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CALL FOR CHAPTERS

***Metropolis* at 100: The Machine, the City, and the Human in the Age of AI**

Edited by
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Overview

Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis* (1927) imagined a fractured city of the year 2026—a vertical world in which a technocratic elite inhabits gleaming towers while an invisible workforce powers the machinery below. That future is now our present. As the film reaches its centenary, this edited volume invites scholars and practitioners to revisit its iconography—the Tower of Babel, the Maschinenmensch, the underground city, and the figure of the Mediator—as analytical lenses for twenty-first-century crises in technology, labor, governance, and culture.

The volume is situated at the intersection of film studies, critical theory, science and technology studies, political economy, and education. Contributions may be theoretical, empirical, or practice-based. We especially welcome interdisciplinary approaches and perspectives from the Global South.

Thematic Areas

Proposals should engage substantively with the film’s narrative, visual language, or production history. Submissions may fall within—but are not limited to—the following areas:

- **AI and Synthetic Humanity.** The “Maria” robot as a precursor to contemporary debates on artificial intelligence, algorithmic governance, deepfakes, and the ethics of autonomous systems. How does the Maschinenmensch prefigure the tensions between human agency and machine autonomy?



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- **Social and Economic Stratification.** The Upper City / Workers' City dichotomy as a framework for analyzing the modern wealth gap, platform capitalism, the gig economy, neocolonialism, and spatial segregation in global megacities.
- **Environmental and Industrial Realities.** Ecological readings of the “Moloch” machine sequence. Industrial metabolism, extractivism, and the sustainability of urban megastructures as extensions of the film’s logic of production without limits.
- **Feminism and Gender.** The construction of femininity and the “rebellious cyborg” in the dual Maria figure. The exclusion of women from technological power structures then and now; the gendered politics of reproduction, labor, and bodily autonomy.
- **Education and Pedagogy.** The “Mediator” figure (“The mediator between the head and the hands must be the heart”) in the age of cognitive outsourcing. What role does the heart—ethics, empathy, critical judgment—play in contemporary curricula and educational practice?
- **Cinematic Form and Global Legacy.** The film’s formal innovations: Expressionist mise-en-scène, the Schüfftan process, monumental scale, and the fusion of science fiction with social allegory. The influence of *Metropolis* on subsequent cinema, visual culture, and media across national traditions.
- **Technology, Power, and Political Order.** The accumulated power of technology not merely as sensory extension (McLuhan) but as a force that reorganizes social order. Surveillance, algorithmic control, platform monopolies, and authoritarian technopolitics as contemporary iterations of the film’s central anxieties about industrial capitalism and mass society.

Submission Guidelines

- **Proposals:** 500-word abstract plus a brief biographical note (institutional affiliation, research interests, and relevant publications).
- **Full chapters:** 5,000–7,000 words, inclusive of endnotes and references.
- **Citation style:** Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition (notes and bibliography).
- **Language:** English. Chapters originally written in Spanish may be considered if accompanied by an English-language abstract.
- **Submissions to:** riidh@ugto.mx



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Timeline

Phase 1: Call and Selection

- **June 1, 2026:** Launch of Call for Chapters. Distribution to academic networks, film studies departments, AI ethics forums, and Latin American studies associations.
- **July 15, 2026:** Proposal deadline.
- **July 31, 2026:** Notification of acceptance. Instructions for authors distributed (style guide, formatting, and word-count specifications).

Phase 2: Writing and Drafting (Summer–Autumn 2026)

- **August–October 2026:** Authors draft full chapters.
- **October 15, 2026:** Full chapter submissions due.
- **October 2026:** Formal book proposal submitted to publishers (table of contents and abstracts).

Phase 3: Editorial Review and Revisions (Winter 2026–2027)

- **November 2026:** Editorial review; feedback to authors.
- **December 31, 2026:** Revised chapters due.
- **January 2027:** Editors' introduction: framing essay connecting the 1927 film to the 2027 world.

Phase 4: Production (Spring 2027)

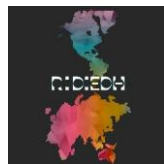
- **February 1, 2027:** Complete manuscript delivered to publisher.
- **February–April 2027:** Copyediting, typesetting, and galley proofs.
- **May 2027:** Indexing and final approval.

Phase 5: Launch and Centenary Promotion (Summer 2027)

- **June 2027:** Pre-order launch and marketing.
- **July 2027:** Official publication, timed to the centenary of *Metropolis*.



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Selected Bibliography

The following works provide foundational context for contributors. This list is indicative, not exhaustive.

Books and Monographs

Elsaesser, Thomas. *Metropolis*. BFI Film Classics, 2000.

Gunning, Tom. *The Films of Fritz Lang: Allegories of Vision and Modernity*. British Film Institute, 2000. See esp. the chapter on *Metropolis*, pp. 52–83.

Kaes, Anton. *Shell Shock Cinema: Weimar Culture and the Wounds of War*. Princeton University Press, 2009.

Minden, Michael, and Holger Bachmann, eds. *Fritz Lang's Metropolis: Cinematic Visions of Technology and Fear*. Camden House, 2000.

Articles and Essays

Huyssen, Andreas. “The Vamp and the Machine: Technology and Sexuality in Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*.” *New German Critique*, no. 24/25, 1981–82, pp. 221–37.

Dadoun, Roger. “Metropolis: Mother-City – ‘Mittler’ – Hitler.” *Camera Obscura*, vol. 5, no. 15, 1986, pp. 136–63.

Yancy, George. “The Darker Side of Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*: Coloniality in Modernist Cinema.” *Social Identities*, vol. 25, no. 5, 2019, pp. 559–73.

Csicsery-Ronay, Istvan. “The Futurological Congress: *Metropolis* and the United States.” Working paper, 2025.

For inquiries, contact the editors at riidh@ugto.mx

Proposals and manuscripts should be submitted as .docx or .pdf files via email.