

Document Citation

Title	Admiral Ushakov
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Stanley Theatre (New York)</i>
Date	
Type	flyer
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	2
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Ushakov (Admiral Ushakov), Shtein, Aleksandr Petrovich, 1953

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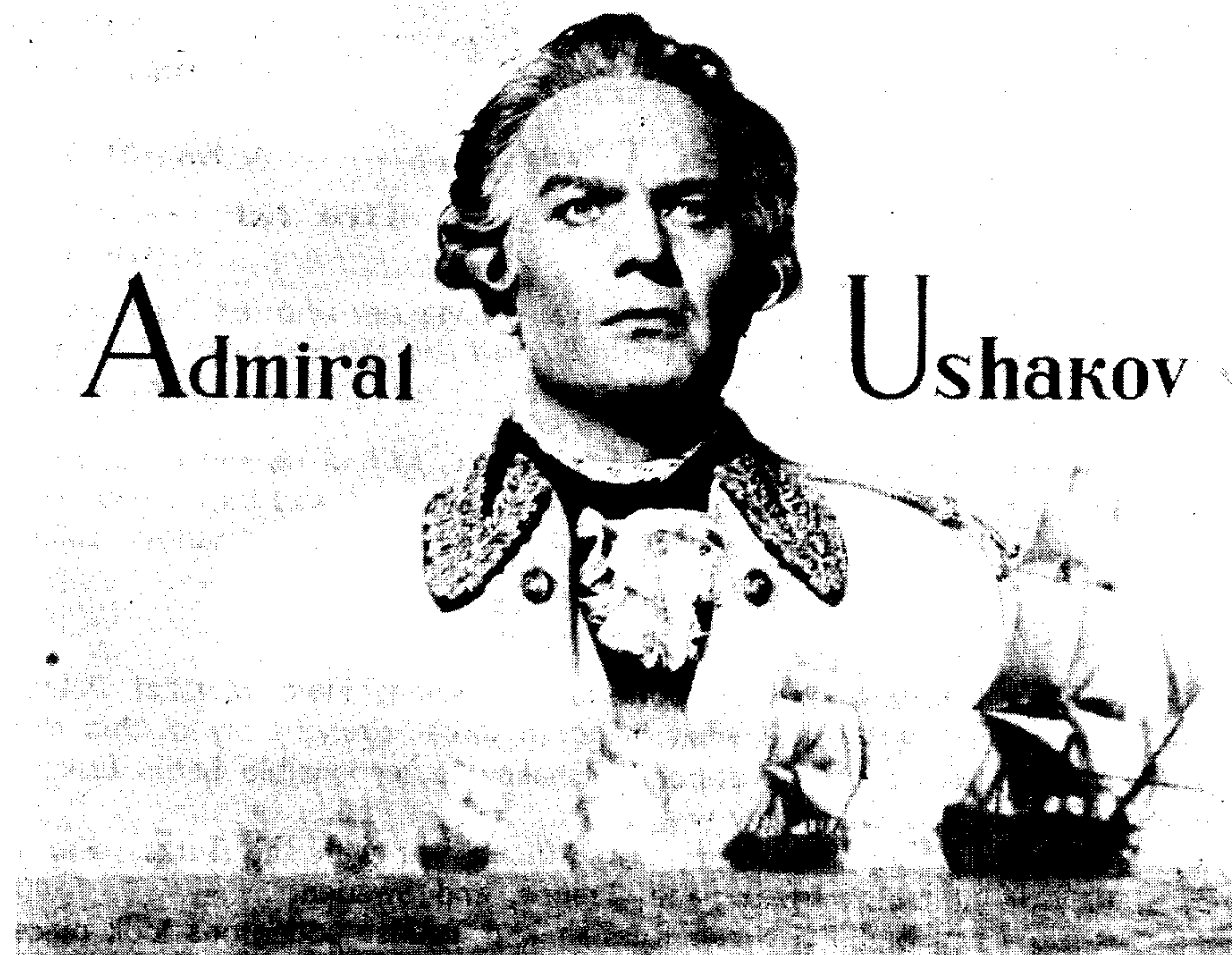
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Admiral Ushakov

Until his last hour Admiral Fyodor Fyodorovich Ushakov—the greatest of Russian admirals, the “Suvorov of the Sea,” as he came to be known during his lifetime and afterwards—lived for the sake of his country's fleet and its sailors, for the sake of all that a fleet can give in the service of the Motherland.

Success did not come soon or easily to Ushakov. It was many years before he had the chance to show his ability in the field in which he was destined to earn immortal fame—as a naval commander who led the Russian fleet from victory to victory, who amazed the world by new and rare examples of admiralship, such as the capture of powerful naval fortresses by naval forces alone, without the aid of a land army.

Ushakov achieved fame only in his mature years. At first he had himself to build and equip squadrons, to create naval bases, fit out wharves, and train crews. Ushakov was the first in a line of wonderful leaders and rearers of Russian sailors. Later came

them. Fortunately, a famous and all powerful statesman, Field Marshal Potemkin, perceived what natural talent and what immense moral strength lay in this modest young officer. Potemkin began to appoint Ushakov to responsible battle tasks, and the eagle at once spread his mighty wings.

In 1787 Russia became involved in a difficult war with the Turks, who were helped, directly or indirectly, by England, France, and Sweden.

The first big naval battle between Russian and Turkish squadrons took place on July 3, 1788, in the Black Sea, off the Island of Fidonisi. Ushakov was in command of the vanguard. The Turks, almost three times stronger, expected to encircle and sink the Russian forces. But after a three-hour engagement they retreated and sailed away. Promoted to rear admiral, Ushakov took command of the Black Sea squadron. In two battles he defeated two Turkish flotillas—first in the Kerch Strait, and then at Khadzhibei. Victory followed victory—at Enikal, Sinop, Anapa and elsewhere. On July 31, 1791, a great sea-battle was fought off Cape Kaliakria, where the Turks had assembled a huge fleet consisting largely of new ships built at British and French shipyards. The Turks had 18 ships of the line, 17 frigates and over 40 other ships. Ushakov, who had a far smaller fleet, carried out a surprise attack, cut the enemy fleet in two by skilful manoeuvring, and dealt it a crushing defeat. This was before sunset, and the enemy hoped to escape under cover of darkness, but Ushakov pursued the remnants of the defeated squadron, sending ship after ship to the bottom. Only a few escaped to Constantinople. For the duration of the war the Turkish fleet ceased to exist as a fighting force.

The superb victories of the Russian sailors, Ushakov's remarkable skill as a naval commander, and the courage and resoluteness of the Russian crews echoed through Europe and roused serious concern among the leading sea powers, England and France. As well as alarm, Ushakov's victories roused great envy. The question was being asked in Europe: Ushakov crushed and defeated the Turks, but has he the skill, and have Russian sailors the courage and seamanship, to deal with a European fleet?

Scenario: A. SHTEIN

Director: M. ROMM

Camera: A. SHELENKOV
CHENG YU-LANG

Music: A. KATCHATURIAN

CAST:

Ushakov I. PEREVEZEV

Potemkin B. LIVANOV

Catherine O. ZHIZNEVA

The Sultan V. VASYLIEV

Pitt N. VOLKOV

Nelson I. SOLOVYOV

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fearlessly and do or die for the Motherland—such was the creed that Ushakov so successfully taught the sailors whom he afterwards led to great deeds.

From the very first years of his service, everywhere and in everything, Ushakov displayed organizing ability, firmness of spirit, fearlessness, and resourcefulness in crucial circumstances far above the common order. Even before the start of his real fighting career, his merits were acknowledged and had even awakened the envy of certain ambitious officers from the rich nobility, who had influential patronage behind

To this question Ushakov gave a most impressive and brilliant answer.

In 1796-97 Napoleon Bonaparte conquered a considerable part of Italy and seized the Ionian Islands, after which he set sail to conquer Egypt. On the way he captured the Island of Malta in the Mediterranean. The French were menacing Turkey and England, and also threatened to penetrate into the Black Sea and attack the shores of Russia.

Russia, Turkey and England hastened to conclude an alliance. Ushakov was entrusted with a Russian squadron. Sailing through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, and taking command of a Turkish squadron as well, he made for the Ionian Islands. Here a fresh string of victories awaited the brilliant admiral and his renowned and battle-tried sailors.

The Greek population of the Ionian Islands greeted Ushakov and his fleet with rejoicing, and treated them as liberators. One after another, the Russian sailors captured the islands of Cerigo, Zante, Cephalonia, Ithaca, Santa Maura. All the French garrisons surrendered. The same lot fell to the main island of the Ionian Archipelago—Corfu. This was unheard-of. In Europe people could hardly believe the news when they learned that a fleet had captured with its own forces such a powerful land and naval fortress.

The great Russian general, Suvorov, was greatly moved by Ushakov's feat. Glowing with deep pride for Russia, he congratulated Ushakov in the following manner: “Hurrah for the Russian fleet! Now I say to myself: Why wasn't I at Corfu, if only as a midshipman!”

The Russian people remember Ushakov as a great naval strategist, a patriot and a hero, a man who won undying fame for his people.

By E. TARLE, Member, Academy of Sciences of the USSR