COMPOSING FOR THE RED SCREEN: SERGEI PROKOFIEV'S FILM MUSIC

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Abstract

Kevin Bartig: Composing for the Red Screen: Sergei Prokofiev's Film Scores
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Sergei Prokofiev's film scores are unique for having attained a steadfast place in the canon of classical music, a feat the composer accomplished in the complicated and oppressive artistic milieu of Stalin's Russia. The eight films for which he wrote music encompass a range of musical and cinematic genres, from the well-known *Aleksandr Nevskii* and *Lieutenant Kizhe* to more obscure propaganda films such as *The Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* and *Tonia*. Discussion of the composer's work with film music, including his celebrated collaboration with director Sergei Eisenstein, has remained absent from musicological literature. This study uses newly-available archival materials to explore Prokofiev's work with film, considering issues of collaboration, technology, aesthetics, and—perhaps most importantly—the privileged and hyper-politicized role of film production and composition in Stalin's Russia.

Chapter 1 explores how Prokofiev, already a world-renowned composer by 1933, approached an uncharted musical genre with the 1934 film *Lieutenant Kizhe*. For the film, he forged a strikingly sparse, hyper-lyrical style that would characterize both his film music and his incidental music during the mid-1930s. The first chapter also introduces Prokofiev's relationship with technology and new media. Chapters 2 and 3

address Prokofiev's scores for Mikhail Romm's *Queen of Spades* and Eisenstein's *Aleksandr Nevskii*, respectively, showing how each resulted from an effort to adapt, transform and employ the Russian past in service of the Soviet present. Chapter 4 focuses on four minor films for which Prokofiev wrote music in 1941-42, and shows how Prokofiev coped with the disruption brought on by war, both financially and ideologically. In chapter 5 I analyze instances of audiovisual dissonance in *Ivan the Terrible*, Prokofiev's last film project, and argue that they represent transformative moments that are a direct extension of Eisenstein's dialectical film theories.

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I am indebted to a host of librarians and archivists whose support and patience have helped enrich the documentary base of my work immeasurably. Noëlle Mann, the former curator of the Serge Prokofiev Archive, provided copies of documents, offered insightful comments on early drafts of the first chapter, and graciously hosted me when I visited the archive in 2005. The majority of the research for this dissertation was conducted in the reading room of the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI) in Moscow, and I extend special appreciation to Elena Chugunova for ensuring that my time there was as productive as possible. Thanks are also due to the staffs of the Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture, the First Reading Room of the Russian State Library, the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI), and the exceptionally helpful personnel at

the library of the *Soiuz teatralnykh deiatelei* on Pushkin Square in Moscow. For generously sharing unpublished materials, I am grateful to Elizabeth Bergman, Dimitri Galon of Hans Sikorski (Hamburg), and especially Marina Frolova-Walker (who also provided valuable feedback on an early version of Chapter 3). At various points I received help and advice from Dassia Posner, Zinaida Astrakhan, Nathan Seinen, Natasha Cherevatskaia, Gabrielle Chomentowski, Svetlana Sigida, Anna Nisnevich, Amy Nelson, Thomas Warburton, and Beth Holmgren.

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Transliteration and Usage

All translations from Russian are my own, unless otherwise noted. I use the Library of Congress (LC) system of Russian language transliteration throughout this study. Following what has become standard practice in musicological literature, I have chosen to depart from an exact transliteration in the case of certain names and institutions that have acquired accepted spellings in English (e.g. Prokofiev and Eisenstein rather than Prokof'ev and Eizenshtein). The sole intentional exception is "Chaikovsky" rather than "Tchaikovsky," as the former is a far more accurate transliteration.

I adhere to the LC system with no exceptions when citing Russian-language sources in the footnotes. It was (and remains) standard practice in Russian-language publications to cite only an author's first initial and last name, a convention that is reflected in both the main text and references of this study.

Abbreviations

f.	Фонд (ф.), *fond* - fond; a basic organizational grouping of archival materials.
op.	Опись (оп.), *opis'* - unpublished inventory of a fond.
ed. khr.	Единица хранения (ед.хр.) - *edinitsa khraneniia* - file, unit.
l. or ll.	Лист (л.), листы (лл.) (pl.), *list, listy* - folio, leaf, sheet.
d.	Дело (д.), *delo* - file, item.
ob.	Оборот (об.), *oborot* - verso, reverse side of a sheet.
SSK	Союз советских композиторов - *Soiuz sovetskikh kompozitorov*, The Soviet Composers' Union
KDK	Комитет по делам киноискусств при СНК СССР - *Komitet po delam kinoiskusstv pri SNK SSSR*, The Committee on Cinema Affairs
TsOKS	Центральная объединенная киностудия художественных фильмов - *Tsentral'naia ob"edinennaia kinostudiia khudozhestvennykh fil'mov*, The Central United Art Film Studio

Introduction

In March 1930 Muscovite cinemagoers took notice of a novelty: the premiere of the first Soviet *zvukovoi fil'm*, or "talkie," as they had become known in the West. Unlike America's first major talkie, the 1927 blockbuster *The Jazz Singer*, Russia's first sound film was little more than a technological curiosity. Inauspiciously entitled *Combined Sound Program* (*Zvukovaia sbornaia programma*), the film consisted of three brief segments: an oration extolling the promise of the new medium delivered by the commissar of culture and education Anatolii Lunacharskii, a documentary short that summarized Stalin's recently unveiled first Five-Year Plan, and a series of scenes from live concerts. In this concluding segment, which met the all-important popular demand for entertainment, the sardonically-toned March from Sergei Prokofiev's opera *The Love for Three Oranges* (*Liubov' k trem apel'sinam*, 1919) enjoyed pride of place.[1]

Prokofiev's (1891-1953) musical presence in the first Soviet sound film presaged the significant role that cinema would play in the composer's career immediately prior to and during the years he lived in the Soviet Union. Between 1932 and 1946 he composed music for eight Soviet-produced films, each playing as varied a role in his career as the subjects of the films themselves. Availing himself of the interest Russian directors took in his art, Prokofiev used film contracts as an inroad to the Soviet cultural scene in order

[1] The documentary short, entitled *Plan of Great Works* (*Plan velikikh rabot*), was directed by Abram Room (1894-1976) The film does not survive. The description given here is based on that in Aleksandr Macheret, ed., *Sovetskie khudozhestvennye fil'my* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1961), II: 3.

to ease his permanent relocation to Moscow in 1936. A shift from credits on the pages of concert programs to the opening titles displayed on Soviet movie screens also promised to familiarize a large and relatively untapped audience with his music. Later, commissions for film music offered Prokofiev much-needed financial gain. Working with directors stimulated Prokofiev's interest in collaborative work, and in the case of his projects with Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948), the result was one of the most enriching artistic unions of Prokofiev's career. Film music furthermore was one of the sites of Prokofiev's self-imposed stylistic overhaul during the 1930s, as he remained aware that the avant-garde musical language he had cultivated in the 1920s would not win over cinema audiences; thus his film music was born out of the mission to create music accessible to diverse listeners.

In composing for the cinema, Prokofiev encountered an artistic medium that Stalin's government valued above all others. The young socialist state seized upon the propagandistic potential of the medium, and to create films was to dive into profoundly political waters.[2] Although Russia's cultural politics are not the sole focus of this dissertation, the heavily-bureaucratic nature of the Soviet system unavoidably informs all investigation of Prokofiev's work from the 1930s forward. To understand its influence on Prokofiev's film music in particular, and composing for the cinema in Stalin's Russia in general, is therefore, at least in part, the topic of this study.

[2] On the general political climate of music in the Soviet Union, see Caroline Brooke, "The Development of Soviet Music Policy, 1932-41" (Ph.D diss., King's College, Cambridge, 1999); Marina Frolova-Walker, *Russia: Music and Nation from Glinka to Stalin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008); Evgenii Gromov, *Stalin: Vlast' i iskusstvo* (Moscow: Respublika, 1998). Two studies of Soviet music history also provide valuable overviews: Levon Hakobian, *Music and the Soviet Age, 1917-1987* (Stockholm: Melos, 1985) and Boris Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1981* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

Each chapter of this dissertation takes as its point of departure the aesthetic, logistical, and musical problems involved in the composer-director collaboration behind each of Prokofiev's film projects. Beyond this, the analysis of each film project offers a framework in which a range of issues central to film production in Stalin's Russia can be addressed: technology, the influence of Hollywood, the use of film and music in civic commemorations, and the execution of a substantial wartime effort in the cultural sphere. These particular concerns point to the importance of film music to composers' careers in Soviet Russia, and how work in the genre offered distinct opportunities for advancement that mirrored similar trends in other Soviet artistic fields.

Prokofiev's eight film scores fall into three groups: two early scores written prior to his work with Eisenstein, two composed in collaboration with Eisenstein, and four written nearly simultaneously during the height of World War II (known in Russia as the Great Patriotic War).[3] The two early efforts include scores for Aleksandr Faintsimmer's (1906-82) satirical comedy *Lieutenant Kizhe* (*Poruchik Kizhe,* 1934), completed prior to Prokofiev's permanent return to the USSR, and Mikhail Romm's (1901-71) film version of the celebrated Pushkin novella *The Queen of Spades (Pikovaia dama,* 1936). Forging ties to the Soviet Union through collaborations such as that offered by the production of

[3] The only overview of Prokofiev's entire output in film music available in English is Harlow Robinson, "The Most Contemporary Art: Sergey Prokofiev and Soviet Film," *Studies in Comparative Communism* 17 (1984–85): 203-18. The numerous available biographies of Prokofiev offer varying amounts of detail on the composer's film projects. Among these are: Daniel Jaffé, *Sergey Prokofiev* (London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1998); David Gutman, *Prokofiev* (London: Alderman, 1988); Suzanne Moisson-Franckhauser, *Serge Prokofiev et les courants esthétiques de son temps: 1891-1953* (Paris: Publications orientalistes de France, 1974); Marina Nest'eva, *Sergei Prokof'ev* (Cheliabinsk: Arkaim, 2003); Israel V. Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, trans. Florence Jonas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960); David Nice, *Prokofiev: From Russia to the West, 1891-1935* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); Harlow Robinson, *Sergey Prokofiev: A Biography* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002); Claude Samuel, *Prokofiev*, trans. Miriam John (London: Calder and Boyars, 1971); Victor Seroff, *Sergei Prokofiev, A Soviet Tragedy* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968). Simon Morrison's forthcoming biography promises to reveal much about the composer's Soviet career in general. See *Prokofiev: The Soviet Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Lieutenant Kizhe concerned the composer as he contemplated the implications of a permanent return to his native country after an absence of nearly two decades. *The Queen of Spades,* composed immediately following Prokofiev's move to Moscow in 1936, was intended as one of a number of events marking the centenary of poet Aleksandr Pushkin's death. Although Prokofiev completed his music for the film in short score, various difficulties plagued the film's production and the picture was ultimately cancelled.

In 1938 Prokofiev accepted an offer from Eisenstein to compose music for *Aleksandr Nevskii*, and their subsequent collaboration resulted in an enormously successful film that propelled both composer and director to the vanguard of Soviet cultural eminence. Prokofiev worked with Eisenstein a second and final time four years later on the trilogy *Ivan the Terrible* (*Ivan Groznyi,* 1941–46). The project remained unfinished at Eisenstein's untimely death in 1948; although part one of the film (1944) received the coveted Stalin prize, part two (1945) was banned, a victim of the postwar eradication of autonomous aestheticism known as the *Zhdanovshchina*.[4] It premiered in 1958, after Eisenstein, Prokofiev and Stalin were all dead.[5] Part three was never realized.

The majority of the Soviet Union's cultural elite spent the fall of 1941 and 1942 evacuated from the nation's western metropolitan centers as Hitler's army advanced eastward. Prokofiev's two years away from Moscow carried him through Nal'chick (in the Caucausus), Tiblisi (Georgia), Alma-Ata (Kazakhstan), and Molotov (from 1957 Perm). While in Kazakhstan, his longest port of call, he completed commissions for four films.

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[4] Stalin met with Eisenstein personally to demand revisions to part two of *Ivan the Terrible.* The official condemnation of *Ivan the Terrible* was published in all central newspapers on 4 September 1946.

[5] Prokofiev's score for this film became popularly known from an arrangement made after the composer's death in 1962 by Abram Stasevich. Stasevich's version departs significantly from the original film score.

Wartime difficulties, however, plagued two of the productions. The score for Aleksandr Gendel'shtein's (1906-81) film *Lermontov* (1943), a period dramatization of the poet's life, was all but abandoned when the aesthetic and physical distance between composer and director grew insurmountable, and Abram Room's (1894-1976) film short *Tonia* (1942) was censored. A third wartime project renewed Prokofiev's collaboration with Faintsimmer through the film *Kotovskii* (1943), a topical picture that dramatized the life of the eponymous hero of the Russian Revolution. Lastly, for Igor' Savchenko's (1906-50) *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* (*Partizany v stepiakh Ukrainy,* 1942), Prokofiev crafted a score using material drawn primarily from his orchestral suite *The Year 1941* (*1941-i god*). All four of these projects remain some of Prokofiev's most obscure works. Although their music is not among his most inspired, reconstruction of their productions reveals Prokofiev's brief, financially driven interest in film music during the war years and uncloaks some of his most unabashed collusion with the political and bureaucratic goals of the Soviet Union. These four film scores cohere as a group in their musical approach, one that shows the composer drawing inspiration from the symphonism of *Aleksandr Nevskii*, while also incorporating conventions of Soviet popular music.

Research on Prokofiev's career in the Soviet Union has been frustrated for decades by restricted access to archival materials. This constraint has represented an especially daunting hurdle for the study of his film music, a portion of the composer's oeuvre that remains almost entirely unpublished. Furthermore, only two of the films for which Prokofiev composed scores are available commercially.[6] Perhaps not surprisingly, only a

[6] All of the composer's film scores, with the exception of *Ivan the Terrible,* remain unpublished and furthermore do not appear in the Soviet 20-volume collected works edition. Hans Sikorski has launched an ambitious project to publish Soviet film music, but to date only one Prokofiev score has appeared: *Ivan Groznyi: muzyka k fil'mu Sergeia Eizenshteina, soch. 116,* eds. Marina Rakhmanova and

small body of literature exists in English and German on Prokofiev's cinematic work despite the post-Soviet interest in the composer's works and their relationship to the Soviet regime.[7] The literature is only slightly richer in Russian-language publications.[8] Moreover, much of the available secondary literature perpetuates misconceptions and serious factual errors. Thus a great deal of the following study is devoted to reconstructing Prokofiev's cinematic projects, an undertaking made possible by a number of fortuitous events. The most significant of these was the declassification in 2003 of Prokofiev's personal archive housed at the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI).[9]

Irina Medvedeva (Hamburg: Hans Sikorski, 1997). Of the films, only *Aleksandr Nevskii* and *Ivan the Terrible* are available commercially in the United States. *Kotovskii* was briefly accessible in Russia through the series *Shedevry sovetsogo kinematografa*.

[7] Rebecca Schwartz-Bishir, "Aleksandr Nevskiy: Prokofiev's Successful Compromise with Socialist Realism," in *Composing for the Screen in Germany and the USSR*, eds. Phil Powrie and Robynn Stilwell (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007), 148-160; Tatiana Egorova, *Soviet Film Music: An Historical Survey*, trans. Tatiana A. Ganf and Natalia A. Egunova (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997), chapter 8 ("Elaboration of the idea of sound-visual counterpoint in the film *Aleksander Nevsky,*" pp. 59-68) and chapter 12 ("A breakthrough in sound-visual cinema: *Ivan the Terrrible* by Eisenstein and Prokofiev," pp. 91-114); Russell Merritt, "Recharging *Alexander Nevsky*: Tracking the Eisenstein-Prokofiev War Horse," *Film Quarterly* 48 (1994-95): 34–47; Ulrich Seelmann-Eggebert, "Klang—Geste—Raum: Prokofjews Filmmusik zu Sergej Eisensteins Alexander Newski," in *Bericht über das Internationale Symposion "Sergej Prokofjew: Aspekte seines Werkes und der Biographie"*, eds. Silke Schloen and Klaus Niemöller (Regensburg: Bosse, 1992), 349–61; Articles by Douglas Gallez and P. D. Roberts present superficial analyses, see Douglas W. Gallez, "The Prokofiev-Eisenstein Collaboration: *Nevsky* and *Ivan* Revisited," *Cinema Journal* 17 (1978): 13–35, and P. D. Roberts, "Prokofiev's Score and Cantata for Eisenstein's 'Aleksandr Nevskiy'," *Semiotica* 21(1977): 151–61. See also Simon Morrison, "Tonya (1942): Reflections on an Unreleased Film and an Unpublished Score," *Three Oranges: The Journal of the Serge Prokofiev Association* 9 (2005): 12–17; Elmar Arro, "Sergej Prokofjews *Iwan der Schreckliche*," *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* 36 (1981): 573-577; Ronald Levaco, "The Eisenstein-Prokofiev Correspondence," *Cinema Journal* 13 (1973): 1-16.

[8] Izrail' Vladimirovich Nest'ev, *Aleksandr Nevskii Prokof'eva* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1968); M. Rogozhina, "Muzyka 'Aleksandra Nevskogo' Prokof'eva v kinofil'me i kantate," in *Muzyka i sovremennost': sbornik statei* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1963), 110-155; V. Vasina-Grossman, "Muzyka k fil'mu 'Ivan Groznyi'," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 3 (1958): 52-58; Oksana Dvornichenko, "Iskusstvo neslykhannykh garmonii: Eizenshtein i Prokof'ev," *Muzykal'naia zhizn'* 3 (1988): 10-11; L. Kozlov, "'Ivan Groznyi' Muzykal'no-tematicheskoe stroenie," in *Voprosy kinoiskusstvo, vyp. 10* (Moscow: Nauka, 1967), 242-257; M. Kozlova, "S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu," *Muzykal'naia zhizn'* 16 (1983): 18-19; E. Vishnevetskaia, "Kinomuzyka S.S.Prokof'eva voennykh let," in *Iz proshlogo sovetskoi muzykal'noi kul'turi,* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1975), I: 35–71.

[9] Portions of the composer's materials (primarily personal letters and journals) housed at RGALI have been reclassified by the Serge Prokofiev Estate until the year 2050.

Exceptional material on Stalin-era cultural practices has been similarly declassified in the wake of the Soviet collapse, and thousands of official decrees, classified internal communiqués, memos, and heretofore unknown correspondence concerning film and music have recently been published in a series of extraordinary document collections.[10] The discussion and analysis within the following chapters benefit at every step from this new-found documentary richness. Using these unexplored materials, along with a number of contemporary sources (newspapers, journals, and reviews), and the composer's recently published diaries (that date from 1907-33), this study seeks to explore not only the aesthetic, collaborative, and political underpinnings of Prokofiev's film music, but to correct factual errors and present the first in-depth study of the composer's work in the genre.[11]

The musicological literature on film music has grown immensely in the past two decades. Although a number of methodological approaches are now available, I do not confine the following analyses to any specific one. The vocabulary established in the

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[10] K[iril] M. Anderson, ed. *Kremlevskii kinoteatr 1928-1953: Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005); V. Fomin, ed. *Kino na voine: Dokumenty i svidetel'stva* (Moscow: Materik, 2005); Oleg V. Naumov and Andrei Artizov, ed. *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia: Dokumenty TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VChK-OGPU-NKVD o kul'turnoi politike, 1917-1953 gg.* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond "Demokratiia," 2002). Evgenii Margolit and Viacheslav Shmyrov have edited a comprehensive catalog of films prohibited in the Soviet Union, *Iz"iatoe kino: katalog sovetskikh igrovykh kartin, ne vypushchennykh vo vsesoiuznyi prokat po zavershenii v proizvodstve ili iz"iatykh iz deistvuiushchego fil'mofonda v god vypuska na ekran (1924-1953)* (Moscow: Informatsionno-analiticheskaia sluzhba "Dubl'-D," 1995). In English translation see Richard Taylor and Ian Christie, eds. *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents, 1896-1939* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988). Several Prokofiev-specific collections have recently appeared: Marina Rakhmanova, ed. *Sergei Prokof'ev k 50-letiiu so dnia smerti. Vospominaniia, pis'ma, stat'i* (Moscow: Deka-VC, 2004); and Rakhmanova, ed., *Sergei Prokof'ev k 110-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia. Pis'ma, vospominaniia i stat'i* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennyi tsentral'nyi muzei muzykal'noi kul'tury im. M. I. Glinki, 2001). In this study, these collections supplement four Soviet-era collections: I. V. Nest'ev, and G. Ia. Edel'man, eds, *Sergei Prokof'ev: Stat'i i materialy* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965); M. Kozlova and N.R. Iatsenko, eds., *S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1977); Semen Shlifshtein, ed., *Sergei Prokof'ev: Materialy, dokumenty, vospominaniia*, 2nd ed., (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1961); Viktor Varunts, ed., *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve: Stat'i i interv'iu* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991).

[11] Sergei Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik 1907-1933* (Paris: sprkfv, 2002). Prokofiev ceased keeping a diary when he returned to Moscow.

classic semiotic-structuralist studies of Claudia Gorman and Michel Chion has proved especially useful, as has that used in more recent post-structuralist and psychoanalytic literature, of which Anahid Kasabian is a major exponent.[12] In terms of methodology, however, I most closely follow Robin Stilwell's model, which advocates merging appropriate methodologies on a case-by-case basis.[13] My methodological approach is thus eclectic, which allows the constantly variable contexts of each of Prokofiev's film projects to shape and guide my analyses in the most direct way.

Music, Film, Politics, and Stalin's Russia

On 5 August 1928, a statement authored by three of the Soviet Union's most prominent film directors, Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin (1893-1953), and Grigorii Aleksandrov (1903-83) appeared in the journal *Zhizn' i iskusstvo* (*Life and Art*), heralding the realization of a "cherished dream": sound film. They proposed a radical use of music in film, lest the new art degenerate into mere filmed theater:

> *Only the contrapuntal use* of sound vis-à-vis the visual fragment of montage will open up new possibilities for the development and perfection of montage. *The first experiments in sound must aim at a sharp discord with the visual images*. Only such a "hammer and tongs" approach will produce the necessary sensation that will result consequently in the creation of a new *orchestral counterpoint* of visual and sound images [emphasis theirs].[14]

The ambitions of Eisenstein and his colleagues reflect the brief flowering of avant-garde

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[12] Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999) and *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (London: BFI, 1987); Anahid Kassabian, *Hearing Film: Tracking Identifications in Contemporary Hollywood Film Music* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

[13] Robynn Stilwell, "Music in Films: A Critical Review of Literature, 1980-1996," *The Journal of Film Music* 1 (2002): 19-61.

[14] S. Eisenstein, V. Pudovkin, G. Aleksandrov, "Zaiavka," *Zhizn' i iskusstvo*, 5 August 1928, pp. 4-5, translated in *The Film Factory*, 234-35.

Soviet film in the latter half of the 1920s, the so-called "Golden Age" of Soviet cinema. The statement is characteristic of Eisenstein in particular; his theoretical writings often envisage an abstract ideal that rarely found realization in practice.[15] Indeed, in 1929, the approximately ten Soviet films that had original musical scores still required live musicians to perform them.[16] True sound-on-film, as we have seen, reached Russia relatively late, and by the time experiments of the type Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Aleksandrov had proposed became technologically possible, cultural watchdogs would condemn such exercises as "formalism," antithetical to the mandated aesthetic doctrine of Socialist Realism.[17]

Socialist Realism remains a notoriously elusive concept. Its implementation as an aesthetic ideology in the Soviet Union can be traced to the liquidation of competing artists' groups that had dominated Soviet culture during the 1920s and their subsequent replacement by professional unions. In music, for example, a Composers' Union (*Soiuz kompozitorov*) replaced the warring Association of Contemporary Music (*Assotsiatsiia sovremennoi muzyki*) and Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (*Rossiiskaia assotsiatsiia proletarskikh muzykantov*) in 1932.[18] The Union's primary functions—fund-

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[15] A selection of Eisenstein's writings appears in English translation in Richard Taylor, ed., *The Eisenstein Reader* (London: British Film Institute, 1998). His complete writings are published in Russian in six volumes: Sergei Eizenshtein, *Izbrannye proizvedenniia* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1964-).

[16] It bears mentioning that in 1925, the theater director Vsevolod Meierkhol'd and Sergei Eisenstein considered asking Prokofiev to provide a score for Eisenstein's (unrealized) film about the 1905 Russian Revolution. No evidence survives as to whether Prokofiev was actually offered the project (Egorova, *Soviet Film Music*, 6).

[17] A notable exception is Dziga Vertov's 1931 film *Enthusiasm* (*Entuziazm: Simfoniia Donbassa*). On sound-image relations in Soviet cinema of the early 1930s, see Kristin Thompson, "Early Sound Counterpoint," *Yale French Studies* 60 (1980): 115-40.

[18] On the musical culture of Russia in the 1920s, see Amy Nelson, *Music for the Revolution: Musicians and Power in Early Soviet Russia* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).

ing and monitoring composition—assured its hegemony in the cultural sphere during the years that Prokofiev lived in the Soviet Union.[19] A similar restructuring in the Soviet literary world was the source of the term *sotsialisticheskii realizm*, a first effort at its codification having been made at the inaugural conference of the Writers' Union in 1932.[20] Though intended as a guiding principle to steer artists away from experimentalism (seen by the bureaucracy as anathema to the proletariat), for most artists Socialist Realism remained a highly abstract and mercurial aesthetic ideal. Early practitioners in music emphasized lyricism, simplicity of means, formal lucidity, and harmonic conservatism.[21] Adherence to these characteristics was, however, no guarantee of success. As a constantly evolving and ill-defined doctrine, Socialist Realism in the 1930s and 1940s can be understood more as a tool available to squelch autonomous aestheticism rather than as a guiding beacon for artists. Malcolm Brown has even suggested that the vagueness of Socialist Realism's demands was purposeful, as the doctrine could thus be wielded for any number of politically expeditious ends.[22]

After nearly seventeen years abroad, Prokofiev returned permanently to the USSR within weeks of a pivotal point in the development of Socialist Realism in music. On the lead page of the central newspaper *Pravda* on 28 January 1936, an anonymous author lambasted Dmitri Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mstensk District* (*Ledi*

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[19] The foundation of the union is traced in Kiril Tomoff, *Creative Union: The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939-1953* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), especially 13-36.

[20] By far the most detailed and comprehensive account of this is found in Régine Robin, *Socialist Realism: An Impossible Aesthetic*, trans. Catherine Porter (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).

[21] These characteristics were discussed and debated in contemporary journals, especially *Sovetskaia muzyka*, the organ of the Composers' Union.

[22] Malcolm Brown, "The Soviet Russian Concepts of 'Intonaziia' and 'Musical Imagery," *Musical Quarterly* 60 (1974): 557.

Makbet Mtsenskogo uezda, 1934) for failing to heed the tastes of the Soviet public—in short, the work played to formalist tendencies that were alien to Socialist Realism. Few would argue that Stalin was behind the now infamous attack (he reportedly left a performance of the opera in an agitated state immediately prior to the appearance of the article).[23] Although by 1936 accusations of formalism in music were nothing new, the harsh terms and prominence of the *Pravda* article represented a warning shot from the highest levels.[24] Leonid Maximenkov has recently suggested that there may have been more to the attack than simple enforcement:[25]

> What [Stalin] was up in arms against was not so much Shostakovich's opera but the "unhealthy" tendencies in Soviet film music, about which there was not one word in the editorial. It pointed to a clear-cut evaluation: Shostakovich should continue working and writing important film music instead of useless operas.[26]

Maximenkov's interpretation derives from a unique source: throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Stalin regularly convened late-night meetings at which he, together with select advisors, screened every film produced in the Soviet Union. We know the details of these sessions thanks to the exhaustive stenographic records of Boris Shumiatskii (1886-1938), the head of the Soviet film industry during the mid-1930s. His notes reveal the cinematic tastes of the most powerful bureaucrats in the Soviet Union.

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[23] Leonid Maximenkov persuasively argues that it was in fact Platon Kerzhentsev, the chairman of the Committee on Arts Affairs, who wrote the article. See *Sumbur vmesto muzyki: Stalinskaia kul'turnaia revoliutsiia* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia kniga, 1997), 88-112.

[24] For a detailed analysis see Marco Frei, '*Chaos statt Musik': Dmitri Schostakowitsch, die Prawda-Kampagne von 1936 bis 1938 und der Sozialistische Realismus* (Saarbrücken: PFAU-Verlag, 2006).

[25] In his seminal study of Stalinist cultural politics, Maximenkov argues that the "secondary" status that is often granted film music does not do justice to the central role it played in the Soviet Union (See *Sumbur vmesto muzyki,* especially the chapter "Kinomuzyka—vazhneishee iz muzykal'nikh iskusstv," 130–41).

[26] Leonid Maximenkov, "Stalin and Shostakovich: Letters to a 'Friend'," in *Shostakovich and His World*, ed. Laurel E. Fay (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 47.

On the evening of 28 June 1934, Stalin screened the documentary *Heroes of the Arctic* (*Geroi Arktiki*), which was shown twice: first without its soundtrack and then with accompanying music.[27] Stalin, expressing surprise at the effect, commented on how music enhances film's images.[28] On 30 October, he praised Isaak Dunaevskii's (1900-55) music for Aleksandrov's new film *The Merry Fellows* (*Veselye rebiata*, 1934).[29] Shostakovich's film music similarly captured the leader's attention: on 18 December the composer's score for *Maksim's Youth* (*Iunost' Maksima*, 1934) was singled out for its "good, cultured music."[30] The following year Shostakovich was the only composer among a group of cinema artists considered for official recognition by the government (although he was not among those chosen).[31] The event that Maximenkov suggests precipitated the *Lady Macbeth* affair was a screening of the film *Girlfriends* (*Podrugi*) on 25 December 1935.[32] Shostakovich's score for the film annoyed Stalin, who found that its character distracted from what was otherwise a fine picture.[33] The *Pravda* article attacking Shostakovich appeared four weeks later. In a subsequent meeting Stalin held with his

[27] Little information on this film survives, and it appears that it was sent to the State Film Archive without being released.

[28] RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 828, ll. 43-45.

[29] Maximenkov, "Stalin and Shostakovich," 46.

[30] RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 828, ll. 81-81 ob. The film, directed by Grigorii Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, consists of three parts: "Trilogy about Maksim" ("Trilogiia o Maksime"), "Maksim's Return" ("Vozvrashchenie Maksima"), and "The Vyborg Side" ("Vyborgskaia storona").

[31] Maximenkov, "Stalin and Shostakovich," 46.

[32] The film was produced at Lenfilm and directed by Leo Arnshtam. Despite Stalin's dislike of the film's music, it premiered on 19 February 1936.

[33] RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 829, ll. 64-66.

Politburo advisors, the topic of discussion was not *Lady Macbeth*, but rather what effect the editorial might have on improving music for film.[34]

Soviet composers expressed interest in sound film from its inception.[35] While the same can be said of many Western art music composers, only in Russia has composing for film remained a regular and unchanging facet of the careers of composers known primarily for their "serious" art music. The triumvirate of Russian composers who dominated the nation's art-music scene in the latter half of the Soviet period, for example, were all prolific composers of film music: Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931) composed seven film scores, Edison Denisov (1929-96) has twenty-seven films to his credit, and Al'fred Schnittke (1934-98) composed for an impressive sixty-six films. Yet only a part of this pervasive interest in film music can be attributed to the attention of Stalin and other high-ranking bureaucrats or to their public machinations such as the *Pravda* article. Most importantly, perhaps, for this steady output was the fact that film studios themselves offered contracts for film scores. While in the West this would seem a given, for Soviet composers it represented a rare and financially rewarding professional opportunity outside of the purview of the Composers' Union. Thus official commissions for art music could be supplemented by (or, if the composer had fallen into disfavor with his colleagues at the Union, replaced by) commissions from Mosfilm, Lenfilm, Soiuzdetfilm, or any other of the nation's film studios. Although many Western scholars are quick to attribute the conservative style of works like Prokofiev's *Aleksandr Nevskii* to the stifling aesthetic

[34] Maximenkov, "Stalin and Shostakovich," 47-48.

[35] By far the most comprehensive surveys of Russian and Soviet film music have been authored by the musicologist Tatiana Egorova. Her book (*Soviet Film Music*), however, suffers from numerous inconsistencies and must be used with caution. A similar version, based directly on Egorova's doctoral dissertation, was published in Russian as *Muzyka sovetskogo fil'ma* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennyi institut iskusstvoznaniia, 1998).

mandates of Socialist Realism (and their enormous popularity to the lowbrow tastes of audiences) the negotiation of the divide between "high" (art) and "low" (film and popular) was in fact a very normal and accepted part of the Soviet system. Kiril Tomoff writes:

> The elision of high and low can be seen even in the work of the system's most prominent composers. Though he may have been more interested in his Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues, Shostakovich nevertheless wrote successful popular film scores. Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* is perhaps the most popular piece of twentieth-century children's music, and his score for the film *Aleksandr Nevskii* in its cantata form has become a staple of the international repertoire.[36]

Shostakovich was involved with film from the earliest years of his career, first as a pianist for silent film houses in Leningrad and later as the composer who supplied scores for the first Soviet "talkies" that approached the *The Jazz Singer's* popularity: *Alone* (*Odna*, 1931), *Golden Mountains* (*Zlatye gory*, 1931) and *The Counterplan* (*Vstrechnyi*, 1932).[37] All three films demonstrate the intermingling of popular song with more classically styled orchestral numbers (often with the song's melody becoming the thematic material of the orchestral sections), a trait that characterizes much Soviet film music throughout the 1930s and 1940s. The song Shostakovich composed for *The Counterplan* became a hit that far eclipsed the popularity of the film for which it was composed.[38]

It was, however, the composer Issak Dunaevskii (1900-55) who achieved signif-

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[36] Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 303.

[37] *Alone* was produced at Lenfilm and directed by Grigorii Kozintsev (1905-73) and Leonid Trauberg (1902-90); *Golden Mountains* at Lensoiuzkino by Sergei Iutkevich (1904-85); *The Counterplan* at Rosfilm (Leningrad) by Fridrikh Ermler (1898-1967) and Iutkevich.

[38] See the discussion of the music for these three films in John Riley, *Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 12-21, as well as Manashir Iakubova's critical commentary to *Dmitri Shostakovich: Novoe sobranie sochinenii, vol. CXXIII. Muzyka k kinofil'my "Odna"* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "DSCH", 2004), 317-21. On the enormous popularity of the "Song of the Counterplan," see John Riley, "From the factory to the flat: thirty years of the *Song of the Counterplan*" in *Soviet Music and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: The Baton and Sickle*, ed. Neil Edmunds (London and New York: Routledge-Curzon, 2004), 67-80.

icant fame as the Soviet Union's preeminent song composer in the 1930s. His hundreds of popular songs, many of which appear in his dozen operettas and nearly thirty film scores, extol an upbeat and optimistic outlook; one was even used as the call sign of Moscow radio.[39] Other Soviet composers known for their film songs include the brothers Dmitri and Daniil Pokrass (1899-1978 and 1905-54 respectively) and the indefatigable Nikita Bogoslovskii (1913-2004), who authored fifty-nine film scores and some two hundred popular songs. Popular film songs of the 1930s, which were almost exclusively cast in a light march style, had much in common with the "mass song," a genre that had come into existence in the late 1920s to fill the need for music that would reach the masses and counter perceived modernist perversions in art music.[40] Prokofiev only occasionally indulged the expectation for popular and mass song, the clearest example being the mass song "Arise, Russian People" used in *Aleksandr Nevskii*. During the war years simple, tuneful songs replaced the marches of the 1930s, a development that was more suited to Prokofiev's characteristic lyricism.[41]

Popular songs were not appropriate for every film, especially those with historical or revolutionary topics. Thus many Soviet film composers, Prokofiev among them, produced predominantly "symphonic" film scores that displayed a more direct connection to classical art music (though, to be sure, "song" scores and "symphonic" scores represent points on a continuum rather than discreet categories). Among the most prolific of these

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[39] On Dunaevskii's life and works, see Dmitri Minchenok, *Dunaevskii: Krasnyi Motsart* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 2006).

[40] On the mass song, see Nelson, *Music for the Revolution,* 121-24, and Larry Sitsky, *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1909-1929* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 150-54.

[41] T[at'iana] K. Egorova, "Muzyka v kino," in *Istoriia sovremennoi otechestvennoi muzyki*, second edition, ed. M[ikhail] Tarakanov (Moscow: Muzyka, 1999), II: 456.

composers are many of the Soviet Union's foremost artists: Iurii Shaporin (1887-1966), Dmitri Kabalevskii (1904-87), Vissarion Shebalin (1902-63), Gavriil Popov (1904-72), Tikhon Khrennikov (1913-2007), and Aram Khachaturian (1903-78).[42] Admittedly the film music of these composers cannot be reduced to a single style or approach, but it is illustrative to draw a parallel between their work and what has become known as "classic" Hollywood practice (a style generally defined by composers such as Max Steiner): a preference for brief symphonic numbers written in a predominantly late-nineteenth century style, unified with the use of leitmotivs.[43] Hollywood's 1930s obsession with "mickey-mousing" (music-image coordination at the gestural level) was, however, not entirely shared by Russian producers. Although brief moments of gestural coordination exist (as we shall see in *Lieutenant Kizhe* and *Aleksandr Nevskii*), it cannot be considered a defining characteristic of Soviet film. Part of this resulted from a simple lack of necessary technology, but directors and composers also actively campaigned against its use and the unnecessary vaudeville effect they thought it brought to film.[44]

As will become apparent in the following chapters, we must be careful in drawing too close a parallel between film production in the West and that in Moscow. In Hollywood, for example, the experience of the composer was relatively standardized. Once

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[42] On the film music of Kabalevskii and Khachaturian, see D. Daragan, *Kinomuzyka D. Kabalevskogo* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965); N. Mikoian, *Kinomuzyka Arama Khachaturiana* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1984).

[43] See chapter four of Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 70-98, 170-72.

[44] See in particular Vladimir Messman, "Muzyka v kino," *Kino* 16 February 1935, p. 4; N[ikolai] Kriukov, "Opyt kompozitora," *Kino* 6 April 1936, p. 3. On Soviet practices, see Thomas Lahusen, "Ot nesinkhronizirovannogo smekha k post-sinkhronizirovannoi komedii, ili kak Stalinskii miuzikl dognal i peregnal Gollivud," in *Sovetskoe bogatstvo: stat'i o kul'ture, literature i kino*, ed. Marina Balina (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2002), 346. For a detailed study on the practice of "mickey-mousing" in general, see Barbara White, "'As if they didn't hear the music,' Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Mickey Mouse," *Opera Quarterly* 22 (2007): 65-89.

filming was completed and a rough cut was assembled, the composer "spotted" the film, timing musical cues (the points where music enters) down to a fraction of a second. The score was then composed to fit the film exactly.[45] This was far from the case in Soviet filmmaking. In a 1935 article, for example, the director B. Bernet sharply criticized Soviet filmmakers for inconsistency in their treatment of music.[46] He cites as a typical example the 1936 film *A Chance Meeting* (*Sluchainaia vstrecha*), which already had its score before a rough cut (the initial assembly of individual takes into a complete film) was completed, precipitating disaster when the script had to be revised three times during filming. Poor planning for the film *At the Blue Sea* (*U sinei moria*, 1935) meant that composer Iurii Nikol'skii had to scramble to complete his score, delaying the film's release.[47] Inconsistency in production protocol remained a problem throughout the 1930s and 1940s, a condition to which Prokofiev's film projects bear witness.

Another grievance of Soviet composers that would persist throughout the 1940s was directorial ineptness and disinterest in musical matters. When the training of directors was institutionalized in the early 1930s, music was never made part of the curriculum.[48] Many Soviet composers, among them a rising star at Mosfilm, Nikolai Kriukov (1908-61), saw the future of film music in an organic treatment of sound and image (*zvuko-zritel'noe edinstvo*) that could be accomplished only if the composer was involved

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[45] Descriptions of this practice can be found in a number of sources, such as Donald Chase, *Filmmaking: The Collaborative Art* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974).

[46] B. Bernet, "Muzykal'nye siurprizy," *Kino*, 11 December 1935, p. 3.

[47] *A Chance Meeting* was also known as *The Month of May* (*Mesiats mai*). The film was produced at Rot-Front and Mezhrabpomfilm; Igor' Savchenko directed, and the composer was S. Pototskii. *At the Blue Sea* was produced by V. Smirnov at Mosfilm.

[48] See Jamie Miller, "Educating the Filmmakers: The State Institute of Cinematography in the 1930s," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 85 (2007): 462-490.

in the production from the start, and could contribute directly to the creation of the script.[49] The composer Sergei Bugoslavskii, responding to the 1936 *Pravda* editorial, not only exhorted his colleagues to singable melodies, clear forms, and tonal harmony, but also lambasted directors for creating a situation where music and image exist in "different worlds."[50] This attitude, which was tacitly shared by Prokofiev, is not surprising of art-music composers who sought a place of significance for their contributions to film.

One final shortcoming of the Soviet film industry, the miserable condition of sound recording equipment, bears mentioning, not only for its striking difference from the situation in Western Europe and Hollywood, but for elucidating many of the aesthetic choices made by Prokofiev in his film music. Although developing audio recording equipment was a relatively early concern—Pavel Tager (1903-71) working in Moscow, and Aleksandr Shorin (1890-1941) working in Leningrad, began developing sound-on-film systems in 1929—the ultimate quality of recordings was subject to the poor quality of Soviet-made microphones. Furthermore, film studios rarely had access to acoustically-ideal halls in which to record.[51] One critic noted that orchestras of over one hundred performers were regularly used in recording sessions, whereas foreign productions rarely exceeded fifty (early microphones were especially sensitive to distortion from intense sound).[52] Topping the list of sound-related woes, however, was the general incom-

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[49] Kriukov, "Opyt kompozitora," p. 3. Bernet praised director Iakov Protozanov for being one of the few directors to involve a composer in the creation of a script, citing specifically the films he created with composer David Bek, *O strannostiakh liubvi* (1936, Rot-front) and *Bespridannitsa* (1936, Mezhrabpomfilm); see Bernet, "Muzykal'nye siuprizy," 4.

[50] S. Bugolsavskii, "Formalizm v kinomuzyke," *Kino*, 16 Feburary 1936, p. 3.

[51] Iu. Kalashnikov, ed., *Ocherki istorii sovetskogo kino* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1956-61), I: 266.

[52] M. Ul'ner, "Iskusstvo i tekhnika zvukozapisi," *Kino*, 28 March 1935, p. 4.

petence of sound technicians.[53] Valerii Popov, who became the head sound technician at Mosfilm, called for the creation of special training for those involved in sound recording.[54] His pleas were in vain, at least during the period Prokofiev worked in film. This litany of industry problems, and the frustrations it posed for the composer, will be illustrative in understanding Prokofiev's ambiguous attitude toward film music.

The Industry, 1930-48

Each of Prokofiev's film projects crystallized at a distinct and unique moment in the history of a highly variable industry. Industry demands, expectations, and restructurings thus play a large part in this study's analyses and discussions. What follows here is not a detailed and complete history of Soviet film during the Stalin era, but rather a succinct overview that will help connect and contextualize the specific moments addressed in the remaining chapters.[55]

Before the Soviet film industry could effectively deal with the call to Socialist Realism, it had to first contend with the enormous popularity of imported American and Western European film. Histories of film tend to give the impression that innovators such as Eisenstein and Aleksandr Dovzhenko dominated Russian cinema in the 1920s,

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[53] See ibid; V. Leshchev, "Vyshe kachestvo zvuka!," *Kino*, 28 September 1934, p. 1; D[avid] Blok, "Muzyka v kino," *Kino*, 22 January 1935, p. 3; G. Irskii, "Prichiny plokhogo zvuchaniia," *Kino*, 5 September 1935, p. 4.

[54] V. Popov, "Uluchshit' zvukozapis'," *Kino*, 11 July 1934, p. 4.

[55] On general issues of the Soviet film industry during the Stalin era see Peter Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society from the Revolution to the Death of Stalin* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001); Natacha Laurent, *L'œil du Kremlin: cinéma et censure en URSS sous Staline, 1928-1953* (Toulouse: Privat, 2000); Jay Leyda, *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*., 3rd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983); G[rigorii] Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor: Stalin smotrit kino* (Moscow: Konfederatsiia soiuzov kinematografistov "Kinotsentr," 1992); Eberhard Nembach, *Stalins Filmpolitik: Der Umbau der Sowjetischen Filmindustrie, 1929 bis 1938* (St. Augustin: Gardez, 2002); Denise J. Youngblood, *Russian War Films: On the Cinema Front, 1914-2005* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007).

but in reality their films were enjoyed primarily by the intelligentsia and remained altogether unintelligible to the average Soviet cinemagoer.[56] Up to the beginning of the 1930s, foreign film remained prominent, and the bureaucracy's attempts to quell its popularity through critical attacks had little effect.

Similar to other areas of Soviet art, establishing strong centralized control was seen as the answer to promoting Soviet film as a popular, comprehensible, and didactic medium. The first step toward that end was the creation in 1930 of Soiuzkino, a quasi-oversight committee that supervised both Russian studios and the emerging republican studios in Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Central Asia. Soiuzkino was chaired throughout the 1930s by Boris Shumiatskii, a functionary whose lack of any specialized training in film indicates the goal of his appointment: to draw the industry under tight central control rather than offering aesthetic or technological guidance.[57] Beginning in 1934 the quantities, genres, and topics of films were mandated, and scenarios under consideration appeared in the journal *Sovetskoe kino* for public discussion to root out anything that might interfere with their clarity or didactic effectiveness. This regimentation precipitated three distinct film genres by the mid-1930s: Historical dramas (such as Vladimir Petrov's *Peter the First* and Eisenstein's *Aleksandr Nevskii*), revolutionary pictures (such as the Brothers Valsilev's *Chapaev*) and overtly didactic contemporary stories (the rise of heavy industry, the importance of collective farms, or the struggle against saboteurs).[58] Shumiatskii's tenure also saw the systematic elimination of foreign-

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[56] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 63-64, 80.

[57] Soiuzkino was initially and briefly chaired by Mikhail Riutin (1890-1937), but his attempts to temper Stalin's coalescing dictatorship led to his arrest and execution.

[58] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 121-30 and 144-49; see also Evgenii Gromov, *Stalin, vlast' i iskusstvo* (Moscow: Respublika, 1998), 186-87, 212.

produced films from Soviet theaters as well as the upbraiding of the 1920s experimentalists, who were forced to recant their formalist pasts in 1935.[59]

Heavy-handed bureaucratic control also meant that, beginning with Soiuzkino's inception, the number of new films that appeared on Soviet screens was comparatively small. Production times bloated under the rigors of censorship; in the 1920s the average film remained in production two or three months, by the latter half of the 1930s, fourteen months was typical.[60] A 1935 visit to America convinced Shumiatskii that a Crimean-based "Soviet Hollywood"—which he christened *Kinogorod* (literally "Film-city")—held the key to increasing and centralizing Soviet film production. Much attention was diverted to the realization of this project, which barely made it past ground breaking by 1938. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union's studios and theaters languished: while in the late 1930s the West saw the first examples of Technicolor film, in the USSR the majority of projectors were not even yet equipped for sound.[61]

Official disappointment in Shumiatskii's tenure reached a peak when members of the Politburo screened portions of Eisenstein's film *Bezhin Meadow* (*Bezhin Lug*, 1935-37) on 5 March 1937, a work that they found "anti-artistic and politically groundless." Shumiatskii bore the brunt of the subsequent attack, outwardly for not having monitored the film's production, and tacitly for having diverted so much of his attention to *Kino-*

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[59] Shumiatskii's 1935 book *The Cinema of the Millions* (*Kinematografiia millionov*) was a vicious attack on the 1920s experimentalists. See the description in Denise Youngblood, *Soviet Cinema in the Silent Era* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1985), 230-2.

[60] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 121.

[61] Ibid., 123.

gorod, his expensive and ineffectual pet project.[62] Although his downfall was not tied directly to Eisenstein's film, his fate was nevertheless sealed. In 1938, at the height of the Great Purges (1937-39), Shumiatskii was denounced as a "fascist cur," arrested on charges of sabotage, and executed.[63]

Soiuzkino also disappeared and was replaced by a Committee on Cinematography (*Komitet po delam kinoiskusstv pri SNK SSSR*, hereafter KDK) headed by the former NKVD agent Semyon Dukel'skii (1892-1960). His tenure was brief (little more than one year) yet devastatingly destructive. In an attempt to make up for Shumiatskii's perceived lack of attention, a number of films were indiscriminately cancelled—a restructuring that directly affected Prokofiev's film work shortly after his permanent return to Russia in 1936. The nefarious effects of Dukel'skii's excesses were quickly recognized, and he was transferred to an appointment as minister of the navy. The vacant chair of the KDK was filled by the much more moderate Ivan Bol'shakov (1902-80), who would hold the position for the remainder of the Stalin era. Any plans Bol'shakov may have had to reform the industry following Dukel'skii's removal, however, evaporated with the Nazi invasion on 22 June 1941. The first year of the war drastically reduced the means of the film industry; primary goals included the production of *kinosborniki* (collections of short war-themed films) and, as the *Wehrmacht* drew alarmingly close to Leningrad and

[62] "Postanovlenie Politbiuro TsK VKP(b) o kinofil'me 'Bezhin lug'," 5 March 1937, RGASPI f. 17, op. 3, d. 984, l. 18, reprinted in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 406. Shumiatskii's relationship with Eisenstein had already soured due to the latter's association with avant-garde filmmaking in the 1920s. Shumiatskii maintained that the unintelligibility of 1920s "intellectual" silent film scared good scenario writers away, precipitating the scenario shortage of the later 1930s (Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky," 202). In December 1936, inaccurate notices appeared in Parisian newspapers regarding the reported arrest of Eisenstein in the USSR. Shumiatskii penned a personal letter to Stalin, in which he eagerly suggested that Eisenstein himself had circulated the rumors as a counter-Revolutionary stunt (Letter dated 21 December 1936, AP RF, f. 3 [dokumenty Politbiuro] op. 35, d. 89, l. 96, cited in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 375).

[63] Shumiatskii was executed on 29 July 1938. Translations of denunciations in *Pravda* and *Iskusstvo kino* appear in *The Film Factory*, 386-89.

Moscow, the evacuation of essential personnel from the nation's film studios to safer locations deep in Central Asia.[64]

When production of feature-length films resumed in the second half of 1942, the most successful of these dealt with partisan warfare and the heroic deeds of women on the homefront, themes that carefully avoided disheartening reference to the actual horrors of the front (this development, as we shall see, directly informed two of Prokofiev's projects: *Tonia* and *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*). While many directors would remember the war years as a time of relative artistic freedom—official attention was directed elsewhere—the trying wartime conditions meant that producing films involved coping with subpar working conditions and making due with inadequate raw materials. Further difficulties resulted from the fact that scriptwriters, directors, and composers were often separated by thousands of kilometers, depending on where the evacuation had carried them.[65]

Prokofiev's career in film ended during the surreal and absurd postwar years of Stalin's reign. Russia's victory in the Great Patriotic War fueled Stalin's predisposition to xenophobic nationalism, the most tangible effect of which was Andrei Zhdanov's (1896-1948) two-year ideological campaign against foreign perversions of Soviet art and science (a thinly-veiled justification for the reassertion of bureaucratic control following

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[64] The first few *kinosborniki* contained instructional shorts such as *What We Should Do during an Air Raid Alert* (*Chto my dolzhny delat' po signalu "Vozdushnaia trevoga"*). The fifth *kinosbornik* offered two documentaries on the war. The remaining collections were comprised of fictional shorts called *kinonovelly* (literally "film-novellas"). *Kinosborniki* nos. 1 through 7 were produced in Moscow, the remaining seven were made during the evacuation in Alma-Ata. See "Iz vospominanii I. G. Bol'shakova," in *Kino na voine*, 89.

[65] See *Literatura i iskusstvo*, 24 July 1943, p.1.

the more moderate war years).[66] Zhdanov fulfilled his task with sadistic intensity (for instance denouncing the poetess Anna Akhmatova as a "harlot"); the years of his merciless attack on all sectors of Soviet culture (1946-48) have henceforth born his name: *Zhdanovshchina*. Literature, theater, and film stood first in line for attack. Although the target of the Zhdanov-instigated Central Committee decree of 4 Sept 1946 was Leonid Lukov's film *The Great Life*—accused of emphasizing personal rather than societal problems—Part II of Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* was also criticized, as were films by the vanguard of Russia's directors: Vsevolod Pudovkin, Leonid Trauberg, and Grigorii Kozintsev.[67] The effects of the *Zdanovshchina* reached music relatively late, on 10 February 1948, but its intensity had only grown in the interim: the Composers' Union, the Committee on Artistic Affairs, and the Bolshoi Theater, as well as the composers Nikolai Miaskovskii, Vano Muradeli, Valerii Popov, Vissarion Shebalin, Shostakovich and Prokofiev were targeted. Most of the disgraced composers retreated from art music (at least until Stalin's death in 1953) and many turned to film music as a viable and relatively safe option. Between 1948 and 1953, Shostakovich composed seven film scores, Shebalin five, and Khachaturian four (and little, if any, music in other genres).[68] Prokofiev, already infirm, never recovered from the blow—his work with film ended with *Ivan the Terrible* in 1945.

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[66] Yoram Gorlizki and Oleg Khlevniuk, *Cold Peace: Stalin and the Soviet Ruling Circle, 1945-1953* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[67] "O kinofil'me 'Bol'shaia zhizn'," *Iskusstvo kino* 1 (1947): 1-2.

[68] Egorova, "Muzyka v kino," 467.

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Before turning to Prokofiev's film scores, a cautionary word is in order. The place of Prokofiev's film music in the intricate political and cultural landscape briefly explored in this introduction remains complex. The Cold-War-born impulse to make a reductive equation of dissidence and artistic worth (and by extension an equation of Socialist Realism and artistic insignificance) dies hard. Prokofiev's music for the cinema has suffered under the label of "propaganda," to some glorifying a dark chapter of twentieth-century history better left forgotten. Katerina Clark laments that Soviet Socialist-Realist works are taboo in Western scholarship, unless they are discussed in terms "of outrage, bemusement, derision, or elegy."[69] Film music represents an especially contentious case, not only thanks to its visually-fixed "meaning," but also given the Soviet bureaucracy's direct involvement in approval and censorship mechanisms. In 1995, for instance, Richard Taruskin attacked *Ivan the Terrible* in the pages of *The New York Times*:

> Is it possible to forget that this movie and this score, whatever their artistic merits, conveyed as poisonous a message as art has ever been asked to monger? And from that follow these: Whatever the sympathy we feel for the human plight of artists who worked under killing constraints, and however strong our human impulse therefore, to focus on their "purely artistic" achievement, is it really possible to ignore the content of their work? And if possible, is it desirable that we make ourselves indifferent to the horrific ideas to which they lend such compelling artistic support? For make no mistake: *Ivan the Terrible* is dedicated to the proposition that abstract historical purposes justify bloody acts in the here and now.[70]

In the chapters that follow, I explore Prokofiev's film work as neither "purely artistic" achievement nor as unequivocal political document. My analyses are politically in-

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[69] Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), ix.

[70] Richard Taruskin, "Great Artists Serving Stalin Like a Dog," *The New York Times*, 28 May 1995, p. 22.

formed, but rather than passing judgment on the product, I seek to examine the creative and professional process: what did film music mean to Prokofiev's career, what were its styles and methods, and what role did it play in aligning him (or misaligning him) with underlying political currents? Life in Stalin's Russia was in constant flux, a mix of terror, optimism, and uncertainty—certainly not a static, continually repressed vacuum from which only occasional brilliant bursts of dissidence issued.[71] Forging a career as a composer in this environment was a similar and equally complex mix of dissent and collusion. It is to this constantly shifting environment that Prokofiev's film music testifies.

Chapter Overview

Sergei Prokofiev's score for the film *Lieutenant Kizhe* stands among the twentieth century's best known compositions for the cinema, thanks to the enormously popular suite based on the film's music. Yet despite this popularity, scholars have devoted little attention to Prokofiev's intriguing role in the film's production, which resulted in his first work expressly for a Soviet audience as well as his first foray into the genre of film music. Chapter 1 explores how Prokofiev, already a world-renowned composer by 1933, approached an uncharted genre, and the forces behind his decision to work with the film industry, especially his 1930 visit to Hollywood. For the film, he forged a sparse, hyper-lyrical style that would characterize both his film music and his incidental music during the mid-1930s. Prokofiev remained in Paris during *Kizhe's* production, conducting his

[71] Two excellent studies explore this and other aspects of Stalinist culture: Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), and Orlando Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007).

affairs with Faintsimmer almost entirely through correspondence. Because of this, Prokofiev produced a score that is neither synchronic nor asynchronic; in its audiovisual pairing the music participates in creating a quasi-surrealistic atmosphere, an environment altogether unique in Prokofiev's film work. The first chapter also introduces Prokofiev's relationship with technology and new media through the lens of *Lieutenant Kizhe,* as well as his experiences during his 1932 London recording session (as piano soloist). The possibilities of recording technology remained behind much of Prokofiev's interest in sound film.

In 1937 the Soviet Union celebrated two events of great significance to the young socialist state: the Pushkin centenary and the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution. Historian Karen Petrone discusses the great political importance of these official commemorations and how they proved to be a far more effective tool to "create legitimacy and mobilize citizens" than more straightforward socialist education.[72] One of the facets of the Pushkin commemoration was Mikhail Romm's film version of Pushkin's celebrated novella *The Queen of Spades*, for which Prokofiev composed his second film score. Romm's and Prokofiev's collaboration was informed by Vsevolod Meierkhol'd's 1935 production of Chaikovsky's opera *The Queen of Spades*, which sought to purge the opera of perceived proto-Symbolist aspects and return it to a more "authentic" base in Pushkin's original. The same ambition lay behind Prokofiev's score, which consciously distanced itself from Chaikovsky's, exchanging nineteenth-century Romanticism for spare and impassive characterization. Chapter 2 analyzes how Prokofiev's score, along with Meierkhol'd's re-Pushkinized opera production and Romm's unrealized film repre-

[72] Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 6.

sent different facets of the same effort to adapt, transform, and employ the Russian past in service of the Soviet present.

Romm's *Queen of Spades*, however, never made it to the theater. The extensive ambitions of the Soviet bureaucracy in the realm of culture nearly always exceeded available means, and the Pushkin jubilee was plagued by confusion, disorganization, missed deadlines, and the ultimate cancellation of a number of projects, including Romm's film. Nevertheless Prokofiev completed his work in short score prior to the film's cancellation, and he recycled material from it in several of his later compositions. *The Queen of Spades* provides a lesson in Soviet reality, which marked the end of an era of innocence for the composer and stood as an ill omen of things to come. From this point forward, Prokofiev's work would be increasingly subject to the whims of Soviet officialdom, and Stalin ever more expected artists to participate in the construction of a Russian past for the Soviet present.[73]

In 1938, during his last tour outside of the Soviet Union, Prokofiev visited Hollywood for a second time, meeting with Walt Disney and admiring the technological sophistication of American film studios. In the early 1930s, Eisenstein also developed connections with Hollywood, as did Shumiatskii, who had spent several months in Hollywood in 1935 absorbing and admiring the technological refinement of the American film industry. Prokofiev, Eisenstein, and Shumiatskii were influenced in different ways by the model of Hollywood, and each would try to adapt the American example to a very

[73] Chapters 2 and 3 are informed by historian David Brandenburger's study of a new sense of imagined community displaced from nineteenth-century European nationalism. Like many cultural developments of the 1930s, Stalin deliberately cultivated this awareness in an attempt to gain legitimacy for the Soviet Union through the annexation of "glorious Russian" heroes such as Aleksandr. See David Brandenburger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931-1956* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

different, technologically impoverished and politically charged context—Shumiatskii overtly with his brainchild *Kinogorod*, and Eisenstein and Prokofiev more tacitly with *Aleksandr Nevskii*.

Aleksandr Nevskii, Prokofiev's third film project and his first collaboration with Eisenstein, has a checkered reception. Critics, responding to Eisenstein's theoretical and propagandistic writings, often herald the film's innovative audiovisual pairing while others merely condemn the film for its transparent jingoism. [74] In Chapter 3, I take a fresh look at this "warhorse" film from three distinct but complementary viewpoints: collaboration, musical style, and technology. What emerges is a picture of a composer-director collaboration that was not only exceptionally close, but experimental, offering much practical experience for the next Eisenstein-Prokofiev project, *Ivan the Terrible*. I argue that Prokofiev's appropriation of *kuchkist* language (the "nationalist" style forwarded by Musorgsky and his colleagues) owes much to Eisenstein's aesthetic demands and editing. A central theme of the chapter is the deceptively simple role Prokofiev's music plays in *Aleksandr Nevskii*, despite what Eisenstein's theorizing would have us believe. The film's prodigious success with many levels of Soviet society hinged upon a visceral reaction to the music.

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[74] See, for example the director's comments in Sergei Eizenshtein, *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1964), II: 192–93. In terms of music, Russell Merritt comments "Prokofiev's music underscores the ellipses in Eisenstein's narrative by opening up fissures between the sound track and the images, commenting on them and occasionally even contradicting what is seen on screen." Russell Merritt, "Recharging *Alexander Nevsky*: Tracking the Eisenstein-Prokofiev War Horse," *Film Quarterly* 48 (1994-95): 36. Egorova adds that the "Complex counterpoint" of sound and image "proclaimed a milestone in the development of film for its breaking down "all established stereotypes and notions of the ways in which music and representation should interact," see Egorova, *Soviet Film Music*, 60.

Viewers were meant to sense parallels between Aleksandr and Stalin. See Eisenstein's writing on the film: "Aleksandr Nevskii," in *Sovetskii istoricheskii fil'm: Sbornik statei* (Moscow: Goskinizdat, 1939), 19.

Chapter 4 reconstructs and chronicles Prokofiev's work with film music during the wartime evacuation, a chapter of his career that has been almost entirely forgotten. A score for Al'bert Gendel'shtein's *Lermontov,* a film about the life of nineteenth-century Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov (1814-41), was actually begun before the Nazi invasion, but various delays and problems caused the production to drag on for nearly two years. Although Prokofiev eventually backed out of the project, his frustrations with the production reveal the nature of music's place in the film industry at the beginning of the 1940s (and furthermore demonstrate that directorial attitudes toward film music had changed little over the 1930s). Despite his unpleasant experience with *Lermontov*, Prokofiev tackled another three film projects in the fall of 1942: *Tonia*, *Kotovskii*, and *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*. Although the underlying nationalistic and propagandistic trends of Soviet film in the early 1940s manifest themselves differently in each film, Prokofiev found that each benefited from similar musical dramaturgy. I argue that these four films represented a way for Prokofiev to cope with the disruption brought on by war. They offered financial gain when other official channels failed to provide support and helped Prokofiev summon a response to his country's cause. Prokofiev's often unfortunate experiences with these films help explain why, despite several offers, he never again composed film music after finishing his score for *Ivan the Terrible*.

The collaboration of Prokofiev and Eisenstein on *Ivan the Terrible* produced a film score unique in Prokofiev's output. If in *Aleksandr Nevskii* and the films of 1941-42 music clarifies the action, delineating protagonists and antagonists—often to great propagandistic effect—music in *Ivan the Terrible* confuses, distorts, and undercuts the visual element. In Chapter 5, I analyze instances of audiovisual dissonance and argue that they

represent transformative moments that are a direct extension of Eisenstein's dialectical "theory of opposites." In combining images and music that are seemingly antithetical, or in juxtaposing contrasting music so that incongruities arise, *Ivan the Terrible* challenges its listeners to make sense of conflicting stimuli, and in the process, experience the film in a highly subjective way. This subjectivity allowed Eisenstein and Prokofiev the freedom to produce a stunningly provocative yet hermeneutically open work within the confines of a bureaucratically mandated subject.

The following chapters seek not to identify one single compositional style and manner of execution that unifies all eight films, but to explore the process that gave rise to such varied musical products. Prokofiev did some of his best and most memorable work in collaboration with Eisenstein, but film also was the site of some of his most inconsequential music. Untangling why this is so is a central aim of the chapters that follow. Likewise, this study does not posit any judgment on Prokofiev's own political beliefs, or even his attitude toward the highly politicized nature of film, but rather considers the changes in the cultural milieu of Soviet Russia that informed the artistic life Prokofiev forged there. What ultimately emerges is a portrait of a brief but rich cinematic career that encompassed different aesthetic worlds and political environments, and bequeathed a formidable repertoire to both stage and screen.

CHAPTER ONE

Lieutenant Kizhe and the Negotiation of New Media and New Means

In the early months of 1930 Prokofiev visited both coasts of the United States as part of an extended concert tour. While en route by train from New York to Los Angeles in February the composer received a peculiar telegram from the renowned Hollywood actress Gloria Swanson (1899-1983). She inquired as to whether or not Prokofiev was aboard the train; the composer later joked that he was unsure if the telegram betokened a job offer or if Swanson simply hoped to arrange for a compelling photograph of him exiting his carriage in Los Angeles. Upon arrival, Prokofiev was pleased to learn that the actress wanted him to compose a score for her most recent film, the romantic comedy *What a Widow!*. The prospect of such a project, Prokofiev quipped, was "splendid and smelled of money."[1] Swanson spared no pains in wooing the composer: after being whisked to Hollywood in her Rolls Royce, Prokofiev was treated to lunch and a private showing of the final edit of the movie. Evidently star-struck, the usually self-assured composer admitted to feeling timid in the actress's presence. Swanson explained that two of her financiers, dismayed at the poor quality of the music planned for *What a Widow!*, had insisted that she seek out the composer to furnish a score. Prokofiev hesitated, how-

[1] Sergei Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik* (Paris: sprkfv, 2002), 2: 755 (entry of 12 February 1930).

ever, when he learned that he would need to complete the music in little over a month's time, and he ultimately declined the project when the financiers refused to meet his fee.[2]

Although Prokofiev's first contact with Hollywood did not result in a commission, the film industry nevertheless had captured his imagination. The technological marvel of film with sound in the 1930s held the potential to reach vast new audiences and carry a composer's music literally to the far corners of the earth, a detail not lost on the itinerant Prokofiev. Film, however, attracted audiences that had radically different aesthetic and stylistic expectations than the Parisian elite and followers of chic to whom he had become accustomed through his work for the Ballets Russes. Musing on his experiences with Swanson and the prospect of composing film music, he wrote, "wouldn't it be better to return to this question in my next work? […] Is it possible to write simple music, completely accessible to the masses, and at the same time stand to put one's name under it?"[3] The self-questioning harbored an aesthetic challenge: to work in the new medium meant finding a musical language that could engage a much larger, more diverse public than Prokofiev had yet encountered. But retooling his style and syntax for the sake of easy comprehensibility ran the risk of entering the realm of what the composer termed "low-grade music."[4] Successfully negotiating the divide became, in different ways, Prokofiev's undertaking in the early 1930s, much as it became Aaron Copland's mission—though, to be sure, he neither shared his American counterpart's aesthetics nor

[2] Prokofiev requested $5,000 (roughly equivalent to $60,000 in today's currency), which, had he received it, would have made the project more lucrative than his performing engagements. The film's backers determined that American audiences were insufficiently familiar with Prokofiev's name to merit the fee. Ibid., 2: 756-57 (entry of 14 February 1930).

[3] Ibid., 2: 756 (entry of 13 February 1930).

[4] Ibid.

politics.[5] At least at first, Prokofiev did not attempt to advance a specific ideological agenda with his streamlined style.

Three years after his encounter with Swanson, Prokofiev confronted the Hollywood challenge with the score for the satirically anti-tsarist film *Lieutenant Kizhe* (*Poruchik Kizhe*). The score now ranks among the twentieth century's best-known compositions for the cinema, though only owing to the composer's widely performed suite based on its music. Despite the popularity of the suite, little attention has been devoted to the complete, original score, which remains unpublished, or to Prokofiev's role in the film's creation.[6] The outline of the suite refers little to the earlier film score; the composer tailored the later work to fit the demands of concert performance by omitting malapropos passages (particularly those scored for percussion) and by conflating thematic material and making significant changes to the orchestration.[7] In addition to being the composer's first foray into film music, *Lieutenant Kizhe* was his first explicitly Soviet work. The events surrounding its creation raise the question as to how Prokofiev, an established international composer with traditional training but an iconoclastic leaning, approached a completely unknown medium. The *Lieutenant Kizhe* score proved to be something of an anomaly by the standards of early film music, owing to the logistics of

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[5] See, for example, Elizabeth Christ's discussion of the socio-political underpinnings of Copland's works in *Music for the Common Man: Aaron Copland during the Depression and War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[6] On the manuscript versions of the score for *Lieutenant Kizhe*, see Appendix I. The suite is much different in construction than the film score, which does not appear in Prokofiev's collected works: *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. N. P. Anosov, 20 vols. (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1955).

[7] Despite claims to the contrary, Prokofiev found that he had to extend the amount of musical material he had composed for the film when he created the *Lieutenant Kizhe* Suite. See Kevin Bartig, "Creating the Lieutenant Kizhe Suite," *Three Oranges: The Journal of the Serge Prokofiev Foundation* 13 (2007): 22-26.

the composer-director collaboration. It served to enhance Prokofiev's reputation within the artistic circles of Leningrad and Moscow, and shaped his conception of the function of sound on celluloid.

Cinema and New Simplicity

Before reaching the Soviet screen in 1934, *Lieutenant Kizhe* had a protracted genesis and existed in several versions and formats. The script, the work of Russian novelist and literary scholar Iurii Tynianov (1894-1943), was conceived in May 1927 for a silent film. (Tynianov's film work, bearing traces of his Formalist writings on Gogolian parody and dynamic verbal structure, dates from 1926-34, and includes the texts that evolved into the *Lieutenant Kizhe* script.[8]) The plot derives from an anecdote about the reign of Tsar Pavel I (1754-1801), widely rumored to have been mad. A scribe's slip of the pen inadvertently adds a nonexistent lieutenant by the name of "Kizhe" to the ranks of Pavel's army, yet none of the Tsar's circle has enough courage to incur the wrath of the volatile monarch by pointing out the fictional nature of this absent lieutenant.[9] Through bureaucratic incompetence, Kizhe manages to get himself banished to Siberia, return tri-

[8] Jerry T. Heil, "Poruchik Kizhe: A Discussion," *California Slavic Studies* 14 (1992): 174. Tynianov wrote scripts for *The Overcoat* (1926), *SVD* (1927), *The Monkey and the Bell* (1932), and *Lieutenant Kizhe* (1927, 1934). For an overview of his film work, see Heil, "The Russian Literary Avant-Garde and the Cinema (1920s and 1930s): The Film-Work of Isaak Babel' and Jurij Tynjanov" (Ph.D diss., University of California, 1984). The creative evolution of *Lieutenant Kizhe* is further traced by Evgenii Toddes, "Posleslovie," in *Podporuchik Kizhe* (Moscow: Kniga, 1981), 164–200, and by Inna Sepman, "Tynianov-stsenarist," in *Iz istorii Lenfil'ma: Stat'i, vospominaniia, dokumenty*, ed. N. S. Gornitskaia, 4 vols. (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1968-75), 3: 74–76.

[9] The tsar's scribe errs by accidentally entering "Poruchik kizhe" ("Lieutenant Kizhe"), rather than the intended "Poruchiki zhe" ("and the Lieutenants") on a list of soldiers to be added to the Preobrazhensky regiment. Before he can correct his mistake, the tsar's assistant enters and demands the list for the tsar's approval. Upon examining the list, Pavel immediately notices the name "Kizhe" because his title "Poruchik" is lacking the necessary hard sign (a diacritical used in nineteenth-century Russian in masculine nominative nouns). The tsar adds this mark himself, thus facilitating Kizhe's "birth."

umphantly, marry the belle of St. Petersburg, and ultimately attain the rank of general before perishing from a mysterious illness—all, of course, absurdly engineered by members of the tsar's court for their personal gain. Tynianov's script is, however, much more than a trifling lampoon of an oft-told anecdote. From start to finish, the author pays conscious homage to Nikolai Gogol'; the text is freighted with exaggerated, caricature-like individuals who blend the black comic and the tragic. The anecdote, in the words of one critic, "developed into a gloomy phantasmagoria."[10]

The silent version, to have been directed by Sergei Iutkevich (1904-85), went unrealized for lack of studio support. Tynianov thereafter turned his script into a successful short story that appeared in 1928 under the title *Second Lieutenant Kizhe* (*Podporuchik Kizhe*).[11] The positive reception of the short story prompted Tynianov in 1932 to revisit the idea of a *Kizhe* film. By this point, sound cinema had appeared in Russia; Tynianov accordingly revised his original silent scenario to include spoken dialogue.[12] The newly formed Belorussian State Film Studio (Belgoskino) agreed to produce the rewritten script at their Leningrad facility and engaged the rather unseasoned Aleksandr Faintsimmer (1906-1982) to direct the film under Tynianov's close supervision.[13] The pairing was a

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[10] N[ikolai] Otten, "Poruchik Kizhe," *Kino,* 10 January 1934, p. 3.

[11] The film was not produced because Tynianov and Iutkevich did not obtain backing from Sovkino. See Dmitrii Moldavskii, *S Maiakovskim v teatre i kino: Kniga o S. Iutkeviche* (Moscow: VTO, 1975), 88. On the silent version, see Iutkevich, *O kinoiskusstve* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1962), 42. The short story appeared in 1928 in the journal *Krasnaia Nov'*.

[12] Tynianov submitted a copy of this version to the Union of Soviet Writers for evaluation. See "Tynianov Iu. H. 'Poruchik Kizhe': Literaturnyi stsenarii," unpublished, RGALI, f. 631, op. 3, ed. khr. 48.

[13] Belgoskino was established in Leningrad by Sergei Kirov (1886-1934) and Anatolii Lunacharskii (1875-1933) at the request of the Belarusian government. Although the studio began producing films as early as 1928, logistical problems prevented it from moving to its permanent home in Minsk until 1939. See P. Shamshur, "Belye nochi Belgoskino," in *Kino Sovetskoi Belorussii*, ed. E. L. Bondareva (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1975), 113–14. Faintsimmer directed two films prior to *Kizhe*: *Otel' Savoi* (1930) and *Schast'e* (1932), both silent. Although he enjoyed a long career (his last film was made two

practical one: Tynianov lacked the technical training needed to direct a sound picture and therefore assumed an advisory role, helping to shape the style and thematic content of the film. Faintsimmer, one of the first graduates of Moscow's State Film Technicum (GTK), handled production issues.[14] According to the film's artistic consultant, Grigorii Kozintsev (1905-73), Tynianov made his presence felt advising the cast.[15] Erast Garin (1902-1980), the actor who played the role of the tsar's aide-de-camp, depended on the writer's advice:

> Our work on the film alongside Tynianov was a model of how collaborative creation should ideally take place between a team of actors, a director, and a writer. From the very first rehearsals to the editing of the film, Iurii Nikolaevich [Tynianov] never failed to give us directions about the character of the figures we were playing and the era in which they lived.[16]

The Gogolian traits of the *Lieutenant Kizhe* characters, and the surrealistic world they inhabit, attest to Tynianov's influence on Faintsimmer, who transformed Tynianov's literary scenario into a useable script. So too did the casting: Garin's acting style, developed under the tutelage of the theater director Vsevolod Meierkhol'd (1874-1940), was touted for its provocative expressive aberrances.[17]

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years before his death in 1982), he remained obscure as a director. See the brief entry in *Kino: Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'*, ed. S. I. Iutkevich (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1986), 442.

[14] Jay Leyda, *Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 233.

[15] Grigorii Kozintsev, "O fil'me 'Poruchike Kizhe'," in *Sobranie sochinenii*, 5. vols. (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1982-86), 2: 28.

[16] E[rast] Garin, "Obogashchenie literatury," *Literaturnaia gazeta,* 15 January 1935, as quoted in Mikhail Iampolski, *The Memory of Tiresias: Intertextuality and Film*, trans. Harsha Ram (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 194. Garin, who made his screen debut in *Kizhe*, was the only member of the cast to achieve fame in the Soviet Union.

[17] Julia Listengarten, *Russian Tragifarce: Its Cultural and Political Roots* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2000), 137.

When the question of suitable music for *Lieutenant Kizhe* arose, both Tynianov and Kozintsev insisted on seeking out Prokofiev. The Belgoskino administration expressed considerable trepidation over this choice, since they felt that the Paris-based composer's extended absences from Leningrad would hinder his ability to meet deadlines and thus disorder the film's production schedule.[18] This was a valid concern: despite the increasing frequency of Prokofiev's visits to Leningrad and Moscow, Paris had been his home for more than a decade and his permanent return to Russia still lay several years in the future. Working with Prokofiev, however, had distinct advantages for the film's production. *Lieutenant Kizhe* involved elaborate eighteenth-century costuming and sets (Leningrad's actual neoclassical architecture graces the outdoor scenes), and the score would need to preserve and enhance the time and place suggested by these staging efforts. Prokofiev's neoclassical syntax, chiefly emblematized by his "Classical" Symphony (1917) greatly appealed to Tynianov and Kozintsev. But the real draw was his international profile, which lent prestige to a film otherwise created at a minor new studio by a virtually unknown director and little-known actors. One critic later commented: "Speaking frankly, I attended because of Prokofiev's music."[19]

When Prokofiev's third Soviet tour in late 1932 brought him to Leningrad, Tynianov and his associates dispatched the Belgoskino employee Boris Gusman (1892-1944) to negotiate a contract for the film. *Lieutenant Kizhe* was the first of several commissions that Gusman facilitated for Prokofiev, and in this regard he abetted the com-

[18] I. Rummel', "Iz istorii Poruchika Kizhe," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 11 (1964): 69. This author's account dates from thirty years after the film was made, and may not be accurate. In a television broadcast, Garin confirmed that Tynianov and Kosintsev were behind the decision to approach Prokofiev. See "Zabytie lenty. Poruchik Kizhe," unpublished, RGALI, f. 2979, op. 1, ed. khr. 224.

[19] L[ev] Nikulin, "Zhizn' pod baraban," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 4 February 1934 (clipping in RGALI, f. 2979, op.1, ed. khr. 667).

poser's transition to permanent residence in Soviet Russia.[20] On 3 December, Prokofiev signed a tentative contract for the film during a meeting with Faintsimmer and Tynianov.[21]

From his journal entries we know that Prokofiev found the subject matter of *Lieutenant Kizhe* appealing (the film's grating satire resonated with the composer's own sardonic sense of humor); his interest peaked when Gusman told him that the film would likely be distributed abroad.[22] This last detail was not unimportant to Prokofiev's career, for despite the fact that he had expressed interest in working and perhaps even permanently returning to the Soviet Union, he had not taken practical steps beyond securing a Soviet passport. At this point, furthering his career in Western Europe (he possessed a French *cerficat d'identité*) and America remained priorities. The film's exact musical requisites were unknown at this early stage in the production, and Faintsimmer issued no explicit requests for the score beyond leitmotivs (hardly surprising, considering their prevalence in film scores of the period). Faintsimmer further assured Prokofiev that the film required only a modest amount of music—positive news for a peripatetic artist con-

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[20] Gusman worked in his early career for the newspaper *Pravda*, the film production unit Mezhrabpom-Rus, the Association of Revolutionary Cinematography, and, as assistant director, the Bolshoi Theater. In 1929, he lobbied for a Bolshoi Theater staging of Prokofiev's *Le Pas d'Acier*. Besides the contracts for the *Kizhe* film score and suite, Gusman helped Prokofiev secure contracts for *Romeo and Juliet* (1935) and, in his later capacity as repertoire programmer for the All-Union Radio Committee, the *Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October* (1937).

[21] "Predvaritel'noe soglashenie," dated 3 December 1932, unpublished, SPA, XXXII/II/03.12.1932. Rummel' relates that Prokofiev at first doubted his ability to finish the project, citing a busy schedule and the fact that he had no practical experience composing film music (see "Iz istorii Poruchika Kizhe," 69). Prokofiev's journal entries for the period, however, show no sign of hesitation on the part of the composer. Prokofiev signed the formal contract with Belgoskino on 16 March 1933. See "Dogovory Prokof'eva s kinostudiiami i teatrami na napisanie muzyki," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 1).

[22] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik,* 2: 816 (entry of 2 December 1932).

fronting an unfamiliar genre and an ambitious performing and composing schedule.[23]

Perhaps most pertinent to his prospects for the coming decade, the Belgoskino contract allowed Prokofiev the opportunity to realize his aforementioned interest in penning accessible music for the general public, an interest he had begun to articulate even before his 1930 visit to Hollywood. In 1929 in Paris, Prokofiev mused to his colleagues about enhancing the popular appeal of serious music. "We shall use simpler means of instrumentation, write less fully, but still retain the best, the most potent and most poignant and most expressive of modern harmonization. […] Thus I have grown simpler in form, less complex in counterpoint and more melodic in my musical evolution, which I call a new simplicity."[24] Articles for the Soviet and French press in the early 1930s further evince Prokofiev's efforts to connect with the masses.[25] Accessible music, he argued, was extremely difficult to compose, since it should be as uncomplicated and unprepossessing as possible without resorting to the "repetition of conventional formulas."[26] Exploration of this realm of music, including his score for *Lieutenant Kizhe* as well as his incidental music for the Pushkin- and Shakespeare-based drama *Egyptian Nights* (*Egipetskie nochi*, 1934), supplemented Prokofiev's labor on "more serious

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[23] Ibid, 2: 817 (entry of 3 December 1932). Prokofiev anticipated that the task would not over-tax him ("nemnogo raboty"). After the film had been vetted in Moscow and Leningrad in February 1934, Faintsimmer informed Prokofiev that it had received positive reviews. He added that "the music was wonderfully received; it's a shame that there's so little of it" (Letter from Faintsimmer to Prokofiev, dated 17 February 1934, SPA XXXVI/222/17.02.1934).

[24] "Prokofiev Hopes for the Arrival of a Period of 'New Simplicity' in Music," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, 19 February 1929, as quoted in Ludmilla Petchenina and Gérard Abensour, "Egyptian Nights: In Search of the 'New Simplicity'," *Three Oranges: The Journal of the Serge Prokofiev Foundation* 7 (2004): 14.

[25] See the composer's 1934 articles "Sovetskii slushatel' i moe muzykal'noe tvorchestvo," and "Puti sovetskoi muzyki," published in *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, ed. V[iktor] P. Varunts (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991), 126–28.

[26] Prokof'ev, "Sovetskii slushatel' i moe muzykal'noe tvorchestvo," 126.

symphonic compositions, designed for the more refined tastes of experienced musicians."[27]

From the perspective of Prokofiev's relocation to Russia in the spring of 1936, it might be tempting to interpret this statement as blatant pandering to Soviet creative aesthetics. When he signed the *Lieutenant Kizhe* contract, however, he had not resolved to live in Moscow. Moreover, the anti-modernist shockwaves of the Stalinist cultural repressions had yet to be felt. Prokofiev's "new simplicity" is perhaps better understood in the general aesthetic context of *Les Six* and the populism—however acerbic and politically charged—of such figures as Copland, Marc Blitzstein and Kurt Weill.

The absence of any obvious interest in the *Lieutenant Kizhe* project on the part of Soviet cultural agencies will become increasingly apparent as its history unfolds below. The film was realized in a socio-political environment that drastically differed from that of Prokofiev's later film work. The official practice mandated by the Committee on Arts Affairs of defining the quantity, subject, and ideological orientation of the films to be made in a given year became standard only in 1934, and arguably the first organized and effective display of the regime's control of the medium did not occur until 1935, when the nation's leading film directors were forced to denounce their past "mistakes" (see Introduction).

Following a masterclass with composition students at the Moscow Conservatory in early May 1933, Prokofiev opened his journal and wrote almost prophetically that the

[27] Ibid., 126. This "serious" category included the composer's *Symphonic Song* (1933) and Cello Concerto in E Minor (1938). The score for Alexander Tairov's *Egyptian Nights* followed on the heels of Prokofiev's collaboration with Faintsimmer. Prokofiev thereafter composed incidental music for two Pushkin dramas, *Boris Godunov* (1936) and *Eugene Onegin* (1936), and for Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1938), see chapter 2.

meeting "gave me the idea of what I must now do: [compose music] for the masses that would at the same time remain good music. My previous work on melody and the search for a 'new simplicity' have prepared me considerably for this."[28] In the following weeks, Prokofiev busied himself with work on *Lieutenant Kizhe*, and with the question of accessible mass music that had taken form years before in Hollywood.

Outlines

Work on the score began during Prokofiev's tour in the Soviet Union in spring 1933 (his most extensive to date, including Moscow, Leningrad as well as excursions to Georgia and Armenia), when he renewed contact with Gusman and Faintsimmer in Leningrad. Among the composer's initial concerns was the mood of each of the pieces he would compose, a subject addressed in earnest at these meetings.[29] Belgoskino invited the composer to visit the set in late April, an experience that, to Faintsimmer's and Tynianov's presumed consternation, disappointed him. Prokofiev found the costuming uninspired and the acting sub par; the after-work party, he commented in his journal, was the lone positive of his visit.[30] Yet his initial displeasure with the state of the production could not have been too acute, for he began work on the score almost immediately. While still in the Soviet Union, he composed two short songs, "The Little Grey Dove is Moaning" ("Stonet sizyi golubochek") and "Oh, ma belle demoiselle," which Faintsimmer intended

[28] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 829 (entry of 2-5 May 1933).

[29] According to Prokofiev's journal, the first meeting took place on the evening of 18 April. Prokofiev writes that Gusman and Faintsimmer were disappointed to learn about his other commitments. See Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 825 (entry of 18 April 1933).

[30] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik,* 2: 826 (entry of 22 April 1933).

as diegetic music.[31] On pieces of scrap paper, Prokofiev also sketched several short pieces for military-style percussion that not only underlined the centrality of the imperial military in the plot, but whose clock-like rhythms underscored the un-clock-like vagaries of life under Pavel .[32] Prokofiev finished this group of pieces in just under two weeks; Faintsimmer appeared pleased with the result.[33]

In late May, Prokofiev returned to Belgoskino, this time actively participating in the filmmaking process. Faintsimmer showed the composer a rehearsal of a scene that included "The Little Grey Dove is Moaning" (no. 11, see Appendix I), which was originally conceived as a brief duet between Pavel (played by actor Mikhail Ianshin) and the female lead, Princess Gagarina. Ianshin's musicianship did not rise to the task—Prokofiev scoffed that he had "the ears of a bear"—which necessitated reconceiving the music on the spot.[34] Faintsimmer encouraged Prokofiev to sing the song himself while Ianshin mouthed the words, but the composer insisted on having his wife Lina (1897-1989), a trained soprano, perform the song. Faintsimmer consented to this arrangement, but not without some trepidation, for it necessitated restructuring the scene to accom-

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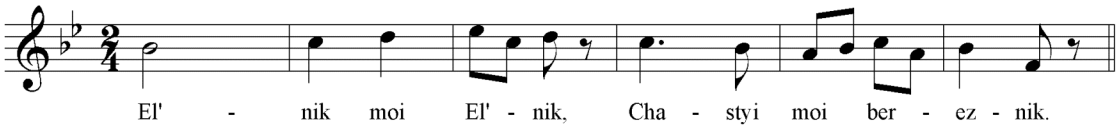
[31] "Stonet siznyi golubochek" became No. 10 (Pesnia Gagarinoi) in the final score. For this song, Prokofiev used a text by Fedor Dubianskii (1760–96): "The little grey dove is moaning, moaning night and day, his dear little friend has long since flown away, long since flown away. See Robert Kenneth Evans, "The Early Songs of Sergei Prokofiev and Their Relation to the Synthesis of the Arts in Russia," (Ph.D diss., Ohio State University, 1974), 54–55.

[32] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 92, ll. 7-10. The fold marks and wear on these pages suggest that the composer kept them in his pocket when not working on them.

[33] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik,* 2: 828 (entry of 2-5 May 1933).

[34] According to Rummel', the filmmakers originally wanted to use guitar accompaniment for this song, but Prokofiev insisted on a harp, lest the piece sound like a "sentimental romance. See Rummel', "Iz istorii Poruchika Kizhe," 69–70. On Ianshin's voice, see Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 835 (entry of 27 May 1933).

modate a woman's voice.[35] In the updated configuration, Pavel and Princess Gagarina play a game of cards as the latter's lady-in-waiting performs the song (Ianshin's portion of the duet was excised from the number). Although no evidence survives to indicate whose voice was ultimately used in the film's soundtrack, it may well be Lina's, making it the only recording of her voice known to exist. The more technically challenging "Oh ma belle demoiselle" (no. 12) required a similar adjustment: the script called for a member of the Tsar's inner circle to entertain the guests with the song at Kizhe's wedding party, but Faintsimmer amended the scene so that the song would be heard from a distance, outside the visual frame. Prokofiev later imported a traditional *chastuskha* (a satirical Russian "limerick") for Ianshin (example 1.1) that he likely knew from Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's 1876 folk song collection; it accommodated the actor's limited singing skills while also underscoring Pavel's perceived imbecility. The text and the six-measure tune play over and over again, with only the slightest of variations.[36]



Example 1.1. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, "Pesnia Pavla" (no. 9), mm. 1–6, the text reads "Little pine tree, my little pine tree, thick is my little birch tree" [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 91, l. 4]

[35] Lina Prokofiev's voice was "tested" for inclusion in the film on 29 May 1933 (Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 835-36).

[36] The song is No. 27 in Rimsky-Korsakov's collection. This collection was later included in the composer's collected works, see *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* vol. 47 ("Sborniki russkikh narodnykh pesen"), ed. B. V. Asaf'ev and N. Ia. Miaskovskii (Moscow: Muzgiz, 1952). In the later manuscript score, Prokofiev indicates that the song, which comprises a single phrase, can be repeated up to four times. In the film, Faintsimmer repeats it an enervating ten times.

Figure 1.1. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, Mikhail Ianshin (1902-76) as Tsar Pavel

Prokofiev no sooner arrived in Leningrad than he departed; his visits to Belgoskino were a luxury he could not indulge. At the end of May, four days after his second visit to the set, he returned to Paris. For the next four months—until the recording of the *Lieutenant Kizhe* score in October—Faintsimmer's letters served as the composer's only line of contact with the studio. Composing and filming occurred simultaneously but independently, in separate corners of Europe. When Prokofiev left Leningrad, most of *Lieutenant Kizhe* had yet to be shot (Faintsimmer remained on the set as late as September), and the composer himself had completed only three of the score's eventual seventeen numbers (nos. 2, 3 and 11).[37] He composed almost the entire score for images he had not seen, relying solely on verbal descriptions of the scenes in question and, in a few instances, the specific timings of those scenes. There exist other early films whose music was composed before the shooting, but the practice was unusual.[38] Shostakovich,

[37] Prokofiev also sketched part of the solo percussion introduction to no. 1 while in Russia.

[38] A notable exception is the classic Soviet comedy, *Veselye rebiata* (1934, screened in the West as *Moscow Laughs*), which was fitted to an ersatz score by Isaak Dunaevskii (1900-55). On

for example, did not begin to compose his score for the 1929 film *The New Babylon* (*Novyi Vavilon*) until he viewed the edited footage with stopwatch in hand.[39]

Prokofiev sent the score from Paris to Leningrad in installments over the course of the summer. In the first group of pieces, couriered on 13 July, he included precise metronome indications, which, taking into account the tempo indications, time signatures, and measure counts, permitted Faintsimmer to calculate the exact length of the number in advance of its recording. Although the director's specific requests for Prokofiev do not survive, the available evidence suggests that he specified the lengths of several of the numbers.[40] Prokofiev voiced concern that the music for shot nineteen of the film (no. 3) ran too long—twenty-one seconds—which confirms that the director had given him the timing in advance (the composer adds that it would be a "pity" to abbreviate an attractive piece to accommodate the stopwatch). Prokofiev likewise quotes an exact duration of sixty seconds for the music that accompanies shot 359 (no. 10) in a letter dated 13 July.[41]

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audiosychronization see Thomas Lahusen, "Ot nesinkhronizirovannogo smekha k post-sinkhronizirovannoi komedii, ili kak Stalinskii miuzikl dognal i peregnal Gollivud," in *Sovetskoe bogatstvo: stat'i o kul'ture, literature i kino*, ed. Marina Balina (St. Petersburg: Akademicheskii proekt, 2002), 346. As a non-Russian example, it merits adding that Ralph Vaughan Williams finished his score for *Scott of the Antarctic* (1948) six weeks before the filming had been completed. He worked with the script alone, without the aid of a chronometer. See John Huntley, "Music in Films," *The Musical Times* 98 (1957): 662.

[39] Shostakovich's early efforts in film music had different stylistic and aesthetic aims than Prokofiev's. See the discussion in John Riley, *Dmitri Shostakovich: A Life in Film* (London: I.B.Taurus, 2005), esp. 7.

[40] Both Rummel' and Garin suggest that Prokofiev had at least some exact timings; they even assert that he argued with Faintsimmer about the duration of the numbers. See Rummel', "Iz istorii Poruchika Kizhe," 69; RGALI, f. 2979, op. 1, ed. khr. 224.

[41] Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 13 July 1933, SPA, XXXIV/210-11/13.07.1933.

In these instances, he proved competent at composing to order, one of the obligatory tasks of the film composer – fulfilling Faintsimmer's requests to the second.[42]

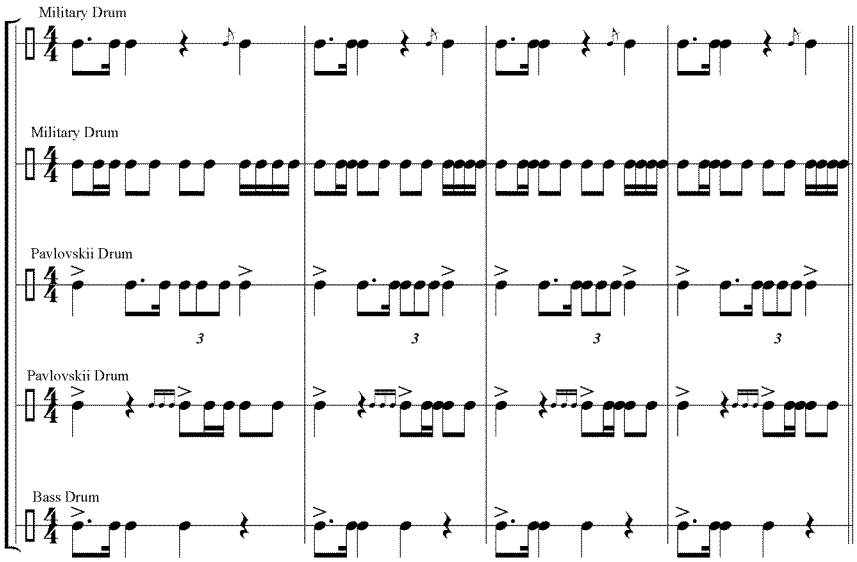
Prokofiev wrote at least four numbers, however, for scenes without precise timings, an obstacle he resourcefully navigated. The music that accompanies the opening episode (no. 1) lasts eighty-eight seconds if performed as written, but it is designed to be lengthened or shortened in two-second increments as needed through the addition or subtraction of certain measures.[43] The conductor could cut two of the four repeated measures preceding rehearsal no. 2 (a passage for solo percussion, see example 1.2) or alternately expand them to anywhere from five to eight measures. The length of the number varied by twelve seconds. Later in the same number Prokofiev duplicates these four measures, indicating the same option to repeat or omit, effectively increasing the amount it could be varied from twelve to twenty-four seconds. An analogous example exists in the music for the "Birth of Kizhe" sequence (no. 5), in which the composer provided an optional four-measure episode in brackets.[44] Prokofiev thus made it possible for Faintsimmer to experiment with different durations, contingent on how the scene had been edited: thirty-three seconds if the cut is taken, forty-two seconds if not. While efficient, Prokofiev's method underscored the fact that, beyond the question of duration, his music did not directly engage with the images. The audio and visual tracks were, from a narrative standpoint, neither synchronic nor a-synchronic; they merely co-existed. In solving the

[42] Prokofiev was not entirely new to the task; the plans for his Parisian ballets often contained projected timings. See Stephen D. Press, *Prokofiev's Ballets for Diaghilev* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 210.

[43] Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 13 July 1933, SPA, XXXIV/210-11/13.07.1933.

[44] Ibid.

logistical challenge of composing away from the set, Prokofiev conceived an eerily lonely soundtrack.



Example 1.2. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, "Nachal'nyi boi barabanov" (no. 1), four measures before rehearsal number 2 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 91, l. 2]

He did, however, manage to include a passing allusion (or perhaps tribute) to gestural music, otherwise known as "mickey-mousing."[45] The director filmed the opening episode (following the unaccompanied title shots) through a kaleidoscopic lens, presenting the viewer with fragmented, surrealistic images of the imperial army marching in various slowly shifting geometric patterns. The episode foregrounds the doubles, overlays, and parallels of Tynianov's Gogolian plot-line. This is the only section of the film in which music and image align: the soldiers' footsteps—floating oddly in the optical space—precisely match the pacing of Prokofiev's fife-and-drum accompaniment (no. 1). The audiovisual pairing invites the viewer to perceive the music meta-diegetically, as one

[45] On the practice of "mickey-mousing," see Barbara White, "'As if they didn't hear the music,' Or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Mickey Mouse," *Opera Quarterly* 22: 1 (2007): 65-89.

of the character's dreams or hallucinations. (Tynianov's script did not call for this sequence: it was clearly added by Faintsimmer.) The synchronization of sight and sound in the film thereafter ceases: with the exception of the aforementioned song (no. 11), there is no further alignment.[46] The scene depicting Pavel's ludicrous inspection of the clumsily assembled imperial ranks offers a parallel to the opening episode. This time, however, there are no special visual effects, and the rhythm of the marching falls out-of-sync with the music—even though the score serves a function identical to that of the opening episode. For the army roll call, Faintsimmer and Prokofiev appear to have exchanged surrealism for caricature.

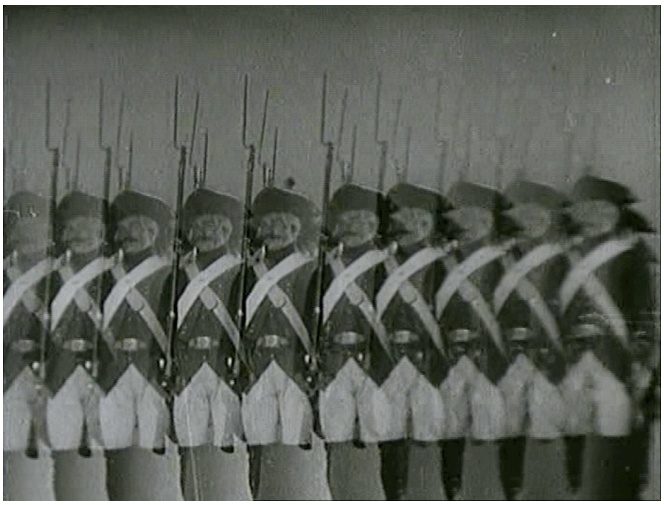
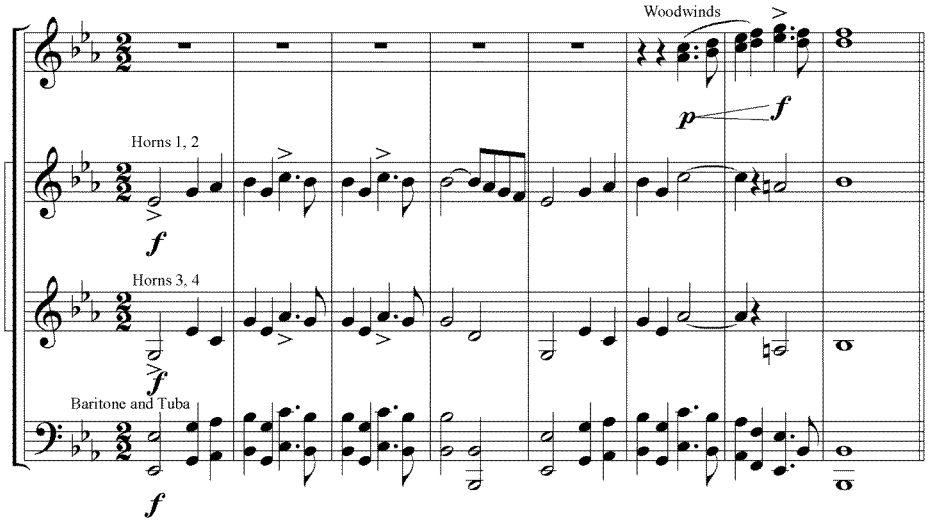


Figure 1.2. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, Kaleidoscopic view of the Imperial Army

As the filming progressed, Faintsimmer found that he could further manipulate Prokofiev's score by taking advantage of the music's obvious sectionalization. During Kizhe's wedding party the director fills almost an entire scene with a single excerpt from Prokofiev's score (no. 14, example 1.3), repeating different passages in different group-

[46] Of the three diegetic songs, no. 11 is the only one in which the viewer *sees* any audiovisual coordination. In no. 9, the singing Tsar performs at a distance from the camera (it is unclear if his mouth is moving); in no. 12 the singing is partly unseen.

ings. The orchestra intones the introduction over and over again to accommodate a visual sequence lasting nearly three minutes with only sparse dialog. The entire number is thereafter twice repeated, first with the introduction and then without it.



Example 1.3. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, "Kizhe zhenitsia" (no. 14), mm.1–8 [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 92, l. 22]

In this fashion, approximately sixty-eight seconds of music accompany more than five minutes of the action. Faintsimmer extended and expanded the score without the composer's input, and without concern for audiovisual coordination.

At the end of the summer, difficulties arose on the set of *Lieutenant Kizhe*. Faintsimmer's working script, derived from Tynianov's intricate literary scenario, proved to be cumbersome and impractical. Sensing that he and the other members of the creative team had been too ambitious, the director streamlined the plot of the film in mid-production, trimming extraneous dialogue and deleting superfluous plotlines.[47] His tinkering earned him the ire of at least one critic, who claimed that the transfer of

[47] Based on a comparison of Faintsimmer's "rezhisserskii stsenarii" (published in Heil, "The Russian Literary Avant-Garde and the Cinema (1920s and 1930s): The Film-Work of Isaak Babel' and Jurij Tynjanov," 353–422) with my own viewing of the film. In the early 1930s it was still common for directors to prepare their own scripts from a literary scenario.

Tynianov's scenario to the screen had reduced it to "vaudeville."[48] The alterations likewise disconcerted Prokofiev; he was putting finishing touches on the orchestration when on 13 September an urgent letter arrived from Faintsimmer (dated 13 September) apprising him of the changes and requesting his immediate presence in Leningrad to assist with "decisions regarding the music."[49] Prokofiev later complained in his autobiography that the script suffered multiple revisions, resulting in a mediocre final product. Clearly, he found Faintsimmer's eleventh-hour alterations exasperating.[50] Nikolai Otten, the same critic who had accused the film of trivializing vaudeville-isms agreed: the repeated abuse to the script had, from the standpoint of character development, rendered it inconsistent.[51] The flexible, adaptable score was, however, wholly spared the cutting-room floor. Faintsimmer merely shifted the positions of several of the score's shorter numbers to accommodate the script's revisions.

Prokofiev's tour of Russia in the fall of 1933 (to Leningrad, Moscow, and Voronezh) allowed him another visit to the Belgoskino facilities, where he assisted Faintsimmer in devising an updated musical plan.[52] Their adjustments were innocuous:

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[48] Otten, "Poruchik Kizhe," p. 3.

[49] "Sluzhebnaia zapiska" from Faintsimmer to Prokofiev, dated 13 September 1933, SPA XXXV/47/13.09.1933. In his 27 September reply, Prokofiev reports that he had completed the music for "Kizhe's funeral" (no. 16) and the "Return of Kizhe" (no. 13). All that remained was to orchestrate the former. See Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 27 September 1933, SPA, XXXV/90/27.09.1933.

[50] Prokofiev wrote that the changes "muddled and confused" the film. See "Avtobiografiia," in *S. S. Prokof'ev: Materialy, dokumenty, vospominaniia*, ed. S. I. Shlifshtein (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1961), 191.

[51] Otten, "Poruchik Kizhe," p. 3.

[52] Prokofiev's journal unfortunately ceases before the fall of 1933; the composer briefly mentions being present for the recording in his autobiography, which was written in 1941 at the request of the editor of *Sovetskaya muzyka*. The Leningrad State Academic Orchestra recorded the score under Dunaevskii's direction on 21 October 1933.

they transferred what was originally the sixth number of the score to the end of the film, where it accompanies the tsar's concluding monologue. They also extended the tsar's *chastushka*. When the tsar finishes singing the song, a brass band takes it up and carries it into the next scene, where it graces a visual sequence without dialogue. Prokofiev evidently composed this extension while on the set; the passage for brass band does not appear in the various extant versions of the score. Further tasks included infusing Kizhe's wedding scene with traditional Russian Orthodox choral music. This music is likewise absent from the extant scores; it seems to have been taken from a pre-existing recording.

In the end, Prokofiev fashioned a score with an unavoidably incidental relationship to the visual images. His early involvement in the filming process, however, resulted in changes to the visuals in deference to the music, as the adjustments to "Gagarina's Song" demonstrate. Although *Lieutenant Kizhe* effectively shuns conventional audio-visual coordination, the editing process was, ironically, much more symbiotic than typical in cinema.

Music for an Absent Hero

In a brief memoir, the assistant cast director of *Lieutenant Kizhe* reconstructed a conversation between Prokofiev and the Belgoskino team in which the composer explained his conception of the soundtrack. After cautioning the team not to expect "illustration" from his score, Prokofiev reportedly emphasized the importance of musically conveying the time and place of the action and the essence of Tynianov's characters.[53] Even with

[53] Rummel', "Iz istorii Poruchika Kizhe," 69.

Faintsimmer's embellishments, most of the 87-minute-long film unfolds without musical underlay, and only four of the seventeen numbers last more than a minute. In this respect *Lieutenant Kizhe* differs markedly from the noise-filled "silent" films to which most Russian filmgoers were accustomed.[54] The economical score affronted the practices of other studio composers, who produced soundtracks that mimicked through-composed symphonic structures, as, for example, in Shostakovich's thick scores for *Golden Mountains* (*Zlatnye gory*, 1931) and *Love and Hatred* (*Liubov' i nenavist'*, 1934). The *Kizhe* score behaves like the invisible lieutenant himself: it exists as an "absent" presence, a reference point in the plotline rather than an actual character.

Referring to his incidental music for *Egyptian Nights* (1934)—a theatrical production that Prokofiev deemed the sibling of *Lieutenant Kizhe*—the composer wrote that "in the art of composing for the stage [here we may also read "cinema"], the following rule may be observed: music is justified if its presence in a scene reinforces the scene's dramatic or lyrical nature; in that case it occupies a rightful place."[55] The miniaturized, discontinuous numbers that characterize *Lieutenant Kizhe* and *Egyptian Nights* show that the composer understood his task as bolstering the emotional and psychological underpinning of select moments in select episodes. He determined that sporadic passages of non-developmental background music afforded a more arresting, more engaging means of enhancing and enriching the visuals than continuous, developmental music.

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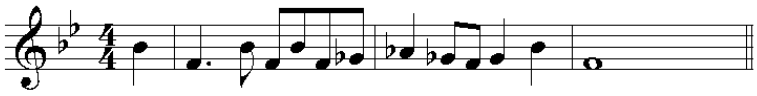
[54] The switch to sound film in the Soviet Union was a protracted process. As late as 1938, silent film projectors still outnumbered sound film projectors (Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 123–24).

[55] Petchenina and Abensour, "Egyptian Nights: In Search of the 'New Simplicity'," 11.

Continuous background scoring, or what Claudia Gorbman calls "the bath of affect" that infuses most sound films, "lessens spatial and temporal discontinuities […], and draws the spectator further into the fantasy-illusion suggested by filmic narration."[56] The music remains outside the viewer's sphere of perception because of, rather than in spite of, its constant presence. The *Lieutenant Kizhe* score engages the audience through opposing means: the "bath of affect" is supplanted by punctuating shards of sound. Extended silences place the entrances of the seventeen numbers into sharp relief; as the result, the viewer becomes more cognizant of their existence. The dialogue in *Lieutenant Kizhe* tends to be terse, stressing the intonations of individual words, individual syllables, over complete sentences; periods of musical silence hauntingly correspond to periods of verbal silence.

The occasional intrusion of the music into the viewer's perception is perhaps best illustrated by the thirteen-note motive that comes to represent the absent protagonist (example 1.4).



Example 1.4. The Kizhe motive

Prokofiev's reliance on this motive is neither innovative nor progressive; he, like other film composers of the period, heeded the requests of their directors for non-develop-

[56] Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 6.

mental recollection themes.[57] Its creation was among Tynianov's and Faintsimmer's first requests to Prokofiev, which the composer fulfilled with typical precision.[58] Almost all of the score's numbers—the exceptions being the numbers scored for solo percussion and the diegetic songs—have the Kizhe motive at their basis. The integration of the motive into the soundtrack is noteworthy in several respects. First, the brevity and relative simplicity of the motive—it falls within the range of a perfect fourth and comprises just four pitches—illustrates the appealing directness of Prokofiev's "new simplicity." Second, because the motive lacks development, and because it persists in the soundtrack; it lingers in the ear, sounding even when it is silent.[59] The motive's chromatic displacement, finally, emblematizes Kizhe's physical displacement. For the grimmer episodes in the plotline—the imaginary lieutenant's flogging before his exile to Siberia (no. 7), and his somber funeral procession (no. 15)—Prokofiev enhances the chromaticism while ensuring that the motive remains recognizable (examples 1.5 and 1.6).

Throughout the film, Faintsimmer makes comic reference to Kizhe's non-existence, to the fact that he is, as the other characters (who at least exist on celluloid) whisper to each other, "a secret figure, without form." At Kizhe's wedding, the priest holds a crown (a traditional marriage symbol in Russian Orthodox ceremonies) over the absent head of the absent groom. Later, Kizhe's empty boots are spotted beneath his

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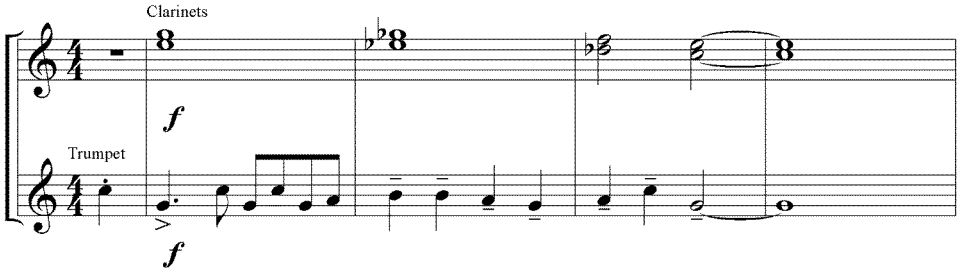
[57] The serious "operatic" practice of using recollection themes in film scores is given extensive attention in Soviet film studies. See, for example, I. Ioffe, *Muzyka sovetskogo kino* (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennyi muzykal'nyi nauchno-issledovatel'skii institut, 1938), 24–26.

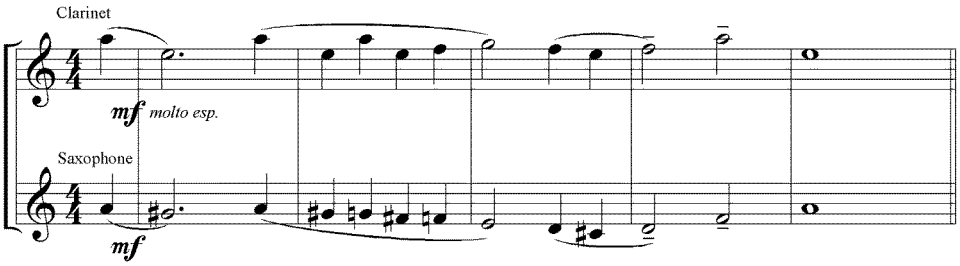
[58] See Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 817 (entry of 3 December 1932).

[59] Prokofiev saw *Golden Mountains* at the Théâtre Pigale in Paris on 26 June 1932. He remarked in his journal that Shostakovich's score was based primarily on popular urban songs that lacked development—an attempt to make the music understandable to the "simple public." Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 805 (entry of 26 June 1932).

chair, drawing attention to his missing feet and legs; following the hero's death a retinue bearing an empty coffin processes through the streets of St. Petersburg. In each episode, Kizhe's motive becomes the lieutenant's aural embodiment. Herein is a reference of sorts to the ontology of music, which, despite being written down, only truly exists in performance. Prokofiev's ephemeral, apparitional score is in this regard the perfect emblem of the film's protagonist. The viewer hears rather than sees Kizhe's "appearances" at pivotal moments in the plot, from his "birth" at the scribe's desk to his banishment, brilliant marriage, and bathetic demise. Prokofiev also deploys the motive when Pavel muses on the greatness of the lieutenant whom he has never met (nos. 6 and 10).



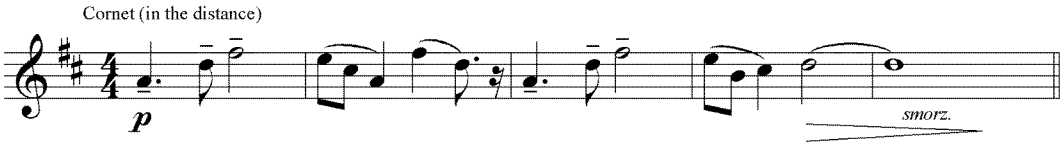
Example 1.5. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, "Kizhe sekut" (no. 7), mm. 10–13 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 91, l. 3]



Example 1.6. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, "Kizhe umer" (no. 15), mm. 7-11 [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 92, l. 25]

Figure 1.3. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, The wedding ceremony, where a crown is held over Kizhe's non-existent head.

In his 13 July 1933 letter to Faintsimmer, Prokofiev announced that he had composed "a very beautiful fanfare" that he wanted heard when a title card sets the scene in the year 1800 (example 1.7).[60]



Example 1.7. *Lieutenant Kizhe,* "Izdali slyshna truba" (no. 4), complete [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 91, l. 2 ob.]

Somewhere in the course of shooting it was decided to reprise the fanfare at the end of the film; Faintsimmer subsequently used it a third time in the middle, to accompany a

[60] Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 13 July 1933, SPA, XXXIV/210-211/13.07.1933.

scene showing St. Petersburg asleep at night.[61] At the beginning and ending of the film we see Pavel in the same state: slumbering in the uneasy quiet of the Imperial palace. Prokofiev's fanfare thus comes to represent both the poorly governed aristocratic city and its poorly disciplined decadent ruler, whose waking becomes the inadvertent cause of Kizhe's exile to Siberia.

Faintsimmer and Tynianov entrusted Prokofiev to provide the *couleur locale* of Kizhe's exploits, a task he dutifully fulfilled. To quote one reviewer, "It is precisely [his] music that more than anything gives the film the color of the epoch."[62] Prokofiev builds his depiction of Imperial Saint Petersburg on a traditional tonal foundation, a late eighteenth-century patina of common-practice-period conventions. He was loathe, however, to merely appropriate Haydnesque language for the sake of authenticity, instead maintaining a consciously modern tonal palette that more often parodies tonal practice than imitates it (note the jarringly dissonant tritone harmony in example 1.3, measure 7) – an approach in keeping with Tynianov's parodic stylizations.[63]

In addition to employing common-practice-period allusions in the numbers coinciding with events at the tsar's court, Prokofiev highlights the importance of the Imperial army to Petersburg life with four numbers (nos. 2, 3, 8, and a significant portion of 1) scored for percussion. He intended each number to be repeated as needed, and Faintsimmer took full advantage of the options. The persistent percussiveness (all but

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[61] In the earlier manuscript version of the score, Prokofiev jotted down in pencil (probably at a later time) "the same for the ending" ("takzhe dlia kontsa") beside this number.

[62] V. Tarov, "Poruchik Kizhe," *Gudok,* 6 March 1934 (clipping in RGALI, f. 2979, op. 1, ed. khr. 667).

[63] Prokofiev likewise eschewed the Oriental lushness suggested by the setting of *Egyptian Nights* in favor of an "exoticism by means of techniques appropriate to a modern style" (Petchenina and Abensour, "Egyptian Nights: In Search of the 'New Simplicity'," 13).

absent in the familiar *Lieutenant Kizhe* Suite) at times imbues the period setting with bellicose splendor, at other times renders it surreal. "The rhythm of the drums," one critic remarked, "continues throughout film—during the wedding, during the funeral, during Pavel's amorous scenes—giving it an extraordinarily coarse, grotesque underlining."[64] Another critic focused on the inclusion of percussion in the wedding scene: here the clattering is juxtaposed with stylized Russian Orthodox singing, imparting a "grotesque coloring to the entire wedding ceremony, which is perceived by the listener as sarcasm."[65]

The entire score's stylistic break with Romantic symphonic convention, its sparse texture, and its terseness find parallels in the soundtracks of Copland and Virgil Thomson, whose efforts in the genre reflect modernist musical practice even while drawing upon American folk idioms.[66] These traits did not, however, strike the reviewers of *Lieutenant Kizhe* as particularly significant; their attention remained on the script, specifically Tynianov's strangely incongruous attention to period setting and language. During the semiofficial assessment of the film that followed its completion (but preceded its general release) in early 1934, Boris Brodianskii (1902-45), a conservative Belgoskino scriptwriter, crudely and harshly attacked the film for its eclecticism and abstraction, while also branding Tynianov a "cheat" who had compromised the honor of the studio. Another Bolgoskino employee, A. Nekrashevich, concurred, declaring the production of *Lieutenant Kizhe* a strategic mistake. Tynianov blanched at the criticism and terminated

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[64] Nikulin, "Zhizn' pod baraban."

[65] A[leksandr] Ostretsov, "Rol' muzyka v zvukovom fil'me," unpublished manuscript, RGALI, f. 652, op. 4, ed. khr. 78, l. 51.

[66] See, for example, Neil Lerner, "Copland's Music of Wide Open Spaces: Surveying the Pastoral Trope in Hollywood," *Musical Quarterly* 85 (2001): 477–515.

his relationship with the studio.[67] The film's detractors further decried Faintsimmer's penchant for abstraction, asserting that it would alienate unsophisticated audiences—an ironic state of affairs considering Prokofiev's attempt to fashion an accessible, audience-friendly soundtrack. Fortunately, at least for the sake of the composer's nascent Soviet career, the post-release reviews of the film were less contentious than those of the Belgoskino ideologues.

Celluloid Sound

The sheer number of composers who tried their hand at film music in the early twentieth century attests not only to the novelty of the medium but also its compelling, progressive manipulation of technology. Even the Moscow critic who accused Faintsimmer of purveying vaudeville admitted that, despite the film's drawbacks, *Lieutenant Kizhe* marked an impressive technological advance for Belgoskino and cinema culture in general.[68] Beyond exploring a new aesthetic paradigm in *Lieutenant Kizhe*, Prokofiev had to contend with such logistical challenges as composing for the microphone. He discovered in the process that technology not only provided access to a larger audience, but also allowed him to manipulate sound in hitherto inconceivable ways.

On 26 June 1932, Prokofiev traveled to London to perform and record his Third Piano Concerto (1921) with Pierre Coppola and the London Symphony Orchestra—one of his first experiences in a well-equipped recording studio.[69] During the two-day session

[67] A-va, "Skromnitsy iz Belgoskino," *Kino*, 10 February 1934, p. 2.

[68] Otten, "Poruchik Kizhe," p. 3.

[69] Prokofiev recorded a sizable amount of piano music during his lifetime (most of it his own); notable among his early recordings are the piano rolls he produced in New York in 1926 for the "Duo Art"

(the novelty of which elicited an impromptu visit by H.R.H. Prince George, the future Duke of Kent) the process of working at the microphone alternately intrigued and exhausted the composer:

> We began to record a test disc. If there are wrong notes, no matter; what matters is to know the relationship between the piano and the orchestra and that between the orchestral instruments. We played the test disc and found that the piano was a bit weak and that the second violins, bassoons, and oboes were not heard in the orchestra. Then the bassoons and oboes rushed the tempo, and the second violins got mixed up with the first. We played the second test.
>
> This sounded so good that it's quite a shame we spoiled it (playing an unfinished disc destroys it). My playing sounded good in places, energetic, but in other places – those with a little uncertainty or artificiality—it was mannered. In general, the most insignificant of mannerisms, those that go unnoticed in a typical performance, are sufficient, since the gramophone immediately amplifies them.
>
> We began to record the first real take. Emotion, of course, and I played with much tension, not entirely steady. The first disc nonetheless came out well except for the second clarinet playing wrong notes. We repeated it; the clarinet played correctly, but I played worse. Three hours thus passed. I worked with great interest, but I was glad when it was over since I was tired of concentrating.[70]

Like most of the composers and performers who made recordings in the 1920s and 1930s, Prokofiev found the process unsettling and unforgiving. Following the session with the Third Piano Concerto, he bemoaned the challenge of playing with complete precision for four-minute stretches (the length of one side of a gramophone record). In a letter to his Moscow-based colleague Nikolai Miaskovskii (1881-1950) dated 11 June 1932, he joked "just think—I can't sneeze or miss any notes!"[71] Calculating balance among instruments, returning to correct missed notes, not to mention the opportunity to

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firm. See Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 365-66 (entry of 2-3 January 1926). His 1932 sessions in London appear to be his first contact with a well-equipped studio.

[70] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 806 (entry of 27-28 June 1932).

[71] *S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska*, ed. D. B. Kabalevskii (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Sovetskii kompozitor," 1977), 384.

judge the technical plusses and minuses of each test disc—all taken for granted in our digital age—nonetheless captured Prokofiev's imagination while also fueling his obsessions with detail and organization.

Scholars and critics habitually associate Prokofiev's interest in recording technology with his collaboration with Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948) on the 1938 film *Aleksandr Nevskii* (Chapter 3). The association stems from an article about *Aleksandr Nevskii* written by the composer himself, in which he describes placing microphones close to the brass to generate distortion—an obvious musical symbol of the repellant Teutonic knights.[72] Prokofiev explored similar effects five years earlier, however, in *Lieutenant Kizhe*. The electronic transfer of the unusually prominent percussion in the film was one of his first concerns when he began working with Faintsimmer on the score.[73] In May 1933, he sketched out a few drum patterns in order to assess the amount of distortion produced by the Belgoskino equipment.[74] These "exercises" evidently proved satisfactory, since he included them in the finished score.[75] Prokofiev often referred to the recording process in his dispatches to Faintsimmer from Paris; his remarks attest to his anxieties about how his scoring would fare on disc. For "Kizhe's return" (no. 13) he

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[72] Prokof'ev, "Muzyka v fil'me *Aleksandr Nevskii*," in *Sovetskii istoricheskii fil'm: Sbornik statei* (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939), 26-29, esp. 27.

[73] Early sound recording equipment was notoriously bad when it came to reproducing percussion; Leonid Sabaneev, one of the earliest scholars of film music, admonished: "The real percussion instruments on the whole have little phonogenicity. […] The timpani lose their accuracy of intonation, and the difference between their sound and that of the bass drum almost disappears." Leonid Sabaneev, *Music for the Film: A Handbook for Composers and Conductors*, trans. S. W. Pring (London: Pitman & Sons, Ltd., 1935), 66.

[74] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 828-29 (entry of 2-5 May 1933).

[75] The exercises were added by Prokofiev to the earlier version of the score (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 92, ll. 9-12). The number titled "Tambours de l'Empereur Paul I" (ll. 9-10) was not used in the film.

wanted the violins to "play loudly and significantly, but with mutes." He clarified, however, that if the mutes made for a "poor recording," he did not oppose excluding them.[76] It is entirely possible that the composer knew that the strings reproduced weakly on disc, which would account for the prominence of wind and brass instruments in his orchestration.[77]

Prokofiev found that, in the recording studio, balance was less dictated by the conductor and ensemble than by the placement of the microphone. For "Kizhe's birth" (no. 5), he deduced that the trumpets could crescendo without distortion if they played at a distance from the microphone.[78] In his draft score, he likewise noted that the horns in "Kizhe's funeral" (no. 16) needed to be placed before the microphone in order to be heard. He later added in pencil that the bassoon should join them, obviously fearing that its part would be submerged in the relatively thick orchestration.[79] Prokofiev iterated these instructions to Faintsimmer, noting that everything except the horns and bassoon must sound "as if from a distance."[80]

In the first decade of sound film, sound technology itself served as a dramatic device. The complex audiovisual dialogue in *Lieutenant Kizhe's* opening minutes doubtless struck Soviet audiences as extremely modern—Prokofiev and Faintsimmer's tech-

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[76] Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 13 July 1933, SPA, XXXIV/210-211/13.07.1933.

[77] Sabaneev, for instance, cautions: "Stringed instruments, which form the most important group in the orchestra, cannot claim to be sufficiently phonogenic. Their timbre is transmitted with the loss of certain characteristic features—the harmonics, which impart a pungency to the tone colour" (Sabaneev, *Music for the Film,* 57-58). The choice of instrumentation could also, of course, reflect a desire to enhance the militaristic tone of the score. Prokofiev enhanced the string sound in the *Lieutenant Kizhe Suite*.

[78] Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 13 July 1933, SPA, XXXIV/210-211/13.07.1933.

[79] RGALI, f. 1929, op.1, ed. khr. 92, l. 28.

[80] Letter from Prokofiev to Faintsimmer, dated 3 October 1933, SPA, XXXV/123/03.10.1933.

nical wizardry, in short, enriched the film's surrealistic atmosphere. And, as we shall see in the remaining chapters, sound technology came to represent a significant factor in the development of Prokofiev's approach to film music.

Figure 1.4. Poster advertising the general release of *Lieutenant Kizhe* (Belgoskino)

Other Opportunities

In the midst of his work with Faintsimmer, Prokofiev considered composing a score for an animated film, one that replicated the aesthetic, logistical and technical concerns of *Lieutenant Kizhe*. The offer of a contract for this second project hardly surprised the composer; in prewar Russia cartoons accounted for a significant percentage of the films released. Of the thirty-five Soviet films that appeared in theaters during 1934, no fewer

than eight were animated.[81] Films intended for younger audiences—animated versions of traditional fairytales (*skazki*), for example—served both political and nonpolitical educational purposes.

On 6 June 1933, the last day of his tour of Russia (and following his initial encounters with Belgoskino), Prokofiev received a visit from a group he humorously referred to as "cartoon people." They showed him a working version of a new animated film called *The Tale of Tsar Durandai* (*Skazka o tsare Durandae*).[82] Directed by Ivan Ivanov-Vano (1900-87), it adapted the plotline of a traditional satire about the plights of Tsar Durandai (meaning "old fool") and his covertly wicked fiancée Tetkha (old dear). The plot was suitably uncomplicated and, like that of *Lieutenant Kizhe*, transparently anti-tsarist: Tetkha, not wanting to wed the tsar, poisons him and his faithful servant Sila (force); ultimately, she herself perishes as punishment for her wrongdoings. Prokofiev took to the film and immediately (perhaps owing to his imminent departure for Paris) signed the contract to compose the "accompanying music" for it.[83]

As outlined in the contract, Prokofiev's responsibilities included the composition of three dances—one for each of the principal characters in the tale—in piano score by the end of the same month, a rather tight deadline. He would need to complete the remainder of the music in short score by 1 October, four months away, and to orchestrate it no later than 1 November; the contract included the special provision that Prokofiev

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[81] These figures, which concern only completed and released films, come from *Sovetskie khudozhestvennye fil'my*, ed. Aleksandr Machert (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1961), 487-503.

[82] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2:836 (entry of 1-6 June 1933).

[83] Prokofiev noted in his journal that Ivanov-Vano's most recent film was "better"; the composer obviously knew the director's work. Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 836 (entry of 31 May 1933). The contract, which was issued by Mezhrabpom-Rus, is preserved in RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 2.

would participate directly in the film editing process whenever he might be in Moscow. For his labors, Prokofiev was promised a commission equal to that agreed upon for *Lieutenant Kizhe*: 10,000 rubles.[84]

However, when *The Tale of Tsar Durandai* opened on 2 March 1934, the sound-track comprised music by Anatolii Aleksandrov (1888-1982), not Prokofiev.[85] Why or at what point Prokofiev ceased his involvement in the film's production remains unclear, but the absence of documents pertaining to the film in his archival holdings beyond the unfulfilled contract suggests that he never began work on the score. It likewise remains unclear whether he or the studio broke the contract.[86] Prokofiev perhaps thought better of committing to the project after returning to Paris, where he faced the task of composing the score for *Lieutenant Kizhe* as well as attending to other compositional projects, notably his *Symphonic Song* (op. 57, 1933) and the sketches for what would become his Cello Concerto in E Minor (op. 58, 1933-38).

Although Prokofiev did not write the music for *The Tale of Tsar Durandai*, his interest in doing so reveals that, as in the case of *Lieutenant Kizhe*, he had few qualms about composing film music "to order" and even fewer qualms about working without direct contact with the studio or the director. Ivanov-Vano's film, with its streamlined, easy-to-grasp plot, would have likewise offered him a lucrative diversion from heavier creative labors. Nevertheless, during the years that separated *Lieutenant Kizhe* from his next cinematic commission, *Queen of Spades* (Chapter 2), Prokofiev kept abreast of new

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[84] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 2.

[85] These details come from *Sovetskie khudozhestvennye fil'my,* 57-58.

[86] Prokofiev made his final journal entry on 6 June 1933, barely a week after he signed the contract for *The Tale of Tsar Durandai*.

American, French, and German films, keeping an annotated list of those that he had seen. His tastes were eclectic; among the films he enjoyed, for example, were the musical *Sing Me a Love Song* (1937, dir. Ray Enright), *San Francisco* (1936, dir. W.S. Van Dyke), a romantic drama starring Clark Gable and Jeanette MacDonald, the comedy *Theodora Goes Wild* (1936, dir. Richard Boleslawski), and Werner Hochbaum's psychological drama *Die ewige Maske* (1935).[87]

Ironically, the harshest critique of the music of *Lieutenant Kizhe* came from Grigorii Kozintsev, who, together with Tynianov, had originally insisted that Prokofiev be awarded the commission for it. On the eve of the film's general release in the Soviet Union, he expressed his displeasure with the music:

> If the studio had paid more attention [to Prokofiev], he would have written remarkable music. Instead he produced merely good music. […] Details were insufficiently explained to him, which in turn produced flawed results. This is not Prokofiev's fault. He is a first-rate European and Soviet artist who would bring honor to any studio in which he worked. But there is a need to guide him a bit more attentively in order to receive the maximum from him.[88]

Taking into account Prokofiev's subsequent successful collaboration with Eisenstein on *Aleksandr Nevskii* (1938) and *Ivan the Terrible* (1942-46), a collaboration that involved frequent meetings and regular contact under trying conditions, Kozintsev's remarks would seem to have merit. Producing the compact and succinct *Lieutenant Kizhe* score nonetheless proved beneficial both for Prokofiev's mutating technique and his nascent populist aesthetic.

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[87] Simon Morrison, *Prokofiev: The Soviet Years*, forthcoming (chapter 2), citing RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 332, l. 44.

[88] From a discussion of the film at the Russian Association of Workers of Revolutionary Cinematography (ROSARRK) on 16 February 1934, as recounted by Kozintsev, "O fil'me 'Poruchike Kizhe'," 2: 28.

Despite a long, convoluted path to the screen, *Lieutenant Kizhe* enjoyed success: following an elaborate advertising campaign in (among other Soviet newspapers) *Vecherniaia Moskva* (*Evening Moscow*, figure 1.5), the film opened at no fewer than six Moscow theaters on 7 March 1934.[89]

Figure 1.5. Advertisement for *Lieutenant Kizhe* in *Vecherniaia Moskva*, 11 March 1934

Summarizing the general public response, E. Kol'tsova lauded Faintsimmer for demonstrating command and control in his first sound film, but critiqued his emphasis on the

[89] The advertisements appeared daily on page 4 of *Vecherniaia Moskva* from 20 February to the end of March 1934 (smaller advertisements appeared sporadically in April). *Lieutenant Kizhe* opened in Moscow at the Udarnik, Pervyi khudozhestvennyi, Ars, Forum, Taganskii, and Shtorm theaters. On the reception of the film, see Letter from Faintsimmer to Prokofiev, dated 17 February 1934, SPA, XXXVI/222/17.02.1934.

grotesque.[90] Later in 1934, the film premiered in France as *Lieutenant Nantes* and in the United States as *The Czar Wants to Sleep*.[91] Four years later, the original version still remained in the repertoire of regional Soviet theaters.[92] The relative success of the project came at a crucial juncture in Prokofiev's career, a point when he was exploring the potentials of a stripped-down style and while still maintaining a reputation for innovative harmonic, rhythmic, and orchestral effects. *Lieutenant Kizhe* opened the door for new commissions with new collaborators, increased the composer's reputation in Soviet artistic circles, and encouraged him, for better and worse, towards a permanent return to his homeland.

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[90] E. Kol'tsova, "Poruchik Kizhe," *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, 16 March 1934, p. 4.

[91] On the French opening, see David Nice, *Prokofiev: From Russia to the West, 1891–1935* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 308. The film opened in the United States on 9 December 1934; a review appeared on 10 December in *The New York Times*.

[92] According to Prokofiev's collection of newspaper clippings, *Kizhe* was shown in no fewer than thirty-two Soviet cities in 1937 and 1938. "Reklamnye ob"iavleniia o fil'me 'Poruchik Kizhe'," RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 629.

CHAPTER TWO

Mania and Megalomania: *Queen of Spades*

After nearly eighteen years living abroad, Prokofiev made Moscow his permanent home in 1936—timing that from our viewpoint today seems painfully malapropos. Within days of Prokofiev's arrival, evidence of the anti-formalist campaign in the arts flashed on the pages of the central newspaper *Pravda* with heretofore-unseen vitriol, claiming Shostakovich's 1934 opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (*Ledi Makbet Mtesenskogo uezda*) as a sacrificial lamb.[1] Following this attack, there could be no doubt that the ill-defined doctrine of Socialist Realism was now the party line in music, and what Richard Taruskin calls "quasi-Tolstoyan ideals of simplicity and universal accessibility" no longer represented tacit expectations, but rather outright demands of Soviet music.[2] Leon Trotsky (1879-1940) observed and lamented from afar, dryly capturing the ironies of Socialist Realism: "The impressions made by the new opera upon high-up auditors are immediately converted into a musical directive for composers. […] The

[1] The article "Muddle instead of music" ("Sumbur vmesto muzyki") appeared in *Pravda* on 28 January 1936.

[2] Richard Taruskin, "Tone, Style and Form in Prokofiev's Soviet Operas: Some Preliminary Observations," in *Studies in the History of Music*, vol. 2, ed. Gerald Abraham (New York: Broude, 1988), 216.

official formula reads: Culture should be socialist in content, national in form. As to the content of a socialist culture, however, only certain more or less happy guesses are possible."[3]

For Prokofiev, the Soviet Union's most recent prodigal son, adjustment to the regimentation of Soviet musical life involved, at least initially, methods less crude than the diatribe visited upon Shostakovich. Prokofiev's arrival coincided with the preparation of a massive civic commemoration marking the centenary of poet Aleksandr Pushkin's (1799-1837) death. More than an isolated cultural event, the elevation of Pushkin to the public spotlight represented a calculated move in the implementation of an engineered Russian national identity. Bringing Russian historical figures such as Pushkin into a meticulously constructed pantheon of Soviet "heroes" harnessed a rich Russian past to a nascent Soviet present, a decidedly political move that bolstered the fledgling nation with much-needed consciousness of historical continuity and legitimacy. Among the wealth of new films, music, and art that attended the Pushkin jubilee was director Mikhail Romm's (1901-71) planned film adaptation of the poet's celebrated 1834 novella *Queen of Spades* (*Pikovaia dama*), for which Prokofiev composed his second film score. The extensive ambitions of the Stalinist bureaucracy, however, nearly always exceeded available means; the Pushkin jubilee—plagued by disorganization and missed deadlines—proved no exception. *Queen of Spades* suffered a tortured path to production before reorganization at the highest levels of the Soviet film industry precipitated a *coup de grâce*, leaving Prokofiev's second film score without a film.

[3] Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, trans. Max Eastman (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1937), 184-85.

Romm's *Queen of Spades* was by no means the first adaptation of Pushkin's novella. Two predecessors in particular exerted influence on the project and its intended audiences: Pyotr Chaikovsky's opera *Queen of Spades* (1890), which departs significantly from Pushkin, and a radical restaging of that opera in 1935 by director Vsevolod Meierkhol'd (1874-1940) that sought to "re-Pushkinize" the opus.[4] A similarly authenticist ambition lay behind the collaboration of Prokofiev and Romm, in intent if not in practice. In this respect, Meierkhol'd's re-Pushkinized opera production, Romm's unrealized film, and Prokofiev's score all represent different strands of an effort to adapt, transform and employ the Russian past in service of two gods, one imagined and one real: historical authenticity and the Soviet present. Prokofiev's score for *Queen of Spades*—although ultimately unused—revisited and codified much of the dramaturgical and musical approach seen in *Lieutenant Kizhe*, albeit with a strikingly different context in which Prokofiev was no longer a Western composer testing the waters of a new genre, but rather a Soviet artist searching for a foothold in his radically-transformed homeland.

Pushkin Jubilee

Prokofiev's career in the Soviet Union was guided by an official inclination for historical topics that cultural organs of the state gradually imposed upon Russia's artistic sphere beginning in the second half of the 1930s. Far from something new, historical figures and events had long been part of the imagination of Russian art; in the 1930s, however,

[4] It bears noting that the Brothers Vasilev planned a film version of the opera in the early 1930s (and again in 1946), neither project was realized.

such topics attended the growth of a new genus of national identity.[5] Historian David Brandenberger elaborates:

> Distancing themselves from fifteen years of idealistic, utopian sloganeering, Stalin and his colleagues gradually refashioned themselves as etatists and began to selectively rehabilitate famous personalities and familiar symbols from the Russian national past. Earlier Marxist sloganeering was integrated into a reconceptualized history of the USSR that increasingly stressed Russian aspects of the Soviet past […] Although Stalin and his entourage intended to promote little more than a patriotic sense of loyalty to the party and state between 1931 and 1956, their approach to popular mobilization ultimately contributed to no less than the formation of a mass sense of Russian national identity in Soviet society.[6]

Thus real-life "heroes" of the recent Russian past—members of the Communist Party, the Komsomol, the Red Army—became the positive heroes of Soviet art. The deployment of such figures proved to be untenable at least in part, however, as such heroes were often the targets of the Great Purges (1937-39).[7] On 11 January 1938, for example, the director of Intorgkino (the trust responsible for foreign distribution of Soviet films) listed films that had become problematic due to their portrayal of "enemies of the people" (*vragi*

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[5] The veneration of heroes from the pre-revolutionary Russian past has been subjected to varying interpretations. The phenomenon has been considered a facet of Stalin's progressively pervasive personality cult, or simply attributed to a sharp conservative turn in Soviet life of the 1930s. The pervasiveness of the latter interpretation can be traced to an influential study by Nicholas Timasheff, *The Great Retreat: The Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia* (New York: Dutton, 1946). On the relation of Stalin's personality cult to Soviet film, see Richard Taylor, "Red Stars, Positive Heroes and Personality Cults," in *Stalinism and Cinema*, ed. Richard Taylor and Derek Spring (New York: Routledge, 1993), 69-89, 239-41.

[6] David Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity*, *1931-1956* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 8-9. In the following paragraphs, I adopt Brandenberger's arguments that are germane to the present discussion (see especially the introduction and chapters 2 and 5 of his book). Brandenberger's work is a synthesis (and significant expansion) of the extensive literature on the movement towards domestic etatism in the Soviet Union, for example: Mikhail Agursky, *Ideologiia natsional-bol'shevizma* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1980).

[7] Brandenberger suggests that this had a direct bearing on the film industry, citing that only 15 percent of the 102 films due to be completed by 1 November 1936 were finished. While the arrest and imprisonment of many of the film's heroes undoubtedly contributed to the industry's surprisingly high failure rate, this must also take into consideration that the Soviet film industry often suffered from severe disorganization, which undoubtedly contributed to cancellations. On the general difficulty of film production during this period, see Peter Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society* (New York: I.B.Tauris, 2001), especially 115-21.

narodov). *Zakliuchennye* (1936), which included the dishonored and soon-to-be-executed former NKVD chief Genrikh Yagoda (1891-1938), was one such film removed from circulation.[8] Other films were edited to excise the presence of disgraced figures, a process occasionally overseen by Stalin himself.[9] As the example of *Queen of Spades* will show, problematic heroes were only one of a litany of issues plaguing the Soviet film industry during the second half of the 1930s. Boris Shumiatskii (1886-1938), responsible for overseeing the country's film production until 1937, proved inept in establishing the centralized control expected of Soviet cultural organizations, leaving film production in a state of acute disorganization.[10] Shumiatskii joined the countless numbers slaughtered in the Great Terror, and his removal presaged the unhappy outcome of Romm's *Queen of Spades*.

The veneration of figures from the more distant Russian past in Soviet film, music, and art grew out of a need for a "usable" history encompassing personalities whose historical distance afforded latitude in creating the ideal canvas of the Russian past. Aleksandr Pushkin represented one of the most telling of the resurrected voices. His works had garnered enormous respect among the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia, prompting the aggressive eradication of his writings from Soviet libraries and school curric-

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[8] "Spravka Intorgkino ob iz"iatii iz prokata kinokartin s kadrami 'vragov naroda'," 11 January 1938, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 120, d. 349, ll. 18-22, published in K[irill] Anderson, ed., *Kremlevskii kinoteatr 1928-1953: Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005), 459-61.

[9] See, for example, "Dokladnaia zapiska S. S. Dukel'skogo I. V. Stalinu i V. M. Molotovu o peremontazhe riad kinokartin s kadrami 'vragov naroda'," 28 May 1938, RGASPI, f. 82, op. 2, d. 959, l. 75, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 497.

[10] As early as 1936, the film industry entered severely troubled times: complaints against uncompleted or poorly-produced films were extremely common. On 27 June 1936, the Organizational Division (Orgbiuro) of the Central Party listened to a particularly dismal assessment of the activities of the film industry. Their recommendations included more strict control and more films on contemporary themes. See "Postanovlenie Orgbiuro TsK VKP(b) o proizvodstve v vypuske kinokartin v 1936 g.," 27 June 1936, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 114, d. 612, p. 18-19, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr,* 319-321.

ulums during the 1920s and early 1930s.[11] A characteristically Stalinist *volte-face*, however, launched Pushkin onto the lead page of *Pravda* on 17 December 1935 (figure 2.1), where readers learned that the "Great Russian Poet" would receive the honor of a jubilee celebration in 1937, marking the centenary his death.[12] The chauvinism guiding this turn of events is thinly veiled: Pushkin was not only a great poet, but a great *Russian* poet. The slight-of-hand that substituted Russian for Soviet shored up a much-lacking sense of shared history among Soviet citizens, at the same time establishing the primacy of Russia among the Soviet republics. Other articles in *Pravda* enhanced the jingoistic tone of the Pushkin jubilee, notably an editorial that ran on 1 February 1936 that lauded Russians as "first among equals," that is, the superior racial group within the sprawling, multiethnic Soviet Union. Besides this blatantly nationalist claim, the jubilee served a second goal. Karen Petrone writes: "By adopting Pushkin as a symbol of Soviet official culture, the designers of the Pushkin Centennial hoped to translate the old intelligentsia's reverence for Pushkin into support for Soviet political and cultural activities."[13]

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[11] Brandenberger, *National Bolshevism*, 295, citing A. V. Blium, "'Sniat' kontrrevoliutsionnuiu shapku…': Pushkin i leningradskaia tsenzura 1937 g.," *Zvezda* 2 (1997): 209.

[12] A Pushkin Centennial Committee had been formed in 1934, chaired by Maksim Gor'kii (1868-1936). After Gor'kii's death, a replacement "All-Union Pushkin Committee" was convened. On its recommendations see "Postanovlenie politbiuro TsK VKP(b) ob utverzhdenii proekta postanovleniia SNK SSSR 'Ob oznamenovanii stoletnei godovshchiny so dnia smerti A. S. Pushkina'," 9 January 1937, reprinted in Andrei Artizov and Oleg Naumov, eds. *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia: Dokumenty TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VchK-OGPU-NKVD o kul'turnoi politike, 1917-1953 gg* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond 'Demokratiia', 1999), 344-46.

[13] Karen Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous, Comrades: Celebrations in the Time of Stalin* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 115.

Всесоюзная Коммунистическая Партия (больш.)

ПРАВДА

Орган Центрального Комитета и МК ВКП(б)

№ 346 (6592) | 17 декабря 1935 г., вторник | ЦЕНА 10 КОП.

Великий русский поэт

Глухой зимней ночью 1837 г. жандармы царя Николая I, таясь и крадучись, как воры, увозили из Петербурга мертвое тело Пушкина. Царское правительство пыталось украсть у русского народа его великого поэта, убитого агентом, ставленником дворянской реакции. Давно развеяна наукой официально-либеральная легенда о смерти Пушкина на дуэли из личных мотивов. Поединок Пушкина, затравленного придворной челядью, был завершением длительной борьбы, которую гениальный поэт вел с реакционным дворянством за судьбы русской литературы.

Эта борьба не закончилась смертью Пушкина. Она продолжалась над гробом его. Она велась вокруг произведений поэта

шим поэтом нашей советской эпохи. Безразличие к его памяти и его произведениям — преступление». Эти слова о Маяковском на высочайшую ступень подняли вопрос о значении нашей поэзии, и постановление ЦИК СССР о Пушкинском комитете продолжает линию, указанную в словах товарища Сталина.

Пушкин — великий русский национальный поэт. Но бессмертные произведения его художественного слова обогатили человечество. Русский народ справедливо гордится своим поэтом. В Пушкине сказались талантливость, сила, вдохновение, страсть великой страны, ее трудящихся масс.

Но не только для русского народа писал

Figure 2.1. Headline of the newspaper *Pravda*, 17 December 1935 [The headline reads "The Great Russian Poet"]

The scope of the Pushkin jubilee was staggering: 13.4 million copies of Pushkin's works were printed for readers across the nation, and the poet's works became a mandatory subject in school curriculums.[14] In Moscow, such venerable locales as Ostankino, the *Neskuchnaia naberezhnaia*, and the State Museum of Fine Arts were renamed in honor of the poet.[15] During the four months leading up to February 1937, a reported 3,232 lectures on Pushkin took place in Leningrad alone, attended by some 700,000

[14] Details of the circulation of editions of Pushkin are found in "V Sovnarkome Soiuza SSR," *Literaturnyi Leningrad*, 5 January 1937, p. 1. Karen Petrone confirms the figure quoted here, citing *Materialy k zasedaniiu vsesoiuznogo pushkinskogo komiteta, 29 ianvaria 1937 goda* (Moscow: Vsesoiuznyi pushkinskii komitet, 1937), 1 (also preserved in GARF, f. 305, op. 1, d. 3, l. 61). On school curriculums, see Petrone, *Life Has Become More Joyous*, 113, citing Nina Kosterina, *Diary of Nina Kosterina*, trans. Mirra Ginsberg (New York: Avon Books, 1968), 32-35 and *Literaturnyi sovremennik* (April 1936): inside cover.

[15] "Postanovlenie politbiuro TsK VKP(b)," 8 February 1937, reprinted in *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia*, 353.

people.[16] While such numbers suggest typical Stalinist hyperbole, their prominent display in newspapers and journals nonetheless drove home the significance of the poet to the average Soviet citizen. As Stephanie Sandler writes, "you didn't just read about [Pushkin] on the front page of every paper, you went to Pushkin reading groups in your place of work, you organized Pushkin plays in your apartment building, you criticized new Pushkin-related art in your regional party gatherings."[17]

Prokofiev's involvement in projects related to the jubilee was shaped by an effort to position himself as a composer respectful of the "true spirit" ("istinnyi dukh") of Pushkin's prose and poetry.[18] This posturing was intended partly to spare his music comparison to the celebrated Pushkin operas of Chaikovsky and Musorgsky, specifically *Evgenii Onegin* (1880) and *Boris Godunov* (1869), but the similarity of his authenticist rhetoric to that of Soviet officialdom was certainly not a benign move. Nor was his eagerness to contribute to the jubilee's events, and in his first year as a permanent resident of the Soviet Union, the majority of his compositional output was in service of the Pushkin commemoration. In addition to work on the score for Romm's film version of *The Queen of Spades*, his projects included incidental music for stage productions of two different Pushkin stories as well as a setting of Pushkin verses for voice and piano.[19]

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[16] "700 tysiach slushatelei na lektsiiakh o Pushkine," *Literaturnyi Leningrad*, 11 February 1937, p. 4.

[17] Stephanie Sandler, "The 1937 Pushkin Jubilee as Epic Trauma," in *Epic Revisionism*, eds. Kevin Platt and David Brandenberger (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 197.

[18] See, for instance, S. S. Prokof'ev, "Moi plany," *Vecherniaia Moskva*, 22 June 1936, p. 3, reprinted in Viktor Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991), 142.

[19] Prokofiev's non-Pushkin-themed works of 1936 included *Peter and the Wolf* (*Petia i volk*), op. 67, the Russian Overture, op. 72, two suites extracted from the 1935 score of *Romeo and Juliet* (op. 64-bis and op. 64-ter), and several piano works and songs for children.

Prokofiev finished his score for Aleksandr Tairov's production of *Evgenii Onegin* at Moscow's Kamerny Theater by autumn of 1936, nearly contemporaneously with the score for *The Queen of Spades*.[20] The musical outlines of both of these works bear great similarity to *Lieutenant Kizhe*: brief numbers, some as short as a few measures and rarely more than a minute or two in length, predominate. The neoclassical *couleur locale* used to great effect in Faintsimmer's film (see Chapter 1) proved equally suited to the period setting of *Evgenii Onegin*. The ink on Prokofiev's score had been dry for nearly four months, however, when the production was cancelled on the eve of the official jubilee.[21] The reason had to do not with *Evgenii Onegin* itself, but with another of Tairov's productions, *The Epic Warriors* (*Bogatyri*), a comic opera by Aleksandr Borodin with an updated libretto by poet Dem'ian Bednyi (1883-1945), which had come under sharp criticism in November. After Platon Kerzhentsev (1881-1940), the chairman of the Committee on Art Affairs, attacked *The Epic Warriors* in the pages of *Pravda*, Tairov was held accountable for his production "mistake." In the wake of the incident, *Evgenii Onegin* never made it to the stage.[22]

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[20] Prokofiev had already worked with Tairov when he composed incidental music (op. 61) for the director's production of the play *Egyptian Nights*.

[21] Prokofiev learned about this in a letter dated 18 December 1936, which indicated the production had been cancelled and any further work on the score should cease ("Pis'ma Kamernogo teatra S.S. Prokof'evu," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 820, l. 4).

[22] Leonid Maksimenkov, *Sumbur vmesto muzyki: Stalinskaia kul'turnaia revoliutsiia* (Moscow: Uridicheskaia kniga, 1997), 212-222. Also see A.M. Dubrovsky, "Chronicle of a Poet's Downfall: Dem'ian Bednyi, Russian History, and *The Epic Heroes*," in *Epic Revisionism*, eds. Kevin M. F. Platt and David Brandenberger (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 77-98. Clive Bennett suggests that the production's script—which Tairov had entrusted to writer Sigizmund Krzhizhanovskii (1887-1950)—had simply taken too many liberties with Pushkin's text to be appropriate for an official commemoration of the poet. While entirely plausible, the script had nothing to do with the cancellation of *Evgenii Onegin*. See "Prokofiev and Eugene Onegin," *The Musical Times* 121 (1980): 230-33.

In 1934 Vsevolod Meierkhol'd, one of Russia's foremost directors, longtime friend and supporter of Prokofiev, and member of the All-Union Pushkin Centennial Committee, approached the composer with his plans for a staging of Pushkin's play *Boris Godunov*.[23] Like *Evgenii Onegin* and *Queen of Spades*, the production of *Boris Godunov* unfolded in the shadow of an earlier and immensely popular Russian opera based on the same Pushkin story, though in this case the venerable composer was Musorgsky. The anxiety of operatic influence ensured that Pushkin's name was writ large: through meticulous research and preparation, Meierkhol'd sought to return to a grounding in the poet's story while at the same time striving for a realistic portrayal of Russia at the turn of the seventeenth century. Because Prokofiev's music was crucial to the success of the endeavor, Meierkhol'd closely guided the composer with detailed requests about the character, style, and exact durations of the music he required. Both director and composer made it their primary goal to "return Pushkin to Pushkin."[24] The piano score of *Boris* was ready by November, nearly at the same moment Prokofiev learned of the fates of *Queen of Spades* and *Evgenii Onegin*. Less than three months later, Meierkhol'd's *Boris Godunov* joined the list of canceled projects. Although Meierkhol'd's political standing was precarious—in 1939 he was arrested, brutally tortured, and in 1940 executed—

[23] The director was also responsible for introducing Prokofiev to the story that became the basis for the composer's opera *Love of Three Oranges*. The artistic relationship of Meierkhol'd and Prokofiev is detailed in Harlow Robinson, "Love for Three Operas: The Collaboration of Vsevolod Meyerhold and Sergei Prokofiev," *Russian Review* 45 (1986): 287-304.

[24] Simon Morrison, "Russia's Lament," in *Word, Music, History: A Festschrift for Caryl Emerson* [Stanford Slavic Studies Volumes 29-30], ed. Lazar Fleishman, Gabriella Safran, Michael Wachtel (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 667-68, 675.

surviving evidence suggests that the termination of *Boris Godunov* derived from problems within the production rather than from external political force.[25]

In 1936 and early 1937—his first full year as a resident of the Soviet Union—Prokofiev likely did not yet perceive his new home in the context of the surrounding political terror, but rather in light of the inefficiency and capriciousness of artistic work in the Soviet Union. Stravinsky, who had referred to Prokofiev's return to Soviet Russia as nothing more than "a sacrifice to the bitch goddess," felt that the politically naïve Prokofiev had only sought in his return a more welcoming audience than the one he had found in France.[26] The ultimate cancellation of all three of his projects for the Pushkin jubilee must have come as an especially painful blow to Prokofiev. The oft-iterated line that he had "no substantial reasons for feeling disappointed" with his return to Soviet Russia until his denunciation in 1948 is patently untrue.[27]

Outlines of a Film

For Romm, a young and relatively unknown director in 1936, producing a film version of *Queen of Spades* was an ambitious undertaking.[28] The deadline of the approaching jubi-

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[25] Ibid, 657.

[26] Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Memories and Commentaries* (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), 65. Richard Taruskin and Dorothea Redepenning share Stravinsky's opinion, although admitting that the competition Prokofiev sought to avoid by moving to Russia came primarily from Stravinsky himself. See Taruskin, "Art and Politics in Prokofiev," *Society* 29 (1991): 62 and Redepenning, "Prokofiev," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 20: 414).

[27] See, for instance, Levon Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age, 1917-1987* (Stockholm: Melos, 1998), 154.

[28] After serving in the Red Army from 1918-21, Mikhail Romm studied sculpture before turning to film, first writing scenarios and then, beginning in 1934, directing. Romm became a member of the Communist Party in 1939 and in 1950 was named a People's Artist of the USSR. He is perhaps best known for his 1962 film *Nine Days of One Year* (*Deviat' dnei odnogo goda*).

lee left barely nine months for planning and production at a time when the average Soviet film could take up to fourteen months to complete (see Introduction). Commissioning a score from Prokofiev came into consideration early; Romm's invitation reached the composer on 14 February 1936, well before actual filming was slated to begin.[29] Despite the tight production schedule, the offer seemed to promise an improvement on Prokofiev's first film project, *Lieutenant Kizhe* (1933-34), as Prokofiev's newly established residence in Moscow afforded the luxury of proximity to Romm's base at the Mosfilm studios. There was also the potential to garner significant prestige: Mosfilm was the Soviet Union's leading studio, and the subject of their production was aligned with an officially endorsed civic commemoration with national scope. *Lieutenant Kizhe*, in contrast, was an independent production at a newly formed secondary studio.

Romm anticipated that music would play "a huge role" in the film, which accounts for some of the impetus behind seeking out a composer of Prokofiev's caliber and reputation to author the film's score. He offered Prokofiev a significant degree of freedom not only in planning the content and character of his music, but also determining its use. Music was not specified in Romm's preproduction scenario, and questions regarding cueing were left open-ended.[30] This *carte blanche* was, at least on the surface, inconsistent with Prokofiev's preferences. During a 1936 interview Prokofiev expounded: "I prefer when a playwright or director has concrete requests concerning the music. In other

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[29] "Pis'ma i telegrammy kinodeiatelei i kinostudii S. S. Prokof'evu," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929 op. 1, ed. khr. 809, l. 1. This typewritten letter is not dated. Prokofiev indicates that it arrived on 14 February.

[30] Ibid. Romm and his colleagues state in their letter that music's "place in the scenario is not fixed. We feel that the author of the music should have the deciding word on the order and character of the music."

words, it helps me when they say: 'here I need 75 seconds of music' or 'here give me wistful and delicate music'."[31] Directors who proved to be weak and uninterested artistic partners disappointed Prokofiev. Romm's hands-off approach, which placed a great deal of artistic decision in Prokofiev's hands, at least had the advantage of playing to the composer's ego. Prokofiev, moreover, could not afford to be selective at this moment in his career.

As had been the case with *Lieutenant Kizhe*, the production schedule of *Queen of Spades* demanded a score before the completion of filming; Romm's initial timeline of the production indicated that he expected Prokofiev's piano score by early June and the full score by mid-August.[32] Production was fast-tracked for summer and autumn to meet the end-of-year deadline, thus Prokofiev again composed for a film he had not viewed first-hand. His imagination, supplemented by Romm's scenario, had to suffice.

Prokofiev signed an official contract for *Queen of Spades* on 29 May 1936. The wording of the document suggests that Romm's initial desire to leave the majority of musical and dramaturgical decisions up to the composer remained unchanged, and that he expected Prokofiev to explain how his music would "relate to the primary dramatic lines in the scenario."[33] The generous honorarium guaranteed him in the contract (15,000 rubles) would have been difficult to pass up. Soon after signing with Mosfilm, Prokofiev

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[31] Sergei Prokof'ev, "Izuchaite tekst, teatr, orkestr (Kompositor v dramaticheskom teatre)," *Teatr i dramaturgiia* 8 (1936): 489, reprinted in Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 143-44.

[32] These dates were Romm's projections as of February, 1936. Pis'ma i telegrammy kinodeiatelei i kinostudii S.S. Prokof'evu, unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 809, l. 1.

[33] Dogovory Prokof'eva s kinostudiiami i teatrami na napisanie muzyki, unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, ll. 4-5. The contract originally had a printed date of April (with the day left blank) but this is replaced with a handwritten date of 29 May. The printed date for delivery of the score is given as 20 June, but this was changed to July and initialed by both Romm and Prokofiev. The reason for this delay is unclear, but judging from the later difficulties of the production such delays are not surprising.

departed for his second summer at Polenovo, an artists' retreat south of Moscow, where he devoted his attention to his three Pushkin projects. He penned the *Queen of Spades* piano score rapidly, finishing it on 12 July—just meeting Mosfilm's deadline.[34] Thereafter, most likely in late July or August, the task of copying the full score of *The Queen of Spades* (based on the instrumental indications Prokofiev added to the piano score) was entrusted to Vladimir Derzhanovskii (1881-1942), one of Prokofiev's preferred assistants during the latter half of the 1930s.[35] Although the piano score survives complete and preserved in its entirety, the full score was never finished. Several of the numbers are not fully copied, and the final four numbers of the score are missing, likely indicating that Prokofiev and Derzhanovskii learned of the film's postponement during the time the score was being copied. The uncertainty of the project's fate at the end of the summer is reflected in notes that both composer and copyist added to the incomplete full score, indicating the places where copying would need to be finished should the production come to fruition in the future.[36]

The reasons behind the termination of *Queen of Spades* remain unclear at best. Distraught over the film's outcome, Romm destroyed all materials pertaining to the production, leaving only a few key documents that survive in Moscow archives. The most definitive clues appear in the director's memoirs, which reveal that at some point during 1936 Romm had a heated argument with the director of Mosfilm, Elena Sokolovskaia

[34] Prokofiev signed the final page of the piano score, giving the date of completion as July 12, see RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, l. 15.

[35] Vladimir Vladimirovich Derzhanovskii was a music critic and editor of the Moscow-based journal *Muzyka*.

[36] RGALI, f. 1929. op. 1, ed. khr. 95. In this score, Derzhanovskii's pen trails off in the middle of no. 20 (of a total 24), and also leaves portions of no. 8 and no. 18 incomplete.

(1894-1938), and as a result was forced to find a different studio at which to produce *Queen of Spades*.[37] The reasons behind their dispute seem to be tied to Romm's heady ambitions, which did not mesh with Sokolovskaia's perception of him as a young and inept director. When she learned that, in addition to *Queen of Spades*, Romm planned to produce a film on Lenin, she vehemently rebuked him, claiming he had "no experience" in producing a major film and likely would not be up to such a task.[38] After his falling out with Sokolovskaia, Romm was forced to postpone production of *Queen of Spades* for more than a year.

Meanwhile the official Pushkin celebrations came and went, but the poet's official status did not. During Romm's search for a studio, Pushkin expert Mstislav Tsialovskii (1883-1947) was asked to evaluate the scenario, ostensibly to check its fidelity to Pushkin. Detecting only a few flawed minutiae (down to the level of single words) he nevertheless offered a lackluster evaluation, which captures the intensity of the expectation of "fidelity": "In general the scenario is worthy of approval, in spite of what I see as fairly substantial and inadmissible deviations from Pushkin's text. These deviations on the one hand complicate the plot, and on the other show disregard for the text of

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[37] Mikhail Romm, "Pikovaia dama," in *Izbrannye proizvedeniia v 3–kh tomakh. Tom II: o sebe, o ludiakh, o fil'makh*, ed. Ludmila Belova (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1981), 155-62.

Elena Kirillovna Sokolovskaia (1894-1938) served on the executive committee of the Comintern before being appointed director of Mosfilm in 1935. She served as director up until her arrest in October 1937 on phony charges of espionage. She was executed on 26 August 1938. Ronald Bergan claims that Sokolovskaia's arrest was due to association, her husband having also been arrested. See *Eisenstein: A Life in Conflict* (London: Little, Brown and Co., 1997), 318.

[38] This film eventually became the director's celebrated *Lenin in October*. See Mikhail Romm, "Kak shla rabota nad 'Leninym v oktiabre'," *Nezavisimaia gazeta* (Kul'tura) 69 (15 June 2001), accessed online 3 August 2006, <http://curtain.ng.ru/plot/2001-02-16/4_work.html>. This document was edited and prepared by Russian film historian Mark Zak, and contains previously unpublished material that did not appear in the 1981 edition of Romm's collected writings. Sokolovskaia supposedly told Romm "you are on the verge of disaster. You will not be able to produce this film [*Lenin in October*]. There is not time, and you have no experience. Of course, you made the film *Trinadtsat'*, a small film, [and] the silent film *Pyshka*. You have never done a major film, and perhaps you will not be able capable of doing so."

Pushkin."[39] Not until December 1937 did Romm muster a second attempt at filming, this time in Leningrad. By the following month the actors had assembled in the former capital, where Romm planned to film the outdoor scenes in February and early March and then move indoors to a studio set.[40] It is unclear whether or not Prokofiev was aware of the resurrection of the *Queen of Spades* project, but for him the opportunity of the Pushkin jubilee and its prospects for official recognition had long past. In the meantime, a new and much more promising film project had presented itself in the form of *Aleksandr Nevskii*, and there is evidence that Prokofiev used the contract for this later project as leverage in exacting money from Mosfilm for the unused *Queen of Spades* score.[41]

Romm's second attempt to produce *Queen of Spades*, in any case, was short-lived. Following the removal of Boris Shumiatskii (see Chapter 3), a resolution ordered the creation of a Committee on Cinematography (*Komitet po delam kinoiskusstv pri SNK SSSR*) to be headed by Semyon Dukel'skii (1892-1960)—a former NKVD agent "remembered fondly by nobody," according to Romm.[42] One of Dukel'skii's first moves

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[39] "Otzyvy i retsenzii na stsenarii fil'mov "Pikovaia dama" i dr.," dated 8 July 1937, unpublished, RGALI, f. 2558, op. 2, ed. khr. 128, ll. 33ff.

[40] Unfortunately, Romm does not indicate at which studio filming was to have taken place. See Romm, "Pikovaia dama,"160.

[41] A letter from Mosfilm's director (undated, but no earlier than 23 April 1938) indicates that Prokofiev would receive 25,000 rubles as honorarium for *Aleksandr Nevskii* and an additional 11,250 rubles after receipt of the *Queen of Spades* score. See "Pis'ma kinostudii 'Mosfil'm' Prokof'evu o zakaze na muzyku k fil'mam 'Pikovaia dama' i 'Aleksandr Nevskii,'" unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 218, l. 2.

[42] Romm, "Pikovaia dama," 162. Semyon Semyonovich Dukel'skii served in various governmental capacities before becoming an NKVD (the predecessor to the KGB) administrator in 1934. In 1938-39 he headed the newly created Committee of Cinematography.

was to order the cancellation of a group of films, including *Queen of Spades.*[43] This was accompanied by an abrupt turn to "contemporary" subjects in film (e.g. the Red Army, the Soviet Navy, the Friendship of Peoples, etc.).[44] Dukel'skii's seizure of control was draconian; Romm claims that one of the cancelled films, *The Blue and the Pink* (*Goluboe i rozovoe*), stood only days from completion when it was abruptly terminated. Dukel'skii's forceful assertion of more contemporary themes disguised a need to bring the film industry under more centralized control and ensure more economical use of its budget. A letter from Dukelsy to Viacheslav Molotov (1890-1986, a Politburo member and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars) dated 14 March 1938 makes it clear that he was expected above all to bring the disorganized Soviet film industry under rigid central jurisdiction.[45] In light of this, the wholesale cancellation of the group of films including *Queen of Spades* seems to have derived as much from an effort to clean house as from any direct concern for thematic issues.

Chaikovsky's Shadow

In producing a screen version of *Queen of Spades*, one looming shadow could not be ignored: Chaikovsky's eponymous opera. Romm writes in his initial offer to Prokofiev,

> As you will see, the scenario takes as its basis Pushkin's story and sharply differs in treatment from Modest Chaikovsky's libretto. Consequently, the music will

[43] "Postanovlenie zasedaniia Politbiuro TsK VKP(b) No. 59," 29 February 1938, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 997, l. 1, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 486.

[44] "Dokladnaia zapiska S. S. Dukel'skogo V. M. Molotovu o tematicheskom plane proizvodstva kinokartin na 1938g.," 14 March 1938. RGASPI, f. 82, op. 2, d. 959, ll. 67-69, reprinted in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 489-490.

[45] Ibid.

> obviously need to have a different direction than that in [Pyotr Chaikovsky's] opera.[46]

It would seem that Prokofiev had similar intentions with his music for *Evgenii Onegin*, as is evident in an article he penned for the Moscow press:

> It is well known that opinions about Chaikovsky's opera differ. Some felt that the composer's interpretation was successful, and others believed that it distorted the poet's work, replacing the poet's intrinsic ardor with Chaikovsky's characteristic pessimism. I will personally strive to stay as close to the original and to penetrate Pushkin's true spirit as deeply as possible. To write the music for *Evgenii Onegin* is unusually tempting, but at the same time it is a thankless task. However successful I might be, listeners love Chaikovsky's wonderful music too much to part with familiar musical images.[47]

This was a defense mechanism: in affecting a "return to Pushkin," Prokofiev hoped that his Pushkin works would avoid scrutiny as foolhardy attempts to improve upon beloved operatic classics. (Tying cultural products to a historical hitch post such as Pushkin was another method of dampening potential criticism, one that Prokofiev later put to work with his opera *Semyon Kotko*.[48]) Yet in this respect, Prokofiev's ambitions easily meshed with the official Pushkin veneration, and therefore quickly brought the neophyte Soviet composer into alignment with official bureaucratic goals.

Why, though, was Chaikovsky's opera such a contentious work? Chaikovsky had preserved the basic outline of Pushkin's story: Hermann, a young officer, learns of an aged countess who purportedly has knowledge of a hand of cards that guarantees success in the gambling hall. Hermann gains access to the countess by feigning a love interest in her young ward, Liza, but inadvertently scares the old woman to death in his attempt to

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[46] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 809, p. 1.

[47] Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 142.

[48] Prokofiev publicly likened the opera's arias to those in Chaikovsky's *Evgenii Onegin*. See "Semyon Kotko," in *Sergei Prokofiev: Materials, Articles, Interviews*, ed. Vladimir Blok (Moscow: Progress, 1978), 37-38.

learn her secret. The similarities between Puskin and Chaikovsky, however, end here. As Richard Taruskin points out, Pushkin's terse novella would have "seemed natural for a brisk one-act [operatic] treatment."[49] The Chaikovsky brothers, however, created an expansive three-act opera, refashioning Pushkin's story in accordance with the tastes of late nineteenth-century opera and taking considerable liberties with the novella in the process.[50] Hermann's feigned love for Liza is transformed into a true romance, and dramatic tension derives from the introduction of a completely new character, Prince Eletskii, Liza's fiancée. A formal ball occupies most of Act II, while in the Pushkin the fete is only hinted at *post facto* in Liza's recollections. And perhaps most significantly, the spirit of Pushkin's laconic epilogue—in which we learn that Hermann languishes in an insane asylum and Liza has married another—is completely absent from the opera: when Hermann admits to Liza that the ghost of the countess has revealed the secret of the three cards to him, the heartbroken Liza assumes he has gone mad and drowns herself in the icy waters of the Neva. Hermann shares Liza's romantic tragedy, although his own suicide follows the unbearable shock of losing at the game table.

The popularity of Chaikovsky's opera fundamentally altered the reception of Pushkin's *Queen of Spades*. Galina Pastur writes that since the opera's premiere, Pushkin's tale has been read with Chaikovsky's music "ringing" in the ears of its readers. She suggests that the influence of the opera "has been so powerful that […] events from the prose *Queen of Spades* began to be confused in the public consciousness with those

[49] Richard Taruskin, "The Queen of Spades," *Grove Music Online* (Accessed 12 June 2006).

[50] Galina Pastur, "Terrible Screeching: Adaptation of Pushkin's *Queen of Spades* in Theater, Opera and Film," (Ph.D diss., University of Southern California, 2001), 47.

from its operatic counterpart."[51] Precisely this esteem at the expense of Pushkin's original more often than not drew an unfavorable critical response: critics have berated Modest Chaikovsky's libretto for its deviations from the novella and Pyotr Chaikovsky's score for "musical borrowings and instrumental diablerie."[52] According to Simon Morrison, director Vsevolod Meierkhol'd's desire to "repushkinize" the opera grew out of this mix of critical distaste. (To be sure, the idea of "repushkinization" did not originate with Meierkhol'd: several productions of the novella during 1920s attempted to put the aristocratic Romanticism of the opera behind and impart the requisite "social awareness" demanded by the Soviet context.[53]) Meierkhol'd's production of *Queen of Spades* ran during the 1934-35 season at the Leningrad Maly Theater.[54] His amendments and adjustments to Chaikovsky's music were as sweeping as the composer's had been to Pushkin's prose: in addition to rewriting the libretto at many points, Meierkhol'd cut 445 bars of music.[55] He portrayed such extensive excision as creating a version of the opera more faithful to its literary source, which, he claimed, had been Pyotr Chaikovsky's intent all along: "Our principal motive in this was to restore the reputation of Pyotr Illich Tchaikovsky […] All the time he was composing the score his thoughts were con-

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[51] Ibid., 60-61. An example of the influence Chaikovsky's opera exerted is Nikolai Aleksandrovich Korsakov's 1895 staging of Pushkin's *Queen of Spades*, in which Chaikovsky's first act is substituted for Pushkin's first chapter.

[52] Simon Morrison, *Russian Opera and the Symbolist Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 50-51.

[53] For an overview of adaptations of *Queen of Spades*, see Pastur, "Terrible Screeching," as well as Anatoly Vishevsky, "*The Queen of Spades* Revisited, Revisited, and Revisited…: How Time Changed Accents," *Russian Studies in Literature* 40 (2004): 20-33.

[54] Meierkhol'd's director's script for the production is reprinted in G. V. Kopytovaia, *Pikovaia dama: Zamysel, voploshchenie, sud'ba* (St. Petersburg: Kompozitor, 1994), 133-98.

[55] L. Potapova, "O nekotorykh osobennostiakh spektaklia 'Pikovaia Dama' v postanovke V. E. Meierkhol'd," *Teatr i dramaturgiia* (Leningrad) 6 (1976): 143.

centrated on Pushkin's story, yet he marred the work by heeding the advice of Modest and the Director of Imperial Theaters."[56] Meierkhol'd's remarkable "clairvoyance" cleverly deflected would-be critics by recasting his heady artistic ambitions as the realization of the foiled ambitions of a long-deceased historical figure.

A representative example of Meierkhol'd's excisions and adjustments appears already in the opening moments of his production. When Chaikovsky's Hermann first appears on stage in Act I, he rhapsodizes about Liza, the woman with whom he has fallen in love. Meierkhol'd scraps Hermann's arioso, replacing it with the later portion of the same scene in which Tomsky relates of the countess's fantastic past. Meierkhol'd thus backgrounds Hermann's love for Liza by removing it from its privileged first scene spotlight. The impasse, however, is evident: Meierkhol'd could barely reconcile Chaikovsky with Pushkin without mutilating an opera that was tightly organized thematically and formally (and thus producing something that was faithful to neither Chaikovsky nor to Pushkin). The slew of negative criticism that attended Meierkhol'd's production dwelled on this very point; Meierkhol'd's ultimate motivation seems to have derived more from a desire to free the opera from its Romanticist wash than to venerate an "authentic" Pushkin.[57]

The timing of Meierkhol'd's version was nonetheless critical. As literary historian Anatoly Vishevsky notes, "the line between … Pushkin's text and Chaikovsky's libretto has been [so] blurred that … a number of educated Russians would be surprised to

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[56] Edward Braun, ed. and trans. *Meyerhold on Theatre: Translated and Edited With a Critical Commentary* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1969), 278.

[57] There is also evidence that fidelity to Pushkin's original did not stand as Meierkhol'd's primary concern: For example, in the denouement of Meierkhol'd's version, it is neither Chekalinskii (Pushkin) nor Eletskii (Chaikovsky) against whom Hermann plays his three cards, but rather a mysterious "stranger" introduced by the director.

learn that the Winter Canal or the words 'three cards, three cards' are not to be found in Pushkin's story."[58] The sheer number of *Queen of Spades* adaptations that preceded Meierkhol'd's fostered an atmosphere in which claims of "authenticity" could easily take hold at a time when the poet was declared nothing short of a national hero. Faithfulness to Pushkin therefore represented a political statement, regardless of the degree or form of "authenticity" achieved. The rhetoric surrounding Meierkhol'd's production informed the production of Romm and Prokofiev, who were next to try their hand at *Queen of Spades*.[59]

An Unheard Score

The entire piano score for Romm's *Queen of Spades* survives, penned with Prokofiev's usual meticulousness on sixteen leaves of rectangular manuscript paper; its completeness makes it a strangely incongruous relic from a troubled and ultimately aborted project.[60] The existence of such a score not only reveals Prokofiev's response to his relative artistic freedom in the project but also suggests much about how Romm's film would have taken shape, had it been produced under happier circumstances.

The *Queen of Spades* score comprises twenty-four short, individual numbers, more than half of which clock in at less than one minute (and the most extended barely reaches

[58] Vishevsky, "*The Queen of Spades* Revisited," 21.

[59] It also bears mentioning that, unlike the Chaikovskys, Romm and Prokofiev were expected to emphasize class struggle (while remaining faithful to Pushkin). While Hermann is part of the proletariat, his obsessions make him an essentially evil figure. Lisa is the pure heroine, working class by origin and subject to the abuses of the decadent aristocracy (which the Countess represents). I am grateful to Simon Morrison for pointing this out to me.

[60] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93.

two minutes in length).[61] The abbreviated nature of Prokofiev's numbers, while hardly atypical for film music in general, is nevertheless important to note as it is far from a fixed trait in Prokofiev's own output for film. As will become clearer below, Prokofiev's use of brief numbers was not a concession to convention, but rather an important facet of the film's musical aesthetic. Most characteristically, however, and ultimately most importantly for the profile and character of the score, Prokofiev's music presents a minimum of thematic material and a distinct avoidance of any development of that material. This striking feature, which is also evident in the *Lieutenant Kizhe* score (see Chapter 1), represents the linchpin of what can be considered Prokofiev's "early" film style—an approach that would change significantly in 1938 when he began to collaborate with Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948).

As with all of Prokofiev's film work, the final project was shaped as much by logistical concerns as by broader aesthetic goals. In the case of *Queen of Spades*, Prokofiev worked in Polenovo—far from the Mosfilm studios—and produced his entire opus before filming was slated to begin. Prokofiev composed using a rough preproduction script (that unfortunately does not survive), as each musical number is keyed to a specific sequence of shots (*kadry*). The music-first approach did not preclude coordination of image and music at the gestural level. The sixth number of the score ("Utro," see Appendix I) exists in two versions in the short score; the first is crossed out. Both assume a tripartite form, with their similar middle sections intended for a moment of sound-image coordination: Prokofiev indicates "soldiers' steps" that correspond to each

[61] Although no recorded version of the complete score for *Queen of Spades* exists, the composer's precise metronome markings dictate only twenty-eight minutes of music (although twice the amount he had composed for *Lieutenant Kizhe*).

pulse of a relatively brisk tempo.[62] Although the outer sections of both versions differ in tempo and length, both nonetheless take exactly 72 seconds to perform using Prokofiev's metro-nome indications. The correspondence in duration suggests a concern for precise timing on Prokofiev's part, likely a prerequisite for any coordination of the visual and audio planes. Romm's expectations regarding the film's music may have been inexperienced, but his planning at least allowed Prokofiev to forego the optional cuts and extensions that had been necessary in his first film score for *Lieutenant Kizhe*. Prokofiev, moreover, was likely happy to avoid anything more than brief moments of "mickey-mousing," even though it was a common feature of film scores throughout the 1930s. This was a prefer-ence shaped by Sergei Diaghilev (1872-1929), as the example of Prokofiev's early ballet *Chout* testifies: The first version (1915) of this work was highly mimetic, calling for a rigid synchronization of dance and music. Diaghilev's subsequent advice to the com-poser prompted Prokofiev to revise the ballet completely, producing a second version (1920) that was much more "symphonic" in style. Prokofiev commented in his journal following a meeting with Diaghilev: "If there is too much detail, as in my piece [*Chout*] … [the] choreography becomes a slave to the music and it results in just a simple pantomime." [63] This still rang true nearly two decades later in the composer's career, albeit in a cinematic context.

One of the most intriguing documents surviving from the production is a copy of the short score made by Prokofiev's assistant, Pavel Lamm (1882-1951) at the com-

[62] The reference to "soldiers steps" poses a riddle, as the literary scenario ("'Pikovaia dama,' Literaturnii stsenarii," unpublished, RGALI, f. 631, op. 3, ed. khr. 238) makes no reference to the presence of such figures. It is likely that this was a later addition to the scenario, which would account for the two versions of Prokofiev's no. 6: the first includes no reference to "steps," and the second extends the mimetic middle section (see the piano score, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, ll. 4-5).

[63] Stephen Press, *Prokofiev's Ballets for Diaghilev* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 123.

poser's request during late July 1936. This version, however, does not include any of Prokofiev's expressive or instrumental indications.[64] The purpose of such a version is puzzling, but perhaps suggests that Prokofiev's music was to play a role in filming: arranging for a pianist to perform the score during rehearsals was not an unheard of phenomenon, and, if this indeed was Romm's intent, it may explain why he requested music early in the production.

Among the scant documents that survive from the ill-fated production of *Queen of Spades* is a faded typewritten list sectioning the film into twenty-five short episodes.[65] The action closely outlines Pushkin's novel, though divided into four chapters, where Pushkin has six.[66] Although it might seem natural for Prokofiev's twenty-four musical numbers to coordinate roughly with the twenty-five episodes planned by Romm, this is not at all the case: the music was to be distributed unevenly, supporting only localized

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[64] Lamm's copy of the piano score is preserved (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 94). On the same day he completed the short score, Prokofiev dispatched a note to Lamm: "in the next few days I will finish the piano score of *The Queen of Spades* and I will ask you to copy it […] I would hope that you would be ready by 25 July," RGALI, f. 2473, op. 1, ed. khr. 181, ll. 8-9, reprinted in "Pis'ma S. S. Prokof'eva k P. A. Lammu," ed. Irina Medvedeva, in *Sergei Prokof'ev: Vospominaniia, pis'ma, stat'i* (Moscow: Deka-VS, 2004), 282-83. A letter from Prokofiev to Lamm dated 6 August mentions the completed copy, indicating that Lamm completed his work sometime between 12 July and 6 August (RGALI, f. 2473, op. 1, ed. khr. 181, l. 10).

[65] "Perechen' epizodov fil'ma 'Pikovaia dama,'" unpublished, RGALI, f. 844, op. 4, ed. khr. 1. This document undoubtedly survived Romm's internal purges because it was typed on the back of a list of information pertaining to Romm's successful film *Lenin in 1918* (*Lenin v 1918 godu*), on which he worked nearly contemporaneously with *Queen of Spades*.

[66] An undated copy of the literary scenario (containing dialog and stage directions) was submitted to the Soviet Writer's Union, and is preserved in RGALI, f. 631, op. 3, ed. khr. 238. The scenario provides a concise overview of Pushkin's novella as Romm had conceived it for his film. The bulk of the film's dialog was taken verbatim from Pushkin, although additional lines were added to account for the lack of a narrator. Romm's only significant deviation from Pushkin involves the countess's steward: In Pushkin, he appears only tangentially, and in the epilogue we learn that his son is the "amiable young man" whom Liza has married. Romm used the figure of the steward as a sign of the rising "new bourgeoisie" and the concurrent fade of the old aristocracy (Romm, "Pikovaia dama," 156). As such, Romm introduces the steward as a character in the film. The steward addresses Liza and points out that she is treated as a housemaid despite her status as a ward of the nobility. Romm rationalized this addition to Pushkin as a "very important social idea" already present in *Queen of Spades* (ibid, 156).

sections of the film and leaving four large segments of the film unaccompanied.[67] Although two of these extended periods of musical silence correspond to the most dialogue-laden segments of the movie, this did not result wholly from a desire to separate music and speech. Prokofiev had unequivocal criteria behind his choice of which scenes deserved music:

> A composer cannot expect that music in dramatic productions will play the same role as in opera or ballet. In a dramatic production, music should appear where it intensifies the effect and not where the dramatic action can manage without it. Furthermore, accompanying music should never drown out dialogue.[68]

Perhaps most striking here is the assertion that film music functions principally and solely to intensify a preexisting emotion. A striking example of this aesthetic comes during Hermann's clandestine interrogation of the countess. The drama of the protagonist's grotesque behavior had inspired the operatic Chaikovsky to compose some of the most striking and dissonant lines he ever penned, yet the corresponding moment passes completely unaccompanied in Prokofiev's score.[69] For Prokofiev, the scene offered little opportunity to develop Hermann's character; it was instead an opening that allowed some of the arresting silences that pervade *Lieutenant Kizhe* to enter upon this macabre moment in *Queen of Spades*.

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[67] The unaccompanied portions of the film occur at the opening, directly following the overture (shots 1-34), following Prokofiev's no. 7 (shots 129-98), following no. 12 (shots 269-311), and following no. 15 (shots 363-551).

[68] Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 143-44.

[69] David Brown describes Chaikovsky's treatment of this scene: "astringent harmonic language of seventh and ninth chords, so saturated with suspensions, appoggiaturas and simultaneous false relations. As a projection of tormented obsession … the bedroom scene [is] unsurpassed." See *Tchaikovsky: Vol. 4, The Final Years, 1885-1893* (New York: Norton, 1991), 268-69. The literary scenario (not the director's script) indicates that a choir should sing during the Countess's funeral (which occurs during this extended unaccompanied stretch). See RGALI, f. 631, op. 3, ed. khr. 238, l. 31. Whether or not this detail would have been executed in the completed film is unclear. This may have entailed using a preexisting recording, as had been done for the wedding scene in *Lieutenant Kizhe* (see chapter 1).

In several instances, Prokofiev remained sensitive to nuances of dialogue, taking control of aspects of the soundtrack that might have been better left to later mixing during recording. During the ball scene (no. 14), for example, he indicates a decrease in dynamics in the orchestra so that a short dialogue between the countess and one of the minor characters can be easily heard.[70] Other gestures, however, were calculated for purely dramatic effect rather than balance. The music of no. 18 accompanies the inexorable building of tension as Hermann makes his way to the gambling hall and, upon arriving, announces "allow me to place a card." Prokofiev indicates that the music must cease at the exact moment of Hermann's line, even suggesting a cut to ensure that the protagonist articulates his words in a sudden and pregnant silence.[71] In these cases, Prokofiev shows little differentiation between the *Queen of Spades* score and his simultaneous work on the scores for *Evgenii Onegin* and *Boris Godunov*, which both exhibit tight control over the execution of music in relation to spoken word.[72] The consistent pairing of film and incidental music in one musical "category" (*Lieutenant Kizhe* with *Egyptian Nights*, *Queen of Spades* with the other Pushkin projects) reflects a pre-Eisenstein conception of genre that gradually dissolved in the later 1930s.

Prokofiev's *Queen of Spades* begins with an overture (example 2.1). Steady pizzicato quarter notes fill the bass register of the entire overture, tracing a serpentine line from B-flat through A, B (natural), C, and E. The meandering pitches of the line are tonicized locally (the A is preceded by G-sharp, the B by F-sharp) but this only bewilders;

[70] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, l. 9.

[71] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, l. 12.

[72] Bennett, "Prokofiev and Eugene Onegin," 231.

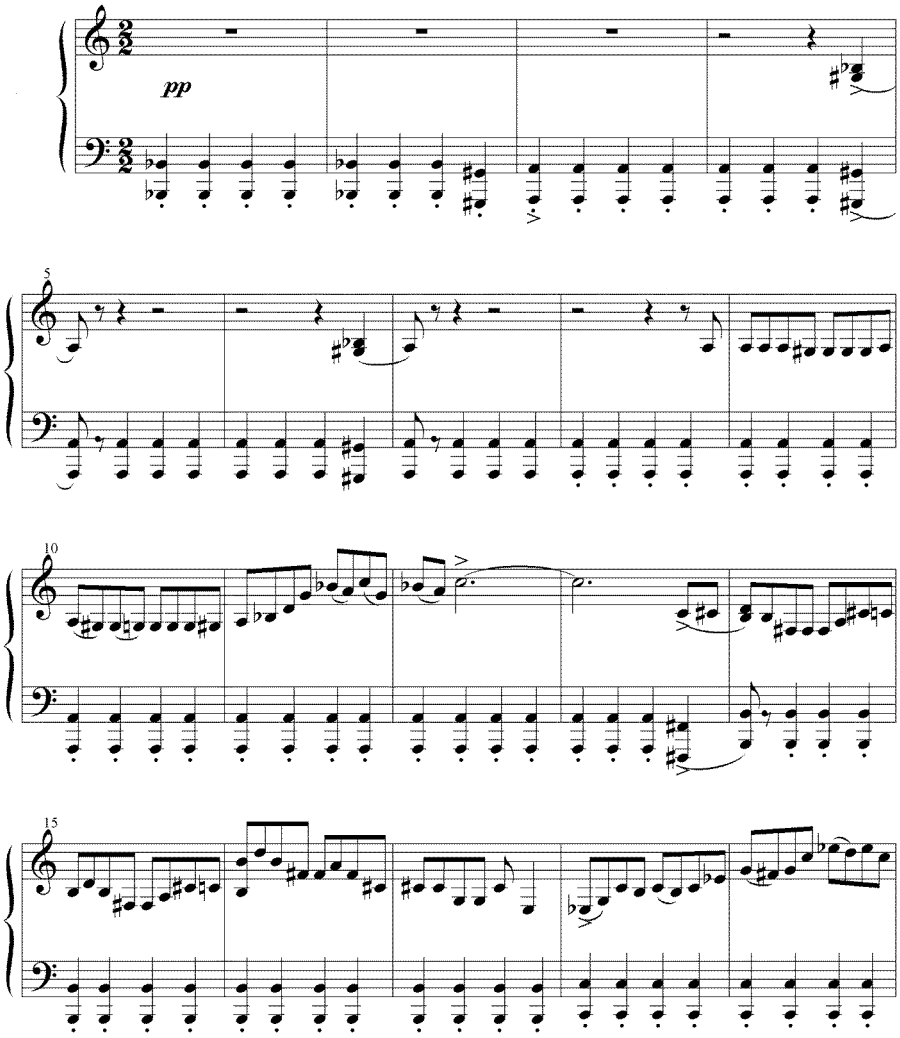
what seems like a firm foundation of B-flat gives way to A, and then just as abruptly jumps up to B natural. The violins offer no helping hand: they chatter a relentless rattle of eighth notes that further obfuscate any sense of a tonal center. The object of Hermann's obsession is embedded directly in this music: after the initial B-flat pedal in measures 1-2, three groups of seven quarter notes on A provide the most stable moment of the overture, reflecting the first two cards of the countess's mystical hand (three, seven, ace). This macabre ostinato—which was to be the first sound the audience heard in the film—follows Hermann throughout Prokofiev's musical plan.

Hermann is agitated and unstable, relentless and calculating—an obsessive *perpetuum mobile* squelched only by the loss of the final game of cards. He is also a wholly static character. His ostinato "theme" as stated in the overture sounds throughout the film but remains unchanged. During the title credits and the first seventy-four shots—more than a tenth of the entire film—Hermann's already restive music obstinately reiterates verbatim. Much in the same way that Meierkhol'd excised any trace of Liza from the first scene of Chaikovsky's opera so as not to obscure Hermann's motivations by amorous musings, Prokofiev similarly constructs a figure whose relentless musical figuration leaves no question as to his character.

The manic Hermann of Prokofiev's *Queen of Spades* is not Prokofiev's only dehumanized hero. The General and Aleksei in *The Gambler* (*Igrok,* 1917), both ruined by pathological gambling, and Lubka in *Semyon Kotko* (1939), who erupts in an ostinato-ridden *scène de folie*, are all somehow morally or mentally flawed.[73] But the central figure in this respect—and one who informed Hermann's character—is Renata, the fallen

[73] This tendency in Prokofiev's music is briefly addressed in Boris Iarustovskii, "Prokof'ev i teatr: Zametki o dramaturgii," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 4 (1961): 71.

heroine of *The Fiery Angel* (*Ognennyi angel*, 1927). Renata, like Hermann, is a figure completely lacking in musical development.



Example 2.1. *Queen of Spades*, "Overture" (no. 1), mm. 1-32 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, l. 1]

Although she appears in nearly every scene of the opera, it is always while singing to the same ostinato-like patterns. As Richard Taruskin comments: "Prokofiev's garish music, while often strikingly evocative of Renata's obsessions […] undeniably overworks the

device of ostinato."[74] She remains a static figure even in the work's dénouement, where her flirting with the devil causes a convent to explode in madness.

Prokofiev wrote: "take, for example, the central character Hermann, who in Chaikovsky's [opera] is passionately in love with Liza. In Pushkin he is a player, by chance noting the young ward of the countess [Liza] and using her as a tool to accomplish his own goals."[75] Chaikovsky's Hermann, as Prokofiev suggests, is not at all static, for two equal forces—the gambling table and his love for Liza—continually preoccupy him. In the opening scene of the opera, Hermann's theme reveals his two sides: a mournful cello line accompanies the lovesick Hermann but morphs into the celebrated "card theme" (example 2.2). Hermann à la Chaikovsky is lyrical; he is human in a way that Prokofiev's Hermann is not. Romm was especially struck by Prokofiev's depiction of the lead character: "With his typical exactness, [Prokofiev] wrote music that was neither dramatic nor lyrical. He used a motive as an obsessive idea. Because of this, all the musical phrases are repeated multiple times in simple form, reminding one of a piano exercise."[76]

Prokofiev echoed Romm's observations in his own prose in more general terms, stating what would become a recurring theme in his film music for the remainder of his career: "it is best if a composer employs only several melodies but repeats them multiple times: by the end the viewer will be able to sing them. For a dramatic production it is better to compose a few clear melodies than many that are unclear or difficult to

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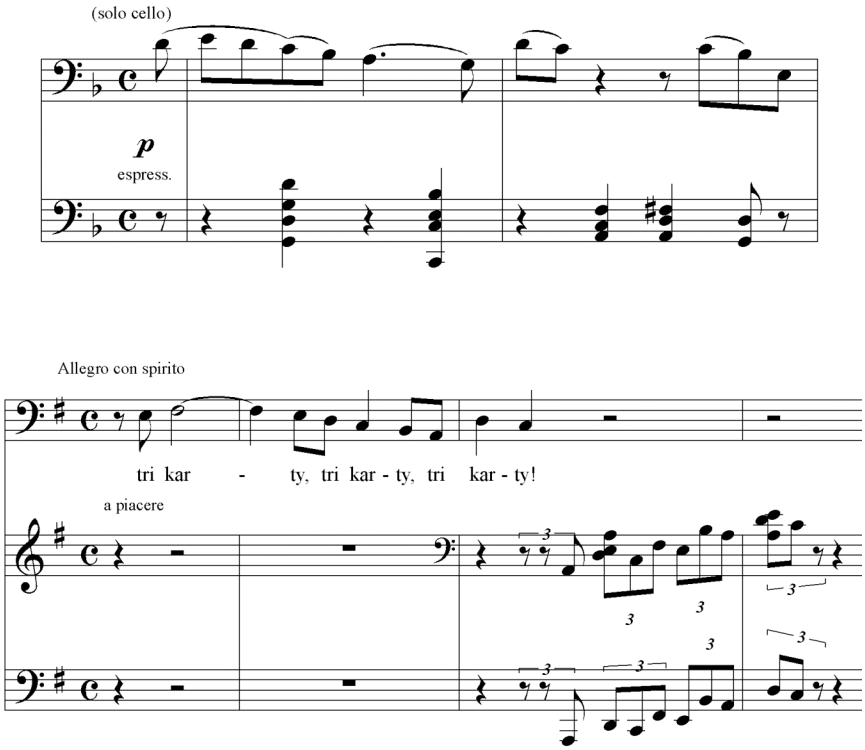
[74] Richard Taruskin, "The Fiery Angel," *Grove Music Online* (Accessed 12 June 2006). Taruskin makes similar claims in "Tone, Style and Form in Prokofiev's Soviet Operas," 224.

[75] Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 142.

[76] Romm, "Pikovaia dama," 159.

comprehend."[77] In terms of "melody," Hermann's unmelodic theme obviously represents a special case, but through emphasis on restatement (and thus on ease of comprehension), Prokofiev reveals a clear manifestation of the "new simplicity" that attended his works in the mid-1930s.

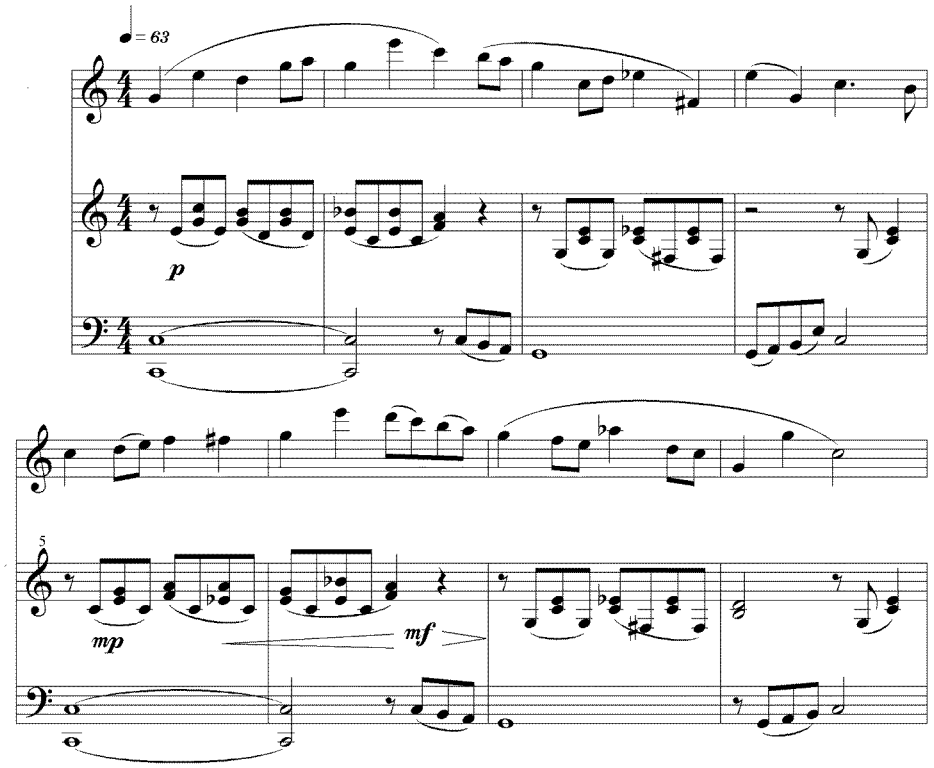


Example 2.2. Chaikovsky, *Queen of Spades*, Act I: a) Hermann's "lovesick" theme, b) The "card" theme ("Three cards, three cards, three cards!") [Piano-vocal reduction]

Prokofiev's music for Herman is unambiguous in its characterization; the equation of starkly black-and-white musical depiction with lucidity was a crucial development for Prokofiev. Even though *Queen of Spades* never appeared on screen, it served as an important step toward his next project, *Aleksandr Nevskii*, a film whose success hinged on its resistance to equivocation.

[77] Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 143-44.

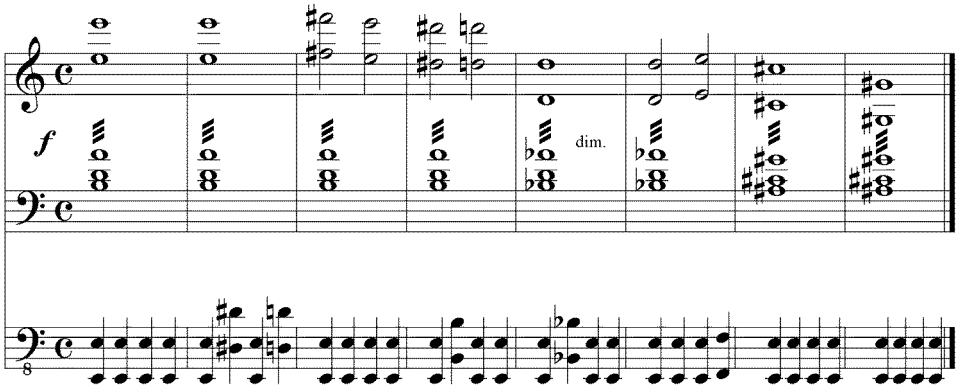
Hermann's obsessive ostinato eschews any real melody; in its absence we sense that something human is lacking in his character. Liza, however, possesses what Hermann lacks: Prokofiev's gift for lyricism (example 2.3).



Example 2.3. *Queen of Spades*, "Liza" (no. 4), mm. 5-12 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, l. 3]

Comfortably seated in C major and with a typically Prokofievian lyric melody of sprawling range, Liza's music is the antithesis of Hermann's ostinato figurations. She, furthermore, develops musically, whereas Hermann remains rooted in his ostinato mantra. At the moment Hermann passes a contrived love letter to Liza and their hands briefly touch, an extract of Liza's melody appears, transposed from C major to E minor and subject to the frenetic pizzicato bass line of Hermann's music (example 2.4). Unlike Hermann's ostinato, Liza's theme is permeable; it can be breeched and corrupted from without. Hermann's obsession taints Liza's innocence from the moment of their first contact, a

twist that flies in the face of Chaikovsky. Prokofiev notes in the margin of his manuscript that music and image must align exactly at this instant, and—considering the demand this would have placed on the director during filming—demonstrates a considerable privileging of music.



Example 2.4. *Queen of Spades*, "German vruchaet Lize pis'mo" (no. 8), mm. 23-30
[Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 93, l. 6]

More than dramatic placement or indirect musical characterization, music here enters directly into the narrative plane of the movie. As Hermann and Liza physically join hands, music portends an unhappy union. Such moments of narrativity, however, are rare in Prokofiev's first two film scores. In 1936, Prokofiev wrote about the function of dramatic music, and by extension film music:

> In an opera or ballet production or a symphony concert, the listener attends with the specific wish to listen to music. Similarly, a viewer attending a dramatic production is not interested whether the dramatic performance will be accompanied by music. Thus music in a dramatic production needs to accompany rather than to serve special functions. Most importantly it needs to be understandable and intended for the unskilled listener.[78]

This passage is remarkably understated in its assessment, but it explains why moments like the one shown in example 2.4 are relatively rare in Prokofiev's first film scores.

[78] Ibid.

Behind his laconic exactness lurks the outline of his early film-music aesthetic: writing that was immediately comprehensible, not distracting, and at all times supportive of the visual action on the screen. Aesthetic trends and influence from both new collaborations and the Soviet bureaucracy would later change aspects of Prokofiev's approach to film music, but melodic, harmonic, and formal lucidity would always remain part of its strong foundation.

At the end of 1936, however, Prokofiev faced a failed production and an unused score. Undoubtedly pleased at the success of the *Lieutenant Kizhe Suite* (op. 60, 1934, based on the *Lieutenant Kizhe* film music), Prokofiev anticipated deriving a similar suite from *Queen of Spades*. On his contract with Mosfilm he appended a line that retained his right to produce a concert version of the music.[79] Yet Prokofiev never attempted to produce such a work, despite the finished and nearly completely orchestrated score that lay unused on his desk. He remarked to Nikolai Miaskovskii (1881-1950) that the score for *Queen of Spades* would be "decent" (*prilichno*) only when paired with Romm's images; on its own, Prokofiev likely felt it unsuitable for the concert hall.[80] Indeed, *Queen of Spades* does not possess the same wealth of memorable melodic material that has made the *Lieutenant Kizhe Suite* rank among the composer's most beloved compositions.[81]

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[79] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 4. The contract reads "Za kompozitorom sokhranetsia avtorskoe pravo na priniatye utverzhdennye studiei eskizy, a ravno i na izdanie muzyki fil'ma i ispol'zovanie ee dlia gramofona i radio v SSSR, i dlia kontsertnykh peredelok." The final four words are added in Prokofiev's hand.

[80] See Prokofiev's letter to Miaskovskii dated 24 July 1936, reprinted in S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii, *Perepiska*, eds. Miralda Kozlova and Nina Iatsenko (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1977), 448. Prokofiev writes, "The opus is not one of the best, although with the film it will undoubtedly be decent."

[81] The task of creating a suite from the *Queen of Spades* film score fell to conductor Gennady Rozhdesvenskii, who used three pieces ("Hermann," "Liza," and "Polonaise") in his 1962 compilation suite of Prokofiev's music, *Pushkiniana.*

Prokofiev instead chose to recycle material taken from the film score in a cluster of later works, including the *Pushkin Waltzes* (op. 120, 1949), as well as his magnum opus *War and Peace* (*Voina i mir,* op. 91, 1941–3, rev. 1946–52). Liza's lyrical theme turns up in two works from 1944, the Piano Sonata No. 8 (op. 84) and the Fifth Symphony (op. 100). In the case of the latter work, Lamm's copy of the *Queen of Spades* piano score was put to use by Prokofiev in planning, where marginalia in red pencil indicates the material's suitability for use in the symphony.[82]

Prokofiev's eagerness to be involved in screen and stage productions related to the Pushkin jubilee and embrace the mandated goal of fidelity to the poet was one answer to the question of how to become a Soviet artist. Although his projects for the Pushkin jubilee proved to be disappointing and failed to bring him the recognition he sought in his homeland, they stood as a suitable arena for him to take his first steps as a Soviet artist. It would take the inspiration of a likely director (Eisenstein) and an unlikely place (Hollywood) to rekindle his interest in the film music, and his next cinematic project, *Aleksandr Nevskii*, would finally bring him sought-after success.

[82] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 94.

CHAPTER THREE

Aleksandr Nevskii and Success Manifest

On 7 November 1941, the twenty-fourth anniversary of the October Revolution, Josef Stalin addressed a war-torn Russia from Red Square: "Let the heroic example of our great forefathers inspire you in this war: Aleksandr Nevskii, Dmitri Donskoi, Kuzma Minin, Dmitri Pozharskii, Aleksandr Suvorov, Mikhail Kutuzov."[1] It was no coincidence that Stalin's litany of ancestral heroes duplicated the titles of recent Soviet films: *Aleksandr Nevskii* (1938), *Minin and Pozharskii* (1939), and *Suvorov* (1941). (Kutuzov would have his day on screen in 1944.) An accompanying article published in *Pravda* under Stalin's name offered an expanded list, where cultural figures such as Glinka and Chaikovsky mingled with their military compatriots.[2] The reflex to invoke the Russian past in service of the Soviet present had become ubiquitous, and the ascendant Russian nationalism that had shaped such events as the 1937 Pushkin Jubilee laid the foundation for a pervasive veneration of the past during the years immediately preceding and during the Great Patriotic War.[3] At a time of national trauma, the Great Purges (1937-39), many of the

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[1] "Rech' Predsedatelia Gosudarstvennogo komiteta oborony i Narodnogo komissara oborony tov. I. V. Stalina," *Pravda*, 8 November 1941, p. 1. The text of this speech is also published in I. V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, vol. 15, ed. Richard Kosolapov (Moscow: Rabochii universitet, 1997), 86.

[2] "Doklad Predsedatelia Gosudarstvennogo komiteta oborony tovarishcha I. V. Stalina," *Pravda*, 7 November 1941, p. 2.

[3] It is important to note that the preference for historical topics in Soviet art accompanied but did not totally eclipse the use of more contemporary themes. See, for instance, David Brandenberger, *National*

nation's "classics" of Socialist Realist art appeared, their heroic optimism eerily out of keeping with the surrounding unmitigated domestic horror, at least from our distanced perspective.[4] *Aleksandr Nevskii*, one of the most celebrated of these works, was produced at the confluence of a number of phenomena, both official and personal, aesthetic and political: the chauvinistic reverence of Russian history, the circular development of Socialist Realism, Eisenstein's and Prokofiev's struggle to find a Soviet voice, and, perhaps most immediate, the growing Nazi menace in the West.

To discuss Prokofiev's contribution to *Aleksandr Nevskii* is to tackle an unusual legacy. On the one hand, the interaction of music and image in the film is often cited as a font of innovation and complexity, an over-inflated esteem that owes much to Sergei Eisenstein's (1898-1948) later theoretical and propagandistic writings.[5] On the other, the film is frequently condemned for its thinly veiled propaganda. The available secondary literature on the film and its music, moreover, often perpetuates misinformation about production and reception. In what follows, I attempt to negotiate this complicated situation by examining Prokofiev's role in *Aleksandr Nevskii* anew from three distinct but complementary viewpoints: collaboration, musical style, and technology. What emerges is a picture of a composer-director collaboration that was not only exceptionally close, but experimental, offering much practical experience for the next Eisenstein-Prokofiev

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Bolshevism: Stalinist Mass Culture and the Formation of Modern Russian National Identity, 1931-1956 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 86-87.

[4] The purges were defined *post facto*, and it remains difficult, if not impossible, to determine exactly how much ordinary Soviet citizens knew about what was going on around them in the late 1930s. Orlando Figes's oral history of the Stalin era reminds us of the plurality of responses to Stalinist rule; see *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin's Russia* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007).

[5] For instance, Russell Merritt comments "Prokofiev's music underscores the ellipses in Eisenstein's narrative by opening up fissures between the sound track and the images, commenting on them and occasionally even contradicting what is seen on screen." Russel Merritt, "Recharging *Alexander Nevsky*: Tracking the Eisenstein-Prokofiev War Horse," *Film Quarterly* 48 (1994-95): 36.

project, *Ivan the Terrible*. Addressing musical style reveals not only how Prokofiev appropriated markers of *kuchkist* style (another facet of the nationalistic veneration of the past), but how his score responded to Eisenstein's editing to create categorical impact. A central theme of this chapter is how Prokofiev's music plays a deceptively simple role in *Aleksandr Nevskii*: distant is the surrealism of *Lieutenant Kizhe* and the macabre mania of *Queen of Spades*; the film's prodigious success with both public and bureaucracy hinged upon a more visceral reaction to the music, one that invoked the nineteenth century as much as the twentieth (or the thirteenth, for that matter). As David Brandenberger posits, "Eisenstein certainly understood that his professional future depended on the creation of an inspiring tale of valor and heroism that was neither ambiguous nor equivocal. And he delivered precisely such a film."[6] Thanks in no small part, that is, to Prokofiev's score.

My analysis below is framed by a prelude and postlude; the former offers a revealing look at how *Aleksandr Nevskii's* genesis and production—which unfolded against a profoundly xenophobic political landscape—was catalyzed by three visits by three Soviet citizens to a seemingly unlikely place: Hollywood. The latter briefly traces *Aleksandr Nevskii's* place in Eisenstein's theoretical writings.

Hollywood in the Russian Imagination

In January of 1938, Prokofiev departed Moscow on his second concert tour since returning permanently to his homeland. Making his way west through Europe, he performed in Warsaw, Prague, and London before boarding the oceanliner *Normandy* and setting sail

[6] David Brandenberger, "The Popular Reception of S. M. Eisenstein's *Aleksandr Nevskii*," in *Epic Revisionism: Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda*, ed. Kevin M. F. Platt and David Brandenberger (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 234.

across the Atlantic with his wife, Lina (1897-1989). Boston was the scene of the first performance of *Peter and the Wolf* (*Petia i volk*, 1936) outside of the Soviet Union.[7] Moving further west, the Prokofievs spent several days in Denver, where they were the guests of one of the founders of the local symphony.[8] Their hosts later decried the composer, calling him a "grouch." (A great deal of Prokofiev's sour mood derived from the Denver Symphony's underwhelming performance of his own First Piano Concerto, op. 10.[9]) Only one event did not seem to fill Prokofiev with displeasure: a viewing of Walt Disney's newest release, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937).[10] The film reportedly enthralled him; the quality of Disney's production and the precision of music-image coordination likely struck Prokofiev as modern and full of potential.

This esteem was not entirely new. Following Prokofiev's tour of Western Europe and America from December 1936 to February 1937 he had written that "American cinematography—where wonderful acting used to be paired with completely incidental music—now shows a growth in interest towards music's quality. It is now common for film music to be ordered from serious composers."[11] Describing the brief time he spent

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[7] Lina Prokof'eva, "Iz vospominanii," in *Sergei Prokof'ev 1953–63: Stat'i i materialy*, eds. I. V. Nest'ev, and G. Ia. Edel'man (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965), 221.

[8] Prokofiev performed in New York City on 6 February (a chamber concert), Detroit on 11 February (where he directed his "Classical" Symphony [No.1] and was the soloist in his own First Piano Concerto), Chicago on 15 February (a solo recital) and Denver on 18, 20, 21, and 23 February (where the Detroit concert was repeated in addition to two solo recitals and one chamber recital).

[9] This performance and Prokofiev's reaction are detailed in Elizabeth Bergman, "Prokofiev on the Los Angeles Limited," in *Prokofiev and His World*, ed. Simon Morrison (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming 2008).

[10] Harlow Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 343, quoting Arlynn Nellhaus, "Jean Cranmer Hosted Early DSO Artists," *The Denver Post*, 26 February 1978.

[11] Sergei Prokof'ev, "Amerika i Evropa segodnia," *Sovetskoe iskusstvo*, 11 March 1937, p. 6, reprinted in Viktor Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991), 152-53.

in the French capital during the tour, he recalled: "In Paris I preferred to go to the cinema, as in the theaters there is not much that is interesting," and commented on Parisian movie theaters' appeal to his itinerant nature, "in the cinema films from all countries are shown: American, English, French, German, Soviet."[12]

Prokofiev had not intended to travel further west than Colorado. On 23 February, however, he penned a letter to Ephraim Gottlieb, a Chicago insurance executive and supporter of Prokofiev's music: "Sorry not to have written earlier,—up to now I did not know if I was going to Hollywood or not. Even now I have no definite proposition, but they phoned twice and persuaded me to come, saying there are many possibilities."[13] On 26 February 1938, Prokofiev arrived in Los Angeles, later joined by his wife who had remained behind in New York. The extension to the tour afforded the opportunity to visit the man behind the subject of Prokofiev's recent fascination, Walt Disney (1901-66), whom the composer described to his sons as "*le papa de* Mickey Mouse." With the help of Rudolph Polk, a Hollywood artist's agent, Prokofiev arranged for a meeting with Disney, at which he demonstrated *Peter and the Wolf* at the piano.[14] At the time, Disney was expanding his animated short of Dukas's *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (which would eventually become the centerpiece of the 1940 film *Fantasia*) and was attracted to the

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During his tour, Prokofiev visited Brussels, Bordeaux, Paris, Lausanne, Prague, New York City, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, and Washington.

[12] Prokof'ev, "Amerika i Evropa segodnia" in Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 152-53.

[13] Bergman, "Prokofiev on the Los Angeles Limited," unpublished manuscript. Bergman suggests that the calls Prokofiev mentions likely came from Rudolph Polk, a Hollywood artist's agent. Bergman's essay, which reconstructs details of Prokofiev's time in Hollywood using newspaper and journal articles, offers the first accurate account of the 1938 visit.

[14] It is difficult to judge the accuracy of Disney's recollections. For example, Disney claimed that Prokofiev spoke almost no English, when in reality Prokofiev had a near-fluent command of the language. See Disney's introduction to the TV serial "Your Host Walt Disney: Fourth Anniversary Show," (1957) released on Disney DVD 50361.

possibilities of the marriage of animation and classical art music. A programmatic children's work like *Peter and the Wolf* that lent itself to such a union was of great interest to Disney, who claimed "all the time [during Prokofiev's performance] I could see pictures."[15] A production agreement was not immediately forthcoming, however, due to Disney's packed studio schedule (in fact, it would take another three years for such an agreement to be reached; Disney's version of *Peter and the Wolf*, which appeared as a part of the film *Make Mine Music*, did not appear until 1946). Nonetheless, Prokofiev left the meeting deeply impressed by Disney's productions and hopeful for collaboration with one of Hollywood's leading figures. Following what would be his last foreign tour, Prokofiev authored an article on his experiences for the newspaper *Izvestiia*, in which film topped a list of highlights, second only to the American success of *Peter and the Wolf*.[16]

Disney's sophistication dazzled other filmmakers in the Soviet Union, the precision of sound-image coordination making an especially strong impression. In Disney's productions, dialog, music, and sound effects were recorded separately (coordinated with the aid of a metronome) and later combined. Soviet techniques, which included recording while showing a cut of the film, and, in some cases even recording the score beforehand and coordinating the visual image using the soundtrack, yielded variable results. Valentina Brumberg (1899-1975), a budding director and contributor to the weekly news-

[15] Ibid.

[16] S[ergei] Prokof'ev, "V kontsertnykh zalakh Evropy i Ameriki," *Izvestiia*, 20 April 1938, p. 4.

paper *Kino,* called for Soviet directors to adopt Disney's techniques, as they were far superior to those used in Soviet studios.[17]

That Prokofiev had become a respected figure in America is evidenced by a remarkable banquet held in his honor on 13 March at the Victor Hugo, a Laguna Beach restaurant.[18] Responsible for organizing the event was the director Rouben Mamoulian (1897-1987), who ensured that the Prokofievs were feted by such luminaries as Mary Pickford, Marlene Dietrich, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., as well as the actress who had so dazzled the Prokofievs during their 1930 visit to Hollywood, Gloria Swanson.[19] The personalities in attendance even included another arrival from the European musical world, Arnold Schoenberg.[20] During his first Hollywood visit in 1930, Prokofiev had requested a sizable honorarium to compose a score for the comedy *What A Woman!*, a stipulation that went unmet because the composer's name was not felt to be a commodity in America.[21] Only eight years later, Prokofiev was a confirmed celebrity—a status no doubt fueled in part by his newfound image as a visitor from the somewhat exotic Soviet East. The attention lavished upon him in Hollywood must have made him ever more cognizant of the fact that he had not had any significant compositional successes in his homeland since permanently relocating there in 1936.

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[17] V[alentina] Brumberg, "Kak ozvuchivaiutsia fil'my Disneia," *Kino*, 22 June 1935, p. 4.

[18] Bergman, "Prokofiev on the Los Angeles Limited," unpublished manuscript, citing Read Kendall, "Around and About in Hollywood," *Los Angeles Times,* 17 March 1938.

[19] Prokof'eva, "Iz vospominanii," 221. Mamoulian, an Armenian native, immigrated to America in 1923, where he was employed briefly at the Eastman School of Music. He was the director of a handful of Hollywood films, most notably *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931) and *The Mask of Zorro* (1940).

[20] Ibid, 221.

[21] Sergei Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik* (Paris: sprkfv, 2002), 2: 755-57 (entries for 12 and 14 February 1930).

On 7 March Prokofiev sent a note to his two young sons in Moscow, Oleg (1928-98) and Sviatoslav (b. 1924), describing his visit: "The majority of American films are made in Hollywood. For this they build entire houses, castles, and even cites out of cardboard. Today I was at a filming. An old town square through which rode people on horses was built inside a huge, tall warehouse."[22] In a letter to his friend and fellow composer Nikolai Miaskovskii (1881-1950), Prokofiev expressed similar fascination, noting with pleasure that Hollywood had shown "unexpected interest" in him. He found the filmmaking he observed in Hollywood "very modern, possessing many diverse possibilities."[23] The "unexpected interest" came from Paramount, as Prokofiev described in a letter to his mother-in-law Olga Codina on 4 March: "Paramount immediately approached me to do music for a film and offered a nice big sum. But for this I would need to remain here [for] ten weeks. That is to return to Moscow around June 1. And this would be inconvenient. And so it had to be turned down, and now we're in negotiations for a future season."[24] Beyond this obvious appeal to his ego, what Prokofiev observed at Paramount left a significant impression on him in terms of the technical sophistication and enormous resources of its productions. Judging from the lackluster impressions of Prokofiev's few visits to the set of *Lieutenant Kizhe* (his only substantial experience to date with the production of a film), Hollywood appeared marvelous in comparison. If Prokofiev's interest in film music had wavered following the unsatisfying productions of

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[22] Prokofiev's letter addressed to his sons on Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel letterhead, dated 7 March 1938. The letter is reproduced in I. V. Nest'ev and G. Ia. Edel'man, eds., *Sergei Prokof'ev 1953–63: Stat'i i materialy* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965), 222-23.

[23] Letter from Prokofiev to Miaskovskii, dated 2 March 1938. *S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska*, ed. Dmitri Kabalevskii (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1977), 456.

[24] Bergman, "Prokofiev on the Los Angeles Limited," unpublished manuscript. No documents survive that indicate which film was under negotiation.

Lieutenant Kizhe and *Queen of Spades*, the technical refinement, prestige, and affluence of the American film industry offered cause for reconsideration.[25]

Returning to the East Coast from California at the end of March, a brief stop in New York City provided the opportunity for a meeting with Vernon Duke (1903-1969, the Anglicized name of Vladimir Dukel'skii). In his memoirs, Duke claims to have arranged through his Hollywood agent for Prokofiev to be offered a contract with generous terms, including an honorarium of $2,500 per week.[26] By contrast, Prokofiev's "exorbitant" fee for *What a Woman!* eight years prior was a *total* of $5,000.[27] In reality, Duke, who was prone to exaggeration, was doubtlessly referring not to a film score contract but rather to the $1,500 fee that Disney had offered for the rights to *Peter and the Wolf*.[28] Regardless, Hollywood's overtures to the Soviet Union's foremost composer were ill timed. Duke recalls:

> I showed Serge the telegram [bearing the offer] exultantly; there was a flicker of interest for a mere instant, then, his face set, his oversize lips petulant, he said gruffly: "That's nice bait, but I won't swallow it. I've got to go back to Moscow, to my music and my children […] You know, Dima [Duke], it occurred to me that I may not be back for quite some time […] I don't suppose it would be wise for you to come to Russia, would it?" "No, I don't suppose it would," I answered, smiling bravely, my happiness abruptly gone. I never saw Prokofiev again.[29]

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[25] Prokofiev's Soviet biographer even asserts that Prokofiev's Hollywood visit served as a study for his future works. Israel Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, trans. Florence Jonas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 294.

[26] Vernon Duke, *Passport to Paris* (Boston: Little & Brown, 1955), 367. Duke does not indicate which film was offered to Prokofiev.

[27] Prokof'ev, *Dnevnik*, 2: 756-57 (entry for 14 February 1930).

[28] I am grateful to Simon Morrison for this clarification.

[29] Duke, *Passport to Paris*, 367.

Significant momentum propelled Prokofiev back to Moscow, explaining why he so brusquely declined both Paramount's overtures as well as Duke's "commission." His two children, who had remained behind in Moscow during his American tour, weighed heavily on his mind in particular. By 1938, travel outside the borders of the Soviet Union had become an extraordinarily rare occurrence for even high-ranking Soviet citizens; the Prokofiev children at home in Moscow were collateral. On 30 March, the Prokofievs embarked on the return journey across the Atlantic, arriving in the Soviet Union on 16 April. Even if Prokofiev perceived that his foreign tours would become less frequent, it is unlikely that he realized they would cease altogether.[30] As his train carried him across the Soviet border for what would be the last time, Prokofiev's life and career became inextricably bound to his homeland. Lina Prokofiev would see the West again only decades later, and only after experiencing the darkest side of Russia's most tragic era: eight years in Gulag prison camps.

Eisenstein arrived in Hollywood just four months after Prokofiev's first visit in 1930. Unlike the composer's relatively unnoticed arrival, the director's was heralded with great ceremony. On 22 June, the *Los Angeles Times* announced: "Hollywood's most daring experiment since the 'importation' of Ernst Lubitsch, German film director, got underway last week. Sergei M. Eisenstein, first Russian genius to be recognized inter-

[30] Beginning in 1932 Soviet citizens had both internal and external ("Abroad" or *zagranichnyi*) passports. When Prokofiev returned to Moscow, he followed the obligatory procedure of swapping his external passport (with exit permit) for his internal passport bearing his Moscow residency registration. I am grateful to Simon Morrison for supplying me with this detail. Dorothea Redepenning's claim that Prokofiev's external passport was surrendered "for the transaction of a formality" and never returned to him (as a means to prevent his travel) is inaccurate. See "Prokofiev," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, eds. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 20: 414.

nationally as a power in film progress, arrived last Monday at the Paramount studio."[31] Soon after establishing himself, Eisenstein could claim Disney and Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977) as close associates.[32] The attention lavished on Eisenstein (and his amazement at Hollywood's resources in return), however, was to no avail, as by year's end he had been unable to propose a film that Hollywood studios deemed suitable for American audiences.[33] Discouraged and repeatedly threatened with repatriation to the Soviet Union, in December Eisenstein eagerly accepted an invitation from author Upton Sinclair (1878-1968) that promised to fund generously a production in Mexico. Eisenstein's cinematic answer to Sinclair's invitation, a sprawling film about Mexican history and culture entitled *Que Viva Mexico!,* evolved into a production fiasco. Eisenstein worked continuously in Mexico throughout 1931, constantly going over budget, until a disquieting telegram arrived from Moscow in November in which Stalin demanded that he return to the Soviet Union, lest he be branded a "deserter."[34] This, in combination with Sinclair's growing perturbation over Eisenstein's scattered production, resulted in the cancellation of *Que Viva Mexico!.* Eisenstein had no choice but to return to a Soviet Union that had grown hostile to his 1920s avant-garde experimentation—like-minded cinema modernists

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[31] Scheuer, Philip K., "Russian Film Genius Here," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 June 1930, p. B7. Ernst Lubitsch (1892-1947) was a German film director who arrived in Hollywood in 1922 at the invitation of Mary Pickford. Unlike Eisenstein, he remained in America and was a pioneer in the early film musical, such as *The Love Parade* (1929), *Monte Carlo* (1930), and *The Smiling Lieutenant* (1931).

[32] See the account of Eisenstein's visit in Harlow Robinson, *Russians in Hollywood, Hollywood's Russians* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2007), 45-52.

[33] On Eisenstein's attempted American productions, see David Bordwell, *The Cinema of Eisenstein* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 17-19.

[34] Harry M. Geduld and Ronald Gottesman, *Sergei Eisenstein and Upton Sinclair: The Making and Unmaking of "Qué viva México!"* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 212.

Dziga Vertov (1896-1954) and Lev Kuleshov (1899-1970) had already been sharply upbraided.[35]

Prokofiev and Eisenstein were not the only Soviet citizens seduced by the appeal of Hollywood. On 19 April 1935 Boris Shumiatskii (1886-1938), the head of the Soviet film industry, requested permission to travel abroad for purposes of observing "new film technology."[36] He commenced a sojourn that carried him through Western Europe and across America to Hollywood, where he was greeted by Mamoulian's hospitality (an arrival noted with some curiosity in the *Los Angeles Times*).[37] Shumiatskii's experience in Hollywood was unmistakably similar to Prokofiev's in 1938: he met, among others, Marlene Dietrich and Cecil B. DeMille, as well as observed first-hand the filming of Frank Lloyd's *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935).[38] Whereas Prokofiev and Eisenstein were taken by Hollywood's distinction in the art of film, Shumiatskii envied its centralized structure and efficiency in producing large numbers of films, both qualities that had eluded the Soviet film industry. Taking his cue from Hollywood, Shumiatskii developed plans for "Kinogorod" (see Introduction), a centralized base for Soviet film production that would be the answer to stagnant production and a tool for deploying top-down

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[35] Vertov's 1930 film *Enthusiasm* was suppressed; Kuleshov suffered much at the hands of critics who were concerned about the political efficacy of his work. See Peter Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society* (New York: I.B.Tauris, 2001), 102-106.

[36] "Postanovlenie Orgbiuro TsK VKP(b) o komandirovanii za granitsu komissii dlia osvoeniia novoi kinotekhniki," 19 April 1935, RGASPI f. 17, op. 114, d. 583, l. 13, published in K[irill] Anderson, ed., *Kremlevskii kinoteatr 1928-1953: Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005), 266.

[37] "Soviet Film Group Will Visit Here," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 May 1935. p. 22.

[38] Richard Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky and Soviet Cinema in the 1930s," in *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 213, citing reports in *Kino*, 17 July 1933, p. 1 and 23 July 1933, p. 1.

"managerial" command.[39] The Soviet Crimea was chosen as a location for Kinogorod—Shumiatskii equated the region's temperate climate with that of southern California—and by mid-July of 1936 construction was already underway, albeit at a snail's pace. Shumiatskii maintained contacts in Hollywood who answered his numerous queries about the structure of the American film industry.[40] The project was an undertaking that did not garner universal support in the Soviet Union, and Shumiatskii's fraternization and continued consultations with foreign contacts aroused much suspicion.[41] Moreover, thanks to its enormous cost, the construction of Kinogorod languished in its preliminary stages and became what Richard Taylor termed the albatross around Shumiatskii's neck.[42]

Shumiatskii's fate was ultimately tied to Eisenstein's. The two shared a working relationship that was far from cordial, primarily because Eisenstein's avant-garde films such as *Battleship Potemkin* (*Bronenosets Potemkin,* 1925), and *October* (*Oktiabr',* 1928) championed the experimentalism that Shumiatskii was trying desperately to eradicate

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[39] Ibid, 206, citing B. Shumiatskii, "Rezhisser i akter v kino," *Iskusstvo kino* 2 (1936): 8-9.

[40] "Dokladnaia zapiska B. Z. Shumiatskogo V. M. Molotovu o rabote po sostavleniiu planovogo zadaniia po iuzhnoi baze," 15 July 1936, RGASPI, f. 82, op. 2, d. 958, ll. 15-16, published in *Kremlovskii kinoteatr,* 327.

[41] The eminent author team of Il'ia Il'f (1897-1937) and Evgenii Petrov (1903-1942) visited the United States at the end of 1935. Their ten-week road trip across the country (which became the basis for articles in the Soviet magazine *Ogonek* as well as their book *Odnoetazhnaia Amerika* (*One-storied America*) included a stop in Hollywood. Their evaluation of the American film industry was often scathing; upon returning to Moscow, they criticized Shumiatskii's plans in a letter to Stalin, lamenting that, among other problems, Kinogorod would locate the Soviet film industry far in the south, away from the necessary supplies of actors, actresses, musicians from Moscow and other major Soviet cities. See "Pis'ma I. Il'fa i E. Petrova I. V. Stalinu o poezdke po SShA" (undated, no later than 26 February 1936), Arkhiv Presidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AP RF), f. 3, op. 35, d. 63, ll. 23-27, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 302-05. In response, Shumiatskii dispatched a defensive letter to Stalin ("Dokladnaia zapiska B. Z. Shumiatskogo I. V. Stalinu o pis'me I. Il'fa i E. Petrova," 27 March 1936, AP RF, f. 3, op. 35, d. 63, ll. 23-36, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 312-14).

[42] Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky," 215.

from Soviet cinematography. Following his return to Moscow in 1932 in the wake of the *Que Viva Mexico!* fiasco, Eisenstein remained under suspicion and was consistently denied permission to produce new films.[43] In 1935 Eisenstein was finally allowed to begin production of *Bezhin Meadow* (*Bezhin Lug*), a film that dramatized the story of fourteen-year-old Pavlik Morozov, a real-life boy who reportedly had denounced his own anti-Soviet father. After viewing a fragment of the film on 5 March 1937, however, members of the Politburo issued a directive that halted production of what they had found to be an "anti-artistic and politically groundless" movie, tacitly directing their ire at Shumiatskii for not having properly monitored the content of the scenario.[44] Eisenstein came precariously close to arrest in the months following the censoring of *Bezhin Meadow*; the Great Terror was reaching a frenzied pace and NKVD records indicate that Eisenstein was being investigated for supposed connections to Trotskyites in Mexico and Turkey.[45] His situation was desperate.

In a missive to Shumiatskii dated 16 April 1937, Eisenstein pleaded for clemency, and, after acknowledging that he understood the "artistic simplicity" to which he was

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[43] Peter Kenez, "A History of *Bezhin Meadow*," in *Eisenstein at 100: A Reconsideration,* eds. Al Lavalley and Barry P. Scherr (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 195.

[44] "Postanovlenie Politbiuro TsK VKP(b) o kinofil'me 'Bezhin lug'," 5 March 1937, RGASPI f. 17, op. 3, d. 984, l. 18, reprinted in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 406. Shumiatskii's relationship with Eisenstein had already soured due to the latter's association with avant-garde filmmaking in the 1920s. Shumiatskii maintained that the unintelligibility of 1920s "intellectual" silent film scared good scenario writers away, precipitating the scenario shortage of the later 1930s (Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky," 202). In December 1936, inaccurate notices appeared in Parisian newspapers regarding the reported arrest of Eisenstein in the USSR. Shumiatskii penned a personal letter to Stalin, in which he eagerly suggested that Eisenstein himself had circulated the rumors as a counter-Revolutionary stunt (Letter dated 21 December 1936, AP RF, f. 3 [dokumenty Politburo] op. 35, d. 89, l. 96, cited in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 375).

[45] Leonid Maksimenkov, *Sumbur vmesto muzyki: Stalinskaia kul'turnaia revoliutsiia, 1936-1938* (Moscow: Iuridicheskaia kniga, 1997), 250-52.

being guided, asked for permission to produce another film.[46] Shumiatskii realized his chance to dispatch a nuisance and liability, and forwarded the director's letter to Stalin together with a note indicating that he felt Eisenstein should not work again as a director.[47] In typical form, Stalin put the matter to a vote—testing his advisors as much as querying them—and inscribed on Shumiatskii's communiqué: "To Comrades Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, Kerzhentsev: What's it to be?"[48] The majority registered their support of Eisenstein. Kaganovich was the sole dissenting voice, invoking the *Bezhin Meadow* debacle and expressing trepidation that Eisenstein would again "waste millions" on a film. Eisenstein was spared, and Shumiatskii was entrusted with the selection of a proper theme and the close monitoring of its development.[49] Eisenstein was subsequently given the choice between two historical figures about which a film could be made: Ivan Susanin (a seventeenth-century folk hero) or the thirteenth-century Prince Aleksandr Nevskii. Settling on the latter, Eisenstein was provided with a scenario created by the Party-line writer and NKVD confidant Pyotr Pavlenko (1899-1951).

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[46] RGASPI, f. 17, op. 163, d. 1147, ll. 126-28, reprinted in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 417-18.

[47] Letter dated 19 April 1937 and Resolution of the TsK VKP(b) of 19 April 1937, in RGASPI, f. 17, op. 163, d. 1147, ll. 123-25 and AP RF, f. 3, op. 35, d. 87, ll. 129-30, reprinted in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 419-20.

[48] Viacheslav Molotov (1890-1986), chairman of Sovnarkom (the Council of People's Ministers); Lazar Kaganovich (1893-1991), Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party; Kliment Voroshilov (1881-1969), People's Commissar for Defense; Andrei Zhdanov (1896-1948), Leningrad Party leader; Platon Kerzhentsev (1881-1940), chairman of the Committee on Arts Affairs.

[49] *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 420 n. 2. Leonid Maksimenkov notes that in this matter Molotov changed his vote after initially siding with Kaganovich. The remaining three voters then indicated their agreement with Molotov. Maksimenkov, *Sumbr vmesto muzyki*, 249. Other authors have suggested that it was Shumiatskii's removal that made *Aleksandr Nevskii* possible, see Richard Taylor, *Film Propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 1998), 85.

Pavlenko's scenario and Eisenstein's subsequent film detail the thirteenth-century struggle of the Russians of Novgorod with invading Teutonic Knights.[50] After the Knights stage a massacre in the city of Pskov, Prince Aleksandr Nevskii (1221-63) leads the people of Novgorod to a sensational battle with the Germans on the frozen surface of Lake Chudskoe on 5 April 1242. After defeating the Germans, Aleksandr returns victoriously to Novgorod.[51] In Eisenstein's hands this scenario became a film, as David Brandenburger describes, "emplotted in epic fashion with hyperbolic two-dimensional characters, a rousing musical score, and deliberately ungainly props and segues between the scenes." Yet the connection between this "epic" and the contemporary situation was undeniable: the Russians against the Teutonic Knights of the thirteenth century became the Soviets against the Nazis of the twentieth. This thinly veiled analogy was made wholly unambiguous by a propaganda campaign that accompanied the production of *Aleksandr Nevskii*.[52]

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[50] The scenario appeared in the journal *Znamia* in December 1937, with printed suggestions by the writer and dramaturge Vsevolod Vishnevskii (1900-51). See Ronald Bergan, *Eisenstein: A Life in Conflict* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1997), 298.

[51] For a discussion of the historical Nevskii, see James Billington, *The Icon and the Axe* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), esp. Chapters 1 and 2.

[52] The newspaper *Vecherniaia Moskva* (*Evening Moscow*) ran regular stories on the film's production during November and early December, 1938. Eisenstein's own article about the upcoming film was clear-cut, not only making connections with the contemporary Nazi threat, but positioning Stalin as Aleksandr's heir: "'The swine were finally repulsed beyond the Russian frontiers,' wrote Marx. Such will be the fate of all those who dare encroach upon our great land even now. For if the might of our national soul was able to punish the enemy in this way, when the country lay exhausted in the grip of the Tartar yoke, then nothing will be strong enough to destroy this country which has broken the last chains of its oppression; a country which has become a socialist motherland; a country which is being led to unprecedented victories by the greatest strategist in world history—Stalin." S. Eizenshtein, "Aleksandr Nevskii i razgrom nemtsev," *Izvestiia* 12 July 1938, p. 3; see also P. Pavlenko and S. M. Eizenshtein, "Rus': Literaturnyi stsenarii," *Znamia* 12 (1937): 102-36; I. Smirnov, "Ledovoe poboishche," *Leningradskaia pravda*, 11 April 1938, p. 3; S. M. Eizenstein, "Zametki rezhissera," *Ogonek* 22 (1938): 20-21.

The deteriorating situation in Europe was not the only factor that fostered the appearance of *Aleksandr Nevskii.* The roots of its genre can be traced further back in the 1930s as part of the growing veneration of the Russian past that had so deeply informed Prokofiev's last film project, *Queen of Spades* (see Chapter 2). In other words, not only was *Aleksandr Nevskii* instructive of the Nazi threat, but it furthermore opened a window on a glorious moment in the distant Russian past that could be used to nurture Soviet nation building. This was a thoroughly efficacious technique; as Brandenberger posits, *Aleksandr Nevskii* proved to be a more successful vehicle of nationalism than twenty years of Marxism-Leninism.[53] Composer Aram Khachaturian (1903-78) perhaps unwittingly captured the extent to which historical films such as *Aleksandr Nevskii* offered a legitimizing backbone that the Soviet Union lacked: "I hear the throbbing pulse of our revolutionary reality even in such works as *Aleksandr Nevskii*, the theme of which concerns the distant past of the Russian people."[54]

On the eve of 1938, Eisenstein and his colleagues were reminded of the precarious situation in which they were working when Shumiatskii was arrested on charges of sabotage and denounced as a "fascist cur." As *Aleksandr Nevskii* went into production, Shumiatskii went before a firing squad.[55]

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[53] Brandenberger, "The Popular Reception of S. M. Eisenstein's *Aleksandr Nevskii*," 246.

[54] N. Rogozhina, "Muzyka 'Aleksandra Nevskogo' Prokof'eva v kinofil'me i kantate," in *Muzyka i sovremennost'*, vol. 2 (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1963), 155, citing Georgii Khubov, *Aram Khachatrurian* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1962), 319.

[55] Shumiatskii was executed on 29 July 1938. Translations of denunciations in *Pravda* and *Iskusstvo kino* appear in Richard Taylor and Ian Christie, eds., *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896-1939*, trans. Richard Taylor (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988), 386-89. Shumiatskii's successor, Semyon Dukel'skii (1892-1960), is discussed in Chapter 2.

From Scenario to Socialist Realist Classic

By 1938 Eisenstein had not successfully produced a film at home or abroad in nearly ten years. Since returning to Moscow, Prokofiev had fared only slightly better; the Pushkin projects of 1936 had never came to fruition (save for the relatively minor *Three Romances*, op. 73) and his major effort of 1936-37, the *Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of the Revolution* (*Kantata k dvadtsatiletiiu oktiabria,* op. 74) was stillborn.[56] With an officially mandated topic and closely monitored production, *Aleksandr Nevskii* must have seemed a relatively fail-safe opportunity to gain a foothold in the Soviet musical world, regardless of what Prokofiev thought of the film's topic or director—Prokofiev's opinions of both at the outset of the project remain unclear.[57] (It also bears mentioning here that Prokofiev was not alone in joining the *Aleksandr Nevskii* project out of financial need. Vladimir Lugovskoi (1901-57), a prominent teacher at the Literary Institute in Moscow, had come under attack in 1937 for the publication of a set of poems that were deemed politically unacceptable. As a result he was forced to recant and make a series of public speeches that tacitly encouraged the purges.[58] With his career irrevocably damaged, he ceased writing poetry for several years and earned desperately need-

[56] The latter work, Prokofiev's first try at an overtly Soviet opus (an unwieldy setting of texts by Marx, Stalin, and Lenin) had drawn sharp criticism from the Committee on Artistic Affairs. See Simon Morrison and Nelly Kravetz, "The Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October, or How the Specter of Communism Haunted Prokofiev," *Journal of Musicology* 23 (2006): esp. 248-49. As Prokofiev embarked on his last foreign tour in January 1938, he still hoped that the work would soon have its premiere. In March, while Prokofiev visited Hollywood, Miaskovskii informed him that the hoped-for rehearsals of the cantata had not materialized and that Prokofiev had better concentrate his energy elsewhere (*S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska*, 458).

[57] It remains unclear when Prokofiev and Eisenstein first met. There were several opportunities in the 1920s, as Eisenstein's paths abroad occasionally crossed Prokofiev's, yet the composer's meticulous journals kept between 1908 and 1933 makes no mention of such a meeting.

[58] Figes, *The Whisperers,* 268-69.

ed income by composing lyrics for *Aleksandr Nevskii's* three centrally placed songs (see Appendix IV). His work later earned him a similar commission for *Ivan the Terrible*.)

Prokofiev was involved with the production of *Aleksandr Nevskii* within days of his return to the Soviet Union in April 1938, although he did not formally sign a contract until 20 June.[59] This chronology suggests that Prokofiev knew something of the project even before returning from his tour abroad, perhaps one further reason why Hollywood was unable to completely seduce the composer. Intriguingly, Prokofiev's delayed return to Moscow greatly alarmed Eisenstein, whose notes at the time indicate he briefly considered consulting Gavriil Popov (1904-72) about composing the score.[60]

Prokofiev's obligations detailed in the contract demanded a thorough composer-director collaboration:

> [The composer must] participate in the preparation of a cue sheet (*razrabotka eksplikatsii*) for the film in accordance with director Eisenstein and his plans for the musical design of the film. […] [The composer must] participate directly in the production of the film throughout the entire process of its musical design, that is, rehearsals, filming, montage, etc. During the time of his participation in production work, the composer is an employee of the filming group, required to observe all directives of the studio leadership and internal regulations.[61]

One feature distinguishes the project outlined in this contract from Prokofiev's other film work (with the notable exception of *Ivan the Terrible*) and indeed from most film music practice of the twentieth century: Prokofiev would be involved first-hand throughout the film's production. Moreover, *Aleksandr Nevskii* promised the guidance of a consummate

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[59] The Prokofievs arrived in the Soviet Union on 16 April; a letter Prokofiev addressed to Mosfilm on 23 April mentions his involvement with the production of *Aleksandr Nevskii* ("Pis'ma kinostudii 'Mosfil'm' Prokof'evu o zakaze na muzyku k fil'mam "Pikovaia dama" i "Aleksandr Nevskii," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 218, l. 2).

[60] R. Iurenev, *Sergei Eizenshtein: Zamysly, fil'my, metod* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1998), 2: 155.

[61] "Dogovory Prokof'eva s kinostudiiami i teatrami na napisanie muzyki," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 6.

director, something Prokofiev had not enjoyed since Diaghilev's death in 1929.[62] Grigorii Kozintsev's sense (stated in 1934 following the production of *Lieutenant Kizhe*) that there was "a need to guide [Prokofiev] a bit more attentively in order to receive the maximum from him" rings prophetic.[63]

As collaborators, the first task Prokofiev and Eisenstein addressed in late spring was the creation of a cue sheet (a detailed outline of the duration and character of each occurrence of music in the film). During what Prokofiev described simply as "a long discussion," he and Eisenstein developed this document from a typewritten preproduction script that listed dialogue along with descriptions of each shot.[64] Prokofiev annotated nearly every one of the eighty-four pages of the script, noting which scenes would be accompanied by music, indicating the general character of music needed, and marking "cues," or the exact moments when music begins and ends.

The cue sheet was a preparatory exercise before tacking the heart of the film, the "Battle on Ice" ("Ledovoe poboishche"), an extended sequence in which Aleksandr and his fellow Novgorodians confront and defeat the Teutonic knights on the frozen surface of Lake Chudskoe. In late June or early July, Eisenstein asked Prokofiev to compose music for the opening five minutes of this sequence in advance of filming, a task for

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[62] Nelly Kravets argues that the death of Diaghilev was one of a handful of factors that prompted Prokofiev to return to Russia permanently. See Nelly Kravets, "'...Life will not forgive you, people will not understand you': On Prokofiev's Emigration," in *Verfemte Musik: Komponisten in den Diktaturen unseres Jahrhunderts*, eds. Joachim Braun, Heidi Tamar Hoffmann, and Vladimir Karbusicky (New York: Lang, 1997), 333-41.

[63] From a discussion of *Lieutenant Kizhe* at The Russian Association of Workers of Revolutionary Cinematography (ROSARRK) on 16 February 1934. Grigorii Kozintsev, "O fil'me 'Poruchike Kizhe'," in *Sobranie sochinenii* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1983), 2: 28.

[64] "Aleksandr Nevskii, muzyka k fil'mu, pomety, sdelannye na rezhisserskom stsenarii, kasaiushchesia muzykal'nogo oformleniia fil'ma," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98. The archival cataloging of this document provides a date of March 1938, but there is no indication as to when Prokofiev might have added his notes to the typescript.

which he would be guided by his cue sheet and Eisenstein's detailed pencil sketches of the scenes.[65] Prokofiev added remarkably little in his notes apart from indicating that the approaching knights would be represented by a gradual crescendo in the music.[66] (Throughout Prokofiev's two collaborations with Eisenstein, the composer's production notes are generally terse, suggesting that visual impressions played a large role in composition.) Eisenstein also requested in advance music that would be evocative of Catholic liturgical singing. According to the film's sound engineer Boris Vol'skii, (1903-1969), it was only a matter of days before Prokofiev returned to the studio with music in hand.[67] Most significantly, Eisenstein's request for advance numbers was a deliberate move in terms of music's significance to the production: hoping to build a visual sequence that would be sympathetic to the rhythm and contours of Prokofiev's music, the director asked Prokofiev to perform the music at the piano so that a reference recording could be

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[65] Boris Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," in *Eizenshtein v vospominaniiakh sovremennikov* (Moscow: Isskustvo, 1974), 305. The contract indicates that the deadline for the piano score for the "Battle on Ice" was July 10; the Catholic "psalm-singing" was due five days later, on 15 July (see RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98, l. 6). A selection of Eisenstein's drawings are collected in Sergei Eizenshtein, *Risunki: Sbornik* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1961).

[66] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98, ll. 53-54.

[67] Frequent claims that Prokofiev composed music for the entire Battle on Ice sequence in advance of filming are erroneous. Vol'skii indicates that Prokofiev produced five minutes worth of music; Prokofiev's production notes confirm this.

Boris Alekseevich Vol'skii graduated from the Kiev Conservatory and worked for a time as a composer and music teacher before becoming a sound engineer at Mosfilm in 1931. Vol'skii and Valery Popov were the sound engineers during the production of *Aleksander Nevskii*.

Not all the music used in the film survives in manuscript, at least at RGALI (A portion of the score appears to be held in the Mosfil'm archive in Moscow). An orchestral manuscript primarily in Prokofiev's hand exists but a number of sections of the film are missing (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 96). Notably absent from the orchestral manuscript are the two songs, "A i bylo delo na Neve-reke" and "Pesnia ob Aleksandre Nevskom," which only survive in short score (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97). A large collection of sketches and drafts appear to correspond only to the sections of the score composed earliest. Extant are 18 leaves of sketches in various states of completeness for "Svin'ia," "Kare," "Russike rozhki," and "Presledovanie," as well a piano score of "Razorennaia Rus'"; also included are preliminary versions of nos. 7 and 8 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97).

made for use during filming.[68] Eisenstein, in fact did not begin recording the Battle on Ice sequence until 26 September.[69] It is important to note that in 1938, despite nearly a decade of theorizing about sound in film, Eisenstein did not have any significant practical experience working with a composer, and much of his initial work with Prokofiev was at least somewhat experimental. Prokofiev's role in the Battle on Ice sequence appealed to the composer's ego, and he later remarked with satisfaction that he had "recorded a few of these [musical numbers] on film (*na lentu*), and Eisenstein filmed separate episodes, creating them based on his [Prokofiev's] musical design."[70]

Eisenstein's initial approach to practical visual-sound relations was, in fact, rather straightforward and uncomplicated. He sensed that the Battle on Ice, with its steady gallop of horse hoofs and measured blows of hundreds of swords, would be the film's most "rhythmic" scene. Here Eisenstein likely deferred to the admonition of his erudite contemporary and film-music expert Leonid Sabaneev (1881-1968), who held that "the effectiveness of decisive and rhythmical movements—such as a leap, a fall, an explosion, a shot—is enhanced if the rhythm of the musical accompaniment is in perfect accordance with them."[71] Although Sabaneev refers to synchronization at the gestural level—of which there is relatively little in *Aleksandr Nevskii*—his concern for the "rhythm" of the accompaniment and its potential to weaken a scene was shared by Eisenstein. In the pro-

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[68] Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," 306.

[69] "Rezhisserskie zametki k muzykal'nomu i zvukovomu oformleniiu fil'ma 'Aleksandr Nevskii'," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 432, l. 24.

[70] S[ergei] Prokof'ev, "Moi novye raboty," *Literaturnaia gazeta*, 20 September 1938, p. 5, published in Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 165-66.

[71] Leonid Sabaneev, *Music for the Film: A Handbook for Composers and Conductors*, trans. S. W. Pring (London: Pitman & Sons, Ltd., 1935), 98.

duction notes, Eisenstein noted that the "clang of the Knight's weapons" would pervade the first five minutes of the battle; Prokofiev added an annotation that Eisenstein expected the music to do the same: "S[ergei] M[ikhailovich] wants me to clang" ("S. M. khochet, chtoby ia liazgal").[72] This seemingly trifling remark belies a fundamental assumption of Eisenstein's later audiovisual theories: that certain visual shapes or patterns (e.g. rising, falling) can resonate with similar aural gestures, despite their divergent perceptual planes.

Although filming began on 5 June, Prokofiev departed for nearly two months' summer vacation in the south of Russia after composing the initial numbers for the Battle on Ice.[73] After he returned to Moscow in late summer, filming was underway and the nature of his collaboration with Eisenstein naturally changed: composer and director met on a regular basis in a projection hall at Mosfilm studios to view the day's rushes, after which Prokofiev would return home to compose music to accompany the sequences he had just seen. According to Vol'skii, who often observed this process, Prokofiev watched each rush multiple times in absolute silence, enjoying the experience of viewing the film for which he was composing—something that remained an infrequent luxury in his film career.[74] Prokofiev flourished in Eisenstein's regimented production, prompting the director recall drolly: "Prokofiev works like a clock. This clock neither gains nor loses time. Like a sniper, it hits the very heart of punctuality. Prokofiev's punctuality is not a

[72] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98, l. 53.

[73] Iurenev, *Sergei Eizenshtein*, 2: 150.

[74] Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," 306.

matter of business pedantry. His exactness in time is a by-product of creative exactness."[75]

On the first page of his cue sheet, Prokofiev noted "1 meter equals 2 seconds," and, with such an equation, Eisenstein's frequent and detailed indications of meterage gave Prokofiev precise timings that supplemented his viewings of the daily rushes.[76] In many instances Prokofiev "blocked" sections of the score by first laying out the number of measures needed to fill a certain amount of time and then tracing a musical skeleton, experimenting with how the music might unfold within the allotted space. Example 3.1 presents a transcribed excerpt of twelve measures from Prokofiev's sketches, in which his "skeleton" method is evident. In the first two bars, the metronome marking indicates that each quarter note lasts 0.75 seconds. Eight such quarter notes—two measures' worth—will therefore last a total of six seconds, as reflected by the chronometer markings. The third and fourth bars pass at a tempo of one quarter note to the second—four of these bars (taking the repeat) will thus last 16 seconds, or from 1:36 to 1:52. Once this temporal foundation was established, musical ideas could be sketched in with the assurance that they would fit the film exactly.

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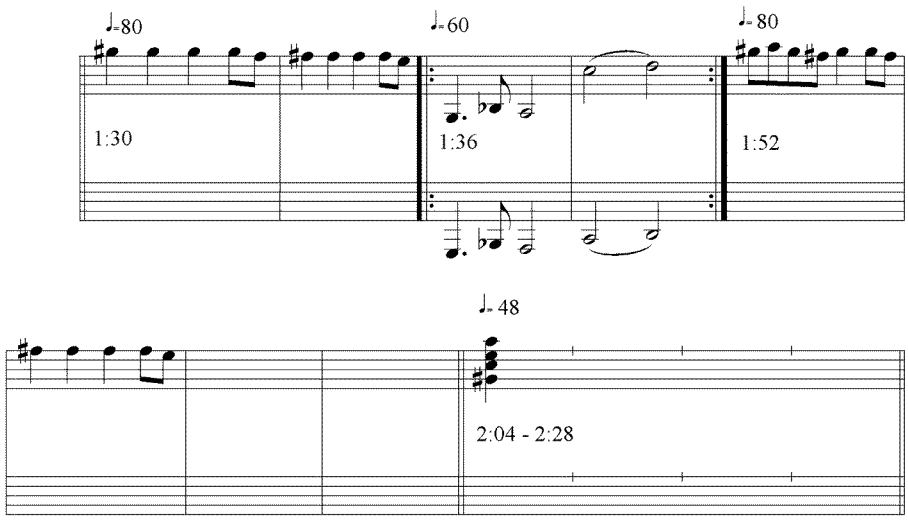
[75] Sergei Eisenstein, "P-R-K-F-V," In *Sergei Prokofiev: Materials, Articles, Interviews*, ed. Vladimir Blok (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978), 252-53.

[76] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98, l. 7. In Prokofiev's sketches, timings are often penciled in the margins; in once instance he notates a section of music "24 meters = 48+4 = 52 seconds until Catholic singing," indicating that he indeed worked from Eisenstein's "meterages" for some, if not all, of the music composed in advance of filming (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97, l. 10).



Example 3.1. Excerpt from Prokofiev's sketches for *Aleksandr Nevskii* [Source: transcribed from RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97, l. 17]

Even though Prokofiev composed in accordance with Eisenstein's plans, the artistic equality suggested by describing their relationship as a "collaboration" is entirely merited, as Prokofiev rarely considered himself the director's subordinate. During one of the projection-hall sessions Vol'skii observed Prokofiev dismiss Eisenstein over a rush that was not sufficiently edited, saying "when you finally polish it, then show it to me."[77] As the general release of *Aleksandr Nevskii* approached, Eisenstein requested an overture, a task Prokofiev refused, as he wanted the film to begin with the "Mongol theme" (No.1). The images of bald hills and fields littered with bones and the detritus of war that open the film, he felt, would be too incongruous following a traditional overture. Although Eisenstein deferred to music in several instances throughout the production, here he was

[77] Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," 307.

unwilling to edit, and the deadlock is evident in the film's opening credits, which run without any musical accompaniment.[78]

In recalling his work on *Aleksandr Nevskii*, Eisenstein was struck especially by the extent to which Prokofiev responded to visual stimuli:

> There are scenes in which the pictures were edited in accordance with music pre-recorded on the soundtrack. There are scenes where the music was entirely written to fit a fully completed visual montage; and there are scenes in which every available intermediate method was used. Finally, there are also some cases that have become legendary, such as, for instance, the scene with the pipes and tabors played by the Russian troops: I was totally unable to explain in detail to Sergei Prokofiev exactly what I wanted to "see" in sound for that scene. Finally, losing my temper, I ordered up a selection of the appropriate property instruments (i.e. soundless ones) and made the actors visually "play" on them what I wanted; I filmed them doing this, showed it to Prokofiev and […] almost instantly he produced for me an exact "musical equivalent" of the visual image of those pipers and drummers which I had shown him.[79]

Perhaps more remarkable than Prokofiev's "visual" predilections remains Eisenstein's directorial approach: by involving Prokofiev directly in the creation of the film from the very beginning, Eisenstein developed a working method that allowed for an exploration of an organic dialog of image and music. This was instructive in several respects: first, Prokofiev's and Eisenstein's work together laid a foundation for their next project, *Ivan the Terrible*. Unlike *Aleksandr Nevskii*, music in the later film often intentionally contradicts, distorts, and obscures the image in a way that is crucial to the meaning (or avoidance of meaning) of the film. The collaborative testing ground of *Aleksandr Nevskii* made the refinement of *Ivan the Terrible* possible. And it was furthermore the catalyst for a new respect Prokofiev gained for film music: Little over six months after the pre-

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[78] Ibid, 307.

[79] Sergei Eisenstein, "Vertical Montage," in *S. M. Eisenstein: Selected Works. Volume II: Towards a Theory of Montage*, eds. Michael Glenny and Richard Taylor, trans. Michael Glenny (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1991), 371. The scene with "pipers and drummers" that Eisenstein describes occurs mid-way through the Battle on Ice.

miere of *Aleksandr Nevskii*, Eisenstein tried to convince Prokofiev to compose for *Fergana Canal*, an ultimately unrealized film about the construction of the eponymous Central-Asian waterway. Prokofiev declined in a letter dated 30 July 1939, citing the pressures of preparing his new opera *Semyon Kotko*. He, however, used the occasion to comment on the status of Soviet film music:

> Don't be surprised that I have switched to opera. I continue to consider cinema the most modern of the arts, but specifically because of its novelty in our country we haven't learned to value integral parts and to consider music to be some sort of appendage, not deserving of any particular attention.[80]

When Prokofiev did return to film in 1941—likely out of financial necessity—he would have to confront directly the frustration of dealing with his music being treated as "an appendage."

The Sound of Stalinist Nationalism

The production of *Aleksandr Nevskii* was the most conventional that Prokofiev had yet encountered. The unorthodox and often problematic productions of *Lieutenant Kizhe* and *Queen of Spades* demanded short numbers with clear sections that could be cut, length-ened, looped, and generally cued as needed during production, and as a result the scores are nearly indistinguishable, at least in structure, from his incidental music for dramatic productions. By contrast, Prokofiev's viewing sessions with Eisenstein directly impacted the outlines of the film's score by offering a visual product that was clear in duration and visual content.

The most immediate feature of the twenty-one individual numbers that comprise the score of *Aleksandr Nevskii* is their length. Composing more extended numbers was

[80] "Iz perepiski S. Prokof'eva i S. Eizenshteina," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 4 (1961): 106.

not only logistically feasible, the aesthetics of *Aleksandr Nevskii* demanded it, as Eisenstein intentionally constructed the film of a handful of extended scenes, minimizing segues and temporal shifts.[81] The film's conglomeration of tableau-like blocks represents a simplifying approach that not only met the demands of Socialist-Realist *dostupnost' massam* (accessibility to the masses) but complemented the film's epic atmosphere, as the austerity of *Aleksandr Nevskii's* structuring seems to parody the formulaic and episodic style of epic prose. The actors' stiff movements and highly stylized mannerisms and gestures enact epic clichés at a more local level. Film historian David Bordwell notes that Eisenstein's editing techniques in the film represent a simplification of those of his earlier work; cuts often correspond directly to dialogue, an approach that Bordwell feels contributes to the film's "staginess."[82] This type of editing left a distinct mark on Prokofiev's score: sections of dialog that are crucial to the plot (such as Aleksandr's repudiation of the Mongol representative at Pleshcheevo Lake and his speech to the people at Yaroslavl) are separated from music, the two entities often opposing each other in alternating blocks.

Although Eisenstein's images and editing bespeak a conscious homage to epic genre, when considered with Prokofiev's music many critics instead choose to describe *Aleksandr Nevskii* as "operatic."[83] This is unsurprising for a number of reasons, not least

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[81] During 1941-42, the Battle on Ice was released separately from the rest of the film as part of a series of *kinosborniki*, or collections of war-themed shorts. That this was possible testifies both to the sectional nature of the film as well as to its popular currency by the early 1940s: audiences were familiar enough with the plot to fill in the missing context. See Rostislav Iurenev, "Aleksandr Nevskii," in *Rossiiskoe kino*, ed. L. M. Budiak (Moscow: Materik, 2003), 182.

[82] David Bordwell, *The Cinema of Eisenstein*, 214-15, 220.

[83] Rarely, however, is this label explained. Consider Rob Edelman's perplexing notes to the DVD edition of the 1982 foreign release of *Aleksandr Nevskii* (Chatsworth, CA: Corinth Video, 1998): "In

of which is the score's preponderance of vocal numbers. The conspicuous segmentation of the audio editing enacts a *opéra-comique*-like separation of music (aria) and dialogue (recitative), that, in combination with Eisenstein's intentionally ungainly epic markers, draws attention to the work's artifice. Prokofiev's notes, for example, indicate that the song "Arise, Russian People" was to be introduced quietly and build in volume until reaching full intensity.[84] Eisenstein instead chose to begin the song suddenly and at full volume, creating a sharp edge in the audio plane, a decidedly uncinematic idiosyncrasy of which there are many in *Aleksandr Nevskii*, especially during the Battle on Ice.[85] One critic in fact has suggested that *Aleksandr Nevskii's* lack of clichéd film music devices such as continuous, "wall-to-wall" scoring contributed to its success.[86] Much in the same way that the paucity of musical material in *Lieutenant Kizhe* drew attention to the film's sparse musical cues, the sectionalized nature and rough audio edges of *Aleksandr Nevskii* have the effect of keeping the viewer cognizant of the film's music, breaching what Claudia Gorbman calls the "bath of effect."[87]

Although music and image were conceived side by side in *Aleksandr Nevskii*, their coordination rarely falls to the level of gesture. Instances of "mickey-mousing" are present (e.g. the curl of smoke in rising from the fire in sacked Pskov or the flight of

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sequence after sequence, Eisenstein fashioned *Alexander Nevsky* as a visual opera. […] If the score is, literally, music, [*sic*] the union of sound and image might be called 'visual music'."

[84] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98, l. 30.

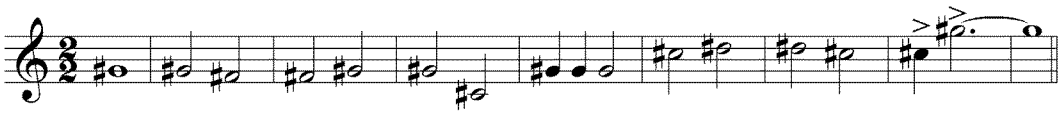
[85] For example, Michel Chion argues that "the mixing of soundtracks consists essentially in the art of smoothing rough edges." *Audio-Vision: Sound on Film,* trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 42.

[86] Philip D. Roberts, "Prokofiev's Score and Cantata for Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky*," *Semiotica* 21 (1977): 164-65.

[87] Claudia Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 6.

arrows during the Battle on Ice), but generally the synchronization of visual and sonic planes exists at a more structural level. Just as editing often follows dialogue, points of audiovisual synchronization often follow musical phrasing. For example, each four-bar phrase of the "Song about Aleksandr Nevskii" is highlighted by a change in shot.

In a film that Eisenstein constructed with blocks of music, image, and dialogue, Prokofiev's score finds a setting where it excels in effecting contrast. Musically, German and Russian camps are explicitly opposed; the invading Teutonic hordes flash onto the screen as repellant warmongers.[88] Eisenstein wanted their elaborate and highly stylized armor—one of the film's most potent images—reflected in a similarly arresting leitmotiv performed by trumpets (example 3.2). In his notes, Prokofiev inscribed "ice-coated sound, tearing" (*obledenelnyi zvuk, rvushchii*).[89]



Example 3.2. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, "Teutonic Trumpets" [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97, l. 6]

The Catholic faith of the German Knights was an important part of Eisenstein's conception. Prokofiev's initial reaction to Eisenstein's order for Catholic "liturgical music" was to consult "authentic" Catholic music of the thirteenth century, a task for which Vol'skii served as research assistant. Whatever Vol'skii managed to secure from the depths of Moscow's repositories (and one wonders exactly what that might have been), however,

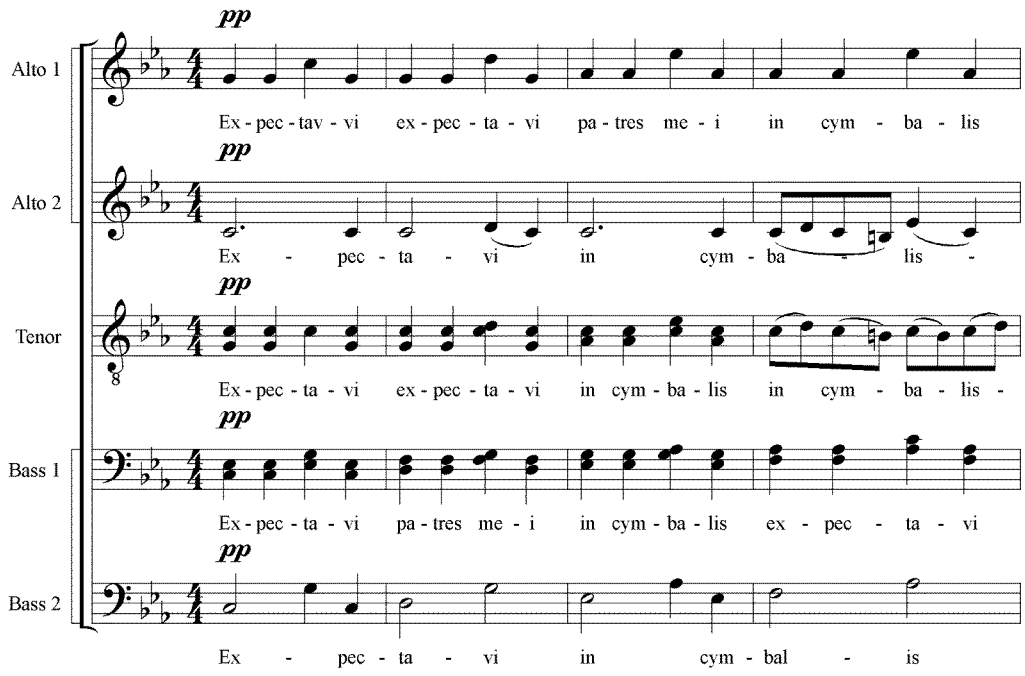
[88] Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," 305.

[89] RGALI, f. 1929, op.1, ed. khr. 98, l. 23.

did not interest Prokofiev, who justified his subsequent decision to pen his own "psalmody" thus:[90]

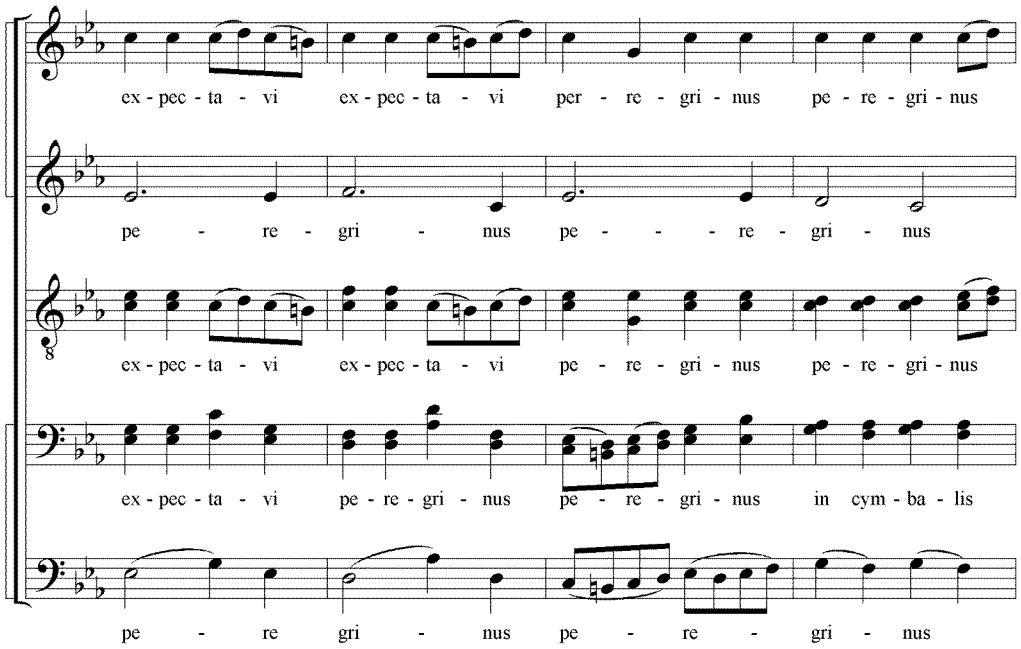
> The first impulse was to use actual music of the period. But a brief acquaintance with Catholic choral singing of the thirteenth century showed that this music in the past seven centuries has become so unfamiliar and emotionally distant that it may not offer enough food for the imagination of the audience.[91]

The choice of phrase "food for the imagination" is ultimately ironic, for Prokofiev was concerned not that the audience experience the music equivocally, but rather that the music be a strong vehicle of *un*equivocal characterization. In other words, using "authentic" Catholic music ran the risk of simply sounding alien or exotic, while the music Prokofiev composed could be calculated to have one interpretive outcome: repugnancy (example 3.3).



[90] Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," 305.

[91] S. S. Prokof'ev, "Muzyka k "Aleksandru Nevskomu," in Varunts, *Prokofiev o Prokofieve*, 168.



Example 3.3. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, Catholic Liturgical Music [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 96]

Prokofiev's dense counterpoint, unfolding in a rigid framework of incessant, slow moving, and heavily accented quarter and eighth notes imbues the soundtrack with an overwhelming sense of burden. Prokofiev's deliberately clumsy leaps and doublings magnify the labored tone. The extremely low fidelity of Soviet recording technology, although spoiling Prokofiev's initial conception, arguably worked to his advantage in the end. Leonid Sabaneev cautioned early film-music composers that "sound film will not stand more than two independent melodic lines. The principal melody and its counter-point represent the utmost polyphonic luxury permissible without risk of obtaining an undifferentiated chaos of sounds."[92] On the soundtrack, the closely-spaced voices of the liturgical singing dissolve into a nebulous muck of discord, a mockery of the clarity

[92] Sabaneev, *Music for the Films*, 70.

demanded by the contrapuntal texture. The ungrammatical Latin text, "Peregrinus expectavi pedes meos in cymbalis" ("A stranger I waited my feet on cymbals"), crowns the satire of the marauders.[93] The absurd lyrics are iterated numerous times up through the Battle on the Ice, underscoring imbecility and religious hollowness of the Catholic aggressors. A particularly vile-looking monk accompanies the singing (Figure 3.1).[94]

Figure 3.1. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, monk accompanying the Germans' liturgical singing

[93] Many translations of this text (such as "As a wanderer, I expected my feet to be shod with cymbals") ignore the fact that Prokofiev's Latin is entirely ungrammatical. His nonsense text was cobbled together using the text of an unlikely source: Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*. (An annotation of a list of Prokofiev's compositions that the composer and Mira Mendel'son compiled in 1951-52 for Levon Atovmian confirms this. I am grateful to Simon Morrison for pointing this out.) Each of the words of Prokofiev's text appears in the three psalms chosen by Stravinsky, all in the same grammatical inflection: "Peregrinus," from psalm 38:14 (Quoniam advena ego sum apud Te et peregrinus, sicut omnes patres mei); "Expectavi," from psalm 39:2 (Expectans expectavi Dominum, et intendit mihi); "pedes meos" from psalm 39:3 (Et statuit super petram pedes meos: et direxit gressus meos) and "In cymbalis" from psalm 150 (Laudate Eum in cymbalis, bene sonantibus) [psalm numbering corresponds to the Latin Vulgate]. See S. Lebedev and R. Pospelova, *Musica latina: Latinskie teksty v muzyke i muzykal'noi nauke* (St. Petersburg: Kompozitor, 2000), 93, 188.

[94] *Aleksandr Nevskii* was not Prokofiev's first "Catholic" music. The act-five climax of his opera *The Fiery Angel* (*Ognennyi angel*, 1919-23, rev. 1926-27) contains the exorcism of its lead role, Renata. Besides *Aleksandr Nevskii*, this is the only instance where Prokofiev sets a Latin text: "Spiriti maligni, damnati, interdicti, exterminati, extorsi, jam vobis impero et praecipio, in ictu oculi discedite omnes qui operamini iniquitatem!" ("Malign spirits, condemned and prohibited, banished, exiled, I command and charge you, in the blinking of an eye depart, all you who purvey iniquity!") Traces of the *The Fiery Angel* can be found in a number of Prokofiev's other works, even the politically-aligned *Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October* (1937). See Morrison and Kravets, "How the Specter of Communism Haunted Prokofiev," 245.

When it came to depicting the film's protagonists, Prokofiev had a rich palette of cultural signifiers at his disposal, and his use of them is revealing of the film's context in Stalin's Russia. Marina Frolova-Walker draws a distinction between the musical styles of Prokofiev's *Aleksandr Nevskii* and his slightly earlier *Russian Overture* (*Russkaia uvertiura,* op. 72, 1936-37). In the earlier work, "metrical play of folk-style motives, the montage-like interpolations of themes, […] and the combination of diatonic folk-like tunes with a densely chromatic background" are suggestive of Stravinsky's style, however much they are deployed within Prokofiev's typically clear formal organization and functional harmony.[95] Frolova-Walker suggests that some of the negative criticism drawn by the *Russian Overture* (following its otherwise well-received premiere) informed *Aleksandr Nevskii*, which instead of forwarding a Stravinskian litany of modernist techniques invokes the romantic nationalism of Borodin and his contemporaries, especially, and not surprisingly, in its depiction of Aleksandr and his compatriots.[96]

Frolova-Walker's assessment is especially telling in the context of Prokofiev's presentation before the Soviet Composer's Union in April 1937. Prokofiev made clear during his address that he had not strayed from his imposed division of "music for the masses" and "symphonic music, chamber music, and opera" that had attended his approach to composition throughout the 1930s.[97] Yet his self-imposed rubrics were laced with new and unsubtle rhetoric:

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[95] This is drawn from a manuscript of Chapter 6 of Marina Frolova-Walker, *Russia: Music and Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, forthcoming 2008).

[96] Ibid.

[97] "Vystuplenie na sobranii aktiva Soiuza kompozitorov (konspekt)," 9 April 1937, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 107, ll. 1-2 ob., published in Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 154-56.

> If the development of wonderful folk songs in [Musorgsky's] *Boris Godunov* 70 years ago is compared to [Ivan] Dzerzhinskii's opera [*Quiet Flows the Don*, 1934], then it becomes unsettling how we have begun to throw away priceless folk songs instead of solicitously and lovingly cultivating them.[98]

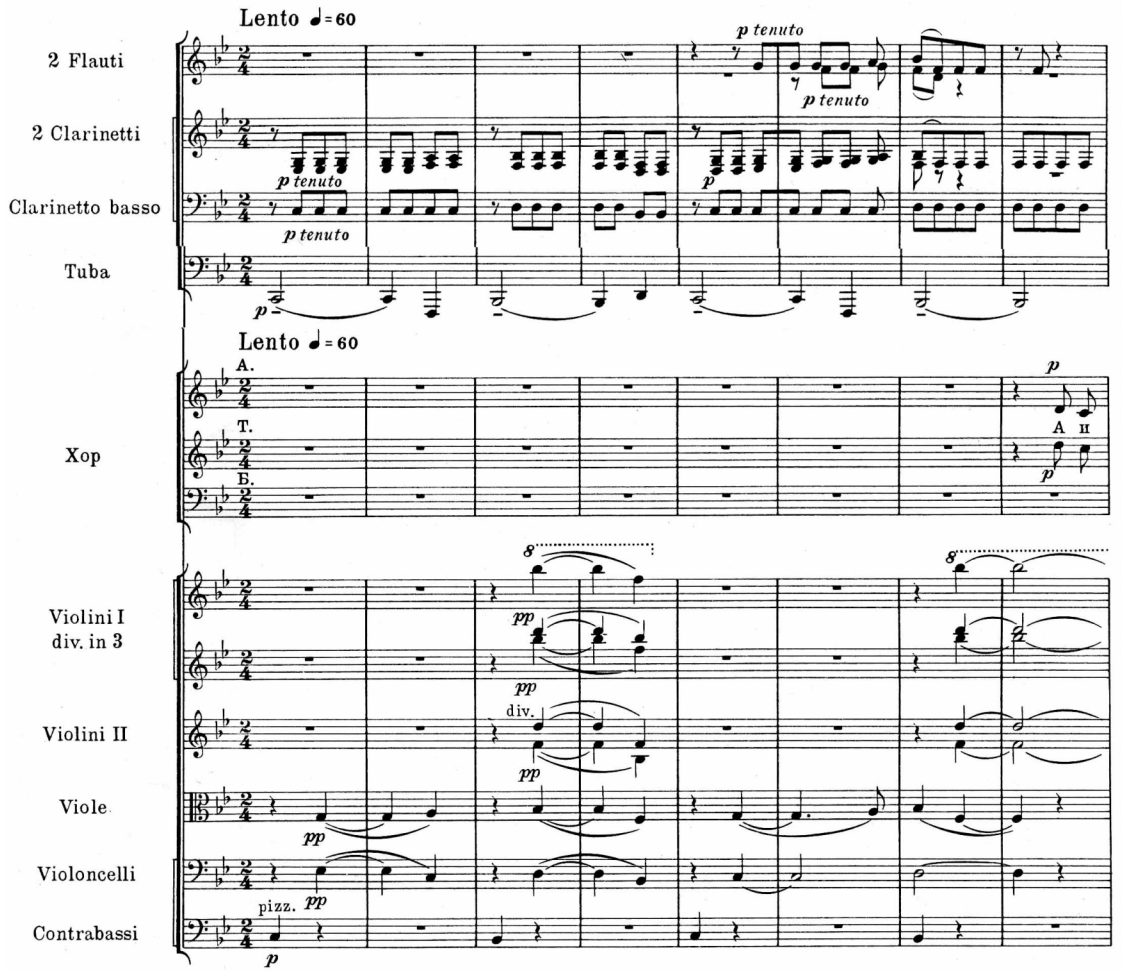
Prokofiev's negotiation of the party line is striking; reliance on folk idioms—the *sine qua non* of Socialist Realism in music (if such a protean doctrine can be essentialized)—had crept into the composer's rhetoric. Tempering his admiration of Musorgsky and the concern for "appropriate cultivation of folk songs," Prokofiev stressed the danger of stagnation presented by simply emulating the style of the composers of the *moguchaia kuchka*—their example must instead serve as a firm foundation for development and enrichment.[99] Prokofiev's appeals to the model of 1860s *kuchkism* were astute for the times, and, if the example of *Aleksandr Nevskii* is any testament, parroting of his predecessors was not a danger, but rather a crucial key to success.

Aleksandr first appears on screen as the benevolent prince of peacetime, fishing with his clan on Lake Pleshcheevo. Their untroubled, industrious labor is interrupted momentarily by the arrival of a Mongol chief, who in vain tries to entice Aleksandr to the Golden Horde. Apart from Aleksandr's dialogue, the "Song about Aleksandr Nevskii" accompanies the entire scene (texts are listed in Appendix IV). Men's voices extol Nevskii's earlier victory over the invading Swedes at the River Neva ("Neva" being the source of Aleksander's appellation), establishing historical context and precedent for the prince's upcoming victory over the Germans. The song steeps the film's protagonists in a plethora of markers of "Russianness," at least as they were popularly imagined: alternating men's choruses, strikingly unadorned harmonic language, a purely diatonic

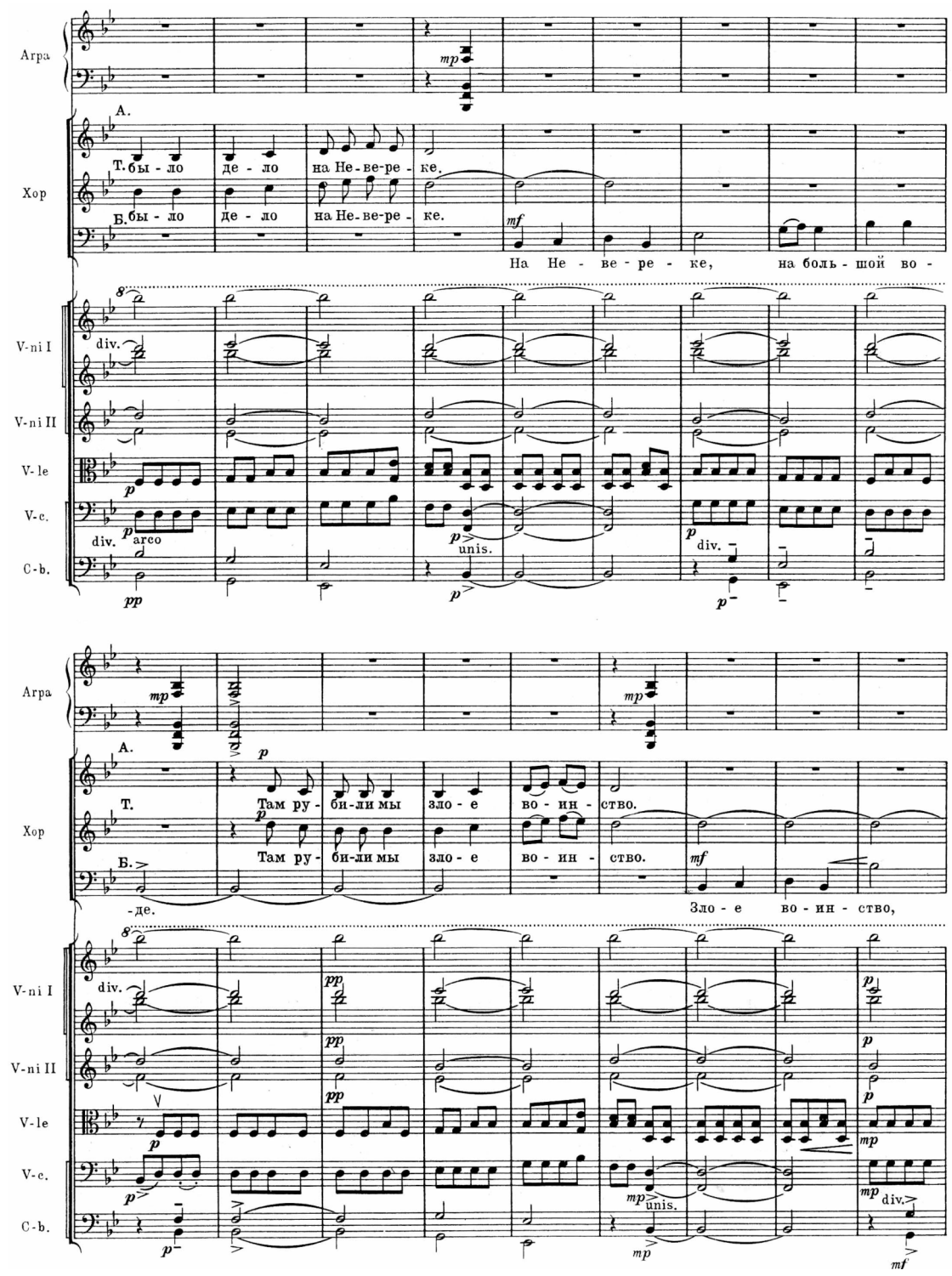
[98] Ibid, 155.

[99] Ibid, 155.

and primarily conjunct melody, and, most importantly, a preference for "plagal" harmonic movement that avoids articulation of the dominant. Apart from the orchestral introduction, Prokofiev fashioned the phrases of the first section of the song around a recurring I-vi-IV-I progression, ultimately leading to final plagal cadence.[100]



[100] "Plagalism" as a distinct trait of Russianness has been a pervasive trope in Russian music criticism of both the 19th and 20th centuries. The equation of exclusively diatonic melodies with Russian folk song is an equally prevalent conviction in the popular conception of Russianess. See Marina Frolova-Walker, "On 'Ruslan' and Russianness," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9 (1997): esp. 23-28.



Example 3.4. *Aleksandr Nevskii*: "Song about Aleksandr Nevskii," mm. 1-26. NB: all instruments written in C. [Source: S. S. Prokof'ev, *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. N. P. Anosov, 20 vols (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1955), 16A: 8-9]

The long pedal tones of the upper strings, besides lending measured pacing, call to mind similar usage in the opening of Aleksandr Borodin's popular, *kuchkist*, and jingoistic musical portrait *In Central Asia* (*V srednei Azii*, 1880). Not surprisingly, for Soviet audiences Prokofiev's song evoked the *bylina*, Russia's ancient style of epic narrative poetry (often sung, with similar nationalistic resonances as the Icelandic Rímur or the Finnish Kalevala), even though Prokofiev's music bears little resemblance to this historical genre.[101] The song returns at the end of the film with full orchestral bombast during Aleksandr's triumphant procession into Pskov, fulfilling the Socialist Realist demand for glorious apotheosis.

The tranquility of the opening song contrasts with the Russian call to battle, "Arise, Russian People." This was Prokofiev's answer to the so-called "mass song," a genre that literally had been willed into existence in the late 1920s to fill the need for music that would reach the masses and counter perceived modernist perversions in art music.[102] Simple texts with equally simple yet rousing musical settings were meant to appear as if spontaneously bursting forth from the mouths of the populace, and successful mass songs were to be comprehended without effort and immediately assimilated by the listener. Finding the right solution to this simplistic formula was difficult for a creative mind like Prokofiev's, even in the context of his professed search for an accessible musical language.[103] His piano score for "Arise, Russian People," for example, contains an interior

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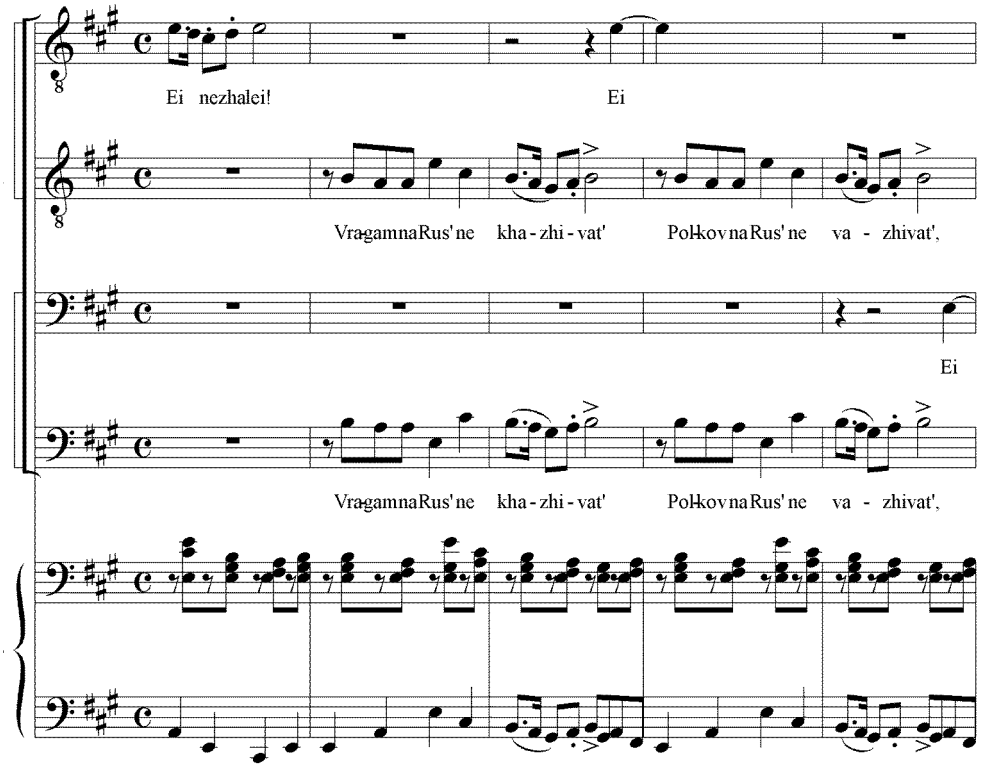
[101] See, for instance, Rogozhina, "Muzyka 'Aleksandra Nevskogo'," 123; Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, 300.

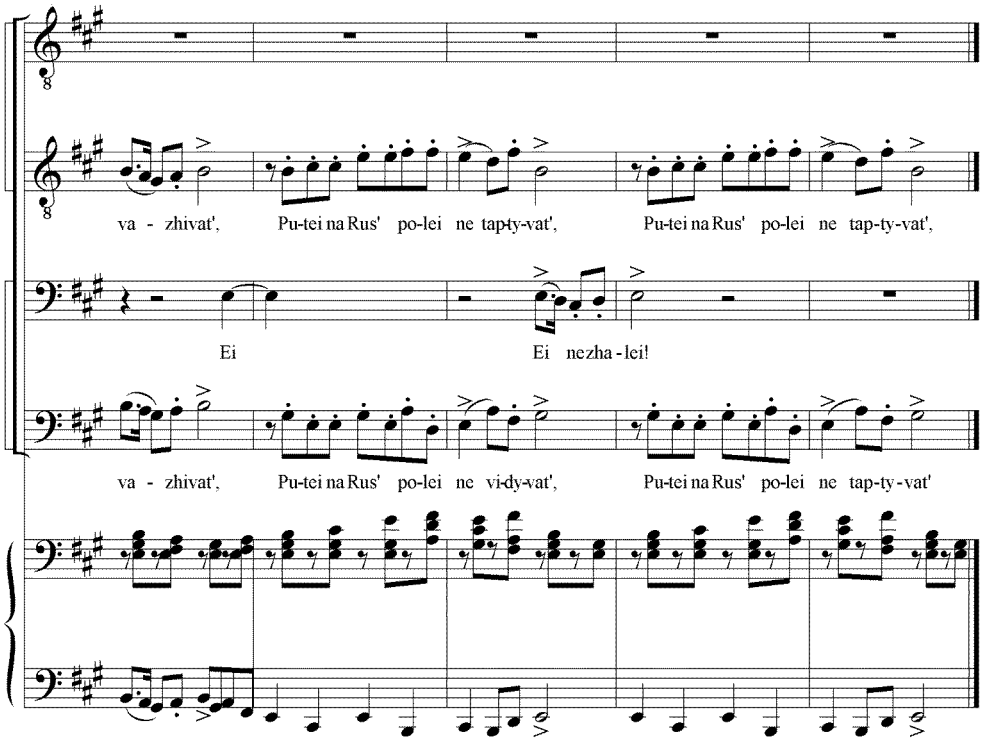
[102] On the mass song, see Amy Nelson, *Music for the Revolution: Musicians and Power in Early Soviet Russia* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), 121-24, and Larry Sitsky, *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1909-1929* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 150-54.

[103] Several sketches and several versions of the piano score are extant, penned on differing paper, suggesting that the song was not composed in one continuous stretch. The preliminary material (sketches and piano score) is in RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97, ll. 2 ob.-5, 6 ob., 11.

section that does not appear in the film (example 3.5). Prokofiev ultimately discarded the passage because it threatened to fail the primary demand of the mass song, namely simplicity such that the tune would be immediately memorable. The men's voices engage in rapid cells of wordy call-and-response with challenging off-beat entrances. The final version of the song instead alternates a much more foursquare melody for tenors and basses with an equally solid, hymn-like passage in D major for the female voices.[104]



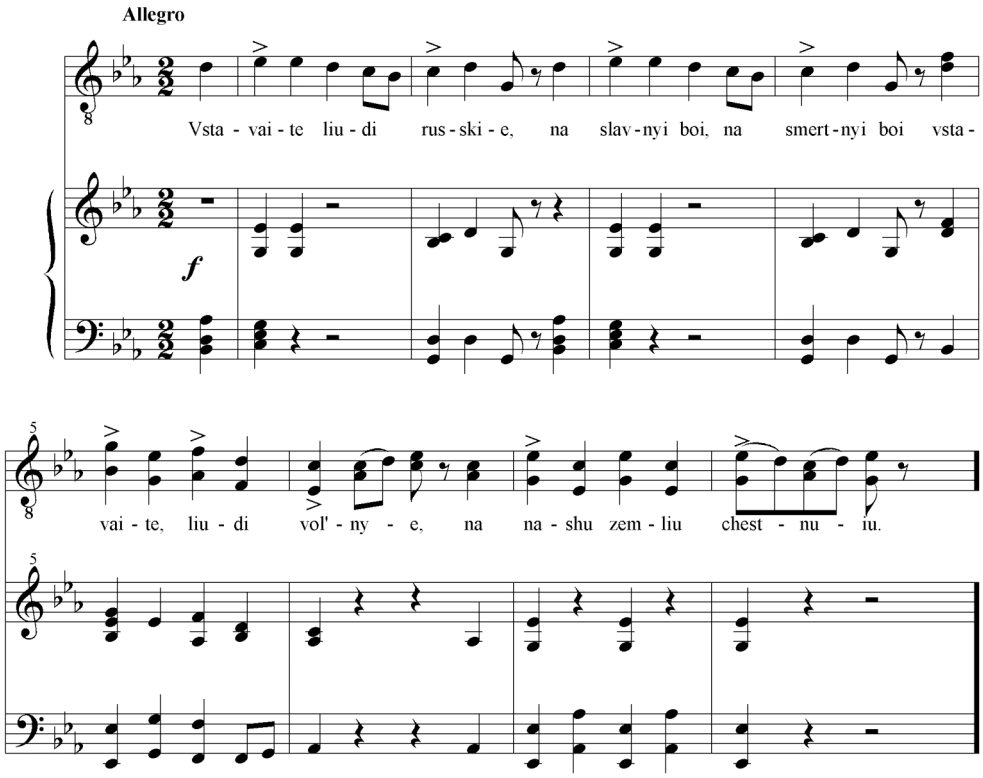
[104] It bears noting that not everyone found the style of "Arise, Russian People" appropriate. After the film's release, M. Khrapchenko, chairman of the Committee on Arts Affairs, evaluated the *Nevskii* score for a possible Stalin Prize. Likely responding to the heavy use of percussion and archaisms in the text, he deemed the song not sufficiently "Russian." I am grateful to Simon Morrison for sharing this detail with me.



Example 3.5. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, Unused middle section of "Arise, Russian People" (tenors and basses *divisi*), text printed in Appendix IV [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97, l. 3 ob.]

The Russian people respond to Aleksandr's call to arms, assemble, and clothe themselves in armor in a rapid series of shots that represents a rare passage in *Aleksandr Nevksy* where narrative time is compressed.[105] In contrast to Aleksandr's dialogue on the shore of Lake Pleshcheevo and his rousing speech on the Yaroslavl town square—both of which are examples of Eisenstein's large "blocks" of real time—the mobilization of the Russian army occurs in a burst of activity, completed in a matter of minutes of filmic time. Here "Arise, Russian People," in addition to serving as a stirring summons, exhibits an aria-like moment when music's temporality suspends the viewer's disbelief at the visual artifice (example 3.6).

[105] On issues of sound and perception of time, see Chion, *Audio-Vision*, 13-20.



Example 3.6. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, "Arise Russian People," mm. 1-8 [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 97, l. 3]

Much like the expectation that a mass song would burst forth from the mouths of the proletariat, the mobilization of the Russian people "spontaneously" erupts—Eduard Tisse's (1897-1961) brilliant camerawork makes the people seem to emerge directly from the earth at the beginning of the sequence—and the jarring contrast of Eisenstein's manipulation of temporality with the static previous scenes is masked by the singular emotional thrust of the accompanying song. Similar to the operatic aria that is a time-suspended emotional outpouring in response to a preceding plot-forwarding recitative, "Arise, Russian People" is a patriotic outburst that is the time-suspended, visceral reaction to Aleksandr's reasoned speech.

In a discussion of the film at Dom Kino on 28 November 1938, three days before its general release, a speaker (unidentified in the transcript) pointed to what he felt was the musical apotheosis of *Aleksandr Nevskii*: "Here we have powerful, grand music with national character. […] Suddenly the music ceases and a woman's voice sounds, and the woman [appears], alone, like a symbol, clad in chain armor, so beautiful and clear."[106] What had so affected the speaker was the lament intoned by Olga Danilovna (played by actress Vera Ivashova), a maid from Novgorod, as she surveys the post-battle carnage. If the music of *Aleksandr Nevskii* seemed to shine with a patina of nineteenth century *kuchkism*, her song, "Hear this, brave falcons" ("Otzovitesia, iasny sokoly") made the impression indelible. Prokofiev and Eisenstein planned for motives from the song to be introduced earlier in the film during the chilling shots of ravaged Pskov, where grief-laden appoggiaturas introduce a lament for the destruction of Russia that achieves a cathartic apogee in Olga's search for survivors after the battle.[107]

In the last line of Lugovskoi's text for the lament (see Appendix IV), men are likened to "brave falcons" ("iasnyi sokoly"). Although a frequent image of Russian folk prose, the metaphor suggests a connection to a specific predecessor: Aleksandr Borodin's opera *Prince Igor* (*Kniaz' Igor'*, 1887), the *kuchkist* opera *par excellence*, in which a heroine of the distant Russian past, Iaroslavna, refers to her husband, held captive by the Polovtsy, as a "brave falcon." The folk-toned melodrama of Iaroslavna's own lament (No. 25, "Plach Iaroslavny") had long been considered a classic among Russian audiences, and that Olga's lament in *Aleksandr Nevskii* would evoke Iaroslavna's in *Prince*

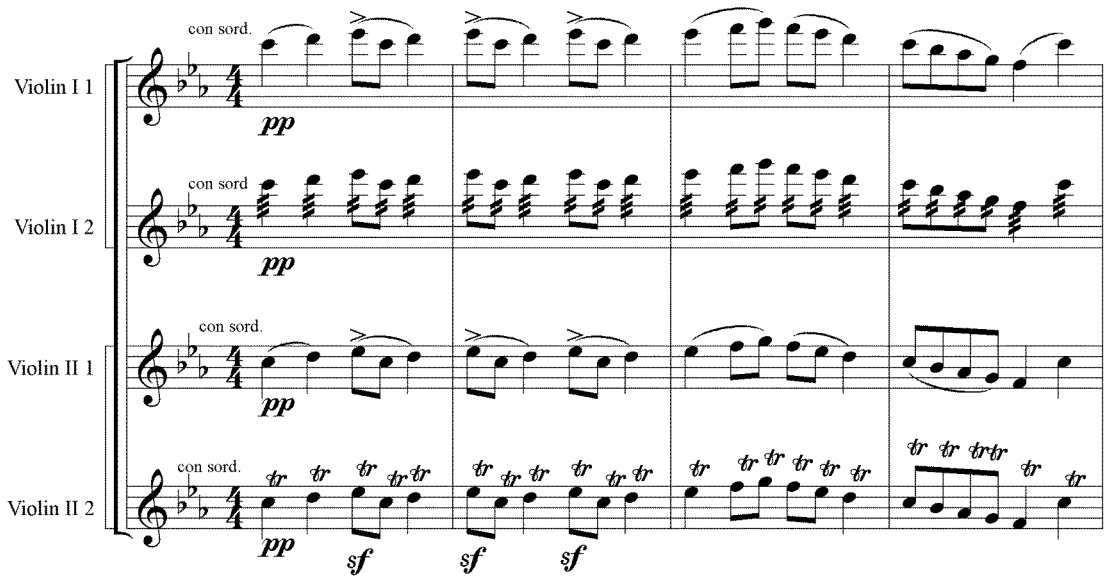
[106] "Stenogramma diskussii po fil'mu 'Aleksandr Nevskii' (Dom Kino)," 28 November 1938, unpublished, RGALI, f. 2923, op. 1., ed. khr. 30, l. 9 ob.

[107] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 98, l. 42.

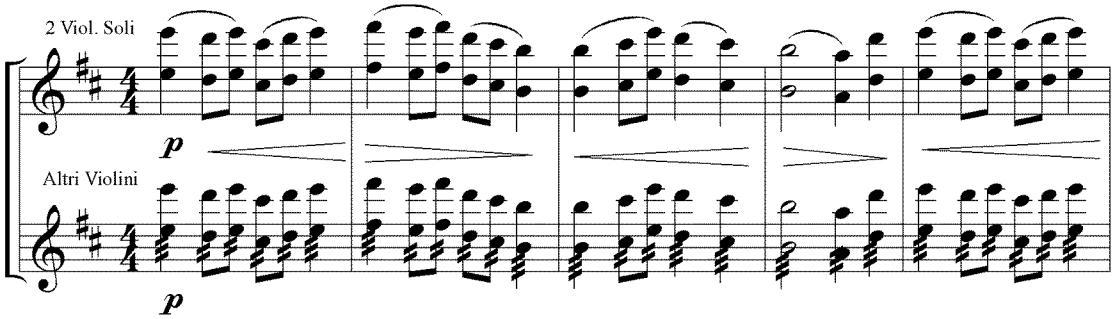
Igor with Russian audiences is certain: the similarities are visual and musical. Both are sung by female voices in semi-darkness—Iaroslavna during the early morning hours and Olga in the late evening—immediately before a triumphant culmination elicited by a victorious return (the appearance of Iaroslavna's husband after escaping the Polovtsy in the former work and Aleksandr's return to Pskov in the latter).

Figure 3.2. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, Olga following the Battle on Ice

Prokofiev adopts a shimmering tremolo string texture—evoking the same in Borodin—with the melody doubled in octaves, Prokofiev's muted, Borodin's *sul ponticello*. Both have repeated cells comprised of a quarter note and two eighth notes (Examples 3.7 and 3.8) and similar melodic contours that alternate stepwise motion with minor thirds. The melody of "Otzovitesia, iasny sokoly" eschews the leading tone (B-natural) of the lament's C minor, instead lingering on the subtonic (B-flat) to impart a sense of hovering between tonic foci of C minor and E-flat major (example 3.9).

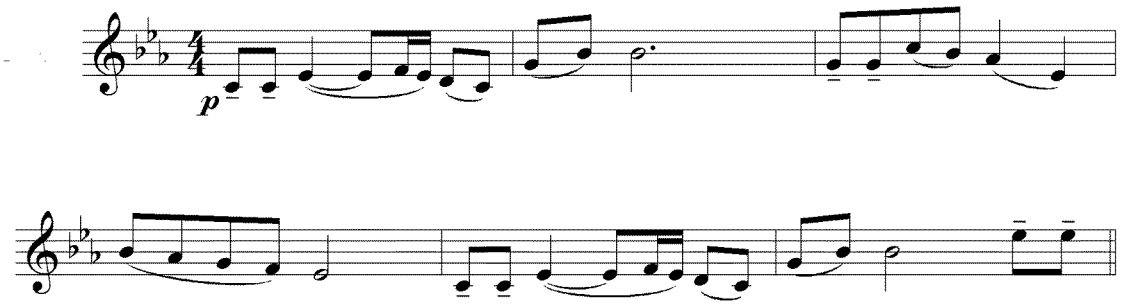


Example 3.7. Prokofiev, *Aleksandr Nevskii*, "Otzovitesia, iasny sokoly" (Olga's Lament), mm. 1-4 [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 96]



Example 3.8. Borodin, *Prince Igor*, "Plach Iaroslavny" (no. 25), mm. 1-5, upper strings only

The common tone between minor key subtonic and major key dominant allows for a blurring of minor and relative major known as *peremenost'* (mutability)—a definitive marker of Russian folk song and its stylization by *kuchkists* such as Musorgsky and Borodin.



Example 3.9. *Aleksandr Nevskii*, "Otzovitesia, iasny sokoly" (Olga's Lament), mm. 11-16, melody only, showing *peremenost'* [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 96]

That Prokofiev's score is laced with references to rear-garde *kuchkist* nationalism has led some Western critics to lament the style of *Aleksandr Nevskii*. On the surface, the daring modernist of the 1920s seems to have all but disappeared, shamelessly pandering to Soviet tastes with conservative folk styles. Yet the stylistic foundation of *Aleksandr Nevskii*—clear formal structures and functional harmony—had never been absent from Prokofiev's work of any period, a view for which Frolova-Walker argues. In her words, "to make his music conform with the demands of Socialist Realism, he could simply bring these elements [clear form and functional harmony] to the fore—a radical transformation was unnecessary."[108] Prokofiev's score for *Aleksandr Nevskii* celebrates the art of harnessing past styles—and all of the semantic and cultural markers that come with them—to new ends, a microcosm of the way the Stalinist bureaucracy engaged in rehabilitating the Russian past for new Soviet goals. In this way, Prokofiev not only ensured that he would ingratiate himself with the Soviet musical establishment, but also made certain that Eisenstein's images were bathed in familiar, easily comprehendible, and therefore unequivocal musical language. As a Soviet musicologist heartily proclaimed,

[108] Frolova-Walker, *Russia: Music and Nation*, unpublished manuscript.

"Like out great 'musical chronicler' Musorgsky, Prokofiev could say 'the past in the present—this is my task'."[109]

Celluloid Sound Revisited

Thanks to a 1939 article penned by Prokofiev in which he details the soundtrack's production, scholars and critics have invariably tied the composer's initial work with sound recording to *Aleksandr Nevskii*.[110] Yet the possibilities of celluloid sound caught his attention as early as the recording of his Third Piano Concerto in 1932 and his work on *Lieutenant Kizhe* in 1933 (see Chapter 1). Following his visit to America in early 1937, the highest praise Prokofiev awarded the country's musical life was for its recordings:

> Recordings on gramophone records are of very high quality. Especially the wonderful recording of Mozart's symphonies by the New York Philharmonic under Toscanini, the recording of Brahms' First Symphony by the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Mendelssohn's symphonies and Beethoven's Eighth Symphony performed by the Boston Orchestra.[111]

The related technological sophistication of American film production prompted Prokofiev's amazement during his Hollywood sojourn the following year. And this was not without reason: in 1938, the Soviet Union lagged significantly behind the West in sound technology. At a time when Hollywood was producing cinematic spectaculars such as *Gone With the Wind* (1939), the majority of the Soviet Union's theaters were not even equipped for sound film. Many new releases had to be produced with corre-

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[109] Rogozhina, "Muzyka 'Aleksandra Nevskogo'," 155.

[110] S[ergei] Prokof'ev, "Muzyka v fil'me *Aleksandr Nevskii*" in *Sovetskii istoricheskii fil'm: Sbornik statei*, ed. B. S. Grekov and E. Veisman (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1939), 26-29.

[111] Sergei Prokof'ev, "Amerika i Evropa segodnia," *Sovetskoe iskusstvo*, 11 March 1937, p. 6, reprinted in Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 152-53.

sponding silent versions.[112] Soviet microphones furthermore left much to be desired; a number of authors have commented on the strikingly poor sound quality of *Aleksandr Nevskii*.[113] Even Prokofiev's wife Lina complained about the film's "nightmarishly" bad sound in a letter to the composer on 20 August 1939.[114] Hollywood, if perhaps dismaying Prokofiev at the technological shortfalls of his own country, nonetheless piqued a predilection for experimentation and innovation, leading him not only back to composing for films, but to write about the process for the general public.

Prokofiev treated the meager equipment he did have available at Mosfilm with creativity, finding enterprising ways to lessen the technological gap between Moscow and Hollywood and approximate the spirit of the colossal acoustic experiments of Disney and Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977).[115] Eisenstein's desire to make the Teutonic trumpets sound "ice-coated," for example, prompted Prokofiev to have the brass play directly into the microphone during the recording. Prokofiev elaborates:

> It is well known that a strong sound wave directed straight into the microphone damages the tape and produces an unpleasant scratching when played back. But since the sound of the Teutonic trumpets must have been unpleasant to the Russian ear, I had the fanfares played directly into the microphone, giving an extraordinarily dramatic effect.[116]

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[112] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 124.

[113] Russel Merritt, citing the fact that other Soviet films of the late 1930s seem to have better sound than *Nevskii*, suggests that the music in the soundtrack may actually have been from a rehearsal take. See Merritt, "Recharging *Alexander Nevsky*," 44.

[114] I am grateful to Simon Morrison for sharing this detail with me.

[115] Disney's and Stokowski's experiments included multiple-track recording and forays into extremely complex stereophonic effects. See David R. Smith "The Sorcerer's Apprentice: The Birthplace of *Fantasia*," *Millimeter* 4 (1976): esp. 18-24 and 64-67.

[116] Sergei Prokof'ev, "Muzyka k Aleksandru Nevskomu," in *S. S. Prokof'ev: Materialy, dokumenty, vospominaniia,* ed. Semen Shlifshtein (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe muzikal'noe izdatel'stvo, 1961), 229.

Experimentation that may seem unsophisticated, even crude, nevertheless marks a significant moment in Prokofiev's art, as the coarse sounds accompanying the German army exhibit orchestration that could never be duplicated in concert performance; score and musical product are mediated in a very modern way by the recording studio.[117] Here two qualities associated with sound recording from its inception, definition (the amount of detail a recording is physically able to capture) and fidelity (the subjective quality with which a reproduction matches its original) are reversed.[118] By stretching definition to its physical limit and beyond, Prokofiev effectively destroys fidelity as a concept. In an era when sound recording was perceived and evaluated in terms of fidelity, his experimentation was innovative. The result was even more damaging to the concept of fidelity, for the "authentic" musical document of *Aleksandr Nevskii* crystallized in the reproduction, rather than the original. In this sense, the film has progressive underpinnings, despite its musical conservatism—the locus of such elements has simply been transferred from Stravinskian musical techniques to recording technology (an ironic notion, given the film's abysmal sound quality).

In his work on *Lieutenant Kizhe* in 1933, Prokofiev found that the recording studio allowed balance to be dictated more by the placement of the microphone than by the conductor and ensemble. While in *Lieutenant Kizhe* the use of this discovery was limited to a handful of adjustments for the sake of balance, in *Aleksandr Nevskii* it

[117] Several sources claim that Prokofiev happened upon this effect accidentally. Boris Vol'skii confirms that the effect was in reality reached after some experimentation (Vol'skii, "Prokof'ev i Eizenshtein," 306).

[118] Chion discusses the use (and misuse) of these two terms in relation to filmic sound, see *Audio-Vision*, 98-99.

became a favored device.[119] *Aleksandr Nevskii* also introduced Prokofiev to the creative potentials of mixing. He emphasized in particular the possibilities this held for composers:

> There are powerful instruments in the orchestra such as the trombone and weaker instruments like the bassoon. But if we place the bassoon right next to the microphone and the trombone twenty meters away from it, the result will be a huge, strong bassoon and in the background a tiny, barely audible trombone. This offers great opportunities for inverted orchestration (*perevernutaia orkestrovka*) unthinkable in music for concert performance.[120]

A correspondent for the English-language journal *Moscow News* summarized a presentation by Prokofiev to the Composers' Union regarding his 1938 foreign tour, revealing the composer's interest in recording technology as well suggesting just how deeply the viewing of *Snow White* had impressed Prokofiev:

> The discussion moved to cinematography and the role of music in it. The recent experiments in recording music in Disney's film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, which had magnificent success in America, demands study. The music was recorded, Prokofiev explained, by recording instruments of the orchestra separately. They recorded not the full orchestra, but rather every instrument individually. The performers sat in individual chambers and were unable to hear the sound of their neighbors, although the conductor could be seen by all.[121]

Prokofiev's description of Disney's studio techniques is uncannily analogous to the one he would soon write detailing his own work on *Aleksandr Nevskii*:

> We placed the brass in one studio and a choir in another, both performed their parts simultaneously. From each studio, a wire ran to a booth where the recording took place, and where by simply pressing a button the sound one or the other

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[119] For example, in the manuscript of the opening number, "Ravaged Rus," Prokofiev indicated the following layout: "In front of the microphone: 1) first oboe, first bassoon, 2) first violins, cellos, contrabassoon; In the middle (*posredine*): English horn, all brass, remaining strings; In the distance: Bass clarinet, second oboe, second bassoon," see transcription in Rogozhina, "Muzyka 'Aleksandra Nevskogo'," 122.

[120] Prokof'ev, "Muzyka k Aleksandru Nevskomu," 229.

[121] The article originally appeared in *Moscow News* 22 (1938), pp. 16, 22 [author unknown], and was subsequently translated and reprinted as "Kompozitor rasskazyvaet o tom, kak sovetskaia muzyka priobretaet populiarnost' za rubezhom," Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 164-65. The passage quoted here is my translation of the version appearing in the latter publication.

> group could be magnified or diminished, depending on the demands of the action. We also recorded on three microphones, which demanded great skill in merging ("mixing") all three channels.[122]

If Disney's influence did exert a direct influence on Prokofiev, then it can be seen most clearly in recording techniques, rather than in terms of aesthetic borrowings. Prokofiev, after all, had long been loath to employ pervasive sound-image at the gestural level, the quintessential characteristic of Disney's sound-image aesthetic.

Aleksandr Nevskii's musical language and references reflect nineteenth-century *kuchkism*, but as a larger whole, the work is situated directly in the excitement that attended sound recording during the 1930s. One of the earliest scholars of film music, Kurt London (1900-1985), writing two years before *Aleksandr Nevskii's* release, keenly sensed the rapid aesthetic paradigm shift, even calling for the establishment of a "microphone academy," which he felt was the only way the art of sound recording could be saved from "gigantic dilettantism."[123] Prokofiev was an eager participant in this era of experimentation, and his musings on *Aleksandr Nevskii* exhibit the clear hope that recording technology held much promise for the future of music.

"Vertical Montage"

In her study of Soviet film music, Tatiana Egorova writes that *Aleksandr Nevskii* "broke down all established stereotypes and notions of the ways in which music and repre-

[122] Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve*, 168.

[123] Kurt London, *Film Music: A Summary of the Characteristic Features of Its History, Aesthetics, Technique and Possible Developments*, trans. Eric S. Bensinger (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1936), 249-61.

sentation should interact, and [that] it was built as a complex polyphonic composition."[124] Egorova's adulation of the film's revolutionary audiovisual construction seems the antithesis of the studied comprehensibility targeted by Prokofiev and Eisenstein, a disparity that derives from the claims made in a prodigious corpus of theoretical material authored by Eisenstein. The director's writings deal overwhelmingly with montage, a term that for Eisenstein meant—in its most basic sense—the art of creating overall effect through juxtaposition and association of constituent elements (images, motifs, individual shots, etc.). Eisenstein's montage theories were constantly evolving, and, as Eisenstein scholars such as David Bordwell have pointed out, nearly impossible to encapsulate in any overarching fashion.[125] Much of Eisenstein's writing throughout the 1920s and 1930s additionally exhibits a striving to uncover a theoretical language and method for film, and his voluminous musings have produced an even more voluminous body of secondary literature that negotiates Eisenstein's extraordinarily dense essays that reference everything from Pushkin to Leonardo da Vinci to Goethe.

Eisenstein used *Aleksandr Nevskii* as a tool in developing a theory of "Vertical Montage," one of his most enduring and controversial concepts.[126] In essence, Vertical Montage is a relatively simple abstraction in which Eisenstein extends his theories of montage to encompass music. Since music possesses local gestures or "movement" (Eisenstein variously described these with terms such as "striving upwards, spreading,

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[124] Tatiana K. Egorova, *Soviet Film Music: An Historical Survey*, trans. Tatiana A. Ganf and Natalia A. Egunova (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997), 60.

[125] Bordwell, *The Cinema of Eisenstein*, 132-33.

[126] Eisenstein wrote his study of "Vertical Montage" after the production of *Aleksandr Nevskii* in July and Aug 1940, and it first appeared in *Isskustvo kino* 9 (1940): 16-25, and 1 (1941): 29-38. See also Sergei Eisenstein, "Sychronization of Senses," in *The Film Sense*, trans. and ed. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1942), 82.

fragmented, well-balanced, stumbling, smoothly deployed, flexible, zigzagging"), the outline of a segment of music becomes bound to the visual profile of the image that it accompanies.[127] To explicate this, Eisenstein created an "audiovisual" analysis of twelve stills from *Aleksandr Nevskii* and the seventeen bars of Prokofiev's "Rassvet" (no. 2) that accompany them. A portion of this analysis (for shots I through IV) is excerpted in figure 3.3 below. Eisenstein describes:

> The first chord is perceived as something like a point of "take-off." The following five crochets, in a rising series, are naturally read as the gradations of a line of rising tension. Therefore we will draw it not just as a line rising straight upwards but a slightly arching curve [see the "scheme of movement" line]. […] The next phrase, of one note repeated four times between quaver rests, is naturally interpreted as a *horizontal line*. […] Now imagine *a diagram of our eye movements* [see the "scheme of depiction" line] along the main lines of shots III and IV which "respond" to that music. […] What does this show? That the two patterns of movement are identical, i.e. *the movement of the music and the movement of the eye over the lines of the graphic composition coincide* [emphasis Eisenstein's].[128]

Eisenstein develops this analytical kernel into a highly detailed audiovisual analysis (which Hanns Eisler decried as "heavy artillery [used] to shoot sparrows").[129] This venture at advancing a method of close audiovisual analysis is the source of much commentary on the film's retroactively perceived complexity, particularly apropos "counterpoint" between music and image. Eisenstein deflected potential critics by admitting that his scrutiny of *Aleksandr Nevskii* was *post hoc* and never came to bear on the planning of the film (noting Eisenstein's and Prokofiev's collaborative methods would be proof enough of this).

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[127] Eisenstein, "Vertical Montage," 2: 376.

[128] Ibid, 380-81.

[129] Hanns Eisler, *Composing for the Films* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 157.

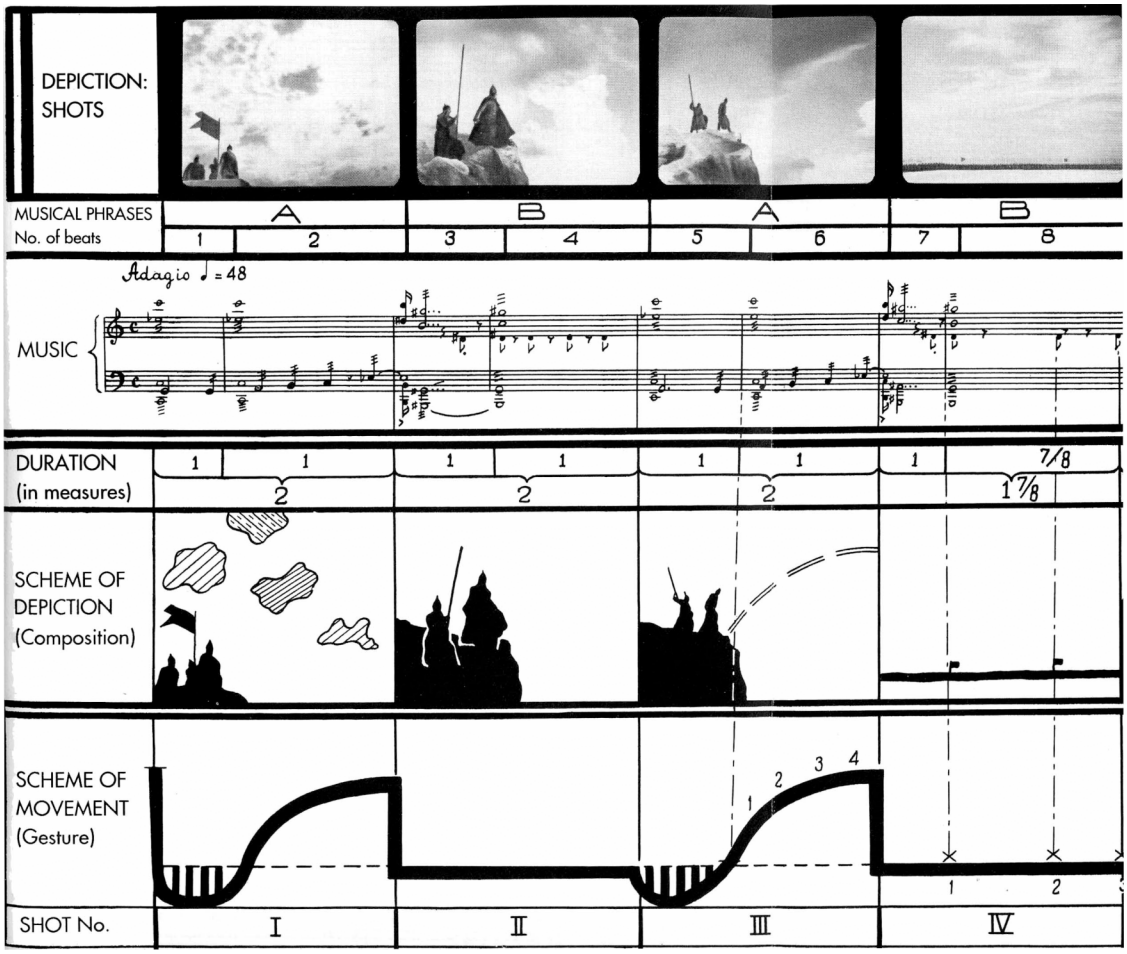

Figure 3.3. Excerpt of Eisenstein's analysis from "Vertical Montage" [Source: *S. M. Eisenstein: Selected Works*, ed. Richard Taylor, 4 vols. (London: British Film Institute, 1988), 2: 396, overleaf]

He instead contended that the striking harmony of image revealed in his study sprung forth intuitively during production. He elaborates:

> The creative process is spontaneous, "justification and motivation for precisely that and not another disposition pass through one's mind…, but one's mind does not linger in order to express such motifs in full; it hastens on to make the idea into reality … This does not mean, however, that the fruits of the 'creative act' are any the less subject to strict rules and principles, as we have tried to show in our analysis of the material we have chosen.[130]

[130] Eisenstein, "Vertical Montage," 399.

> Similarly, in a number of instances pre-recorded pieces of music sometimes prompted us to find graphically expressive solutions which neither he nor I had foreseen. Many of these coincided so well with the 'inner resonance' linking music and pictures that they now seem to have been the most carefully "pre-arranged" combinations.[131]

Aside from the fact that Eisenstein chose a segment of the film that lent itself particularly well to close music-still analysis, his work suffers from a flaw that has haunted film analysis up to the present day: both image and music are media that unfold in time, and while Western musical notation is adequate for visually representing temporal elements, image does not fare as well.[132] Stills compress the visual element into a non-temporal form, an abstraction that distorts what an audience actually sees. Claudia Gorbman elaborates and points to a second fallacy:

> [Eisenstein's] work has stood alone as a vigorous and thorough—if somewhat delirious—combination of transcription and analysis. […] His "delirium" stems from his idea that we perceived the melodic and dynamic contours of music analogously to the actual visual dynamics of shot composition. His analysis of the music-image relations in the "Battle on Ice" sequence in *Alexander Nevsky* rests on the further assumption that we read a filmed image from left to right as linearly as the music's progression on the soundtrack."[133]

Michel Chion has argued further against the persistent use of the term "counterpoint" since "sound and image fall into different sensory categories," and this excludes the possibility of "horizontal-contrapuntal dynamics."[134] While Eisenstein's dissection is unsound and has misled many critics, it is nevertheless remarkable in being one of the earliest attempts at a close audiovisual reading of music and image. Furthermore,

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[131] Ibid, 371.

[132] Nevertheless, the use of still has become a popular component of film analysis since the 1970s. A more practical attempt (if still cumbersome) at Eisenstein's methods appeared in 1957, in Roger Manvell's and John Huntley's text on film music *The Technique of Film Music*, revised and enlarged by Richard Arnell and Peter Day (New York: Hastings House, 1975), esp. 96-107 and 140-49.

[133] Gorbman, *Unheard Melodies*, 117, 127, and 174.

[134] Chion, *Audio-Vision*, 36.

Eisenstein's earnestness in using the film as a laboratory for developing his theoretical models mirrors the same kind of progress-driven curiosity that lies behind Prokofiev's experimentation with sound recording. The director's emerging theory of Vertical Montage is evidence that his collaboration with Prokofiev on *Aleksandr Nevskii* was the force behind a methodical consideration of the potential uses of music in film, a contemplation that grew and matured in the years leading up to *Ivan the Terrible*. The latter film, an extraordinarily complex *tour de force*, which in part uses music to create striking internal contradictions, eerie doubles, and equivocal themes, mocks the clarity of *Aleksandr Nevskii.* The earlier film was a catalyst for innovation that was to come.

Reception and Non-Aggression

Aleksandr Nevskii proved enormously successful with the public throughout the Soviet Union.[135] Eisenstein's images and Prokofiev's black-and-white musical portrayals created a template that the average Soviet citizen could superimpose directly on the contemporary situation. An examination of the film's reception shows that past and present were blurred in the popular imagination, and the contemporary threat was often discussed in language that conflated Nazis and Teutonic Knights.[136] *Aleksandr Nevskii* was furthermore a personal triumph for both Eisenstein and Prokofiev, proving them "useful" to the

[135] A large number of reviews and accounts of production appeared in Soviet newspapers; a short bibliography (non-exhaustive) can be found in *Sovetskie khudozhestvennye fil'my*, ed. Aleksandr Machert (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1961), 2: 149. See also Brandenberger "The Popular Reception of S. M. Eisenstein's *Aleksandr Nevskii*," esp. 239-41. *Aleksandr Nevskii* furthermore enjoyed much success abroad; it premiered in Europe in January 1939 and in America in March 1939 (Iurenev, *Sergei Eizenshtein*, 172). The Soviet Press kept close track of foreign premieres, see for instance A. Ia. Mitlin, "Uspekh Aleksandra Nevskogo v SShA," *Kino* 19 (23 April 1939).

[136] Brandenberger, "The Popular Reception of S. M. Eisenstein's *Aleksandr Nevskii*," 238.

artistic establishment. Prokofiev was especially pleased with the success of the film, carefully noting its progress through the Soviet Union (see Appendix IV).

Figure 3.4. Advertisement for *Aleksandr Nevskii* (Soiuzkinoprokat)

Yet for all the film's success, its initial appearance on the Soviet screen was short-lived. In August 1939, the German foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow on a mission to help quell the growing German-Soviet tension, and on 24 August, he and the Soviet premiere, Viacheslav Molotov, concluded a ten-year Soviet-German non-aggression agreement. (A secret protocol attached to the pact that would come to light only after the war outlined the conditions for Nazi Germany's and the Soviet Union's dissecting of the Baltic States, Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe into spheres of Nazi and Soviet influence.) After the treaty came into force, public displays of anti-German sentiment were untenable in the Soviet Union and *Aleksandr Nevskii* was quietly removed from theaters and shelved. At least two other films suffered a similar fate, Adolf Minkin's and Gerbert Rappaport's *Professor Mamlok* (1938), and

Grigory Roshal's *The Oppenheim Family* (*Sem'ia Oppengeim*, 1939)—both of which detail brutal Nazi treatment of Jews.[137]

Prokofiev took advantage of the fact that while *Aleksandr Nevskii* the film was banned, its music was not. A cantata version for orchestra, mixed choir, and alto soloist (op. 78, the version with which most audiences are familiar today), premiered on 17 May 1939 under the composer's baton, dedicated to "one of the most glorious episodes in the history of the Russian people."[138] Although Prokofiev significantly reworked material from the film in creating the cantata, notably changing the orchestration to compensate for the lack of effects the recording studio had offered, the sharp lines between Russia and her historical aggressor are still present. Absent, however, were Eisenstein's potent images. On stage the cantata could pass as a rousing historical drama; on screen the connection to contemporary events was undeniable, too puissant for the delicate diplomatic illusion of the pre-war years.

Prokofiev's other "anti-German" work, the opera *Semyon Kotko*, premiered on 23 June 1940, but not without significant diplomatic gestures and Prokofiev's direct appeal to Molotov. Valentin Kataev (1897-1986), upon whose novella the opera was based, describes how "an effort was made to play down the production [of *Semyon Kotko*]. The Germans were even re-costumed as Austrians. And it all was some sort of diplomatic unpleasantness. […] Kind words flew around the country."[139] That the *Aleksandr Nevskii Cantata* and *Semyon Kotko* remained in production while the anti-aggression pact was in

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[137] Grigorii Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor: Stalin smotrit kino* (Moscow: Konfederatsiia soiuzov kinematografistov "Kinotsentr", 1992), 71.

[138] Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, 299.

[139] Excerpted from an interview with Kataev on 21 September 1963, published in L. Skorino, *Pisatel' i ego vremia: zhizn' i tvorchestvo V.P. Kataeva* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1965), 306-07.

force furthermore testifies to the popular and political currency films like *Aleksandr Nevskii* had compared to other genres.

The day after the Nazi invasion on 22 June 1941, *Aleksandr Nevskii* was redistributed to theaters in spades, its re-release accompanied by a propagandistic scramble to stir the country's patriotism that even included enjoining historians to laud the country's past victories, especially Aleksandr Nevskii's from more than a half-millennium prior.[140] A short segment of the Battle on Ice even found its way into the wartime series of *kinosborniki* (collections of film shorts favored during the first year of the war).[141] Throughout humanity's most devastating war, mobile projection units showed Eisenstein's and Prokofiev's work at the front lines, perhaps one of the most remarkable testaments to the nationalist potency of *Aleksandr Nevskii*.[142]

The successful reception of *Aleksandr Nevskii* saved Eisenstein's career (and perhaps prevented his incarceration), and gave Prokofiev's flailing Soviet career the impetus it desperately needed. This favorable outcome owed much to a collaboration that united image and music to present a categorical whole. *Aleksandr Nevskii's* prodigious success furthermore confirmed the efficacy of using historical subjects, paving the way for Eisenstein's and Prokofiev's next collaboration, *Ivan the Terrible*. The experience director and composer gained during the production of *Aleksandr Nevskii* laid a firm collaborative foundation for this next film, one that by contrast would prove to be highly complex and highly controversial.

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[140] Brandenburger, *National Bolshevism*, 116.

[141] *Nevskii* became part of *Kinosbornik No. 6*. See Iurenev, "Aleksandr Nevskii," 182, and Iurenev, *Sergei Eizenshtein*, 173.

[142] Iurenev, *Sergei Eizenshtein*, 173.

CHAPTER FOUR

1941-42: Between Two Pinnacles

In the pre-dawn grey of 14 October 1941, two trains silently departed war-ravaged Moscow, escaping the nightly rain of Nazi bombs. Their carriages were filled with unlikely cargo: nearly one hundred employees of Mosfilm and Lenfilm, the Soviet Union's chief film studios. Their destination was even more unlikely: exotic and remote Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan—more than 2,000 miles east of Moscow—where the city's Palace of Culture was converted for use as a temporary film studio.[1] Other studios were similarly relocated—Soiuzdetfilm to Stalinabad (Dushanbe), the Kiev and Odessa Studios both to Tashkent. Igor Savchenko (1906-50), one of Prokofiev's later collaborators, was initially sent to Ashkhabad, where he found his new surroundings disorienting, the sweltering sun agonizing: "I can't breathe here. Twenty times a day I save myself under the shower in the studio's garden. […] Send me immediately to Moscow. I'm going to join the film group on the front!"[2]

For Prokofiev, the years of the Great Patriotic War, which were partially spent evacuated from his Moscow home, brought a mix of opportunity, difficulty, success, and failure. In his list of wartime compositions, one of the few projects to exist in prewar and

[1] V[alerii] I. Fomin, ed., *Kino na voine: Dokumenty i svidetel'stva* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), 229.

[2] Ibid, 247.

wartime phases was his score for director Al'bert Gendel'shtein's (1906-81) *Lermontov,* a biographical film about the nineteenth-century Russian poet Mikhail Lermontov (1814-41). For Prokofiev, the film represented a moment of contact with the cinema industry of the late 1930s and early 1940s at its most typical—that is, a production without the wealth of resources, talent, publicity, and scrutiny that attended the very atypical production of his previous film, *Aleksandr Nevskii* (1938). Although *Lermontov* is all but forgotten today, its production merits reconstruction and analysis, perhaps most importantly because as the product of an "average" Soviet production, it offers insight into the many challenges that film-music composers in the Soviet Union faced during the late 1930s and early 1940s. Moreover, the partnership of Prokofiev and Gendel'shtein, although difficult and ultimately unhappy, left behind a correspondence ample enough to reveal a quasi-parody of collaboration, one in which physical distance frustrated, and where the director became a somewhat unwitting student of the composer.

From the summer of 1942, Prokofiev himself lived in Alma-Ata, having been invited by Sergei Eisenstein to compose for *Ivan the Terrible*. This afforded proximity to the evacuated Mosfilm and Lenfilm, which Prokofiev found to be extremely lucrative. Over the course of a few short months, he composed music for a trio of films in rapid succession: *Tonia*, *Kotovskii*, and *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* (*Partizany v stepiakh Ukrainy*). Although their overtly propagandistic themes are distant from *Lermontov's* more tacit nationalism, Prokofiev found that each benefited from similar musical dramaturgy and suffered from the same symptoms of the industry's ills. Film music ultimately represented a way for Prokofiev to cope with the disruption brought on by war: it provided financial security when other official channels failed and offered an expedient me-

dium for what Simon Morrison calls messages "of questionable ethical virtue but unquestionable socio-political force."[3] Almost more than any other genre, film music helped Prokofiev summon an "official" response to his country's cause.

A Return to Film

During the first months of 1941 Prokofiev recovered from the lukewarm reception of *Semyon Kotko* (1939), his first Soviet opera. After the disappointment of this strongly topical work—based on Valentin Kataev's (1897-1986) Socialist Realist novella *I Am a Son of the Working People* (*Ia syn trudovogo naroda*, 1937)—he retreated from contemporary themes and began working on a new ballet, *Cinderella* (*Zolushka*, 1940-44). It was only slightly later in the spring that Gendel'shtein approached Prokofiev regarding *Lermontov*, likely directly before or after the composer's holiday in Sochi during March and April. Prokofiev readily agreed. Why he consented to such a commission at this point, however, remains unclear. It was not for lack of prior opportunity: in 1939 Soiuzdetfilm had offered Prokofiev a contract for the film *The Commandant of Bird Island* (*Komendant ptich'ego ostrova*), a drama about the Soviet frontier guard's efforts against Japanese spies, but this project seems to have held little interest for him.[4] Even another cinematic collaboration with Eisenstein could not tempt Prokofiev, the director having

[3] Simon Morrison, "Tonya: Reflections on an Unreleased Film and an Unpublished Score," *Three Oranges: The Journal of the Serge Prokofiev Foundation* 9 (2005): 15.

[4] Letter dated 14 January 1939, "Pis'ma i telegrammy kinodeiatelei i kinostudii Prokof'evu," unpublished, RGALI f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 809, l. 4. *The Commandant of the Bird Island* was directed by Vasilii Pronin and opened on 13 August 1939. Vano Muradeli (1908-70) was chosen as composer after Prokofiev declined.

asked him in 1939 to compose a score for his ultimately unrealized film *Fergana Canal*.[5] Although Prokofiev claimed that work on *Semyon Kotko* prevented him from tackling a new film project, even his wife Lina expressed surprise at her husband's refusal to renew his collaboration with Eisenstein.[6]

Lermontov may have promised some political expediency. Just as Prokofiev had turned to a collaborative effort on a non-contemporary theme (*Aleksandr Nevskii*) after the failure of his last topical composition (*The Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October*), so did *Lermontov* follow on the heels of *Semyon Kotko's* foundering. A more immediate reason, however, derives from the fact that *Lermontov*, as well the three other films discussed in this chapter, were less-publicized, relatively low-budget pictures directed by figures who could not boast the prestige and fame (or infamy) of Eisenstein. Unlike Prokofiev's projects with Eisenstein, *Lermontov* and the trio of war films were for Prokofiev relatively low-risk, minimal-commitment projects that nevertheless promised generous honoraria. Income was a relevant concern indeed: In March 1941, Prokofiev left his Spanish-born wife Lina (1897-1989) and began living with a Russian woman, Mira Mendel'son (1915-68). As the Soviet Union drifted toward what would be a long and unfathomably devastating war, Prokofiev remained responsible for Lina, his two sons Oleg and Sviatoslav, as well as Mendel'son, who would become his second wife.

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[5] *Fergana Canal* was never made. In a letter to Eisenstein dated 30 July 1939, Prokofiev indicated that he was too busy with *Semyon Kotko* and a staging of *Romeo and Juliet* in Leningrad to devote his attention to another film project. "Iz perepiski S. Prokof'eva i S. Eizenshteina, *Sovetskaia muzyka* 4 (1961): 106.

[6] Letter from Lina Prokofiev to Sergei Prokofiev, 20 August 1939. Lina was vacationing in Gagra on the Black Sea while her husband was in Kislovodsk. I am grateful to Simon Morrison for sharing his transcription of this letter with me.

Production, Pre-Engagement

After serving as chairman of the Committee on Cinema Affairs (KDK) for little over one year, the boorish Semyon Dukel'skii (1892-1960) relinquished his post on 3 June 1939 to take up an appointment as Commissar of the Soviet Navy.[7] One of the first orders of business tackled by his successor, Ivan Bol'shakov (1902-80), consisted of preparing a thematic plan for Soviet film production during 1939, 1940, and 1941.[8] Such blueprints, dictating genre, title, and quantity, were typical of the film industry beginning with the second half of the 1930s, yet they were rarely more than bureaucratic gestures carrying Politburo endorsement. The perpetual disorganization of film production in tandem with official censorship all but guaranteed that none of the industry blueprints were fulfilled.

Bol'shakov's thematic plan nevertheless was approved on 4 November 1939, and *Lermontov* appeared in a list of projects scheduled for 1940 (1941 marked the centenary jubilee of the poet).[9] By early 1941 writer Konstantin Paustovskii (1892-1968) finished a literary scenario and the Soiuzdetfilm administration chose Gendel'shtein, at the time a relatively unseasoned director, to produce the film.[10] The head of the Directive for Prop-

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[7] "Postanovlenie Politbiuro TsK VKP(b) 'O predsedatele i zam. predsedatelia Komiteta po delam kinematografii pri SNK SSSR'," 3 June 1939, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 1010, l. 25, published in K[irill] Anderson, ed., *Kremlovskii kinoteatr 1928-1953: Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005), 545.

[8] Ivan Bol'shakov began a career as a machine operator in a factory in Tula. After attending a "rabfak" in the 1920s (an institution designed to prepare workers for higher education), he studied economics in Moscow and served as an instructor for a professional organization (*profsoiuz*) of metal workers. From the early 1930s until his appointment to the Committee on Cinematography, Bol'shakov served as an advisor to the SNK (*Sovet narodnykh Komissarov*) on business-related matters.

[9] "Postanovlenie Politbiuro TsK VKP(b) o tematicheskom plane proizvodstva khudozhestvennykh kinokartin na 1939-1941 gg.," 4 November 1939, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 3, d. 1015, ll. 50, 100-102, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 567-69.

[10] Al'bert Aleksandrovich Gendel'shtein (1906-1981) graduated from the State School of Cinema (GIK) in 1927, where he was a classmate of Aleksandr Faintsimmer (the director of *Lieutenant Kizhe* and *Kotovskii*). He did not direct his first film until 1935, when he produced *Love and Hate* (*Liubov' i nenavist'*), for which he worked with Dmitri Shostakovich. In addition to making a number of short films during the first five-year plans, he co-directed two other films, *The Train Goes to Moscow* (*Poezd idet v*

aganda and Agitation, Giorgii Aleksandrov (1908-1961), however, gave Paustovskii's literary scenario an inauspicious review in his assessment of the film industry's plans for 1941, criticizing the author's portrayal of Lermontov as a "worldly young man" (*svetskii molodoi chelovek*). In Aleksandrov's estimation, Paustovskii furthermore had neglected to emphasize Lermontov's stand against the prerevolutionary nobility (a biographical detail that endeared the poet to the postrevolutionary bureaucracy).[11]

Gendel'shtein, anxious to get production underway, completely disregarded this early evaluation. With almost no effort given to transforming the literary scenario into a usable director's script, he began filming, compensating by consulting with his crew on-set before filming each scene. Gendel'shtein filmed each scene multiple times from different angles, "just in case," in the director's words, leaving much to be sorted out during later editing—an approach that drastically slowed the pace of production and wasted considerable quantities of film.[12]

On 15 May, Gendel'shtein telegraphed Prokofiev, asking him to confirm his interest in the film. Prokofiev agreed, and rapidly composed a quadrille and a waltz (nos. 1-2,

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Moskvu, 1938) with D. Pozhnanskii and *Exactly at Seven* (*Rovno v sem'*, 1941), with A. Row. After directing *Lermontov* during 1941-43, he gave up feature films and in the remainder of his career produced 15 documentary films. See entry in S. I. Iutkevich, ed, *Kino: Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (Moscow: Sovetskaia entsiklopediia, 1986), 92. Konstantin Paustovskii (1892-1968) was primarily a novelist and writer of short stories. During the war he served as a correspondent. *Lermontov* appears to be the only film scenario he authored. Soiuzdetfilm (a contraction of "Soiuz detskikh kinofil'mov," or Union of Children's Films) began producing films in 1936 after subsuming the resources and personnel of the recently dissolved Mezhrabpomfilm. Although Soiuzdetfilm primarily produced films for young audiences (including animated films), it did release occasional historical pictures like *Lermontov*. In 1948 the studio was rechristened the "Kinostudiia im. M. Gor'kogo" (Gorky Film Studio), the name it still carries today.

[11] "Dokladnaia zapiska nachal'nika upravleniia propagandy i agitatsii TsK VKP(b) G. F. Aleksandrova sekretariam TsK VKP(b) A. A. Andreevu, A. A. Zhdanovu, G. M. Malenkovu o plane proizvodstva khudozhestvennykh fil'mov na 1941 god," 31 March 1941, RGASPI, f. 17, op. 125, d. 71, l. 123-28, published in *Kino na voine*, 27.

[12] I. Turin, "Pochemu zapazdyvaet fil'm 'Lermontov'?," *Kino*, 13 June 1941, p. 4.

see Appendix I), presenting them in piano score with instrumental indications little more than two weeks later, on 27 May. Prokofiev's speed is not surprising in light of the ambitious deadlines of his contract: the short score needed to be completed by 15 June and fully orchestrated by 15 July.[13] Gendel'shtein's ineptness on the set, however, hampered progress, and while Prokofiev waited for further instructions—Gendel'shtein had never provided a full musical plan—the June deadline for the piano score came and went.[14] As of mid-June, when *Lermontov* was supposed to have been more than halfway completed, Gendel'shtein had already exceeded the film's total budget yet only filmed a quarter of the planned scenes. Large portions of the film, including a long sequence that was to be filmed on-site in the Caucasus Mountains, were nonexistent.[15]

The Nazi invasion on 22 June threw the troubled production of *Lermontov* into a death spin, and Soiuzdetfilm suspended the film's original completion date of 8 October. Mira Mendel'son would later claim (with exaggerated sentiment) that Prokofiev promptly ceased working on *Lermontov* and *Cinderella* and "only thought of what the immediate response to the stirring events should be."[16] On 8 August, Prokofiev was evacuated, not to Central Asia like many of his cinema colleagues, but to Nal'chik, a small town nestled

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[13] "Dogovory Prokof'eva s kinostudiiami i teatrami na napisanie muzyki," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, ll. 14-15.

[14] Prokofiev's assistant, Pavel Lamm (1882-1951), copied the full score of the waltz (No. 2) by 20 June and Prokofiev wrote that he hoped to send him another three numbers in five to seven days, but changes to the film had prevented this. Letter to Lamm from Prokofiev dated 20 June 1941, RGALI, f. 2743, op. 1, ed. khr. 182, ll. 2-3, published in "Pis'ma S. S. Prokof'eva k P. A. Lammu," in *Sergei Prokof'ev: Vospominaniia, pis'ma, stat'i,* ed. Marina Rakhmanova (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Deka-VC', 2004), 295.

[15] Turin, "Pochemu," p. 4. Gendel'shtein and his crew were scheduled to travel to the Caucasus on 25 June; the outbreak of war prevented this.

[16] M[ira] Prokof'eva, "Vospominanie o vstrechakh i rabote S. S. Prokof'eva s S. M. Eizenshteinom," manuscript, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 3.

in the foothills of the Caucasus Mountains in the far south of Russia. As the situation in the USSR grew ever graver throughout the fall, Prokofiev began to consider *Lermontov* a lost project and by mid-September he began to demand the unpaid honorarium promised him. A draft of Prokofiev's first letter to the studio's bookkeeper dated 15 September coincidentally records the composer's disquiet at being taken far from his home; on the reverse he had drafted a note to his estranged wife who had remained in Moscow, "I have not heard a single word from you and I'm worried … how is your health, Sviatoslav's, Oleg's? Did Sviatoslav enroll at the University? Is Oleg going to school?"[17] Prokofiev had increasing worries of his own. Muzfond, the financial division of the Moscow Composers' Union, had promised him and other exiled union members a monthly subsidy that was to maintain them during the evacuation. This support, however, never materialized during the difficult autumn and winter of 1941. On 14 December Prokofiev wrote to the head of Muzfond, Levon Atovmian (1901-73), complaining that, in addition to not having heard from his wife and children since the beginning of the war, he was struggling to get by without official benefaction.[18]

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[17] Draft letter, dated 15 September 1941, "Pis'mo S.S.Prokof'eva Gaiamovu Aleksandru Iakovlevichu," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 60.

[18] Prokofiev first mentions the monthly subsidy in a letter to Atovmian dated 4 September 1941 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 151, l. 2). Letters to Atovmian dated 17 November and 14 December confirm that the stipends had not yet been processed (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 55, l. 1; RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 151, l. 3). Translations of these letters will be published in Nelly Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence, 1933-52," trans. and ed. Simon Morrison, in *Prokofiev and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, forthcoming 2008). I am grateful to Simon Morrison and Nelly Kravetz for sharing this material with me in advance of publication.

Context and Wartime Compromises

The difficulties of *Lermontov's* production were not isolated. In the mid-1930s the Soviet film industry already had begun to show signs of serious distress, something that a blockbuster success such as *Aleksandr Nevskii* tends to obscure. According to historian Valerii Fomin, a cluster of hurdles hindered the production of films, including gross neglect in modernizing production equipment, severe censorship, inept management, and a stagnant talent pool.[19] Boris Shumiatskii's (1886-1938) near obsession with creating a Soviet Hollywood, *Kinogorod*, drew his attention away from the crucial task of modernizing film studios, leaving directors and operators to grapple with cameras and sound recording equipment of miserably poor quality. Theaters were in similar need of updating; in 1938, 60 percent of the Soviet Union's movie houses were still not equipped for sound film. What Fomin describes as the "severe bureaucratic order" imposed by the KDK beginning in 1939 (i.e. thematic plans, official readings of scenarios, and official screenings of final cuts) was extraordinarily ineffective paired with "scandalous mismanagement" at the studio level (such as the lack of oversight that allowed Gendel'shtein to squander huge quantities of film). Often boundaries were blurred; as the example of *Kotovskii* will demonstrate, scenarios were subject to vigorous and indiscriminate unofficial censorship by other directors even before being submitted to the KDK for official scrutiny. Taken together, these obstacles combined to significantly hinder an expeditious path to the screen. As mentioned in the Introduction, a typical Soviet film took an average of two or three months to produce in the 1920s, while by the latter half of the 1930s the figure had bloated to fourteen months. Wartime only aggravated the situation; in the

[19] The following paragraph summarizes Fomin's key points (*Kino na voine,* 14-16).

case of two of the films for which Prokofiev composed during 1941-42, *Lermontov* and *Kotovskii*, production lasted more than two years. Finally, the talent base of the industry was stunted; directors with adequate training and experience were few. As the historian Sheila Fitzpatrick has argued, most professional fields in the Soviet Union experienced considerable personnel turnover during the late 1930s due to the Great Purges.[20] Cinema, however, appears to have remained relatively static in terms of labor force; arrests tended to target administrative figures not involved directly in productions.[21] Thus the vanguard of Soviet directors came of age at the end of the silent era, long before music in film was even a concept, let alone standardized. All of these factors contributed not only to extraordinary inefficiency (for example, of ninety planned films for 1938, only thirty-four were completed) but a decrease in artistic integrity and a generally depressed atmosphere throughout the industry. In the context of these problems, *Lermontov's* disorganized production, although extreme, is best understood as indicative of much larger worries.

The frenetic mobilization in all sectors of Soviet society and culture during the first months of the war seemed to presage improved efficiency in cinema. On the day of the surprise Nazi invasion, Grigorii Aleksandrov ordered Bol'shakov to exchange all films in Moscow theaters for patriotically-themed classics. Within several hours, *Minin and Pozharskii*, *Suvorov*, *Chapaev, Shchors*, and, perhaps most importantly, the malevolently anti-German *Aleksandr Nevskii* (which had been shelved for nearly twenty-one months while the German-Soviet anti-aggression pact was in illusory force) were show-

[20] This is one of the main theses of Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[21] Jamie Miller, "The Purges of Soviet Cinema, 1929-38," in *Studies in Russian & Soviet Cinema* 1 (2007): 5-26. See also Jamie Miller, "Educating the Filmmakers: The State Institute of Cinematography in the 1930s," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 85 (2007): 478.

ing in the capital's movie houses.[22] Conversely, the KDK banned all films that viewed the British—the new Soviet ally—in a negative light, notably Pavel Petrov-Bytov's *The Defeat of Iudenich* (*Razgrom Iudenicha*, 1941).[23] Compared to the industry's normal unproductiveness, the weeks following the invasion were a whirlwind of activity. On 23 June Bol'shakov addressed Moscow-based directors, enjoining them to continue work as usual while preparing more experienced operators to film on the front lines. On the third day following the invasion, the first footage from the front arrived in Moscow, and by the end of a week it was showing in the capital's theaters. Bol'shakov also initiated the production of collections of short war-themed films known as *kinosborniki*.[24] The first two *kinosborniki* were ready by the end of July, and over the next year crews readied another dozen.

The Nazi invasion caught the Soviet Union woefully unprepared; evidence exists that those who tried to warn Stalin of the signs of an impending invasion were executed as warmongering foreign spies. Thus heavy industry and the government had to be relocated following the invasion—it was common during the fall of 1941 for entire factories to be dismantled and transported by rail away from the encroaching *Wehrmacht*. As an entire nation literally shifted eastward, its cultural institutions followed suit. In June, a committee on evacuation already was organized under the auspices of the Council of

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[22] "Iz vospominanii I. G. Bol'shakova," in *Kino na voine*, 89.

[23] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 173.

[24] The first few collections contained instructional shorts such as *What We Should Do During an Air Raid Alert* (*Chto my dolzhny delat' po signalu "Vozdushnaia trevoga"*). The fifth *kinosbornik* offered two documentaries on the war. The remaining collections were comprised of fictional shorts called *kinonovelly* (literally "film-novellas"). *Kinosborniki* nos. 1 through 7 were produced in Moscow, the remaining seven were made during the evacuation in Alma-Ata. "Iz vospominanii I. G. Bol'shakova," in *Kino na voine*, 89.

People's Ministers (Sovnarkom); Bol'shakov used his close ties with the organization to secure the evacuation of the nation's film industry to various locations throughout Central Asia. As Mosfilm and Lenfilm personnel traveled to Alma–Ata, Gendel'shtein's studio, Soiuzdetfim, relocated to Stalinabad (from 1961 Dushanbe); the uprooting prompted Gendel'shtein and his colleagues to give serious consideration to the fate of projects in production prior to 22 June. Raw materials and other resources for filmmaking were limited in quantity, and it was crucial that each film in production be imbued with clear patriotic and propagandistic sentiment.

Production, Engagement

The KDK indicated that if production of *Lermontov* were to resume, the "patriotic resonance" of the scenario would need to be markedly bolstered. This official recommendation prompted a revision that delayed the production until 24 February 1942, more than eight months after the Nazi invasion.[25] By this point, the eastward movement of the front lines had pushed Prokofiev and other high-ranking figures further south to Tbilisi, Georgia. When the director of Soiuzdetfilm arrived in the Georgian capital on business, he used the opportunity to coax Prokofiev back to the project.[26] Prokofiev agreed, even though more than 1,000 miles separated him from the studio, and despite the fact that he had recycled one of the *Lermontov* waltzes (no. 2) in his new opera *War and Peace*

[25] Paustovskii's scenario is preserved in six different closed files at RGALI (f. 2119, op. 1, ed. khr. 163-168). At the time of writing, the Paustovskii museum in Moscow refused permission to consult these materials, so it was impossible to determine exactly how many distinct versions of the scenario exist or the nature of the revisions.

[26] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 13.

(*Voina i mir,* first version 1941-43). By the beginning of May, nevertheless, he was once again on board, which elicited a gushing response from Gendel'shtein:[27]

> I am simply unimaginably happy that you have agreed to continue working on the film *Lermontov*. [Work on] the film, despite very difficult conditions, continues and I hope it will be finished. I remember our artistic plans with great pleasure, and with even more pleasure the music you had already written [for the film]. I am not in the least upset that a portion of this music has appeared in your opera [*War and Peace*]. If you find it necessary to use this music in the film, I shall not be at all against it.[28]

Money was likely the main reason why Prokofiev did not hesitate to return to such a troubled project.[29] Foreshadowed in his September letter to Soiuzdetfilm's bookkeeper, a great deal of Prokofiev's correspondence began to concern finances. Indeed, when he rejoined the project in May, the studio still owed him a significant portion of his honorarium. Completing his score must have seemed the easiest and surest way of securing payment.[30]

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[27] Prokofiev's and Gendel'shtein's correspondence to each other is preserved in three separate files at RGALI (f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 491; f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 166; f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 61). At the time of writing, the first two files remained classified. The bulk of this correspondence, however, has been published in somewhat truncated form in M. G. Kozlova, "Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu," *Muzykal'naia akademiia* 16 (1983): 18-19.

[28] Letter from Gendelshtien to Prokofiev, 7 May 1942 (Kozlova, "Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu," 18).

[29] On *War and Peace*, see A. Volkov, *"Voina i mir" Prokof'eva: Opyt analiza variantov opery* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1976), 17; Malcolm Brown, "Prokofiev's *War and Peace*: A Chronicle," *The Musical Quarterly* 63 (1977): 297-326.

[30] In a letter to the Soiuzdetfilm administration dated 27 July 1942, Prokofiev indicates that he will be returning the money that was promised to him for work on the film during the months that were interrupted by the outbreak of war (July-September 1941). However, it is clear that Prokofiev had never received full payment, as Souizdetfilm still owed him 1,745 rubles even after he had returned his honorarium from the prior year. See letters from Prokofiev to Soiuzdetfilm dated 30 September 1941 and 27 July 1942, "Pis'ma, telegrammy i zaiavlenie Prokof'eva v Glavnoe upravlenie khudozhestvennykh fil'mov i kinostudiiakh o svoei muzyke k fil'mam," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 338, ll. 2, 5.

On 23 May 1942, Prokofiev and Gendel'shtein for the first time agreed on a musical plan for *Lermontov* (see Appendix V).[31] Prokofiev then rapidly finished another two numbers—a waltz (no. 4) and a five-measure trumpet fanfare (no. 5) that his assistant, Pavel Lamm (1882-1951), copied and dispatched to Stalinabad on 25 May.[32] For the polonaise indicated in the plan, Prokofiev saved time by using verbatim the one he had composed six years earlier for an unrealized stage production (1936) of Pushkin's *Boris Godunov*.[33] There was ample reason to rush: four days later, on 29 May, he and Mendel'son departed for Alma-Ata to join Eisenstein on the set of *Ivan the Terrible*.[34] Problems, however, followed Prokofiev to Central Asia: Gendel'shtein was not satisfied with the purloined polonaise (no. 3), as it was not sufficiently "monumental" or, in the director's words, not adequately "Petersburgsky" ("Petrburgskii").[35] Criticism coming from a film director, especially one Prokofiev perceived as second-rate, was unexpected. Prokofiev retaliated in a letter to Gendel'shtein, acerbically mocking the director's vocabulary: "probably [the polonaise] was simply played for you badly, resulting in

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[31] "'Lermontov,' Muzyka k fil'mu, plany muzykal'nogo ozvuchivaniia fil'ma," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 101, l. 3.

[32] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 25 May 1942 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 61, l. 1). An undated letter from Lamm to Prokofiev (but addressed to Tbilisi) furthermore mentions work on the film score (RGALI, f. 2743, op. 1, ed. khr. 182, l. 9), published in "Pis'ma S. S. Prokof'eva k P. A. Lammu," 297). Mira Mendel'son claims that Prokofiev also composed a "Gallop", but this does not appear to survive. She may have meant the "Quadrille" (No. 1). RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 14.

[33] Prokofiev, in fact, removed the pages containing the polonaise directly from his manuscript of *Boris Godunov*, see note on this in Marina Rakhmanova, Introduction to Sergei Prokofiev, *Ivan Groznyi: Muzyka k fil'mu Sergeia Eizenshteina* (Hamburg: Sikorski, 1997), 248.

[34] Mira Mendel'son indicates that she and Prokofiev left Tbilisi on 29 May (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 14). The exact date of Prokofiev's arrival is unknown, but it is no later than 16 June; the composer's correspondence from that date forward indicates that he was in Kazakhstan.

[35] Letter from Gendel'shtein to Prokofiev, dated 18 June 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 18-19).

inadequate monumentality and 'Petersburgness'."[36] (Incidentally, after Lamm finished copying the polonaise out in full score, Prokofiev removed it from the piano score of *Lermontov* and recycled it a yet another time in Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*, where it accompanies the opening scene in the Polish court of King Sigismund.)

At the beginning of July Gendel'shtein announced that the opening of the film had been truncated and rewritten, modifications that seem to have been aimed at expediting the production rather than meeting the demands of any official censorship. These mid-production revisions likely reminded Prokofiev of the very similar and unpleasant experience he had had with *Lieutenant Kizhe* nearly a decade earlier (see Chapter 1). The *coup de grâce*, however, was the director's letter of 10 August, in which he again criticized Prokofiev's work. For entirely vague reasons he was not satisfied with a new waltz Prokofiev had composed in July (no. 7) to replace the original that had been subsumed into *War and Peace* (no. 2).[37] Prokofiev refused to allow the "cantankerous" director use of the original waltz in the film, which in turn only seemed to fuel the director's desire for it.[38] Gendel'shtein also irritated Prokofiev with his confidence that the composer would abandon Alma-Ata for Stalinabad. Prokofiev's icy reply reveals his annoyance at the presumption of *Lermontov's* priority: under no circumstances could the original waltz be used, and his traveling to the studio was out of the question.[39] He furthermore refused to compose any more music until Gendel'shtein sent the appropriate rushes

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[36] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 8 July 1942 (ibid, 19).

[37] The original *Lermontov* waltz (no. 2) became part of scene two of *War and Peace*.

[38] Letter from Gendel'shtein to Prokofiev, dated 10 August 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 19).

[39] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 26 August 1942 (ibid, 19).

to Alma-Ata.[40] Knowing that fulfilling such a request would have been extraordinary during peacetime, let alone during wartime evacuation, Prokofiev ostensibly hoped to hasten the end of his association with Gendel'shtein. Neither composer nor director compromised, however. Gendel'shtein was under pressure to bring the two-year project to fruition, and official hearings of *War and Peace* in Moscow and the commission for *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* diverted Prokofiev's attention in different directions.[41] Cutting his losses, Prokofiev sent a telegram to Gendel'shtein recommending that Vasilii Nechaev (1895-1956), complete the score "in [Prokofiev's] style."[42] Gendel'shtein took no notice of this suggestion and instead turned to Venidikt Pushkov, a composer who was living out the evacuation in Stalinabad (the director likely also knew that Pushkov had composed for Sergei Gerasimov's 1941 screen version of Lermontov's *Masquerade* and would likely be familiar with the style demanded by *Lermontov*).[43] When *Lermontov* finally premiered in Moscow on 6 July 1943, both Prokofiev's and Pushkov's music accompanied Gendel'shtein's images.

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[40] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 8 July 1942; in a separate letter dated three days later (11 July), Prokofiev complains that the updated beginning to film is unclear (ibid, 19).

[41] Directors were strongly encouraged to produce films rapidly, not only to feed the wartime propaganda and entertainment industry, but also to save the studios money during the difficult war years. There are numerous examples of production teams that were officially recognized for producing films ahead of schedule, see, for example, RGALI, f. 2453, op. 1, ed. khr. 2, ll. 2–4.

[42] Telegram from Gendel'shtein to Prokofiev, dated 13 November 1942; Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 16 November 1942; Telegram from Gendel'shtein to Prokofiev, dated 16 November 1942; Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 17 November 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 19).

[43] Venidikt Pushkov was born in Saratov, where he received his early musical education. After studying composition with V. Shcherbakov at the Leningrad Conservatory, he became a music teacher, and, beginning in 1946, served on the faculty of the Leningrad Conservatory. Although he was equally versed in art music and film music, he was the most prolific in the latter category, composing for at least thirty-nine films between 1934 and 1965.

Illusory Collaboration

Paustovskii fashioned his scenario around a pair of formal Petersburg balls; at the first Lermontov learns of the fatal wounding of his idol Pushkin in a duel, and at the second Lermontov himself is challenged to a duel that will end his life.[44] These two scenes demanded a great deal of diegetic dance music, not only to accompany the main event, but also to imbue the film with the appropriate nineteenth-century aristocratic *couleur locale*. If in *Lieutenant Kizhe* the ubiquitous military tattoos evoked Imperial Petersburg, here it was the characteristic rhythmic patters of the aristocracy's favorite pastime. With genre and style relatively fixed, waltzes, gallops, and polonaises were "music to order" that did not require a great deal of input from the director, let alone prior viewing of rushes. That Prokofiev began with dance numbers for the film thus is not surprising, as they could be written quickly (or easily borrowed in the case of the *Boris Godunov* polonaise) without a visit to the set.

To be sure, Prokofiev's early involvement in the production was not calculated. Eisenstein's use of Prokofiev's advance numbers in the "Battle on Ice" sequence of *Aleksandr Nevskii* during filming has become a well-worn anecdote (Chapter 3); similarly Mikhail Romm ostensibly had hoped to use Prokofiev's score for *Queen of Spades*

[44] The film opens on a grand Petersburg ball in 1837, where the young poet Lermontov anxiously awaits his first meeting with the great poet Pushkin. When Lermontov learns that Pushkin has been fatally wounded in a duel, he pours out his emotions into a poem that, in addition to damning Puskhin's assailant, offered sharp criticism of the autocracy. For his rebellious efforts, Tsar Nicholas I exiles Lermontov to the Caucasus. While in exile, Lermontov befriends the Decembrist A. I. Odoevskii, and begins work on his best-known poems. When the poet is allowed to return to Petersburg, he does so with renewed confidence in his abilities, and in his place as Pushkin's successor. Lermontov's detractors, however, prove quite aggressive and succeed during the second ball scene in provoking a duel between Lermontov and the son of the French ambassador. For his hooliganism, Lermontov is spared Siberia and instead sent to the Tenginskii regiment, which is actively engaged in a campaign in the Caucasus. Lermontov is popularly held up as a hero and symbol of military glory. The poet's enemies, however, give him no rest and in the final hyper-romanticized moments of the film, Lermontov engages in another duel, and this time perishes by the hand of his jealous former friend, Martynov.

as a foundation for his ill-fated production (Chapter 2). But Gendel'shtein displayed no such innovation, and, despite the prompt installments of Prokofiev's score, he chose not to use them during filming. During *Lermontov's* ball scenes, for example, we rarely see the revelers' feet as they traverse the ballroom floor. Close scrutiny reveals that there is no coordination at the gestural level—the movements of the dancers' feet fall inelegantly out-of-step with the pulse of Prokofiev's music. Rather than arrange for a more convincing synergy of sound and image, Gendel'shtein opts for an awkward *plan américain* that crops the crème of St. Petersburg high society at their knees.

The musical plan Gendel'shtein produced in May 1941 (Appendix V), although significantly different in design from the one that the film actually follows, reveals the relatively simple functions he hoped music would serve. Recurring passages underscore basic parallels, for example, Pushkin's "death theme" (no. 3) also plays at Lermontov's own undoing (no. 17), aurally summoning the popular conception of the younger poet as Pushkin's heir. Gendel'shtein's indications as to the emotional tone of music are remarkably scant, save for a curious note at no. 16, which indicates that the music preceding Lermontov's death should reflect his mental condition, "not tragic, but more life-affirming, cheerful." The earlier criticisms of Lermontov's lack of necessary Socialist-Realist patriotism and heroism clearly had left an impression.

The plan's most striking detail is its appropriation of existing nineteenth-century repertoire (nos. 1, 2, 13, and 14). As Lermontov is sent into quasi-exile in the Caucasus, Gendel'shtein hoped to use an "old song" taken directly from an anthology (no. 14). Likewise, the opening of the film was to have been accompanied not by Prokofiev's music, but by excerpts from Daniel-François-Esprit Auber's opera *La muette de Portici*

(1828). This particular opera is a puzzling choice, for, apart from possessing a great deal of dance music, it has little outward resonance with *Lermontov*. The libretto is fashioned around a popular rebellion, and it may be that Gendel'shtein hoped that the spirit of the opera would resonate with the ersatz insurrection represented by Lermontov's stand against the aristocracy. In Stalin's pantheon of Russian heroes, after all, Lermontov's deeds had to be valorized to the point that they could be seen as a harbinger of the October Revolution. Prokofiev, however, found the prospect of pilfering from Auber unappealing. He had long been loath to repeat the works of others, even to the point of avoiding the quotation of folk song; any borrowed material in his compositions is systematically revamped.[45] When Prokofiev acquiesced and sent Gendel'shtein selections from *La muette de Portici*, they were painstakingly developed; he felt the revisions were justified by Auber's "perfunctory" treatment of the original material.[46]

Gendel'shtein's surprise revisions at the beginning of July irritated Prokofiev. The scenes that employed the music he had fashioned from *La muette de Portici* had been cut, and worse, he was goaded by "blunders" he detected in the revised script. These infelicities were announced in a communiqué to the director: "never at a party," for example, "where dignitaries of Benkendorf's type play cards, were children allowed to play tag," and "no prince would boast of his high birth so embarrassingly as Vasilchikov." Prokofiev's parting line to the director, "I hope that you will agree with me and smooth the edges [of the script]" reveals—in addition to underscoring the composer's often

[45] See, for example, Stephen D. Press, *Prokofiev's Ballets for Diaghilev* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 137.

[46] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 16 August 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 19).

caustic nature—his conception of his status and place in the project.[47] Indulged by years of joint work with talent such as Diaghilev and more recently Eisenstein, he was most frustrated by Gendel'shtein's unwillingness to enter into an equal collaboration. Prokofiev was surely reminded of his telling Eisenstein in 1939 that that film music did not hold much interest for him because it invariably served as "some sort of appendage, not deserving of any particular attention."[48]

Owing to the physical distance separating director and composer, letters and telegrams conveniently chronicle nearly their entire work together, revealing that Prokofiev's instruction of Gendel'shtein was not limited to identifying gaffes in the script. Several times Prokofiev outlined his approach to film music in rather basic terms, catering to the ineptness he sensed in Gendel'shtein's abilities. The director's updated musical plan, for example, called for two extended "symphonic pieces" that would function nondiegetically outside of the ball scenes (nos. 3 and 17). Prokofiev bristled:

> Your idea to combine [individual] musical numbers into one large piece [...] appears to me to be impractical. Don't forget that you will shorten or lengthen your scenes ten times until the very moment of the film's release, and each time the music will have to be mutilated if it is written as one continuous piece. If the music is written in […] individual pieces then all of your changes will not injure it. My method is more practical, more flexible, and in the final reckoning will give the best results. Your method would be good if your montage was set in stone once and for all, but this never happens in the movie business.[49]

Beyond deriding Gendel'shtein's competence, Prokofiev's insistence tacitly points to a lack of established procedure. Gendel'shtein, similar to his colleague Faintsimmer, never

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[47] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 11 July 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 19).

[48] Letter from Prokofiev to Eisenstein dated 30 July 1939 ("Iz perepiski," 106).

[49] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 8 July 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 19).

considered it unusual, not to mention problematic, to deal with music before images had been committed to film. The directors' maladroit handling of music is symptomatic of their training, which was barely sufficient for matters of filming and editing, let alone how to properly approach the specialized issue of music. It bears recalling that what Shumiatskii had admired most about Hollywood was its standardized, rigid, assembly-line efficiency.[50] Soviet productions, to which Prokofiev's experience repeatedly testifies, were fluid in procedure, and often inefficiently so. Music might be ordered before (*Queen of Spades*), during production (*Lieutenant Kizhe* and *Lermontov*), or after (as would be the case with *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*). With the dual obstacles of official censorship on the one hand and directorial inexperience on the other, productions were more often than not a quagmire of delays, modifications, and cuts in which the musical "appendage" suffered much. As we shall see in more detail below, one of the main criticisms of film music during the war years was its lack of clearly identified dramaturgical function, a shortcoming aggravated by the stumbling blocks of the industry as a whole.[51]

With the orchestration of *War and Peace* occupying his attention, Prokofiev had no desire to travel to Stalinabad to be near *Lermontov's* production (he furthermore knew well that living conditions were much worse in other areas of Central Asia). It is not at all surprising that the music Prokofiev did compose for the film does not venture beyond short, highly sectionalized dance numbers—ones that could be shortened, lengthened,

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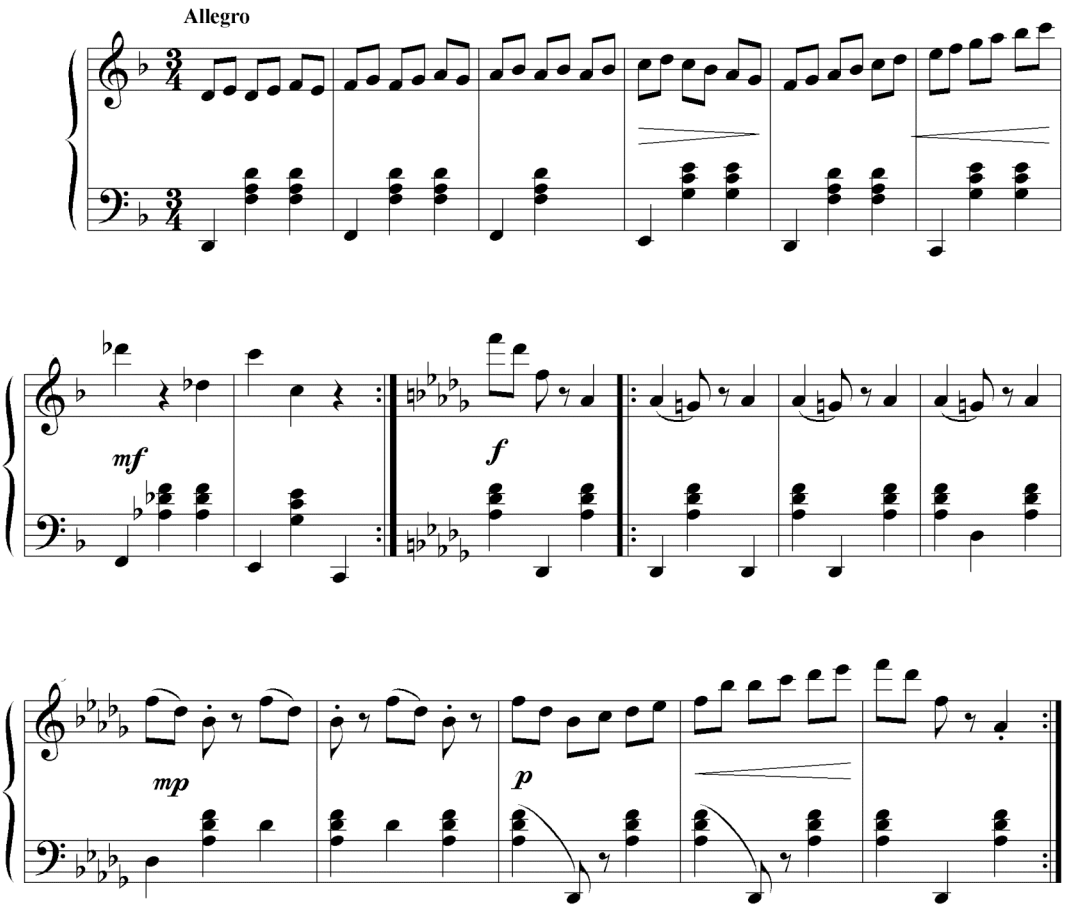
[50] Richard Taylor, "Boris Shumyatsky and Soviet Cinema in the 1930s," in *Inside the Film Factory: New Approaches to Russian and Soviet Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 1991), esp. 206.

[51] See Nikolai Kriukov's speech at the Moscow "Dom Kino" during a conference held 13-15 February 1945, transcribed in "Itogi raboty Sovetskoi khudozhestvennoi kinematografii za 1944 g.," RGALI, f. 2923, op. 1, ed. khr. 140. A translation is in Appendix VII.

and looped as needed. The waltz he composed prior to his departure to Alma-Ata in May 1942 is formally conventional, yet strikingly compressed (example 4.1).



Example 4.1. *Lermontov*, "Masqurade" Waltz, mm. 5-21[Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 99, l. 18 ob.]

One of Prokofiev's less inspired pieces, the number begins with a nondescript, insipid melody in d minor. The composer's typical humor is not lost, however: the sudden appearance of the flattened tonic in measure 7 collapses to C major in measure 8 before we are immediately jolted up back up to D-flat major for the second strain (a favorite harmonic technique of Prokofiev). The harmonic maneuvers of measures 7-8 complement the hemiolas of measures 13-21, which help lend a patina of rhythmic complexity.

Both are couched in a highly compact formal framework; the two fleeting strains shown in example 4.1 comprise more than a third of the musical material of the entire number. Prokofiev directed Lamm to telescope the piece when copying out the full score, referencing the following formal scheme:

Intro (4m.) | A (8m.) | A (8m.) | B (8m.) | B (8 m.) | A (8m.) | C (4m.) |
A (8m.) | C (4m.) | A (8m.) | B (8m.) | A (8m.) | C (4m.) | {Trio follows}

[A: mm. 5-13, B: mm. 14-21, C: a short bridge not shown in example 4.1]

Prokofiev wrote to Gendel'shtein: "[the numbers] are composed in such a fashion that having played the number through once, you may repeat again and stop wherever it is appropriate."[52] To Gendel'shtein's credit, his insistence that Prokofiev present himself at the studio had much to do with the extended "symphonic numbers"—these demanded much more from the composer than formal sleights-of-hand.

The type of "building-block" maneuvering shown above allowed Prokofiev to dash off numbers posthaste. But it also reveals Prokofiev's continued commitment to *dostupnost' massam*; the verbatim iterations of the waltz's strains making a calculated impression on the viewer's memory. Prokofiev refused to cede his devotion to comprehensibility:

> I am against using […] a group of fleeting pieces in the film: the viewer does not remember a single motive from this mixture after leaving [the theater]. On the other hand, if the motive is repeated persistently, it remains in the memory and becomes popular. […] This does not result from any stinginess on my part, but rather from experience.[53]

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[52] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 25 May 1942 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 61, l. 1).

[53] Letter from Prokofiev to Gendel'shtein, dated 8 July 1942 (Kozlova, *S. S. Prokof'ev pishet muzyku k fil'mu*, 19). Prokofiev had made a similar claim in 1940 about his opera *Semyon Kotko*, contrasting it to Wagner's *Götterdämmerung,* which "was for a long time felt to be all noise without melody, whereas in reality there are too many melodies piled one on another." Sergei Prokof'ev, "Semyon Kotko," RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 321, ll. 5-7, published in Viktor Varunts, *Prokof'ev o Prokof'eve* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1991), 184.

Prokofiev's concern for motivic and thematic unity, however, fell on deaf ears. On 6 July 1943, well over two years after production began, *Lermontov* premiered in the Soviet Union.[54] It was only after the film's opening in Moscow that Prokofiev learned of its fate and that of the music he had composed. In late July, Mendel'son wrote in her journal:

> In the evening we watched the film *Lermontov*. Only recently did we learn from the newspaper that *Lermontov* was playing in Moscow theaters. We were unsure of how the film's music had been handled, since we had had no contact with Gendel'shtein after our departure from Alma-Ata to Moscow. Seryozha was curious whether they had used his music (three waltzes, a quadrille, and a polonaise). We guessed who the second composer was (V. V. Pushkov). […] Seryozha felt the film was not too bad, but not too good. And this was true—it was very clear. Of Seryozha's work they used principally the dance music. Pushkov wrote music for the dramatic moments as well as one waltz. Seryozha found that what he had written was not bad; although the mixture of his music with that of another composer alternately irritated and amused him.[55]

Critics pummeled *Lermontov* in the nation's newspapers in a fashion that must have reminded Gendel'shtein of the criticism that he had been so quick to ignore at the outset of production. V. Zhdanov decried the film as a string of facts devoid of any reference to class struggle, shortcomings that the director tried to hide by calling his work "pages of the biography of a great poet." L. Barn deemed it simply "incoherent and fragmentary."[56] Writing for *Pravda*, Sergei Borodin lamented that "in the film there is nothing that would explain or would bring to light the poets' growth, his interests, his relation to

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[54] Aleksandr Macheret, et al, eds., *Sovetskie khudozhestvennye fil'my* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1961), 2: 317.

[55] GTsMMK f. 33, ed. khr. 1413, l. 65, quoted in "Pis'ma S. S. Prokof'eva k P. A. Lammu," in *Sergei Prokof'ev: Vospominaniia, pis'ma, stat'i,* ed. Marina Rakhmanova (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Deka-VC', 2004), 295.

[56] V. Zhdanov, "Ob istoricheskom fil'me," *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, 25 July 1943, p. 3. L. Barn, "Fil'm o Lermontove," *Literatura i iskusstvo*, 17 July 1943, p. 2.

the people, his artistic milieu."[57] The evaluation of prominent critic and writer Viktor Shklovskii (1893-1984) in the newspaper *Trud* was perhaps the most damning: "Two years of work, many costumes made and—no film!"[58] Although Prokofiev had completed three other film projects and moved on from Alma-Ata by the time of this critical maelstrom, the scathing nature of the reviews must have been nevertheless hard to forget.

Alma-Ata, Wartime Eldorado

When Lenfilm and Mosfilm arrived in Alma-Ata in October 1941, the KDK ordered their temporary integration with the local Alma-Ata studio to form the Central United Studio of Art Films (*Tsentral'naia ob"edinennaia kinostudiia khudozhestvennykh fil'mov*) or TsOKS.[59] Film music remained an incidental concern during the evacuation process and subsequent studio restructuring: only one full-time composer, Nikolai Kriukov (1908-61) traveled to Alma-Ata with the cadres from Mosfilm and Lenfilm, and it was not until 8 December that the TsOKS administration appointed him music director of the studio. His assumption of the position is not at all surprising; as a film music specialist and staff composer at Mosfilm, he had thirteen scores to his credit prior to the Nazi invasion, including one for Mikhail Romm's enormously successful 1939 blockbuster *Lenin in 1918* (*Lenin v 1918 godu*).

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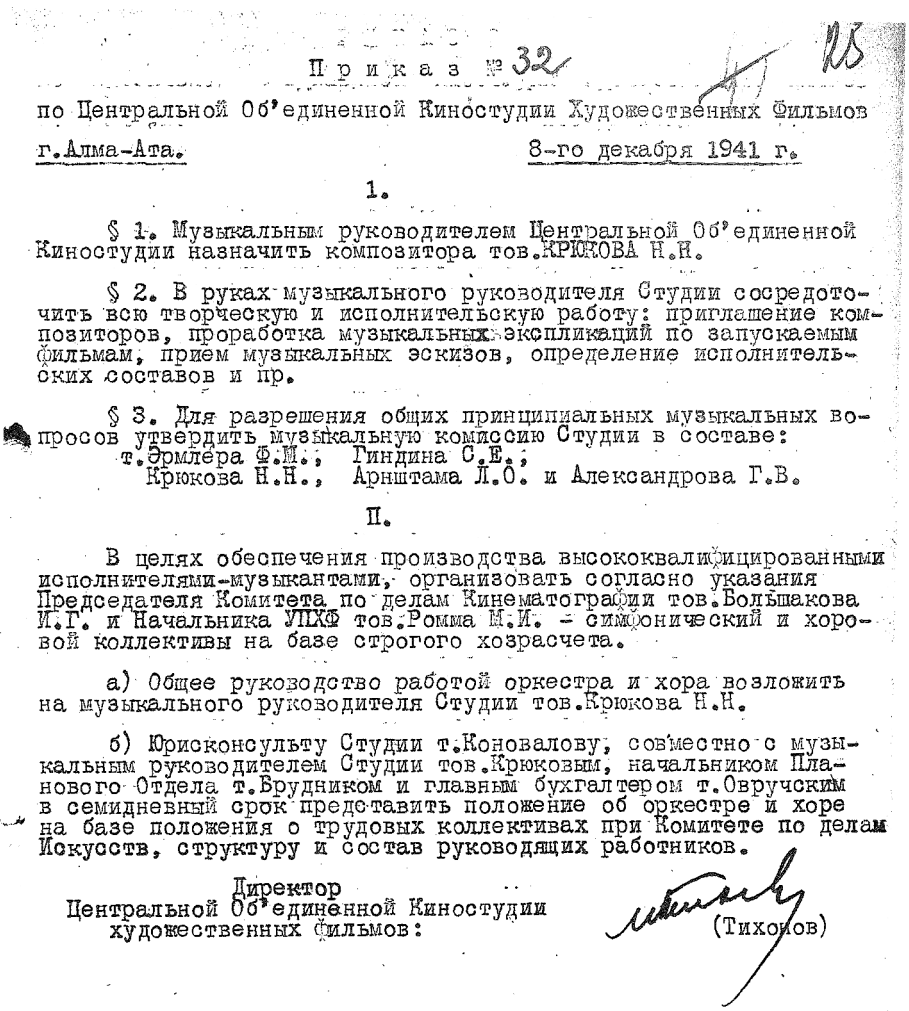
[57] Sergei Borodin, "Neudavshiisia fil'm," *Pravda*, 31 July 1943, p. 4.

[58] V. Shklovskii, "Listy, vyrvannye iz biografii i plokho prochtennye," *Trud*, 25 July 1943, p. 4.

[59] "Prikaz po Komitetu po delam Kinematografii pri SNK SSSR," 15 November 1941, unpublished, RGALI, f. 2453, op. 1, ed. khr. 2, l. 5.



П р и к а з № 32

по Центральной Об'единенной Киностудии Художественных Фильмов

г.Алма-Ата. 8-го декабря 1941 г.

I.

§ 1. Музыкальным руководителем Центральной Об'единенной Киностудии назначить композитора тов.КРЮКОВА Н.Н.

§ 2. В руках музыкального руководителя Студии сосредоточить всю творческую и исполнительскую работу: приглашение композиторов, проработка музыкальных экспликаций по запускаемым фильмам, прием музыкальных эскизов, определение исполнительских составов и пр.

§ 3. Для разрешения общих принципиальных музыкальных вопросов утвердить музыкальную комиссию Студии в составе:
т.Эрмлера Ф.М., Гиндина С.Е.,
Крюкова Н.Н., Арнштама Л.О. и Александрова Г.В.

II.

В целях обеспечения производства высококвалифицированными исполнителями-музыкантами, организовать согласно указания Председателя Комитета по делам Кинематографии тов.Большакова И.Г. и Начальника УПХФ тов.Ромма М.И. - симфонический и хоровой коллективы на базе строгого хозрасчета.

а) Общее руководство работой оркестра и хора возложить на музыкального руководителя Студии тов.Крюкова Н.Н.

б) Юрисконсульту Студии т.Коновалову, совместно с музыкальным руководителем Студии тов.Крюковым, начальником Планового Отдела т.Брудником и главным бухгалтером т.Овручским в семидневный срок представить положение об оркестре и хоре на базе положения о трудовых коллективах при Комитете по делам Искусств, структуру и состав руководящих работников.

Директор
Центральной Об'единенной Киностудии
художественных фильмов: (Тихонов)

Figure 4.1. Internal directive appointing Kriukov Music Director of TsOKS [Source: RGALI, f. 2453, op. 1, ed. khr. 3, l. 25]

Translation:

I.

1. Appoint Comrade N. N. KRIUKOV musical director of the Central United Film Studio.

2. Entrust all artistic and performance work to the musical director, including inviting composers, criticism of musical plans for launched films, consultations on musical sketches, determination of performance staff and so on.

3. Regarding general issues concerning music, a music committee is appointed consisting of:

Comrades F. M. Ermler, S. E. Gindin [*sic*]
N. N. Kriukov, L. O. Arnshtam and G. V. Aleksandrov.[60]

[60] Fridrikh Ermler (1898-1967), director; S. [*sic,* Mikhail] Gindin (1904-67), cameraman; Leo Arnshtam (1905-79), director; Grigorii Aleksandrov (1903-83), director.

II.

In order to secure highly qualified performers and musicians, organize self-financing symphonic and choral groups. […]

a) The director of the Studio Comrade N. N. Kriukov is responsible for the general direction of the orchestra and choir.

b) The studio's legal consultant, Comrade Konovalov, together with the music director of the Studio Comrade Kriukov, the head of the Planning Division Comrade Brudnik, and the head bookkeeper Comrade Ovruchskii, will in seven days' time report on the condition of the orchestra and choir […].

Director
of the Central United Filmstudio
of Art Films: [signed] Tikhonov

That Kriukov was relatively isolated as a specialist at TsOKS is evident in the choice of personnel for the music committee, which included three directors and a cameraman. Prokofiev's move to Alma-Ata at Eisenstein's insistence—the significant expense of which was footed entirely by TsOKS—brought him into a close-knit artistic community bereft of musical experts.[61] Apart from Prokofiev and Kriukov only three composers were in TsOKS's employ at various points during the evacuation: Vasilii Velikanov (1898-19??), Gavriil Popov (1904-72), and Oskar Sandler (1910-81). Velikanov and Popov appear to have arrived from Leningrad, and Sandler likely traveled with them. Their presence in Alma-Ata was unanticipated at best, as Prokofiev indicates that Popov arrived under his own auspices and without invitation (no information survives on the situations of the other two composers).[62] On 3 October, Prokofiev drafted

[61] The telegram bearing Mikhail Tikhonov's invitation to Alma-Ata (dated 24 April 1942) is in RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 809, l. 9. On 16 August 1942, Prokofiev submitted his Tbilisi to Alma-Ata travel expenses (1,443.50 rubles) to the TsOKS bookkeeper (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 338, l. 4).

[62] Oscar Sandler supplied music for *Antosha Rybkin* (1942), Vasilii Velikanov composed for the final *Boevoi kinosbornik* (no. 12). Musicologist Liudmila Kovnatskaya claims that Popov was officially evacuated together with Lenfilm staff, although Prokofiev's accounts of his difficulties seem to suggest that this is not the case, see the entry "Popov, Gavriil Nikolayevich," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. S. Sadie and J. Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), 20: 125-26.

a letter to his colleague Nikolai Miaskovskii (1881-1950) who had been evacuated to Frunze (Bishkek):

> I went to the administration of the United Film Studio [TsOKS] and informed them that a troupe of the most valuable composers had arrived in Frunze, and [inquired] whether they needed anyone. For greater show I even announced that I speak as the assistant director of the Moscow Composer's Union. [...] The administration said that a sufficient number of films are planned and it would be desirable to have more composers, but all hinges on living quarters. It will be decided in a few days: either the studio will receive apartments—then the business [of traveling here] will be possible—or if they don't then their own employees will be left living stacked on top of each other [*na golovakh drug u druga*]. Gabriel Popoff,[63] for example, arrived here a month ago without invitation and, although he received a film, had to live five together, that is, him, his wife, and a trio of others—one of whom was a drunk. [...] Film work is plenty, lucrative, and does not demand artistic overexertion [*tvorcheskii perenapriazhenie*]. Alma-Ata is a pleasant city full of money.[64]

Prokofiev's first offer after *Ivan the Terrible*, however, came not from the "pleasant city full of money" but from the Soiuzdetfilm studios in Stalinabad. Within days of his arrival in Alma-Ata, he considered the lucrative prospect of providing a score for the studio's new production entitled *The Prince and the Pauper* (*Prints i nishchii*).[65] On 17 June, he sent a telegram to Stalinabad expressing interest, but only if he were able to remain in Alma-Ata while composing.[66] Negotiations went no further, but the offer is intriguing, as it reveals the composer's willingness to sacrifice a modicum of his artistic

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[63] Here Prokofiev refers to Gavriil Popov (Prokofiev uses an French rendering of the name because the two composers had met in Paris).

[64] Letter from Prokofiev to Miaskovskii dated 3 October 1942, *S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska,* ed. Dmitri Kabalevskii (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1977), 461.

[65] Telegram from Erast Garin to Prokofiev dated 16 June 1942, "Pis'ma i telegrammy kinodeiatelei i kinostudii," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 809, l. 10. The film is based on Mark Twain's novel *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881); Sergei Pototskii (1883-1958) composed the score for the film. Prokofiev was likely sought out because the film's co-director, Erast Garin (1902-80), had starred in this composer's first film project, *Lieutenant Kizhe*.

[66] Draft telegram, dated 17 June 1942, "Pis'ma, telegrammy i zaiavlenie Prokof'eva v Glavnoe upravlenie khudozhestvennykh fil'mov i kinostudiiakh o svoei muzyke k fil'mam," unpublished RGALI, 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 338, l. 3.

integrity by proposing an arrangement that would have involved him only tangentially in the production.

Film work in Kazakhstan was indeed lucrative. For *Tonia* Prokofiev received 5,000 rubles, and for *Kotovskii* and *Partisans in the Ukranian Steppe* the figure tripled to 15,000 rubles for each (such honoraria become even more significant in light of the fact that Prokofiev devoted under a month of sporadic work to each score). Thus, thanks to film music contracts, Prokofiev found his bank account augmented by 35,000 rubles at the end of 1942 with relatively minimal expenditure of time.[67] As a point of comparison, immediately prior to the war, *yearly* salaries at Mosfilm ranged from the chauffeur's 1,200 rubles to director Vsevolod Pudovkin's handsome 80,400 rubles.[68] The advent of war significantly tempered these figures—for instance, the director of TsOKS, Mikhail Tikhonov, earned only 21,600 rubles per year—making Prokofiev's honoraria even more generous.[69]

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[67] Although for the time being, this was a theoretical augmentation: Prokofiev was initially paid only 10,000 rubles of his promised 15,000-ruble honorarium for *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*; his letter-writing campaign traces his efforts in 1943-45 to receive the missing 5,000 rubles. As of early 1944—a year after the movie's premiere—the money had not been forwarded to him. Either Prokofiev was paid or gave up his efforts to secure the money after his final request dated 20 February 1944. See telegram dated 10 March 1943 ("Pis'ma, telegrammy i zaiavlenie Prokof'eva v Glavnoe upravlenie khudozhestvennykh fil'mov," 11); draft letter from Prokofiev to the Committee on Author's Rights dated 4 June 1943 ("Pis'ma, telegrammy i zaiavlenie Prokof'eva v Glavnoe upravlenie khudozhestvennykh fil'mov," 13); letter dated 25 August 1943 ("Pis'ma i telegrammy v Upravlenie po okhrane avotrskikh prav," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 349, l. 11); letter dated 20 February 1944 ("Pis'ma, telegrammy i zaiavlenie Prokof'eva v Glavnoe upravlenie khudozhestvennykh fil'mov," 14).

[68] "Prikaz No. 55 po Moskovskoi ordena Lenina kinostudii 'Mosfil'm'," 22 February 1941, unpublished, f. 2453, op. 1, ed. khr. 3, ll. 1-2.

[69] "Prikaz No. 1 po tsentral'noi ob"edinennoi kinostudii khudozhestvennykh fil'mov komiteta po delam kinematografii pri SNK SSSR," 15 November 1941, unpublished, RGALI, f. 2453, op. 1, ed. khr. 3, l. 3. Comparison of these figures to American currency (or any foreign currency for that matter) is extremely difficult and often misleading as exchange rates varied dramatically during the 1930s and 1940s. As a somewhat anachronous but illuminating point of reference, the ruble was fixed at $0.19 in 1936. This would make Prokofiev's income of 35,000 rubles equivalent to roughly $6,600, or (even more roughly) $70,000-$90,000 in today's buying power, taking into account the seventy years of inflation between 1936 and 2006.

News from Moscow fueled Prokofiev's desire for more contracts. In September he learned that his wife and children were finding food in the capital only with difficulty; in addition to arranging for them to register with the Composers Union cafeteria, he asked Atovmian to provide his wife with a 1,000-ruble advance drawn on his contracts.[70] Prokofiev continued to support his estranged family well into 1943, responding with special generosity when he learned one of his sons was gravely ill.[71] Prokofiev's own situation was also worsening; the theater director Iurii Liubimov (b. 1917) even recalls the composer selling his Western-made clothes in an Alma-Ata market in order to secure food.[72]

Call of the Motherland

The war years saw an increased focus on female subjects in Soviet film. As historian Denise Youngblood points out, realistic depiction of the carnage on the front lines would have been "far too demoralizing for an already demoralized population," and as such "pride of place was […] given to the exploits of the partisans, and especially the role of *women* in the partisan movement."[73] This tendency gave birth to perhaps one of the most iconic films of the war years, Fridrikh Ermler's *She Defends the Motherland* (*Ona*

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[70] Letter from Prokofiev to Atovmian dated 14 Sept 1942 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 55, l. 5), forthcoming in Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence."

[71] Letter from Prokofiev to Atovmian dated 28 May 1943 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 151, l. 11), forthcoming in Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence." Prokofiev asked that 3,000 rubles be given to his wife.

[72] Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 182.

[73] Denise J. Youngblood, *Russian War Films: On the Cinema Front, 1914-2005* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007), 60.

zashchishaet rodinu, 1943, released in the U.S. as *No Greater Love*), the story of a common Soviet woman's heroic partisan leadership after witnessing her husband and baby murdered by Nazi troops. This film was preceded in production at TsOKS by two short and relatively unknown "film novellas" (*kinonovelly*) celebrating the Soviet woman that were to comprise one of the final *kinosborniki* under the title *Our Girls* (*Nashi devushki*). The opening titles of the collection summarized the underlying thematic sentiment (figure 4.2).

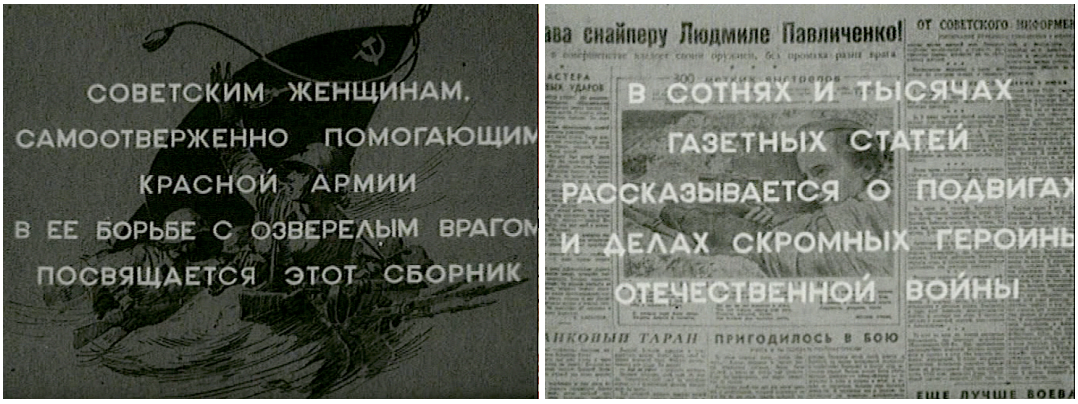

Figure 4.2. Opening Titles of *Nashi Devushki*: "This collection is dedicated to Soviet women, selflessly aiding the Red Army in its struggle with the brutal enemy" and "The feats and deeds of the unassuming heroines of the Patriotic War are told in hundreds and thousands of newspaper articles." [Source: Gosfilmofond]

Abram Room's (1894-1976) *Tonia*, based on a scenario authored by Boris Brodskii, was the first of the two *kinonovelly*. Tonia, a telephone operator in a generic Soviet town during the war, passes up a summons to the front lines because of a stunted leg.[74] By chance, she alone remains behind when the Nazis invade her town, and, from her clandestine base at the telephone exchange, relays the German's location to the Soviet

[74] Tonia is played by Valentina Karavaeva, a twenty-one-year-old rising star at the time of filming. Shortly after production was completed, Karavaeva was involved in a serious automobile accident that left her face disfigured, ending her career in cinema. Although she became a successful stage actress, her only film credit following the tragedy was a minor role in Erast Garin's 1964 *Ordinary Miracle* (*Obyknovennoe chudo*).

counteroffensive. Tonia survives the Soviet attack on the enemy (shells explode with frightening proximity) only to be discovered by a stray German soldier who orders her to mislead the Soviet army. She refuses and is brutally shot. Although Tonia's death casts a shadow on the eventual rout of the Nazis, her example of heroic self-sacrifice for the common good is powerful. Tonia is a paradigmatic Socialist-Realist heroine who, as Simon Morrison writes, "evince[s], after some ideological counsel, preternatural determination," and "overcomes her anatomical and psychological inhibitions to play a significant role in Soviet history."[75]

Figure 4.3. Valentina Karavaeva (1921-97) as Tonia

Beginning in July 1942, Prokofiev was regularly present at the TsOKS studios to meet with Eisenstein regarding *Ivan the Terrible*. It was during one of his visits that he encountered Room, which led directly to his signing a contract for *Tonia* on 21 July.[76]

[75] Morrison, "Tonya," 13.

[76] On the reverse of one of the pages of the manuscript score for *Tonia* (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 40, l. 1 ob.) are notes concerning Eisenstein and *Ivan the Terrible*; obviously visits to the TsOKS

Besides the appeal of proximity—Room and his crew were practically living together with Prokofiev and Mendel'son—*Tonia* had a special appeal to Prokofiev: an unusually detailed chronometer, complete with precise musical indications. For example:

> For the "Russian People" Episode: The first musical segment should come right up to the beginning of the noise of the departing carriage, i.e. the length of the segment should equal 29 seconds. The beginning of the second segment of music should come directly out of the distant signal of the train, departing in a distant shot. The second segment occupies 30 seconds (nos. 8, 9, 10).[77]

Following such instructions, Prokofiev quickly penned fifteen brief numbers for the film that were ready by 10 August.

Historian Harlow Robinson observes that on the "war films," Prokofiev proceeded "differently than he had on films in the past. […] He worked from a generalized musical plan, using one musical idea (usually a song) as the emotional-psychological 'key' that conveyed a general mood."[78] In the case of his score for *Tonia*, Prokofiev imported the "thesis" song (no. 4) from his cycle *Seven Mass Songs*, op. 89 (1939), updating it for the film with new lyrics written by Mira Mendel'son:

> The time has come for you to go, comrade, the Motherland calls her sons to battle. / Through fire and through the smoke of charred ruins, woman's love goes with you everywhere. / Neither black bullets nor shells will strike down this love that is with you. / Look around, the love of your girlfriends is near, with a new strength you will meet the victorious battle! / The call of the Motherland at the hour of the battle to the death, the true son gives a blood oath to her: the dark forces will be smashed.
>
> [Час настал, уходишь ты, товаришь, кличет Родина сынов своих на бой. / Сквозь огонь войны сквозь дым пожарищ всюду девичья любовь пройдет с тобой. / И ни черной пулей ни снарядом той любви нельзя сразить, она с

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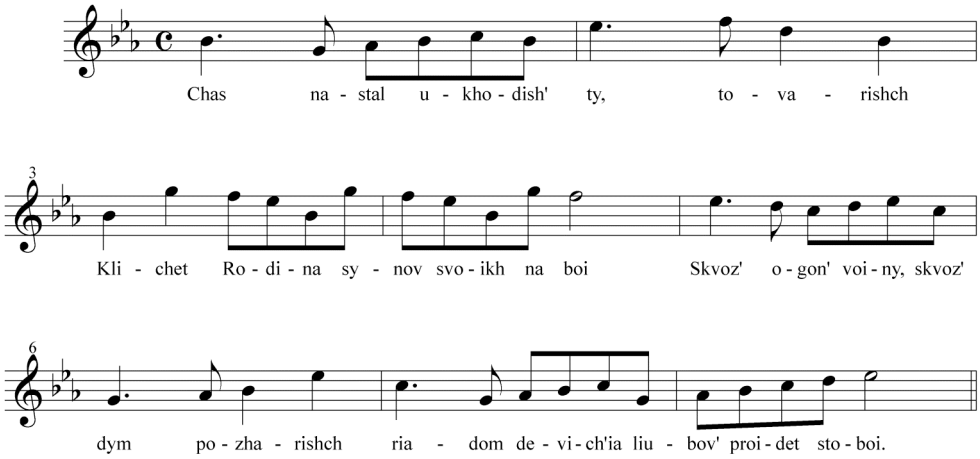
facilities afforded the opportunity to work on both films simultaneously. Prokofiev's contract for *Tonia* is in "Dogovory Prokof'eva s kinostudiiami i teatrami na napisanie muzyki," 13.

[77] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 40; Here I am quoting Simon Morrison's translation found in "Tonya," 17.

[78] Harlow Robinson, *Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 408.

тобой. / Оглянись, любовь подруги рядом, с новой силой ты идешь в победный бой! / Кличет Родина в час смертной битвы, Клятву кровную ей верный сын дает: Будут черные полки разбиты.][79]

The song (example 4.2), which sounds during the opening credits, pervades *Tonia's* brief 33 minutes in a number of guises, its melody used as the sole thematic material in the majority of the score (see example 4.3).

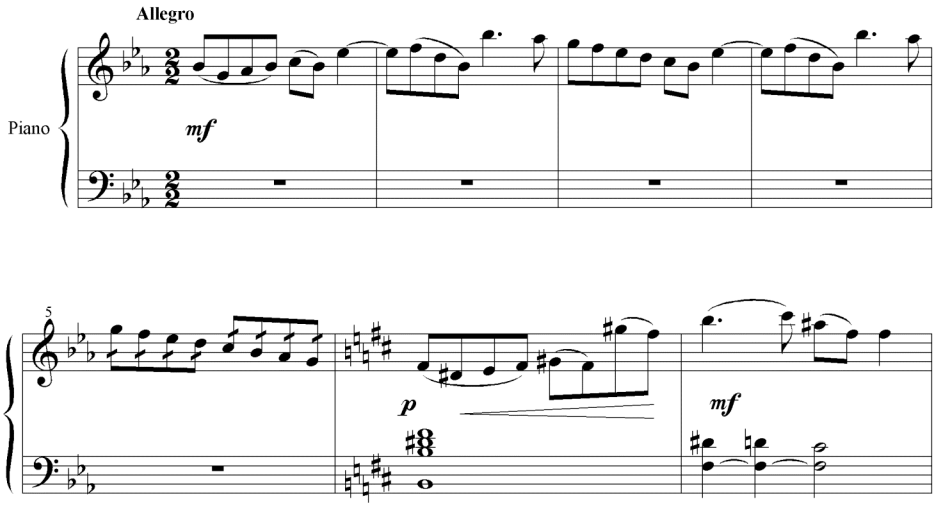


Example 4.2. *Tonia*, "Pesnia," (no. 4), mm. 1-8, melody only [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 102, l. 2]

The thematic cogency of the *Tonia* score is not surprising considering Prokofiev's thoughts on motivic comprehensibility in film music. In employing a "theme" song in such a fashion, Prokofiev tapped one of the few strong trends of Soviet film music in the 1930s and 1940s (although it remains unclear whether intentionally or inadvertently). Robinson's observation cited above is indicative of a preference for the blurring of song and symphonic boundaries in film music that had been typical since Shostakovich's score for Fredirkh Ermler's 1932 film *The Counterplan* (*Vstrechnyi*), which features the tuneful "Song of the Counterplan," an instant popular hit following the film's release (see Intro-

[79] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 102, ll. 2-3 ob.

duction). During the war, "theme" songs in film gave way from popular mass-song-like marches to lyrical songs that helped capture the personal side of the war.[80]



Example 4.3. *Tonia*, "Tonia spuskaetsia po lestinitse" (no. 3), mm. 1-7, showing melody derived from no. 4 [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 103, ll. 4 ob.-5]

Although Room completed his contribution to the new *kinosbornik*, *Tonia* never appeared in theaters. Film experts Evgeny Margolit and Viacheslav Shmyrov offer the rather unsatisfying suggestion that it was simply the phasing out of *kinosborniki* that led to the film's demise.[81] Morrison offers a more nuanced explanation, including "ideological deficiencies, reduced distribution budgets and, […] unhappy timing."[82] *Tonia's* fate, however, had little to do with the film itself and likely everything to do with the outré plot of the film with which it was paired in the *kinosbornik*.

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[80] Egorova, *Soviet Film Music*, 79.

[81] Evgenii Margolit and Viacheslav Shmyrov, *Iziatoe kino: Katalog Sovetskikh igrovykh kartin, ne vypushchennykh vo vsesoiuznyi prokat po zavershenii v proizvodstve ili iz"iatykh iz deistvuiushchego fil'mofonda v god vypuska na ekran (1924-1953)* (Moscow: Informatsionno-analiticheskaia firma "Dubl'-D", 1995), 88.

[82] Morrison, "Tonya," 15.

This second film was Grigorii Kozintsev's (1905-73) short *Once at Night* (*Odnazhdy noch'iu*). (Incidentally the film for which Gavriil Popov—whom Prokofiev mentions in his above-cited letter to Miaskovskii—had composed "without invitation.") The film's inane plot features two WWII paratroopers, one Russian and one German, who land behind Soviet lines and together encounter a Russian girl and her sick pig, Masha. The German (who happens to speak perfect Russian) denounces the Russian as a spy. The Russian soldier earnestly denounces the German as the real spy. The perplexed girl cannot divine friend from foe, and instead diverts her attention to Masha, who suddenly rises up on all four legs, turns to the camera and smiles at the audience. This final, outlandish detail crowned an already queer film, revealing lingering traces of Kozintsev's background in FEKS (Factory of the Eccentric Actor), an avant-garde film and theater group active in the 1920s.[83] Although official documents banning *Once at Night* have never been found, an evaluation of the film survives at the State Film Archive (where the completed film was shelved) that laments the film's "pathological" characters.[84]

The case against Kozintsev is even more damning when *Once at Night* is considered with another film on which he worked during 1942, *Young Fritz* (*Iunyi Frits*). Fritz, played by actor Mikhail Zharov (1900-81), is a young Aryan being brought up to appreciate the distinguishing traits of the *Herrenrasse*. What on the surface is an anti-Nazi picture quickly dissolves into surreal unreality; against a black background, Fritz swells to enormous proportions and tramples across a map of Europe while miniature

[83] The essential artistic manifesto of the "Factory of the Eccentric Actor" ("Fabrika ekstsentricheskogo aktera") is translated in Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, Sergei Yutkevich, and Grigori Kryzhitsky, "Eccentrism," in *The Film Factory: Russian and Soviet Cinema in Documents 1896-1939*, eds. Richard Taylor and Ian Christe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1988), 58-64.

[84] Margolit, *Iz"iatoe kino*, 88.

artillery aircraft swirl about him. While the symbolism rings with clarity, its phantasmagorical (read formalist) manner sealed the film's fate and cast a pall over its director. In the swift censorship of the formalist *Young Fritz* and *Once at Night*, the new *kino-sbornik* did not stand a chance, and *Tonia* perished by association.

Revolution Revisited: *Kotovskii*

A widespread symptom of the Soviet film industry's various difficulties during the later 1930s and 1940s was the chronic unemployment of directors. Established directors often waited years between productions; neophytes were more often than not wholly unsuccessful and sought employment in other fields.[85] In the nearly eight years between the release of *Lieutenant Kizhe* (1934) and the Nazi invasion, Aleksandr Faintsimmer (1906-82) managed to produce only two films, *Baltiitsy* (1937, released abroad as *Men of the Sea*), a military drama about the naval defense of Petrograd during the Civil War, and *Tanker 'Derbent'* (1941), another navy-themed picture.[86] Curiously, after the war the creator of Kizhe's surrealistic, Gogolian escapades became the Soviet Union's cinematic expert on naval matters, producing two dramas, *The Naval Battalion* (*Morskoi batal'on,* 1946) and *For Those Who Are at Sea* (*Za tekh, kto v more,* 1948), as well as a documentary entitled *At the Northern Seas* (*U severnykh morei*, 1952).

Faintsimmer's claim to cinematic posterity, however, remains his one non-navy-themed picture of the 1940s, *Kotovskii*, a dramatization of the life of the maverick revo-

[85] Miller, "Educating the Filmmakers," 478.

[86] "Dokladnaia zapiska zav. otdelom kul'turno-prosvetitel'noi raboty TsK VKP(b) A. S. Shcherbakova I. V. Stalinu, A. A. Andreevu, i N. I. Ezhovu ob itogakh raboty GUKF v 1935 g. i plane na 1936 g.," undated (no later than 2 March 1936), RGASPI, f. 17, op. 114, d. 949, l. 109-117, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 309.

lutionary Grigorii Kotovskii (1881-1925). Kotovskii, a hero to the Bolshevik cause, had deserted from the Russian Imperial Army, led popular rebellions in his native Moldova in 1905 and 1915, and, during the Civil War, helped defeat the White Army in Ukraine. In 1940 he stood poised for immortalization in the Soviet cinematic pantheon of heroes, as evidenced by his inclusion in Ivan Bol'shakov's blueprints for the industry: *Kotovskii* "is devoted to one of the greatest heroes of the Civil War, G. Kotovskii. In a series of battle episodes, he is portrayed as a talented war commander, a complete master of the strategies and tactics of cavalry battle."[87] The creation of this script was entrusted to veteran scenarist Aleksei Kapler (1903-1979), and in January 1941 *Kotovskii* was placed on the production books at the Mosfilm studios in Moscow with Faintsimmer as director.[88] Considering the material lack of the film industry at the beginning of the 1940s, an unusual amount of resources was channeled into assuring the film's "authenticity" of depiction. In addition to the standard budget allotment, the KDK awarded Mosfilm an additional 50,000 rubles to allow for an exceptionally long "preparatory" period of nearly five months.[89] The studio hired a certain Comrade Armaderov from the Frunze Red Army War Academy, one of Kotovskii's actual staff officers, as a consultant to ensure

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[87] "Dokladnaia zapiska I. G. Bol'shakova V. M. Molotovu o tematicheskom plane proizvodstva kinokartin na 1939-1940 gg.," 7 August 1939, RGASPI, f. 82, op. 2, d. 960, ll. 5, 15-28, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 552.

[88] "Perepiska po proizvodstvu kinokartiny 'Kotovskii' s rezhisserom, Glavnym upravleniem po proizvodstvu fil'mov i direktsiei studii 'Mosfil'm'," unpublished, RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 73, l. 7.

Beginning in 1920 in his hometown of Kiev, Kapler worked in various theaters as an actor and director. With Grigorii Kozintsev (1905-73) and Sergei Iutkevich (1904-85), he organized an experimental theater known as "Arlekin" and subsequently became associated with FEKS. From the late 1920s to the end of his career, Kapler was known primarily as a scenarist. In 1939, he was appointed to the faculty of the All-Union State Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) in Moscow. In 1943 he was repressed on groundless charges, and did not work until his post-Stalin rehabilitation in 1954.

[89] RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 73, ll. 10, 21.

accurate depiction of Kotovskii and his campaigns.[90] Faintsimmer's obsession with "authenticity" included filming on location in the locations of Kotovskii's various exploits, and the KDK's generous subsidy allowed the director and two colleagues from Mosfilm to undertake a reconnaissance trip to Kishinev (Chisinau) in Moldova and L'vov (L'viv) in Ukraine at the end of January in anticipation of transferring a production team there.[91]

Figure 4.4. Nikolai Mordvinov (1901-66) as Grigorii Kotovskii

The members of the internal script division at Mosfilm (which constituted something of an oversight-cum-censorship committee), feeling entitled by the gravity they felt the film demanded, found Kapler's initial scenario unsatisfactory. During February and March, they demanded that he rewrite his work no fewer than *five* times.[92] The various

[90] Ibid., 5.

[91] Ibid., 7-8.

[92] "Protokoly, zasedaniia u direktora studii i khudozhestvennogo soveta po obsuzhdeniiu literaturnogo stsenariia A. Ia. Kaplera 'Kotovskii'," unpublished, RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 71.

versions of the script do not survive, but the discussion accompanying the evaluation of the revisions is sufficient to reveal an effort to mold Kotovskii into a one-dimensional stock Socialist-Realist hero, obliterating the studio's earlier painstaking efforts at historical accuracy. Endeavoring to mythologize Kotovskii, the Mosfilm committee, for example, asked that he appear to have no role in inciting the battle in which his comrade-in-arms Kharitonov is fatally wounded.[93] Sergei Eisenstein, a member of the script division, responded strongly to these whitewashing efforts during a discussion on 14 April:

> That which is most serious [problem] in the script is the understanding of Kotovskii as a Bolshevik. Generally one can observe the tendency to make out of Kotovskii and Kharitonov a Chapaev and Furmanov [A Red Army Commander and a Bolshevik Commissar, respectively]. This cannot be done in any situation. Our heroes need to be characterized along distinctive lines.[94]

The repeated manipulation of Kapler's script was the product of more or less voluntary internal censorship; the document had not yet even been sent to the KDK for official scrutiny. The difficulty (and inefficiency) of bringing a project to the production stage—even at the nation's foremost studio—is striking. (It also bears noting that as unofficial and official censorship forced increasingly more revisions, the concept of authorship becomes increasingly blurred, and the extent to which the final script for *Kotovskii* was Kapler's, for example, remains entirely subjective.) To be sure, the efforts to mold Kotovskii into the "proper" hero were not isolated. In addition to *Kotovskii*, a trio of films dealing with the German occupation of Ukraine in 1918 appeared in 1942, all of which significantly distort historical facts: *How the Steel Was Tempered* (*Kak zakalialas'*

[93] RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 73, ll. 17-19

[94] RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 71.

stal'), *The Defense of Tsaritsyn* (*Oborona Tsaritsyna*) and *Aleksandr Parkhomenko*.[95]

When the Nazis invaded on 22 June, *Kotovskii's* production had been in a holding pattern since April. Surprisingly, however, war did not discourage Faintsimmer and his staff as it had Gendel'shtein with *Lermontov*. Despite the fact that feature-length films were not in production during the first months of the war, the Mosfilm collective nevertheless displayed a sudden burst of productivity and produced an abbreviated version of script on 5 July. On 24 July Faintsimmer dispatched a director's script to the KDK for official evaluation in which the updated wartime dimensions of the plot are immediately evident in the amplification of Kotovskii's efforts against the Romanian and German occupiers of Moldavia and Ukraine during the Civil War.[96] That Hitler's army controlled a similar region during the first days of the Great Patriotic War granted the film an unexpected and eerie topicality. Accommodations were made to reduce the scope of the production and lessen the demand on the nation's exiguous supply of film, including incorporating clips from two earlier Civil War dramas, Eisenstein's *October* (*Oktiabr'*, 1927) and Mikhail Romm's *Lenin in October* (*Lenin v oktiabre,* 1937).[97]

The evacuation of Mosfilm on 14 October again deferred production. Following the studio's reconstitution as part of TsOKS, the documentary trail of *Kotovskii's* production becomes significantly leaner. Filming began in the summer of 1942, but it remains

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[95] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 181. *How the Steel Was Tempered* was directed by Mark Donskoi and released on 28 September 1942; The Brothers Vasiliev's (Sergei and Georgii) *Defense of Tsaritsyn* opened on 29 March 1942; *Aleksandr Parkhomenko*, directed by Leonid Lukov, opened on 20 July 1942.

[96] "Rezhisserskii stsenarii A. M. Faintsimmera 'Kotovskii'," unpublished, RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 72. This file contains only short excerpts from Faintsimmer's script; complete assessment of what changes had been made to Kapler's original script in the months preceding Faintsimmer's dispatch to the Cinematography Committee is impossible.

[97] RGALI, f. 2453, op. 2, ed. khr. 73, ll. 26-27.

impossible to determine if in the intervening months the script had been subject to further emendations. Prokofiev's involvement, it appears, grew out of sheer physical proximity, as had been the case with *Tonia*. On 20 August, only ten days after he had put the final touches on his score for *Tonia*, he signed a contract for *Kotovskii*. Less than two weeks later, on 10 September, the entire score was delivered to TsOKS and Prokofiev collected his honorarium of 15,000 rubles.[98]

The music Prokofiev composed for *Kotovskii* is almost entirely incidental and nondiegetic. This resulted from logistical necessity, as it appears that filming was underway but not yet completed when Prokofiev joined the production. Mendel'son assisted in creating a list of episodes that would be accompanied by music, likely done in consultation with Faintsimmer, who had a rough idea of the film's musical needs.[99] Mendel'son listed meterages (that allowed Prokofiev to calculate exact timings) for about half of the film's twenty musical numbers. Such figures proved superfluous, however, as the musical plan does not square with the final cut of the film. Revisions appear to have continued until the final edit.

Kotovskii's sound engineer employed a number of techniques to hide the fact that the film's music had not been carefully fitted to filmed scenes. Fade-ins and fade-outs abound, and the noise of the film's numerous scenes of cavalry advances is often used to mask crudely executed musical cues. Likewise, musical cues are expediently cut at the moment of cannon or rifle fire several times, and, while clever, it gives the comic impresssion of weapon fire penetrating the film's nondiegetic musical fabric. Musical

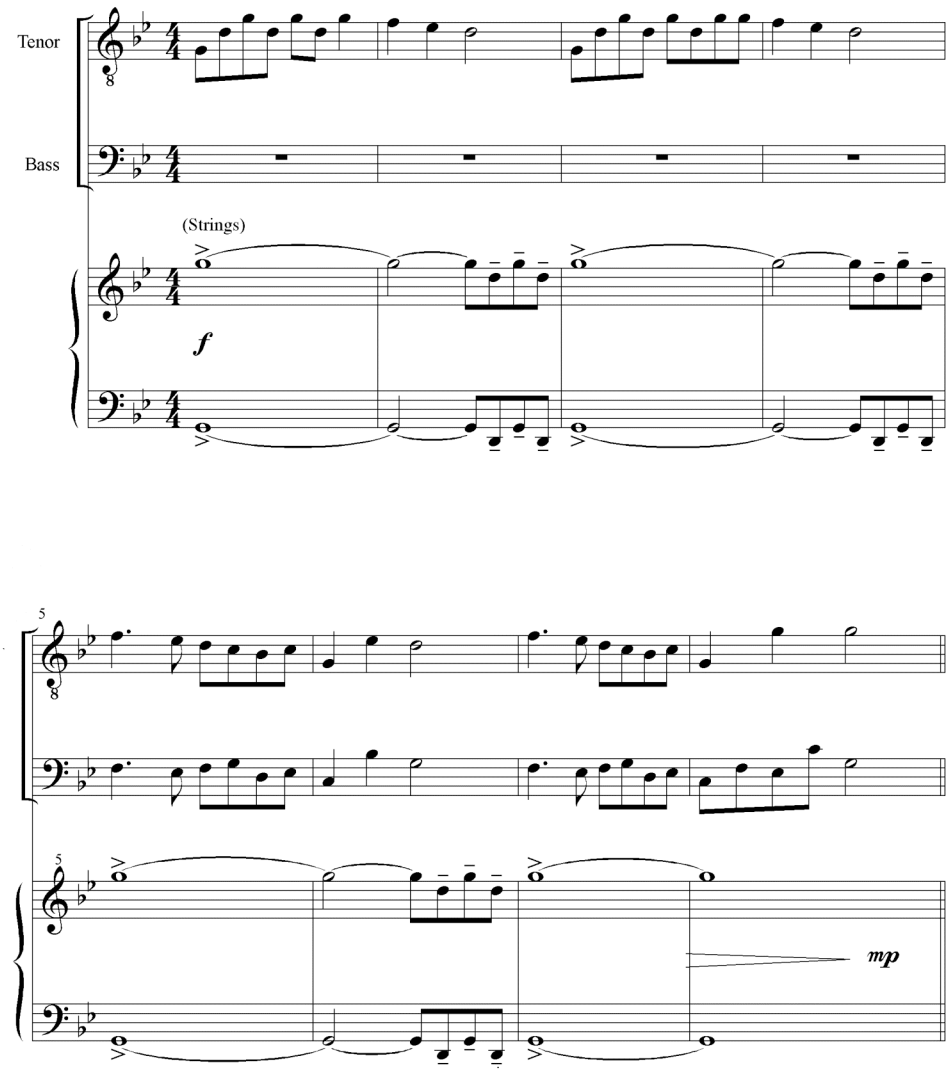
[98] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 14.

[99] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 105, l. 8.

levels are habitually and drastically cut during passages of extended dialogue. Of all Prokofiev's film scores, *Kotovskii* was handled with the least finesse in the finished soundtrack.

Prokofiev's score for *Kotovskii* is only partially extant (see Appendix I). The music's dramaturgical function, however, is relatively easy to judge. The invading Germans are assigned a grotesque march (see example 4.10 below), and the prerev-olutionary Russian aristocracy gets a waltz that Prokofiev transferred from his as yet unfinished ballet *Cinderella*. Striking, however, is Prokofiev's characterization of Kotovskii as a "folk" hero. During the opening titles, men's voices intone the melody of what will become the "theme" song of the film (no. 1, example 4.4), which is then taken over as a solo by Kotovskii in the opening scene—one of the only moments where the music functions diegetically. The first phrase consists entirely of melodic fourths and fifths, punctuated by the F and E-flat of a G natural minor scale. The starkly bare orches-tral accompaniment consists of unison strings that echo the horn-like vocal intervals. In the fifth measure, the voices move within the space between the G pedals of the strings, lingering on a dissonant minor seventh above the bass and an even more biting major second below the upper pedal. The ensuing faux-counterpoint between the tenors and basses mocks standard Western practice with its predominance of open fourths and fifths, which Prokofiev enhances by seating clarinet, bassoon, and flute next to the microphone to effect a distinctly pastoral and folk-like timbre.[100]

[100] Ibid., 2.



Example 4.4. *Kotovskii*, "Pesnia" (no.1), mm. 1-8 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 105, l. 1]

Although Faintsimmer claims Prokofiev professed interest in Moldavian folk music—likely to advance the image of "authenticity" sought after in the film—the *Kotovskii* song does not quote actual folk melodies.[101] Prokofiev instead relies on a plethora of markers

[101] E. Vishnevetskaia, "Kinomuzyka S.S.Prokof'eva voennykh let," in *Iz proshlogo sovetskoi muzykal'noi kul'turi,* (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1975), 1: 49.

of non-Westerness, creating a setting sufficiently exotic to viscerally suggest to the listener some far-flung place—in this case, Kotovskii's native Moldova. Mendel'son later wrote a text to fit the melody, which begins "Oh you, motherland of mine, my domain" ("Oi ty, Rodina moia, moi prostor"), for which she was given an honorarium of 400 rubles.[102]

Once filming was underway, Faintsimmer managed to complete the film with a "fast and energetic tempo," ostensibly hoping to finish in time for the Soviet Union's twenty-fifth anniversary in November.[103] A rough edit was ready by 28 October, when it was flown from Alma-Ata to Moscow for screening.[104] When *Kotovskii* premiered on 6 January 1943, the critic A. Krivitskii lauded Prokofiev's opening song:

> Along the Prut and Dnestr [rivers between Moldova and Ukraine], in towns and villages, people sang their beloved *protiazhnye* [songs] about folk heroes—brave, strong, and fearless. In these songs lived the dream of justice […] The film "Kotovskii" opens with this kind of song.[105]

Republican Partisanship

In May 1942 the Ukrainian director Igor Savchenko (who earlier had complained so bitterly about the sweltering conditions of Central Asia) began work on a new film with the provisional title *Ukraine, 1941*.[106] At the time, Savchenko was enjoying the after-

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[102] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 15.

[103] O. Leonidov, "Fil'm o Kotovskom," *Ogonek*, 31 January 1943, p. 15.

[104] Anon., "Khudozhestvennye fil'my k 25-letiu Oktiabria," *Trud*, 29 October 1942, p. 4.

[105] A. Krivitskii, "Kotovskii," *Krasnaia zvezda*, 14 January 1943, p. 4.

[106] Igor' Savchenko was born in Ukraine; his early career interests were in theater. In 1932 he moved to Moscow and accepted a position at the Moscow Theater for the Working Youth. Savchenko was strongly attracted to film and shortly after his move to Moscow directed his first film, *Harmonica* (1932). This was followed by *The Ballad of Cossack Golota* (1937), *Horsemen* (1939), *Bogodan Khmel'nitskii* (1941), *District No. 14* (1942) and *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* (1943). Savchenko died just short of

glow of his first major cinematic success, *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* (1941), a biographical film about the eponymous seventeenth-century insurrectionist who had campaigned against Polish rule in Ukraine. Yet the depiction of Ukrainian historical subjects on the red screen was delicate business thanks to the prewar nationalism that privileged Russia as first among the Soviet republics. In the wake of the Russian epic *Aleksandr Nevskii*, the KDK permitted each of the non-Russian republics only one epic of their own, and each was expected to maintain a careful balance between bolstering republican nationalism and remaining subordinate to Russian chauvinism: *Georgii Saakadze* in Georgia, *David Bek* in Armenia, *Arshin-MalAlan* in Azerbaijan, and *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* in Ukraine.[107] The subject of each of these films was carefully chosen to avoid any reference to historical conflict between Russia and the (current) republics. Likewise, the Polish antagonists of *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* offered a safe choice thanks to their descendants' enmity toward Stalinist rule.[108] The relative success of Savchenko's Ukrainian epic, in conjunction with tensions between the foremost Ukrainian filmmaker Aleksandr Dovzhenko (1894-1956) and the Soviet bureaucracy, granted the director new standing as wartime cinematic chronicler of the Ukrainian people.[109]

For *Ukraine 1941*—eventually renamed *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*—Savchenko again joined forces with his collaborator from *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii*, the

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the premiere of the film for which he is best known, *Taras Shevchenko* (1951), a biographical film of the celebrated 19th-century Ukrainian poet.

[107] The first series of *Georgii Saakadze* (dir. Mikhail Chiaureli) opened on 14 September 1942, the second on 10 August 1943; *David Bek* (dir. Amo Bek-Nazarov) opened on 14 February 1944; *Arshin mal-alan* (dirs. Rza Takhmasib and Nikolai Leshchenko) opened on 13 October 1945. *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* premiered on 7 April 1941.

[108] Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 180.

[109] Dovzhenko was repressed in the early 1940s, see Kenez, *Cinema and Soviet Society*, 180.

Ukrainian writer and Stalinist darling Aleksandr Korneichuk (1905-72). Korneichuk's scenario concerns a group of Ukrainian partisans, led by the fearless Salyvon Chasnyk, which wages battle on the invading Nazis during the first days of the Great Patriotic War. In a series of confrontations, Chasnyk's forces attempt to expel the Nazis, but the Germans manage to capture a large section of the partisan forces. The turning point comes when Taras, an elderly partisan, leads the Germans onto a minefield, sacrificing himself but giving Chasnyk's forces the upper hand. Korneichuk's plot remained faithful both to wartime topicality and to cinematic depiction of "reality" that avoided revealing the horrific and demoralizing carnage of the front lines. And, as we shall see, Prokofiev's music for the film established the necessary hierarchy: Ukrainian partisanship averts Nazi treachery, but the republican Soviets are in turn subjugated to the glory of the Red Army, and ultimately to the glory of Stalin himself.

Production took place at the Kiev Film Studios, which, after a brief time in Tashkent, had been evacuated to Semipalatinsk (Semey), a Kazakh city approximately 600 miles to the north of Prokofiev's base in Alma-Ata. The contract Prokofiev signed on 12 November indicated that a piano score would be due by 5 December and that the soundtrack recording—for which Prokofiev was required to be present—would occur no later than 31 December.[110] Prokofiev's interest in the project owed much to this schedule, which allowed him to travel to the studio in Semipalatinsk en route to Moscow for the official screening of the first version of *War and Peace* in January 1943.[111] Another

[110] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 17.

[111] Prokofiev officially requested permission to leave Alma-Ata on 19 November 1942. See Prokofiev's letter to the TsOKS administration, "Pis'mo direktoru TsOK Traubergu," unpublished, RGALI f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 338, l. 7.

factor that interested Prokofiev was the subject of the film, which resonated strongly with a work that he had composed in the fall of 1941.

The Year 1941

One of Prokofiev's first wartime commissions from Muzfond was a symphonic suite for orchestra entitled *The Year 1941* (*1941-i god*, op. 90).[112] The work, completed in piano score on 28 August 1941 and in full score on 12 October, is cast in three movements: "In Battle" (*V boiu*) "At night" (*Noch'iu*), and "For the Brotherhood of Nations" (*Za bratstvo narodov*).[113] Prokofiev described the work:

> The first movement is a scene of heated battle, heard by the audience sometimes as though far away and sometimes as though on the actual battlefield; the second is a poetic night scene disturbed by the tension of impending conflict; the third is a triumphant lyrical hymn to victory and the brotherhood of peoples.[114]

"In Battle" begins with a *tutti* flourish that leads to the main theme (example 4.5, the main theme enters at rehearsal number 2). The violins introduce an arching melody that outlines an e-minor triad; it unexpectedly collapses into E-flat major and just as erratically careens back to e minor (measures 5-6 after rehearsal number 2).[115] This harmonic maneuver repeats at rehearsal number 3, although this time the upper string's lingering on f-sharp sets up an enharmonic common-tone pivot for a fleeting tonicization of e-flat

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[112] The contract for *The Year 1941* is mentioned in Prokofiev's letter to Atovmian dated 4 September 1941 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 151, l. 2), Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence."

[113] The manuscript score is in RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 137.

[114] Israel Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, trans. Florence Jonas (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), 328.

[115] The "triadic" melody and harmonic maneuvers of "In Battle" bear a strong resemblance to the third movement of Prokofiev's Piano Sonata No. 8 (op. 84), begun in 1939 but not finished until some five years later.

minor. The pattern continues for some fifty measures, taking the listener through a minor and d minor, both with E-flat and e-flat minor interjections. In the absence of any easily assimilated melody—the upper strings, winds, and trumpets offer only triadic outlines—the opening third of "In Battle" gives the aural impression of a mottle of two- and four-measure slabs of texture in unrelated key areas. The acrobatic arching of the main theme engenders a tremendous amount of vigor, but gives little sense of where the work might lead formally or harmonically. The music's rough shifts of tonal focus are, however, "visual," suggesting a rapid cinematic montage. Even more visual is the movement's middle section (example 4.6). Strings and winds lock into a hypnotic rhythmic pattern, while the timpanist delivers a *fortissimo* solo of exploding incendiary bombs. The brass joins the timpani several measures later. Abruptly, however, *pianissimo* replaces *fortissimo* (six measures after rehearsal number 8). The rhythmic pattern persists unhindered by the dynamic shift, and thus the sudden change in intensity engenders a sense of distance. The effect is clever: we hear the sounds of battle from two distinct viewpoints—one alarmingly near to the action, and one significantly more removed. In order to preserve dramatic tension at a greatly reduced dynamic level, Prokofiev introduces (parodying the Introduction to Part II of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*) a quartet of muted trumpets and horn (rehearsal number 9) that begin a protracted and dissonant climb by alternating half- and whole-steps. After fifty-four measures of sustained battle viewing devoid of melodic interest, Prokofiev recapitulates the opening material, building to a dense apotheosis that is strikingly Stravinskyesque in its ostinato-driven layerings.

Allegro tempestoso ♩. = 128

Piccolo
2 Flauti
2 Oboi
Corno inglese
2 Clarinetti
Clarinetto basso
2 Fagotti
3 Trombe
4 Corni
3 Tromboni e Tuba
Timpani
Tamburo
Piatti
Arpa

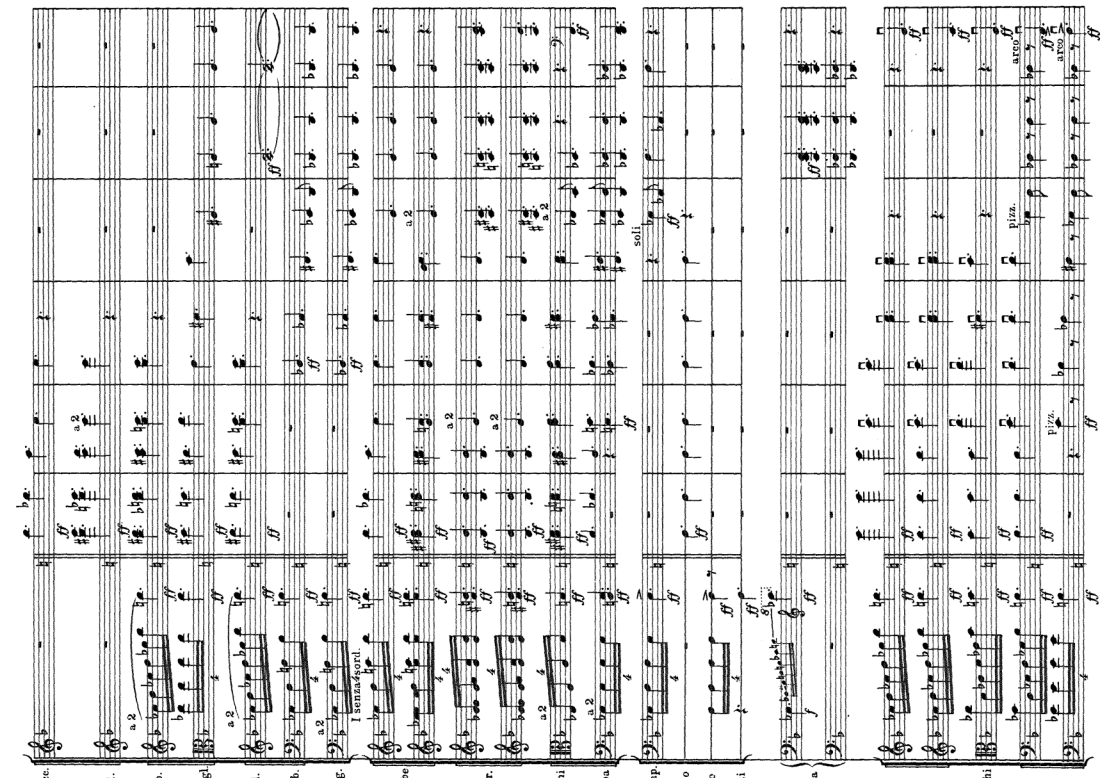
a 2
gliss.
re#

Allegro tempestoso ♩. = 128

Violini I
Violini II
Viole
Violoncelli
Contrabassi

Pic.
Fl.
Ob.
C.ingl.
Cl.
Cl.b.
Fag.
C-fag.
Tr-be
Cor.
Tr.ni e Tuba
Archi

I con sord.
II con sord.
senza sord.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Fl.
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e
Tuba
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Tr-lo
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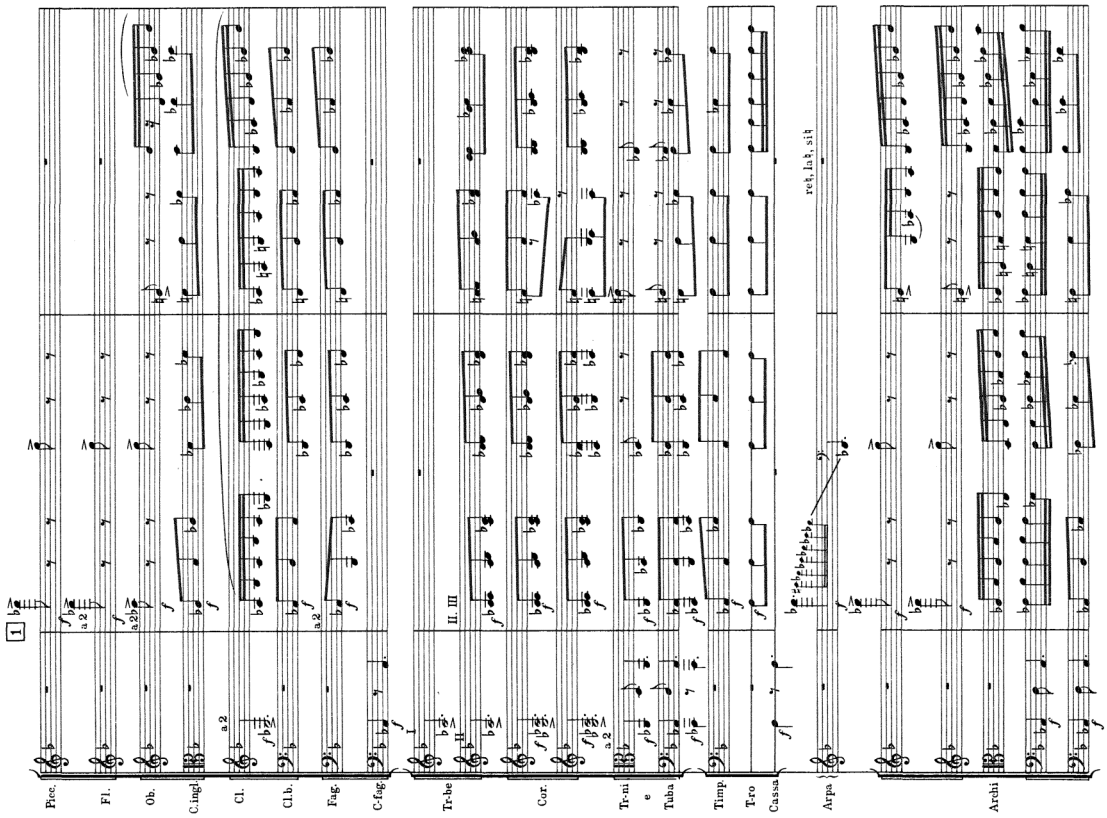
P-tti
Arpa
Archi
a 2
I senza sord.
soli
pizz.
arco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Picc.
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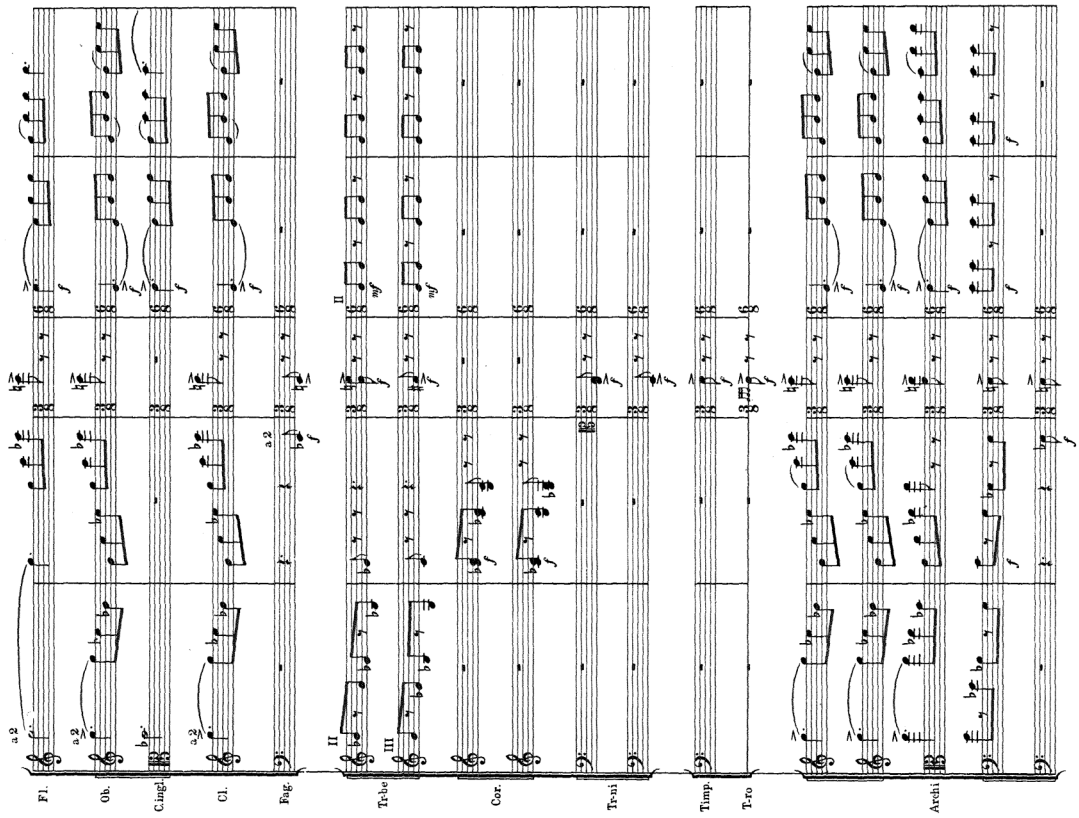
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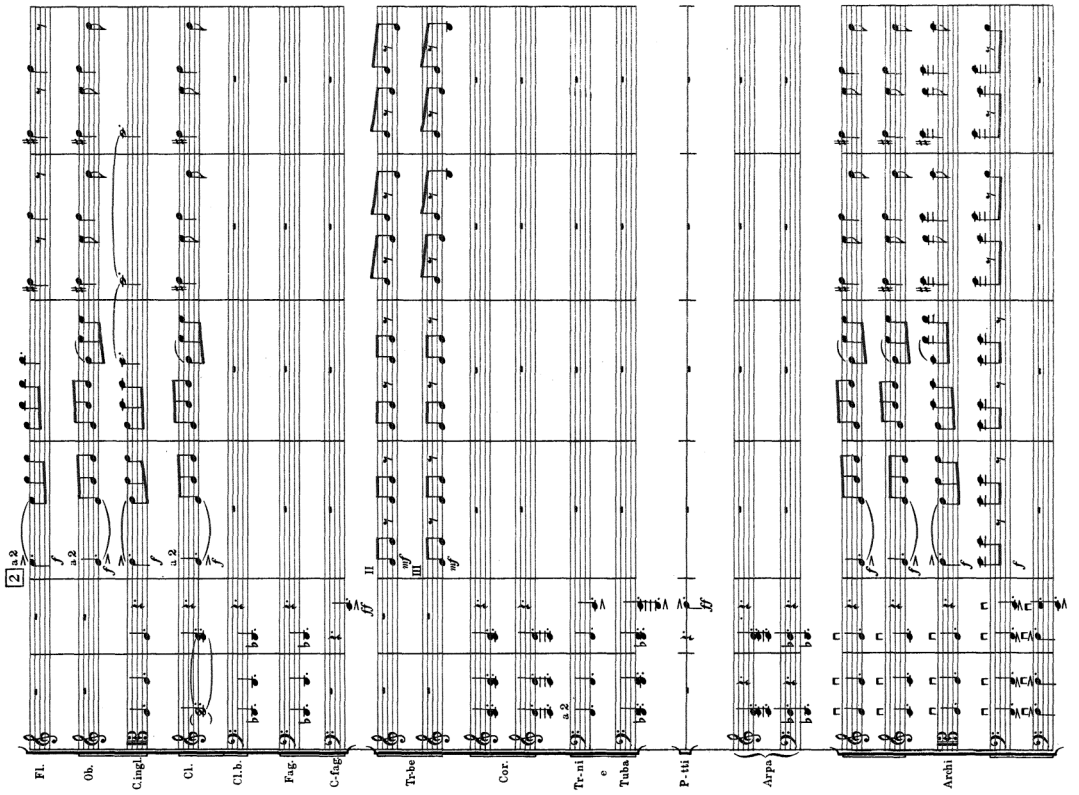
T-to
Archi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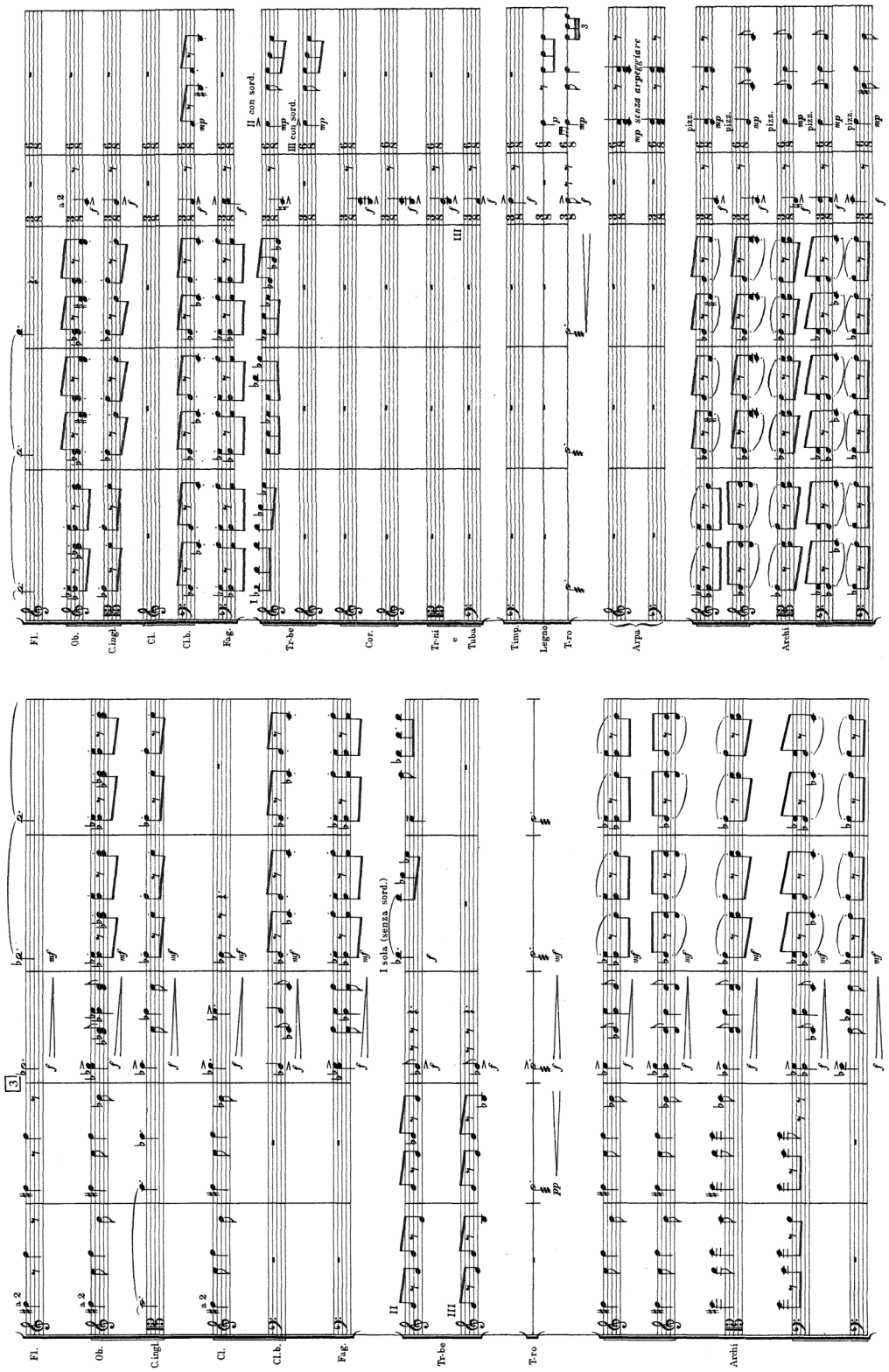
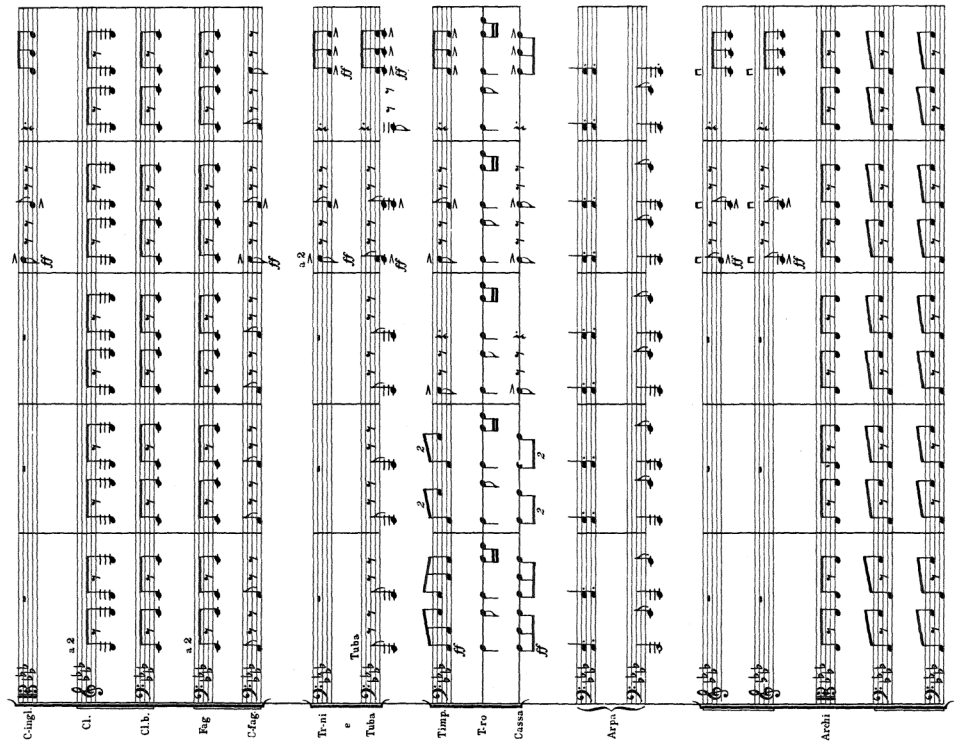


Example 4.5. *The Year 1941*: I, m. 1 to four measures before rehearsal no. 4 [Source: S. Prokof'ev, *1941-i god: Simfonicheskaia siuita* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1973), 5-12]

While interesting in its narrative effects, *The Year 1941* was ultimately puzzling as a Socialist Realist work. The first movement ends with a triumphant march firmly rooted in foursquare D major—the protagonists would seem to have emerged from the preceding battle victorious—only to be contradicted by a coda of twenty-five measures of the battle cacophony that opened the work. The third movement, "For the Brotherhood of the Nations" erupts with a triumphant D major march that moves forward unchecked in intensity until the work's somewhat overblown conclusion (a harmonized D-major scale that builds from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*). Between opening battle and concluding paean is the movement entitled "Night," which alternates sections of evocative music (complete with Bartókian nocturnal woodwind insect chatter), with a simple and sparsely accompanied folk-like melody played on solo flute. Prokofiev's critics who looked for the easily comprehended Socialist Realist trope of overcoming hardship for the better good instead detected three rather disparate numbers that failed to offer an overall logical progression for the narrative imagination. *The Year 1941* drew sharp criticism when it was premiered after significant delay, first in Sverdlovsk (Ekanterinburg) on 21 January 1943 and then in Moscow on 19 April 1943. Even Shostakovich, normally a tight-lipped colleague of Prokofiev's, decried the work as "insufficiently thought through and under-developed."[116] In the fourteen months between its completion and its unhappy premiere as a concert suite, however, *The Year 1941* had found a second life in *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*, where Savchenko's images supplied the music's lacking narrative.

[116] Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, 328. *The Year 1941*, despite Prokofiev's best efforts, was never published in his lifetime. The first edition appeared in 1973: S. Prokof'ev, *1941-i god: Simfonicheskaia siuita* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1973).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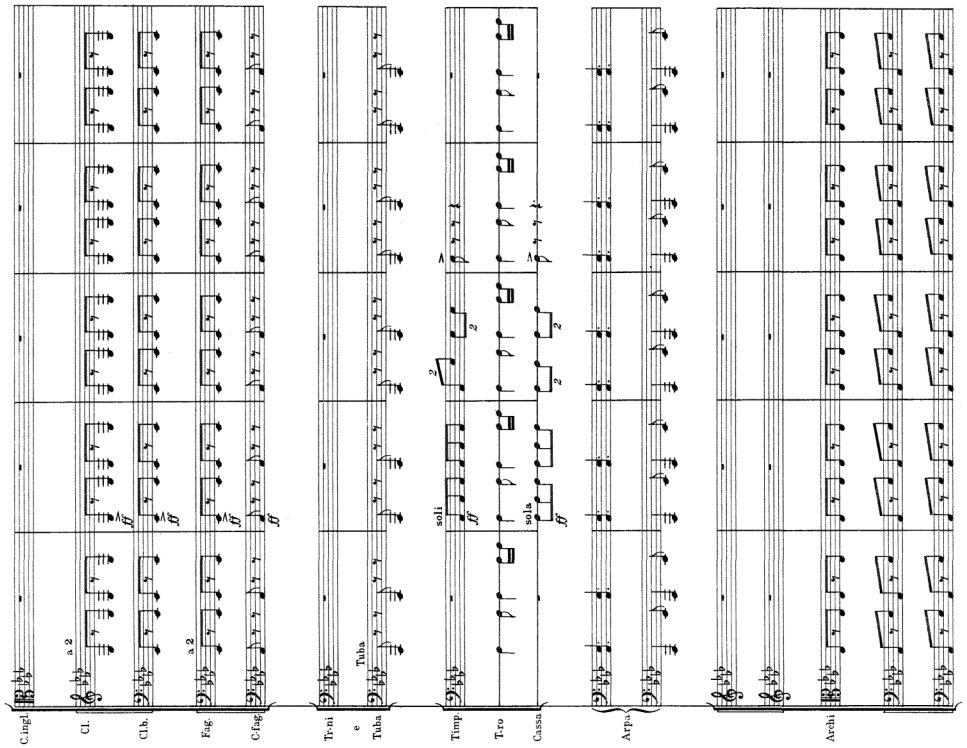
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Cassa
sola
Arpa
Archi

C. ingl.
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C-fag.
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e
Tuba
Timp.
T-ro
P-tti
Cassa
Arpa
Archi

8

C. ingl.
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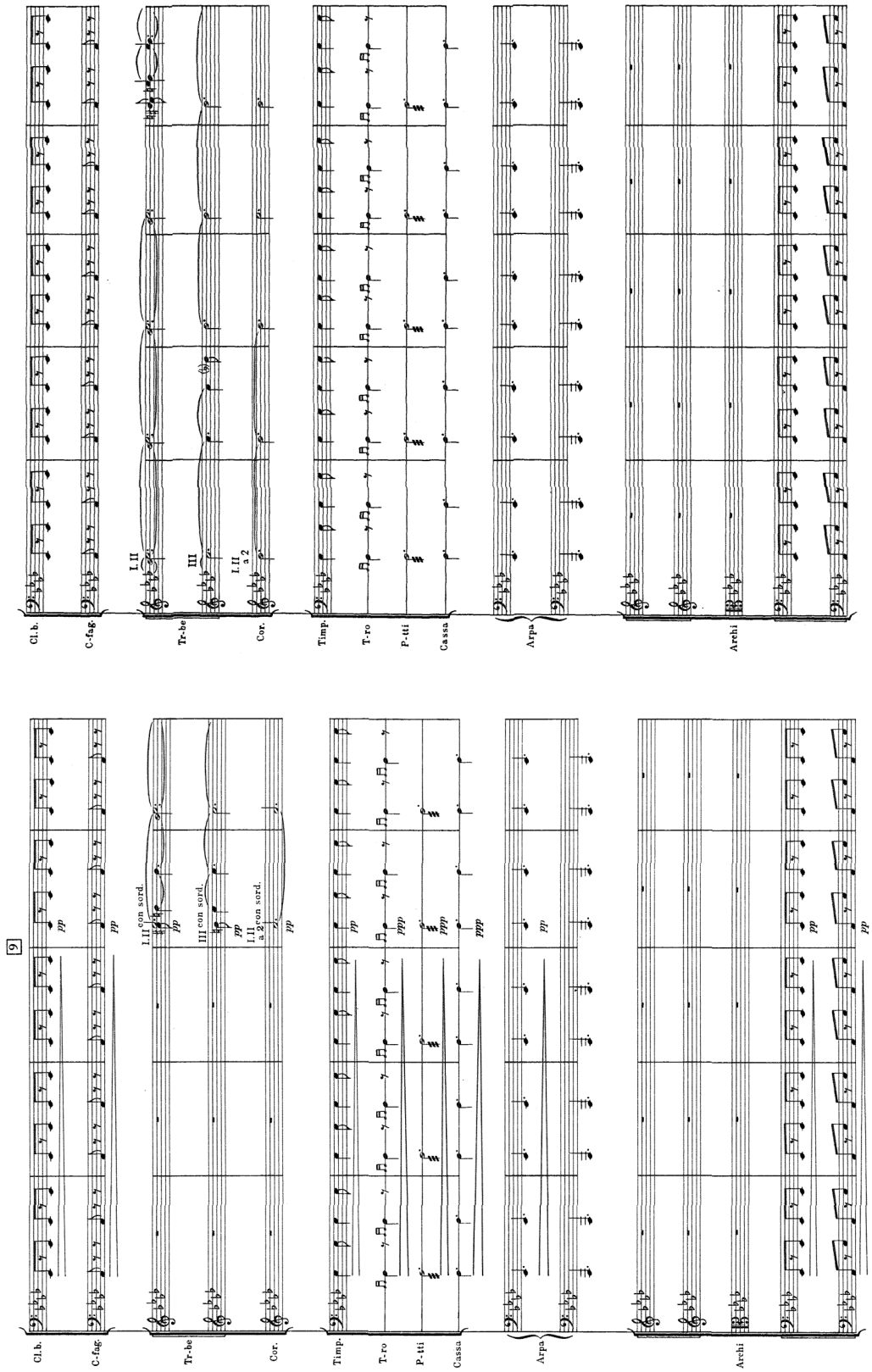
Archi



Example 4.6. *The Year 1941*: I, rehearsal no. 7 to 7 measures after rehearsal no. 9 [Source: S. Prokof'ev, *1941-i god: Simfonicheskaia siuita* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1973), 19-24].

From Suite to Film Score

Prokofiev and Mendel'son left Alma-Ata on 27 November, arriving in Semipalatinsk shortly thereafter. By the end of December, they were back in Moscow, making their tenure at the evacuated Kiev Studios well under one month. Mendel'son later wrote that Prokofiev enjoyed the time spent there—in addition to finding the film highly topical, he was fond of working with the musically-literate Savchenko.[117] The choice to use *The Year 1941* in *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* was a pragmatic one; when Prokofiev signed a contract for the film, the suite had languished for over a year without a premiere.[118] Savchenko moreover expected fifty minutes of "original" music for the film, and fast. Thus Prokofiev gladly brought his unused suite to the table, a shortcut that he made no effort to hide: at the recording, the orchestra played directly from the instrumental parts of *The Year 1941* that had been deposited in the library of the Composers' Union in Moscow.[119] Although Savchenko approved of Prokofiev's self-borrowing, the ready-made score did not accommodate all of his musical objectives for the film, nor did it allow for the use of a "theme" song, as had been so central in *Tonia* (and to a lesser extent *Kotovskii*). Thus Prokofiev composed nine brief numbers expressly for the film, using, at Savchenko's request, a Ukrainian folk song, "Oi ty Galiu" (example 4.7), as the primary thematic material.

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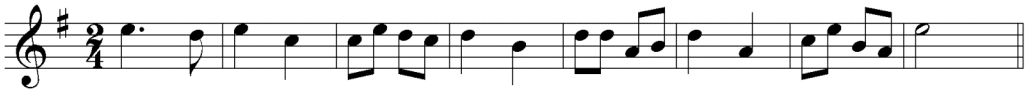
[117] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, ll. 23 and 29 ob.

[118] Prokofiev's letter to Atovmian on 24 April 1943 indicates that he was unsure if the work had received a premiere. Prokofiev asks if he instead has "heard" the suite in *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 33, ed. khr. 55, ll. 9-10, published in Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence").

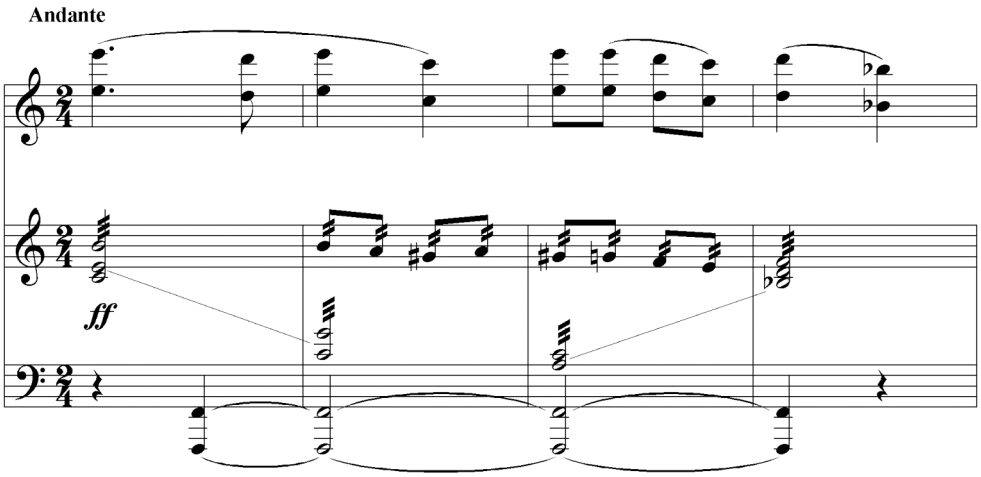
[119] The contract is in RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 17. Part of the manuscript score is written on the backs of the orchestral parts of *The Year 1941* (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr 107, l. 7 ob.).



Example 4.7. Ukrainian folksong "Oi ty Galiu," refrain only [Source: Ukraynsky narodny pysny (Kiyv, Derzhavne vidavnitstvo, 1960)]

When distant weapons fire shatters the bucolic opening scene, Chasnyk, the former chair of the local *kolkhoz* (collective farm), leads a debate in which the townspeople decide the best course of action. They come to the decision that self-sacrifice is necessary and they burn their fields as the Nazi divisions threaten to overtake the region (in reality Stalin had mandated the Scorched Earth policy). Savchenko films this scene from an angle that captures Chasnyk, as well as a bust of Lenin and a winding river in the distance (figure 4.5, left still). The angle and composition of this shot will, in later combination with Prokofiev's music, become a simple audiovisual motif. The moment of immolation offers a montage sequence, rare in Soviet wartime film, in which Savchenko juxtaposes impetus (the townspeople's debate), action (burning grain), and result (the inconsolable lamenting of the town's women). Prokofiev ties this temporal and visual conflation together with a tense, melodramatic, and tremolo-rich setting of "Oi ty Galiu" (No. 2, example 4.8).

Material from *The Year 1941* enters immediately following the montage sequence, where the first movement, "In Battle," plays uncut for more than four minutes. What was underwhelming in the concert hall here proves especially effective: thanks to the incessant figuration of the music, the partisan's preparations for the arrival of the German army derive a high level of tension.

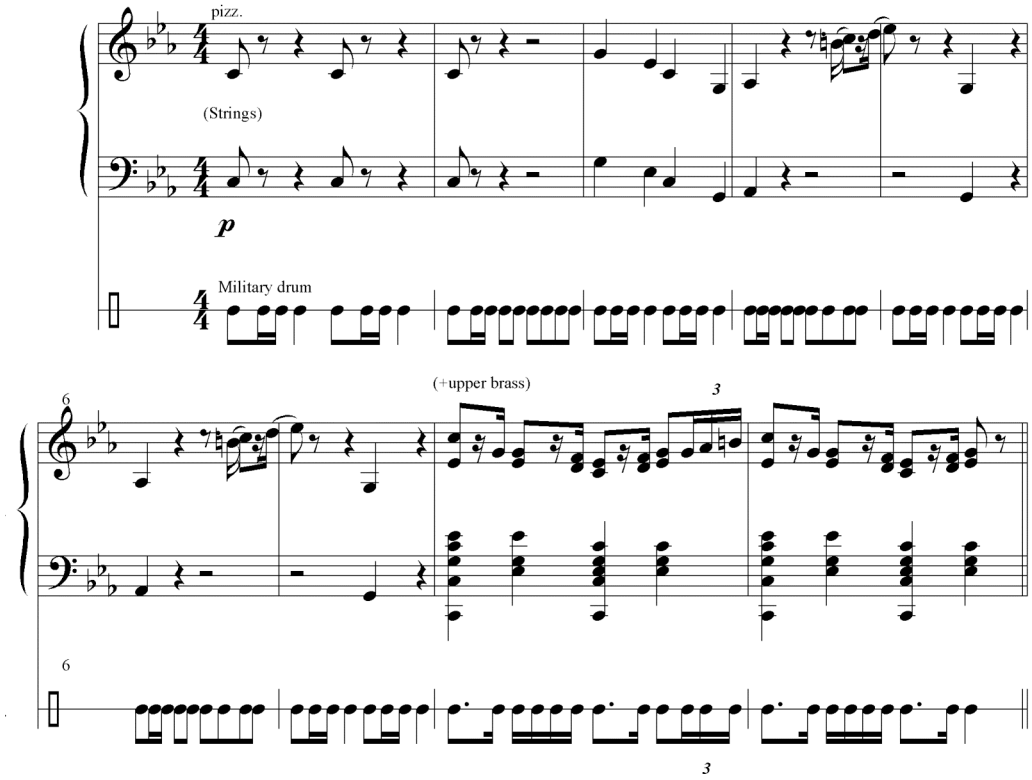


Example 4.8. *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*, "Posle vzryva" (no. 2), mm. 1-4
[Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 107, l. 2]

The strains of the Suite's first movement are lost in the sudden scream of an air raid siren (as in *Kotovskii*, loud noises in the soundtrack are used to mask the cuts made in the music). An abrupt cut brings back the film's opening shot, although now Nazi troops and crudely constructed gallows corrupt its sylvan beauty (Figure 4.5, right still).

Figure 4.5. *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*, visual motifs in the opening sequence

For this scene, Prokofiev imported the grotesque march he had composed for the Germans of *Kotovskii* (example 4.10).[120] The effect is simple yet potent agitprop: the audience both sees and hears the debasement of formerly unsullied lands. These simple juxtapositions and contrasts, typical of wartime films, represent intentional efforts at comprehensibility and, by extension, at propagandistic efficacy. As might be expected in this aesthetic framework, the Germans remain monothematic throughout the film; the march taken from *Kotovskii* is their only musical characterization. Similar to *Kotovskii* and *Aleksandr Nevskii*, the antagonists are caricatures, both musically and visually.



Example 4.10. *Kotovskii*, "Nemtsy pered goloi atakoi" (no. 11), mm. 1-9 (also used in *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*) [Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, 106, l. 7]

[120] In the manuscript score of *Partisans*, Prokofiev instructs the copyist to use the *Kotovskii* score in this instance (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 107, l. 3). Prokofiev openly admitted to using the same music to represent the Germans in both films, see Sergei Prokof'ev, "God raboty," *Literatura i iskusstvo*, 1 January 1943, p. 4.

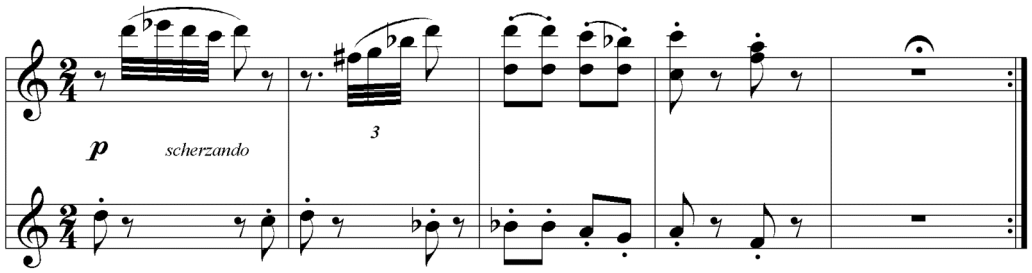
At one of the emotional climaxes of the film, Taras, a village elder, knowingly leads the Germans directly onto a minefield, hoping to dispatch the Nazis. Again the scene is rife with marked contrasts. The Germans silently move through the forest, but the viewer rarely sees their faces—they are dark wraiths. Meanwhile Taras is filmed in such an overexposed fashion that he appears to glow with whiteness (figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6. *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*, Taras leads the Nazis to the minefield

But it is not Taras's conspicuous appearance that attracts the attention of the Germans, but rather his unaccompanied intoning of "Oi ty, Galiu." The melody that has been woven into the orchestral score since the opening scenes at this point emerges from the nondiegetic backcloth and assumes its original vocal form. That the melody that has come to represent the plight of the partisans emerges in its "true" (i.e. diegetic) form in this scene signals the gravity of Taras' impending death, the righteous self-sacrifice for the greater good demanded of all Socialist Realist heroes.

From the minefield, a Nazi officer pursues Taras to a small forest hut. The old man hides inside the structure, pretending to lie dying on the floor when in reality his

body conceals several live grenades. The officer arrives and, realizing that a single old man is responsible for decimating his regiment on the minefield, exclaims with disgust, "he was alone, alone—this Russian!" In Savchenko's script, Taras is to "smile cleverly." Preserving his cover, we hear his smile rather than see it thanks to a four-measure *scherzando* snippet of music that Prokofiev composed for this moment (example 4.11) using the melody of "Oi ty, Galiu." After ordering the elderly man's village burnt, the officer again exclaims "Mein Gott! He was alone!" Again Taras "smiles" with the same three-measure musical fragment.



Example 4.11. *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*, "Smert' deda" (no. 3), mm. 11-15 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 107, l. 4]

Music historian E. Vishnevetskaia points out that Prokofiev here uses a tried-and-true device, the type of "monologue-dialogue" that has long been used in opera, most noticeably in act two of Chaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* (1890), where Hermann interrogates a tight-lipped but musically loquacious countess.[121] Unlike Chaikovsky's opera, however, the moments leading up to Taras's death are comic rather than macabre, thanks to the character of the music and its ersatz "mickey-mousing." Taras's death fulfils part of a Socialist-Realist ritual; Slavicist Katerina Clark describes the typical "elder" in the plots of Stalin-era novels, who is almost always "old and about to 'pass on'," his death

[121] Vishnevetskaia, "Kinomuzyka S.S. Prokof'eva voennykh let," 61.

representing a necessary step where he, like all Socialist-Realist heroes, "dies as an individual and is reborn as a function of the collective."[122] Even though the elder's death heralds the turning point in the struggle against the Nazis, the jocular tone of Prokofiev's faux-speech for Taras distracts from the gravity of the grisly self-sacrifice.

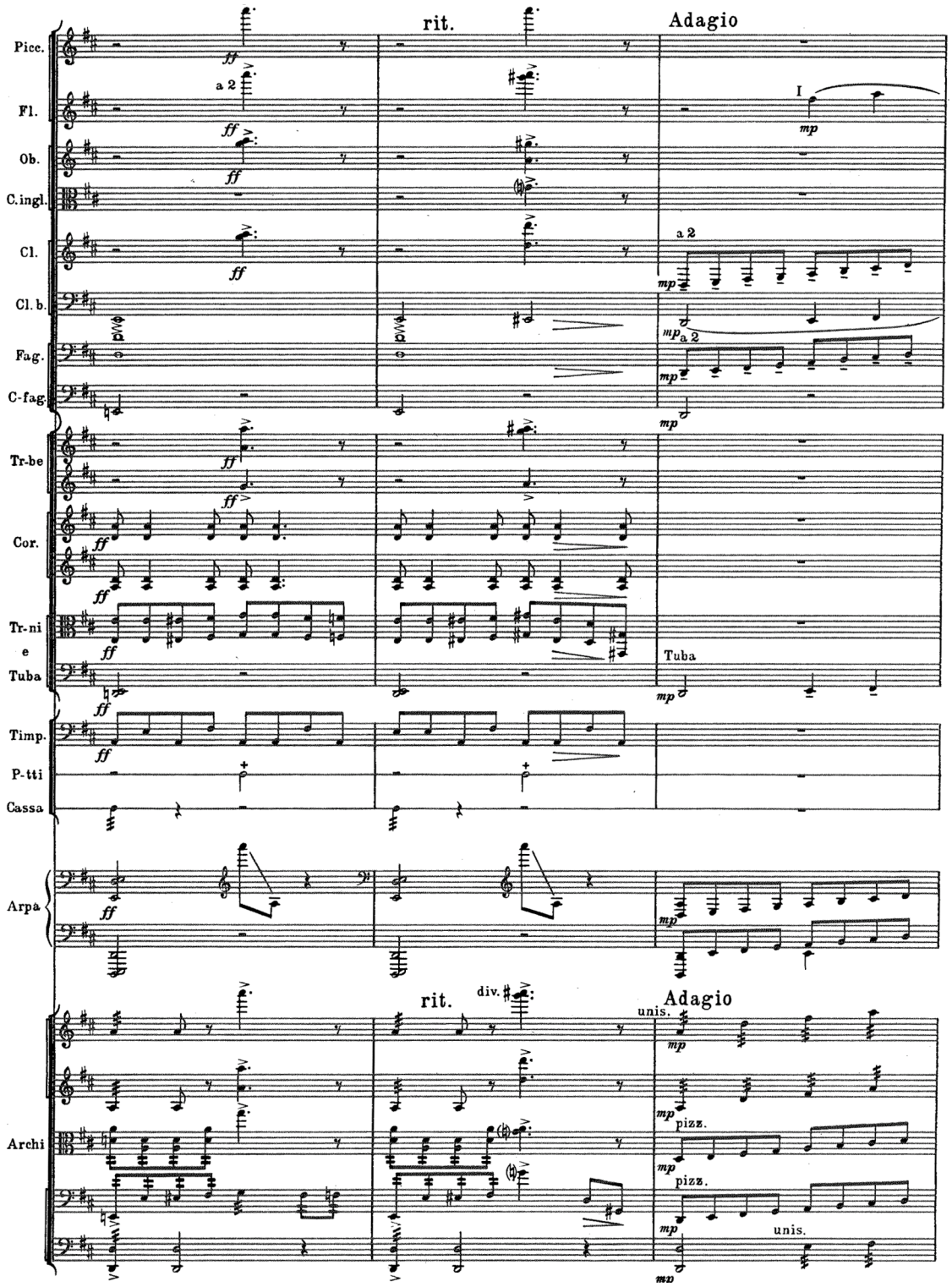
The most compelling use of music from *The Year 1941* in *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* occurs in the last third of the film, following Taras's death. Chasnyk finds a functioning radio, and, after some fine-tuning, reports from Moscow begin issuing forth. For the first time the partisans learn the extent of the war, and most importantly that they are not alone in their struggle. The radio becomes a crucial agent of contextualization, expanding the focus from the local to the national. In one of the more remarkable moments of the film, the radio broadcasts Stalin's voice as he addresses the Red Army during the 7 November 1941 events on Red Square marking the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Revolution. As time and place are abruptly and disorientingly fixed, Savchenko cuts to stock footage of Red Square, complete with assembled army ranks, while the men of the army join voices in a sustained battle cry in response to Stalin's speech that travels over the radiowaves to Chasnyk's base in Ukraine. The partisans crowded around the radio rejoice at the sound of their leader's voice. The scene is in turn intercut with shots of a small Nazi division moving through the forest near the partisan enclave, which, passing close enough to overhear the might of the Red Army transmitted through the radio, melodramatically retreats in fear. Stalin's voice rings out from the radio, "do not be afraid," a phrase picked up and echoed by the partisans as the find their strength and will unexpectedly renewed. Chasnyk is the most taken by the moment, and

[122] Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981), 170 and 178.

directly addresses the camera: "Stalin, our father, thank you for your words at this difficult hour!"

Prokofiev accompanies this concluding ode with the last quarter of the third movement of *The Year 1941*. The tension-inducing tremolos that have pervaded the score thus far (both in the first movement of the suite and the numbers composed specifically for the film) are reduced to melodic emphasis in the *divisi* first violins. The tempo slows from *andante* to a concluding *adagio*, suggesting the calming effect Stalin's "intervention" has on the partisans (example 4.12).

Chasnyk's concluding words are aligned with the final four measures of the suite, in which Prokofiev resolves the preceding tension and adds a clichéd gesture where nearly every instrument in the orchestra plays an ascending line that builds to the final D-major sonority. In effect, Prokofiev's score allows Stalin to inhabit an audiovisual space entirely removed from that of the rest of the film. The message is not at all understated: while the Ukrainian partisans may be a robust detachment, equal to the super-human tasks required of Socialist-Realist protagonists and heroes, they cannot equal the might of the Red (Russian) Army. The army and the partisans both turn to the benevolent and deified Stalin. Whatever their ideological and moral shortcomings, such audiovisual techniques possessed significant propagandistic power.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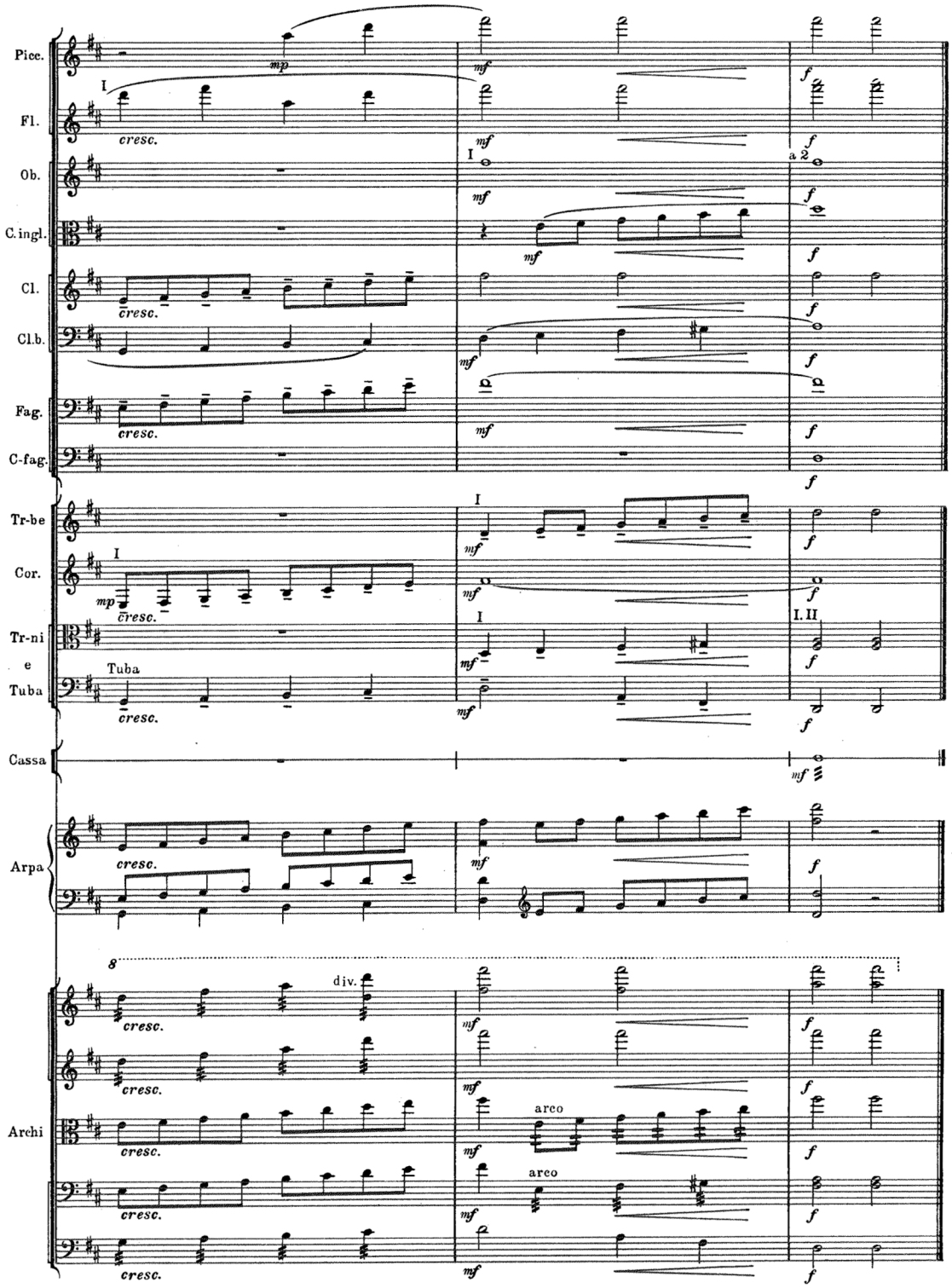

Example 4.12. *The Year 1941*: III, final six measures [Source: S. Prokof'ev, *1941-i god: Simfonicheskaia siuita* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1973), 19-24].

Postlude

In mid-February 1944 the KDK convened a conference at Dom Kino in Moscow entitled "Results of the Work of Soviet Artistic Cinematography in 1944." In a series of addresses given by the leaders of the industry, some congratulatory and some critical, the Soviet film industry attempted to evaluate itself. Nikolai Kriukov took the podium to speak for the nation's achievements and setbacks in film music (see Appendix VII). Comparing the Soviet film composer to an epic hero (*bogatyr'*) who must triumph over a number of "dragons," Kriukov numerated many of the industry's ills from a composer's perspective. Among the monsters that Kirukov's heroes had to overcome were scenarios and scripts prepared without consulting the composer, directors not versed in music, and inept sound technicians. Sadly, these problems were nothing new: eight years earlier, Kriukov had made nearly identical complaints in the journal *Kino*.[123] It was these problems that more than anything deterred Prokofiev from future work in film.

When *Lermontov* premiered on 6 July 1943 (the last of the 1941-42 "war" films to come to the screen), Prokofiev was still in the midst of work on Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*. The strikingly different experiences of *Aleksandr Nevskii* on the one hand, and *Lermontov*, *Kotovskii*, *Tonia*, and *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* on the other, reveal just how privileged Prokofiev's role was in an Eisenstein film. As well shall see in the next chapter, *Ivan the Terrible* was a similarly intense, deep (and thus atypical) cinematic collaboration. Prokofiev's involvement with "typical" Soviet film ended in 1942 when the ink had dried on his score for *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*. Prokofiev appears to have passed up an offer to compose for *Genesis*, a collectively-composed film score

[123] N[ikoali] Kriukov, "Opyt kompozitora," *Kino*, 6 April 1936, p. 3.

engineered in 1944 by Nathaniel Shilkret (1895-1982), then a staff conductor at the Victor Recording Company. Shilkret commissioned music from six composers, Arnold Schoenberg, Aleksandr Tansman, Darius Milhaud, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Ernst Toch, and Igor Stravinsky, which, together with Shillkret's own contribution, was to be used by MGM as a ready-made documentary film score. Bela Bartók, Paul Hindemith, and Prokofiev were all asked to take part in the project, but refused. (Unfortunately, a fire destroyed the score, leaving only a recording as evidence of the project; the film was never realized).[124]

Following the notorious Central Committee attack on Soviet composers on 10 February 1948, many of those disgraced retreated from composing art music and sought some level of professional stability and safety in composing film music.[125] Prokofiev, however, displayed no such interest, despite several offers. On 16 June 1949, Levon Atovmian wrote to Prokofiev that a certain Iurii Vinokurov hoped to meet with the composer regarding a film. Prokofiev's response was categorical: he would not consider writing any more film music.[126] On 24 June 1952 another request arrived, asking for fifteen minutes of music for a film titled *Flight to the Moon* (for which Prokofiev would receive about 15,000 rubles), again transmitted via Atovmian, and again refused by

[124] Jennifer Shaw, "Arnold Schoenberg's Collaborations: Alienation, Denigration, and the Desire for Popularity," paper read at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Fall 2004; also see James Westby, "Castelnuovo-Tedesco in America: The Film Music," (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1994), 283-288.

[125] Tomoff, *Creative Union*, especially Chapter 5 (122-151).

[126] Letter from Atovmian to Prokofiev dated 16 June 1949 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 447, l. 3) and letter from Prokofiev to Atovmian dated 16 July 1949 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 55, l. 20), both forthcoming in Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence."

Prokofiev.[127] It bears noting that in 1951, *Kotovskii* revisited Prokofiev: On 7 September, an administrator from the Kiev film studios wrote to the composer, asking him to assist in reconstructing either from memory or by ear portions of the *Kotovskii* manuscript that had been lost during the evacuation. No record of Prokofiev's response survives; he appears to have declined.[128] The experiences of 1941-42 remained with Prokofiev until his death; after the protracted frustration of *Lermontov* and *Tonia's* inexplicable prohibition, the once-promising medium now seemed a professional gamble. Prokofiev instead turned his attention to opera and ballet—at least until 1948, when the act of composing itself seemed to become a gamble.

[127] Letter from Atovmian to Prokofiev dated 24 June 1952 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 447, ll. 45-46), forthcoming in Kravetz, "Prokofiev and Atovmyan: Correspondence." The film does not appear to have been produced.

[128] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 809, l. 28. Prokofiev may have simply sent the studio portions of his own manuscript score, which would explain why the copy in the composer's archive is incomplete. Prokofiev's lifelong habit of meticulously preserving his personal documents would seem to make this highly unlikely, however.

CHAPTER FIVE

Ivan the Terrible and Subjectivity

Mira Mendel'son spent the days leading up to the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 with Prokofiev at the artists' colony in Kratovo, outside of Moscow. She recalls an unexpected event from this time in her memoirs:

> One day, returning from a walk, we noticed strange things on the armchair sitting on the terrace—a piece of iron and a stone. We were at a loss as to how they could have gotten there. The answer came unexpectedly: Eisenstein, having met Prokofiev, said to him in passing that he had stopped by, and finding nobody at home, left his "visiting card"—iron—*Eisen* and stone—*Stein*. While visiting us, Eisenstein excitedly told us about his new plans: he was preparing to work on a historical film about Ivan the Terrible, and invited Prokofiev to write music. Prokofiev found this invitation interesting.[1]

The new project, *Ivan the Terrible* (*Ivan groznyi*), would be Sergei Eisenstein's (1898-1948) final credit as director. During the course of nearly seven years of planning and production, it developed into an immense trilogy that remained unfinished at Eisenstein's death. Of the two completed parts, the first (1945) received a Stalin Prize, the Soviet Union's highest honor in the arts, while the second was censored and did not premiere until 1958, years after Eisenstein, Prokofiev, and Stalin were all dead. Part III was never

[1] M[ira] Prokof'eva, "Vospominanie o vstrechakh i rabote S. S. Prokof'eva s S. M. Eizenshteinom," manuscript, RGALI f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 3 (Published as M[ira] Prokof'eva, "Iz vospominanii," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 4 [1961]: 91-104).

realized.[2] On the surface, the tripartite film presents elements of a typical Socialist-Realist plot: Ivan IV (1530-84), Russia's first tsar, struggles to free his lands from occupiers—the Mongols from without and the boyars (the hereditary nobility) from within—a quest that comes at great personal cost. Yet this ubiquitous trope of self-sacrifice for the greater good unfolds in an extraordinarily complex visual and audio framework that audiences have found alternately perplexing, exhilarating, confusing, or thoroughly strange.[3] Interpretations of the film's message similarly vary from those who read it as a shameless justification of Russian imperialism to those who laud what they see as a shockingly daring critique of Stalin's regime.[4]

Much work exists that elucidates Eisenstein's intricate networks of visual motifs of images, shadows, postures, and color.[5] Prokofiev's contribution to *Ivan the Terrible*, however, has been underestimated, either granted cursory attention or considered an extension of *Aleksandr Nevskii's* aesthetic world.[6] If in *Aleksandr Nevskii* music clari-

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[2] Contrary to much received opinion, Eisenstein filmed several brief segments of Part III that survive. These came to light in a 1998 film edited by Naum Kleiman, *Neizvestnyi Ivan Groznyi* (*The Unknown Ivan the Terrible*), released in the United States as part of Criterion Collection IVA090 (#88).

[3] On the prototypical plots of Socialist Realist works, see Katarina Clark's classic study, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), esp. 1-24.

[4] Richard Taruskin, "Great Artists Serving Stalin Like a Dog," *The New York Times*, 28 May 1995, p. 22). Joan Neuberger, a historian and one of the leading authorities on *Ivan the Terrible*, claims in contrast that *Ivan the Terrible* is "a devastating critique of tyranny and a brilliant challenge to the conventions of Socialist Realism." Joan Neuberger, *Ivan the Terrible* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 32.

[5] Kristin Thompson, *Eisenstein's* Ivan the Terrible: *A Neoformalist Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Joan Neuberger, *Ivan the Terrible* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003); Yuri Tsivian, *Ivan the Terrible* (London: British Film Institute, 2002); Mary Madeline Peatman, "Sergei Eisenstein's 'Ivan the Terrible' as a Cinematic Realization of the 'Gesamtkunstwerk'" (Ph.D diss, Indiana University, 1975).

[6] Oksana Dvornichenko, "Iskusstvo neslykhannykh garmonii: Eizenshtein i Prokof'ev," *Muzykal'naia zhizn'* 3 (1988): 10-11; L. Kozlov, "'Ivan Groznyi,' Muzykal'no-tematicheskoe stroenie," In *Voprosy Kinoiskusstvo, Vyp. 10* (Moscow: Nauka, 1967), 242-57; M. Sokol'skii, "Sodruzhestvo s muzykoi," *Iskusstvo kino* 12 (1958): 96-100; V. Vasina-Grossman, "Muzyka k fil'mu 'Ivan Groznyi'," *Sovetskaia Muzyka* 3 (1958): 52-58; Elmar Arro, "Sergej Prokofjews Iwan der Schreckliche,"

fies, delineating Russian protagonists and German antagonists, music in *Ivan* more often than not confuses, distorts, and undercuts the visual element, participating in transformative moments that are a direct extension of Eisenstein's dialectical theories. In combining image and music that are seemingly antithetical, or juxtaposing contrasting music so that incongruities arise, *Ivan the Terrible* challenges its listeners to make sense of conflicting stimuli, and in the process experience the film in individualized ways. This fundamental subjectivity allowed Eisenstein and Prokofiev the freedom to produce a stunningly provocative yet hermeneutically open work within the outlines of a bureaucratically mandated subject.

Ivan the Terrible is a conflation of events drawn from the reign of Russia's first tsar, Ivan IV, popularly known as "Groznyi" (the Terrible).[7] Ivan is a pivotal figure in Russian history; his military conquests and political machinations united a vast, multiethnic expanse under a single crown. As his sobriquet suggests, however, the famous victories of his reign remain tainted by infamous brutality. The force of Ivan's autocracy owed much to the *oprichniki*, the state police cum black-cloaked death squad, who at Ivan's behest ruthlessly suppressed the boyars and perpetrated atrocities such as the 1570 Massacre of Novgorod.

In the collective imagination of twentieth-century Russia, one event of Ivan's rule stood out above all others: the tsar's accidental murder of his own son. This derived from

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Österreichische Musikzeitschrift 36 (1981): 573-77; Christopher Palmer, "Prokofiev, Eisenstein and Ivan," *Musical Times* 132 (1991): 179-181. See also Chapter 12 ("A Breakthrough in Sound-Visual Cinema: *Ivan the Terrible* by Eisenstein and Prokofiev") of Tatiana K. Egorova, *Soviet Film Music: An Historical Survey*, trans. Tatiana A. Ganf and Natalia A. Egunova (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997), 91-113.

[7] On the historical Ivan, see the following recent studies: Andrei Pavlov and Maureen Perrie, *Ivan the Terrible* (London: Pearson/Longman, 2003); Isabel de Madariaga, *Ivan the Terrible: First Tsar of Russia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Boris Floria, *Ivan Groznyi* (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1999); Natalia Pronina, *Ivan Groznyi: muchitel' ili muchenik?* (Moscow: Eksmo, 2005).

a widely known painting by Ilya Repin, *Ivan the Terrible and his Son Ivan* (1873), which depicts the crazed tsar cradling his child's bloody corpse. Repin's work caught Stalin's attention in the late 1930s when he came across it in a manuscript of Andrei Shestakov's *Short Course on the History of the USSR*, the textbook from which the Soviet populace learned their history. Stalin excised the image, deeming it "prejudicial," and entrusted Andrei Zhdanov (1896-1948), the Leningrad Party head at the time, with rewriting passages in the *Short Course* that dealt with Ivan.[8] The rehabilitation of Ivan as a Russian patriot subsequently became a concern at the highest levels of government. While Ivan's overhaul undoubtedly owes much to Stalin's own personality cult (the modern leader reportedly admired his historical counterpart), the propaganda value of the resonances between Soviet expansion into the Baltic States during the 1940s and Ivan's own campaign for the same region nearly four centuries earlier remains at least partially responsible for the sudden interest in the tsar.[9] Ivan's successes in securing the nation's borders represented an important tool for reassuring the average Russian that their nation had a long history of repelling threats from without.

Even more problematic than Ivan's tarnished popular image, however, was the fact that the tsar's despotism bore similarities to Stalin's own brutality. There is no doubt that Eisenstein remained aware of this and intended the connection to be sensed by

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[8] Kevin M. F. Platt and David Brandenberger, "Terribly Romantic, Terribly Progressive, or Terribly Tragic: Rehabilitating Ivan IV under I. V. Stalin," *The Russian Review* 58 (1999): 637-38. Platt and Brandenberger's study presents a wealth of documentary information regarding the cultivation of Ivan in Soviet Russia. Their conclusion, however, that "the artistic community's conception of Ivan [offered] images of progressive, charismatic leadership in a tragic battle against implacable foes and enormous odds" is reductive.

[9] Maureen Perrie "Nationalism and History: the Cult of Ivan the Terrible in Stalin's Russia," in *Russian Nationalism Past and Present*, eds. G. Hosking and R. Service (New York: St. Martin's Press in association with the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1998), 112.

viewers of *Ivan the Terrible*. As Joan Neuberger writes, "contrary to much received opinion about *Ivan*, Eisenstein used the film to engage important political and social questions of his time rather than to evade or whitewash them."[10] Documentary evidence of what these questions were, let alone their answers, is scarce. Neuberger has identified only one instance where Eisenstein explicitly connects historical tsar and Soviet dictator, buried in a passage of Eisenstein's personal journal.[11] One of the only other direct (and heretofore unknown) links is found on a faded piece of scrap paper inserted into Eisenstein's notes on the musical construction of the film, which were later deposited in the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art. The page contains hastily penned and cryptic remarks about "Maliuta's Jealousy," referring to the scene immediately preceding the attack on Kazan in Part I in which the loyalties of those close to Ivan are questioned. Eisenstein added an annotation to these: "The establishment of the NKVD" (*Uchrezh-denie NKVD*), doubtlessly indicating that the nefarious forerunner of the KGB was a model for the director's image of the oprichniki.[12] Such a parallel requires little stretch of the mind; in Eisenstein's depiction the murderous acts of Ivan's henchmen easily map onto those of Stalin's attendants during the Great Purges (1937-39). It is injudicious, however, to suggest that these documents indicate *Ivan the Terrible* is a simple allegory of Stalin's Russia. The interpretive debates that still surround the film remind us that while a critique of the Soviet system (indeed of Stalin himself) may have been part of

[10] Neuberger, *Ivan the Terrible*, 3.

[11] Ibid., 78.

[12] "Rezhisserskie plany muzykal'nogo i zvukovogo oformlenie fil'ma 'Ivan Groznyi' i chernovye nabroski k planam," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 24.

Eisenstein's imagination, the film is far too complex to reduce to any one meaning or metaphor. [13]

Bringing Ivan into the pantheon of Russian historical heroes—a place already populated by more conventional figures such as Aleksandr Nevskii and Aleksandr Pushkin—was yet another delicate undertaking for Soviet artists. The Central Committee's approach involved popularizing the tsar through a trio of commissions that took Ivan's reign as their subject: a play, realized by writer Aleksei Tolstoi (1882-1945), a film (realized by Eisenstein), and an opera, which went unrealized but was briefly considered by Tikhon Khrennikov (1913-2007) and Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-75).[14] Zhdanov personally delivered the order for the film to Eisenstein in early January 1941, making it clear that refusing the commission was not an option.[15]

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[13] A number of writers identify dissident undertones in *Ivan the Terrible*: Marie Seton, *Sergei M. Eisenstein: A Biography* (London: Dobson, 1978); Leonid Kozlov, "Ten' Groznogo i khudozhnik." *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* 15 (1992): 14-47, 243-248; Alexander Zholkovsky, "Eisenstein's Poetics: Dialogical or Totalitarian," in *Laboratory of Dreams: The Russian Avant-Garde and Cultural Experiment*, eds. John E. Bowlt and Olga Matich (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 245-56. Kristin Thompson argues against the interpretation of *Ivan the Terrible* as anti-Stalinist. See "*Ivan the Terrible* and Stalinist Russia: A Reexamination," *Cinema Journal* 17 (1977): 30-43.

[14] On commissions for the play and film, see Platt and Brandenburger, "Rehabilitating Ivan," 639 n19; see also: R[ostislav] Iurenev, *Sergei Eizenshtein: Zamysly, fil'my, metod* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1998), 2: 192, 210; Tikhon Khrennikov, *Tak eto bylo: Tikhon Khrennikov o vremeni i o sebe*, ed. V. Rubtsova (Moscow: Muzyka, 1994), 110; S. M. Khentova, *Shostakovich: Zhizn' i tvorchestvo*, vol. 1 (Leningrad: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1985), 519. According to his Soviet biographer, Prokofiev himself considered writing an opera on Ivan the Terrible (Israel V. Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, trans. Florence Jonas [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960], 359).

[15] Iurenev, *Eizenshtein*, 2: 209. A number of sources claim that the order for *Ivan* "from above" is unsubstantiated. Eisenstein's letter to Stalin of 20 January 1944, however, refers to Zhdanov as the origin of the film's commission (Pis'mo S.M. Eizenshteina I.V. Stalinu o fil'me "Ivan Groznyi", (dated 20 January 1944), AP RF, f. 3, op. 35, d. 87, ll. 170-71, reprinted in K[irill] M[ikhailovich] Anderson, ed., *Kremlevskii kinoteatr 1928-1953: Dokumenty* (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2005), 690-91. Grigorii Marianov claims that Bol'shakov and Zhdanov recommended that Eisenstein be given the commission. See Grigorii Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor: Stalin smotrit kino* (Moscow: Konfederatsiia soiuzov kinematografistov "Kinotsentr", 1992), 71.

Production History

Following Zhdanov's visit, Eisenstein immediately began planning the film, a task for which he immersed himself in a multitude of aesthetic and historical sources. A preliminary draft of the screenplay was ready by April (unlike in *Aleksandr Nevskii*, Zhdanov allowed Eisenstein to pen his own scenario for the film). Music figured early into the planning process—among the director's first notes for the film, dated 23 January, are specific musical details.[16] No evidence exists suggesting that Eisenstein ever had a partner other than Prokofiev in mind for *Ivan the Terrible*, and his meeting with the composer at Kratovo in early summer must have pleased him indeed. The Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, however, delayed the start of their second collaboration and displaced composer and director to different corners of the country—Prokofiev to the Caucasus Mountains and Eisenstein to Alma-Ata. Although Eisenstein wrote to Prokofiev on 23 December confirming that *Ivan* would be produced, the letter was misplaced and did not reach Prokofiev until three months later, at which time the composer had been moved to Tbilisi, Georgia, where he was putting the final touches on the short score of the first version of his opera *War and Peace* (*Voina i mir*).[17] An invitation from TsOKS to travel to Alma-Ata followed Eisenstein's letter, arriving at a fortuitous moment between the composition of *War and Peace* and the work's subsequent and extensive revisions. On 29 March, Prokofiev wrote an enthusiastic note to Eisenstein, confirming that he and Mendel'son were planning to join him in Alma-Ata (the visit of *Ivan's* chief editor,

[16] Rezhisserskie plany muzykal'nogo i zvukovogo oformlenie fil'ma "Ivan Groznyi" i chernovye nabroski k planam, unpublished, RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 1.

[17] Letter dated 23 December 1941; published in Levaco, "The Eisenstein-Prokofiev Correspondence," 10.

Nikolai Sliozberg, to Tbilisi had provided the opportunity to deliver a copy of the screenplay to Prokofiev). Two months later, on 29 May, Prokofiev and Mendel'son began a lengthy journey across the Caspian Sea and the Kazakh desert to join Eisenstein on the set of *Ivan the Terrible*.[18] Their journey carried them through Tashkent, where they met Vladimir Lugovskoi (1901-57), the poet who had written lyrics for the songs in *Aleksandr Nevskii* (see Chapter 3) and subsequently been commissioned to do the same for *Ivan the Terrible*.[19] Mendel'son described their meeting:

> In Tashkent we spent the night with the poet Vladimir Aleksandrovich Lugovskoi, enjoying his hospitality. Lugovskoi read the song texts he had written for *Ivan the Terrible*. Sergei Sergeevich [Prokofiev] noted that he read "with a strong rhythmic emphasis." He wished to remember Lugovskoi's performance to inspire him when he began composing the music [for the film].[20]

By the time Prokofiev and Mendel'son arrived in Alma-Ata, Eisenstein had been actively planning *Ivan the Terrible* for nearly eighteen months—more time than most average Soviet films took to plan and produce in their entirety. Prokofiev began his work before a single rush had been filmed; various delays forced the first days of filming back to April 1943 (for one, official approval for Eisenstein's screenplay had not been forthcoming until 5 September 1942).[21] When cameras rolled for the first time, *Ivan the Terrible* had been well over two years in preparation. Eisenstein in that time had produced several thousand drawings and filled scores of notebooks filled with details on the construction of the film, many of them specifically concerning music.

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[18] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 14.

[19] In 1941 Lugovskoi had traveled to the front lines of the war, where he suffered a nervous breakdown. He was subsequently evacuated to Tashkent, where his path intersected Prokofiev's and Mendel'son's.

[20] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 3, ed. khr. 380, l. 14.

[21] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 652, ll. 9-11.

A few weeks after Prokofiev's arrival, composer and director drew up detailed plans for *Ivan the Terrible's* music, which included a thematic outline and a prose description of musical cues for what would become Part I of the film (translations of both documents are in Appendix VII).[22] Prokofiev composed little music for *Ivan the Terrible* during the fall of 1942, however. Director and composer were limited in what they could accomplish prior to filming, instead directing their combined creative powers at revising and orchestrating *War and Peace* (Prokofiev even expressed interest in having Eisenstein direct the production of the opera).[23]

A return to Moscow for official hearings of *War and Peace* and the Seventh Piano Sonata (op. 83, 1939-42) interrupted Prokofiev's residence in Alma-Ata from late November until January. Prokofiev returned to spend the spring in Kazakhstan and full-scale production of *Ivan the Terrible* began in April. The timing was unfortunate; during the long production delays, Prokofiev had committed to other projects and by the beginning of the summer he prepared to depart Alma-Ata. On 9 July, Eisenstein dashed off a note to the composer, pleading for him to stay: "I beg you very, very much not to leave this place until the recording of the Chorus of Oprichniks—without you the chorus and the recording will be hopelessly botched."[24] Eisenstein's entreaties were to no avail, and Prokofiev spent from mid-July until October 1943 in Molotov (Perm), where evacuated

[22] The exact date of Prokofiev's arrival is unknown, but it is no later than June 29. A letter written on that date to Prokofiev's colleague Nikolai Miaskovskii describes his arrival in Alma-Ata. See *S. S. Prokof'ev i N. Ia. Miaskovskii: Perepiska*, ed. Dmitri Kabalevskii (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1977), 459. The thematic plan and prose description are in RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, ll. 108-120, 121-27.

[23] A. Volkov, *"Voina i mir" Prokof'eva: Opyt analiza variantov opery* (Moscow: Muzyka, 1976), 17; Malcolm Brown, "Prokofiev's *War and Peace*: A Chronicle," *The Musical Quarterly* 63 (1977): esp. 177; see also the discussion in Prokof'eva, "Iz vospominanii."

[24] Letter from Eisenstein to Prokofiev, dated 9 July 1943 (Levaco, "The Eisenstein-Prokofiev Correspondence," 12).

personnel from the Kirov Theater offered consultation on the preparation of his ballet *Cinderella* (*Zolushka*, 1940-44). As revisions to *War and Peace* and continued work on *Cinderella* consumed his attention, Prokofiev's interest in *Ivan the Terrible* temporarily waned. According to Prokofiev's Soviet biographer Israel Nestyev, one of Prokofiev's letters sent from Molotov even referred to Eisenstein's crew as "the tormenters in Alma-Ata."[25] Despite Eisenstein's pleas to travel to Alma-Ata, Prokofiev resettled in Moscow after departing Molotov, offering to compromise with the director by composing via correspondence.[26]

Eisenstein was meanwhile busy filming in Alma-Ata, where he had to contend with sub par working conditions. Owing to a shortage of electricity, filming in the cramped, makeshift studio was only possible at night, often in the bitter cold of the desert winter. Ivan Bol'shakov (1902-80), head of the KDK since 1939, continually criticized Eisenstein over delays, even to the point that Eisenstein applied to Stalin directly for support.[27] Stalin, though distracted by the war effort, had kept abreast of the production as it unfolded in the distant East, and on 13 September 1943, sent an evaluation of the screenplay to Bol'shakov in which he found that "Ivan the Terrible, like a progressive force of his own time, and the *oprichina*, as his expedient instrument, had turned out well."[28]

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[25] Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, 348.

[26] Letter dated 17 November 1943 ("Pis'ma i telegrammy Prokof'eva Eizenshteinu," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 2050, ll. 8-9).

[27] Pis'mo S. M. Eizenshteina I. V. Stalinu o fil'me "Ivan Groznyi," (dated 20 January 1944), AP RF, f. 3, op. 35, d. 87, ll. 170-71, reprinted in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 690-91. Bol'shakov had replaced Semyon Dukel'skii (see Chapters 2 and 3).

[28] Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor*, 70.

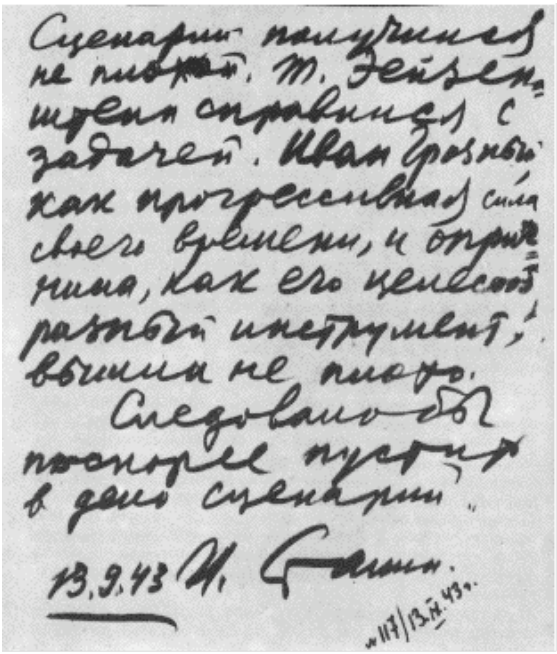

Figure 5.1. Stalin's 13 September 1943 Letter to Ivan Bol'shakov [Source: Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsenzor*, 70]

The combination of the difficult working conditions at TsOKS and Eisenstein's exacting and labor-intensive methods did not allow for an expeditious production. In early 1944 Eisenstein decided to offset the multiplying delays by dividing *Ivan the Terrible* into three parts, with the first two scheduled for release together later in the year and the third at a later date.[29] Struggling to complete a rough cut of the film, Eisenstein missed scheduled soundtrack recordings in Moscow in January and March. Only in early July did he return to Moscow to begin editing Part I of film, submitting his work to the KDK for approval on 19 August.[30]

The members of the KDK, however, viewed a version with an incomplete soundtrack. Although Eisenstein's notes indicate that recording took place on 18-26 July, the

[29] Neuberger, *Ivan the Terrible*, 21.

[30] Pis'ma S. M.Eizenshteina direktoru kinostudii "Mosfil'm" V. N.Golovine o prichinakh zaderzhki s ozvuchaniem fil'ma "Ivan Groznyi", unpublished, RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 659, l. 1.

film's score had not yet been completed.[31] Since the director's return to Moscow, Prokofiev had been ensconced at the Composers' House near Ivanovo, where work on *Cinderella* and his new Fifth Symphony occupied his attention. He again used his physical distance to evade work on *Ivan*: on 17 July, the eve of the recording session in Moscow, Prokofiev wrote to Levon Atovmian (1901-73) that "Eisenstein has been trying to lure me to Moscow, but I would like to stay on here longer […] as I have begun a symphony, and my work is going quite well."[32] A letter from Eisenstein to Prokofiev dated 30 July reveals the director's growing exasperation: "Categorically beg you to come at once. […] A fortnight's delay will upset all my plans for the release of both parts."[33] Prokofiev, however, remained at Ivanovo until the end of August.

Prokofiev's disinclination to return to concentrated work on *Ivan the Terrible* caused Eisenstein some trouble with the Mosfilm directorate, as delays caused by a composer were certainly an exceptional occurrence. The date set for the completion of Part I, 14 September, had to be pushed back to the first week of October, and the studio administration demanded a detailed written explanation of the delay from Eisenstein.[34] For Prokofiev's part, rather than any distaste for the project, the demands of Eisenstein as a collaborator were behind his resistance to returning to work on *Ivan the Terrible.* Mira

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[31] Eisenstein's notes contain a subsection of 13 leaves variously dated between 18-26 July, all concerning aspects of recording balance (RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, ll. 67-80).

[32] Nestyev, *Prokofiev*, 350.

[33] Levaco, "The Eisenstein-Prokofiev Correspondence," 13.

[34] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 659, ll. 3, 3 ob. Eisenstein had further reason to be nervous about delaying completion: at the beginning of the year he had promised the film by mid-summer in a memorandum sent directly to Stalin. See Pis'mo S.M. Eizenshteina I.V. Stalinu o fil'me "Ivan Groznyi", (dated 20 January 1944), AP RF, f. 3, op. 35, d. 87, ll. 170-71, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 690-91.

Mendel'son's account of the grueling schedule Prokofiev faced when he finally returned to work with Eisenstein in September is revealing:

> Seryozha [Prokofiev] first looked at parts of the film in the studio. Then he wrote music at home, taking into account the wishes that Sergei Mikhailovich [Eisenstein] had voiced while the film was being shown. Back in the studio the music is recorded on tape with Seryozha at the piano; when singing is called for, he sings. Immediately afterwards they look at further material. On the next occasion the tape recording accompanies the pictures, and when Eisenstein is satisfied, work on orchestration begins. The material that has been orchestrated is recorded in the studio on tape (immediately with choir and orchestra). Sometimes up to four hours are needed to record two minutes of music; recording was very demanding for Eisenstein and Seryozha, who was present at all the recording sessions.[35]

This compositional method remains nearly identical to the one Prokofiev and Eisenstein developed during work on *Aleksandr Nevskii* (see Chapter 3). Prokofiev relied heavily on exact timings for each cue, which allowed him to "block" the necessary number of measures and then fill them with music (see example 3.1). Mendel'son proved an in-valuable assistant in the process, attending each viewing session at the studio and taking down notes while Prokofiev focused his full attention on the visual character of each rush. Her records expertly parse the film, for example:

[Notes on viewing "Kazan", excerpt][36]

The tsar's exit from the tent	50 [seconds]	
---	---	
Coins and benediction	94	
---	---	
Intrigue, Maliuta's exit until the words	57.25	
---	---	
Conversation between the tsar and Maliuta,	22	
transitioning to the barrels	28	[Total] **50**
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[35] Marinia Rakhmanova, Introduction to Sergey Prokofiev, *Ivan Groznyi: Muzyka k fil'mu Sergeia Eizenshteina* (Hamburg: Sikorski, 1997), 15.

[36] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 139.

The scene with the Tartars until the words "another arrow"

1. Kurbskii leads the Tartars out	28.50	
2. The Kazan tower	16	
3. Kurbskii gives a sign, they tie up the Tartars		
until the words "cry Kazan…."	22.50	
words	4	
pause until "Hey Kazan"	11	
words	9.50	[Total] **47**

Also evident in Mendel'son's account—as well as Eisenstein's 9 July 1944 letter where he laments that the recording will be "hopelessly botched" without Prokofiev's intervention—is the extent to which Prokofiev assumed the responsibilities of a sound engineer. Russian composers groused about unskilled technicians throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and Eisenstein remained unwilling to trust those on staff at Mosfilm with matters of balance and mixing—not to mention coaching the studio's orchestra and choir.[37] *Ivan the Terrible* demanded that Prokofiev's musical skills be directed in several directions, precluding concentrated work on other projects and prompting his disincli-nation to return to the project.

For the second time, the completion date of the film had to be pushed back to accommodate music, this time to 20 October.[38] Prokofiev signed a second contract (the original having expired) dated 14 September that indicated all music would be finished no later than 18 October.[39] Although Prokofiev remained committed to *Ivan the Terrble*

[37] See, for example, M. Ul'ner, "Iskusstvo i tekhnika zvukozapisi," *Kino*, 28 March 1935, p. 4; V. Leshchev, "Vyshe kachestvo zvuka!," *Kino*, 28 September 1934, p. 1; D[avid] Blok, "Muzyka v kino," *Kino*, 22 January 1935, p. 3; G. Irskii, "Prichiny plokhogo zvuchaniia," *Kino*, 5 September 1935, p. 4.

[38] "Izveshchenie Gosbanka," dated 12 October 1944, unpublished, RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 660.

[39] "Dogovory Prokof'eva s kinostudiiami i teatrami na napisanie muzyki," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 804, l. 18.

from 1941 to 1945, he composed the majority of the music for the two completed parts of the film in early autumn 1944. Meanwhile, the KDK issued a series of necessary revisions stemming from their assessment of the rough cut that Eisenstein had submitted in August, the most significant of which demanded that the entire opening sequence of Part I, which depicts Ivan's childhood, be cut (although it was later transferred to Part II with nearly all of Prokofiev's music remaining intact).[40] A second screening occurred in November, this time with the majority of Prokofiev's music present.[41] Following a final screening on 7 December, however, only Part I was approved for release while Part II remained under consideration. On 16 January—three years after Zhdanov first visited Eisenstein—Part I of *Ivan the Terrible* opened in Moscow.[42]

As Eisenstein returned to revising Part II in January 1945, Prokofiev suffered a severe concussion as the result of an accidental fall. After spending the spring incapacitated, he was transferred to Ivanovo for the summer months, where his doctors strictly limited the time he could devote to composing. Although a majority of the score for Part II had been composed during the concentrated work of the preceding fall, music for the "Dance of the Oprichniki,"—an elaborate sequence that concludes Part II and for which Eisenstein had obtained newly-available color film—remained to be written; in a testimony to the depth of their collaboration, Eisenstein refused to proceed without

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[40] On the screenings: See E. Levin, "Istoricheskaia tragediia kak zhanr i kak sud'ba: Po stranitsam dvukh stenogramm 1944 i 1946 godov," *Iskusstvo kino* 9 (1991): 83-92.

[41] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 648, l. 7; f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 642, ll. 4-20.

[42] Official approval came on 31 December (Neuberger, *Ivan the Terrible*, 22).

Prokofiev's participation.[43] The composer's doctors, however, barred him from attending the filming as planned in August, precipitating an unprecedented communiqué on 12 September from Prokofiev to composer Gavriil Popov (1904-72): "Since I will not be able to write all of the music for the second part of *Ivan the Terrible*, it would be good if we were able to [compose] it together. S. M. Eisenstein will speak to you about this—please do not refuse!"[44] That Popov was chosen is not surprising; he was admired by Eisenstein and had even been considered to write the score for *Aleksandr Nevskii* (see Chapter 3). Yet no evidence of Popov's reply survives, and he likely declined, as Prokofiev himself managed to complete the remaining music for Part II of the film later in fall after his convalescence was complete. All together, Prokofiev had devoted nearly three years of intermittent work to *Ivan the Terrible*.

By the end of 1945, Part II of *Ivan the Terrible* was finished in rough cut. At the beginning of November, however, the Mosfilm directorate reported that the new Part II could not possibly exist as an "individual film and correctly show the activities of Tsar Ivan." Eisenstein resisted their demands to make large cuts to the film, completing a final edit on the evening of 2 February 1946, the same night he attended a celebration in honor of the Stalin Prize awarded to Part I of *Ivan the Terrible*.[45] Sadly, the triumph of that evening ended abruptly when he suffered a heart attack during the reception. From the Kremlin hospital, the gravely ill Eisenstein begged Bol'shakov to deliver Part II to

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[43] Letter from Eisenstein to Prokofiev, dated 1 August 1945 (Levaco, "The Eisenstein-Prokofiev Correspondence," 14-15).

[44] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 2050, l. 11.

[45] Pis'mo kinorezhissera G.V. Aleksandrova I.V. Stalinu, 6 March 1946, published in Andrei Artizov and Oleg Naumov, eds., *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia: Dokumenty TsK RKP(b)-VKP(b), VchK-OGPU-NKVD o kul'turnoi politike, 1917-1953 gg.* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond "Demokratiia", 1999), 546-47.

Stalin personally for evaluation.[46] And he was well advised to do so: the war was over, and Stalin had resumed his prewar practice of overseeing the production of films (it bears noting that during the years leading up to the war it was not uncommon for Stalin to participate in Central Committee meetings concerning specific films[47]). Bol'shakov fulfilled Eisenstein's request, and along with Stalin and members of the Politburo, he screened Part II of *Ivan the Terrible* on the evening of 7 February. Gregorii Mar'iamov describes this chilling event:

> Bol'shakov […] didn't utter a single word about the screening, and nobody tried to question him. […] As soon as the lights in the hall came up, Stalin brusquely announced, " It's not a film, it's some kind of nightmare!" This gave impetus to the other Politburo members to burst forth with abusive words. Beria was the most upset. Stalin showed Bol'shakov out with the words: "During the war we didn't have the time, but now we will deal with all of you properly."[48]

On March 5, the Central Committee issued a directive banning Part II of the "anti-historical and anti-artistic" film, effectively squelching any hopes of beginning work on part three.[49] Grigorii Aleksandrov (1903-83), Eisenstein's long-time friend and col-league, penned a lengthy missive to Stalin asking that the Politburo's appraisal not be made known to Eisenstein; the director, recovering but still infirm, remained confident that Stalin would approve of Part II, and news to the contrary could have an adverse effect on his health.[50] Interestingly, the censoring of *Ivan the Terrible* was not made

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[46] Ibid, 547.

[47] See, for example, "Stenogramma soveshchaniia v TsK VKP(b) o kinofilme 'Zakon zhizni'," September 9, 1940, RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 1124, ll. 134-45; published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 573-604.

[48] Mar'iamov, *Kremlevskii tsensor*, 74.

[49] Postanovlenie Sekretariata TsK VKP(b) o vtoroi serii fil'ma "Ivan Groznyi", RGASPI, f. 17, op. 116, d. 249, l. 101, published in *Kremlevskii kinoteatr*, 723.

[50] *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia*, 546-48.

public until August (although it was in the meantime a well-known secret); it is unclear whether concern for Eisenstein's health indeed was behind the unusually long delay. The director remained unaware of what had happened, even writing to Stalin from the Kremlin hospital on 14 May, requesting that he screen the film.[51] Prokofiev, although he often visited Eisenstein in the hospital, was occupied with the June premiere of a revised version of *War and Peace* in Leningrad, and later, when *Ivan the Terrible's* fate was made public, he was busy with preparations for the Moscow premiere of his opera *Betrothal in a Monastery* (*Obruchenie v monastyre*, op. 86).

What had precipitated such a striking turnaround? Why triumph for Part I and the censor's stamp for Part II? On the surface, it would appear that Stalin and his advisors detected a shift in Ivan's character. Stalin would later admit that he was up in arms most about Ivan's depiction as an indecisive "Hamlet."[52] But even a cursory look at the postwar environment—a time of absurd denunciations, modern-day witch hunts, and fanatical xenophobia—reminds us that the sad fate of Part II was as much the result of poor timing and the bureaucracy's re-tightening grip, as of any concrete fault of the film. Stalin's later comments on the film, made during an unprecedented and chilling conference with Eisenstein, Zhdanov, Molotov, and Nikolai Cherkassov (1903-66, the actor who played Ivan) on 25 February 1947, reveal direct ties to the xenophobia of the *Zhdanovshchina*. Stalin lectured Eisenstein that Ivan was a "national tsar," who resisted any foreign influences. It was "Peter [the Great] who opened the gates on to Europe and

[51] Ibid., 555-56.

[52] "Stalin, Molotov, and Zhdanov on *Ivan the Terrible* Part Two," in *S. M. Eisenstein: Selected Works, Volume III, Writings 1934-47*, ed. Richard Taylor and trans. William Powell (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1996), 299.

let too many foreigners in." When asked what specific instructions Stalin had for the film, the leader responded cryptically: "I am not giving instructions so much as voicing the thoughts of the audience."[53] Stalin gave his personal blessing to the production of a revised Part II. Eisenstein ostensibly planned to tackle this when his health improved, but less than a year later he was dead.

Harmony of Opposites

Part I of *Ivan the Terrible* opens with a backdrop of vigorously billowing black smoke, against which a series of titles telegraph what appears to be the essence of the film's plot:

> This film is about a man, who in the sixteenth century first united our country; about a Muscovite Prince, who from divided and self-serving principalities created a united and powerful state; about a military leader, who exalted the military glory of our motherland from east to west; about the sovereign, who in order to attain these great goals first crowned himself tsar of all Russia.[54]

The introductory sequence was one of Eisenstein's first concerns as he began planning the film in 1941. His notes for 23 January, which include the first references to the film's musical plan, read: "In the music, Ivan's theme should depict "approaching thunder" […]

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[53] Ibid, 301, 303.

[54] The plot of *Ivan the Terrible* is as follows: Part I opens with Ivan's coronation. Amid grumbling from the boyars, Ivan promises to unite Russia and defend her borders. Ivan's wedding to Anastasia follows, which is interrupted by a Mongol envoy from Kazan. Ivan declares war on Kazan. Following the successful siege of Kazan, Ivan falls ill. Assuming Ivan is on his deathbed, many of the boyars swear allegiance to Vladimir (Ivan's cousin) rather than the Tsar's heir Dmitri. Ivan mysteriously returns to health. Anastasia is next to fall ill, and Ivan inadvertently offers her a cup of wine that has been poisoned by Efrosinia (Vladimir's boyar mother). After his wife's death, Ivan forms the *oprichniki* and abdicates; the people of Moscow beg for his return. Part II begins with Ivan's return to the throne and a long sequence (originally intended for Part I, here it is styled as a flashback) that details abuse of the child Ivan at the hands of the boyars. The Tsar convinces his one-time friend Filipp to become the Metropolitan of Moscow (meanwhile Ivan's attendant executes three of Filipp's kinsmen). Fedor Basmanov, the first of the *oprichniki*, suggests that it was Efrosinia who poisoned Anastasia. After a failed attempt by the boyars to use the church's power to block Ivan, they decide that assassination is their last option. Ivan invites Vladimir to a banquet, where the latter (upon drinking too much) reveals the assassination plot. Ivan dresses the drunken Vladimir in his own regalia. Vladimir proceeds into the cathedral, where the boyar's assassin murders him, mistaking him for Ivan.

like the beginning of [Wagner's] [*Die*] *Walküre*, tempest, thunder, rain."[55] Eisenstein's choice of prototype shows the influence of his most recent project, a production of *Die Walküre* he directed at Moscow's Bolshoi Theater.[56] Although Wagner's once-significant popularity in Russia waned throughout the 1930s thanks to its association with Hitler's coalescing fascism, following the conclusion of the German-Soviet nonaggression pact in 1939, Wagner's music was back in fashion, at least by official mandate. Eisenstein's "goodwill" production of *Die Walküre* ran for six performances between November 1940 and February 1941; the Germans reciprocated with a performance of Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* in Berlin.[57]

Die Walküre opens with a furious orchestral prelude evocative of an unsettling tempest. An aggressive tremolo in the upper strings becomes the backbone on which hang menacing scale patterns in the lower strings (meant to recall the spear motif from *Das Rheingold*). The orchestral storm presages the psychological instability of Wagner's characters, an aspect of the opera Eisenstein had in mind for his characterization of Ivan, despite *Ivan the Terrible's* outwardly heroic frame of reference.[58] Prokofiev's music for the opening titles bears little outward resemblance to the *Die Walküre* prelude, however, like Wagner's music, it offers impressions of the psychological torment of the following drama. The film's overture (example 5.1) begins with a series of stratospheric sixteenth-

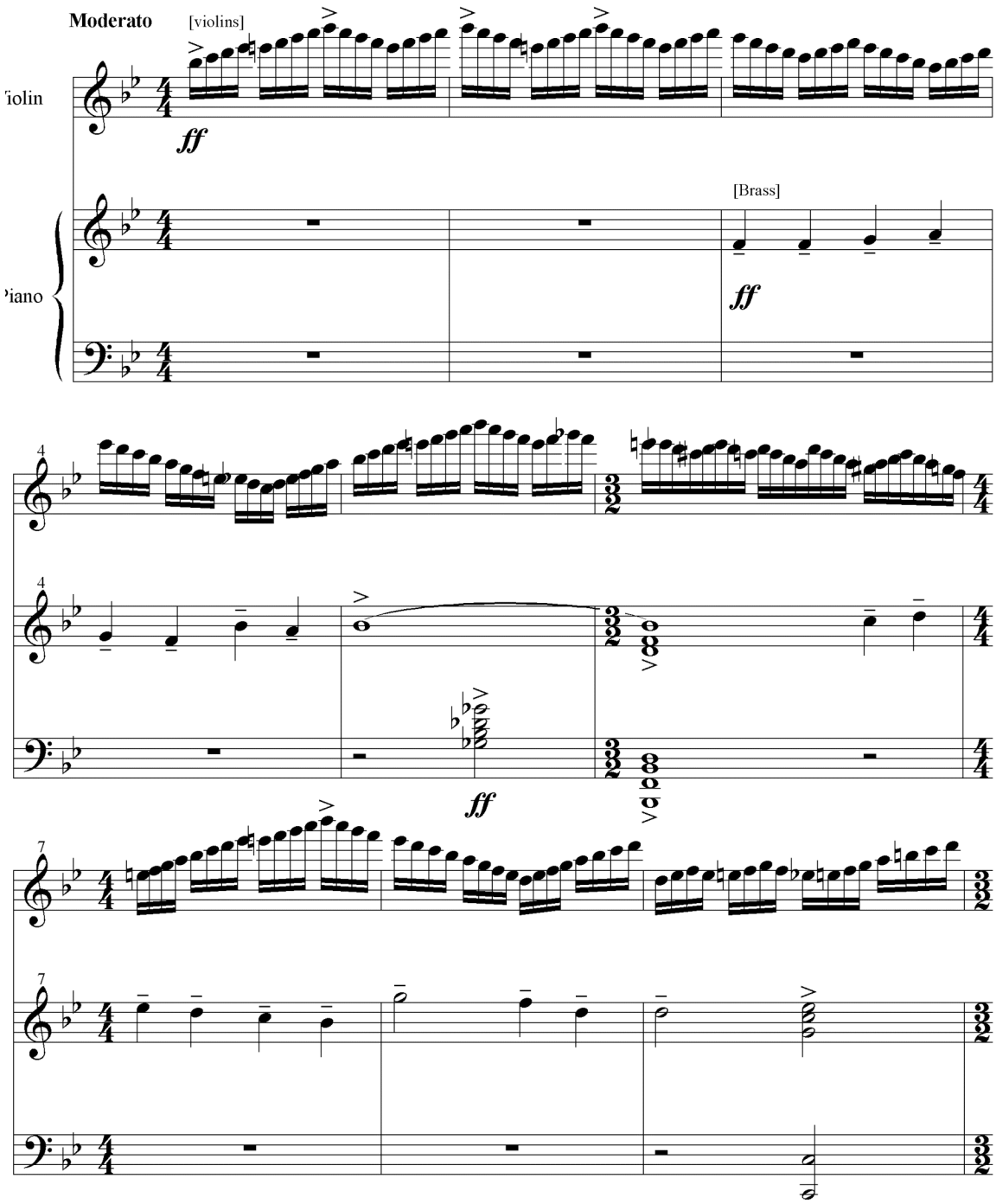
[55] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 1.

[56] Eisenstein prepared the production from March until November, 1940. *Die Walküre* premiered at the Bolshoi on 21 November; in total, the production had six performances, the last occurring on 27 February 1941. The Germans reciprocated the gesture: Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* was produced in Berlin during roughly the same period. On Eisenstein's work with the Bolshoi, see Iurenev, *Eizenshtein*, 2: 183-186.

[57] Rosamund Bartlett, *Wagner and Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 267-73.

[58] Barry Millington, "Die Walküre," *Grove Music Online* (Accessed 10 June 2007).

note scalar patterns in the violins. A tripartite melody—the theme that will be associated with Ivan—enters in unison trumpets and horns, with each section of the melody punctuated by brief outbursts from full brass, winds, and low strings. The B-flat tonal center established by the running line in the violins and the melody in the brass, however, evades a strong articulation of the key. The first full harmony heard (measure 5) is the flat sub-mediant triad, which then moves directly to tonic via common tone (B-flat). An isolated supertonic triad appears in measure 9. In measure 13 a series of non-functional inverted chords obfuscate the final arrival of conclusive dominant-tonic movement, and the cadence itself is significantly weakened by placing the dominant seventh chord in third inversion with an obliquely-resolved chordal seventh (beginning with the third beat of measure 13, the progression is: $D^{6} \rightarrow d^{\circ 6} \rightarrow$ f#6/4→ F6/4→ $g\#^{\circ 6} \rightarrow$ F4/2→ I). In fact, a strong cadential figure is entirely absent in the overture. Rather than commanding firm, resolute support from the orchestra, the visceral exhilaration of full brass and the whirlwind of the violin's figuration are paired with a capricious and volatile harmonic accompaniment. The musical contrast with Prokofiev's other more self-possessed "nationalist" figures, Aleksandr Nevskii and Fieldmarshal Kutuzov in *War and Peace*, is striking. Ivan is at once heroic and unpredictable.


Moderato
[violins]
iolin
ff
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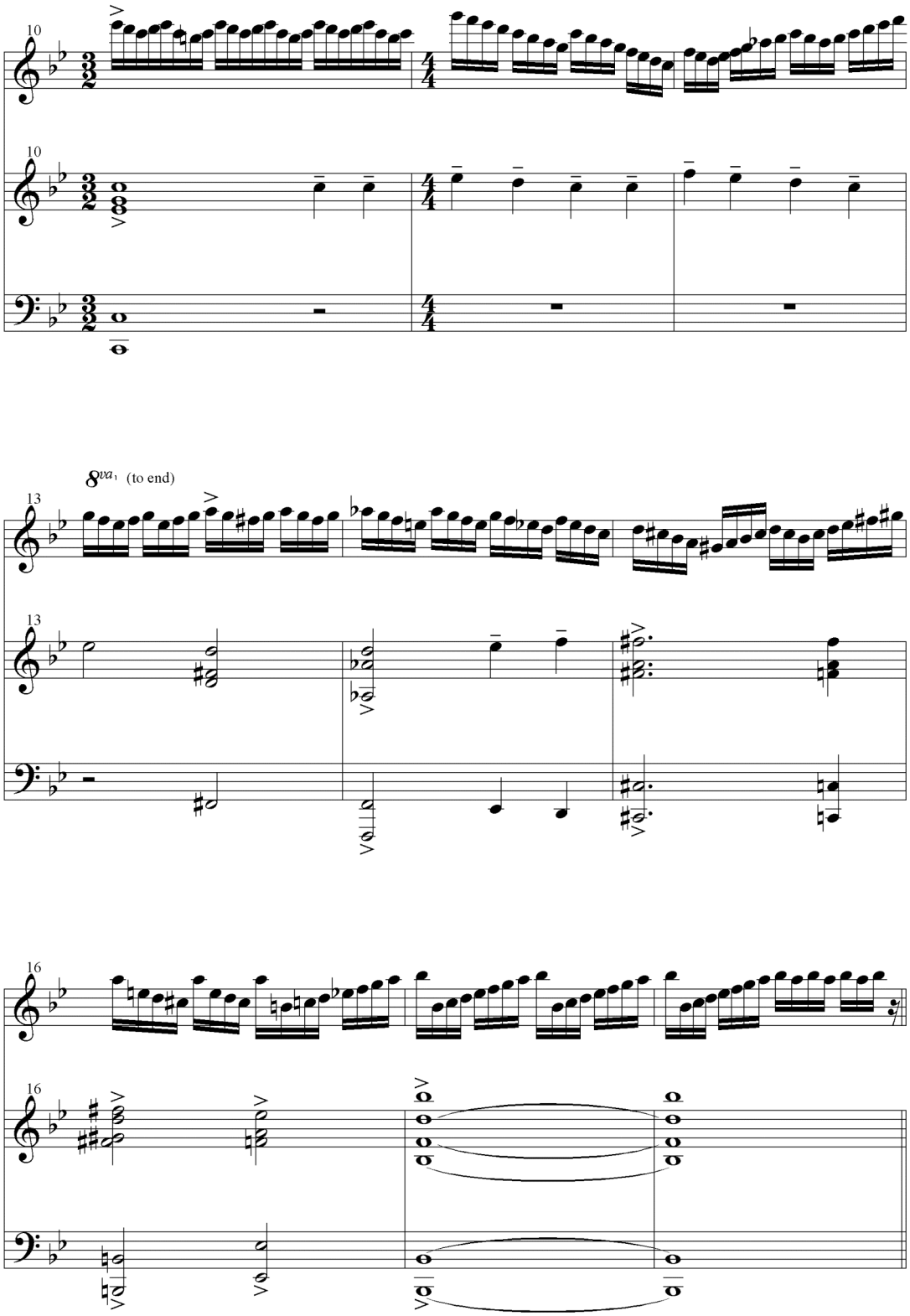
7



Example 5.1. *Ivan the Terrible* (Parts I and II), "Overture," mm. 1-18 [Source: Reduction based on GTsMMK, f. 33, ed. khr. 382]

By the time he began work on *Ivan the Terrible*, Eisenstein had developed a complex poetics of cinema, at the heart of which stood his concepts of "pathos" (*pafos*) and "ecstasy" (*ekstasis*). Pathos derives from a dialectical process in which opposites (of any filmic parameter—line, shot composition, color, etc.) clash, and, in the process of synthesis, elicit an emotional response from the viewer. Eisenstein saw the clash of opposites as a fundamental process in human understanding of reality, thus by subsuming it into filmic practice he felt he gained a significant access point to the human psyche.[59] Moments of pathos carry the viewer along as a film progresses, and they themselves participate in more large-scale dialectical processes, which ultimately leads the viewer to "ecstasy," the consequent overarching unity of many small opposites. The viewer's attainment of ecstasy means that film's boundaries—self and other, reality and unreality, here and elsewhere—disappear, resulting in what Eisenstein called "a feeling of general unison."[60] These concepts grew directly from Eisenstein's approach to 1920s silent film montage. *Ivan the Terrible*, however, was only his second sound film, and both his production notes and the film itself show that he was still searching for music's place in the production of pathos and ecstasy.

Even this cursory summary points to the importance of the dialectical under-pinnings of Prokofiev's overture to *Ivan the Terrible*. The musical contradictions of the opening moments of the film—for example, commanding brass paired with unpredictable harmony—represent localized points of pathos-inducing clash. Eisenstein intended an

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[59] Sergei Eisenstein, "On the Structure of Things" in *Nonindifferent Nature: Film and the Structure of Things*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 10.

[60] Sergei Eisenstein, "Pathos," in *Nonindifferent Nature: Film and the Structure of Things*, trans. Herbert Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 178.

entire hierarchy of contradictions in Ivan's musical theme. In his notes, he describes how the theme has two variants, one (as in the overture) that is bright, heroic, and "sparkling" (*sverkaiushchii*), associated with the glory of Ivan's ascension to the throne, and another, which Eisenstein described as "the theme of the *oprichniki*—the shady side of the monocracy—Ivan's proper theme—somber, in some places tragic."[61] (The *oprichniki* theme originally was to culminate in the chilling "Oath of the Oprichniki," which juxtaposed a portion of the Orthodox liturgy with the *oprichniki's* intoned vows of allegiance to the tsar; the censors did not approve and the sequence was cut.[62]) As Yuri Tsivian writes, "in Eisenstein's art theory the smallest indivisible unit always consists of two things, not one."[63] In *Ivan the Terrible*, these fundamental dualisms are present at many levels, both musically and visually, such that the whole film is based on what has been called a "unity of opposites." Indeed, Joan Neuberger says in the very first sentence of her book about the film that "*Ivan the Terrible* is a film about dualisms."[64] Oppositions small and large abound in *Ivan*, but perhaps the most central concern Ivan himself: is he the valiant unifier of all Russia or a bloody-thirsty tyrant; is he victim or victimizer? Eisenstein's images and dialog circumvent comfortable answers to these questions, and often—completely at odds with the clarity of *Aleksandr Nevskii*—Prokofiev's music does the same.

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[61] RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 81.

[62] Katherine Ossorgin has discussed the planned "Oath of the Oprichniki" in her paper "Liturgical Borrowings as Film Music in Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* (1944-44)," read at the National Meeting of the American Musicological Society, Quebec City, 3 November 2007.

[63] Tsivian, *Ivan the Terrible*, 29.

[64] Neuberger, *Ivan the Terrible*, 1.

Unity and Contrast

In his planning and production notes, Eisenstein conceived of *Ivan the Terrible's* music almost exclusively along motivic and leitmovtic lines. While this is unremarkable in the context of film music, whose Wagnerian roots have been long acknowledged, the extent to which Eisenstein expected motifs to develop in accordance with the plot is exceptional. For example, Eisenstein described the development of leitmotivs he had designed for his unrealized film *Fergana Canal* in a letter to Prokofiev on 26 July 1939:

> The main theme is, of course, the theme of water.
> It distinctly emerges four times:
> 1. Menacing (Timur), destructive.
> 2. Lyric (small irrigation ditch of Tokhtasyn and the daughter's dance).
> 3. Menacing (uprising of the poor), destructive (in a different aspect with respect to no. 1).
> 4. Victorious-celebrative (setting in motion of the canal. It seems to me no. 2 is broadened to the loftiest inspiration—added to it the elements of no. 1 and no. 3)
>
> The second is a very curious theme. This is the theme of the sand. […]
> The sand itself labors:
> 1. A thirst-dying town (introducing its theme).
> 2. The victory of the sands (the finale of Part 1).
> 3. The advance of the sand (through the second part and in particular through the background too).[65]

Immediately after Prokofiev's arrival in Alma-Ata in the summer of 1942, Eisenstein drafted a similar prose outline of musical themes for *Ivan the Terrible*, calling it a "temnik," a diminutive form of the Russian word for "theme".[66] Considering its early date, it is not surprising that the film Eisenstein outlines in the *temnik* is quite different than what we find in the final cut. He had nonetheless already conceived of nine major

[65] Levaco, "The Eisenstein-Prokofiev Correspondence," 8-9.

[66] The *temnik* is dated 14 July and penned on wartime postcards and envelopes that glorified Stalin (paper was perpetually in demand during the evacuation), RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, ll. 108-120 (This document as reprinted and translated in Marinia Rakhmanova, "Introduction to 'Ivan Groznyi'," 28-29, erroneously gives the date of the document as 14 August).

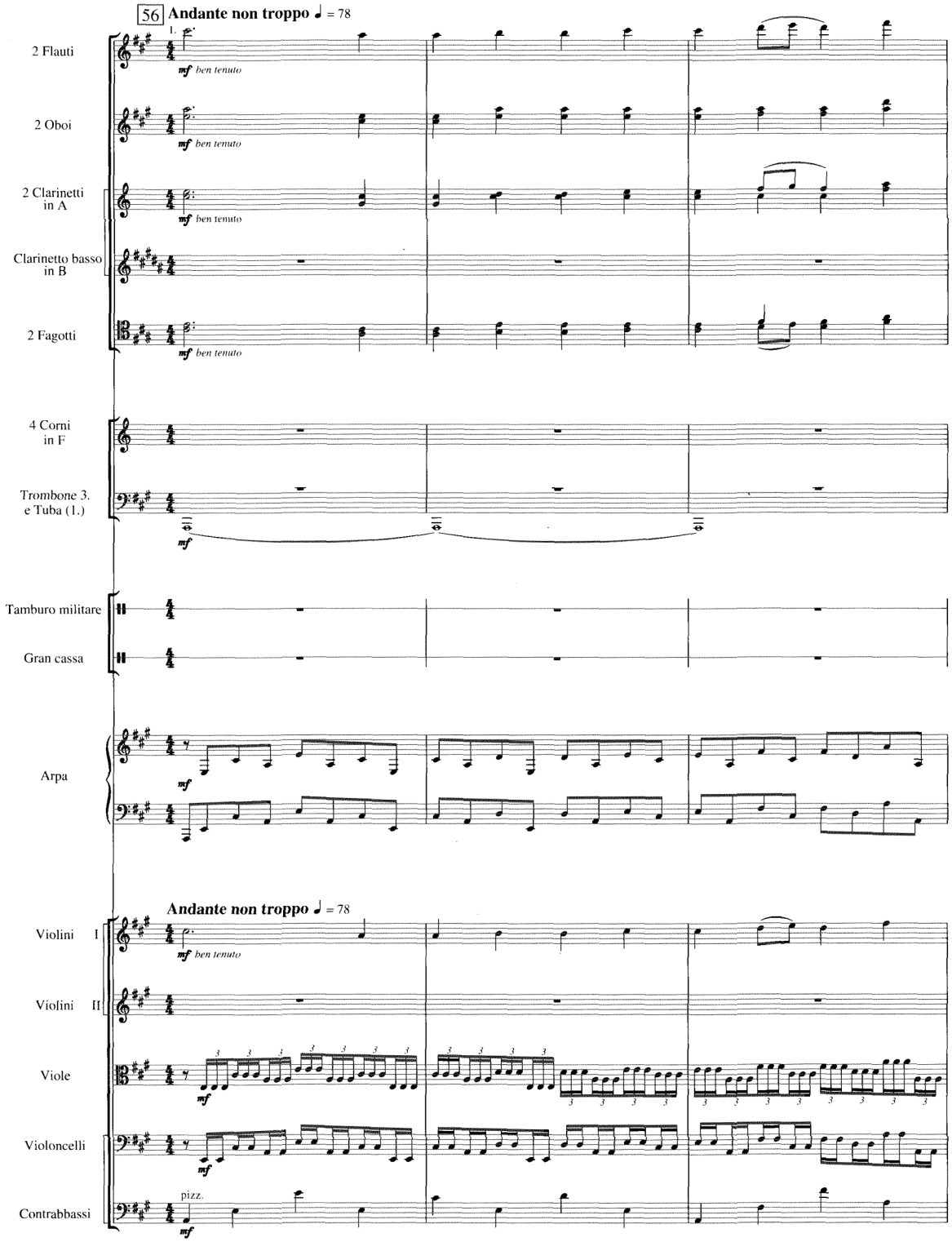
musical themes and established in which cues they would appear. He indicates, for example, that the theme "Ocean-Sea" (*Okean-more*) should be a "hit that can be sung" ('Schlager' *takoi, chtoby mog pet'sia*), and should be heard during five scenes: when the young Ivan's nurse sings to him, during Ivan's coronation speech, as Kurbskii is sent forth to battle with Livonia, during the dance of the *oprichniki*, and finally at the conclusion of the film when Ivan reaches the Baltic Sea. "Ocean-Sea" was ultimately never used in *Ivan the Terrible*, but judging from this litany of scenes diverse in characters and locale, its use as a musical theme is quite different from that of a simple motif or *Reminiszenzmotiv*:[67] in Eisenstein's conception, the motifs in *Ivan the Terrible* would behave as Wagnerian leitmotifs, developing and accumulating meaning as the film progressed. In other words, they rarely represent a one-to-one equivalence between person and music or object and music (such as can be seen in *Lieutenant Kizhe*, *Queen of Spades*, and indeed in most early film music). With respect to interpretive complexity, the *Ivan the Terrible's* most significant leitmotiv is Ivan's theme. Although Eisenstein explicitly tied this theme to the character of Ivan, its use becomes increasingly perplexing as the film progresses, ultimately reflecting back on Ivan, and indeed on the very concepts of power and monarchy that lie at the heart of *Ivan the Terrible*.

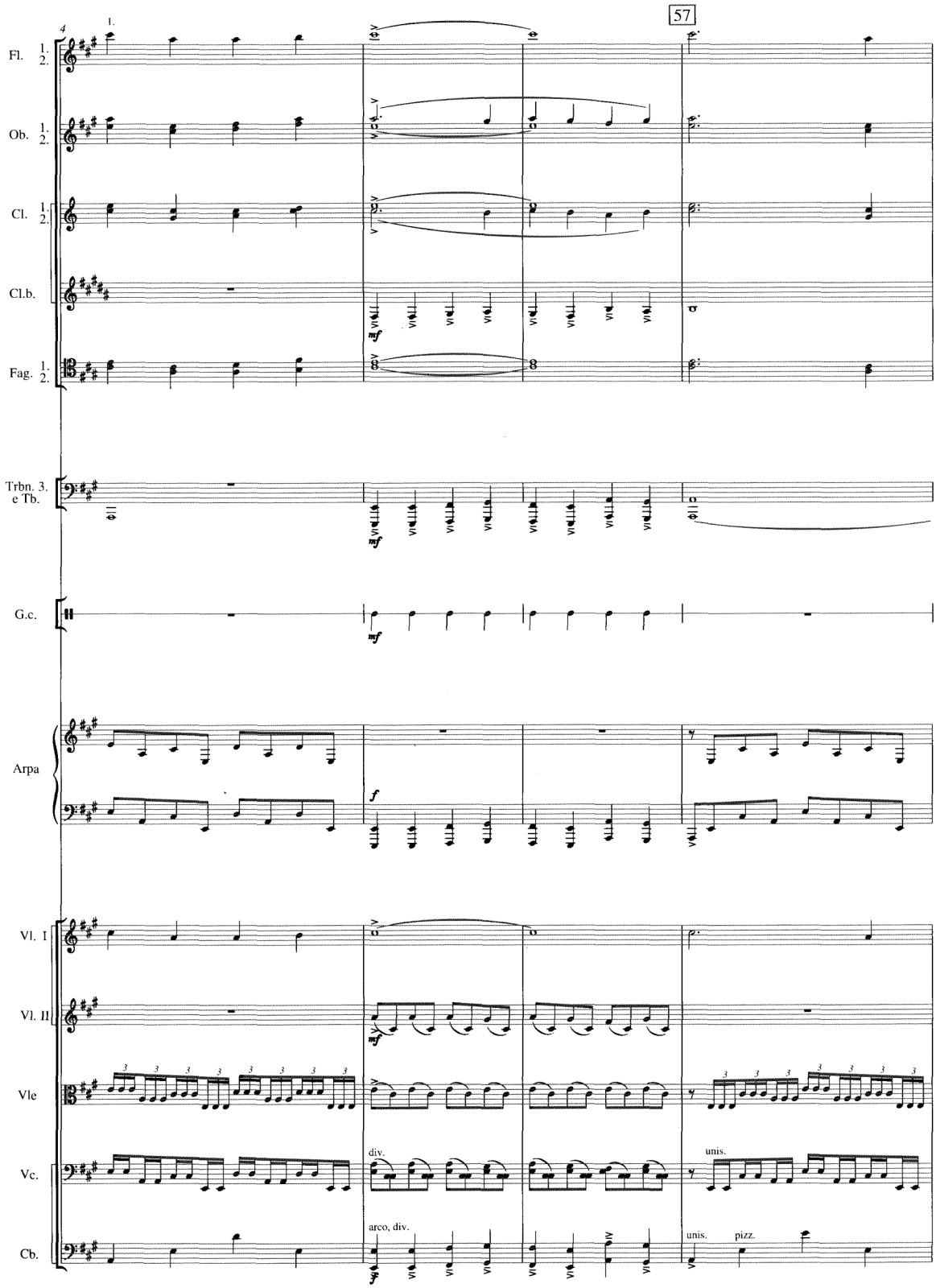
[67] Prokofiev composed it, but many of the scenes for which Eisenstein intended to use it were either cut or part of the unrealized Part III

Figure 5.2. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part I), Ivan emerging from his tent before the battle of Kazan; Fedor Basmanov sees the tsar for the first time

Ivan's theme appears in Part I in two contrasting musical settings, one heroic (as in the overture), and one much more subdued and lyrical. The lyrical version of Ivan's theme (example 5.2) opens with a simple melody played in the upper strings and woodwinds over a gently undulating accompaniment of low strings and harp. Ivan's motif enters in measure 5 in the basses, trombones, tuba, and bass clarinet. Although now solemn in character, it still retains a modicum of its potency from the overture—a slightly menacing punctuation of the otherwise serene string and woodwind texture. In Part I, the lyrical theme bolsters Ivan's presumed nationalistic fervor: Prior to the attack on Kazan, for example, Ivan emerges from his tent, surveying the assembled forces before him, slowly raising his hand to his heart (figure 5.2; here a low camera placement ensures that Ivan appears to be at the highest point). A complete statement of the lyrical theme accompanies the scene; Ivan's motives seem unquestionably patriotic bathed in such music. Later in the same scene, Aleksei Basmanov, a member of Ivan's army, sights the ruler from a distance and instructs his son Fedor (who will soon become the

first of the *oprichniki*) to look; Fedor melodramatically gasps “the tsar!” (figure 5.2, right still).

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Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
Cl.b.
Fag.
Trbn. 3. e Tb.
G.c.
Arpa
Vl. I
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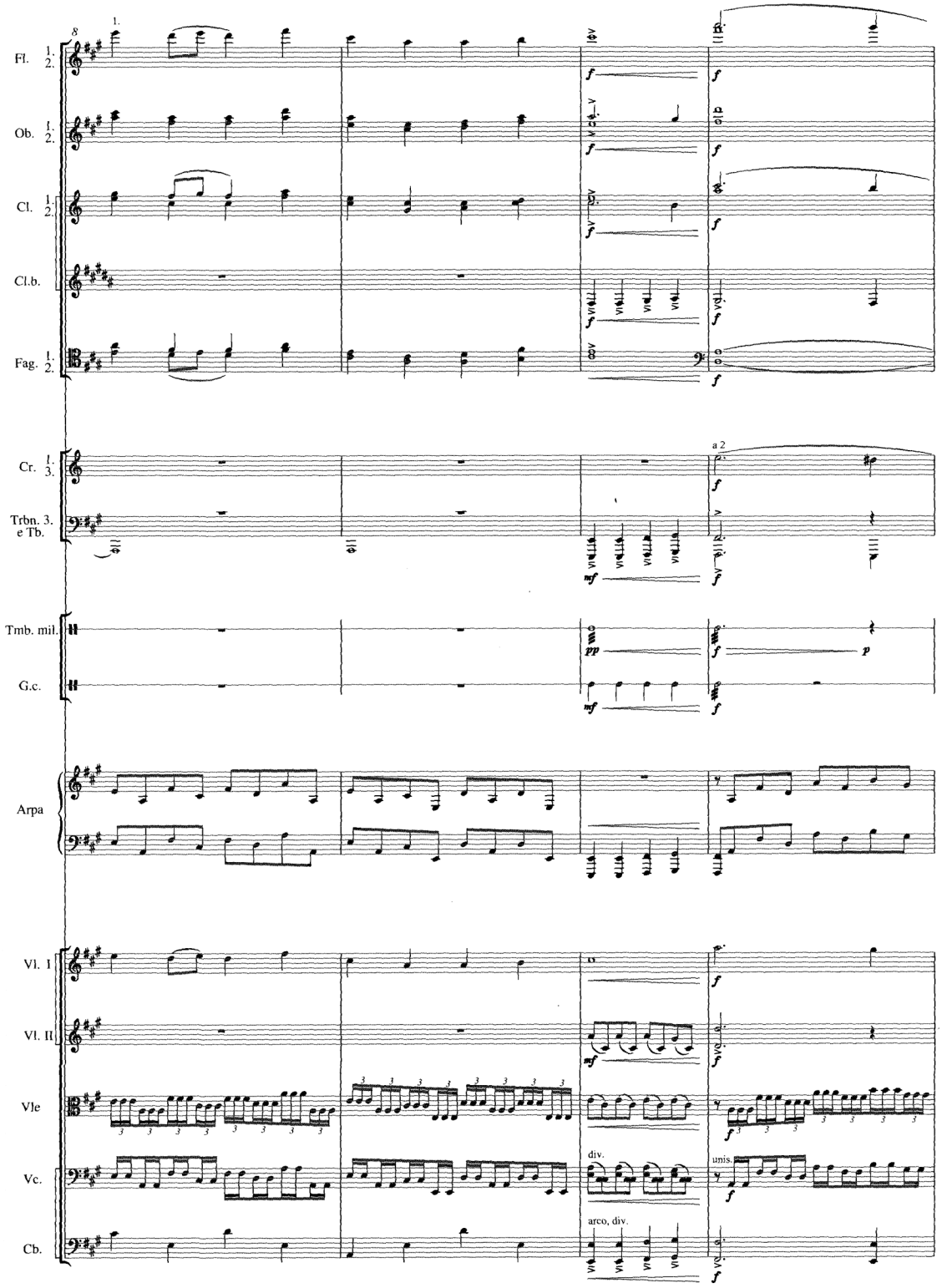

Example 5.2. *Ivan the Terrible*, "Palatka Ivana," mm. 1-11 (Ivan's motive enters in m. 5) [Source: *Ivan Groznyi: Muzyka k fil'mu Sergeia Eizenshteina*, ed. Marina Rakhmanova (Hamburg: Sikorski, 1997), 96-98.]

The use of Ivan's "heroic" and "lyrical" themes becomes increasingly paradoxical in Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*. The heroic theme again sounds as the overture to Part II as a voice-over recounts the plot of Part I.[68] Eisenstein then segues directly to the Polish court, where Ivan's friend, Prince Andrei Kurbskii, betrays the tsar by pledging allegiance to the Polish King Sigismund in a remarkably homoerotic ceremony (Ivan had abdicated the Russian throne at the end of Part I, leading the Polish to believe they now have the political upper hand). Prokofiev accompanies Kurbskii's perfidy with the polonaise he had composed in 1936 for an unrealized production of Pushkin's play *Boris Godunov* (and had subsequently attempted to use in *Lermontov*).[69] When a page abruptly enters bearing the unanticipated news that Ivan has returned to the throne, a wave of alarm passes through the court; in a rough audio cut, the heroic theme replaces the polonaise. Here the use of the theme is, borrowing Michel Chion's terminology, entirely empathetic—like an *Erinnerungsmotiv* that recalls Ivan's might at the mere mention of his name.[70] The members of the court scatter in panic; the brawn of the heroic theme suggests that their fate is already sealed.

Eisenstein mirrors the betrayal in Poland with an act of disloyalty in the tsar's own chambers: Ivan's old friend Pyotr Kolychev, now the monk Filipp, meets the tsar

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[68] Eisenstein hoped to use the macabre "Oath of the Oprichniki"—a portion of which sounds at the end of Part II—as the overture. RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, ll. 137 ob., 138.

[69] Eisenstein himself was homosexual, and had a lifelong fascination with bisexuality and its various manifestations in art. On bisexual/homosexual themes in *Ivan the Terrible*, see Tsivian, *Ivan the Terrible*, 60-73.

[70] Empathetic music can "directly express its participation in the feeling of the scene, by taking on the scene's rhythm, tone, and phrasing." (Chion points out that such a definition relies heavily on cultural codes.) Anempathetic music exhibits "conspicuous indifference to the situation." See Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 8. In the context of *Ivan the Terrible*, my usage of *anempathetic* embraces music that is not only indifferent to image, but may consciously contradict the image in ways that challenge the viewer to look and listen more deeply.

upon the latter's return to Moscow and condemns his creation of the *oprichniki* as the work of the devil. Ivan attempts to justify himself by recounting the injustices of his childhood in the form of an extended flashback. Eisenstein offers the viewer some heretofore-missing background, namely how the boyars mercilessly poison Ivan's mother, leaving the orphaned child ruler helplessly alone on the throne (the identity of Ivan's father remains unknown) and subject to boyar abuse of his rule. Eisenstein conceived of the sequence from a child's perspective filtered through an adult's memory; the omnipresent clashes and contrasts are greatly magnified, with special attention given to exaggerating the boyar's injustice to the verge of melodrama. The clear psychological trauma of the tsar's childhood is, however, anempathetically accompanied by Ivan's stately lyric theme. The heroic theme bursts forth as the chief boyar sardonically pronounces his self-serving plan "the will of the Grand Prince," an evocation of the tsar's might that structurally parallels the *in absentia* summoning at the Polish court, however, now its presence is mocked by its visual pairing. As the unison brass trumpets Ivan's theme, Eisenstein provides a striking image of the youth's vulnerability upon the throne: Ivan's feet dangle, unable to reach the floor (figure 5.3).

Leonid Kozlov suggests that in this scene Ivan's lyrical theme reveals that the dream of a unified Russia was present in Ivan's thoughts from his earliest years on the throne.[71] The anempathetic (Ivan's childhood) and empathetic (Polish court) usage are snapshots of the nascent and the fully-realized might of the tsar's rule, respectively, enacting a Socialist-Realist trope in which the seeds of preternatural ability are present from birth, awaiting a catalytic summons to socialist awareness. In Eisenstein's dialecti-

[71] Kozlov, "'Ivan Groznyi,' Muzykal'no-tematicheskoe stroenie," 248.

cal thinking, however, the child Ivan upon his throne offers the opportunity for a clash of musical and visual signifiers that challenges the assumptions behind their accumulated meanings.

Figure 5.3. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part II), Young Ivan on his throne

The presence of the heroic and lyrical themes in the flashback, beyond extolling a profound audiovisual irony, connects the heroic, patriotic events of Part I (namely the nationalistic expansion of Russian territory) with a devastating emotion: Ivan's hatred of the boyars. This connection becomes even more provocative when we consider that the flashback sequence was originally intended for the opening of Part I. Only after the revisions demanded by the KDK in the fall of 1944 was the childhood sequence excised and later added to Part II as a flashback. Thus, if Eisenstein's original vision had been realized, the theatrical, overwrought appearances of the lyrical (patriotic) theme in Part I would have been heard in the context of the injustices of Ivan's childhood—in the final cut of *Ivan the Terrible*, Eisenstein trusts that the viewer will make this connection retrospectively. Thus a fundamental uncertainty arises, namely whether Ivan's actions are guided by a true solicitude for his nation, or if they emerge from childhood trauma

and a profound hate for the very social fabric that surrounds him. More fundamentally, is Ivan visionary or vindictive murderer?

Unmoved by Ivan's justifications, Filipp attempts to check Ivan's progress by staging a performance of the "Fiery Furnace," a Biblical *mise en abyme* rife with pathos-inducing contrasts. Eisenstein adapted the story from the third chapter of the Book of Daniel, in which King Nebuchadnezzar orders a golden idol made in his likeness, and commands his subjects, the Chaldeans, to worship at its foot. Three Jews refuse to venerate the idol and are cast into a furnace as punishment; an angel spares them from death. In *Ivan the Terrible*, three boys sing atop a mock pyre in front of the cathedral's iconostasis, conflating ancient Babylonia and Ivan's Russia: "Why, shameless Chaldeans, do you serve this lawless tsar […] this devilish, blasphemous, despotic tsar?" (For this Prokofiev composed a setting of Eisenstein's text in a faux-Orthodox liturgical style, but Eisenstein opted to adapt the text to an actual Orthodox chant.) Fillip, now the Metropolitan of Moscow and acting in collusion with the boyars, confronts Ivan directly and demands that he cease his despotic ways.

The heroic theme makes an appearance at the outset of this remarkable scene, but rather than sounding anempathetically, it prompts a series of binary oppositions: the bare unaccompanied diegetic homophony of the three boys and Ivan's nondiegetic full brass and frenetic strings, the innocent purity of the boys and the grotesquely-styled Chaldeans, aural and visual pairs which serve as physical juxtapositions of abstract confrontations: the political and the moral, the traditional and the progressive, the evil earthly god and the benevolent heavenly one.[72] Furthermore, as the heroic theme collides with the plain-

[72] The nonmusical contrasts of this scene are discussed by Neuberger, see *Ivan the Terrible*, 56-57.

tive singing of the boys, the incongruity of Prokofiev's essentially twentieth-century musical language creates a similar collision with the traditional musical language of the Orthodox Church. Although traditional choral music has mingled with Prokofiev's score since the first scenes of Part I, this scene accumulates a critical mass of aural and visual contrasts: disbelief can no longer be suspended. All of Eisenstein's differentiation in his "Fiery Furnace," especially the confrontation of Ivan and Filipp, invites judgment: judgment of Ivan, judgment of monarchy, and (as many hold) judgment of Stalin. At the moment the scene builds to its emotional climax, however, Prokofiev's music foils summary conclusion, as we shall see below.

Following Vladimir's murder at the conclusion of Part II, Ivan and his *oprichniki* assemble in the cathedral and enact a chilling anti-liturgy. With backs to the altar—the opposite of the expected worship posture—they sing a chorus of allegiance to Ivan: "before God I swear a solemn oath / to fulfill the will of the tsar in all Rus' / to destroy savage enemies in Rus'/ to shed the blood of the guilty in Rus'/ sparing neither self nor others" (Prokofiev's "Chorus No. 2"). Ivan, appearing to pray before an icon, abruptly throws his head back in agony and intones the final line of the *oprichniki's* oath: "for the sake of the great Russian Tsardom!" The juxtaposition is macabre. As the black-cloaked minions pledge allegiance and Ivan utters his nationalistically-toned line, the ruler's posture bespeaks personal tragedy: Ivan's closest friends have betrayed him, his own aunt has plotted his assassination, and his cousin lies lifeless on the cathedral floor behind him. Eisenstein startles the viewer with an intentionally crude cut from this pathetic image to the final scene of the film. Ivan stands before his throne, dramatically affirms that he will not allow Russia to be abused, and then awkwardly slumps in his throne as

his heroic theme, now paired with melodramatic harp glissandi, rises to bring the film to a close.

Figure 5.4. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part II), Ivan agonizing following Vladimir's murder; Ivan slumping in his throne at the conclusion of Part II

The final apotheosis represents the standard closing formula of most large-scale Socialist-Realist works (comparable, for instance, to Aleksandr Nevskii's victorious procession into Pskov). Superficially, apart from Ivan's unusual posture, music is entirely empathetic with the surface image, and it would seem that the plot introduced in the titles of Part I has been fulfilled. The crude juxtaposition of the nadir of Ivan's sufferings in the cathedral and the following "patriotic" scene, however, represents a "breaking of inertia," another of Eisenstein's pathos-inducing contrasts, and here music is a full participant.[73] Perceived alongside the tragic rhetoric established in the cathedral, Ivan's theme, with its full orchestral bombast, enters like a hymn to contrived convention. The final sounding of the heroic theme, with its accumulated irony and unequivocalness make

[73] Sergei Eisenstein, *On the Composition of the Short Fiction Scenario,* trans. Alan Y. Upchurch (Calcutta: Seagull, 1984), 16-17.

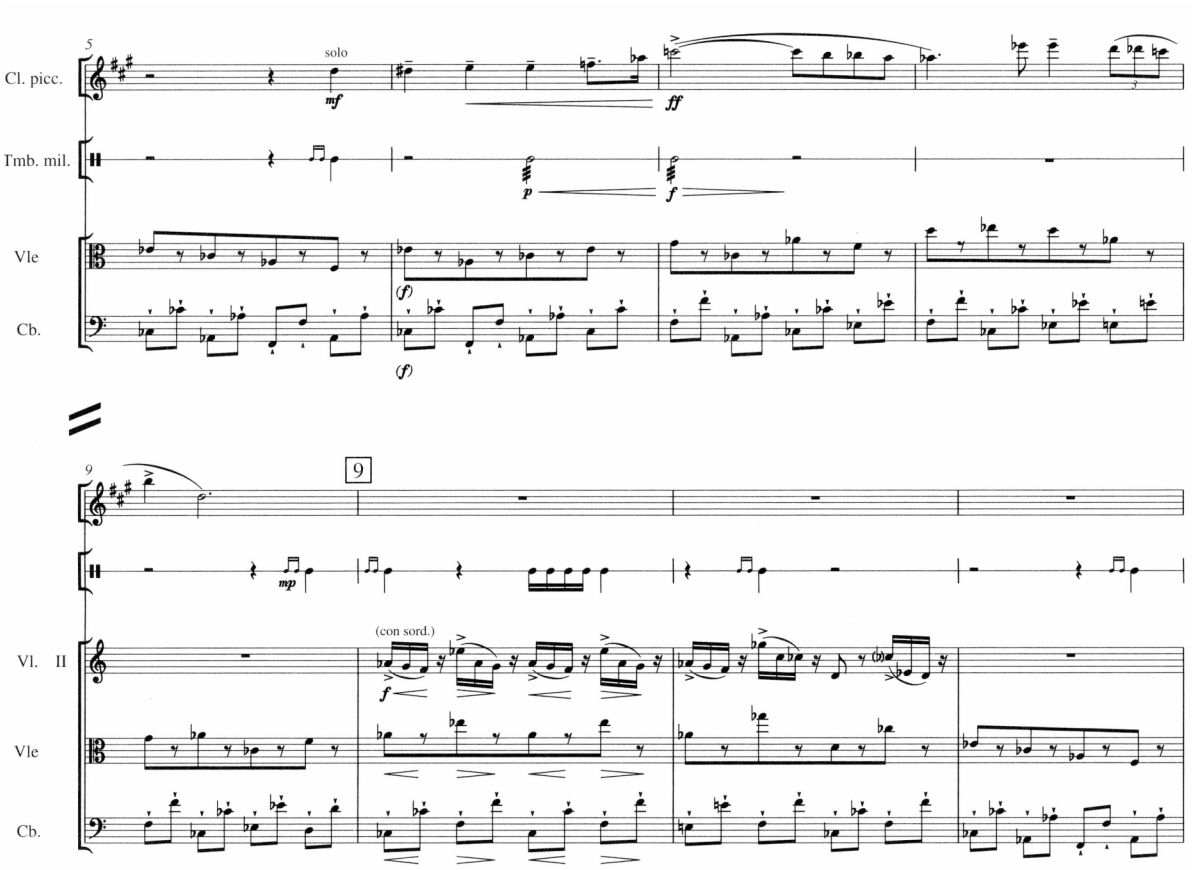
for an entirely perplexing anti-climax. In Eisenstein's dialectics, the strong images of Ivan as self-sacrificing monarch and Ivan as duplicitous tyrant become a unity that cannot be reduced to either part.

Credulous, Incredulous

The Ivan of Part I, regardless of his moral or patriotic dispositions, is nothing if not guileful. Particularly illustrative is his mysterious "illness" following the battle at Kazan: we are never sure if the tsar is truly ailing, and most viewers will suspect him of having crafted a counterfeit sickness to test the loyalty of those around him (and indeed the boyars rush to pledge allegiance to Vladimir, Ivan's contender, at the moment the tsar appears to be mortally ill). In a similar strategic move at the end of Part I, Ivan abdicates only to be recalled to the throne by the Russian people, an act calculated to confirm the legitimacy of his rule in the eyes of the dissenting boyars. By the end of Part II, however, Prokofiev's music has challenged the viewer's assumption of Ivan's shrewdness several times.

During the Part II flashback, Ivan recounts the boyars' murder of his mother, Elena Glinskaia. His memories flash on the screen with all of the melodrama of a 1920s silent film: Glinskaia histrionically wails, "they have poisoned me! I am dying!" and slumps to the floor where a child Ivan huddles in terror (figure 5.5). An E-flat clarinet mimics—even mocks—the melodic contour of the mother's wail over a frenetic, *molto perpetuo* string texture fraught with (equally histrionic) tritones (example 5.3).

Figure 5.5. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part II), The death of Ivan's mother, Elena Glinskaia



Example 5.3. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part II), "Smert' Glinskoi," mm. 5-12 [Source: *Ivan Groznyi: Muzyka k fil'mu Sergeia Eizenshteina*, ed. Marina Rakhmanova (Hamburg: Sikorski, 1997), 42.]

Eisenstein creates structural parallels between the murder of Ivan's mother and that of Anastasia, Ivan's wife. In Part II, Fedor Basmanov suggests to the tsar that it was

Efrosinia, the tsar's own aunt, who poisoned Anastasia. The audience has long been attuned to Efrosinia's treachery, yet Ivan has remained puzzlingly aloof. At the moment Ivan comes to the agonizing realization that Fedor could be right, the E-flat clarinet abruptly interjects Glinskaia's wail. This ersatz cry, however, did not accompany the actual poisoning of Anastasia—only when the murderous connection is made: it was Efrosinia who poisoned both women.

The "poisoning" theme continues into the following scene in which Maliuta, one of Ivan's henchmen, executes three boyars for the crime of conspiring with foreign enemies. The musical continuity highlights an important connection, namely that the boyar deaths are retribution for the deaths of Anastasia and Glinskaia. The continuity is also disorienting: an uninterrupted musical thread between the two scenes suggests a similarly uninterrupted temporal flow; thus the music leads the viewer to believe that the executions directly follow Ivan's and Fedor's discussion. Yet when tsar and oprichnik arrive at the scene of the executions, they have had time to don heavy outerwear. As Ivan approaches the corpses in seeming shock and remorse, Eisenstein uses the Orthodox liturgical song "Do not weep for me, mother" (*Ne rydai mene, mati*) as a seemingly empathetic accompaniment. This is, however, yet another temporal sleight-of-hand, for the song continues uninterrupted into the next scene, where the bodies are already laid in coffins, and we realize that the music is actually diegetic singing accompanying the funeral vigil of those executed. In these three scenes, music is an agent of temporal distortion, opening up fissures in which Eisenstein offers suggestions that Ivan may be horrified by his own actions—or not. The director employs in these scenes a technique

he called "enjambment" (a term adapted from its traditional use in poetry), in which aural intrusions and displacements into neighboring visual scenes bring disorientation.[74]

Returning to the "Fiery Furnace," we find the final appearance of the "poisoning" motif. At the scene's climax, Filipp demands of Ivan: "dissolve the *Oprichina* before it is too late!" and a child at last verbalizes the parallels between the fantastical play and tyrannical reality that have remained uncomfortably tacit: "Look mother! There is the terrible and godless tsar!" Ivan's reaction, however, is perhaps one of the most baffling of the entire film: rather than responding to this insult, he grasps Fedor and exclaims, "It is her, Fedor, it is her!" On cue, Glinskaia's clarinet wail draws all of the preceding scenes together: only at this moment does Ivan fully accept that his aunt, Efrosinia, is responsible for his wife's murder. The "poisoning" motif informs us of Ivan's realization, but also offers cause for contemplation: how has the cunning Ivan of Part I failed to realize the all-too-obvious connection between his aunt Efrosinia and the murder of his wife, even after Fedor's outright suggestion? The child-like trust Ivan has in his closest living relative flies in the face of his otherwise shrewd nature. On the one hand, this brings a distinct human weakness to Ivan—unacceptable for a Socialist-Realist hero. On the other, and perhaps more importantly, it again challenges the perceptions of the viewer. Ivan's sudden humanization demands a retrospective reevaluation of his past actions at the moment Eisenstein seemed to be building up a moment of supreme judgment.

[74] Eisenstein, *Nonindifferent Nature,* 327; Thompson, *Ivan the Terrible: A Neoformalist Analysis*, 275-81.

The "Fantastical Gap"

The boyars, in a last effort to free themselves from Ivan's despotic rule, plan to assassinate the Tsar. The plotting greatly distresses Vladimir, Ivan's simple-minded cousin and the contender to the throne. In one of the most psychologically unsettling moments of the film, Vladimir's mother Efrosinia comforts him with a bizarre lullaby about a black beaver who is caught and skinned by hunters. Eisenstein's and Prokofiev's notes reveal that this lullaby was a somewhat later addition to the film, one that the director felt was critical enough to ask Prokofiev to re-write his score. The insertion does not introduce any new plot information, but rather offers the opportunity for an exploration of how music might be used to create pathos. In the original version of the screenplay, the boyars debate the assassination of Ivan accompanied by a "muffled" setting of a text taken from an anthology of Russian folk song:[75]

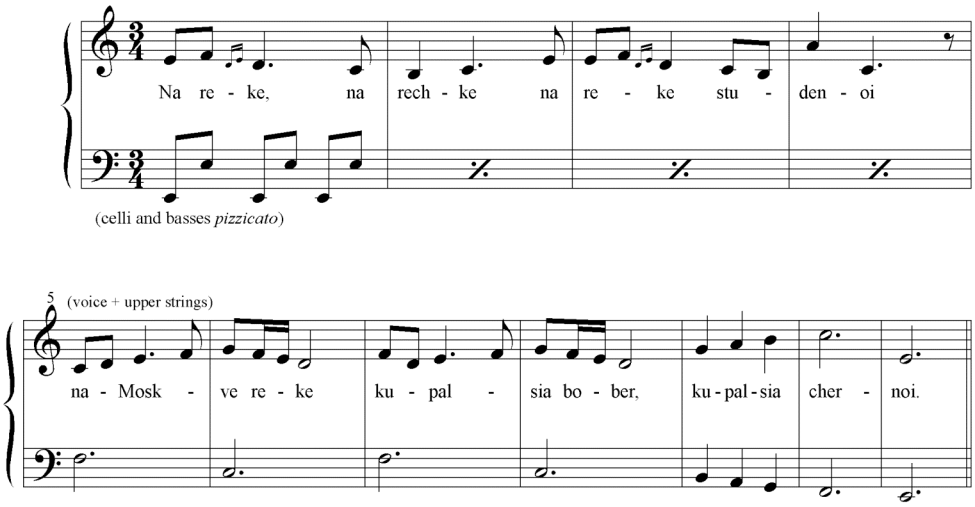
> On the river, the freezing river, on the Moscow River
> a beaver bathed, a black beaver bathed.
> He didn't clean himself, he dirtied himself.
> Finishing his bath, the beaver went up a hill,
> up the high hill of the capital.
> He shook himself, he dried himself,
> he looked around, he glanced around,
> was someone not coming, not searching for something?
> The hunters whistle, they are looking for the black beaver,
> the hunters scour about, searching for the black beaver.
> They want to kill the beaver, they want to skin him,
> to make a fox overcoat trimmed with beaver,
> [to attire tsar Vladimir.]*

[75] The use of the same text in Act III of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *Snegurochka* (*The Snow Maiden*, 1880-95) has suggested to several authors that Eisenstein and Prokofiev borrowed directly from the opera. See, for example, Christopher Palmer, "Prokofiev, Eisenstein and Ivan," *Musical Times* 132 (1991): 180. Eisenstein's notes on this scene, however, indicate that the text was taken directly from a 1902 folk song anthology, Sabolevskii's *Velikorusskie narodnye pesni*, vol. 7 (Saint Petersburg, 1902), 460-62 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 26). Eisenstein also took texts from the same anthology for use in the scene with Foma and Erema at *lobnoe mesto*, though this sequence was ultimately cut during the part one screenings in late 1944 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 27).

[На реке, на речке студеной на Москве реке
купался бобер, купался черный.
Не выкупался, весь выгрязнился.
Покупавшись бобер на гору пошел,
на высокую гору стольную.
Обсушивался, отряхивался,
осматривался, оглядывался,
не идет ли кто, не ищет ли что.
Охотнички свищут, черна бобра ищут,
охотнички рыщут, черна бобра сыщут.
Хотят бобра убити, хотят облупити,
лисью шубу сшити, бобром опушити,
царя Володимира обрядити.]

*Eisenstein modified the final line, which traditionally reads "for a gift for someone."

Eisenstein wanted the song to sound "very terrifying" under the dialogue. Prokofiev composed a rather bald setting (example 5.4), the winding, occasionally melismatic contours of its melody suggesting the characteristic Russian *protiazhnaia pesnia* ("drawn-out song").



Example 5.4. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part II), "Pesnia pro bobra," draft original version, mm. 3-13
[Source: reduction based on RGALI, f. 1929, op.1, ed. khr. 110, l. 9]

An arching melodic line (perhaps suggesting the gentle undulations of the Moscow River) sits atop a tension-inducing static bassline, its effect perhaps not "terrifying," but

certainly ominous paired with an unfolding murder plot. Eisenstein cut the song when he was struck by inspiration: his notes on 4 May 1942 indicate that he had reconceived of the song as a "lullaby" sung by Efrosinia to the dull-witted Vladimir, adding "where better [for] verses about the boyar tsar!! Great!"[76] Prokofiev's second and final setting of the text follows the boyar council (rather than accompanying it) and, as we shall see, offers a visceral, emotional, aria-like response to consequential dialogue. When asked about the scene during a lecture at the State Film Institute (VGIK), Eisenstein indicated that "the whole emphasis was on how the music worked at revealing the thoughts [of Efrosinia], and so on, at a different level—while having the outward appearance of a lullaby."[77]

As the lullaby begins, an agitated Vladimir reclines in his mother's lap; a gently undulating viola line and a fluid, conjunct melody appear to put him to sleep with unusual speed (example 5.5). The key is B minor, but the leading tone (A-sharp) is never articulated, effecting a sense of *peremennost'* (fluctuating minor and relative major tonal foci; see, for example measure 7)—Prokofiev preserved at least some of the folk tone of his first setting. But the typical traits of a lullaby—harmonic simplicity and conjunct melody with a limited range—are challenged. The tonal center abruptly collapses through a cycle of thirds, first moving through g minor in measure 9, and then e-flat minor in measure 11. Efrosinia dramatically breaks her otherwise conjunct line on the word "black," dropping a full octave and highlighting the surprising arrival of e-flat minor. The oboe and flute

[76] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, l. 26. "Great!" is written in English.

[77] Sergei Eisenstein, "From Lectures on Music and Colour in *Ivan the Terrible*," in *S. M. Eisenstein: Selected Works, Volume III, Writings 1934-47*, ed. Richard Taylor and trans. William Powell (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1996), 329. Eisenstein delivered the lectures at VGIK on 12, 18, and 19 March 1947.

offer dissonant chatter in response, as Efrosinia intones "he didn't clean himself, he dirtied himself" in a *Sprechstimme*-like aside—Eisenstein wanted this moment to appear as if Efrosinia had been overcome with hatred and forgot to sing.[78] (The punctuating woodwind notes seem to have been an afterthought, as they are entered on a separate page of Prokofiev's manuscript.[79]) As b minor returns for the second stanza, completing the cycle of thirds (b / g / e-flat-d-sharp / b), Vladimir appears to suddenly awaken, but then again doze with narcoleptic rapidity when Efrosinia again departs from b minor, arriving in a minor (measure 21) by means of a modally-inflected pass through the relative major. Any pretense of a typical lullaby then vanishes, as Efrosinia begins an accelerating march-like interlude—complete with trumpet and drums suggestive of the encroaching hunters—that accumulates dissonance, culminating in a grotesque melodic tritone in measure 36. This tremendous surge of energy, however, does not stir Vladimir from his slumber. Only with the return to the initial lullaby-like texture at measure 41 (now in a minor) does Efrosinia's almost whispered admission that the beaver is to be killed seem to have any effect on her dozing son. When Efrosinia sings the song's final line, "to attire tsar Vladimir," she abruptly rises, her arms mimicking the upward arc of the melodic line, and an unseen choir joins her. Vladimir at last realizes the ramifications of her murderous plot, collapsing with a shriek.

A number of agents of confusion, and therefore of pathos, are at work in this scene. First and most obvious is the incertitude of genre; we initially expect a lullaby, but something quite different follows. And does Vladimir actually hear everything his

[78] Ibid, 318.

[79] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 110, l. 11.

mother sings? Why does he appear unfazed by the threatening middle section of her song but is later awakened by her mere whisper? Even more perplexing is the sudden entrance of an acousmatic choir. These challenges to the boundary between diegetic and non-diegetic music are disorienting. As Robynn Stilwell has argued, "unidentifiable, unlocatable sound is disturbing because [...] it makes us uneasy; we look around for visual grounding. […] Does it matter at which position exactly the audience perceives itself at any one instant during the scene? Not really. The point is that the position is constantly shifting [...], and in our disorientation we are more susceptible to the effects along the way." This liminality is what Stilwell calls the "fantastical gap."[80]

The space represented by this gap is especially appropriate to the musically-induced pathos Prokofiev and Eisenstein sought in *Ivan the Terrible*. In the lullaby we experience a moment of musical metadiegesis; Efrosinia hijacks the film's otherwise omniscient narration, bringing her perspective to the foreground.[81] As Prokofiev's music periodically strays into distant harmonic territory, we are disorientingly pulled into Efrosinia's point of view.[82]

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[80] Robynn J. Stilwell, "The Fantastical Gap between Diegetic and Nondiegetic," in *Beyond the Soundtrack: Representing Music in Cinema*, eds. Daniel Goldmark, Lawrence Kramer, and Richard Leppert (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 188.

[81] Claudia Gorbman has developed this term with respect to film music, see *Unheard Melodies: Narrative Film Music* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 22-23.

[82] Curiously, when Eisenstein was questioned about this phenomenon—i.e. whether musical images can displace visual images—he responded with the example of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* (*Skazanie o nevidimom grade Kitezhe i deve Fevronii*, 1907), in which the battle at Kerzhenets is depicted entirely with music; the curtain remains down. Eisenstein, "From Lectures on Music and Colour," 330.

Andante assai

p

Na re -

pp

p

5

mp

ke, narech - ke stu dyo - noi, naMoskve re - ke ku - pal - sia bdyor,

5

p

p

10

[oboe]

f

ku - pal - sia chyor - nyi.

spoken: Ne vykupalsia, ves' vygriaznilsia.

p

10

mf

fp

[flute]

14

Po - ku -

p *pp*

18

pav - shis' bo - byor na go - ru po - shyol, na vy - so - ku - yiu go - ru

p *mp*

[oboe]

21

stol' - nu - iu. Ob - su-shi-val-sia, ot-

mf *mf* *pp* *p*

25

ria - khi - val - sia, o - sma-tri-val-sia, o - glia - dy - val - sia ne i-doytli kto, ne shcheti

fp

30

shto.

un poco accel.

[Muted trumpet] (etc. to m. 37)

Allegro moderato

O - khot - nich - ki svi - shchut, cher -

mf p *pp* *mp*

33

na - bo-bra i - shchut, o - khot - nich - ki ry - shchut, cher - na bo - bra cy - - -

cresc.

f

37

shchut. Kho - tiat bo-bra u -

mf *p* *pp*

42

bi - ti, kho - tiat ob - lu - pi - ti, lis'-iu shu-bu sshi - ti, bob-

47

rom o - pu - shi - ti, tsa - ria Vo-lo-di-mi-ra ob-ria-

accel.

Maestoso

mf

Example 5.5. *Ivan the Terrible* (Part II), "Pesnia pro bobra," final version, mm. 1-55 [Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 109]

What are Efrosinia's motives, banishing a tyrannical ruler or seizing power for herself? The scene challenges the viewer to consider questions of who is victim and who is victimizer, and perhaps most importantly with whom—Ivan or boyars—to sympathize. Interestingly, the uncertainty of the scene is prolonged to the conclusion of Part II, where Efrosinia repeats two lines of the lullaby-cum-lament following Vladimir's murder by the Archbishop's novice. As she sings, she again cradles the lifeless Vladimir's head until two guards slowly pull his body away, leaving the only the tsar's Cap of Monomakh in

her folded arms.[83] Even this macabre moment is unclear: is the lullaby for her dead son or the lost crown?

End of a Collaboration

Most Soviet critics were struck by the apparent "organic" whole of music and image in Part I of *Ivan the Terrible*. Igor' Lugovskii wrote that "the music of composer S. Prokofiev, as in S. Eisenstein's preceding film *Aleksandr Nevskii*, makes a harmonious whole in line with the director's conception, while at the same time offering considerable individual artistic interest."[84] B. Savoian wrote that "the music written by composer S. Prokofiev is deeply exhilarating. The music is an organic component of the film, successfully supplementing and deepening it,"[85] and an anonymous writer added that "music […] pairs wonderfully with the development of action and with the film's scope of creativity."[86] Although contributors lacked the means and indeed an audience to explore the issue in depth, they responded to a perceived integration of music and image in the film. Eisenstein's future biographer, Rostislav Iurenev, wrote for the journal *Iskusstvo kino*:

> Prokofiev's music brings unusual strength to the film. Russian folk tunes and ancient liturgical melodies are at its foundation. Music accompanies the action, rising at times to the height of tragic pathos, falling to the depths of true grief,

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[83] This is another example of Eisenstein's visual motifs: At the beginning of Part II, boyar guards pulled Ivan's poisoned mother away from him in a similar fashion; the conclusion of Part II reverses the tragedy: son deprived of mother becomes mother deprived of son.

[84] Igor' Lugovskii, "Ivan Groznyi," *Vecherniaia Moskva*, 3 February 1945; clipping in RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 673.

[85] B. Savoian, "Ivan Groznyi," *Kommunist*, 2 March 1945; clipping in RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 673.

[86] Anonymous, "Kak sozdavalsiia film," *Vecherniaia Moskva*, 5 February 1945: clipping in RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 673.

> sounding sometimes tenderly, sometimes joyfully, sometimes threateningly. The director, composer, operators, actors, and actresses work […] in true artistic unity. The musical rhythm, the visual rhythm, the rhythm of the actor's movements, the rhythm of the editing—all condition each other.[87]

Iurenev's assertion that diverse visual and aural elements in *Ivan the Terrible* condition each other is especially revealing, for it suggests that he and his colleagues responded viscerally to the disorienting visual and musical effects of the film. It merits mentioning that critics for the nation's newspapers rarely, if ever, included details of film music during the 1930s and 1940s. Even in the mass of critical reviews and reports detailing the earlier "celebrity" collaboration behind *Aleksandr Nevskii*, authors rarely ventured beyond citing Prokofiev's name.

The composer Nikolai Kriukov came closer to putting his finger on what had caught the attention of many critics, responding to what he felt was a puzzling use of music that weakened the overall narrative power of the film: "If we compare [*Ivan the Terrible*] to [*Aleksandr*] *Nevskii*, I feel, that this work, apart from Prokofiev's wonderful music, is colder, more indifferent, and the reason for this is the weakening of [music's] dramatic function in the film" (see Appendix VI). This perceived indifference—the product of exaggerated acting, hyperbolic dialog, dialectically-influenced editing, and, as I have argued here, the perplexing empathetic and anempathetic use of music—challenges the expectation of an easily comprehended narrative. As the *New York Times*

[87] R. Iurenev, "Ivan Groznyi," *Iskusstvo kino* 2-3 (February-March 1946); clipping in RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 673. Iurenev's review is also revealing in its final sentence, as it shows expectations influenced by Eisenstein's theoretical writings. Exploring the correspondence and interaction of visual "rhythm" and musical rhythm was a feature of Eisenstein's sound-image theories that he variously lumped under the rubric of "vertical montage." See, for example, Sergei Eisenstein, "Synchronization of Senses," in *The Film Sense*, trans. and ed. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1942), 82.

critic Bosley Crowther wrote about the American premiere of Part I, "Eisenstein has no interest in telling a conventionally personalized tale."[88]

Figure 5.6. Advertisement for *Ivan the Terrible* (Part I)

Prokofiev's score does not merely accompany the film's action, but makes demands on the viewer, forcing him or her to a more careful consideration of all of the film's elements; rather than draw the audience into a bath of effect, music calls attention to itself. Thanks to this fundamental subjectivity, Prokofiev and Eisenstein bequeathed a masterpiece that continues to baffle, amuse, perplex, entertain, as well as invite us to ponder over the last product of one of the twentieth century's great collaborations.

[88] Bosley Crowther, "Cinema as an Art," *New York Times*, 16 March 1947.

Coda

On the evening of 10 February 1948, Eisenstein was at work on an article dealing with *Ivan the Terrible* when he suffered a second heart attack. In the middle of the night Eisenstein's cameraman Eduard Tisse (1897-1961) phoned Prokofiev's apartment with the news that the director was dead.[89] The next morning, Prokofiev received a second shock: the now-infamous Politburo decree attacking his music appeared in the pages of the newspaper *Pravda*.[90] Reeling from what must have been two of the deepest blows of his life, Prokofiev, accompanied by Mendel'son, proceeded to *Dom Kino* where Eisenstein's body lay in a sea of flowers. Mendel'son later wrote how Prokofiev approached the coffin of the greatest collaborator of his Soviet career: "standing honorary guard, he did not divert his eyes from Sergei Mikhailovich's face for a long while. From his life had departed a good, true friend."[91]

Despite Stalin's permission, Eisenstein had never returned to work on *Ivan the Terrible* during the final year of his life. Part II remained shelved for over a decade, finally receiving its premiere on 1 September 1958. After Eisenstein's death, Prokofiev lived only another five years, dying, in perhaps one of the deepest ironies of his life, on the same day as Stalin: 5 March 1953. He never returned to film music in the final years

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[89] M[ira] A. Mendel'son-Prokof'eva, "Vospominaniia o Sergee Prokof'eve (fragment: 1946-1950 gody)," in *Sergei Prokof'ev: Vospominaniia, pis'ma, stat'i,* ed. Marina Rakhmanova (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Deka-VC', 2004), 103.

[90] The decree has long been considered an act to restore draconian control of the arts following the comparative artistic freedom experienced during the war years. Theater, literature, and film had already been victims of similar mega-denunciations (along with Prokofiev, the entire vanguard of Soviet composers were attacked: Muradeli, Shostakovich, Khachaturian, Shebalin, Popov, and Miaskovskii). Reprinted in *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsia*, 630-34.

[91] Mendel'son, "Vospominaniia," 104.

of his life; *Ivan the Terrible* remained his final film project and the last product of a lifetime of brilliant collaborations.

As a genre, film music occupies an unusual place in Prokofiev's output. Unlike his Parisian ballets, for instance, it is difficult to trace a strong continuity between each of his eight film scores. Working with film brought Prokofiev into contact with a range of directors, each with different demands and expectations. In the case of Eisenstein, Prokofiev found a partner with especially deep and profound artistic vision. Thus a central theme of this study has been the extent to which Prokofiev responded to, and sometimes shaped, the collaborative demands and the aesthetic worlds of each of the films for which he composed. The grotesque and sardonic tone of *Lieutenant Kizhe*, the *kuchkist*-inspired monumentality of *Aleksandr Nevskii,* and the often banal propagandistic voices of the wartime films all come together not in a unified approach to film music, but in Prokofiev's unique ability to adapt to the needs of a given project.

Prokofiev's motivations for composing film music were as varied as the films for which he composed. His interest in the cinema was at first financially driven, as is evident from his journal entries dating from his first visit to Hollywood in 1930. Yet his initial projects, *Lieutenant Kizhe* and *Queen of Spades,* held the further advantage of easing a difficult return to Prokofiev's radically changed homeland. Prokofiev's financial motivations were renewed during the difficult war years, and the four film contracts of 1941-42 offered generous support when other official channels had failed. Eisenstein's projects captured Prokofiev's attention as an artist, and helped him achieve the goal that had sparked the imagination of so many composers of the twentieth century: harnessing the art of music to the new visual medium that came to dominate the century.

In November 2004 a series of performances at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow electrified audiences: the German director Frank Strobel had succeeded in pairing a live orchestral performance of Prokofiev's score for *Aleksandr Nevskii* with a showing of the film—a feat that has now been repeated across Europe and North America. And in 2008, as I write these words, yet another recording of the music from *Lieutenant Kizhe* (this time by Paavo Järvi and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra) is rocketing up the classical music charts. Prokofiev's film music continues to enjoy a prominent place in the twenty-first century, a significant achievement for works that emerged from one of the modern era's most repressive totalitarian regimes. Ultimately, these works exist as both remarkable artistic achievements that have excited audiences for more than sixty years and as historical documents that bear witness to the complex mix of terror, optimism, uncertainty, opportunity, and bureaucracy that was Stalin's Russia.

APPENDIX I: Contents of Prokofiev's Film Scores

***Poruchik Kizhe* (*Lieutenant Kizhe*)**[1]

No.	Title
1	Nachal'nyi boi barabanov (The initial roll of the drums)
2	Grom barabanov v otvet na "Da zdravstvuet" (Thunder of the drums in response to "Long Live")
3	Nevernyi boi barabanov (Unsteady roll of the drums)
4	Izdali slyshna truba (A trumpet sounds from afar)
5	Rozhdenie Kizhe (Kizhe's birth)
6	Pered secheniem (Before the flogging)
7	Kizhe sekut (Kizhe is flogged)
8	Marshrut v Sibir' (The road to Siberia)
9	Pesnia Pavla (Pavel's song)
10	"Vse neverno" ("It's all Wrong")
11	Pesnia Gagarinoi (Gagarina's song)
12	"Oh, ma belle demoiselle"
13	Vozvrashchenie Kizhe (Kizhe's return)
14	Kizhe zhenitsia (Kizhe marries)
15	Kizhe umer (Kizhe dies)
16	Pokhorony Kizhe (Kizhe's funeral)
17	Parad (Parade)

[1] In the manuscripts, Prokofiev did not number the contents. The numbering is based on the order of the pieces in the later of the two autograph scores (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 92).

The film score exists in two versions in RGALI. The first is a short score in Prokofiev's hand containing 13 numbers (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 92). The second is a full score in a copyist's hand with some notes in the composer's hand (RGALI, f. 1929, op.1, ed. khr. 91). The full score is missing the four pages that contain "Kizhe dies" and "Kizhe marries"; it is otherwise complete.

***Pikovaia dama* (*Queen of Spades*)**

No.	Title
1	Uvertura (Overture)
2	Bluzhdaniia (Wandering)
3	Bluzhdaniia—German pered domom grafini (Wandering—Hermann before the countess's House)
4	Liza
5	German doma (Hermann at home)
6	Utro (Morning)
7	German vidit Lizu (Hermann sees Liza)
8	German vruchaet Lize pis'mo (Herman hands Liza a letter)
9	Liza chitaet pis'mo (Liza reads the letter)
10	Liza mechtaet i pishet otvet (Liza dreams and writes an answer)
11	Liza vkhodit s pis'mom k Germanu (Liza goes to Hermann with the letter)
12	German chitaet pis'mo i German pered domom grafini (Hermann reads the letter
13	and Herman in front of the countess's house)
14	German v komnate Lizi (Hermann in Liza's room)
15	Bal (Ball)
16	Liza u sebia v komnate (Liza by herself in her room)
17	German u sebia za kartami (Hermann alone before the cards)
18	Vizit grafini (The countess's visit)
19	German zapisyvaet, zakladyvaet i prikhodit v igornyi dom (Hermann prepares himself and goes to the gambling house)
20	Pervyi vyigrysh (The first win)
21	German idet vtoroi raz v igornyi dom (Hermann goes to the gambling house for the second time)
22	Vtoroi vyigrysh (The second win)
23	German idet v tretyi paz v igornyi dom (Hermann goes to the gambling house for the third time)
24	German proigral (Hermann loses)
25	Poslednee svidanie (The final meeting)

Aleksandr Nevskii[2]

No.	Title
1	Razorennaia Rus' (Ravaged Rus')
2	Rassvet (Daybreak)
3	Pskov pervyi (Pskov-first)
4	Pskov vtoroi (Pskov-second)
5	Pskov tretii (Pskov-third)
6	Pskov chetvertyi (Pskov-fourth)
7	Veche (Assembly)
8	Mobilizatsiia (Mobilization)
9	Svin'ia (Swine)
10	Russkie rozhki (Russian horns)
11	Rog tonet (The horn sounds)
12	Roga pered kare (Horns before the square)
13	Sopeli (Wheezing)
14	Kare (The square)
15	Poedinok (Duel)
16	Posle poedinka (After the duel)
17	Roga v presledovanii (Horns in pursuit)
18	Konnaia ataka (Cavalry attack)
19	Presledovanie (The pursuit)
20	V"ezd vo Pskov (Entry into Pskov)
21	V"ezd v Novgorod (Entry into Novgorod)
22	Final
23	Sopeli, vtoroi variant (Wheezing, second version)

Songs:

"A i bylo delo na Neve-reke" (Song About Aleksandr Nevskii)
"Vstavaite, liudi russkie" (Arise, Russian People)
"Otzovitesia, iasny sokoly" (Olga's Lament)

[2] The titles of each number were assigned in the course of filming

Lermontov[3]

No.	Title
1	Kadril' (Quadrille, becomes "Contredanse" in op. 96)
2	Val's "Iunost'" (original "Waltz of youth," later used in *War and Peace*)
3	Polonez (Polonaise, taken from *Boris Godunov*, op. 70bis; later used in *Ivan the Terrible*, Part II)
4	Val's na maskarade (Masquerade waltz, alternately titled "Mephisto" waltz, later used in *Waltz Suite*, op. 110)
5	"Rezhim Nikolaia I" ("Regime of Nicholas I")
6	Val's "svetskii" ("Worldly" waltz)
7	Val's (second "Waltz of youth," replaces no. 2)
8	Polonez (second polonaise, replaces no. 3)
	Otryvok iz "Fenelly" (Excerpts from "Fenella" [Auber's *Le muette de Portici*])[4]

[3] Prokofiev did not number the pieces in his score and the numbering in this table simply reflects the chronology of the composer's work. Prokofiev's music for *Lermontov* exists in two manuscript scores. The piano score in Prokofiev's hand (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 99) contains all of the numbers listed above, with the exception of no. 3, which was removed from the manuscript when Prokofiev later used it in *Ivan the Terrible*. The composer included separate pages of "appendices" (*dobovleniia*) that concern details of orchestration that could not fit directly onto the piano score. The groupings in each of these appendices, along with the changes in pen and manuscript paper make it possible to discern chronological groups within the seven numbers in the manuscript: nos. 1 and 2 have an appendix dated 27 May 1941. No. 6 has its own appendix (undated), and nos. 4 and 5 are written on a different type of manuscript paper and grouped together with their own appendix (undated, but referred to in Prokofiev's correspondence with his assistant, Pavel Lamm). No. 7 is clearly a later insert into this score, and no.8 (done in pencil, unlike the remainder of the score) has its own date of 2 July 1942. The second manuscript score is a full score in Lamm's hand based on the composer's piano score but containing only nos. 3, 4, and 5 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 100).

[4] Prokofiev began to sketch these out in his piano score (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 99, l. 1).

Tonia[5]

No.	Title
1	Uvertiura (Overture)
2	Alleia parka (A park path)
3	Tonia spuskaetsia po lestinitse (Tonia descends the stairs)
4	Pesnia (Song)
5	Nemets No.1 (German No. 1)
6	Voennyi epizod (War episode)
7	Proshchanie s Katei (Farewell to Katia)
8	Proshchanie s Anei (Farewell to Ania)
9	Russkie liudi pokidaiut gorod (Russian people abandon the town)
10	1-ia zemlianka (First dug-out)
11	2-ia zemlianka (Second dug-out)
12	Orudie dvizhetsia (The artillery advances)
13	Prikhod nemtsa (Arrival of the German)
14	3-i kuplet pesny (Third stanza of the song)
15	Final

[5] Prokofiev's short score (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 102) contains nos. 2, 4, 5, 15, 16, and sketches for no. 6. The full score (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 103) is complete. No. 13 appears to have been an intentional omission, as the physical construction of the score does not indicate any missing material.

Kotovskii[6] (extant numbers only)

No.	Title
1	Pesnia (Song)
2	Skachka (Gallop)
3	Val's (Waltz, taken from *Cinderella*, op. 87)
4	Revoliutsiia (Revolution)
5	Interventsiia (Intervention)
6	Smert' Kharitonova (Death of Karitonov) [incomplete]
11	Nemtsy pered goloi atakoi (The Germans before the attack)

[6] The extant numbers of *Kotovskii* are preserved in two separate files. Eight leaves of a short score in Prokofiev's hand contain no. 1 ("Pesnia"), no. 2 ("Skachka"), and no. 4 ("Revoliutsiia"). No. 3 ("Val's"), which is taken from Prokofiev's score for the ballet *Cinderella*, is copied on different paper and included with the other three numbers. The final page is dated 26 August 1942 (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 105). Nine leaves of the full score survive, containing nos. 5 and 11 ("Interventsiia," "Nemtsy pered goloi atakoi") in their entirety, and the first line of no. 6 ("Smert' Kharitonova") (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 106). An eighth number, "Prokhod Chasyka," survives on the reverse of the final page of the score for *Tonia* (RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 103, l. 27 ob.).

***Partizany v stepiakh Ukrainy* (*Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*)**[7]

No.	Title
1	Nachalo 2-i pesni (Beginning of the Second Song)
2	Posle vzryva (After the explosion)
3	Smert' deda (Death of grandfather)
4	Bespokoinyi fon (Anxious background)
5	Posle vystrela Sashko (After Sashko's shot)
6	Mogila (Grave)
7	Priglushennyi otryvok iz siuity (Muted extracts from the suite)
9	Passtrel (Execution)

Unnumbered: Prokhod Chasnyka (Chasnyk's passage)

[7] RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 38 and RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 107. No 10 ("Prokhod Chasnyka") is drafted on the back of the final number of the *Tonia* manuscript, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 103, l. 27 ob. The pages of the manuscript clearly show both the constraints of supplies during the evacuation as well as Prokofiev's hurried state: the numbers are written—often in pencil—on various pieces of scrap manuscript paper.

***Ivan the Terrible* (Parts I and II)**[8]

No.	Title
1	Uvertiura (Overture)
2	Smert' Glinskoi (Glinskaia's death)
3	Marsh molodogo Ivana (Young Ivan's march)
4	Okean-more (Ocean-Sea)
5	Shuskii i psari (Shuiskii and the keepers of the hounds)
6	Mnogaia leta (May he live forever)
7	Velichanie (Song of praise)
8	Lebed' (The swan)
9	Iurodivyi (The holy fool)
10	Bunt (Riot)
11	Vykhod tartar (The entrance of the Tartars)
12	Pushki dvizhutsia na Kazan' (The cannons are moved to Kazan)
13	Palatka Ivana (Ivan's tent)
14	Step tatarskaia (The Tartar steppe)
15	Pushkari (The cannoneers)
16	Tatary (The Tartars)
17	Truby Kurbskogo (Kurbskii's trumpets)
18	Ataka (Attack)
19	Zavist' Maliuty (Maliuta's jealousy)
20	Kazan' vziata (Kazan is taken)
21	Ivan umoliaet boiar (Ivan pleads with the Boyars)
22	Bolezen' Anastasii (Anastasia's illness)
23	Otravlenie Anastasii (Anastasia's poisoning)
24	Ivan u groba Anastasii (Ivan at Anastasia's coffin)
25	Kliatva oprichnikov (The Oprichniki oath)
26	Vernis'! (Come back!)
27	Fanfary (Fanfares)
28	Polonez (Polonaise)
29	Peshchnoe deistvo (The play of the fiery furnace)

[8] The numbers given to each piece here are not Prokofiev's, but correspond roughly to the order each piece appears in the film. The entire score has been published: Sergei Prokofiev, *Ivan Groznyi: Muzyka k fil'mu Sergeia Eizenshteina*, ed. Marina Rakhmanova (Hamburg: Sikorski, 1997). The manuscript full score exists as individual numbers in five different files; almost all is in the hand of Prokofiev's copyist Pavel Lamm (GTsMMK, f. 33, ed. khr. 381, 490, 382, 421 and RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 111). Prokofiev's manuscript piano score is in five different files: GTsMMK, f. 33, ed. khr. 489, 491; RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1 ed. khr. 108, 109, and 111.

No.	Title (continued)
30	Diven Bog (Wonderful is God)
31	Penie otrokov (Song of the boys in the furnace)
32	Pesnia pro bobra (The song of the beaver)
33	Pliaski oprichnikov, khaoticheskaia i organizovannaia (The Oprichniki dances, chaotic and orderly)
34	Kuplety oprichnikov (The Oprichniki song)
35	Oprichniki i Vladimir (The Oprichniki and Vladimir)
36	Khor No. 1 (Chorus no. 1)
37	Khor No. 2 (Chorus no. 2)
38	Ubiistvo Vladimira (Vladimir's murder)
39	Vykhod Ivana (Ivan's entrance)

APPENDIX II: Production Credits

1. *Poruchik Kizhe* (*Lieutenant Kizhe*)

Produced at the Belorussian State Film Studios (Belgoskino) in Leningrad, 1932-34.

General Release in the Soviet Union: 7 March 1934

Author of scenario:	Iurii Tynianov
Director:	Aleksandr Faintsimmer
Cameraman:	Arkadii Kal'tsatyi
Assistant cameraman:	V. Stradin
Design:	P. Snopkov, K. Kartashov
Cast Director:	I. Rummel'
Administrator:	M. Minin
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev
Sound:	N. Kosarev, B. Beerval'd
Consultants:	G. Kosintsev, V. Glinka, Iu. Krinkin

Musical score performed by the Leningrad State Academic Orchestra under the direction of Issak Dunaevskii.

Tsar Pavel I:	Mikhail Ianshin
Count Palen:	Boris Gorin-Goriainov
Aide-de-camp:	Erast Garin
Princess Gagarina:	Nina Shaternikova
Freilina:	Sof'ia Magarill
Commandant:	Mikhail Rostovtsev

2. *Pikovaia dama* (*Queen of Spades*)

Based on Aleksander Pushkin's novella *Pikovaia dama* (1833), film unrealized

Director:	Mikhail Romm
Co-author:	Eduard Pentslin
Artist:	Vladimir Kaplunovskii, S. Raevskii
Costume Designer:	K. Efimov
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev
Herman:	Anatolii Dubenskii
Elizaveta Ivanova (Liza):	Elena Kuz'mina
Countess:	Ol'ga Pyzhova

3. *Aleksandr Nevskii*

Produced at Mosfilm Studios (Moscow), 1938

General Release in the Soviet Union: 1 December 1938

Author of scenario:	Petr Pavlenko, Sergei Eisenstein
Director:	Sergei Eisenstein
Cameraman:	Eduard Tisse
Design:	Issak Shpinel', Nikolai Solov'ev, K. Eliseev
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev
Sound:	V. Bogdankevich
Sound engineers:	Boris Vol'skii, Vladimir Popov
Author of song texts:	Vladimir Lugovskoi
Prince Aleksandr Nevskii:	Nikolai Cherkasov
Vasilii Buslai:	Nikolai Okhlopkov
Gavrilo Oleksich:	Aleksandr Abrikosov
Ignat:	Dmitri Orlov
Ol'ga:	Vera Ivasheva
Von Balk:	Vladimir Ershov
Tverdilo:	Sergei Blinnikov
Ananias:	Ivan Lagutin
Bishop:	Lev Fenin
Monk:	Naum Rogozhin

4. *Lermontov*

Produced at Soiuzdetfil'm (Moscow and Stalinabad), 1941-43

General Release in the Soviet Union: 6 July 1943

Author of scenario:	Konstantin Paustovskii
Director:	Albert Gendelshtein
Cameraman:	A. Shelenkov, M. Magidson
Design:	S. Kozlovskii, V. Egorov, K. Efimov, L. Blatova
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev and Venidikt Pushkov
Sound Technician:	S. Iurtsev
Lermontov:	Aleksei Konsovskii
Kniazhna:	Nina Shaternikova
Belinskii:	A Raevskii
Odoevskii:	Pavel Shpringfel'd
Valsil'chikov:	G. Menglet
Martynov:	Pavel Massal'skii
Baron de Barant:	Sergei Martinson
Stepan Stepanovich:	Sergei Martinson (second role)
Nikolai I:	A. Sevost'ianov
The Great Princess:	L. Sukharevskaia
Benkendorf:	Nikolai Komissarov
General Golofeev:	Boris Tenin
Smirdin:	M. Troianovskii
Stolypin:	Andrei Fait

5. *Kotovskii*

Produced at Central United Film Studios (Alma-Ata), 1941-42

General release in the Soviet Union: 6 January 1943

Scenarist:	Aleksei Kapler
Director:	Aleksandr Faintsimmer
Cameraman:	Mikhail Gindin
Artist:	Aleksei Utkin
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev
Sound Technician:	Valerii Popov
Kotovskii:	Nikolai Mordvinov
Kharitonov:	Vasilii Vanin
Kabaniuk:	Nikolai Kriuchkov
Zagari:	Nikolai Kriuchkov (second role)
Doctor	Vera Maretskaia
Prince Karakozen:	Mikhail Astangov
Son of Prince	Mikhail Astangov (second role)
Orderly	Konstantin Sorokin

6. *Tonia*

Produced at Central United Film Studios (Alma-Ata), 1942, release prohibited

Scenarist:	Boris Brodskii
Director:	Abram Room
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev
Cameraman:	Leonid Kosmatov
Artist:	Fedor Berenshtam
Sound Technician:	N. Bogdanovich
Tonia:	Valentina Karavaeva
Vasilii:	Sergei Stoliarov
Telephone operators:	Liudmilla Shabalina
	Larisa Emel'iantseva

7. *Partizany v stepiakh Ukrainy* (*Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*)

Produced at Kiev Film Studios (Semipalatinsk), 1942

General Release in the Soviet Union: 2 March 1943

Scenarist:	Igor' Savchenko
Director:	Igor' Savchenko
Cameraman:	U. Ekel'chik
Artist:	M. Umanskii, E. Ukel'son
Sound technicians:	N. Mina, A. Babii
Second director:	A. Davidson
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev

Salyvon Chasnyk:	Nikolai Bogolubov
Pelageia Chasnyk:	Nataliia Uzhvii
Grandfather Taras:	Boris Chirkov
Grandfather Ostap:	A. Dunaiskii
Doctor:	V. Krasnovetskii
Katerina:	L. Emel'iantseva
Arkasha:	Vladimir Balashov
Sashko:	B. Runge
Translator:	G. Ura
Felimon Dolognosik:	D. Milutenko
German officer I:	E. Ponomarenko
German officer II:	K. Koshevskii

8. *Ivan Groznyi* (*Ivan the Terrible*)

Produced by Central United Film Studios (Alma-Ata), and Mosfilm (Moscow), 1941-46

Premiere: GABT (Bolshoi Theater, Moscow), 30 December 1944
General release in the Soviet Union: 16 January 1945 (Part I), 1 September 1958 (Part II)

Director:	Sergei Eisenstein
Screenplay:	Sergei Eisenstein
Associate Director:	Boris Sveshnikov
Director of Photography:	Andrei Moskvin, Eduard Tisse
Composer:	Sergei Prokofiev
Lyrics:	Vladimir Lugovskoi
Conductor:	Abram Stasevich
Assistant Directors:	Lev Indenbom, Valentina Kuznetsova, I. Bir, Boris Buneev
Cameraman:	Viktor Dombrovskii
Sound:	Boris Vol'skii, Vladimir Bogdankevich
Assistant editors:	Esfir Tobak, Lev Indenbom
Sets:	Iosif Shpinel
Costume design:	Lidia Naumova
Costume assistant:	Nadezhda Buzina
Wardrobe:	Iakov Raizman, M. Safonova
Religious Consultant:	Archpriest P. Tsvetkov
Coreographer:	Rostislav Zakharov

Tsar Ivan IV:	Nikolai Cherkasov
Anastasia Romanova:	Liudmila Tselikovskaia
Efrosinia Staritskaia:	Serafima Birman
Vladimir Staritskii:	Pavel Kadochnikov
Andrei Kurbskii:	Mikhail Nazvanov
Fedor Kolychev (Filipp):	Andrei Abrikosov
Pimen:	Aleksandr Mgrebov
Peter Volynets:	Vladimir Balashov
Maliuta Skuratov:	Mikhail Zharov
Alexei Basmanov:	Amvrosi Buchma
Fedor Basmanov:	Mikhail Kuznetsov
Livonian Ambassador:	S. Timoshenko
Nikola the Holy Fool:	Vsevolod Pudovkin
The Archdeacon:	Maxim Mikhailov
Child Ivan:	Eric Pyr'ev
King Sigismund:	Pavel Massalskii
Elena Glinskaia:	Ada Voitsik
Evstafi :	Pavel Kadochnikov
Heinrich Staden:	Oleg Zhakov
Queen Elizabeth I:	Mikhail Romm

APPENDIX III: Selective Chronology

NB: The other works listed for each year include Prokofiev's major non-cinematic pieces for contextual purposes.

1930

February	Prokofiev visits Hollywood, considers composing a musical score for the film *What a Widow!*
June	Eisenstein arrives in Hollywood

Other works: Fourth Symphony (op. 47), First String Quartet (op. 50)

1932

3 December	Preliminary contract for *Lieutenant Kizhe*

Other works: Fifth Piano Concerto (op. 55), Sonata for Two Violins (op. 56)

1933

16 March	Official contract for *Lieutenant Kizhe*
April-May	Prokofiev visits Belgoskino
1 June	Contract to compose music for Vano's film *Skazka*
July-Oct.	Majority of *Lieutenant Kizhe* score composed
ca. October	Score for *Lieutenant Kizhe* is recorded in Leningrad

Other works: *Egyptian Nights, Symphonic Song* (op. 57)

1934

7 March	General release of *Lieutenant Kizhe* in Soviet Union
8 July	Prokofiev completes the *Lieutenant Kizhe Suite* (op. 60)

1935

May	Boris Shumiatskii in Hollywood

Other Works: First version of *Romeo and Juliet,* Second Violin Concerto (op. 63)

1936

January	Prokofievs move to Moscow
28 January	"Muddle Instead of Music" appears in *Pravda*

14 February	Romm invites Prokofiev to compose for *Queen of Spades*
29 May	Contract for *Queen of Spades*
12 July	Prokofiev completes short score of *Queen of Spades*
ca. July-Aug.	Production of *Queen of Spades* suspended

Other works: Incidental music for *Boris Godunov* (op. 70bis) and *Evgenii Onegin* (op. 71), *Romeo and Juliet Suites* (opp. 64bis, 64ter), *Russian Overture* (op. 72)

1937

5 March	Eisenstein's *Bezhin Meadow* censored
December	Production of *Queen of Spades* renewed

Other works: *Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of October* (op. 74), *Songs of Our Days* (op. 76)

1938

8 January	Shumiatskii arrested
February	KDK created, Semyon Dukel'skii is chair
Feb.-March	Prokofiev visits Hollywood
ca. March	*Queen of Spades* cancelled
5 June	Filming of *Aleksandr Nevskii* begins
20 June	Contract for *Aleksandr Nevskii*
1 December	General release of *Aleksandr Nevskii*

Other works: First Cello Concerto (op. 58)

1939

30 July	Prokofiev declines *Fergana Canal* project

Other works: *Semyon Kotko* (op. 81) and *Zdravitsa* (op. 85)

1941

January	Zhdanov delivers order for *Ivan the Terrible* to Eisenstein
Late May	Contract for *Lermontov*
22 June	Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union
8 August	Prokofiev evacuated to Nal'chik
8 October	Planned completion date of *Lermontov*.
14 October	Mosfilm evacuated to Alma-Ata
late Nov.	Prokofiev moves to Tbilisi

Other works: Second String Quartet (op. 92), *The Year 1941* (op. 90)

1942

24 Feb	Updated script for *Lermontov* completed
March	Filming begins again for *Lermontov*
29 March	Prokofiev formally accepts invitation to move to Alma-Ata
29 May	Prokofiev leaves Tbilisi for Alma-Ata
Early June	Prokofiev meets Lugovskoi in Tashkent
Late June	Contract for *Ivan the Terrible*
14 July	Eisenstein finishes thematic outline for *Ivan the Terrible*
3 Aug	*Tonia* contract
10 Aug	Piano score for *Tonia* due
20 Aug	Contract for *Kotovskii*
10 Sept.	*Kotovskii* piano score due
12 Nov	*Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe* contract
17 Nov	Prokofiev quits work on *Lermontov*
27 Nov	Prokofiev departs Alma-Ata
Early Dec	Prokofiev in Semipalatinsk working on *Partisans*
31 Dec	Prokofiev arrives in Moscow

Other works: *War and Peace* (first version, op. 91), Seventh Piano Sonata (op. 83)

1943

January	Prokofiev returns to Alma-Ata
6 January	General release of *Kotovskii*
2 March	General release of *Partisans in the Ukrainian Steppe*
April	Filming of *Ivan the Terrible* begins
July	Prokofiev leaves Alma-Ata for Molotov
6 July	General release of *Lermontov*
28 July	Prokofiev sees *Lermontov*

Other works: *Cinderella* (op. 87), Flute Sonata (op. 94)

1944

ca. January	*Ivan the Terrible* divided into three parts
July	Eisenstein returns to Moscow and begins editing Part I of *Ivan*
September	Majority of music for *Ivan the Terrible* composed

Other works: Fifth Symphony (op. 100), Eighth Piano Sonata (op. 84), Second Violin Sonata (op. 94bis)

1945

16 January	General release of Part I of *Ivan the Terrible*
September	Popov considered for Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*
Late fall	Prokofiev completes music for Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*

1946

February	Part I of *Ivan the Terrible* awarded Stalin Prize
2 February	Eisenstein suffers first heart attack
7 February	Stalin screens Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*
5 March	Part II of *Ivan the Terrible* prohibited

Other works: *Betrothal in a Monastery* (op. 86)

1947

25 February	Eisenstein meets with Stalin about Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*

Other works: Ninth Piano Sonata (op. 103), Sixth Symphony (op. 111)

1948

10 February	Eisenstein suffers second heart attack and dies
11 February	"On the Opera *The Great Friendship*" appears in newspapers

Other works: *Story of a Real Man* (op. 117)

1953

5 March	Prokofiev dies; Stalin dies

1958

1 September	General release of Part II of *Ivan the Terrible*

APPENDIX IV: *Aleksandr Nevskii*: Song Texts; Dates of Premieres

Lugovskoi's Song Texts

Pesnia o Aleksandre Nevskom (Song About Aleksandr Nevskii)

А и было дело на Неве реке на неве реке, на большой воде. Там рубили мы злое воинство злое воинство, войско шведское.	Yes, it was on the Neva River on the Neva River, on the wide waters. There we slew the evil fighting men the evil fighting men, the Swedish army.
Ух! Как бились мы, как рубились мы!	Ah! How we fought, how we slew the foe!
Ух! Рубили корабли по досточкам! Нашу кровь руду не жалели мы за великую землю русскую.	Ah! We crushed their ships to kindling! Our blood we did not spare for the great Russian land.
Не уступим мы землю русскую. Кто придет на Русь, будет на смерть бит! Поднялася Русь, супротив врага, поднимись на бой, славный Новгород!	We will never yield Russian soil. He who invades Russia will meet death! Arise Russia, against the enemy, rise to the battle, great Novgorod!

Vstavaite, liudi russkie (Arise, Russian People)

Вставайте, люди русские на славный бой, на смертный бой; вставайте, люди вольные, за нашу землю честную!	Arise, Russian people to the glorious battle, to the mortal battle Arise, free people for our honored soil!
Живым бойцам почет и честь, а мертвым слава вечная! За отчий дом, за русский краи вставайте, люди русские!	To living warriors honor and respect, and to the slain eternal glory! For native home, for the Russian land, Arise, Russian people!
На Руси родной, на Руси большой не бывать врагу. Поднимайся, встань, мать родная Русь!	In our native Russia, in great Russia the enemy never will be. Arise, to your feet, native mother Russia!

Otzovites' iasny sokoly (Olga's Lament)

Кто лежит мечами порубленный Кто лежит стрелоую пораненный Напоили они кровю алою Землю честную, землю русскую.	Who lays hacked by swords, Who lays wounded by arrows Their crimson blood waters honest land, Russian land.

Кто погиб за Русь смертую добрую
поцелую того в очи мертвые
А тому молодцу, что остался жить,
буду верной женой, милой лодою.

Не возму в мужя красивого:
красота замная кончается.
А пойду я за храброго,
Отзовитесь, ясны соколы!

[Не богатством славны мы,*
Не родом.
Славны мужеством–и так тому и быть

Не ходи за светлого,
Не ходи за темного
А люби ты храброго. Спаси его господь.]

Who dies a noble death for Rus'
I shall kiss his dead eyes
and to the young ones who remain alive,
I shall be a true wife, a kind beloved.

I shall not take a handsome husband:
earthly beauty ends.
But I shall go to a brave one,
Hear this, brave falcons!

[We are not renowned with riches
Not by birth.
We are rich with courage—and it shall always be so
Do not go to a light-haired one
Do not got to a dark-haired on
But love one who is brave. Lord save him.]

*This verse is present in Prokofiev's cue sheet, but was not used in the film.

Premieres of *Aleksandr Nevskii* in the U.S.S.R.

Prokofiev's list of dates (1938) and locations of the premieres of *Aleksandr Nevskii* in the Soviet Union

[NB: This list is Prokofiev's own effort, and is not exhaustive. Source: "Svedeniia (nepolnye) o datakh i gorodakh demonstratsii fil'ma 'Aleksandr Nevskii'," unpublished, RGALI, f. 1929, op. 2, ed. khr. 110]

December 1: Moscow (16 theaters)

December 3: Leningrad (14 theaters), Minsk (7 theaters), Kiev, Pskov

December 3-10: Cites of the Moscow region: Kalinin, Tula, Serpukhov, Kolomna, etc.

December 9: Cities of the Novosibirsk region

December 10-12: Cities of the Donbass region

December 13: Tbilisi (4 theaters), Kharkov, Alma-Ata, Murmansk, Iaroslavl, Voroshchilovgrad, Voskresensk, Kashira, Dmitrov, Smolensk

December 14: Petrozavodsk, Rybinsk

December 15: Tashkent, Erevan, Stalinabad

December 17: Rostov-on-the-Don (4 theaters), Ordzhonikidze

December 18: Orenburg, Voronezh

December 19: Dnepropetrovsk (5 theaters), Staingrad, Yalta, Sochi, Gorky

December 20: Sverdlovsk, Omsk, Kazan, Arkhangelsk, Kirov, Kaluga

December 21: Ashkhabad, Saratov, Kuibyshev, Piatigorsk, Stalinogorsk, Cheliabinsk

December 22: Groznyi, Krasnoiarsk

December 23: Frunze, Barnaul

December 24: Tamboz

December 25: Vologda, Ufa, Perm

APPENDIX V: Musical Plans for *Lermontov*

First plan, dated 23 May 1942

[Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 101, l. 3.]

1. Opening until shot 16: Select music from "Fenella," orchestra and choir.[9] 164 meters.
2. Shots 28-36 (inclusive): Music from "Fenella," characterizing the dramatic sense of the film. 32 meters.
3. Shots 37-44 (inclusive): Pushkin's death theme: a series of chords with pauses, as if [the news] was incomprehensible (*podlozhno*). 57 meters, but the piece should be 70-75 meters' worth. Music for shot 45 is same as that for [shot] 37.
4. Shots 55-64 (inclusive): Clock chimes and music. Not clear how to combine the two, clarify with the director, 50 meters.
5. Shots 65-70 (inclusive): Song of the Coachman, director will confirm the exact length.
6. Shots 85-90 (inclusive): A piece [from] "Fenella", small orchestra. 32 meters.
7. Shots 103-107 (inclusive): Lermontov's gallop, 39 meters.
8. Shots 121-126 (inclusive): Ball. Waltz *svetskii* (not [Waltz] "of Youth," for Lermontov will be bored), 67 meters.
9. Shots 129-137: Polonaise.
10. Shot 139, etc.: Repeat No. 6.
11. Shots 151-169 (inclusive): "Mephisto" Waltz, 81 meters.
12. Shots 170-177 (inclusive): The waltz switches to a quadrille, 50 meters.
13. Shot 222 and others: Music of Nicholas I's Petersburg, a few pieces.
14. Shots 259-270: Heartfelt soldier's song about Russia. Use an old song (for choir). "Ne bel'ye snegi" ["There is no white snow"], "V stepi mnogo dorog prolegalo" ["In the steppe lay many paths"]. Look for a collection of songs, published for VKK; there is a collection with a section of old songs. 92 meters, but the song is shorter, so at some point there will be a repetition.
15. Shots 284-300 (inclusive): Park in Piatigorsk: Waltz *svetskii*, played by string orchestra. 106 meters.
16. Shots 334-338 (inclusive). The mental conditon of Lermontov before the duel. Not tragic, but more life-affirming (*zhizneutvrzhadiushchee*), more cheerful. Details are in the scenario.

[9] Fenella is the mute heroine in Daniel-François-Esprit Auber's opera *La muette de Portici* (1828).

17. Shot 344 and further: Write four pieces, drawing from Pushkin's death music, developed, [and] with pauses, so that the director can use them as he wishes.
18. Shot 360: Death of Lermontov, possibly with choir. 10 meters.
19. Shot 367: herd of horses, until [shot] 376, 20 meters. See No. 7, but in a different version.
20. Shot 377 to the end: The tempest comes to pass, the poet remains alive for all time; analogy with No. 16.

Second plan, without date

[Source: RGALI, f. 1929, op. 1, ed. khr. 101, l. 2.]

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1. Overture: symphonic piece.
2. First Ball: Polonaise, "Waltz of Youth," Quadrille.
3. Shots 37-44: The death of Pushkin. 90 meters. Symphonic piece.
4. Shots 55-64 (inclusive): Music and bells. Organic required. One piece. 50 meters.
5. Shots 65-70 (inclusive): "Song of the Coachman." 45 meters, duration of the song may be longer.
6. Shots 86-90 (inclusive): "Waltz of Youth," 32 meters.
7. Shots 103-07: Lermontov's Gallop. 39 meters.
8. Shots 121-126 (inclusive): Waltz. 67 meters.
9. Shots 129-136: Polonaise.
10. Shot 139: Waltz of Youth.
11. Shots 151-169 (inclusive): "Mephisto" Waltz.
12. Shots 170-177 (inclusive): Waltz. 50 meters.
13. Shot 222 and others: Music of Nicholas I's Petersburg.
14. Shots 259-270 (inclusive): Heartfelt soldier's song of Russia.
15. Shots 284-300 (inclusive): Park in Piatigorsk. "Waltz of Youth" (string orchestra).
16. Shots 334-338 (inclusive): Music that characterizes the mental condition of Lermontov before the duel-not tragic, but life-affirming. Cheerful (women's choir).
17. Shot 344 to end: Duel. One symphonic piece. Beginning at shot 360 the choir joins the orchestra.

APPENDIX VI: Excerpts from Nikolai Kriukov's Speech (1945)

An evaluation of Soviet film music composed during 1944, delivered during the conference "A Summary of Soviet Art Cinematography in 1944" ("Itogi raboty sovetskoi khudozhestvennoi kinematografii za 1944 g."), 13-15 February 1945, Dom Kino (Moscow).

[Source: RGALI, f. 2923, op. 1, ed. khr. 140, partially published in V. Fomin, ed. *Kino na voine*: *Dokumenty i svidetel'stva* (Moscow: Materik, 2005), 715-718.]

I agree with Comrade Pyr'ev[10] that 1944 was a year of growth for Soviet cinematography. In all areas of film we marked numerous significant and important accomplishments, many of which are found in the work of film-music composers.

I want to highlight several issues concerning Soviet film music that have left their mark on music in films produced in 1944 and [then] draw a few general conclusions.

What is needed so that music sounds clearly and significantly in a film? Brilliant, clear, and skillfully written music with clear cinematic function are the most crucial factors. Unfortunately, there is little of this. […] Our composer works as if in a fairy tale. Usually he is like a mythical epic hero (*bogatyr'*) who has to overcome a series of challenges, chopping off the heads of dragons and monsters. After the composer writes good music, he clashes with the scenario. Music in a film will fail if the scenario does not take into consideration its place and use—even if the music is composed by a Chaikovsky.

The director is the second dragon that confronts the composer. A film's music will fail if the director does not comprehend it and know how to use it.

Recording, moreover, needs to be understood as a technical process. The composer builds a theme, develops it, finds a manner of expression, orchestrates. He painstakingly thinks over timbres—flute or oboe. He creates his score. In concert there is a live

[10] Ivan Pyr'ev (1901-1968), Soviet film director.

orchestral performance. In producing a film, the performance also includes recording. If the work sounds clearly and marvelously on tape, it means that the sound technician is the composer's true artistic partner. A film's music will fail if the sound technician does not comprehend it, if he fails to grasp the whole essence of a score. […] If the music wheezes and groans it will not elicit any emotions. And there are further dragons: editing and rerecording. […]

I want to address several of the most illuminating works of 1944. Of great interest is the brilliant musical *At Six in the Evening After the War* (*V 6 chasov vechera posle voiny*).[11] […] There are many songs of different genres in it—music of varying styles and forms. How [did I] manage with this composer [Tikhon Khrennikov]?[12] It is undeniably a talented and brilliant work.

I could analyze individual methods and episodes in more detail, but I do not have enough time, therefore I ask for forgiveness if I am a bit vague.

[There is something] that I wish for Khrennikov in his outstanding collaboration with Pyr'ev. Take, [for example], a symphony: in it there is a large quantity of themes and moods, but every symphony is united by its style. Our composers need to understand that the demands of the symphony and those of film music are the same. But in our film musicals there is not this unified style, a unified breathing of the entire musical complex. If we take, say, the song "A my s devchatami" ("The girls and I") and symphonic music [evoking] a battle, then we see that these are different musics, lying in different stylistic spheres.

I hope that Khrennikov will conceive of future works more broadly. He writes brilliantly for [individual] episodes, but he does not always achieve a general stylistic unity.

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[11] Ivan Pyrev [Pyr'ev] produced the film at Mosfilm in 1944; it premiered on 16 November 1944.

[12] Kriukov appears to have served as a consultant for the film's music.

The director's work in relation to music in *At Six in the Evening After the War* is splendid. Pyr'ev's musical instructions guide the music with precise meterages [timings], details of the production, and artistic strategies. And this finds realization in the film, in which music works with percussive force.

I hope that in future work, director Pyr'ev will foresee the structure and the construction of a film's music even more deeply, for in the film *At Six in the Evening After the War* the percussive strength of the musical themes are compromised at times. Culminating musical episodes follow one after another, weakening the impact of [each] episode. It is necessary to build and to arrange the musical construction of the film so that there are abatements and intensifications leading to a culmination. This is my simple wish for the authors of this splendid musical film.

I want to address another remarkable collaboration of great masters of modern art: Prokofiev and Eisenstein on the film *Ivan the Terrible*. Both are consummate Soviet artists who stand at the forefront of our era's art. I don't want to talk about the liturgical music in *Ivan the Terrible*—it is splendid in itself; it fits wonderfully in the film and is well performed.

I would like to speak about the artistic side of the work of Prokofiev and Eisenstein. As always, Prokofiev's work is splendid in its mastery and exceptional originality. There is not another contemporary composer who is as striking and individual. You will never confuse Prokofiev with another. It is his distinctiveness that finds its expression in the splendid, brilliant, intense and profound music in the film *Ivan the Terrible*. An especially remarkable trait of his music for this film is, I feel, the exceptionally modern instrumentation and its crystal transparency. It is interesting to compare Prokofiev's orchestration with [Aram] Khachaturian's in *Person No. 217* (*Chelovek No. 217*)[13], where there is the opposite: thick orchestral textures. In *Ivan the Terrible* [the orchestration] is

[13] Kriukov, on the staff at Mosfilm, was able to observe the production of this film; his discussion here predates the general release (9 April 1945) by nearly two months. Mosfilm and Tashkent Studios, 1944; directed by Mikhail Romm; the composer was Aram Khachaturian.

reduced to a minimum of means, yet it exerts stronger influence. Prokofiev's score is unusually cinematographic and suited to recording. This offers the possibility to reproduce all the details of his score on tape.

What gives me the most dissatisfaction is the dramaturgical function of music in the film. In the course of the film, music accompanies only in the background. For instance, in the scene "The sick Ivan and the Boyars"—where music could have revealed Ivan's psychological condition with great descriptive power—the music sounds incidentally, almost not interacting with the unfolding events at all. In the course of the film it remains only an accompaniment. I am very sorry that in this superb film music sounds below its potential, influencing less than possible. If we compare to [*Aleksandr*] *Nevskii*, I feel that *Ivan the Terrible*, apart from Prokofiev's wonderful music, is colder, more indifferent, and the reason for this is the weak dramatic function of music in the film.

This film was recorded well, in my opinion, but not superbly, because complete clarity of all parts—and for this Prokofiev gave every effort—is nevertheless absent.

Khachaturian's music is hugely successful in [his] collaboration with M[ikhail] I. Romm in the film *Person No. 217*. Here the composer's language completely destroys the common conception that music in film must be simple. They say: "you know, the masses will not understand," [or] "in film one can't do difficult things," etc. Khachaturian composed extremely complex music [for] this film. Inflections (*intonatsii*), melodies, harmonies—it is [all] very difficult. Instrumental timbres are used in completely unexpected [ways]. The vibraphone, a jazz instrument, is used as a funeral bell in "Klava's death." The saxophone, to which [we] are accustomed as a vaudeville instrument, sounds as a human voice, relating important feelings and thoughts. The harp is superbly used. But on the whole, the manner of execution of Khachaturian's music is all a bit too complicated. Notwithstanding Minervin's wonderful recording, not all of the details are captured.

The director's work with music in *Person No. 217*, I feel, is outstanding. Khachaturian composed consummate, clear, and well-written music; it was his good fortune to find the director an obliging sprite rather than a dragon.

Music in *Person No. 217* is assigned an important and serious role. The scenario allowed for this, for music arises in places of culmination, in places of significance to the dramaturgy and to the plot. The music does not sound as an accompanying background—it has a consequential and major function [in the film]—a sympathetic place was found for it.

[…] I feel that *Invasion* (*Nashestvie*)[14] is a wonderful work of A[bram] Room, but I consider it defective apropos music. The music is expressive and of good quality, but not sufficiently clear. Music does not find a place in the film. There is a lot of music, but not a single episode where music sounds freely, not a single episode where music speaks with its full power. Its single task is to accompany the action, to illustrate it. This is unfortunate, as the film is magnificently done in all details except the director's work on music.

The film *Ivan Nikulin, Russian Sailor* (*Ivan Nikulin, russkii matros*)[15] calls for special examination. Music sounds from beginning to end, it sounds in the background and at moments emerges with significant force. In his introductory words, the chair I[van] A. Pyr'ev gave this detail little attention.[16] […]

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[14] The composer was Iurii Biriukov. The film was produced at TsOKS under the direction of Abram Room, premiering 22 February 1945.

[15] Mosfilm, 1944; directed by Igor Savchenko; score by Sergei Pototskii.

[16] In his opening comments, Pyrev had offered three sentences on music: "About the music. In 1944 there are many interesting works of our composers. The best of these works are by [A.] Khachaturian, S. Prokofiev, N. Kriukov, and T. Krennikov."

APPENDIX VII: From Eisenstein's Notes on the Music for *Ivan the Terrible*

Ivan the Terrible (Temnik); Alma-Ata, 14 July 1942
[Underlining and numbering duplicates Eisenstein's. Source: RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, ll. 121-27.]

Part One

1. "A Thunderstorm Approaches" – The Principal Theme of Ivan the Terrible
   Depicts an approaching thunderstorm
   a. In the "Overture": this theme emerges from a chaos of voices and sounds. {at the words "A black cloud appeared"}
   b. Ivan's entrance to receive the ambassadors {the boy Ivan}
   c. End of the scene at Anastasia's coffin.
   Finale of the first part.

2. "Ocean-Sea"
   A song with text.
   A hit that everyone can sing.
   a. The nanny sings to the young Ivan.
   b. It is heard during Ivan's speech in the Uspenskii Cathedral – dolefully.
   c. Kurbskii is sent on a campaign against Livonia {After the scene of Ivan's illness}
   d. Second Part (worked into the Oprichniki's Dance)
   e. Campaign against Livonia (galloping cavalry, the ride to the ocean, the ocean at the feet of Tsar Ivan).

3. The Kazan Song
   {"Forge iron cannons, gunners"}
   A hit that everyone can sing
   a. Preparations for Kazan – 2 stanzas
      then interwoven with the stanzas of Foma and Erema / the third stanza orchestra.
   b. Night and dawn {lyrical climax: blessing of the soldiers}
   c. Warlike song – assault. Ensemble with Foma and Erema (Kurbskii rushes away).

4. The Oprichniki Oath
    a. As a song in the Oprichniki Order
    b. As a quasi-recitative – at the death of Vladimir Andreevich
    c. Dancingly – while Staden whistles
    d. In the scene with Basmanov and his son – in the background. Fedor whispers.

5. The Fiery Furnace
   The Song of the Boys.
   End of the scene: Filipp is persecuted {the boys' music leads up to it}

6. Song about the Beaver
   A very ominous lullaby.

7. Silent Campaign
   (The skiers glide silently over the snow. The pursuit accelerates.)

Uproar in the Uspenskii Cathedral
Combination of bells, joyful songs, the murmur of the crowd, cries in various languages.

Candle near Kazan
Girls and Kurbskii
Ivan's Assault and Kazan Glory
{fanfares etc.} {"The Lithuanians are coming!" in Part II}
Jesters.
"Rule Britannia!" Elizabeth's little ship.
Scene at Anastasia's Coffin.
Psalm and Maliuta's reports.
In the finale of the scene and this part of the film the Ivan theme *ne plus ultra*.

"Arrest him!" spoken with a "Japanese" accent.

Bell during Ivan's illness.

Choral music as Ivan receives the last sacraments.

Part Two

a. "Goida! Goida!"
First appearance of the galloping Oprichniki. Theme of the oprichniki (perhaps a derivative of Ivan's theme, perhaps an independent theme of "The Oath of the Oprichniki").
b. Beginning of executions and snowstorm.
c. Banquet in the Aleksandrova suburb (with Vladimir). "Goida goida!" – in the couplets and the dance.
Before this as a reprise of the banquet of the Oprichniki.
Sound of bell to prayer.

"With all the saints"

a. Ivan's confession
b. Filipp's Chapel (Filipp over the corpses)
c. Ironic events "With all the saints" (funeral banquet in the Aleksandrova suburb – before the death of dear Fedor). / The same briefly and tragically at Fedor's death.
"Dirge" – dance ritornello to "With all the saints"

"The Ballad of Red-Haired Bess"

{Distribution by cues} / Song. A bit of music between the couplets. Fade.

"Place of Execution" (*Lobnoe mesto*)

As background to Ivan's speech from the place of execution: "Judge, people…" etc.
Explosion to the words "Be terrible!"

Storming of the Castle of Weißenstein and the Death of Atlanta-Maliuta

Assault – battering rams. / The dance of Weissenstein. / Maliuta's death. / Maliuta is carried along and battering-ram waves. / The waves lie down at Ivan's feet.

Music for Part I of *Ivan the Terrible* (without date, ca. late 1942 or early 1943)

[Source: RGALI, f. 1923, op. 1, ed. khr. 568, ll. 121-27.][17]

1. The Overture goes until the end of the episode "Glinskaia's death." The first part plays until Glinskaia's scream "I'm dying, they've poisoned me." From here voices and cries again go with the music.

2. Reception of the Ambassadors. Exit of the young Ivan to music—evidently, with a march—think of from where to take this theme. The music continues until Belskii's words "Great Muscovite Prince…" Music enters after Shuiskii's last phrase: "…the will of the great prince is law."

3. Ivan's palace. The introduction of "Ocean-Sea" begins with the first shot. Record an innocent old voice. The introduction is repeated twice: the first time as the boyars enter and quarrel, the second up front with the nanny herself. Music begins with the words "seize him"—Ivan's theme (a summoning voice), the character is a roar. In the silence, the steps of the keeper of the hounds. After the keeper of the hound's cue, music with Ivan's ascent (voices of Joan of Arc). At the end of the episode the bells enter—a little overwhelmingly.

4. The Tsar's Coronation. The signal bells of the coronation sound loudly until Pimen's words; at Pimen's words they move to the background and sound the entire time. With the conclusion of Pimen's words begins the "Kyrie Elesion," very resonant, sounding during the discussions of the foreigners. After the tsar's words, the ringing grows and the most solemn part of the liturgical singing occurs. [The singing] fades away with Pimen's phrases, but continues in the background the whole time. After Pimen's words "…for ever and ever"; "many years"; the diaconal proclamation from the beginning. Music at

[17] The notes are typed leaving a large right-hand margin for notes (although the copy preserved at RGALI has no annotations). Eisenstein's signature appears on the final page.

the golden rain,[18] […] the same theme as Anastasia's. "Many years" moves to its concluding phase […] Ivan's theme plays continuously during his speech (a distant drone). With the words "…and outside" the theme "Ocean-Sea" begins (without words). At the angry remarks of the foreigners after Ivan's speech panic in the music and bells to the end.

5. The Wedding Feast. The music at the wedding feast has two themes: 1) Rumble of revolt, 2) Wedding. The bell begins to sound and grows until Ivan's and Efrosinia's exchange. Treat the cries "bitterly" musically.[19] Chimes more freq[uent]. The revolt theme from the moment Efrosinia comes outside; the fire alarm (moves to the foreground, the wedding theme retreats to the background). At Kurbskii's return, the second part of the wedding music begins. During the discussion with Kolychev the revolt theme briefly grows. After Efrosinia's wave the psalteries begin and play [during] the swans. At the shouts of "glory" a song in the background. After the break-in, alarm breaks out: the music of the revolt bursts into the quarters. The revolt is [accompanied by] clean music—without cries—only until Maliuta's cry "to the tsar." "Drum drumming" until Ivan's words "you are talking about magic". And at Ivan's remark the Groznyi theme accompanies. On Ivan's word "cut" [there is] a sharp musical accent. After Efrosinia's orders and the admittance of the Tartar ambassadors the Tartar theme begins, eastern, Kazan-like. After the conclusion of the dialogue, after "end himself" Ivan's theme enters. The cries "to Kazan" accompany the music. Brass. Ivan's theme and the theme of the revolt. As Anastasia passes, so does the theme of "golden rain." [Following] the second drawn-out cry of Ivan: "to Kazan" switch to the song of Kazan ("Gore gor'koe").

6. Kazan. The song of Kazan plays. A squeaky wheel supplements (partially in the music, but a real squeak when the cannons enter the foreground). Beginning with the scene "[Ivan's] tent" the musical picture "Morning" begins, derived from motives of the

[18] Here Eisenstein refers to the moment during the coronation in which golden coins are poured out at the feet of the Tsar.

[19] "Bitter!" is commonly uttered at Russian weddings to prompt bride and groom to kiss.

Kazan Song. […] Then the theme broadens and moves to a mournful theme (the theme of the "golden rain" and Anastasia's [theme] [both] lie on the basis of [the theme of the] copper coins but sound sorrowfully. The Kazan Theme changes to the blessing of the troops. In the foreground the gunners (before the underground tunnel) the theme of the undermine begins (derive it from themes of the gunners). Music continues until Zharoz's[20] report. Before moving to the scene with the Tartar captives the Tartar Theme begins. After the remark "…look, son" music played on a Turkish drum begins, continuing as all the barrels are brought out and changing to the solemn Two Candles.[21] The musical picture "Two Candles." Ivan's wrath booms in the music. […] Trumpets and music of the onslaught—the attack of the Russian cavalry. The music sounds victorious beginning with the shot of Maliuta with a lump of earth. At the end of the episode [an] orchestra[l] finale, and at the very end interlaced with the sorrowful bell of extreme unction.

7. <u>Stairs with passages. Extreme unction. Fight about the oath.</u>

Sorrowful bells sound. After the cue "in the presence of the living Ivan" singing begins (in place of "My soul…."). "Mnogomilostivy gospodi" in the basses. At the response "come..." the bells are more solemn and deep. With the first scene after the bedchamber a distant sound concluding the services.[22] As Efrosinia and Kurbskii rise up the service ends, only a bell is left. After "slyshal," singing of the exiting procession. Efrosinia's procession. In the dramatic music [use] the theme of the boyar revolt, which sounds in the overture. Groznyi's [Ivan's] drums [sound] in the background, behind Anastasia's dialogue. Kurbskii to the meetinghouse [accompanied by] dramatic music. Ivan's dialogue with Anastasia and Maliuta after his exit on the theme "More sinee" [referring to "Ocean-Sea"], and from the moment "and our southern frontiers" change to Groznyi's [Ivan's] theme.

—In the Staritskii's chambers there is no music.—

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[20] It is unclear to which character this refers.

[21] "Two Candles" refers to a sequence that Eisenstein eventually cut from the film.

[22] Ivan receives the Orthodox sacrament of Last Rites.

8. Anastasia's Illness. Ivan close[s] his eyes (after Nepei's exit) and a distant [iteration of] Anastasia['s] [theme] beg[ins]. After Zharov's remark "Grief…" the theme of the riot.[23]

9. Anastasia's Coffin. "With all the saints" or "Creation song" sounds the whole time, very distant. A sharp musical accent after Fedor Basmanov's cue "true." Ivan's theme begins and music from this point continues without interruption to the end of the film. At the fleeing of the torch-bearers there is a strong accent and [then] Ivan's theme. And from the fort a terrifying transition to the oath. Ivan prostrates himself before Anastasia—a sobbing fall in the music.

10. Oath and religious procession. After the words "…mother of the damp earth" a distant choir begins to sound, "Spasi gospodi." Record anew the declamatory finale of the oath. Record "amen" to the music. A strong burst of singing with the opening of the doors. Singing at Ivan's exit. After Ivan pauses and then moves again, "Spasi gospodi" moves to the music. After the lowering of the icon voices intone "come back." Hearing a gallop in Ivan's theme is ideal after the cue "saddle the horses."

[23] Eisenstein's remarks here are especially cryptic. "Zharov" refers to Mikhail Zharov, the actor who played Maliuta. It is unclear to whom "Nepei" refers.

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