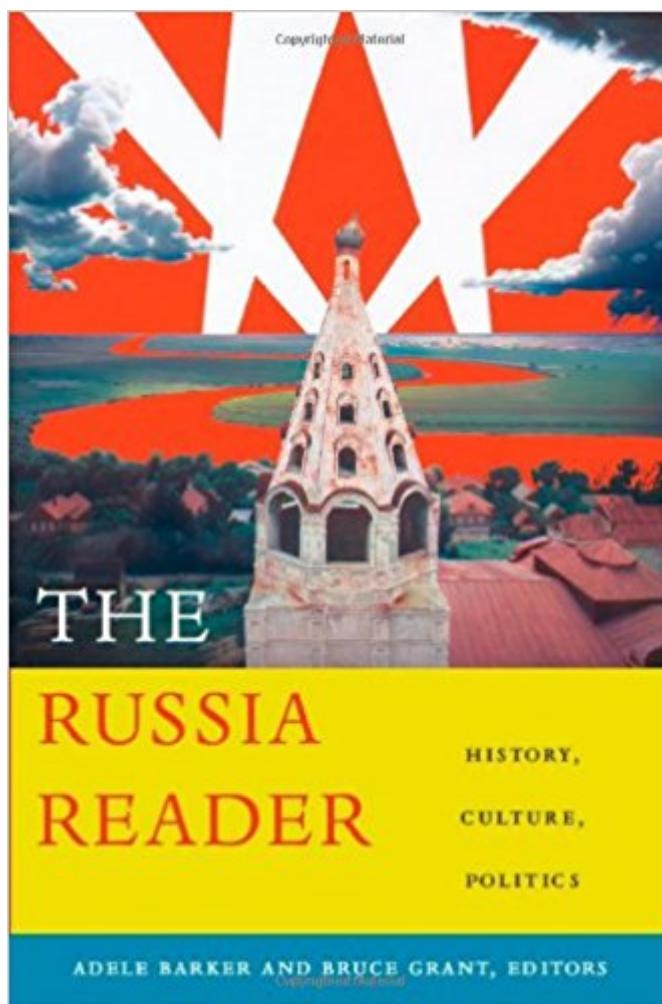


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# The Russia Reader: History, Culture, Politics (The World Readers)



## Synopsis

Letters recording the reactions of ordinary Russians to the Revolution as events unfolded in 1917, an account of the day-to-day scramble to make a living after the end of the Soviet Union, and excerpts from a sixteenth-century manual instructing elite Muscovites on proper household management. The Russia Reader brings these and many other selections together in this introduction to the history, culture, and politics of the world's largest country, from the earliest written accounts of the Russian people to today. Conveying the texture of everyday life alongside experiences of epic historical events, the book is filled with the voices of men and women, rulers and revolutionaries, peasants, soldiers, literary figures, immigrants, journalists, and scholars. Most of the selections are by Russians, and thirty are translated into English for the first time. Illustrated with maps, paintings, photographs, posters, and cartoons, The Russia Reader incorporates song lyrics, jokes, anecdotes, and folktales, as well as poems, essays, and fiction by writers including Akhmatova, Dostoyevsky, Pushkin, and Tolstoi. Transcripts from the show trials of major Party figures and an account of how staff at the Lenin Library in Moscow were instructed to interact with foreigners are among the many selections based on personal memoirs and archival materials only recently made available to the public. From a tenth-century emissary's description of his encounters in Kyivan Rus, to a scientist's recollections of her life in a new research city built from scratch in Siberia during the 1950s, to a novelist's depiction of the decadence of the "New Russians" in the 2000s, The Russia Reader is an extraordinary introduction to a vast and varied country.

## Book Information

Series: The World Readers

Paperback: 784 pages

Publisher: Duke University Press Books (July 12, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0822346486

ISBN-13: 978-0822346487

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.9 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #240,531 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > Travel > Asia > Russia > General #591 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Human

## Customer Reviews

Ã¢ "For the reader who desires to take a first dip into Russian history and culture but is overwhelmed by the vast amount of work available, *The Russia Reader* is the ideal starting point.Ã¢ - Viktoria Ivanyutina, *The Moscow Times*Ã¢ "If you purchase just one non-fiction book on Russia this year, make it this one. An eclectic, rich compendium of readings that covers a very broad swath of Russian history and culture. . . . Surely to be a popular choice for college survey courses on Russian history, this volume offers a wealth of knowledge for anyone with an interest in things Russian. And it does not require systematic reading, front to back. In fact, it rewards the serendipitous reader: no matter where you dip into it, you are sure to be enthralled.Ã¢ - Paul E. Richardson, *Russian Life*Ã¢ "The Russia surveyed here is one that reveals the complex layers of history that have accumulated over time and the voices that Barker and Grant marshal in telling RussiaÃ¢ "s history are engaging and innovative ones. . . . The *Russia Reader* should interest any . . . traveler looking for a rich introduction into the history, culture, and politics of Russia.Ã¢ - Stephen M. Norris, *Anthropology of East Europe Review*Ã¢ "The *Russia Reader* is excellent. It is a tremendous introduction for the newcomer to Russian history and culture, and even the well-versed reader should find fascinating new material amongst the rich variety collected here.Ã¢ - Mary Bailes, *Scotland-Russia Review*Ã¢ "This volume represents, in the truest sense of the phrase, a Herculean effortÃ¢ -In compiling an eclectic mixture of stand-alone articles and excerpts from existing and newly commissioned translationsÃ¢ -Adele Barker and Bruce Grant seek to provide a one-stop source for students and travelers. For the most part, they have succeeded admirably.Ã¢ - Kathleen ParthÃfÃ©, *Slavic and East European Journal*Ã¢ "The *Russia Reader* provides a wonderful overview of Russian life and culture across the centuries, from the emergence of Muscovy and Russian Orthodoxy to the present day. The editors have done a remarkable job in selecting a range of texts that offer a sweeping overview of the complexity and passion of Russian life, and their brief introductions helpfully situate the texts. Whether readers follow the fate of Russia chronologically or use the book as a kaleidoscope to explore different facets of Russian life and culture, they will find a treasure trove of beautiful, dramatic, and tragic readings for exploring Russian history and culture across the ages.Ã¢ -Ã¢ -Peter Holquist, University of PennsylvaniaÃ¢ "Adele Barker and Bruce Grant have selected a fascinating group of writings reflecting Russian reality, past and present, most by Russians themselves. The

selections make absorbing reading and convey insights that penetrate the veil of mystery that has so long obscured the "Russian soul." •Jack F. Matlock Jr., United States Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 1987-1991 "The Russia Reader is excellent. It is a tremendous introduction for the newcomer to Russian history and culture, and even the well-versed reader should find fascinating new material amongst the rich variety collected here." •(Mary Bailes *Scotland-Russia Review*) "For the reader who desires to take a first dip into Russian history and culture but is overwhelmed by the vast amount of work available, *The Russia Reader* is the ideal starting point." •(Viktoria Ivanyutina *The Moscow Times*) "If you purchase just one non-fiction book on Russia this year, make it this one. An eclectic, rich compendium of readings that covers a very broad swath of Russian history and culture. . . . Surely to be a popular choice for college survey courses on Russian history, this volume offers a wealth of knowledge for anyone with an interest in things Russian. And it does not require systematic reading, front to back. In fact, it rewards the serendipitous reader: no matter where you dip into it, you are sure to be enthralled." •(Paul E. Richardson *Russian Life*) "The Russia surveyed here is one that reveals the complex layers of history that have accumulated over time and the voices that Barker and Grant marshal in telling Russia's history are engaging and innovative ones. . . . *The Russia Reader* should interest any . . . traveler looking for a rich introduction into the history, culture, and politics of Russia." •(Stephen M. Norris *Anthropology of East Europe Review*) "This volume represents, in the truest sense of the phrase, a Herculean effort." In compiling an eclectic mixture of stand-alone articles and excerpts from existing and newly commissioned translations, Adele Barker and Bruce Grant seek to provide a one-stop source for students and travelers. For the most part, they have succeeded admirably. •(Kathleen Parthasarathy *Slavic and East European Journal*)

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facets of Russian life and culture. Readers will find a treasure trove of beautiful, dramatic, and tragic readings for exploring Russian history and culture across the ages."--Peter Holquist, University of Pennsylvania

This is a fascinating book with excellent sources. If you are interested in Russian history I highly recommend this book.

Cool tidbits of Russian history. Helped a lot on my exams.

awesome!

still working my way through but good stuff

If you purchase just one non-fiction book on Russia this year, make it this one. An eclectic, rich compendium of readings that covers a very broad swath of Russian history and culture, this volume has foreign traveler's impressions of Russia (from the tenth and eighteenth centuries, among others), 1930s show trial transcripts, historians' essays on everything from the revolution to dachas, writings by Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Pushkin and others, excepts from the *Domovoy*, memoirs, poems, maps, photographs, and on and on. Over thirty selections are translated into English here for the first time. Surely to be a popular choice for college survey courses on Russian history, this volume offers a wealth of knowledge for anyone with an interest in things Russian. And it does not require systematic reading, front to back. In fact, it rewards the serendipitous reader: no matter where you dip into it, you are sure to be enthralled. As reviewed in *A Russian Life* *A* magazine.

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