibar, 2012.

**Processing History**

This collection is minimally processed in order to facilitate access. It was arranged and described by Michelle Light in consultation with Etienne Balibar in 2012. Finding aid created and additions processed by Audra Eagle Yun in 2012.

**Biography**

Etienne Balibar is best known as a Marxist philosopher and political theorist focused on historical materialism, critical theory, ethics, and political philosophy. As a student of Louis Althusser at the École Normale Supérieure from 1960 to 1965, Balibar contributed to Althusser's collective theoretical work *Reading Capital*(1965). Major books written by Balibar include *Spinoza and Politics* (1985), *Race, Nation, Class*(with Immanuel Wallerstein, 1991), *The Philosophy of Marx* (1993), *Politics and the Other Scene* (2002), and *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship* (2004).

Etienne Balibar was born in Avallon, Yonne, Bourgogne, France on April 23, 1942. He earned a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in 1962 and Diploma of Higher Studies in 1963 from the University of Paris (Sorbonne) while a student at the École Normale Supérieure. In 1987, he earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree, *cum laude*, from the Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen (Netherlands) for his dissertation entitled, "The infinite contradiction: elements of a philosophy in history."

Balibar received a habilitation from Université Paris I in 1993 and an honorary doctorate from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece) in 2005. Etienne Balibar is Professor Emeritus of moral and political philosophy at the University of Paris, Nanterre and was appointed Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of California, Irvine from 2000 to 2012.

1942 Etienne Balibar born in Avallon, Yonne, Bourgogne, France on April 23.

1960 Begins studies at Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris, ending in 1965.

1961 Joins the French Communist Party

1962 Receives Bachelor of Philosophy degree from Sorbonne.

1963 Receives Diploma of Higher Studies under direction of Georges Canguilhem, Sorbonne.

1965 Joins the University of Algiers as Assistant, leaving in 1967.

Publishes <title render="italic">Lire le Capital</title> (English translation, Reading Capital in 1970), a collection of essays developed by Louis Althusser and his students (Balibar, Roger Establet, Jacques Rancière, and Pierre Macherey) in a seminar on Karl Marx's <title render="italic">Das Kapital</title>.

1967 Joins the School of Savigny sur Orge as Professor, leaving in 1969.

1969 Joins the University of Paris I as Assistant, then Senior Lecturer, leaving in 1976.

1976 Joins Rijksuniversiteit Leiden you (Netherlands) as Wetenschappelijk Hoofdmedewerker, Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid, leaving in 1977.

Publishes<title render="italic"> Sur la dictature du prolétariat </title>(English translation, On the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in 1977)

1977 Joins the University of Paris I as Senior Lecturer, leaving in 1994.

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- 1981 Expelled from the French Communist Party for criticizing the party's attitudes towards immigration.
  - 1985 Publishes *Spinoza et la politique* (English translation, *Spinoza and Politics* in 1998)
  - 1987 Receives Ph.D. degree in Philosophy from Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen (Netherlands).
  - 1988 Publishes *Race, Nation, Classe* (English translation as *Race, Nation, Class* in 1991).
  - 1993 Publishes <title render="italic">La philosophie de Marx</title> (English translation, *The Philosophy of Marx* in 1995)  
Receives Habilitation from Université Paris I.
  - 1994 Joins University of Paris, Nanterre as Professor.  
Publishes <title render="italic">Masses, classes, ideas. Studies in politics and philosophy</title>
  - 2000 Becomes Distinguished Professor of Humanities at the University of California, Irvine.
  - 2003 Publishes *L'Europe, l'Amérique, la Guerre. Réflexions sur la médiation européenne*
  - 2002 Becomes Professor Emeritus at the University of Paris, Nanterre.  
Publishes <title render="italic">Politics and the Other Scene</title>
  - 2004 Publishes *We, the People of Europe? Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*
  - 2005 Receives honorary doctorate from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece).

### **Bibliography**

For additional bibliographic and biographical information on Etienne Balibar, see:

"Etienne Balibar." *UC Irvine - Faculty Profile System*. UC Irvine, 11 Feb. 2008. Web. 02 Mar. 2012.  
[http://www.faculty.uci.edu/profile.cfm?faculty\\_id=4809](http://www.faculty.uci.edu/profile.cfm?faculty_id=4809) .

"Balibar, Etienne." *Universite Paris Ouest Nanterre La Defense*. Department Philosophie. Web. 02 Mar. 2012.  
[http://www.u-paris10.fr/16444241/0/fiche\\_pagelibre/](http://www.u-paris10.fr/16444241/0/fiche_pagelibre/) .

Yeghiayan, Eddie. Etienne Balibar. *Etienne Balibar: A Bibliography*. 1996. Web. 02 Mar. 2012.  
<http://www.lib.uci.edu/about/publications/wellek/balibar/index.html> .

### **Arrangement**

This collection is arranged in 12 series:

- Series 1. Work with Louis Althusser, 1963-1977
- Series 2. "Ecole project," 1968-1971
- Series 3. Communist Party writings, 1965-1977
- Series 4. Personal reading notes, 1980-2000
- Series 5. "Travaux, 1965-1987," for PhD at Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen, circa 1987
- Series 6. Ludwig Wittgenstein translation project, 1987-1989
- Series 7. Habilitation, Université de Paris I, 1992-1993
- Series 8. *La philosophie de Marx*, after 1993
- Series 9. Teaching seminars at Université de Paris X Nanterre, 1995-1996, 2001
- Series 10. "Passion profane," 1991-1992
- Series 11. Writings, lectures, and interviews, 1985-2012
- Series 12. Scholarly journals, 2003-2011

The collection was arranged by the creator in consultation with Special Collections & Archives staff.

### **Collection Scope and Content Summary**

This collection is comprised of manuscripts, typescripts, and research materials documenting Etienne Balibar's studies and research from 1963 to 2001. A student of Louis Althusser, Balibar is best known as a Marxist philosopher and political theorist focused on historical materialism, critical theory, ethics, and political philosophy. The collection contains research notes and writings during his work with Althusser in the 1960s and documents the structuralist and Marxist thought of this group. It also includes Balibar's writings as a member of the French Communist Party. Balibar's notes and writings on Baruch Spinoza, René Descartes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Ludwig Wittgenstein are also included, as are a variety of publications and lectures. The vast majority of the materials are in French.

### **Subjects and Indexing Terms**

- Althusser, Louis, 1918-1990
- Balibar, Étienne, 1942-
- University of California, Irvine -- Archives.
- Critical theory -- Archives.

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Critical theory -- Study and teaching (Higher) -- California -- Irvine  
Philosophers.  
Philosophy, French -- 20th century  
Philosophy, Marxist -- 20th century

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- Box 1                    **Work with Louis Althusser** Series 1. **1963-1977**  
                                 **Physical Description:** 6.0 folders  
                                 **Scope and Content Summary**  
                                 This series consists of notebooks that Balibar kept while a student of Louise Althusser at the École Normale Supérieure. The notebooks contain course materials, lecture notes, and writings. They include materials related to *Reading Capital* and the materialist theory of discourse. Also included are notes for a seminar by Althusser on Jacques Lacan.
- Box 1                    **"École" project** Series 2. **1968-1971**  
                                 **Physical Description:** 3.0 folders  
                                 **Scope and Content Summary**  
                                 This series consists of Balibar's notes, drafts, and typescripts for a manuscript on intellectual and manual labor that was never completed. In 1969-1970, in the wake of the student revolt and general strikes in France, the students closest to Althusser collaborated on an ambitious project to interpret class, domination, and its symbolism as determinations of the educational system ("École", later called the typical "Ideological State Apparatus" by Althusser). Members of the project included Balibar, Christian Baudelot, Roger Establet, Pierre Macherey, and Michel Tort, each of whom planned to write one to two chapters for the manuscript. Balibar's focus was on intellectual and manual labor. The project collapsed around 1970, following the group's visit to teach summer school at the University of Havana, Cuba. Baudelot, Establet and Tort later published their chapters independently.
- Box 2                    **Communist Party writings** Series 3. **1965-1977**  
                                 **Physical Description:** 7.0 folders  
                                 **Scope and Content Summary**  
                                 This series consists of typescript drafts, notes, and other material related to Communism. Included are Balibar's writings from 1965 for the Communist student organization; articles and correspondence documenting a 1969 debate among Communist intellectuals and party leadership concerning education and teaching philosophy; and two of Balibar's lectures at the Centre D'Etudes et de Recherches Marxistes in 1975-1977.
- Box 2-3                **Personal reading notes** Series 4. **1980-2000**  
                                 **Physical Description:** 8.0 folders  
                                 **Scope and Content Summary**  
                                 This series contains notes written by Balibar regarding his reading of works by Baruch Spinoza, René Descartes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and others.
- Box 3-4                **"Travaux, 1965-1987," for Ph.D. at Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen** Series 5. **circa 1987**  
                                 **Physical Description:** 5.0 folders  
                                 **Scope and Content Summary**  
                                 This series consists of all five sections of Balibar's dissertation.

- Box 4                    **Ludwig Wittgenstein project Series 6. 1987-1989**  
**Physical Description:** 3.0 folders  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series consists of translation materials, typescripts, and notes related to the philosophy and works of Wittgenstein. The series includes an unpublished translation of Wittgenstein's Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* into French (left unpublished because of copyright restrictions but distributed as teaching material to students at Paris I among others). At the same time, Balibar was working on a related book project regarding truth entitled "'Lieux' and 'Noms de la verite;'" uncompleted materials related to this project are included in the series.
- Box 5                    **Habilitation Series 7. 1992-1993**  
**Physical Description:** 3.0 folders  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series contains work submitted for the Habilitation at the University of Paris I.
- Box 5                    **La philosophie de Marx Series 8. after 1993**  
**Physical Description:** 1.0 folders  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series consists of notes and typescripts for Balibar's book *The Philosophy of Marx*.
- Box 5-6                **Teaching seminars at Université de Paris X Nanterre Series 9. 1995-1996, 2001**  
**Physical Description:** 4.0 folders  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series consists of course materials, readings, and a course notebook for seminars taught by Balibar at the University of Paris, Nanterre.
- Box 6                    **"Passion profane" Series 10. 1991-1992**  
**Physical Description:** 5.0 folders  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series consists of readings, clippings, writings, and ephemera relating to Balibar's collaboration with musician Nicolas Frize (a former student of John Cage) for the "Passion profane" project. The project incorporated "concrete music" with professional and non-professional musicians in a series of musical events with prisoners inside the prison of Saint-Maur (near Châteauroux, France). It also includes a conversation between Balibar and inmates of the prison regarding citizenship. The series includes a notebook kept by Balibar documenting the project.
- Box 7                    **Writings, lectures, and interviews Series 11. 1985-2012**  
**Physical Description:** 10.0 folders  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series comprises essays and lectures by and interviews with Balibar from 1985 to 2012. The materials include drafts and published writings, some with annotations by Balibar.  
**Arrangement**  
This series is arranged chronologically.
- Box 7-8                **Scholarly journals Series 12. 2003-2011**  
**Scope and Content Summary**  
This series consists of six issues of scholarly journals in which Balibar's writings were published.