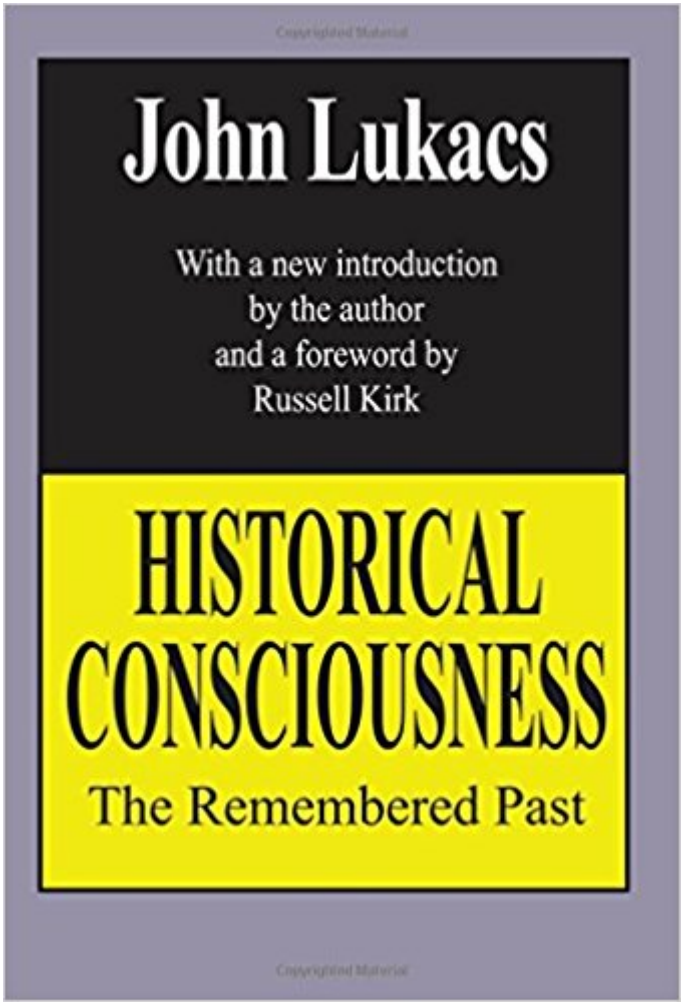
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Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past (Contemporary Austrian Studies)



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Synopsis

One of the most important developments of Western civilization has been the growth of historical consciousness. Consciously or not, history has become a form of thought applied to every facet of human experience; every field of human action can be studied, described, or understood through its history. In this extraordinary analysis of the meaning of the remembered past, John Lukacs discusses the evolution of historical consciousness since its first emergence about three centuries ago.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

John Lukacs is professor emeritus of history at Chestnut Hill College. He was also visiting professor at Johns Hopkins, Columbia, Princeton, and La Salle universities. He is the author of A Short History of the Twentieth Century, The Future of History, and The Legacy of the Second World War. Ã Â

John Lukacs is always rewarding. He is a good writer trying to communicate original and sometimes difficult ideas. He is very good when smashing ready-made narratives--whether conservative or liberal.

All branches of historical study will appreciate Lukacs' perspective on historical consciousness.

Lukacs is an acquired taste--but one worth acquiring. His politics aside, this is an important exploration of how humans have come to be historically-aware beings. The new preface is a beautiful condensation of a lifetime’s serious reflections.

While studying for a Master’s degree in history in the 90s, I found John Lukacs "Historical Consciousness" one of two influential contemporary history books (the other being Ernst Breisach’s "Historiography") that influenced my views on historiography - the study or view of history.While I am a conservative Protestant and he is a conservative Roman Catholic, I found his view of historical consciousness or, perhaps rather, imagination - one of the truest written in contemporary times. This is perhaps, because he holds a Pauline or Augustinian view of human nature - which sees people in their true human condition, yet doesn’t blanch at human inconsistency.Added to that his observation that history is made up of so many elements in a person’s and a people’s collective history or memory, wherever they are from, and that it is important for a person to know his history, to help him move on in his own history. This text is useful for any developing historiography.Against leading current trends that spend too much time spinning political spins, Lukacs’ is the notion that history is personal.No matter where a person is from - it is what they think and believe that defines their path. But, for him the pursuit of the historian is the pursuit of truth, as best can be achieved. The historian must understand his limited capacity, as only God holds the total story.His ruthless pursuit of getting it right is similar to that of the late-George Orwell, yet in a different fashion (this will appear pedantic to some). This is also a good book for aspiring journalists, so they are wise enough not to burn out in a profession that has been defined, for too many years, by political cynicism.

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