

György Lukács. A reading list.

Biography and autobiography

- Congdon, Lee. *The Young Lukács*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1983. [Follows Lukács from his childhood to exile in Vienna. Good on biographical details but the political analysis leaves much to be desired].
- Gluck, Mary. *Georg Lukács and his Generation: 1900-1918*. Harvard: 1985. [Detailed account of the social and intellectual milieu of Lukács and Budapest].
- Kadarkay, Arpad. *Georg Lukács: Life, Thought and Politics*. Blackwell: Cambridge, Mass., 1981. [out of print. Not very good on the politics but the only full biography available].
- Lukács, Georg. *Record of a Life*. London: Verso, 1983. [Out of print. A transcription of a long taped interview between Lukács and some of his students; made shortly before he died in 1971].

Political writings

(due to the voluminous nature of Lukács' writing I have only listed those works that I consider essential).

- History and Class Consciousness*. London: Merlin Press, 1974 (many reprints). [Originally published 1923. The most important and discussed work ever written by Lukács].
- Lenin: A Study on the Unity of his Thought*. London: NLB, 1970.
- Tailism and the Dialectic*. London: Verso, 2000. [Lukács' previously unpublished defence of *History and Class Consciousness*. With an 'Afterword' by Slavoj Žižek – **not** recommended].
- Tactics and Ethics 1919-29*. London: Verso, 2014. Essential reading for any study of Lukács' ideas. Includes his critique of Bukharin and a selection from the *Blum Theses*.
- The Young Hegel*. London: Merlin Press, 1975. [According to his former student István Mészáros, Lukács uses his assessment of Hegel to criticise Stalin].
- The Destruction of Reason*. Delhi: Aakar Books, 2016. [Huge tome where Lukács analyses what he sees as the irrationalist trend in German idealist philosophy which contributed to the growth of fascism]
- The Culture of People's Democracy: Hungarian Essays on Literature, Art, and Democratic Transition, 1945-1948*. Brill Academic Publishers, Netherlands, 2013. [Important but often neglected essays].
- The Present and Future of Democratisation*. Orig. written in 1968. [Lukács' failed attempt to argue for the democratisation of the Hungarian Communist Party, it was banned by the Party for 20 years and only published in 1988 when the Party was facing

extinction. As far as I know not available in print but can be accessed online at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs> which also contain numerous other works by Lukács].

Correspondence

Georg Lukács: Selected Correspondence 1902-1920. New York: Columbia University Press [Out of print and hard to get hold of].

Literary, cultural and aesthetic writings

The Historical Novel. London: Merlin Press, 1962. [Originally written in Russia between 1936-7, although it was not published in book form till Lukács returned to Hungary].

The Meaning of Contemporary Realism. London: Merlin Press, 1963.

Writer and Critic. London: Merlin Press, 1978. [Collection of essays from the 1930s, includes 'Narrate or Describe' with its subtle critique of socialist realism].

Solzhenitsyn. London: Merlin Press, 1970.

Analysis and Comment

[There is an astonishing mountain of comment and analysis on Lukács, much of it written by academics and often impenetrable. I have limited my recommendations to the following two books, both written by Marxists].

Beyond Capital. István Mészáros. London: Merlin Press, 1995. [pp. 282-422 contain a highly developed critique of Lukács' writings particularly *History and Class Consciousness*. Mészáros studied under Lukács between 1948-56 and is one of the few students of his who remained a Marxist].

Georg Lukács: From Romanticism to Bolshevism. Michael Löwy. London: NLB, 1979. [Excellent analysis of Lukács' 'journey' to Marxism].