CONFINED SPACES / ERUPTED BOUNDARIES:

CROWD BEHAVIOR IN PROKOFIEV'S *THE GAMBLER*

by

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In the 1860s, a small group of privileged persons made their way from Russia to a casino resort in the remote and fictitious town of Roulettenberg, Germany. These individuals become acquainted with players from a variety of backgrounds, but quickly, with gambling as a common interest, each character comes to recognize that what they all share is the objective to win. This brief summary of Fyodor Dostoevsky's novella "The Gambler" (1867) describes a story often encountered in European literature of the nineteenth century. The rustic scene of the country retreat was a picturesque illusion painted for the educated middle-class; it was a place to which those fortunate enough to be literate could escape from their daily responsibilities while still maintaining a sense of reality by identifying with the setting and characters. Dostoevsky's portrayals, however, did not hold the promise of a fantastic getaway so much as they betrayed the author's desire to turn a painfully real mirror on his readers.

After witnessing in prison the amplification of class inequalities taking place within the boundaries of such a confined society, Dostoevsky became fascinated with power and social rank, and later recounted his experiences in various literary settings, but most notably in *From the House of the Dead*. As was common in the nineteenth century, literature and opera often explored status and authority through the dramatic portrayal of gambling, and frequently the events of the betting arena serve to further some extension of the plot, the narrative of which continues to develop outside of the game.[1] It is therefore remarkable that Dostoevsky's "The Gambler," places a spotlight on the act of gambling itself. In this story, the misfortune and destruction left in the wake of the game is what leads to the demise of every character. One

[1] Exemplifying the characteristic realism and psychological curiosity of this period are such depictions as, Alexander Pushkin's "Queen of Spades" (1834) (inspiring both an opera by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky and a film score by Sergei Prokofiev), in which the temptation of gambling is associated with the siren call of a menacing countess, and George Elliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876), which tells a tale of tragic events proceeding from a grueling round of roulette.

operatic setting of the novella, and the focus of this paper, is Sergei Prokofiev's *The Gambler* (1915-1929). While retaining the substance of Dostoevsky's insights on the detrimental effects of gambling, Prokofiev's interpretation exploits the peculiarities of crowd behavior found in a society of gamblers as described by contemporaneous scholars and critics.

Beyond a mere adaptation of Fyodor Dostoevsky's novella, Prokofiev altered the progression of the original narrative by shifting the perspective of the story from investigations of gambling that centered on overarching social conflicts between high and low class to a focus on the locally developing power struggle taking place solely within a confined community of gamblers. Diverging from the broad social structures depicted in the Dostoevsky, Prokofiev placed an emphasis on the small-scale personal interactions that potentially led to larger social movements. Although gambling scenes were perhaps instrumental to the dramatic thrust of nineteenth-century realist narratives, exceptional to Prokofiev's twentieth-century exploration is his isolation of gambling to a solitary, strategically placed, scene at the end of his opera. Here, abandoning all but one of the primary characters, the tactical introduction of a variety of new characters moments before the opera's conclusion is an odd artistic choice, and one that challenges previous dramatic conventions. Yet, as we will see, this sudden diversion was necessary and quite deliberate for Prokofiev's realization of this opera.

Prokofiev's operas in general opened many doors for him, but, as his first successful opera, the novel approach to composition in *The Gambler* helped to establish Prokofiev's popularity as an operatic composer.[2] In this work, according to Harlow Robinson, Prokofiev

[2] While composing *The Gambler*, the director and producer Vsevolod Meyerhold had a strong influence on Prokofiev. Meyerhold's role proved instrumental in establishing Prokofiev's reputation in and outside of Russia, and after incurring various obstacles preventing the staging of the 1917 version of *The Gambler,* Meyerhold proposed suggestions to help reshape the opera into its 1929 revision, the version in which the opera eventually reached acclaim.

introduced a reformulation of the relationship between music and text.[3] Following Mussorgsky's compositional process in *Marriage* and developing concurrently with Leoš Janáček's speech melodies, in *The Gambler*, Prokofiev aspired to mimic the intonation of spoken language. Robinson's Prokofiev set large portions of Dostoevsky's novella to music while preserving the original text almost verbatim. Robinson suggests, "Prokofiev concedes little to musical form in his libretto; it is clear that the words were written first, carefully conforming to the literary original, and that the music was written to fit the text."[4] Robinson does not explain, however, how he has arrived at such a speculative conclusion. Prokofiev, unlike Janáček, left no account of how he set Dostoevsky's text to music, and because the novella is told in a first-person narrative, Prokofiev often took liberties with the text by transforming the narrative into dialogue. As this paper will show, in the process of fitting the words and music together, Prokofiev in fact deviates from Dostoevsky's text, and ultimately from the author's moral message. In attending specifically to the dialogue from the novella, the inflection of particular passages is altered, the text is manipulated, and certain events in the plot gain greater significance. The success of *The Gambler* lies partly in Prokofiev's interpretation of Dostoevsky's story, but more specifically, the composer's insight into the culture of gambling and his portrayal of the toll of gambling on the psychology of the individual imitated the interactions of people in large groups, and paralleled the emergent theories of contemporaneous scholars and critics who were observing and studying crowd behavior.

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[3] Harlow Robinson, "Love for Three Operas: The Collaboration of Vsevolod Meyerhold and Sergei Prokofiev," *Russian Review* 45/3 (July 1986): 287-304.

[4] Harlow Robinson, "Dostoevsky and Opera: Prokofiev's 'The Gambler,'" *The Musical Quarterly* 70/1 (1984): 104.

The Plurality of the Masses

In Russia in the early twentieth century, conflicts with the monarchical power, which had been steadily in decline since the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, instigated a series of revolutions from 1905 – 1917. Punctuated by the First World War and a devastating civil war that ended in 1920, the link between power and status that was so often explored in nineteenth-century fiction was still an ever-present concern in the twentieth century. Those critical of the situation in Russia in the early part of the twentieth century sought to provide educational and vocational opportunity to the masses, but these ambitions came frequently at the expense of the autonomous creative endeavors of artists, authors, and composers. The conflict and navigation between individual contributions and communal productivity led to many emergent theories on crowd behavior. Moreover, connections can be found between theories on the psychology of the crowd and Prokofiev's *The Gambler*. The operatic setting of a novella published shortly after the emancipation of the serfs—a semi-autobiographical confession from an author who was himself both a gambler and a victim of the imbalanced monarchical power—suggests that Prokofiev sustained an interest in subjects of realist significance. In addition, it is impossible to imagine that the restless political climate in Russia and the surge of theories on crowd behavior sweeping across Europe in the 1920s could have escaped Prokofiev, even if his assessments of these changes were subtly masked below the surface of his creative output.

Of particular relevance in relating Prokofiev's *The Gambler* to theories of crowd behavior is the work of Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin. As found primarily in his engagement with literary subjects, Bakhtin rarely associated the crowd with real life social circumstances. The crowd, for Bakhtin, was to be observed as an agglomeration of various characters within the confines of a

literary text.[5] Unique to Dostoevsky, Bakhtin claimed, was his ability to paint members of a community simultaneously as both individuals and mediators of a crowd. Bakhtin furthermore observed that the interaction of these characters provided psychological insight into the mind of their author. According to an analysis published by Bakhtin in 1929, Dostoevsky's depiction of the crowd "touches upon several basic principles of European aesthetics," which, through the proper methodology, could be abstracted as a tool to analyze the "radical restructuring" of a "new artistic model of the world."[6] It is on this point that I believe a reading of Bakhtin can be of significance in an exploration of operas based on Dostoevsky's texts, and even more so in the case of operas that were composed and staged within only a few years of Bakhtin's theoretical observations.

Of course the idea of collective psychology did not begin with Bakhtin. As mentioned, the correlation between individuals and society had long been a subject of literary and dramatic exploration, and already fifty years prior to Bakhtin, the French poet Charles Baudelaire explored what he considered to be the central dilemma of the crowd—the position of the individual. The observation of the dialectical discord between the self and the crowd stems from the Baudelairian predicament of "multitude, solitude."[7] Ranking the individual according to his (or her) ability to mediate between solitude and multitude, the poet grieves that while one is in a crowd he (or she) may choose to be who he wishes, but that by definition, as a member of such a crowd, shrouded in multiplicity, the individual loses all sense of personal identity.[8]

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[5] Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 3.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Christine Poggi "Mass, Pack, and Mob: Art in the Age of the Crowd," in *Crowds*, eds. Jeffrey T. Schnapp and Matthew Tiews (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), 159.

[8] "It is not given to every man to take a bath of multitude; enjoying a crowd is an art... Multitude, solitude: identical terms, and interchangeable by the active and fertile poet. The man who is unable to people his solitude is equally unable to be alone in the bustling crowd." Charles Baudelaire, "The Crowd" in *Paris Spleen, 1869*,

Like Baudelaire, Gustav Le Bon asserted that, by becoming part of a group, persons who co-inhabit a crowd abandon their individuality. In seeking membership to the crowd, the individual commences a desperate search for guidance and leadership, and it is for this reason, Le Bon concludes, that amassed individuals are highly susceptible to the power of suggestion. Agents of the crowd are prone easily to suggestion since, in their simultaneous attempt to please the leader and belong to the group, each individual submits to the compulsive imitation of communal activities. These actions, while spreading contagiously through the crowd, gather force, enjoining the group and commanding individuals to act as a single, codified collective.[9] Because of this relationship between leader and led, for Baudelaire and Le Bon, the relationships of individuals to one another are inherently entangled in hierarchies of power, and hence also compulsorily adjoined to matters of politics and economics. It is on the basis of this triangle between power, politics, and economics that twentieth-century discourses on mass psychology were developed.

In 1922, using the theories of Gustave Le Bon as a backdrop, Freud compiled his observations of the crowd in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.[10] Departing momentarily from his interest in the afflictions of the individual, Freud sought to explore behaviors of the crowd so as to inform an analysis of the conscious self and ego. Although Freud was interested in the works of Dostoevsky, his engagement with the author occurred largely through an examination of neurosis, a subject of marginal relevance to this paper.[11] However, in combination with the models of other theorists, and taken together with Bakhtin's assessment

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trans. Keith Waldrop (New York: New Directions Books, 1970), 22.

[9] Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, trans. T. Fisher Unwin (1895; reprint, Marietta, G. A.: Larlin Corporation, 1982), 120.

[10] Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, trans. James Strachey (New York: Liveright, 1967).

[11] Sigmund Freud, "Dostoevsky and Parricide," In *Writings on Art and Literature*, ed. James Strachey (Stanford, C. A.: Stanford University Press, 1997).

that the communal interactions of Dostoevsky's characters illuminate authorial motivations that lie outside the narrative scope of a particular literary work, an abstraction of Freud's and other such theories on the crowd prove useful in an analysis of works like Prokofiev's, which were inspired by Dostoevsky.

Dostoevsky Reimagined

In *The Gambler*, the characters enter as convicts. For every individual who walks through its doors, the Grand Hôtel-Casino becomes a prison, and confined to the casino, the characters are forced to join a community whose sole uniting cause is a preoccupation with gambling. Alexei, our protagonist, is a well-educated but low-stature tutor employed in the service of the General and his fiancée, Blanche.[12] The General's game is roulette, and because of his affinity for gambling, he and his entourage quickly fall into debt. The Marquis, Blanche's cousin, offers to save the General from ruin by granting him several loans, but with each expression of generosity, the Marquis raises his stakes.

Time and again the General renews his loans with the Marquis by promising a hefty payout from an anticipated inheritance of his aging auntie Babulenka. But, after a particularly grueling episode at the tables, it becomes clear that the General is hopelessly consumed by his addiction, and the Marquis sets his sights on a new avenue to Babulenka's money. From here, the Marquis supposes that he should seduce Polina, the General's niece, who he is confident will receive her inherited dues. But undercutting the Marquis's plans once again, Babulenka's unexpected entrance at the close of the second act stirs the pot initiating a riotous commotion.

Babulenka arrives to discover the General's miserable condition, and at the close of Act II

[12] For a list of characters in the opera refer to the Appendix.

she indignantly howls at him, "But not one sou shall you receive!!"[13] Abandoning the General, Babulenka heads off to the roulette table with Alexei as her guide, but soon she also acquires a taste for gambling. Squandering away her savings and ultimately losing over one hundred thousand francs, as it turns out, only devastation is left in Babulenka's wake. The Marquis, realizing that he has taken on more trouble than its worth, uses Polina, who is now responsible for the accrued debt, as leverage. But Polina, in an effort to redeem herself and salvage her reputation, suddenly begins to reciprocate Alexei's advances toward her.

Because of his loyalty and romantic feelings for her, Alexei is easily manipulated by Polina. In the first three acts she is able to repeatedly send him into humiliating situations, and it is through her bidding that Alexei develops his addiction to gambling. In the moments that open the opera, Polina forces Alexei to enter a game of roulette on her behalf, but as the plot progresses, Alexei becomes increasingly enthralled with gambling. In the final act, Polina gives Alexei a letter from the Marquis. In this letter, the Marquis discloses his efforts to swindle Babulenka's money, and following a brief moment of intimacy with Polina, Alexei bounds for the roulette table swearing to restore her honor.[14]

As an opera, *The Gambler* begins abruptly, forgoing the introductory information that served to formulate a frame of reference in Dostoevsky's novella. In the absence of a first-person narrator, and because the audience is introduced to the characters almost instantaneously, one after the other, each individual has an equally captivating presence. From the opening of the opera, the actions and interactions of the characters seem somewhat absurd. The pacing is

[13] Act II, in Irving and Georgette Palmer, trans., *The Gambler Libretto* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., 1975), 23.

[14] I have kept the ellipses from the translation. Act IV, Tableau i, *The Gambler Libretto*, 32.

propelled by dialogue which, distinct from the narrative of the novella, deliberately obscures subtleties in the plot. Thus, continuously throughout the opera, events are alluded to, but it is several minutes before the audience becomes privy to the details of a particular situation.

In the novella, at the moment Prokofiev's opera begins, the spotlight is on Alexei, who is already selfishly consumed with roulette, and showing little signs of concern for Polina, whose money he is wagering. Merely enumerating the events of that day, Alexei, while thoroughly descriptive, avoids a betrayal of any kind of emotion:

> As for me, I lost every farthing very quickly. I staked straight off twenty friedrichs d'or on even and won, staked again and again won, and went on like that two or three times. I imagine I must have had about four hundred friedrichs d'or in my hands in about five minutes. At that point I ought to have gone away, but a strange sensation rose up in me, a sort of defiance of fate, a desire to challenge it, to put out my tongue at it. I laid down the largest stake allowed—four thousand gulden—and lost it. Then, getting hot, I pulled out all I had left, staked it on the same number, and lost again, after which I walked away from the table as though I were stunned, I could not even grasp what had happened to me, and did not tell Polina Alexandrovna of my losing till just before dinner.[15]

Rather than keep the matter-of-fact tone from the novella, already in Alexei's first line, Prokofiev betrays his sentimental vision of the character.

Following a brief orchestral prelude, the opera commences with a curt exchange between Alexei and Polina, who are soon joined by the General, the Marquis, and Blanche.

> Alexei: How can I find the right words to tell Polina her misfortune?
> (*Their whole conversation is in brief phrases)*
>
> Polina: Have you carried out all my wishes?
>
> Alexei: I have.
>
> Polina: And all my diamonds, did you pawn them?

[15] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Gambler and Other* Stories, trans. Constance Garnett (Whitefish, M. T.: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 20.

Alexei: They were pawned.

Polina: And then did you go there? *(She is obviously alluding to the casino which can be seen in the back)*

Alexei: Yes.

Polina: And you played the roulette-wheel?

Alexei: I played.

Polina: What happened? *(pause)* Why do you keep silent?

Alexei: *(suddenly confessing)* I lost everything.[16]
Enter the General, Blanche, and the Marquis.

In addition to a complete revision of the narrative, the musical setting of this text granted Prokofiev an expressive flexibility beyond what was conveyed within its literary medium. Prokofiev's musical language at this moment, and generally throughout the opera, borrows its contour from the intonation of spoken dialogue, but this musical inflection often alters the tone expressed in the novella. Contrary to the monotony and distanced tone of Alexei's recollection in the novella, in the opera, Alexei's first line already exposes his meditative state and fear of disappointing Polina. By simply inserting the emphatic "*je*" in the initial utterance "*Kakime je slovami raskaju ya vcyo Polinye?*" ["How can I find the right words to tell Polina her misfortune?"] Prokofiev allows Alexei to convey his distress through the text, but the composer further stresses the altered tone of this phrase by infusing the line with a particular musical lyricism.

As shown in Example 1, Alexei's compassionate plea is expressed with a rising tone that musically complements the contour of a rhetorical question. Prepared by an upbeat at R. 5, the word "*ka-KI-me*" ["which"] is paced similarly to spoken dialogue with emphasis placed on the C

[16] Act I, *The Gambler Libretto*, 7.

of the downbeat to the next measure. This opening gesture leads to a hesitant rise to D ♭ in preparation for the leap to F, an inquisitive climb that subtly increases the musical urgency of this passage, which is resolved then by a step-wise descent. Here, in addition to again emphasizing the penultimate syllable, in "*slo-VA-mi*" ["words"] the line adopts the entreaty of speech by lingering on the pitch E ♭ for a whole-note—the longest duration of any syllable in this phrase. In contrast to Alexei's anxious tenor, at Polina's entrance, the rapid pecking of her direct speech cuts through his lyricism, causing the music to pivot and suddenly alter the tone of this scene. The insecurity of Prokofiev's Alexei, expressed already in his initial utterance, makes us sympathetic to his plight and conflicts with the cold and heartless inquiry of Prokofiev's Polina.

In an effort to avoid the mere adaptation of Dostoevsky's text to the music, Prokofiev made many conscious decisions in his realization of the novella. By assigning a musical language that reflects the inflection of the character speaking, Prokofiev altered the tone of particular passages adding meaning beyond what might be conveyed through the text alone. Moreover, through the use of recurrent leit-motifs Prokofiev created a musical memory within the opera, but he then manipulated the reiterations of these melodic fragments through excessive repetition. Particularly in the gambling scene of the fourth act, the referential significance of text and music in *The Gambler* reflects the psychological overtones of individuals in the crowd as their behaviors were described by contemporaneous social theorists.

All is Fair in Love and Opera

Beyond a musical setting of the text, perhaps the most illuminating difference between the opera and the novella occurs on the large scale with Prokofiev's transformation of the plot.

Although the opera is in four acts, Prokofiev cleverly placed dramatic emphasis on the final act, asserting himself that "the dramatic tension gradually increases as the end draws near."[17] Prokofiev proclaims that,

> The "hit" of the opera is, without a doubt, the last but one scene, which takes place in the gambling-house.[18] This scene is without a choir as a choir is not versatile, nor is it amenable to staging. However, it does call for a large number of participants—gamblers, croupiers, onlookers—and each one of them has his own specific character. All this, in addition to the extreme quickness and complexity of action, results in a confused tangle...I make bold to believe that the scene in the gambling-house is totally new in the operatic literature both in idea and structure.[19]

Building anticipation for the game from the beginning, and holding our attention until the very last moment, Prokofiev leaves the unveiling of the roulette table until the second of three Tableaus in the final act, the only act to be divided into smaller scenes. In this gambling scene, Prokofiev abandons the central characters from Dostoevsky's novella apart from Alexei, and thus significantly departs from the original narrative.[20] Prokofiev's digression from the plot in the *The Gambler* therefore invites an analysis that focuses primarily on this section. By setting the stage around the roulette table, Prokofiev ensures an open arena to which anyone with the minimal bet might enter. But, in the struggle for power and fiscal gain—which are synonymous at the roulette table—it is expected that one individual emerge victorious.

Prokofiev envisioned the gambling scene as a culminating event to the entire opera, and as such, the fourth act is structurally organized to ensure that the dramatic activity of its central scene takes precedence over the moments that envelop it. The communal atmosphere of this segment is augmented by Prokofiev's formal design of the opera. Act IV is the longest of the

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[17] Sergei Prokofiev, *Sergei Prokofiev: Materials, Articles, Interviews*, ed. Vladimir Blok (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978), 28.

[18] This remark possibly infers that in an earlier version other scenes took place in the "gambling-house"; however, there is no surviving document to confirm this.

[19] Prokofiev, *Materials*, 28.

[20] Robinson, "Dostoevsky and Opera," 104. For a list of characters in the Act IV, Tableau ii, refer to the Appendix.

three previous acts, and also the only act to be presented in two distinct locations. The first and third Tableaus of Act IV take place in Alexei's room, and feature Alexei and Polina alone. Their solitude here serves as a partitioning that sets apart the public atmosphere of the second scene from the intimacy that cradles it. The stage represents a space that the crowded gamblers occupy, and one which, in this act, is otherwise inhabited by the two lovers alone. By encroaching on the same non-diegetic space (the stage), the contrast between the privacy afforded the lovers and the public-ness of the "confused tangle" in the over-populated casino causes a conflict that augments the absurdity of the crowd in the central scene of this act.[21]

Critical of Prokofiev's interpretation of Dostoevsky, Harlow Robinson claims that the opera and the novella differ in their focus on the delicate *dos-à-dos* between Alexei and his romantic counterpart, Polina.[22] Robinson maintains that the mounting tension of the opera, which rests on the assignation of the two in Act IV, Scene i, is "scattered" in the second scene due primarily to Polina's absence.[23] Robinson is apparently unaware of, or unsympathetic to, Prokofiev's vision of the gamblers whose interactions in Scene ii of this act are meant to propel the action toward the climatic Entr'acte that follows. If the opera is viewed as a series of moments with Alexei in the spotlight, the gambling scene might be viewed as the culminating result of several preceding moments. In this light, the drive of the opera can be seen not as a grand motion toward the labored, and frankly anti-climactic, moment of intimacy afforded to Polina and Alexei. With mass psychology in the forefront, Prokofiev's methods, however unconventional or nuanced, warrant an analysis that focuses on the expectation perpetuated by the interactions of individuals in the crowd of gamblers.

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[21] Prokofiev, *Materials*, 28.
[22] Robinson, "Dostoevsky and Opera," 105.
[23] Ibid.

Round and Round They Go...

Textually, the roulette scene (Act IV, Tableau ii) opens, like the beginning of the opera, in short spurted statements propelling the action forward. The abruptly blurted phrases and musical and textual repetition augment the absurdity of this scene, and, as we will see, the repetition, which appears with increasing frequency, is seemingly without reason.

At first, the characters that encircle the roulette table do not engage with one another. Each individual is self-consumed and only concerned with independent gambling strategies. As a result, in addition to its brusque delivery, the "musical prose"—the musically inflected text of each person—is constantly changing, shifting with every character.[24] Further contributing to the seclusion of each gambler and the overall confusion of this fast-paced scene is the quick exchange of languages from Russian, to French, and to English. The linguistic multiplicity and individualized inflection afforded each character also causes this scene to seem populated—public instead of private, and yet each individual speaking in his or her own language is left in babelic solitude. Additionally, the odd circumstances and the musical texture of this scene, including unexpected fluctuations in dynamics, frequent alternation of chromatic and diatonic harmonic contexts, wide registral leaps, and a continuously diversifying instrumental texture, draw attention to the awkward encounters between individual characters. But it is the increasingly frequent repetition of seemingly senseless musical phrases that allow this scene to become particularly satiric.

Contrary to the opening of the opera Tableau ii begins with a fanfare and a motivic introduction to significant characters such as the Croupier and Alexei, but most of gamblers in this scene remain nameless and tuneless. Compelling the actors is the orchestral accompaniment

[24] Prokofiev, *Materials*, 28.

simulating the revolution of the roulette table (Example 2). The orchestral eighth-note pulse that links the alternating calls of the Croupier with the reactions of the enthused gamblers perpetually moves this scene forward while also forcing the music to settle into a static rhythmic motion. When the Croupier states his characteristic motive "*Les jeux sont fait*" ("no more bets"), resting on the descending semi-tone F♯ to F♮, Alexei announces "*na krasnuyu*" ("on red"), the first of many subsequent bets on the color red, and following suit, each gambler searches for his or her independent betting strategies, bellowing pulsing eighth-note phrases that center on the pitch B.

The Old Gambler places a bet on "the second dozen" to the pitches D-F♯-B, and the Sickly Gambler enters in muffled imitation. Soon, at R. 477, the Croupier's motive sounds again, announcing "*rien ne va plus*," and at the call "*dix-neuf*" ("Nineteen"), as shown in Example 2, Alexei affirms that red has won with his own recurring motive defiantly returning to B.[25] After a short musical interlude, at R. 479 the Croupier calls for bets a third time, and here the Unlucky Gambler and the Venerable Dame exchange the notes B-F♯-B, continuing the ostinato of eighth-notes like the tick-tick-tick of the roulette wheel, and through their mutual exchange, also drawing attention to the camaraderie budding among those crowded around the roulette table.

The musical pacing of the roulette scene is maintained by the constant eighth-note pulse of the singers. But this pulse, together with the incessant return to the pitches B and F♯, also gives the impression of stasis. This sense of stasis, evident in the eighth-note pulse and recurring rhythmic and melodic gestures, mirrors the banality of placing bets, rolling dice, and the other repetitive acts associated with gambling. But Prokofiev instills the musical texture with occasional chromaticism to maintain a dramatic fluidity in this scene. The perpetual motion of

[25] The multiplicity of languages (the opera is primarily in Russian, but also features French, German, and English) further augments the uniting of the crowd, since the apparent mimicry also includes gaining a shared language among several characters. The politics that underline this observation, while interesting are outside the scope of this paper.

the roulette ostinato never really seems to progress anywhere, and yet, slight waves of motion are achieved through the alteration of chromatic pitches in a single voice, which bring moments of harmonic variety. As the action evolves, the orchestral music is increasingly diversified, but the motivic gestures of various singers become suggestive of one another signifying a collective transformation from the seclusion of independent gamblers to the collective of the gambling crowd.

The Roulette Theme

In the opening of the gambling scene, Prokofiev employs a recurring orchestral theme to simulate the cyclical revolution of the roulette wheel itself, but this theme also functions as an architectural component of the formal structure. The Roulette Theme is spliced into four smaller motives that often follow the Croupier's exclamations "*Les jeux sont faits*" or "*Rien ne va plus*." In an effort to simulate the unpredictability of gambling, these motives do not return in any determined order, and are labeled Motives A-D in Example 3 according to their first appearance in the score. Interspersed with new material and the imitative exclamations of gamblers, the reappearance of the fragments from the Roulette Theme, regardless of which of the four motives sounds, always redirect our attention back to the roulette table. As shown in Chart 1, the motives identified in the Roulette Theme do not often appear in succession, but with every manifestation of this theme, the characters collected around the roulette table become engrossed anew in their habit of gambling. Isolated characteristic measures of each roulette motive appear unexpectedly and unpredictably to reunite the crowd. As the Roulette Theme is increasingly interrupted by motivic elaborations or entirely new musical material, the exclamations of the gamblers also become fragmented, segmenting into short, imitative spurts that carry from one player to the next.

After several minutes of static pulsation, at R. 483, the schizophrenic musical texture is momentarily halted, and Alexei is featured singing a melodious ode to the roulette table. This is the moment when the independent members of the gambling crowd begin to embody the characteristics of a shared community. As one of the longest passages delivered by a single character in this scene, Alexei's soliloquy becomes a transition which draws attention away from the independent gamblers and toward one specific person. Following Alexei's exclamation that he has won three times in a row, Prokofiev drastically shifts our focus from the protagonist at one table to a scandal that erupts at another table. At R. 486, the orchestra unexpectedly pauses, but the eighth-note propulsion continues in the exchange between two gamblers.

Hunchback Gambler: *(Banging the table on the first beat of each measure)*
Madame...you're taking all my winnings.

Old Suspicious Woman: Ah no, no, Monsieur, these chips are mine.

Hunchback Gambler: I beg your pardon, I've just won them.

Old Suspicious Woman: No...No...they're mine.

Hunchback Gambler: *(Protesting)*
They're mine.

Old Suspicious Woman: They're mine.[26]

Although Prokofiev physically shifts our gaze to the second roulette table, musically he still maintains continuity with the previous passage. As can be seen in Example 4, the bickering between the Old Suspicious Woman and the Hunchback Gambler recalls musical material heard previously in this scene. For example, the ostinato eighth-note pulse initiated by the Hunchback, which alternates between a stable F♯ and pitches that descend chromatically, recalls the Reckless

[26] Act IV, Scene ii, *The Gambler Libretto*, 34.

Gambler's utterance at R. 480. But in the more immediate context, the C♯-D fragment that the two hostile players exchange on the word "Mo'i" ["Mine"] (Example 4.2) stems from Alexei's monologue in which he repeats the text, "Vtroyne, Vtroyne" ["threefold, threefold"] (Example 4.1), simulating the excitement of winning again and again in the music. From the moment the Old Suspicious Woman is accused of stealing the Hunchback Gambler's chips, the subtle imitation that has pervaded since the opening of the roulette scene bursts forth in full force to prepare the gamblers for the abandonment of their individuality as they claim their membership to the collected crowd.

The moment the bickering gamblers are drawn center stage, the isolated presence of individual gamblers is forgotten, and a small group forms around them. At this point, as illustrated in Chart 1, the Roulette theme is suspended, and an entirely new mood emerges. The orchestra starts a hesitant, quarter-note pizzicato passage in unison (R.487), and the atmosphere begins to shift, but the singers continue to propel the eighth-notes forward, breaking into echoes of infectious minor sixths that emerge in summons of the Croupier (R. 488) (Example 4.3). This turning point, R. 486 – 488, is the first instance where the individuals draw together physically, textually, and musically as a collective. The motivic contagion in this passage is a sign of mania in the crowd, and a premonition of the repetition that will plague the gamblers in their final descent into gambling-induced madness. When the individuals are divided amongst themselves, as in the scandal between the Hunchback and the Old Suspicious Woman, the act of gambling, symbolized by the Roulette Theme in particular, serves as a device to unite and reunite the members of the casino. Thus, following the conflict and momentary suspension of the Roulette Theme, Prokofiev corrals the gamblers and confines them to the table once more with the sound of the revolving roulette wheel. Distracting the players from the small scandal, the Croupier

prompts the players to place their bets, and at R. 490 the fragmented parts of the Roulette Theme return.

Follow the Leader

One of the necessary facets of the crowd, as often depicted by contemporaneous theorists, is a leader that acts as commander of the group.[27] This leader is not usually a solitary figure that stands at the head of the collective; the role of leader is often a privileged position to which members of the community aspire. This role is fluid, and in the case of gambling, depending on the outcome of a particular round, the position of leader can be left open for any and every member of the crowd to assume.

Despite the various national, class, and social identities of the characters in *The Gambler*, Mikhail Bakhtin asserts that the act of gambling in this portrayal neutralizes the roles that these players have outside of the casino, and easily allows them to transition into the crowd amassed around the roulette table. In his analysis of Dostoevsky's novella, Bakhtin observes that,

> ...People from various (hierarchical) positions in life, once crowded around the roulette table, are made equal by the rules of the game and in the face of fortune, chance. Their behavior at the roulette table in no way corresponds to the role they play in ordinary life. The atmosphere of gambling is an atmosphere of sudden and quick changes of fate, of instantaneous rises and falls, that is, of crownings/decrownings.[28]

Bakhtin's imagery of rapid crowning and decrowning accompanies the successions of victory and defeat. When abused through addiction, gambling as a repetitive act is not driven by an aberrant lust for money, but is rather an unyielding desire for power. The roulette table bears the potential for fiscal reward, but moreover, it can award the player an elevated social status, which, if successful, holds the promise of uncompromising celebrity.

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[27] Freud, *Group Psychology*, 13.
[28] Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics,* 171.

Although mass psychology was already a popular subject at the beginning of the twentieth century, after the Second World War such theories proliferated, coming to be viewed as a means through which to understand the underpinnings of large social structures. Once again, Baudelaire's navigation between solitude and multitude was evident in intellectual circles, but only insofar as his predicament fostered an optimistic vision of individual potential and a communal sense of belonging. Invoking descriptions of crowd behavior that were observed by Elias Canetti in the aftermath of the Second World War, in 1987 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari arrived at the metaphor of a pack of wolves to describe the prevalent dynamics of power in the crowd. Imagining the pack amassed around the roulette table, their metaphor of the crowd allows for an easy comparison to the scene in Prokofiev's opera. "Canetti notes that in a pack each member is alone even in the company of others (for example, wolves on the hunt); each takes care of himself at the same time as participating in the band..." Canetti continues, "'when the pack forms a ring around the fire, each man will have neighbors to the right and left, but no one behind him.'"[29] In the crowd, note Deleuze and Guattari, "the leader of the pack...plays move by move, [and] must wager everything every hand."[30] In this way, both the fire and the roulette wheel reassign the leader with every round, but the leader can only be elected from those amassed in the circle. Gaining entry to the gambling pack is privileged, since, without the financial wherewithal, one cannot breach the boundaries of the circle; but once awarded access, the members of the pack possess an equal opportunity to reign victorious as leaders of the group.

As formulated by Deleuze and Guattari, the unpredictable social dynamics of the pack, reaffirmed in the opera with each round of roulette, detract from any one leader's ability to

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[29] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 33 – 34.

[30] Ibid., 33.

acquire "stable power."[31] The fleetingness of power in the crowd reinforces the communality among those gathered at the table, since the role of leader might fluidly pass from one member to the next and present the same optimistic opportunity to each. Because of the capriciousness with which this power is delegated, each gambler comes to identify with his or her neighbor at the table, and, as in the case of Jeffrey Schnapp's description of the "emblematic crowd," with every subsequent win "the multitude faces its own visage and vice versa in an act of mirroring that allows for no fundamental ontological gap between leader and led," between winner and loser.[32]

In *The Gambler*, Alexei establishes and reinforces his position as leader after several triumphs at the roulette table. Alexei's repeated bets on red and his subsequent winnings as a result ensure and continuously reassure his role as leader of the crowd. Through the struggle for power, Alexei's repeated crowning forces all those who had previously possessed equal access to now shift their gaze toward him. Together they aspire to be like him and to attain his exalted status. Recalling the power of suggestion in Le Bon's observations, once crowned, a leader of the crowd has the ability to convince the group of anything through the reenactment of successful deeds. "When an affirmation has been sufficiently repeated and there is unanimity in this repetition...what is called a current of opinion is formed and the powerful mechanism of contagion intervenes. Ideas, sentiments, emotions, and beliefs possess in crowds a contagious power."[33] As the contagion spreads, one by one the members of the pack are captivated by their leader, since, as Le Bon suggests, "contagion is so powerful a force that even the sentiment of personal interest disappears under its action."[34]

Following the scandal between the Hunchback and the Old Suspicious Woman, the

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[31] Ibid., 358.
[32] Jeffrey T. Schnapp "Mob Porn," in *Crowds*, Eds. Jeffrey T. Schnapp and Matthew Tiews (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), 5.
[33] Le Bon, *The Crowd*, 122.
[34] Ibid.

gamblers begin to form a community, uniting through their outrage. Alexei's continued success captivates the attention of the other players, and at R.494, Alexei once again states his recurring motive to confirm his winnings. However, in this instance he adds the exclamation: "My luck is unfailing! Now I am the Master," over an elaboration of Motive C. Together, several of the crowded gamblers cheer "what uncanny luck!", and it is this moment which serves as the declaration of Alexei's crowning. From here the gamblers quickly agree to bet as Alexei does, leading first to a textual mimicry of the phrase "Krasnaya!" ["Red!"] at R. 506 (Example 5.1), and then to a musical and textual imitation of the Reckless and Unlucky Gamblers (Example 5.2). By R. 512, the gamblers are convinced that Alexei is their leader, embracing him and accepting each other as belonging to the same shared community. Here, the fragmented music and textual mimicry of the singers is allowed to take hold, and, with Alexei as their coroneted leader, the Roulette Theme is suspended as a unifying device once and for all.

After Alexei's crowning, moments of textual and musical imitation become increasingly frequent and repeat from one gambler to the next (Example 6). As Prokofiev claimed, this mimicry substitutes for the traditional chorus, and serves to populate the chaotic atmosphere of the gambling scene. Rather than give a single line in unison, the characters at the roulette table sing the same line over and over. The repetition of these short outbursts illustrates the multitude of the crowd, but utterances given by soloists among the crowd also give the impression of many solitary individuals, thus musically and textually simulating Baudelaire's "multitude, solitude" dilemma. The activity of these brusque statements, with quick outbursts being thrust from one individual to the next, further illuminates the excitement of the crowd. And so, on the verge of mania, the gamblers encroach on the roulette table, and betting as Alexei does, they begin to reap the benefits of his successes.

The Final Eruption

The shared space and common activity of gambling restricts the crowd, and the leader ensures that his minions do as he does, making it difficult for them to disperse.[35] Perhaps Prokofiev was familiar with Dostoevsky's comparison of gambling to his famous portrayal of the lives of impoverished prisoners in *House of the Dead*. As Dostoevsky remarked, the novella "The Gambler" was "a *description of a sort of hell*, a unique sort of 'prison bathhouse.'"[36] This prison is unique precisely because the boundaries that restrict gamblers are not physical, but psychological. Restrained to the table through the simultaneous struggle for power and in the firm clutches of addiction, these gamblers are unable to break free, since even in solitude they are still united by their hunger for the game.

Elias Canetti described a group with a uniting cause (in this case the allure of chance) as a "closed crowd" confined to a space with imagined boundaries.[37] Those collected in *The Gambler* are restricted to the casino, and more specifically to the ring around the roulette table, but when their leader has been declared, this amassed group seeks to break free from its prison. At the height of musical and textual repetition, R. 547 – 554, as shown in Chart 2, the crowd transforms into an uncontrollable mob spurred on by the contagious expletives, "*dvestyi tïsych*" ("two-hundred thousand"), "*vot on*" ("that's him"), "*schastlivets*" ("lucky devil"), which climatically burst into the *Entr'acte*. Canetti terms this type of crowd dispersal the "eruption," because, much like an atomic explosion, the individuals push forth "into the squares and streets of a town where [they] can move about freely, exposed to everything and attracting everyone."[38] In their charge off stage, the pack of gamblers transition from a "closed" to an "open" crowd. The closed crowd

[35] Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, trans. Carol Stewart (New York: Viking Press, 1962), 17.
[36] Emphasis in original, Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 172.
[37] Canetti, 16 – 17.
[38] Canetti, 20 – 22.

that was once restricted to the roulette table is overcome with the need to spread out, but tragically, they never forget their mutual agreement—their covenant with Alexei.

The closing of Tableau ii is fraught with a madness that is reflected in the mess of incessant chatter among all of the players. At R. 549, upon the Reckless Gambler's announcement that Alexei has won "another two-hundred thousand francs!" the gamblers erupt with excitement and, as in the images below, some productions place emphasis on the "open" crowd by amassing throngs of people to herald Alexei as they tear across the stage.

Images: Act IV, *Entracte*. The 2009 production of *The Gambler* directed by Dmitri Tcherniakov at the Staatsoper in Berlin.

In the final scene of the opera, the crowd breaks free, sprawling in all directions and abandoning Alexei. Meeting Polina, Alexei invites her to join him in celebration, but upon his proposition to share his wealth with her, Polina is offended beyond consolation that Alexei would suggest payment for her services. After a short exchange, Polina storms out. The curtain is drawn with Alexei standing deserted in a daze from his manic, gambling-induced adventure. In these moments, only fragmented and superimposed variations of the roulette theme can be heard as tragic echoes of Alexei's once heroic victories, which suggests that, regardless of one's financial success, Prokofiev believes that an addiction to gambling is resolutely defeating.

Conclusion: Open Crowds and Hidden Agendas

Historically, the period of the 1910s and 20s was a time when the world was collectively struggling with the destruction of war and, as a result, individuals were suddenly faced with a sense of loss for both nationhood and personal identity. *The Gambler* aptly reflects many aspects of this period, but none more than this crisis of self in the negotiation between solitude and multitude. The personal responsibility to uphold a particular national image meant that many individuals sought refuge in the stronghold of collective society. However, for artists, the disparity between personal opinion and the communal ideology could often only be met through the distanced metaphors of the artistic medium.

Although Prokofiev claimed to have deliberately detached himself from political affiliations, one cannot simply extract an artist from the environment in which he existed.[39] While Prokofiev did not seek out the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM), the

[39] Morrison, Simon Alexander. *The People's Artist: Prokofiev's Soviet Years*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 53.

anti-Prokofiev campaign that the RAPM promoted hindered Prokofiev's professional aspirations and subsequently prevented the Russian premiere of *The Gambler* in 1929.[40] In fact, the opera was not staged in the Soviet Union until 1974.[41] There is no doubt that the reception history of *The Gambler*, and, arguably, the character of Prokofiev's late style in general, would have been quite different were the Soviet forces more supportive of Prokofiev's earlier experimental activities. Nevertheless, the composer was fortunate to have the option of premiering his opera abroad, and such experiences prior to returning home made an impression on his work to come.

At a time when political agendas were changing on a regular basis, it was of popular opinion, perhaps even one shared by Prokofiev, that aligning oneself with any political arena was certainly more dangerous than abstaining altogether.[42] Although, in its investigation of group psychology, this paper does not directly address the role of politics, a reflection of the times unmistakably emerges in *The Gambler,* and retrospectively unveils some common themes across multiple social boundaries.

Like the methodologies of Freud and Bakhtin, Prokofiev's dramatic works might be further abstracted from their musical context to inform our understanding of the composer's social and political views. *The Gambler* paints an image of the solitary individual who, bursting through the confines of his or her identity, becomes subsumed in a collective ideology. Russian

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[40] Robinson, "Love for Three Operas" 297.

[41] Although the political climate that halted the Soviet production of *The Gambler* at the end of the 1920s is of course relevant to Prokofiev's composition history, it is not directly relevant to the scope of the investigation in this paper. For information on how socialist realism took hold in the Soviet state, see Suny, "Culture and Society in the Socialist Motherland." On Prokofiev's personal involvement with Soviet politics at this time, and particularly the early 1930s before his final return to Russia, see Simon Morrison and Nelly Kravetz, "The Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October, or How the Specter of Communism Haunted Prokofiev," *The Journal of Musicology* 23/2 (2006): 227 – 262. Some relevant discussion of the RAPM's rejection of *The Gambler* can be found in Harlow Robinson, "Love for Three Operas," 297 – 298.

[42] As Larry Sitsky once wrote about music during the tumultuous political climate in Russia at this time: "the law of the land changed; what was acceptable one day was subversive the next..." Larry Sitsky, *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1900 – 1929* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), x.

intellectuals of the early twentieth century, attempting to escape the lulling repetition of the communal dogma, continuously aspired to maintain individuality within the sanctioned space of their creative endeavors all the while obscuring their own personal sentiments. Perhaps for Prokofiev, the gambling crowd in *The Gambler* provided a voice, and the operatic stage afforded him just such a space.

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CONFINED SPACES / ERUPTED BOUNDARIES:

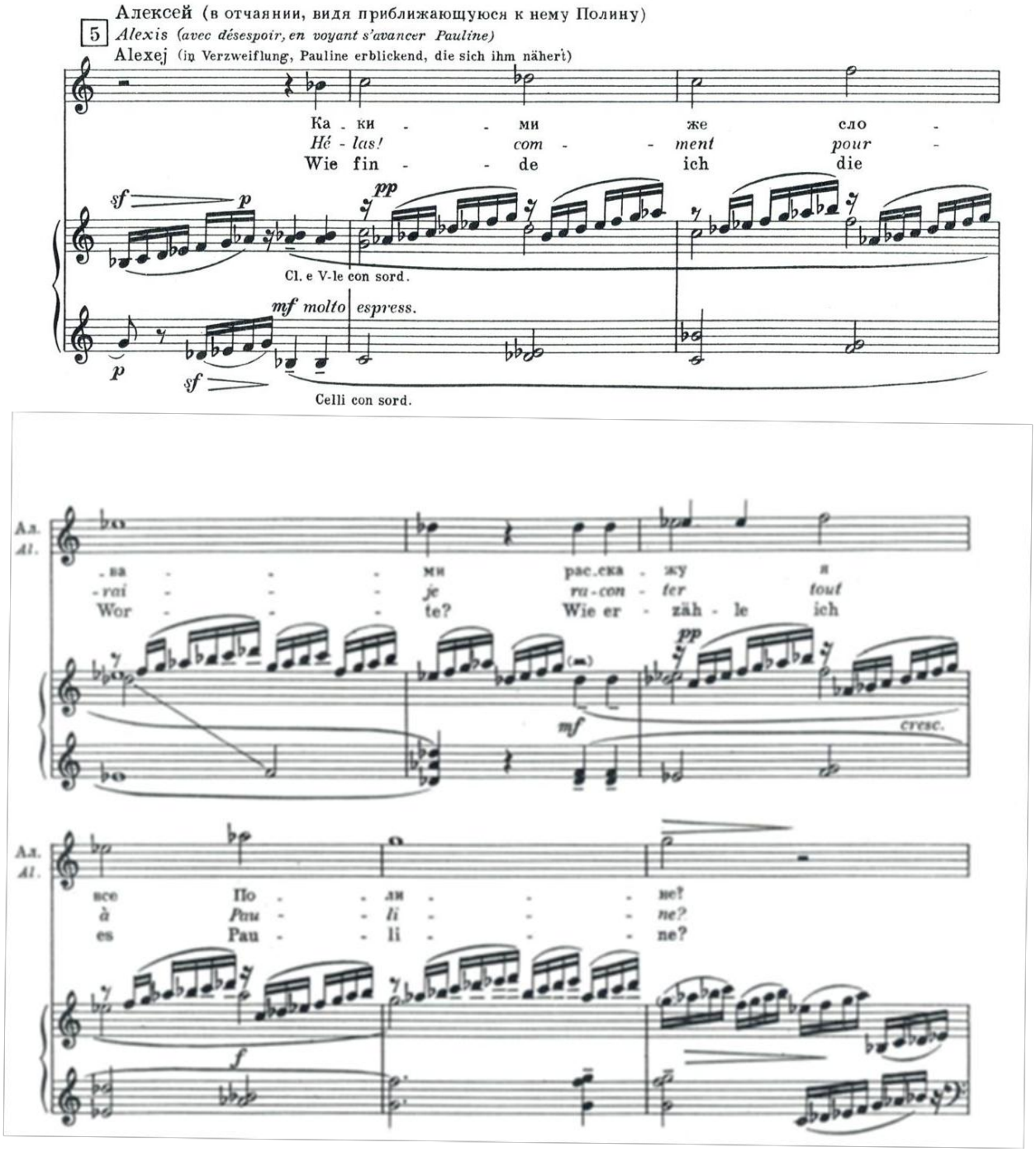
CROWD BEHAVIOR IN PROKOFIEV'S *THE GAMBLER*

Musical Examples

by

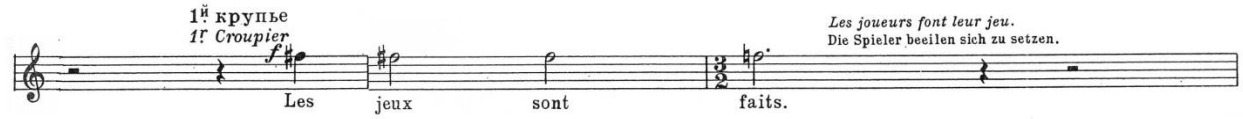
Danielle Sofer

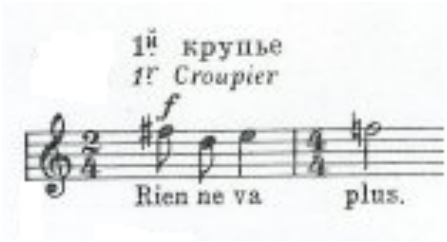
Example 1: "Musical Prose" Act I, *The Gambler*, R. 5 – 6.



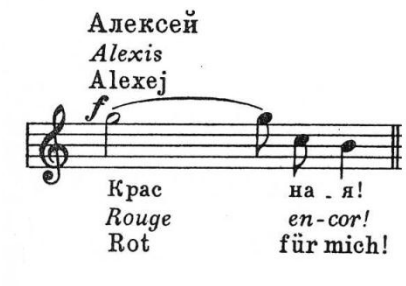
Example 2: Representative leitmotifs from Act IV, Tableau ii, *The Gambler*

The Croupier



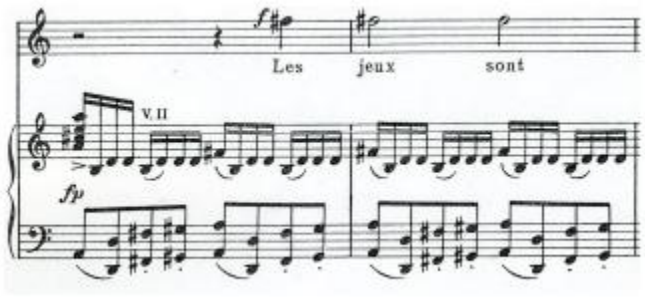


Alexei

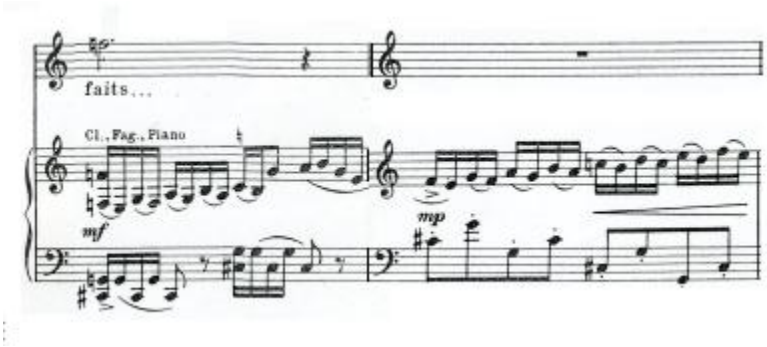


Example 3: Motives from "The Roulette Theme"

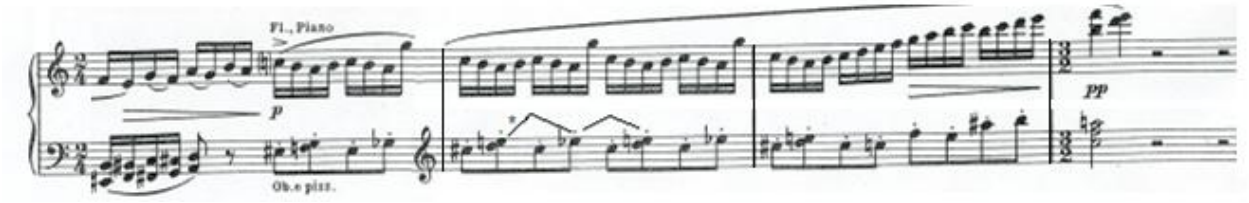
Motive A (R. 474/3-4).



Motive B (R. 475/0-1).



Motive C (R. 477/2-5).



Motive D (R. 480-481).

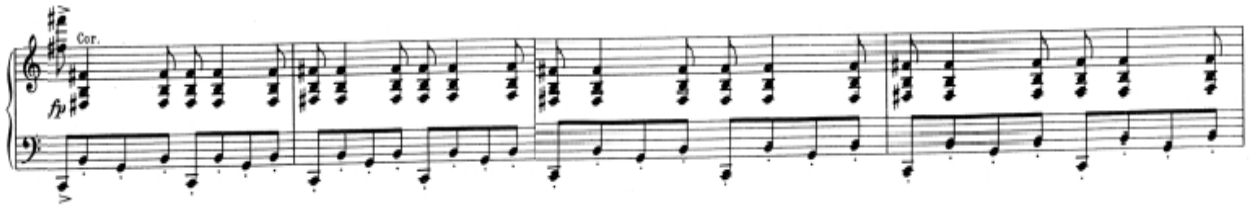
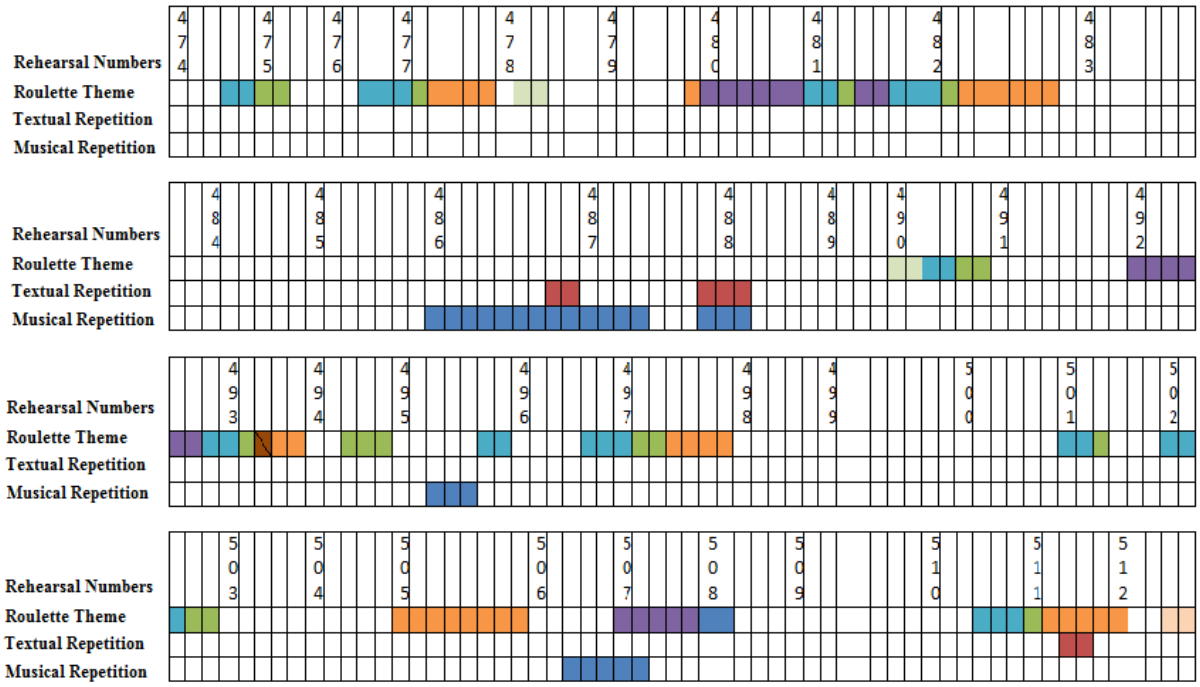


Chart I: Graph of Repetition in Act IV, Tableau ii, R. 474 – 512 grouped by measures.

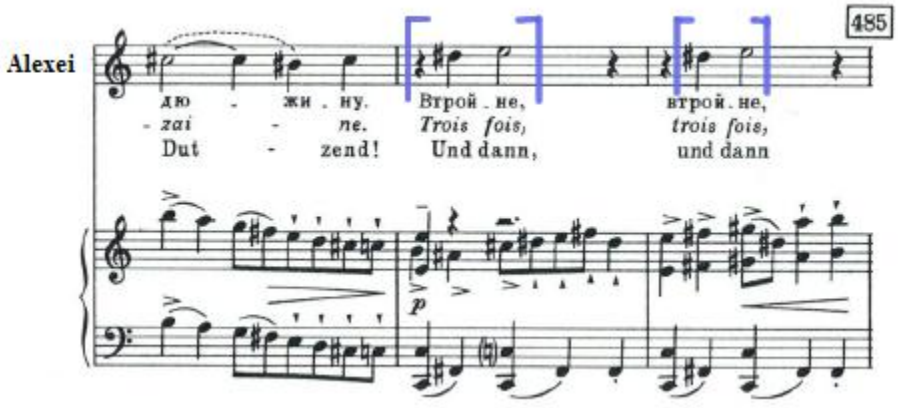


KEY:

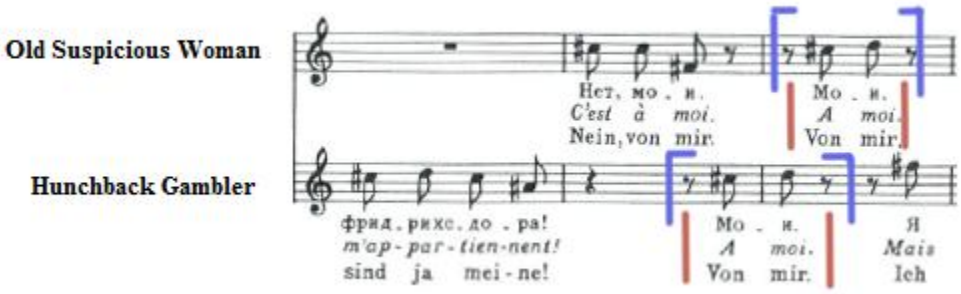
	Color			
Roulette Theme	Motive A	Motive B	Motive C	Motive D
Text Repetition				
Musical Repetition (not Roulette Theme)				

Example 4: Musical and textual imitation as evidence of contagion, R. 484 – 488.

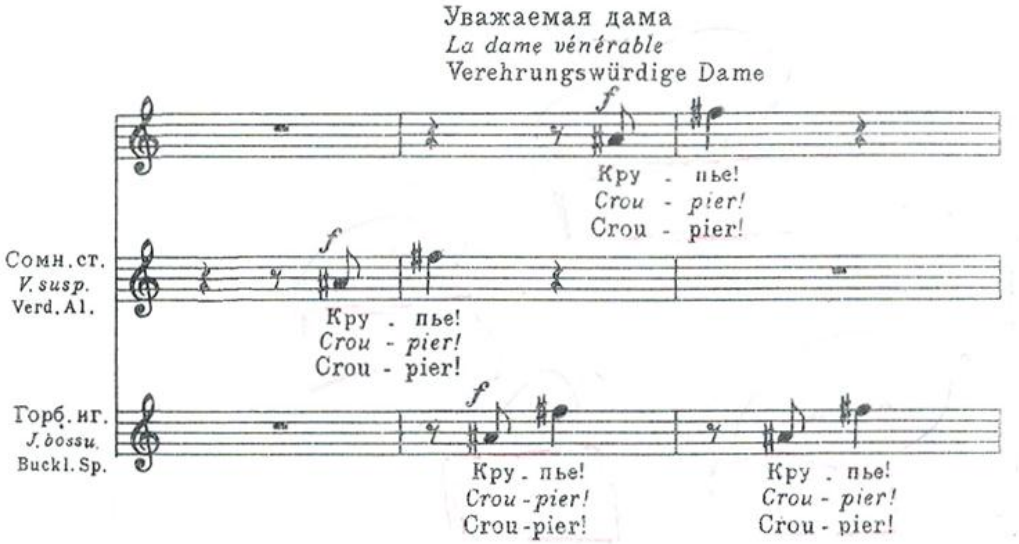
1) mm. 64 – 66



2) mm. 80 - 82

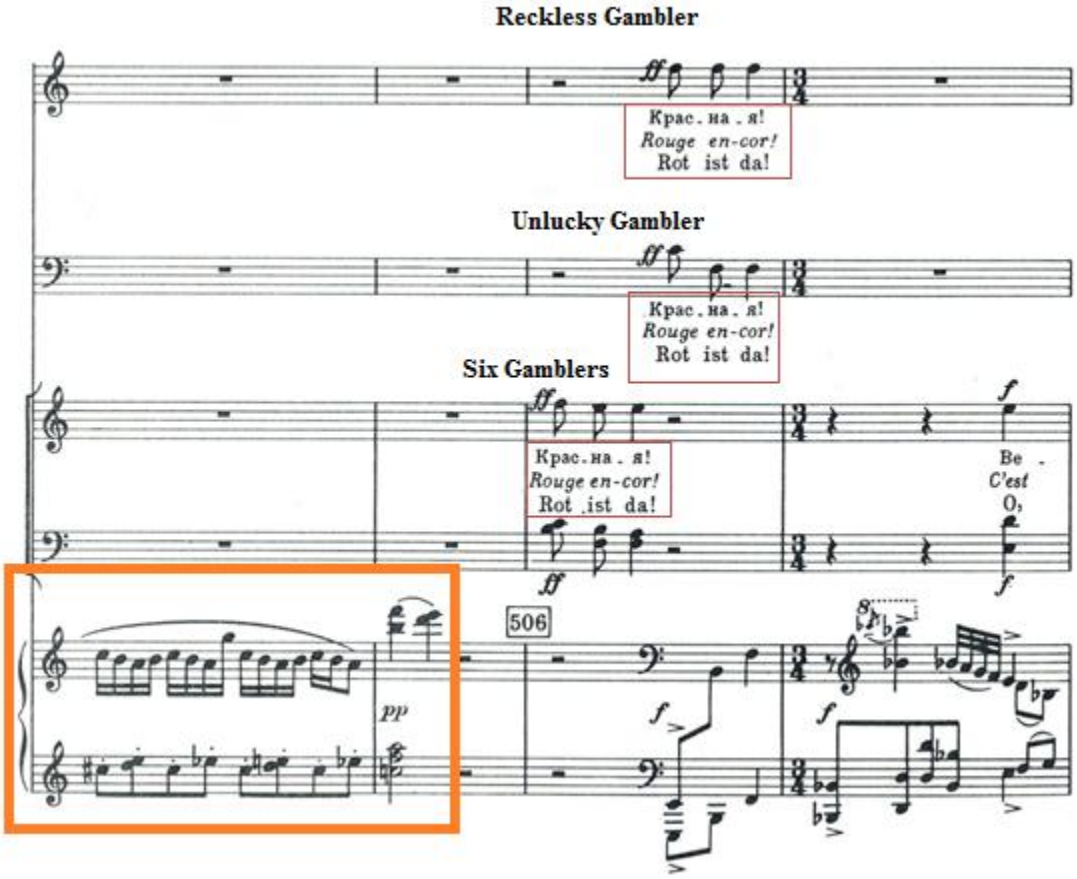


3) mm. 90 - 92:

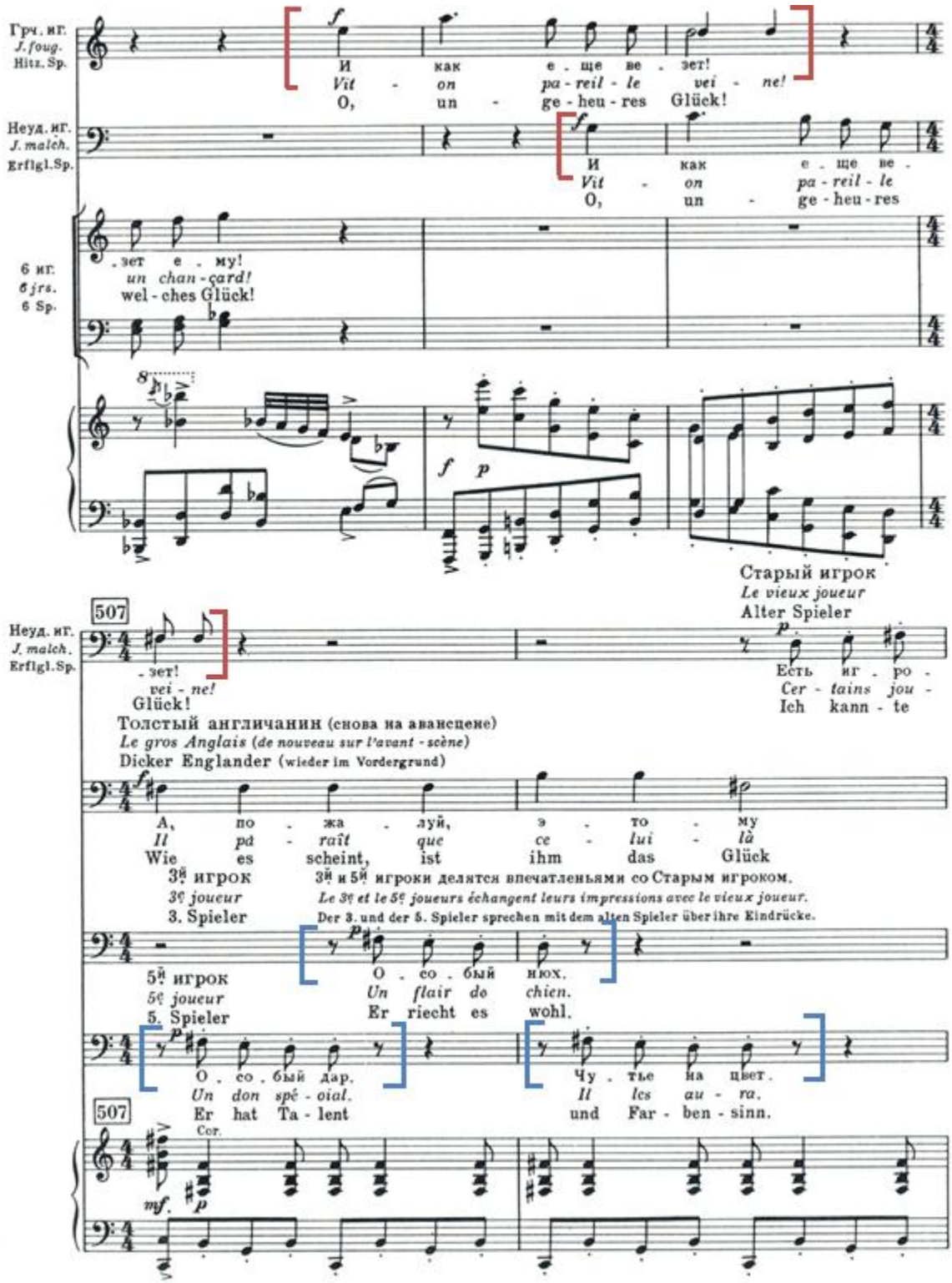


Example 5: Musical and textual imitation following Alexei's crowning, R. 506 – 508.

1) mm. 198 – 201



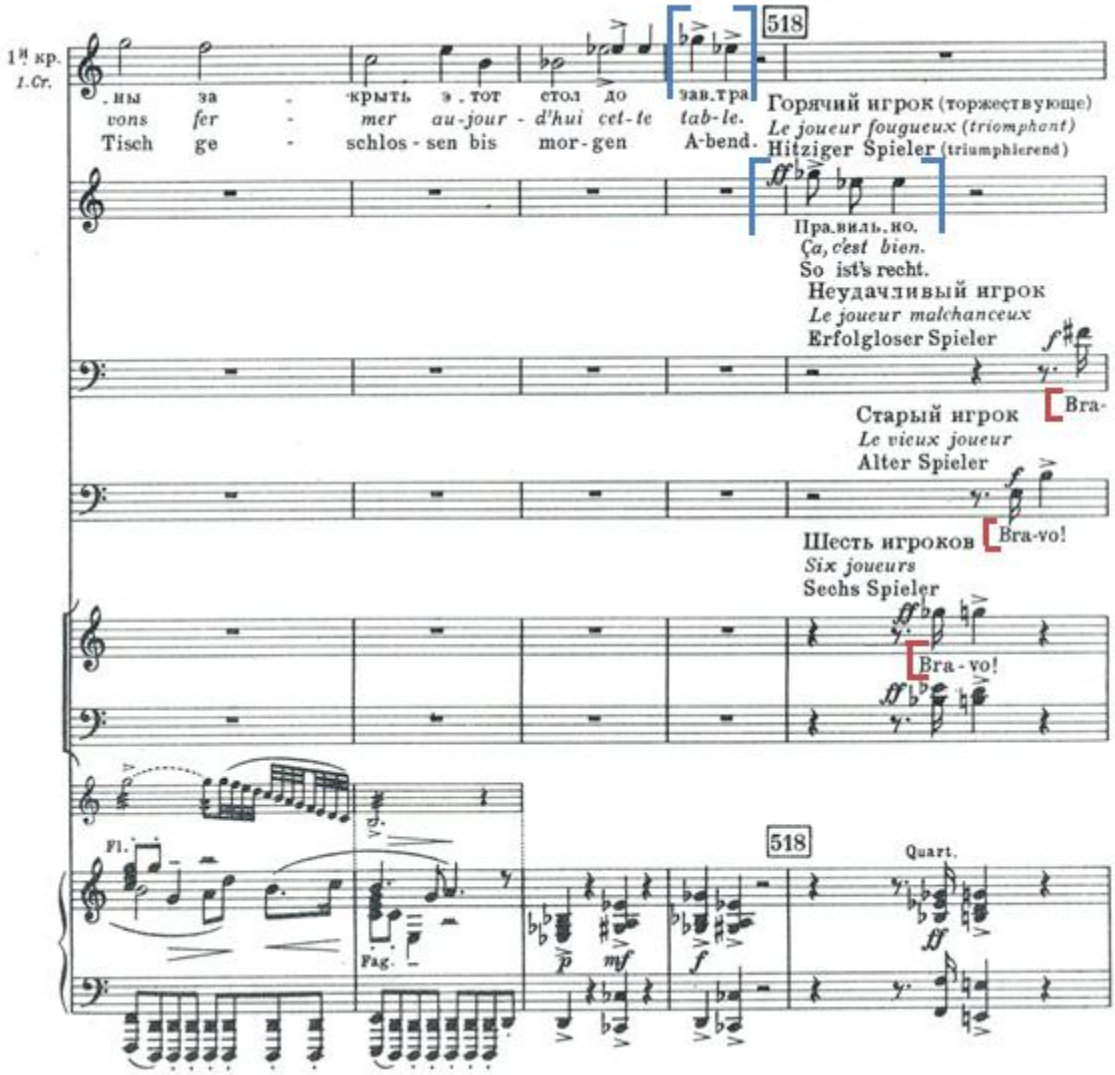
2) mm. 207 – 212

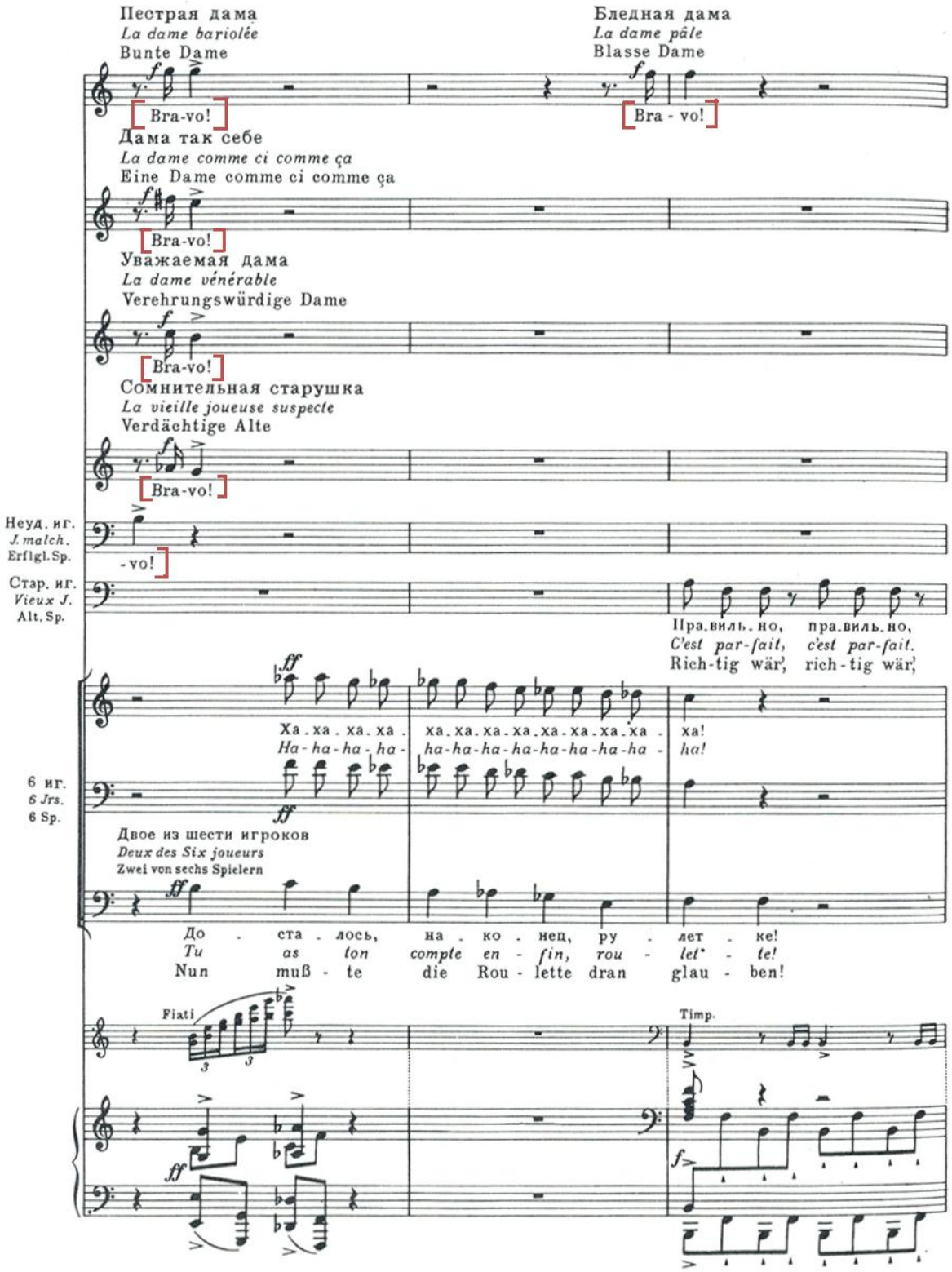

Грч. иг.
J. foug.
Hitz. Sp.
И как е . ще ве . зет!
Vit - on pa - reil - le vei - ne!
O, un - ge - heu - res Glück!
Неуд. иг.
J. malch.
Erflgl.Sp.
6 иг.
6 jrs.
6 Sp.
. зет е . му!
un chan - card!
wel - ches Glück!
Старый игрок
Le vieux joueur
Alter Spieler
507
Неуд. иг.
J. malch.
Erflgl.Sp.
- зет!
vei - ne!
Glück!
Есть иг . ро -
Cer - tains jou -
Ich kann - te
Толстый англичанин (снова на авансцене)
Le gros Anglais (de nouveau sur l'avant - scène)
Dicker Englander (wieder im Vordergrund)
А, по - жа - луй, э - то - му
Il pa - raît que ce - lui - là
Wie es scheint, ist ihm das Glück
3й игрок
3e joueur
3. Spieler
3й и 5й игроки делятся впечатленьями со Старым игроком.
Le 3e et le 5e joueurs échangent leurs impressions avec le vieux joueur.
Der 3. und der 5. Spieler sprechen mit dem alten Spieler über ihre Eindrücke.
5й игрок
5e joueur
5. Spieler
О . со . бый нюх.
Un flair do chien.
Er riecht es wohl.
О . со . бый дар.
Un don spé - cial.
Er hat Ta - lent
Чу . тье на цвет .
Il les au - ra.
und Far - ben - sinn.
507
Cor.

Example 6: Musical and textual imitation as a "populating" device.

"*Bravo*" and echoing laughter:

1) R. 518




Пестрая дама
La dame bariolée
Bunte Dame
Бледная дама
La dame pâle
Blasse Dame
Bra-vo!
Bra - vo!
Дама так себе
La dame comme ci comme ça
Eine Dame comme ci comme ça
Bra-vo!
Уважаемая дама
La dame vénérable
Verehrungswürdige Dame
Bra-vo!
Сомнительная старушка
La vieille joueuse suspecte
Verdächtige Alte
Bra-vo!
Неуд. иг.
J. malch.
Erflgl. Sp.
-vo!
Стар. иг.
Vieux J.
Alt. Sp.
Пра.виль.но, пра.виль.но,
C'est par-fait, c'est par-fait.
Rich-tig wär', rich-tig wär',
6 иг.
6 Jrs.
6 Sp.
Ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха.ха!
Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha!
Двое из шести игроков
Deux des Six joueurs
Zwei von sechs Spielern
До . ста . лось, на . ко . нец, ру . лет . ке!
Tu as ton compte en - fin, rou - let' - te!
Nun muß - te die Rou - lette dran glau - ben!
Fiati
Timp.

2) R. 529

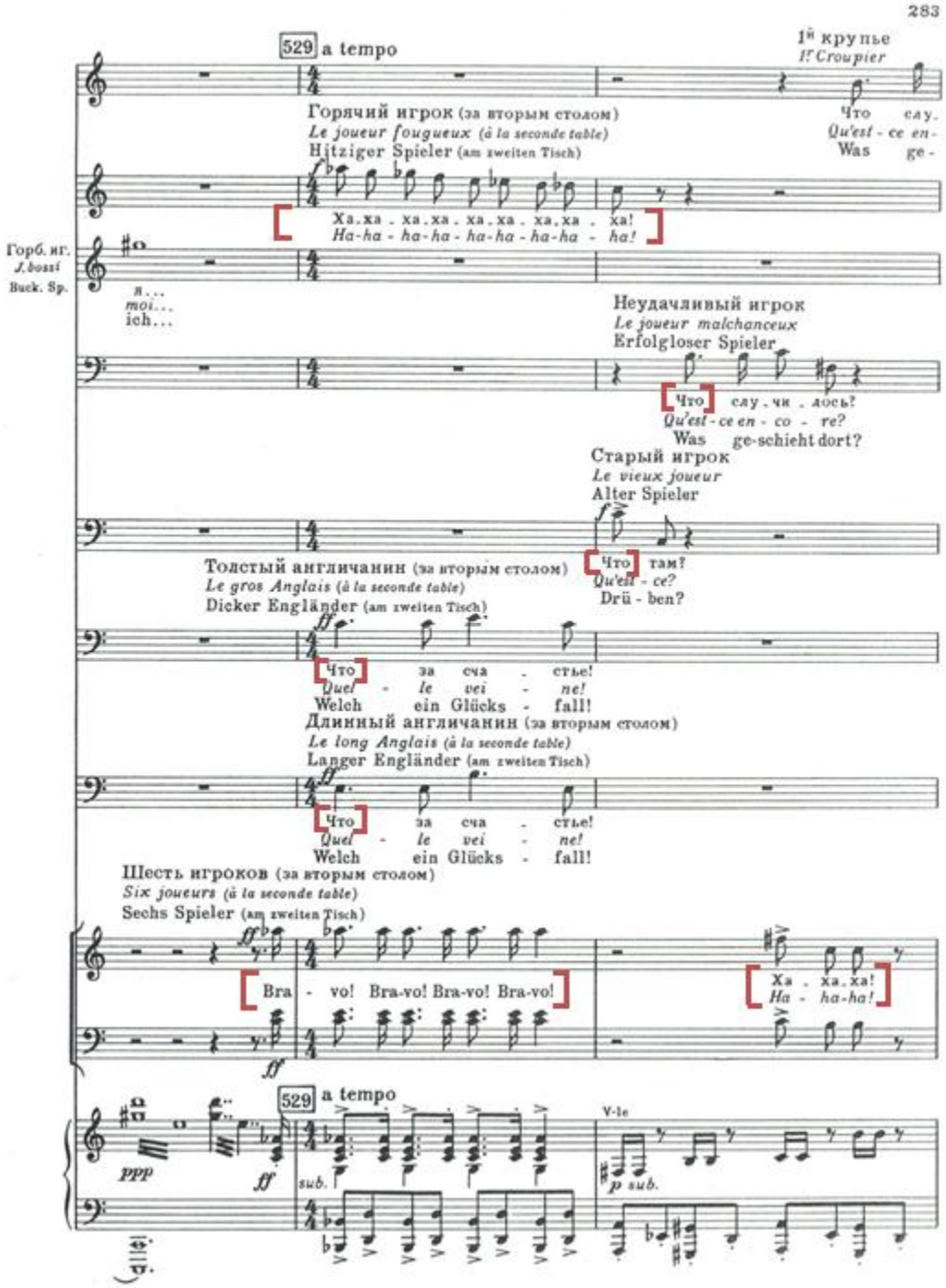
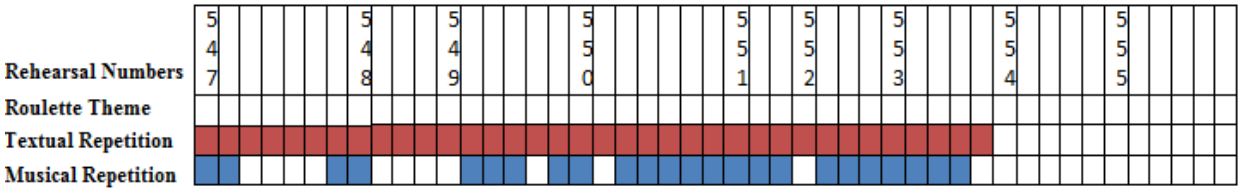

283
529 a tempo
Горячий игрок (за вторым столом)
Le joueur fougueux (à la seconde table)
Hitziger Spieler (am zweiten Tisch)
Ха.ха . ха.ха . ха.ха . ха.ха . ха!
Ha-ha - ha-ha - ha-ha - ha-ha - ha!
Iй крупье
I' Croupier
Что сау.
Qu'est - ce en-
Was ge -
Горб. иг.
J. bossi
Buck. Sp.
я...
moi...
ich...
Неудачливый игрок
Le joueur malchanceux
Erfolgloser Spieler
Что слу.чи.лось?
Qu'est - ce en - co - re?
Was ge-schieht dort?
Старый игрок
Le vieux joueur
Alter Spieler
Что там?
Qu'est - ce?
Drü - ben?
Толстый англичанин (за вторым столом)
Le gros Anglais (à la seconde table)
Dicker Engländer (am zweiten Tisch)
Что за сча - стье!
Quel - le vei - ne!
Welch ein Glücks - fall!
Длинный англичанин (за вторым столом)
Le long Anglais (à la seconde table)
Langer Engländer (am zweiten Tisch)
Что за сча - стье!
Quel - le vei - ne!
Welch ein Glücks - fall!
Шесть игроков (за вторым столом)
Six joueurs (à la seconde table)
Sechs Spieler (am zweiten Tisch)
Bra - vo! Bra-vo! Bra-vo! Bra-vo!
Ха . ха.ха!
Ha - ha-ha!
529 a tempo
V-le
ppp
sub.
p sub.

Chart II: Graph of Repetition in Act IV, Tableau ii, R. 574 – 554 grouped by measures.



KEY:

	Color
Text Repetition	
Musical Repetition	

Appendix

List of characters in order of appearance:

Alexei, tutor to the General's children
Polina, the General's step-daughter
Blanche, *demi-mondaine*
General, retired officer
Marquis
Mr. Astley, rich English nobleman
Baron
Babulenka
Prince Nilsky
Potapitch

List of characters in Act IV, Tableau ii, in order of appearance[1]:

Croupier #1
Alexei
Reckless Gambler
Unlucky Gambler
Old Gambler
Sickly Gambler
Gambler #3
La Dame Comme ci-Comme ça
The Pale Lady
Fat English
Tall English
Hunchback Gambler
Old Suspicious Woman
La Dame Venerable
Gambler #1
Gambler #5
Gambler #6
6 Players (2 Tenors, 2 Baritones, 2 Basses)
Painted Woman
The Director
Croupier #2
Various silent roles

[1] Translated titles from Irving and Georgette Palmer, trans., *The Gambler Libretto* (New York: Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., 1975).