

**RUSSIAN'S EXISTENTIAL AND SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE
POST-CRIMEAN WAR IN FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY'S *THE GAMBLER*:
AN EXISTENTIAL-SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**
**Atmosfer Eksistensial dan Sosial Rusia Pasca-Perang Krimea
dalam *The Gambler* Karya Fyodor Dostoevsky: Sebuah Pendekatan Sosiologi Eksistensial**

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan membahas isu-isu eksistensial dan sosial yang ada dalam *The Gambler* karya Fyodor Dostoevsky. Masalah yang diangkat dalam *The Gambler* terkait dengan peristiwa bersejarah di Rusia, yaitu perang Krimea. Ada tiga masalah yang dibahas dalam penelitian ini. Yang pertama adalah mengenai nasionalisme bangsa Rusia dan sentimen mereka terhadap orang Eropa; yang kedua membahas perjudian dan kaitannya dengan pergulatan ekonomi dan kelas sosial; yang ketiga membahas eksistensi tokoh utama wanita yang ditampilkan dalam novel tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi-eksistensial dengan dasar bahwa manusia selalu memberikan makna dan bertanggung jawab atas setiap tindakan atau pilihan-pilihan hidupnya, tetapi hal tersebut tidak terlepas dari sistem sosial tempat ia berada. Metode penelitian deskriptif analisis digunakan untuk memberikan analisis yang mendalam terhadap isu-isu terkait. Penelitian ini menghasilkan temuan bahwa Perang Krimea memberi pengaruh yang cukup signifikan pada keberadaan eksistensial dan sosial masyarakat Rusia seperti yang direfleksikan dalam novel *The Gambler*.

Kata-Kata Kunci: eksistensialisme; sosiologi; sosiologi eksistensial

Abstract: This research discusses the existential and social issues arose from *The Gambler* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The issues discussed are related to significant moment in Russia history; the Crimean war. There are three issues discussed in this article. The first one is about Russian tempered nationalism against Westerners; the second one discusses the gambling addiction toward economic and social class struggles; and the last one is about the way the heroine existence is portrayed along the storyline. Existential-sociological approach is used for it explains the way people make sense of their lives and it is inseparable from the social system and beliefs where they exist. The method used is descriptive qualitative to give deeper analysis upon the matters. The study finds that there are substantial influences of the Crimean war that affect the existence and social condition of Russian people as reflected on the novella.

Key Words: existentialism; sociology; existential-sociology

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding a work of literature can either be conducted or explained when taken from its context since literature is not just born from a vacuum. Literature is a depiction of life all around us for literature is a reflection of society. There are life problems that hail from the social reality or social life environment envisaged in the mind of or seen by the author. This is in line with what is stated by Najid (2003:9) that literature is a reflection of life. Literature is the crystallization of life values and experiences for it portrays a depiction of life and life is a realization of culture. Nevertheless, a novel as a form of literature is a world of reality where events and experiences occur and are created by the authors. The social reality, psychological reality, and religious reality are themes that we often hear when discussing a novel as a reality of life. Such is also the case with a work of literature or novel; what is revealed by an author is the revelation of the spirit contained in the works: "Basically, the novel, for the first part of its history, was a biography and a social chronicle and so it has always been possible to show that the social chronicle reflected to a greater or lesser degree the society of the period—" (Goldmann, 1980:6).

In literary studies, a sociological criticism emerges to give a deeper understanding of the larger social context in literary works so that the investigation of the relationship may organize and deepen one's authentic response to a work of art. It analyzes the way society functions in literature and the way literature works in society. Furthermore, it represents a social construct that exists in the era when literary work is produced. As a result, the criticism provides a particular and partial view of reality; the cultural, economic, intellectual, religious and political context in which the

literature is written or received. Sociological criticism itself is derived from sociology science, which is also known as human science; it studies about humanities and the embodied ideals and values they hold. Furthermore, sociology studies meaning, values, intentions, beliefs, and ideas realized in human social behavior and in socially created institutions, events, and symbolic objects, such as texts and images (Harrington, 2005:4).

The role of society is somehow difficult to separate from the literary works for they are the product of the society itself. Several critics and scholars from Plato down to the present time have discussed the different theories of sociological approach to literature. The early critics also believed the reciprocal relationship between literature and society; that thoughts and feelings found in literatures are conditioned and shaped by the cultural life created by the society. Although sociological approach to the study of literature has long and distinguished history from Plato onwards, it has gained its special place in the history of critical theory in the late twentieth century.

Meanwhile, existential perspective has also gained recent popularity in several fields since the occurrence of existential movement in the late 19th. The problems of authenticity, which become the main concern in existentialism is, as old as human being itself. Driyarkara states that epistemologically, the word of Existentialism is derived from the word "ex" (outside) and "stance" (the way of standing) which refers to the way person stands outside him/herself, the way person presents in this world (Kusumawardani, 2008:11). Along the development of the theory, existential problem directly tied to social problem, and vice versa. Both are complementary perspectives since they share general concern about the crisis of individual

and its society. The blend of both theories was firstly coined with term 'existential-sociology' by Edward Tiryakian in his book, *Sociologism and Existentialism* in 1962. Tiryakian views society as existential reality, therefore it becomes very important for sociologists to see how the existential structure of human-being is reflected in societal existence. Furthermore, individual deviances are considered as 'symbolic interaction'. It means that deviance is not a simple matter but a complex result of social and political process which occurs within a specific culture.

Soren Kierkegaard, Jean Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Fyodor Dostoevsky are amongst the prominent list of existential thinkers and writers. Dostoevsky was considered as the first Russian literary author to existentialism. His famous work *Notes from Underground*, *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov* reveal major existential issue.

The Gambler which was originally written in Russian entitled *Igrok*, was completed by Fyodor Dostoyevsky in 1866, a decade after the end of Crimean War which happened in 1853-1856. During the war, Russia was opposing Europe's largest army. Despite the fact that Russia's population was greater than that of France and Britain combined, it failed to defend its territory, the Crimea, from attack. This failure shocked the Russians and demonstrated to them the inadequacy of their weaponry and transport and their economic backwardness relative to the British and French.

The novel itself tells of the life experience and journey of the main character Alexei Ivanovitch which is filled with conflicts, whether with himself or with other people. Alexei is a tutor who works for the General and his Russian family who stays in a suite at a German hotel.

Alexei is hopelessly in love with Polina, the General step-daughter, and swears of his undying love and servility to her. Polina uses his oath for her interests and needs, though actually she also loves him. She has asked him to do several idiocies acts, including insulting the aristocratic couple (the Baron and Baroness Wurmerhelm) and asked him to place a bet for her in the town's casino without a definite reason. Hence, Polina has inflicted the spirit of gambling inside of him and leads him to meet many inward and outward conflicts in his life. Alexei continues to gamble and ends up losing his fortune, his job and his love. Apart from Alexei, other characters in the novel also have debts and complicated affair with each other which often brought about and maintained merely by financial commitments to each other.

Many people believe that *The Gambler* was made so rich and accurate by the author's insight into his own addiction to gambling. In his *A Devil's Vaudeville: The Demonic in, Dostoevsky's Major Fiction*, Leatherbarrow (2005:11) says that *The Gambler* is painfully autobiographical. The novella reflects Dostoevsky own addiction to roulette. Written in the form of first-person confession or diary, his particular addiction has become more than just an inspiration; it is a force that encourages him to produce the novel since he completed the novella under a strict deadline (less than a month) to pay off his gambling debts. Dostoyevsky's tempestuous affair with his mistress, Appolinariya Suslova, during his first marriage with Mariya Dmitriyevna Isayeva is reflected in his portrayal of the relationship between the central characters of Alexei Ivanovitch and Polina Alexandrovna.

The Gambler was mostly analyzed from its psychological aspect. Dostoevsky himself was fond to explore human psychology in the troubled

political and social atmosphere of 19th century Russia. He is well-known to literary-inclined psychiatrists for his rich and accurate portrayal of mental illness in several of his works. He also engaged with a variety of philosophical and religious theme in his works. Sanju George even explored *The Gambler* depiction of gambling from psychological analysis of the novel and Dostoevsky's life story, and used the results for gambling addicts to "understand more about gambling addiction, its characteristics and its consequences." (George, 2012:230) He found that gambling addicts often have preconceptions that they can defeat the system, or predict the results. These are illusionary and misleading and keep them gamble for more.

Despite the well-known fact that Dostoevsky's works always famous for their psychological profundity, there are other interesting issues arose especially from this novel when it is seen from existential sociology perspective. This study aims to discuss some main existential and sociological problems arose in the novel, which are known as deviances that appear within several characters. Moreover, the study aims to show how these deviances are inseparable from (represent) the social context inside the text and also outside the text (the reality of the author's background and Russian history).

METHOD

This study is conducted by applying qualitative method. The qualitative method is used to gather the data that support the analysis and to provide a rich description of the analysis and discussion. The research design of this research, therefore, is descriptive qualitative design since the data that emerge from qualitative study is descriptive; they are reported in words and images rather than in numbers (Creswell,

2009:195). The data collection methods are reading and note taking to unfold the meaning details in the story. The sources of theories used are drawn out from books and websites' articles while the data sources are in the forms of dialogues and inner thoughts narrative of the main characters. The method of analyzing the problems is conducted firstly on the character and characterization of the novel and secondly through its extrinsic elements which is the historical background and the sociocultural context. Existential sociology approach is used in discussing the existential problem (deviances) and their relation to social forces appeared in the novella, in larger context. The context of Crimean War and Dostoevsky life as the author are also brought about since they are parts of the object studied.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This discussion focuses on the existential and social issues emerged in the novel *The Gambler*, particularly from the conflict rooted from Alexei's addiction to gamble, his sentiment toward Europeans and his submission to the heroine of the story Polina. Therefore, the discussion will be divided into three subparts: Sentiment against Russian nationalism, gambling towards the economy and class struggle, and women portrayal.

Sentiment Against Western and Russian Nationalism

According to the history, the Crimean War happened as a result of Russian pressure on Turkey which had threatened British commercial and strategic interests in the Middle East and India. Meanwhile France, having provoked the crisis for prestige purposes; it exploited the war to strengthen an alliance with Britain and to reassert its military power. The hotbed for all of this turmoil was St. Petersburg, which happened to be the

home of Fyodor Dostoevsky, whose novels record these troubled times in timeless literary works (Lambert, 1991).

From the political view in the novel, Dostoevsky hints his patriotism spirit. Born as Russian, Dostoevsky has shown many characteristics of being a Russian at that time from his point of view in the novel. In fact, he is intensely patriotic and still critical. His father was serving as military doctor and Dostoevsky was later sent to Military Engineering Academy. According to the letter from Aleksander Petrovich Miliukov, when he was young, Dostoevsky joined the Petrashevsky Secret Socialist Circle in which he actively engaged in reading and circulating among the members some books of current revolutionary or social interest (Sekirin, 1997). He was arrested with other members of the group for their involvement in the circle. He was almost sentenced to death but as he was waiting his turn to be shot, the Tsar unexpectedly released them. Dostoevsky's sentence of eight years' hard labor in a Siberian prison was reduced to four, followed by another four years of compulsory military service.

The novel paints Dostoevsky perceived sense of the superiority of Russian over French and German, despite their flaws, in a subtle manner. During Dostoevsky lifetime, Britain and France joined the Ottomans against Russia in the Crimean war, and so the sentiments toward British and Frenchmen grew. This becomes the social forces that influence his individual actions or behavior. This is shown in some dialogues of Alexei to other characters and also within his narration (inner voice) inside the story. Below are several traits of Russian that Dostoevsky displayed in the novel that shows sentiments over the European:

"Next, for some reason or another, he added that, 'though a great many Russians go in for gambling, they are no good at the game. 'I think that roulette was devised specially for Russians,' I retorted; and when the Frenchman smiled contemptuously at my reply I further remarked that I was sure I was right."

(Dostoevsky, 2003:24)

"... Indeed, I believe that none but greenhorns and excessively Russian people feel an attraction towards the French; for, to any man of sensibility, such a compendium of outworn forms—a compendium which is built up of drawing-room manners, expansiveness, and gaiety—becomes at once over-noticeable and unbearable.

(Dostoevsky, 2003:44-45)

Even from the beginning of the novella, the characters of *The Gambler* have been broken down easily into two groups: Russians and Europeans. Dostoevsky illustrated the contrasts between Russian national characters and others (German, French, English) and the readers could feel how they were contrasted along the lines (Frank, 2010:949). Therefore, the conflict story does not only arise from individual temperaments and personal qualities but also from the reflection of an insight of various national values and ways of life. Among the Europeans, there are fake and dubious Count or Marquis de Grioux and his supposed cousin, Mlle Blanchés de Cominges. Both of these French figures were depicted as having squandered money right and left.

For some reason, the nationalism trait of Alexei as Russian hints the national temperament as manifested abroad (Roulettenberg, Germany). Alexei was portrayed to be a devoted Russian patriot who passionately defended his country's unpopular policies against foreign critics. There are several actions

of Alexey that showed this, especially when he was attending the luncheon with the General and the Frenchman:

“During the meal the Frenchman was in great feather: he was discursive and pompous to everyone ... Above everything I wanted to pick a quarrel with the Frenchman ...’ if one is a man of self-respect,’ I went on, ‘one risks abuse by so doing, and is forced to put up with insults of every kind. Both at Paris and on the Rhine, and even in Switzerland—there are so many Poles, with their sympathizers, the French, at these table d’hote that one cannot get a word in edgeways if one happens only to be a Russian.”

(Dostoevsky, 2003:3-4)

“But is that how Russian subjects ought to be treated? Why, when they settle here they dare not utter even a word—they are ready even to deny the fact that they are Russians!

At all events, at my hotel in Paris I received far more attention from the company after I had told them about the fracas with the sacristan.”

(Dostoevsky, 2003:6)

The Russian sentiments towards Europeans are expressed in the beginning of the novel until the end. This phenomenon cannot be separated from what happened between Russia and Europe at that time, as the effect of Crimean war. Dostoevsky as an ardent Russian shows how he tries to defend his country dignity through the character of Alexei that is eager to criticize upon other European fellows who looked down upon him for being Russian with its entire incompetence stereotype after their loss in Crimean war.

Gambling for Economy and Class Struggle

After the country had just failed miserably in the Crimean War, Russian

Government seemed to have lost its confidence as a nation that had a strong military power. After all, the army was the great symbol of Russia’s strength and power. Given that its army remained strong, Russia could afford to ignore its backwardness as a nation. But the Crimean defeat had undermined this notion of Russia’s invincibility. Therefore, Tsar Alexander II decided to free the serfs, who had lived in virtual slavery for centuries for the hope that despite Russia’s defeat, the end of the war would have had marked a golden moment in the nation’s history. Nonetheless, it turned out that the manifest inefficiency benefited neither the lord, the peasant, nor the nation. Therefore, the 1860s were still a turbulent time for Russian people. Millions of people had just gained real civil rights for the first time. Government distrust still soared because of a failed war. Marxism was in its infancy, and Russians were split over whether socialism or capitalism could lead the nation out of decades of economic stagnations. Even though the war merely happened within 3 years, both parties suffered a great loss both in financial matters and their people, especially on Russia side. The nation was even involuntary sell Alaska to US, in order to save its financial downfall.

The trouble in financial matters reflected through the problems of Russian figures in the novel. In Russia, the General laid his estate to a certain Marquis de Griens in order to pay small amounts of debt. For six months, the General looks forward to news from Moscow about the death of his sick aunt, for the hope of getting enormous inheritance from her and for the hope of marrying a beautiful young Frenchwoman, Mademoiselle Blanche, who he is passionately in love with. The aunt, however, is a 75-year-old formidable and rich landowner and a Moscow lady, in a chair with paralyzed legs, with coarse

manners. When she dies, the General promises to give his previous estate to de Griens. De Griens on the other side is having a secret relationship with the General step-daughter, Pollina. The Frenchman also tries to make acquaintance with the General for his wealth. Unfortunately, Mlle Blanche is attracted to Alexei, while Alexei is deeply in love with Pollina. Mr. Astley, the Englishman and Alexei's good friend also shares the same feeling towards her. One day the aunt comes to Roulettenberg and that surprises everyone, especially the General. The Aunt, as it is predicted, loses most of her money on Roulette table that leaves the General almost insane. De Griens then decides to sell the General's property. At the end, it is Pollina who receives the remaining inheritance of her grandmother (the Aunt).

Alexei's addiction to gambling mostly represents the author's (Dostoevsky) personal debt to his ruthless Russian publisher. He had owed a considerable amount of money to his publisher and bet his publishing rights of his past and future works (George, 2012:227).

In the life of Dostoevsky himself, he suffered financial problem and a deep mourning after the death of his loving brother, Mikhailovich. However, his brother was the owner and editor of the well-known journal in Russia, and his death left Dostoevsky with debts around 43.000 rubles. Dostoevsky escaped abroad with 175 rubles in his pocket and a "slave contract" with bookseller F. T. Stellovsky. This agreement required that if Dostoevsky did not produce a new novel by November 1, 1866, all rights to Dostoevsky's past and future works would revert to Stellovsky.

In the story, it is illustrated that Alexei was once disliked gambling and his first experience had been forced by Pollina and by his surrounding:

"Still, she had charged me with a commission—to win what I could at roulette."

"I confess I did not like it. Although I had made up my mind to play, I felt averse to doing so on behalf of someone else."

(Dostoevsky, 2003:11)

"When, on the present occasion, I entered the gaming-rooms (for the first time in my life), it was several moments before I could even make up my mind to play. For one thing, the crowd oppressed me."

(Dostoevsky, 2003:12)

As the story goes, Alexei motives to do more gamble were getting complicated. He wants to show that he is worth it to have Polina's attention upon her. He thought by winning much money in the casino, he could have his place amongst the society:

"The same evening I went to roulette. Oh how my heart beat! No, it was not money that I wanted. All that I wanted then was that next day all these ... Magnificent Baden ladies – that they might be all talking about me, repeating my story, wondering at me, admiring me, praising me, and doing homage to my new success."

(Dostoevsky, 2003: 110).

From the confession of Dostoevsky himself, besides trying to pay back his debt to his creditors, he was getting more addicted to roulette for some reason. The significance of gambling according to him, does not merely lay on the fortune or for the sake of money but solely to the psychological sense of its power it enables to acquire over others. It is not acting for what he called "immediate self-interest or for the gratification of any fleshly material desire", but solely to satisfy a powerful physical craving of the human personality, whether for good

or evil (Frank, 2010:958). We could see how Dostoevsky's gambling addiction is not merely on his money, but also on his life and works and these almost costs his career.

The history of serfdom in Russia and its abolishment has affected the novel as well. In Russia the traditional relationship between lord and serf was based on land. It was because he lived on his land that the serf was bound to the Lord. When long before the 19th century, the feudal system had been abandoned in Western Europe as it moved into the commercial and industrial age; while the Imperial Russia underwent no such transition. It remained economically and socially diffident.

Nevertheless, the issue of serfdom has affected the story in the novella, especially upon the character of Alexei. The inner struggle that has obsessed Alexei is the sense of his own social inferiority towards the general and Polina. Despite his role as a humble tutor in the General's household and despite his culture, education and status as Russian nobleman, Alexei is treated only a little better than a servant. In fact, he was treated out rightly as servant by de Grioux and the hotel's staff. He was placed in a small room on the fourth floor of the hotel where the General's household was staying. However, Alexei inner voice stated that he should have had deserved better place: "for you must know that I belonged to the General's suite." (Dostoevsky, 2003). This is also shown in the following passage:

"I received from them a welcome quite different to that which I had expected. I thought I could even detect a certain of shamefacedness in the General's glance. Maria Philipovna, too, seemed distraught, and conversed with me with an air of detachment."
(Dostoevsky, 2003:1)

"Every now and then I would glance at Polina Alexandrovna, but she paid me no attention; until eventually I became so irritated that I decided to play the boor."

(Dostoevsky, 2003:4)

The Russian characters in the novel are not always depicted as having flawless traits. On the other hand, the Russian characters "are all moved by feelings whose consequences may be practically disastrous but in every case involve some passion transcending the financial" (Frank, 2010:952). Most of the Russian figures are depicted as reflection of the real Russian condition at that time; the economy collapse and class struggle within the society including the peasant, the intellectuals and even the upper class as the aristocrats, noblemen, and *Bourgeois*. Moreover, it also reflects how the government was trying not to lose face in the international world, after its loss in Crimean war. It is portrayed in the character of General. Even the General himself is depicted as having illusion of the real situation of himself and his country, persistently defending his self-dignity:

"In Moscow too, I remembered, he had blown a great many bubbles. Intermittently he discoursed on finance and Russian politics, and though, at times, the General made feints to contradict him, he did so humbly, and as though wishing not wholly to lose sight of his own dignity."

(Dostoevsky, 2003: 4)

Women Existence and Portrayal

Feminism in Russia was born in the 18th century, influenced by the Western European Enlightenment and mostly confined to the aristocracy. It affected the lives of women at that time and that was also shown through literary works, including Dostoevsky's.

There is an opposing perspective that Dostoevsky seems to show on his heroine in *The Gambler*, named Pollina. It is in the individual characteristic of her as a woman and how she is viewed by the man she actually loves, Alexei. In the matter of his helpless love to Polina, the character Alexei shows the proud trait of a man dealing with higher-class and manipulative woman as Polina, despite his maddening love toward her. The passage below show the issue experienced by Alexei:

“She, too, knew it in some curious way; the thought that I was fully conscious of her inaccessibility, and of the impossibility of my ever realizing my dreams, afforded her ... Hitherto (I concluded) she had looked upon me in the same light that the old Empress did upon her servant—the Empress who hesitated not to unrobe herself before her slave, since she did not account a slave a man. Yes, often Polina must have taken me for something less than a man!”
(Dostoevsky, 2003:10-11)

Alexei feeling towards Polina is always in battling decision; whether he loves her or he hates her. This happens because Polina is an attractive yet manipulative woman in the story. Therefore, Alexei found Polina as lovely, yet disheartening. Since the beginning of the story, Polina has asked Alexei to do several folly things to prove his love to her. This started since Alexei swears an oath of servitude to her. He told her while on a walk on the Schlengenber (a mountain in German town), that he would gladly walk off the edge and die if she simply asked him to do so. This also leads to her asking him to go to town's casino and place a bet for her.

No matter how Alexei gets desperate over Pollina, the passage below shows the opposing perception towards Russian woman in general:

“And even though it may offend you, I feel bound to say that the majority also of English people are uncouth and unrefined, whereas we Russian folk can recognize beauty wherever we see it, and are always eager to cultivate the same. But to distinguish beauty of soul and personal originality there is needed far more independence and freedom than is possessed by our women, especially by our younger ladies.”
(Dostoevsky, 2003: 155)

As a writer, Dostoevsky expressed his thought towards women through the novels that he wrote. One of the collected letters about Dostoevsky was written by Liudmila Sionova entitled *Dostoevsky Talking to Activists of the Women's Movement in Russia*, “When I spoke about women, he made a comment: “I have thought about women for a long time. You see, several women like you have visited me, and several women activists have written me letters.” (quoted in Sekirin ed., 1997:217)

Aside from the origin of feminism in Russia itself, Joanna Hubbs in *Mother Russia: The Feminine Myth in Russian Culture* argues that “In the face of the Russian man's degeneration, the Russian woman preserves the ‘life-affirming and altruistic values’ inherited from Mother Earth, the sacred soil that remains the regenerative source for all Russians.” (quoted in Avaramenko and Ying, 2015) Dostoevsky's appraisal of Russian women, therefore represents the pride and devotion of Russians to their country.

Dostoyevsky seems to deny the false rigidity of categorizing women as either a ‘Femme Fatale’ or a ‘Fair Maiden’ has made his heroine more powerful when we consider his novel attempt to portray the complexity of a whole, complete person.

CONCLUSION

From existential sociological approach, *The Gambler* has represented the existential and social struggle of Russians at that time. Dostoevsky works, as always, cannot be taken and analyzed merely as biographical and simple works of literature. His rich and valued life experience has prominently affected his works for he has been through the life calamity himself. From political, social, psychological and religious views of him, he becomes a true existentialist as a human being and as a writer. The personal entanglements with the characters in the novel, even though they are often portrayed as filled with melodramatic intensity, cannot really be understood unless one grasps how their actions are intertwined with ideological motivation. Alexey as the main character in the story underwent an existential trait of 'bad faith' which according to Sartre refers to a denial of one's agency, often with attribution of meaning to external circumstances, people, or structures. Alexey believes that he has no choice, that he is the victim of other characters and circumstances. After loses his fortune and the love of his life, his life becomes meaningless and absurd that he is unable to make a just decision about his future. That also makes the central theme and the key plot elements that drive the story: it is the debt incurred from gambling and the vicious cycle to make money from gambling that resulted in vain.

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