

Document Citation

Title	Sergei Eisenstein's Alexander Nevsky
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Artkino Pictures Inc.</i>
Date	194-?
Type	distributor materials
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	3
Subjects	Cherkasov, Nikolai (1903-1966), St. Petersburg, Russia (Federation) Prokofiev, Sergei (1891-1953), Sontsovka (formerly Russia), Ukraine Eisenstein, Sergei (1898-1948), Riga (formerly Russia), Latvia Tisse, Eduard (1893-1961), Litan, Russian Empire(now Latvia), Russia (Federation)
Film Subjects	Aleksandr Nevskii (Alexander Nevsky), Eisenstein, Sergei, 1938



SERGEI EISENSTEIN'S ALEXANDER NEVSKY

THE STORY

It is the Autumn of the year 1241. The conquering Tartars have just ravaged the land of Russia. Only the city-state of Novgorod has remained untaken. Alexander, Prince of Novgorod, tiring of the bickerings and quarrelings of the merchants and nobles, has retired to his fishing lands on Lake Pleshchayev. A Mongol chieftain and his warriors pass by with a band of slaves taken as tribute. They begin to beat his fisherman, but Nevsky calls out from the lake. His name is magic. The chieftain, upon learning he is Alexander Nevsky, the surname acquired from a great battle he had won over the Swedes on the Neva, orders his party to proceed.

In Novgorod, Buslai and Olexich, two great warriors enjoying a respite from battle, seek the hand of Olga, a noble maiden. A messenger arrives to announce the fall of Pskov, a neighboring city-state, to the Teutonic Order of Knights. Olga tells the warriors that she will take him who shows the greatest valor against the Germans. The townspeople call for Alexander Nevsky to lead them.

Meanwhile Pskov is being sacked. The women and children are burned. As Pavsha, the governor, is hanged, he calls upon his daughter, Vassilissa, to flee to Alexander Nevsky and ask him to avenge the dying people. When Vassilissa arrives in Novgorod, Alexander has assumed leadership of the volunteer soldiers and armed the peasantry. Buslai and Olexich are his lieutenants. Vassilissa is given mail, helmet and weapons by the armorer Ignat. Alexander announces he will attack the Germans on foreign soil.

A vanguard is sent across Lake Peipus against the Germans. The knights and their semi-slave foot-soldiers are at field chapel. Tverdillo, former Mayor of Pskov, who had betrayed his city to the invaders and joined them against Novgorod, sends another traitor, an apostate monk, to guide the Teutons and trap the vanguard. It is all but wiped out, but Buslai, who is the leader, escapes. Alexander Nevsky draws up his army on the lake shore. His plan is to let Buslai take the brunt of the wedge attack from across the ice while he and Olexich, leading the flanks, close in.

The panoplied and barbarously accoutred crusaders of the Teutonic Order sweep across the frozen surface of Lake Peipus. It is April 5, 1242. The historic "Battle on the Ice" has begun. The German wedge strikes and sticks fast. The flanks close in. The battle surges back and forth. Buslai, Olexich and the Pskov girl Vassilissa are surpassed in bravery only by Alexander himself. At a turning point in the battle, Alexander challenges the Grand Master of the Order to personal combat. They join in a fierce hand-to-hand fight. The Grand Master is unhorsed and surrenders. Ignat the armorer puts a rope around his neck. The Germans, leaderless, retreat across the ice. Near the shore the ice cracks under their weight and a large part of the army drowns in the lake.

Ignat is stabbed by the treacherous Tverdillo as he is capturing him when the latter pretends to surrender. Buslai and Olexich lie, wounded and exhausted, on the ice. In the dark Olga comes to them. Olexich is very weak. Buslai tells him that he has won Olga and must live.

In Pskov, which the victorious army has entered with its prisoners and its dead, Alexander addresses the multitude. The serf soldiers of the Germans he sets free. The vanquished knights he condemns to be sold in the West "for soap." The traitorous Tverdillo he delivers up to the populace. Olga lays before him the question of her troth. Buslai rises and announces that he relinquishes Olga to the brave Olexich. To appease his proud mother, who wants a wedding, he declaims that Vassilissa was bravest of all and asks for her hand.

Alexander's final prophetic words to the German foot-soldiers before they go home are: "Go home and tell all in foreign lands that Russia lives. Let them come to us as guests without fear. But if anyone comes to us with the sword, he shall perish by the sword. On this the Russian land stands and will stand."

Amkino is Proud to Present

SERGEI EISENSTEIN'S

Alexander Nevsky

Directed by SERGEI EISENSTEIN and D. I. VASSILIEV

Story by SERGEI EISENSTEIN and PETER A. PAVLENKO

Photography by EDWARD TISSE

Original Music by SERGEI PROKOFIEFF

Produced by MOSFILM STUDIOS, U.S.S.R.

CAST

Prince Alexander Yaroslavich Nevsky	NIKOLAI CHERKASSOV <i>Honored Artist</i>
Vassily Buslai	N. P. OKHLOPKOV
Gavrilo Olexich	A. L. ABRIKOSSOV
Ignat, Master Armorer	D. N. ORLOV <i>Honored Artist</i>
Pavsha, Governor of Pskov	V. K. NOVIKOV <i>Honored Artist</i>
Domash, nobleman of Novgorod	N. N. ARSKI
Amelfa Timofeyevna, mother of Buslai	V. O. MASSALITINOVA <i>People's Artist</i>
Olga, a Novgorod girl	V. S. IVASOVA
Vassilissa	A. S. DANILOVA
Master of the Teutonic Order	V. L. ERSHOV <i>People's Artist</i>
Tverdillo, traitorous mayor of Pskov	S. K. BLINNIKOV <i>Honored Artist</i>
Anani, a monk	I. I. LAGUTIN
The Bishop	L. A. FENIN <i>Honored Art Worker</i>
The Black-robed Monk	N. A. ROGOZHIN <i>Honored Artist</i>

WHO'S WHO IN "ALEXANDER NEVSKY"

Sergei Eisenstein stands in the first rank among the motion picture directors of the world. His "Potemkin," made in 1926, was hailed as one of the greatest motion pictures of all time. This was followed by "Ten Days That Shook the World" and other productions for the silent screen. "Alexander Nevsky" is Eisenstein's first venture into the field of sound. He is now engaged on a new film built around the life of the Soviet military hero, Frunze. Eisenstein was recently awarded the Order of Lenin for his direction of "Alexander Nevsky."

Sergei Prokofieff needs no introduction to music lovers. One of the greatest living composers, his works have been played by every leading symphony orchestra throughout the world. His best known compositions include his "Classical Symphony," and some of the most brilliant piano concertos in concert repertory. He has made several visits to America, appearing before concert audiences as piano soloist and guest director.

Edward Tisse has been associated with Eisenstein as cameraman since the filming of "Potemkin." He was one of the first motion picture photographers in the Soviet cinema. His work with Eisenstein has brought him world fame.

Nikolai Cherkassov is the leading actor of the Soviet stage and screen. His previous roles include that of Professor Polezhayev in "Baltic Deputy" and of Alexis in "Peter I." He has been decorated by the Soviet Government for his artistic work.

ARTKINO PICTURES INC.

723 SEVENTH AVENUE · NEW YORK CITY · BRYANT 9-7680

THE CRITICS' RAVES

Dorothy Masters
in the N. Y. DAILY NEWS



"... Certain it is that they've filmed 'Alexander Nevsky' on such a monumental scale that it goes down in history as one of the finest pictures ever to come from Sovietland... lovingly conceived and expertly realized. An exceptionally fine cast, skilled direction and a dynamic theme help it to turn back the pages for a glimpse of old Russia... far too magnificent to be missed..."

Irene Thirer
in the NEW YORK POST

"EXCELLENT"

"'Alexander Nevsky' is a wonderful movie. It should be box office on a commercial scale because its cast is singularly attractive; it moves with a sense of speed and humor; it has a smattering of romance and the most thrilling battle scene we've seen in many seasons—inclusive of Hollywood's wares, and with thoughts to America's ace directors, who will probably bow to Eisenstein's brilliance and attempt to borrow his cameraman, Edward Tisse, who photographed the memorable 'Potemkin' and all of Eisenstein's efforts since. His effects in 'Nevsky' are enchanting and amazing.

"Do we find 'Alexander Nevsky' an entrancing, engrossing and completely superb production? Well—what do you think? Don't miss seeing it. You'll be well rewarded."

William Boebnel
in the N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM

"A magnificent success... Not only is what Eisenstein has to say straightforward and stirring, but the manner in which he says it is

frequently breathtaking. Compositionally and as a dramatic unit, the film is well-nigh perfect. The acting of the entire cast is remarkably fine."

Frank S. Nugent
in the NEW YORK TIMES

"Eisenstein is a great director... It contains the bold, vigorous strokes of a master... He has created a stunning picture of medieval warfare... a vigorous, colorful and undeniably impressive picture."

Howard Barnes
in the N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

"One of the truly great directors of the cinema, Sergei Eisenstein, has made another splendid film... undeniably the work of a master craftsman... The Eisenstein technique is unmistakable. With a sparing use of dialogue, he has marshaled mass forces on the screen in magnificent scenes of spectacle. The great battle between the savage, crusading Germans and the Russians fighting for their land and the right to lead their own particular existence is a high point in all screen pageantry.

"The cast is downright brilliant. Such an eminent screen actor as Nikolai Cherkassov plays Alexander with power and epic grandeur... Sergei Prokofieff has written an intriguing musical accompaniment which is as adroit a combination of medieval and modern accents as the film itself."

Herbert Cohn
in the BROOKLYN EAGLE

"It is Eisenstein who makes 'Alexander Nevsky,' a film to be remembered. He is always the master of a battle scene, he knows how to fill his screen—and we are being literate—with soldiers

slashing furiously at an enemy, and creating a tenseness, a breathtaking excitement that has no peer... Nikolai Cherkassov plays Alexander heroically."

John Mosher
in THE NEW YORKER

"A majestic and vivid and really magnificent portrait of medievalism... The equal of his (Eisenstein's) 'Potemkin' and 'Ten Days That Shook the World' and one of the great battle-pictures of the day."

TIME MAGAZINE

"... like no battle ever recorded before on celluloid... for visual splendor has never been topped."

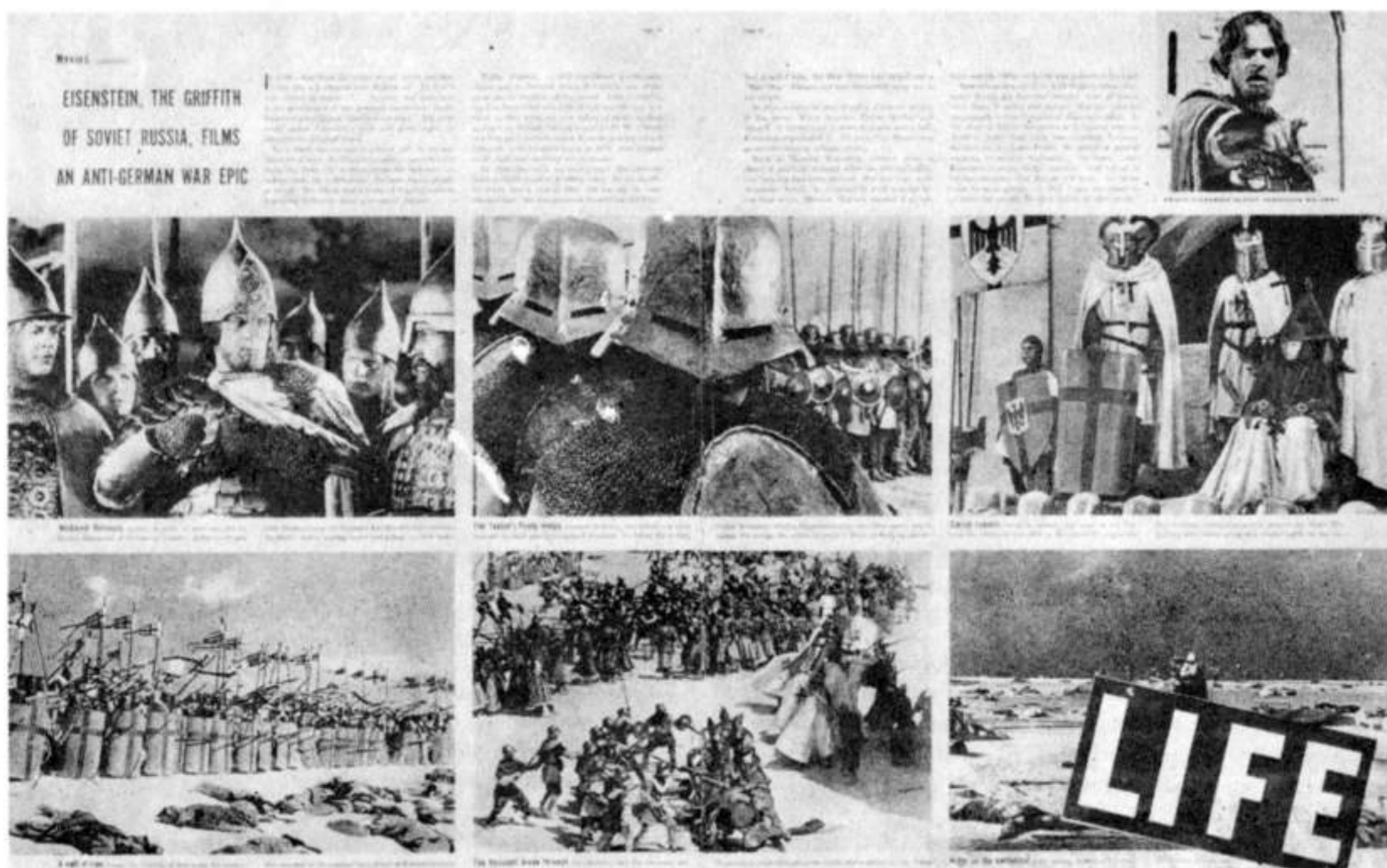
FILM DAILY

"Expertly projected on the screen... an outstanding picture among recently imported foreigners and it takes rank as one of the best pictures ever produced by the Soviet industry... A fine piece of exciting and entertaining screen fare."

THE EXHIBITOR

"Where theatres can play foreign language pictures to advantage, this is box office; it is an attractive dualler for other spots... Although there is not a poor thespian job throughout, the beauty, power of the film is all due to the director. Excellent photography, wonderful musical effects, aid greatly in making this an exceptional production."

"LIFE" Magazine, April 10, 1939



"Alexander Nevsky" Draws
Brilliant Historic Parallel
With Nazi Attack on U.S.S.R.

For the second time in world history the region around Lake Peipus and the city of Pskov in Western Russia has become a crucial battleground between invading German hordes and defending Russian soldiery.

Early in the Nazi drive against the U.S.S.R. Pskov and Lake Peipus became vital objectives, just as they were some 700 years before when flying wedges of weirdly armored Teutonic knights were halted and destroyed by Russian peasants and men-at-arms under Alexander Nevsky, prince of Novogorod.

The battle, which occurred on April 5, 1542, ended when the heavily-armored invaders and their horses sunk through the thin ice of the lake. This historic episode, known to all Russian school children as "the battle on the ice" is recreated by the masterful directing of Sergei Eisenstein in "Alexander Nevsky" which comes to theTheatre on The film, which was conceived as a warning to Nazi aggressors before they attacked the Soviet Union, offers brilliant pictorial parallels between the past and the present. The Teutonic knights advancing with shields locked in solid formation suddenly take on the aspect of modern tanks. This effect is heightened by the powerful music of Sergei Prokofieff, world famous composer who wrote the score for "Alexander Nevsky."

The camera work was done by Edward Tisse, one of the U.S.S.R's most brilliant movie photographers. The role of Alexander Nevsky is played by Nikolai Cherkassov, holder of many decorations from his government for outstanding performances.

Released by Artkino Pictures, Inc..... 723 Seventh Ave., N. Y. C.

UOPWA
NO.16