

Title: A Congeries of Plots: Case Studies in Classics, Adaptations, and Chat
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This paper will address the devious route by which plots reach and are consumed by the contemporary Russian readership at the point of intersection between classic texts, film adaptations, and internet chat rooms. I will take as my two related case studies the examples of Pushkin's Eugene Onegin and Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* in order to address as well the migration, transmigration, and transformation of plots across borders and readerships then and now, that is, at the time of original publication and in our current "global" and "high tech" age. Specifically I will argue that Eugene Onegin and *Pride and Prejudice* make an excellent pairing through which to approach this topic because of the similarities between their plots, which has been noted by recent commentators, and because both have been adapted for film in the post-Soviet period in versions (the 1999 Onegin and the 2005 *Pride and Prejudice*) that have aired in Russia and, more important, that have received considerable comment by Russian readers and viewers in internet chat rooms. An added layer of complexity is provided by the Helen Fielding stories and their 2005 film adaptation, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, a contemporary "rewrite" of *Pride and Prejudice*, which has also figured prominently in Russian responses to the original Austen text and the film version of *Pride and Prejudice*. I note with some irony that Russians today respond to these various "plots" in a manner very like that which Pushkin foresaw in the considerations of the reading process embedded in his "novel in verse" almost two centuries ago, finding in them templates for their own lives, role models for survival in an increasingly complex and cosmopolitan world-not, perhaps, as unlike as it would at first appear from the world of Pushkin's original Russian readers.