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| [Enter your biography] | | | |
| *Российская экономическая школа* [New Economic School, Moscow] | | | |

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| Battleship Potemkin |
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| *Battleship Potemkin* (Dir. Sergei Eisenstein; Moscow: Goskino, 1925) is the only completed film of what was planned as a series commemorating the 1905 Russian revolution. It depicts a mutiny on the eponymous vessel. Often named one of the best films of all time and one of the most powerful propaganda films ever made, *Battleship Potemkin* compellingly implements Eisenstein’s ‘montage of film attractions’ theory. According to Eisenstein an effective film should manifest as a designed series of emotional shocks generated by extra-narrative associations evoked in sequential cinematic images. These accumulative shocks, or ‘attractions’, should compel viewers to adopt a predetermined ideology. A frequently cited example of an ‘attraction’ in *Battleship Potemkin* — and the film’s most significant departure from history — is the scene on the ‘Odessa Stairs’, where tsarist forces massacre unarmed civilians who support the mutiny. |
| *Battleship Potemkin* (Dir. Sergei Eisenstein; Moscow: Goskino, 1925) is the only completed film of what was planned as a series commemorating the 1905 Russian revolution. It depicts a mutiny on the eponymous vessel. Often named one of the best films of all time and one of the most powerful propaganda films ever made, *Battleship Potemkin* compellingly implements Eisenstein’s ‘montage of film attractions’ theory. According to Eisenstein an effective film should manifest as a designed series of emotional shocks generated by extra-narrative associations evoked in sequential cinematic images. These accumulative shocks, or ‘attractions’, should compel viewers to adopt a predetermined ideology. A frequently cited example of an ‘attraction’ in *Battleship Potemkin* — and the film’s most significant departure from history — is the scene on the ‘Odessa Stairs’, where tsarist forces massacre unarmed civilians who support the mutiny.  The decision to make the Odessa Stairs sequence central and to exclude other portions of the script allowed Eisenstein to finish the film despite a short production schedule. Due to various delays, production had begun in August, 1925, and *Battleship Potemkin* premiered the following December, albeit without having undergone final editing. In 1926 Eisenstein released a more polished version, which no longer exists in full. Mosfilm offers a 1976 partial restoration with music by Dmitri Shostakovich. However, Kino International’s 2007 restoration, with Edmund Meisel’s original score, is the most thorough to date. |
| Further reading:  (Eisenstein)  (Eisenstein, The Montage of Film Attractions)  (Eisenstein, The Birth of a Film)  (Grace)  (Taylor) Paratextual Links & Materials: (In Pictures: Soviet posters of the silent screen)  (Lavinskiy)  (Battleship Potemkin) |