

Comparing Triquet's couplets in Tchaikovsky, *Eugene Onegin*; Gladstone/Hille, *Onegin*; and Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*.

Tchaikovsky libretto

TRIQUET

Ah!

Voici [la reine de la fête.]
Mesdames, [je commence.
Je vous supplie de ne pas
m'interrompre.]

A cette fête conviés,
De celle dont le jour est fêté,
Contemplons le charme et la beauté.
Son aspect doux et enchanteur
Répand sur nous tous sa lueur.
De la voir, quel plaisir, quel bonheur!
Brillez, brillez toujours, belle Tatiana!

INVITÉS

Bravo, bravo, bravo, monsieur Triquet!
Vos couplets sont très jolis
et vous les chantez très bien.

TRIQUET

Que le sort comble ses désirs,
Que la joie, les jeux, les plaisirs
Fixent sur ses lèvres le sourire!
Que sur le ciel de ce pays,
Etoile qui toujours brille et luit,
Elle éclaire nos jours et nos nuits.
Brillez, brillez toujours, belle Tatiana!

INVITÉS

Bravo, bravo, bravo monsieur Triquet!
Vos couplets sont très jolis
et vous les chantez très bien!

Translation by Dan Smith

TRIQUET

Ah !

Here is the queen of the party.
Ladies, I will begin.
I implore you not to interrupt me.

As guests at this party,
For the one whose feast day is
celebrated,
We contemplate her charm and beauty.
Her gentle and enchanting appearance
Spreads its light over all of us.
To see her, such pleasure, such fortune!
Shine, shine forever, beautiful Tatiana!

GUESTS

Bravo, bravo Monsieur Triquet!
Your couplets are very pretty
And you sing them very well.

TRIQUET

Let fate fulfill her desires,
Let joy, and games and pleasures,
Affix a smile on her lips!
In the sky of this land,
May she always shine and glow as a star,
Illuminating our days and our nights.
Shine, shine forever, beautiful Tatiana!

GUESTS

Bravo, bravo, bravo Monsieur Triquet!
Your couplets are very pretty
And you sing them very well.

Gladstone and Hille, *Onegin*:

"The Queen of Tonight"

TRIQUET

Aha! Voilà! The Queen of Tonight.
Mesdames, I will begin.
Messieurs, give me some room
To pay tribute to the Queen.

Let us all pay honour
To the charm and beauty
Of the one whose name day we now
celebrate.
She is sweet and kind
Spreads her glory all around
What a pleasure, what a joy
Shine your love upon us all
Forever, beautiful Tatyana! Tatyana!

CHORUS

Bravo, bravo Monsieur Triquet!
(*Mais, he is not finished.*)

TRIQUET : Deux, Trois, Quatre!

May the fates give favour
May her mouth know pleasure
That it remains always with a smile.
She is the North Star, Showing us the
way / In the dark of the night
Shine your love upon us all
Forever, beautiful Tatyana! Tatyana!

CHORUS lists other names that Triquet
has substituted.* Bravo, bravo, bravo
Monsieur Triquet! Bravo!

Comparing Triquet's couplets in Tchaikovsky, *Eugene Onegin*; Gladstone/Hille, *Onegin*; and Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*.

*Triquet's lack of originality is not mentioned in Tchaikovsky's opera, but is part of Pushkin's novel.

In Tchaikovsky, Triquet's dialogue/recitative is mostly in Russian with markers of a thick French accent, but the song is in French, starting with "A cette fête conviés."

Pushkin does not write out words for Triquet's poem, but describes the character as a comic figure and the poem as insipid. He also notes Tatiana's embarrassed reaction.

Pushkin, *Eugene Onegin*, trans. Charles Johnston. Chapter Five.

XXVII

Here, with his red peruke and glasses,
Late of Tambov, Monsieur Triquet
Has come with Kharlikov; he passes
For witty, in his Gallic way.
Inside a pocket, Triquet nurses
Addressed to Tanya, certain verses
Set to a well-known children's glee:
"reveillez-vous, belle endormie."
He found them in some old collection,
Printed among outmoded airs;
Triquet, ingenious poet, dares
To undertake their resurrection,
And for *belle Nina*, as it read
He's put *belle Tatiana*, instead.

XXXIII

Freed from its dripping cork, the bottle
Explodes, wine fizzes up...but, stay:
Solemn, too long compelled to throttle
His itching verse, Monsieur Triquet
Is on his feet—in utter stillness
The party waits. Seized with an illness
Of swooning, Tanya nearly dies;
And, scroll in hand, before her eyes
Triquet sings, out of tune. Loud clapping
And cheers salute him. Tanya must
Thank him by curtseying in the dust;
Great bard despite his modest trapping,
He's first to toast her in the bowl,
Then he presents her with the scroll.