within the history of journalism and different genres of the novel of the time. Jefferson J. A. Gatral
asks students to interpret Lermontov’s “Bela” as a response, and not necessarily a fair one, to the
Russian conquest of the Caucasus. Cathy Popkin also reads a text—Anna Karenina—within Russian
imperial history, but shows her students how specific references to this are part of a larger theme in
the novel of the relation of similar and dissimilar, one’s own and the other. Rebecca Stanton employs
the literary theory of autobiography to explore different “self-narratives” in A Hero of Our Times
and invites her students to compare and judge these.

By comparing the chronotope of the road in Dead Souls with five other intertexts, three foreign
and two Russian (one contemporary and one seventeenth century), Marcia A. Morris reveals a
tension between wanderlust and the desire to settle in Gogol’s novel. Svetlana Slavskaya Grenier
focuses her students’ attention on the concept of freedom within Eugene Onegin, and specifically
the moral lesson Pushkin draws from this. Catherine Theimer Nepomyaschey uses a formalist
approach to show her students how Lensky’s death in the same work opens up the theme of the
passage of time central to it. Maude Meisal reads Tolstoy’s play The Power of Darkness as “three
overlapping and progressively intensifying cycles of temptation, crime, and retribution”; her purpose
is to show her students how great art can be didactic. Finally, Elizabeth Klosty Beaujour focuses on
stage directions in the second acts of The Cherry Orchard and Three Sisters. These make the plays
difficult to perform, yet are crucial to understanding them.

In his own essay, Belknap describes his own life’s work as “studying and teaching.” It seems
clear that he regards the two as linked, as indeed they are in all the contributions to this volume.
Each essay can be profitably read as both scholarship and pedagogy.

Donna Orwin, University of Toronto

Rebecchini, Damiano, and Raffaella Vassena, eds. Reading in Russia: Practices of Reading and

This book is a wonderful new entry into the study of Russian readers. In their introduction, editors
Damiano Rebecchini and Raffaella Vassena provide a rich account of the field’s origin, its relatively
recent “rediscovery,” and current trends in scholarship. Their volume follows the influential studies
of Russian and Soviet reading that emerged in recent decades: works by Gary Marker, Jeffrey Brooks,
Abram Reitblat, Evgeny Dobrenko, Thomas Lahusen, and Stephen Lovell, among others. However,
where these scholars’ studies predominately focus on one period or use one or two methodologies,
Reading in Russia is a broader, multidisciplinary effort. Each of its thirteen essays expertly immerses
one in a specific, often temporally grounded, aspect of reading history and/or culture. Its authors
draw on a variety of disciplines, from sociology to history of the book, from looking at larger groups
of readers collectively to examining individual reader responses. The resulting volume offers a
vibrant, if episodic, narrative of reading, literary culture, and communication over the course of
some two hundred years.

The essays are organized roughly chronologically, beginning with those on the eighteenth and
early nineteenth century. The volume’s working languages are Russian and English. The opening
essay by Rodolph Baudin examines the classicist debate on the novel in the works of Sumarokov
and Kherasov, and how genre affects reading practices, moving to a consideration of the development
of reading’s social function in Russia. Laura Rossi uses an array of eighteenth- and nineteenth-
century autobiographies to discuss children’s literature and childhood experiences of reading. Abram
Reitblat’s essay moves away from personal experience to a detailed examination of the circulation
of manuscript literature in early nineteenth-century Russia, and includes a useful classification system
of manuscript genres as well as information about their readers.

Moving further into the nineteenth century, Rebecchini’s contribution focuses on the pedagogical
methods and reading materials such as maps, charts, exercise books, common-place books, and
other printed items used by poet Vassily Zhukovsky as he tutored the young Alexander II from 1825
Anne Lounsbery examines Belinsky’s use of the word “provincial” in criticism of the 1830s, reflecting on the term’s cultural rather than geographical meaning, and his developing image of a “model reader.” Moving from a model to a real reader, Edyta Bojanowska’s essay shows the effect of reader reaction on texts by Gogol and Turgenev, and the “co-creative” role readers played in influencing authorial decisions. Robin Feuer Miller examines the act of reading and its meaning in Poor Folk (1846), reflecting on the changing nature of interpersonal relationships in the face of contemporary shifting boundaries between real and virtual communications.

Vassena’s essay studies public literary readings during the 1860s, the period of the Great Reforms, showing how collective reading practices increased the possibility of information distortion during this time of heightened political awareness. William Mills Todd III analyzes Prince V. N. Golitsyn’s reaction to the experience of serially reading Anna Karenina in the 1870s; his essay not only demonstrates the role serialization played in reader understanding of a work’s meaning, but also illuminates its cultural context through the web of intertextual associations evoked by Prince Golitsyn’s reading. Rounding out the essays on the nineteenth century, Jeffrey Brooks looks at Chekhov’s early reading habits—particularly the serialized feuilleton—and their influence on his writing, especially his attention to the poetics of narration.

The final three essays focus on twentieth-century topics. Oleg Lekmanov examines the linguistic and stylistic register of three early twentieth-century Russian magazines, each aimed at a different audience, and uses this analysis to determine the reader’s role in turn-of-the-century editorial policies. Jon Stone’s essay investigates Symbolist publishing practices, using the case study of Alexander Dobroliubov’s Collected Verses to examine Valery Briusov’s editorial strategies for developing the new Symbolist reader. Finally, Evgeny Dobrenko explores the role of the mass reader in Soviet texts and culture from the 1920s to the 1970s.

This insightful volume enhances our understanding of Russian literature and its readers; the varied approaches presented here facilitate a multidisciplinary longue durée understanding of Russian reading culture and practice. My main criticism concerns the relative lack of narrative connecting the essays. In this spirit, the conclusion may have helped draw the material together more cohesively. Nevertheless, I highly recommend this volume to those with an interest in literary culture, the history of reading, the social function of reading, the history of the book, or communication. In addition to the print version for purchase, the volume is available as an open access ebook on the di/segni website.

Katherine Bowers, University of British Columbia


If fecundity is the mark of a classic, then Pasternak’s Doctor Zhivago will remain timeless. Not only is the novel itself continually reevaluated, but also the history of its publication is worthy of a Cold-War thriller in itself. To shed light on some of the shadier aspects of this history comes Paolo Mancosu’s Inside the Zhivago Storm, which centers on Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, the publisher of the first, Italian, edition of the novel. The backstory of Zhivago has been told many times in the multiple biographies of Pasternak and in the letters and memoirs of the related figures (Olga Ivinskaya, Jacqueline de Proyart, Pasternak’s family, Giangiacomo’s son Carlo, and Sergio D’Angelo, among others). However, Mancosu’s access to Feltrinelli’s papers in the archives of the Fondazione Feltrinelli (which, appropriately enough, published this volume) and the Archivio Giangiacomo Feltrinelli Editore helps to fill in some of the gaps and put to rest a few older misconceptions, such as textalogical issues with the CIA-backed Russian edition.

The book itself is broken into three chapters, although it would be better to speak of it as two parts. Chapter 1, “The Italian Edition: Il Dottor Živago,” recounts the history of the initial Italian edition. This is far from the first description of the edition, but it is the most complete. Mancosu