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METROPOLIS : AN HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS.

by

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SUMMARY.

This thesis takes Fritz Lang's Metropolis as a case study for an historical and political analysis of film. It involves a detailed examination of the culture and society in which the film was made, and, it is argued, a political reading should be based primarily on such an analysis of the historical context of the film's production.

There are three main parts to this study. The first section deals with the production history of Metropolis, and includes the role played by its production company, Ufa, and the position of the indigenous film industry within a wider economic context. The post-production history of the film charts the various changes which have been made to the film since its initial release in January 1927. Archival documents have been used wherever possible, and in particular, the censorship card has been a valuable source of information about the original version of the film.

The second section attempts to locate Metropolis within the cultural context of the Weimar period, particularly in relation to Expressionism, an ongoing romantic tradition in Germany, and other influences such as Americanism, the city and technology. The response of the critics both at home and in the English-speaking market is assessed, as is the reaction of the audience at the première. The allegation by some post-war critics that Die Nibelungen and Metropolis reveal latent fascist tendencies is examined in detail, and is dismissed as being on balance

unjustified, given the case for a more plausible location of the film's politics along the broad spectrum of the Christian Centre/Social Democracy.

The final chapters, in which certain key themes have been taken as the basis for a political interpretation of the film, deal with the close analysis of the text itself. The method used in this section involves a continuous oscillation between the film itself and its historical context. Thus industry and class, revolution, the family/women/sexuality, and religion are each examined as they are represented in the text, and interpreted in light of their respective positions within Weimar culture and politics.

INTRODUCTION.

Metropolis was first released on 10th January 1927 at the Ufa-Palast am Zoo in Berlin. Since then, it has been the focus of attention of a wide variety of commentators on cinema, whose analytical methods are as diverse as the history of film criticism itself. The net result of this body of work has been the inscription of the film within a number of categories, which may be summarized as "A Fritz Lang film", "Expressionism", "Silent Classic", "Science Fiction film", and "Representative of German Cinema".

Indeed each description has a varying degree of truth about it, and there are critiques which do not classify the film strictly according to these categories. Yet it remains the case that often the acceptance of one or other of these labels as the main framework for an analysis of Metropolis has resulted in the loss of any sense of contradiction within the film. Similarly, little account has been taken of the film as an economic unit, as a product of the German film industry at a particular stage in its development.

Of the studies of Metropolis which involve a detailed analysis of the text, the vast majority fall within the boundaries of auteurism. This method locates Metropolis within Lang's work as a whole, identifying the themes, techniques and stylistic features common to each of his films, and incorporating a considerable amount of biographical detail. (1) Lang's alleged

preoccupation with Fate tends to play a pivotal role in the auteurs' interpretation of his films, particularly in the case of Julian Petley's thesis on Lang.(2) Within this category of criticism there is often a split resulting from directly opposing evaluations of Lang's early German and American periods. On the one hand, Noël Burch and Gavin Lambert regard most of his American films as greatly inferior to those he made during the Weimar Republic, while Peter Bogdanovich, Robin Wood, and the French critics writing for Cahiers du Cinéma in the 1950's reverse the equation, stressing the importance of the films produced under the Hollywood studio system.(3) A departure from the standard auteur format is evident in Stephen Jenkins' Fritz Lang: the Image and the Look, which deals with Lang's oeuvre, but counters traditional auteur theory with a mixture of psychoanalysis and structuralism.(4)

In spite of attempts in the past two decades to shift the emphasis onto the text itself, and its relationship to the viewer or reader, most film and literary criticism continues to attach overwhelming importance to the personality of the author. Roland Barthes' call for the 'death of the author' is a polemical response which leads not only to the exclusion of the personality of the author, but also to the elimination of all external factors in the analysis of a given text. What matters is not who creates what in a particular social and political context, but instead, the structural relations between individual units in an ahistorical text. Barthes' methodology, along with that of other structuralists and semioticians, has produced a rich and eclectic

body of cultural criticism, yet the application of these theories has in some instances been less than useful.

An example of the structuralist approach being applied to film criticism in an unsatisfactory way can be found in Alan Williams' article "Structures of Narrativity in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*", which has as its theoretical basis Greimas' system of narrative analysis, described by Williams as 'a mathematical-logical model'. (5) Despite the algebraic equations and the claim to be scientific, Williams does not objectively describe the deep structures as he purports to, but makes numerous subjective evaluations about the narrative and characters in the film. What is even more difficult to accept, as Bill Nichols points out, is that

"The phenomena of Hitler, Nazism, Weimar Germany, German Expressionism, even the words 'German' and 'Germany' do not appear at all or only in passing." (6)

In spite of the shortcomings of Williams' analysis of Metropolis, the incorporation of structuralist and semiotic methods into film theory represents a worthwhile attempt to establish a rather more scientific basis than has hitherto prevailed in film criticism, which relies all too often on value judgements and notions of 'good taste'. The problems inherent in the structuralist/semiotic approach to film are, however, considerable, stemming primarily from its roots in linguistic theory. As Ronald Abramson has pointed out,

"The fundamental issue at stake is the adequacy of a linguistic model for cinematic discourse." (7)

And the elimination, not only of the author, but also of any factors external to the text itself, can result in the creation of an idealized construct existing in a theoretical vacuum, 'The Text', unaffected by history, politics or economics.

A more interesting analytical method can be found in John Tulloch's article "Genetic Structuralism and the Cinema: A Look at Fritz Lang's Metropolis" (8), which, as the title indicates, is an attempt to apply Lucien Goldmann's theory of genetic structuralism to film criticism. Goldmann's theory differs from other linguistic-based structuralisms by incorporating an analysis of the wider social and economic context in which any given work is produced. Tulloch neatly sums up the essence of Goldmann's approach as follows:-

"His whole theory posits a functional relationship between the structure of the work and the wider social structure which determines it." (9)

Before we are allowed to be disturbed by the use of the word 'determines', Tulloch goes on to explain that Goldmann is not proposing a crudely reductionist model, as he believes that "great works of art ..act back upon their context in a significant way". Nevertheless, we should be wary of Goldmann's tendency to focus on 'great works of art', a notion which has justifiably been called into question by new critical methods like structuralism.

Each of the approaches described above, whether auteur theory, linguistic-based or genetic structuralism, occupies a political position by virtue of its theoretical basis. Thus, the

method adopted by a film critic reveals as much about the politics of the critic as about the film/s being analyzed. The approach in this thesis will be a materialist one, primarily concerned with locating Metropolis in its historical context. The difficulties associated with such an approach are substantial, to say the least. It involves establishing the nature of the relationship between the film text itself and the society in which it was produced, without losing sight of the 'relative autonomy' of art. Having accepted, like Goldmann, that this relationship is a dialectical one, it then becomes virtually impossible to 'prove' objectively the precise influence of a filmic element on an historical event, and vice-versa.

It may be asked why such importance is attached to history in this analysis. A hard-line structuralist, after all, would have denied its relevance altogether, while an auteur critic might admit only as much historical detail as was biographically necessary. It seems essential, therefore, to begin an answer to this question from a very basic and self-evident premise. A film, like any other artistic object, is not an abstract phenomenon which exists outside and above society in an ethereal realm, but is a direct and tangible product of one or more human agents. With the various mythologies which have been created in the world of film, most notably in the 'star' system, it is still easily forgotten that on a more mundane level cinema is an industry, which is in turn part of a wider socio-economic context.

Film production involves the employment of workers who sell their labour (camerapersons, directors, electricians, etc), the

results of which are marketed and are then consumed by potentially millions of viewers. Obviously films cannot be totally equated with cans of baked beans, but they are commodities to the extent that they are located within a system of production, distribution and exhibition. Under capitalism, the commercial feature film industry is at the end of the day concerned with making a profit, even if it is not the main aim of some individuals within a system which is complex and often contradictory. There are instances of film companies financing films for prestige purposes, without any real hope of even covering costs, let alone making a profit. Yet, quite apart from the 'tax dodge' factor in any financial losses, the ultimate aim of creating a 'prestigious' image must be to boost the demand for the company's own subsequent films, or those of the national cinema to which the company belongs. In the case of a state-financed organization like the British Film Institute, the promotion of film culture cannot be reduced to purely economic concerns by any means. Within the mainstream film industry, however, there are few, if any, instances of altruistic motives or aesthetic concerns taking precedence over commercial interests.

As well as functioning within the economic system, film also stands in a direct relationship to the culture in which it is produced. It would be impossible to create a film which was not in some way influenced by both earlier and contemporary filmic practices, and by more general aesthetic developments. For no matter how original a film may seem in terms of form and

content, it has not appeared magically as a result of some conjuring trick, but has evolved by rejecting or incorporating aspects of other films, in however indirect and mediated a way.

Quite apart from the cultural and commercial considerations, there is the devastatingly simple fact that film can convey ideas to large numbers of people in a most enjoyable manner. As such, film has enormous potential as a vehicle for ideologies, a capacity which has been acknowledged in political systems of both right and left.

All films are political in the broad sense of the word, which is not to say that they are patent reflections of class society, or that film-makers are actively scheming to insert capitalist propaganda into feature films. It would be stretching a point to look for the Republican programme in Star Wars, for instance, which is quite different from asserting that the form and content of films are permeated with the influence of social history and aesthetic tradition at various levels.

Even if locating a film in its historical context is accepted as a valid approach, the objection could be raised that while this is a worthwhile method for studying groups of films (Expressionist films, French films during the Popular Front, etc) in a 'sociological' way, it would not be particularly relevant for an in-depth examination of one film. The point being made here, however, is that individual films are produced in a particular time and place under specific circumstances, all of which can help to explain why certain themes and forms occur in a given film.

Metropolis has been chosen as a case study because in many ways this film is pivotal: it has achieved the status in film circles of being a 'classic' by Fritz Lang; it was produced by Ufa, a company with a chequered history; it is a product of the contradictory phenomenon of Weimar culture, which includes the complex artistic movement of Expressionism; and it was made during a particularly turbulent period of German history, in the years which preceded the Nazis rise to power. This combination of factors makes Metropolis a particularly appropriate film for the type of materialist analysis used in this study.

The thesis is divided into three main sections. After an introduction which sets out the type of method used in this analysis, the first chapter deals with the production history of Metropolis, the second with the cultural context and criticism of the film, and Chapters 3 to 6 with the detailed analysis of the text. The first section on the production history of the film is a crucial one. It must be stressed that the information provided here is not presented merely as interesting background material, which is external to the reading of the film itself, and which could be omitted if need be. The analysis of Ufa, its location within the film industry and wider economic context, and the detailed examination of the production and post-production history of Metropolis are all integral to the film's ideological construction. The politics of the film are constituted within this historical context, that is to say, the political significance of Metropolis does not, and indeed cannot, derive solely from the visual structures internal to the text. The

micropolitics of the images cannot be interpreted without reference to the macropolitics of the broader historical background of art, industry and society.

In the case of Metropolis, considerable research was required in order to reconstruct an idea of the original version, as seen by audiences at the time of its initial release. This process was complicated by the fact that most of the footage which has been cut at various stages in the intervening years no longer exists. In addition, the original titling has suffered at the hands of translators and distributors. Tracing back this history of distortion and omission in order to reconstruct the shape and content of the original version has been central to this project, since an ignorance of these changes could easily lead to some unwarranted conclusions.

The second section locates Metropolis within the cultural context of the Weimar period, examining its relationship to the various aesthetic movements of the time and questioning the validity of the label 'Expressionist' to describe the film. The importance of wider cultural undercurrents at that time, such as Americanism, the city and technology, are also traced. It is in the light of this cultural context that the response of the contemporary critics should be seen. Their reaction to Metropolis helps in assessing the position of film as an art form at that time, as well as being a guide to contemporary tastes and to the general cultural climate. The extent to which commercial factors played a part in influencing the critics' response is also examined.

Complementary to the critics' response is the reaction of the average viewer, so for this reason an attempt has been made to gauge the response of the audiences. The result remains sketchy, however, since contemporary reviews were the only sources available for such information. Yet a political reading of the film should try to take the audience factor into account, for meaning is not produced in a vacuum, but at the point of reception - for the film to mean anything at all, it has to be seen by an audience. Since Metropolis was produced for audience consumption in 1927 in Germany (although export markets also played a role) it seems essential to reach an understanding of how the film was received then rather than now. The meaning of a film can change considerably depending on the time, place and circumstances of its reception. To take a recent example, Wajda's Man of Iron would have a different significance when shown in London before martial law in Poland in 1981 than if it were seen in Warsaw today. Likewise, an appreciation of the reception of Metropolis in 1927 may serve to dispel any tendency to 'read back' meaning into the film with the benefit of hindsight. This becomes particularly important in assessing the charge of latent fascism which has been levelled against Metropolis, an allegation serious and persistent enough to warrant closer scrutiny than it has received in the past.

The third section consists of the detailed analysis of the text, and is divided into the following chapters: industry and class; revolution; the family, women and sexuality; and religion. This constellation of themes and concepts which are to be found

in the film is by no means exhaustive, but in my opinion they form the basis for a political reading of Metropolis. In each case, I have tried to analyse the theme through a constant consideration of the historical context. The justification for this particular interpretation of the text relies on a continuous movement between Metropolis and the society in which and for which it was produced.

Appendix 1 lists the original German titles for Metropolis. Appendix 2 comprises three lists of titles from different versions of the film, details of which are given in the first section. Appendix 3 consists of stills of some of the sequences which do not appear in existing versions, reproduced by courtesy of the National Film Archive, and Appendix 4 contains copies of pages from an Ufa publicity pamphlet.

This research is based mainly on original documents which are located in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz and the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde in Frankfurt and its film archive section in Wiesbaden. My thanks are extended to the staff of both institutions for their assistance, in particular to Dr. Eberhard Spiess and Dorothea Gebauer. This research trip was financed by the Carnegie Trust and the Glasgow Educational Trust.

I would like to thank Enno Patalas of the Munich Filmmuseum for his advice regarding the missing sections of Metropolis, and Janet McBain of the Scottish Film Archive, who kindly put its viewing facilities at my disposal on a number of occasions. I am

also grateful to Derek Fogg (Department of German, University of Glasgow) for checking my translation of the original German titles.

CHAPTER 1.THE PRODUCTION HISTORY OF METROPOLIS1. The Economic/Industrial Context.

Before the outbreak of the First World War, the German film market was dominated by foreign films which were imported, mainly from France, but also from the USA, Italy and Denmark. The extent of foreign companies' operations in Germany at this time is indicated by the fact that in 1914, only 15% of feature films shown to German audiences had been produced by the indigenous industry.⁽¹⁾ The war, however, cut off access to the German market to all these foreign competitors with the exception of Denmark, which had remained neutral. The growing demand for light entertainment at home, together with the potential of the isolated markets of Central and Eastern Europe, provided the necessary stimulus for film production in Germany. Both the Imperial government and big business became increasingly interested in film as a vehicle for propaganda and as a source of revenue.

In 1916, a group of industrialists formed the Deutsche Lichtbild-Gesellschaft (Deulig), among whom were Alfred Hugenberg (a director of Krupp and media magnate), Hugo Stinnes (a powerful figure in German industry with interests in mining, electricity and transportation), and Ludwig Klitzsch (a director of Scherl-Verlag who also had connections with heavy industry). Deulig,

which primarily produced 'cultural' shorts rather than feature films, soon became quite a profitable concern. The following year saw the formation of the Bild-und Filmamt (BuFa) by the German High Command under the auspices of General Ludendorff, the purpose of which was to co-ordinate film propaganda for the war effort. The mutual interests of the state and private industry converged in December 1917 in the setting up of a new company, Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft (Ufa). (2)

After Germany's defeat in the war and the failure of the November Revolution in 1918, fears that the new Republic might mean the nationalization of the film industry proved to be unfounded. For it soon became obvious that the initial rhetoric of 'socialization' on the part of the Social Democratic government would come to nothing, and that the German film industry would remain safely under private ownership. As investors became aware of the enormous potential for profits in the film business, production began to flourish. By 1919, there were 245 production companies, as compared to 28 in 1913. (3) The opening up of the Allied markets from 1920 onwards provided further opportunities for expansion in both the production and distribution sectors of the industry, while at home cinemas experienced an unprecedented boom in the post-war years. The number of cinemas in Germany increased from 2,836 in 1918 to 3,731 in 1921, whereas France had only 2,400 and Britain 3,000. (4)

The period of rampant inflation which reached epidemic proportions by the end of 1923 provided ideal conditions for

short-term speculation. Foreign companies were at a disadvantage due to the soaring exchange rate in Germany, which left the home market open for the indigenous industry. More significantly, however, German films could be sold abroad at ridiculously low prices, so there was a mushrooming of hastily formed film companies which rushed to take full advantage of high returns from the export market. With the stabilization of the mark, only the most highly capitalized companies could survive, with the result that the majority of the new enterprises went to the wall. (5)

Many established companies indulged in massive expansion programmes during the inflationary period between 1921 and 1923, failing to anticipate the likely effects of currency reform and the consequent re-establishment of competition from abroad. Another factor which had receded into the background while the short-term profits of the inflation preoccupied the industry was the steady increase in production costs. The introduction of the Rentenmark in November 1923 caused an overnight reversal in the fortunes of the film industry: the profits to be made from the export market sank rapidly, while foreign competitors, particularly American companies, reasserted their position in Germany.

The years following the economic stabilization signalled a critical time for the German film industry. A report drawn up by SPIO (Spitzenorganisation der Deutschen Filmindustrie), the main professional body which represented all sectors of the industry, summarized the problems facing the industry and gave

recommendations as to what steps the state could take to alleviate the crisis. This report, entitled "*Film and Legislation: The Cultural, Political and Economic Significance of the German Film Industry, its Present Position and the State Means for its Preservation*" is undated, but would seem to have been compiled in the autumn or winter of 1925. (6) In arguing its case, SPIO gives a detailed insight into the dire state of the film industry in the mid-20s, and the report concludes by presenting three main demands to the government concerning (a) modifications in the censorship laws, (b) standardization and lowering of taxes, and (c) preservation of import quotas.

(a) Censorship.

After the proclamation of the Republic, censorship of film was abolished completely on 12th November 1918. The following year a series of erotic films, known as 'Aufklärungsfilme' because of their claims to be 'scientific' and 'enlightening', aroused the moral indignation of certain sectors of the population. Amidst the ripping of cinema screens and violent demonstrations came calls for state censorship, which was duly introduced in the Reichslichtspielgesetz of 12th May 1920. (7)

Films had to be submitted to one of two Film-Prüfstellen (boards of censors) based in Berlin and Munich, and permission from either board allowed a film to be shown anywhere in the Reich. Under Paragraph 4 of the Reichslichtspielgesetz, local authorities had the right to refuse permission for a particular film to be shown in their area, although this was apparently a rare occurrence. Perhaps the best known example of a local ban was

the case of Nathan der Weise (Manfred Noa, 1922) being withdrawn in Munich in 1923 after anti-Semitic demonstrations by Nazis. (8)

According to the 1920 law, permission for a film's exhibition could be withheld if the censors felt that the film could

"endanger the vital interests of the State, public order or morality; injure religious feelings; have a brutalizing or immoral effect; or endanger Germany's reputation or its relationship with foreign states." (9)

As Becker points out, the Nazi censorship law of 1934 gave nine grounds for banning films, six of which were taken directly from the Weimar Reichslichtspielgesetz. What the Nazis did, however, exclude from their legislation was a rather vague clause in Paragraph 1 of the 1920 law, which stipulated that permission could not be withheld purely for political, religious or ethical reasons. Despite the inherent ambiguity, this 'Tendenzklausel' enabled Soviet films to be passed during the Weimar period. France was harsher than Germany in this respect, as few Soviet films were shown there during the 1920s, and in 1928 a total ban was imposed. (10)

The SPIO report made it clear that the industry had more or less come to terms with the present form of censorship, but that it was firmly opposed to any further attempts to tighten controls on film exhibition. As it was, SPIO claimed, local censorship boards were undermining the main Film-Prüfstellen in Berlin and Munich by applying what amounted to arbitrary censorship according to individual taste. The industry was therefore calling

on the government to put an end to such regional variations and to give sole authority to the main censorship boards. It further demanded that the age limit for films given a 'Jugendverbot' certification should be lowered from 18 to 16 years. The practice of prohibiting certain categories of films to young people was fairly common, particularly in the period up until 1922, when 70-80% of all feature films were banned to the under 18 age group. (11) The 'Jugendverbot' system was relaxed in the second half of the decade, averaging out at 25-30% : to take 1926 as an example, 2,768 films were submitted, 2,098 were passed, 656 were given the 'Jugendverbot', and 14 were banned altogether. (12) Metropolis was one of the films which received the 'Jugendverbot' that year.

The fact that the film industry was lobbying the government to lower the age limit for 'Jugendverbot' films can scarcely be construed as a noble attempt to liberalize the law. A more obvious reason for this request lies in the economic motivation of large numbers of 16 to 18 year olds boosting audience figures. Likewise, the desire to put a stop to 'censorship on the basis of personal taste' was inspired by the risk to substantial investments on the part of production companies, to which a ban on a film could mean financial ruin.

(b) Taxes.

The second aspect of legislation which SPIO asked the government to look into as a matter of urgency was the various kinds of taxation on the film industry, the most crucial of which was the 'Lustbarkeitssteuer' (entertainment tax). The level of

this tax, which was paid on individual cinema tickets, varied according to which region the cinema happened to be in, but fell somewhere between 10 and 50%, the former being the statutory minimum and the latter the most frequent figure. The industry called on the government to introduce a standard fixed rate of 10% for all regions: its representations were moderately successful, since the level of entertainment tax dropped to about 15% by 1928. (13) Nevertheless, until 1st October 1926 the average rate remained as high as 25%, which put the German film industry at a considerable disadvantage compared to its American rivals. In the USA, the levels of taxation were much more favourable, as cinema tickets up to one dollar were tax-free and the rest were subject to a uniform tax of 10%.

As well as demanding a fixed rate, SPIO was also anxious that films which had been awarded 'predicate' labels should be exempt from the entertainment tax altogether. During the Weimar period, there were four categories of 'predicate', namely 'instructional', 'culturally valuable', 'popularly improving' and 'artistic', the last two of which were awarded to Metropolis. (14) The predicate labels were issued by examination boards in Berlin (the Zentralinstitut für Erziehung und Unterricht) and Munich (the Bayerische Lichtbildstelle), and such an award could mean substantial tax relief (up to 50% depending on the category) for the film in question.

(c) Import Quotas.

The first attempt on the part of a Weimar government to limit the importation of foreign films came on the 1st January 1921, when the Ministry of Economics ruled that imports should not exceed 15% of the total number of metres produced by the German industry in any one year. (15) Such measures were initially resisted by the Foreign Office, which argued that the boycott on German goods would only be overcome by allowing the Allies unrestricted access to German markets. Moreover, the film industry acknowledged the fact that it depended to a great extent on reciprocal exchange with other world markets. In spite of the 15% quota, which was proving to be ineffective, the number of foreign films being shown in Weimar cinemas was steadily increasing. According to SPIO, the proportion of imports had passed the 50% mark by 1924, and this was seen as a major threat to the indigenous film industry. The greatest danger was represented by American films, which began to flood the German market after the currency crisis had been regulated. The following figures give a good indication of this basic trend:

	<u>German films</u>	<u>Total foreign films</u>	<u>American films</u>
1923	253 (60.6%)	164	102 (24.5%)
1926	185 (38.2%)	302	216 (44.3%)

(16)

The problem was exacerbated by the fact that American films had very often covered their costs at home and could thus be 'dumped' at ridiculously low prices on the German market, still making a profit. To stem the tide, the government introduced the

Kontingentgesetz (quota law) at the beginning of 1925, replacing the 1921 regulation by a system whereby foreign distributors had to obtain a 'Kontingentschein' from a German production company, which qualified for such a permit when it had produced a new German film. (17) This law turned out to be as inadequate as the previous attempt to restrict imports, as it was circumvented in a number of ways: permits were forged and sold on the black market, and cheap German productions were rushed out so that a popular Hollywood film could be imported. Despite the loopholes, SPIO was firmly in favour of the new Kontingentgesetz, and concluded its report with an appeal to the government to preserve this form of import control. It is conceivable that without these measures, the German share of the home market would have fallen even lower than the average level of 40% in the mid-1920s. (18)

2. Ufa and the Production of Metropolis.

Ufa (Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft) was set up on 18th December 1917 by a combined investment on the part of the Imperial government and various financiers and industrialists. Of the 25 million marks which formed the capital stock of the new company, the government had directly provided 8 million: it was represented on the board of Ufa by the director of the Deutsche Bank, Emil Georg von Stauß. In March 1921, the government shares were taken over by this bank. From the beginning, the board of directors and the executive committee of Ufa had a distinctly conservative pedigree. As well as von Stauß, there were:-

Johannes Kiehl, also of the Deutsche Bank, the industrialist Robert Bosch, Prince Guidotto von Donnersmark representing Silesian heavy industry, Paul Mamroth of the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft (AEG), Dr. Wilhelm Cuno (the future Reichs Chancellor) representing the Hamburg-America Line, Carl Stimming of Norddeutsche Lloyd, and Herbert Gutmann of the Dresdener Bank. (19)

In the years following its inception, Ufa gradually strengthened its position in the industry through a steady programme of expansion in the production, distribution and exhibition branches. Among the companies to be absorbed by Ufa were Nordisk, Messter-Film, Union and May-Film, but the most important was undoubtedly Decla-Bioscop, which was taken over on 11th October 1921. The acquisition of Decla-Bioscop, the second

largest film company in Germany at that time, gave Ufa thirty more cinemas and the studios at Berlin-Babelsberg. (20)

Ufa was not the only company involved in a programme of expansion. Emelka, formerly known as 'Münchener Lichtspielkunst AG', was financed by a number of banks in Southern Germany, who raised Emelka's capital stock from 2 to 10 million marks, thus enabling the company to take control of smaller concerns in the distribution and exhibition sectors. (21)

It is important to remember that it was only the biggest production companies which had interests in other branches of the film industry. This became crucial after 1924, when heavy losses on the production side could only be balanced out by income from the other sectors, in particular from distribution. The trade paper, *Lichtbildbühne*, estimated that the ten largest production companies had suffered combined losses of about 122.5 million marks between 1924 and 1928. (22)

Monaco disputes the commonly-held assumption that Ufa was monopolistic, basing his argument on two sets of figures, namely that Ufa's share of the total feature film production was approximately 7% during the mid-20s, and that the combined total of cinemas owned by Ufa and Emelka amounted to less than 3%. (23) As far as production levels are concerned, 7% might seem a small figure, but certain other factors must be taken into consideration. Spiker points out that only 15-20% of all registered film companies were involved in the production of feature films, and of these, only 21 worked continuously between 1926 and 1929. (24) The vast majority of production companies

(75%) made between 1 and 5 films per year, while Ufa produced 12 in 1926 and 16 in 1928. (25) Neither does Monaco consider the importance of what type of films Ufa tended to make, that is, big budget prestige productions like Die Nibelungen and Metropolis aimed at the export market. Another significant factor was Ufa's considerable share of distribution on the home front, which averaged out at 17% for the period 1927-29. (26) On the question of Ufa's share of the exhibition sector, Monaco admits that "UFA owned Europe's largest chain of movie houses" (27) yet his insistence on the tiny percentage figure of 3% is once again misleading. For Ufa owned many first-run cinemas with large seating capacities in big cities, whereas most other cinemas in Germany were family concerns owned on an individual basis. The Ufa Annual Report for the year 1924/25 describes the refurbishment of the Ufa-Palast am Zoo in Berlin being modelled on first-run New York cinemas, and claims records at the box office of up to 9,000 per day. (28)

Like the rest of the film industry, Ufa profited from the favourable economic situation which had, paradoxically enough, been caused by the inflation: by 1925 Ufa had a virtual monopoly of the export market. Yet its powerful position within the industry did not prevent Ufa from getting into severe financial difficulties by the end of 1925. With debts amounting to over 50 million marks, which exceeded its capital stock of 45 million, the company tried in vain to get financial help from both central government and industry. Finally, Ufa had little choice but to conclude the 'Parufamet' agreement.

It was rather ironic that at a time when the United States was regarded as the arch rival of the German film industry, Ufa should find it necessary to enter into an agreement with two of the biggest American corporations, Paramount (which distributed Famous Players Lasky films) and Metro-Goldwyn Pictures. Several other German companies came to similar arrangements with US competitors after the Ufa deal, such as Terra/Universal, Phoebus/MGM, and Rex-Film AG/United Artists. (29) The injection of American capital into the German film industry was consistent with developments in the rest of the economy: the Dawes Plan of 1924 provided 110 million dollars in the first year to help stabilize German capitalism. (30)

There were two parts to the Parufamet deal. Ufa was to receive a ten-year loan of 4 million dollars (approximately 17 million RM) at an interest rate of 7½%, but instead of being given shares in Ufa, the US companies would have a mortgage on Ufa's property on the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin. Secondly, a joint distribution company, Parufamet, was formed, in which Ufa had a 50% share. Ufa undertook to distribute 40 American films per year in Germany (20 from each corporation), reserving 75% of the running time in Ufa cinemas for them. In return, the American companies would release 10 Ufa films in the United States with full-scale promotion. The apparently unfavourable ratio of 40:10 was justified by the greater number of cinemas in America to which Ufa would have access: the USA had over 20,000, while Germany had only 3,500. (31)

In addition to the agreement with Paramount and Metro-Goldwyn, Ufa also negotiated a loan of 275,000 dollars from Universal Pictures Corporation, on condition that Ufa would release 50 of this company's films in Germany. (32) The reasons for Ufa concluding these deals with the American corporations are interesting in that they prefigure in many ways the next financial crisis in which Ufa found itself at the beginning of 1927, for which much of the blame was put on Metropolis.

The Ufa Annual Report for the year 1924/25 shows that the company made a net profit of just over 3 million RM. (33) However, the Deutsche Bank had provided Ufa with a loan of 18 million RM, which had been used to finance the big budget productions of that year. The bank suddenly demanded repayment of the money, which was virtually impossible, since the films had not yet had time to bring in sufficient returns to cover the loan. Added to which, profits from distribution and exhibition could no longer compensate for the huge losses on the production side, due to a downturn in business in the cinemas, which was mainly a result of the still high levels of entertainment tax. Hence a further irony of the Parufamet deal - Ufa desperately needed a loan to pay off a previous debt. (34)

A few months after this first crisis, the shooting of Metropolis began on 22nd May 1925, with an original budget of 800,000 RM. (35) For the years 1925-1927 the production costs for a feature film averaged out at 175,000 RM. (36) It is clear from a comparison of these figures that Metropolis was conceived from the outset as an expensive production. The question remains, why

did Ufa approve a big-budget film at a time when the need to reduce soaring production costs was generally recognized as being essential for the viability of film companies? The SPIO report outlined the prerequisites for the survival of the German industry in simple terms:

"The means for achieving this competitiveness lie in an improvement in quality and the reduction of production costs." (37)

The competition referred of course to the American industry, against which Ufa was determined to assert itself. Ufa's strategy for challenging the US domination of world markets was two-pronged: it would have to sustain and develop its strong position at home in all branches of the industry, and at the same time it would aim at producing films "which will enjoy eventual success on a world-wide scale thanks to their excellence." (38)

The desired quality was to be achieved by lavish productions like Metropolis, which would be 'bigger and better' than American blockbusters. By the time it was finished, however, Metropolis had run drastically over-budget, far exceeding the 800,000 RM which had been earmarked for the production. Estimates of the exact costs vary considerably, from the lower extreme of 2.2 million RM according to the Nazi historian Traub, to the upper figure of 10 million RM quoted by Luis Buñuel. (39) The accounts of the Neubabelsberg studios submitted to Ufa on 31st May 1926 give the cost to date of Metropolis as 4.2 million RM, which represents nearly half of the total production costs that year (the rest was taken up by 22 other productions). (40) One should

also remember that the shooting of the film was not completed until the 30th October that year, by which time 310 days and 60 nights had been spent in the studio. (41) On the other hand, one critic has claimed that it was no secret in the film trade at the time that expenses incurred by other productions such as Murnau's were simply shifted onto Metropolis' account. (42) Whatever the true figure, Metropolis has gone down in history as the film which bankrupted Ufa. Lang defended himself vigorously against this allegation after von Stauß, then Ufa's chairman, had told the Annual General Meeting that the company's financial plight was due partly to the fact that Metropolis had cost almost 5 million RM. Lang instructed his lawyer to lodge an official complaint and requested an inquiry to prove that the cost of his film had come nowhere near such a sum. (43) Whether Lang was right or not, a closer examination of Ufa's own Annual Reports reveals that there were far more factors contributing to the company's bankruptcy than just the admittedly high costs of Metropolis.

It is clear from the veiled criticism in the Annual Report for the year 1925/26, submitted to the AGM in April 1927, that much of the blame for Ufa's financial plight lay at the door of the management, who had made some serious errors of judgement. The report points out that the key positions in the German film industry were generally occupied by men (there do not seem to have been women in managerial positions) who had either a good knowledge of film production or sound business sense, but rarely a combination of both attributes. As far as Ufa was concerned, this observation would seem to be fairly appropriate, since its

policymakers had totally misjudged the economic climate after the stabilization of the mark and the consequent effects on the film industry. The optimistic predictions regarding the distribution prospects at home and abroad had been quite wrong. Parufamet turned out to be more of a millstone than a viable solution, as few Ufa films ever reached American audiences and the 4 million dollar loan only added to Ufa's monumental debts.

In addition to the deficiencies in general policy matters, management on a day-to-day level does not seem to have been very satisfactory from a 'good business' point of view. In the Annual Report, it is admitted that film production costs for the year 1925/26 far exceeded their allocated budgets, but the reasons are not specified. The accounts of the Neubabelsberg studio are more explicit:-

"We have consistently maintained on previous occasions that a subsequent criticism of high production costs is useless. [...] We believe that a much stricter control of individual items of expenditure must take effect." (44)

They go on to give the example of the costs for cars used in Metropolis, which amounted to more than 8,000 RM in a two-month period. It would appear that no rigorous checks on spending were made during the production: complaints about the high costs came when it was too late to do anything about it. Since no questions were being asked, it is understandable that Lang spared no expense in the making of Metropolis, which had, after all, already been approved as a 'big-budget' production. Judging from the accounts, Metropolis was not an exceptional case as far as

overspending was concerned, which seems to have been standard practice. At any rate, Metropolis provided a convenient scapegoat for Ufa's management when it became obvious at the end of 1926 that the company was once more in a state of crisis.

Estimates of the amount Ufa was in the red vary from 50 to 70 million RM, but the exact figure probably lay at the lower end of this scale. (45) Even assuming that Metropolis cost 5 million RM, it can hardly be claimed that this production was in itself responsible for such a massive deficit. Several groups showed interest in taking over Ufa in the spring of 1927, but Mosse and Ullstein, two of the biggest publishing firms in Germany, changed their minds when they realized the extent of the company's financial problems. The eventual buyer who faced the daunting task of making Ufa a profitable concern was Alfred Hugenberg: his plan for re-organizing the company was accepted at a General Meeting on 29th March 1927.

The majority of the shares in Ufa were taken over by a consortium made up of representatives of heavy industry, I.G. Farben and several major banks, who gave Hugenberg carte blanche to knock the company into shape. (46) The result was a rigorous programme of rationalization throughout all the branches of Ufa: staff levels were reduced, a tight control of production budgets was introduced, and the traditional expansion in the home market was temporarily halted during the period of internal consolidation. The management of the company was entrusted to Ludwig Klitzsch, who presided over SPIO and was the director of Scherl-Verlag, part of Hugenberg's publishing empire.

Karl-Dietrich Bracher has described Hugenberg as "a wealthy and influential pig-headed Pan-German and narrow minded reactionary" (47), which suitably sums up the new owner of Ufa. A former director of Krupp and MP for the right-wing nationalist Deutschnationale Volkspartei (DNVP), Hugenberg later played an instrumental role in bringing the Nazis to power. By the time he expressed interest in the takeover of Ufa, he already presided over a multi-media empire with stakes in advertising, publishing and news agencies, all of which were financed by a group called the 'Wirtschaftsvereinigung zur Förderung der geistigen Wiederaufbaukräfte' (Economic Alliance to Promote the Spiritual Strength for Reconstruction). (48) This group was made up of 'nationally-minded' industrial magnates like Emil Kirdorff and Albert Vögler.

Hugenberg had quite openly declared his nationalistic intentions in taking over Germany's most powerful film company. One of the first decisions made by the new management was to ban the rental of Soviet films by Ufa cinemas, as well as forbidding advertising films for left-wing newspapers. (49) There was little public protest about Ufa falling into such conservative hands. The extent of nationalistic feelings around this time is confirmed by the fact that Field-Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, the classic symbol of the old Empire, had recently been elected President of the Republic.

As far as the ideological implications of the change in Ufa's leadership is concerned, Monaco maintains that Hugenberg

did not attempt to influence feature film production and goes on to say:

"It is questionable if he conceived of feature films as vehicles for political messages." (50)

The naïvety of this statement is astonishing, and betrays a very limited conception of the political function of film in the wider sense. Of course Hugenberg did not insert DNVP policy speeches into entertainment films, but decisions such as the ban on Soviet films and the refusal of studio facilities for the synchronization of All Quiet on the Western Front are blatantly political. (51) Evidence of a more direct nature regarding production content is cited by Axel Eggebrecht in an article written on 10th May 1927, only a month or so after the Hugenberg takeover. Apparently a communiqué had been circulated within Ufa stating that no film would be approved if it involved 'experimentation', thus representing an 'aesthetic risk'. (52) Although the primary motivation for this instruction was probably financial, the consequent effect on production would be a conservative one, since only films based on well-tried formulae would be made. Moreover, Monaco admits that Ufa newsreels became more noticeably nationalistic in tone under the new management. One might argue that the dissemination of right-wing propaganda in the 'factual' form of news is infinitely more potent than if it were mediated through entertainment films. A second claim by Monaco is even more difficult to accept than the one which implies the ingenuousness of Hugenberg:

"There is no evidence that governmental investment and the backing of important German capitalists

had any direct influence on the content of German feature films in the 1920s." (53)

The key words here are 'evidence' and 'direct'. It is hardly surprising that no files exist containing details of plans to influence feature film production. There can be few film commentators who give much credence to the conspiracy theory, according to which the State and/or big business is secretly involved in indoctrinating the gullible masses through entertainment films. To go to the other extreme, however, and claim political neutrality and purely economic interest on the part of government and influential financial backers is equally tendentious. Neither theory provides a satisfactory base for analyzing the complex interrelationship of structures and institutions which constitute cinema. A more appropriate starting point might involve acknowledging that it is in the interests of both government and big business to favour the preservation of the status quo, and while they will seek to promote their aims wherever possible, the control they exercise is not monolithic. For the dominant class is capable of permitting a certain amount of dissent, the extent of which is dependent on the prevailing social and political circumstances. Blatant intervention in film matters normally occurs where power elites feel threatened enough to use the weapon of censorship, representing a negative response, as opposed to the active promotion of ideology. In any case, self-censorship operates to a great extent in pre-production stages in an industry where the vast majority of creative and decision-making positions are occupied by the middle

classes: radical challenges to accepted beliefs are rare occurrences in the commercial film industry.

Two documents dating from the Weimar Republic give some indication of the kind of loose, but far from indifferent, relationship that existed between the film industry and both the State and big business. The first is an agreement between Ufa and the Reichsministerium des Innern (the Home Office) signed in July 1925. (54) According to Paragraph 1, Ufa would undertake to comply as far as possible with the wishes of the government in filming scenes from public life for its new Ufa chronicle, which was about to be launched. In return, the government would help Ufa by providing favourable opportunities for such filming whenever it could, either directly to Ufa or through Europa-Film AG. The significance of Europa-Film becomes clearer in the second part of the agreement. "After the majority of shares in Europa-Film AG have been bought over", Ufa would undertake to respect the wishes of the government in all official commissions and opportunities for filming. The following addendum is particularly significant:

"this right [of the government to exert influence] may also be claimed for the rest of Europa's production."

This mutually beneficial arrangement would tend to indicate that the Weimar government was actively concerned with influencing film production, and was not merely a disinterested bystander.

The second document, which reveals the interest of big business in film, is to be found among the papers of Dr. Paul

Silverberg, who was a member of Ufa's board of directors after the Hugenberg takeover.⁽⁵⁵⁾ Silverberg had also been the director of the employers' organization, the Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie (the National Federation of German Industry), which compiled a series of reports entitled 'Kulturbolschewismus' starting at the beginning of 1931. The recipients were asked to treat the documents as 'highly confidential'. The express purpose of these reports was to "counteract the growing spread of radical tendencies in different areas of cultural life". Issue No. 7, dated 30th May 1931, describes the danger of what it calls the 'Weltanschauungsfilm' (ideological film) currently on release in Germany. The example it focuses on is Lang's *M*, which it accuses of sensationalizing the actual case of the child murderer Kürten and of implicitly putting forward the argument against capital punishment. The analysis ends by describing *M* as "a crime against the public". Big business was clearly concerned about the content of feature films, and not just their economic viability.

3. The Script and the Novel: Thea and Fritz.

Thea von Harbou , Lang's wife from 1920 till his departure from Germany in 1933, worked on most of his scripts with him during the Weimar period. She collaborated with him in the making of Metropolis and wrote a novel of the same name, two factors which have proved to be important in the history of Metropolis for a number of reasons. On the one hand, critics have cited the 'Thea' element when passing judgement on the content of the film ever since the first reviews began to appear. On the other hand, later critics have referred to the novel Metropolis in an attempt to reconstruct an idea of the original version of the film, which, as we shall see, was drastically cut shortly after its initial release. Both of these critical methods are based on misconceived premises and have resulted in rather distorted conclusions about Metropolis.

Many critics have come to terms with what they perceive as inadequacies in Metropolis by blaming Thea von Harbou, thus absolving Lang of any responsibility for the aspects of the film which they find unacceptable. By dividing 'her' content off from 'his' form, critics have been able to preserve the myth of 'Lang, great artist and film director' at the expense of 'von Harbou, kitsch novelist and inferior screenwriter'. The most extreme example of this attitude can be found in Buñuel's article on Metropolis which appeared in the Gazeta Literaria de Madrid in 1927, and is worth quoting at length:

"*Metropolis* is not one film, *Metropolis* is two films joined by the belly [...] What it tells us is trivial, pretentious, pedantic, hackneyed romanticism. But if we put before the story the plastic-photogenic basis of the film, then *Metropolis* will come up to any standards, will overwhelm us as the most marvellous picture book imaginable.[...] It is not the first time that we have noted such a disconcerting dualism in the works of Lang. For example, in the ineffable poem *Destiny* are interpolated disastrous scenes of a refined bad taste. Even though we must admit that Fritz Lang is an accomplice, we hereby denounce as the presumed author of these eclectic essays and of this hazardous syncretism his wife, the scenarist Thea von Harbou." (56)

Thus the 'plastic-photogenic basis', that is, the images, is bracketed off and held up for admiration, while the narrative is demolished. Such a separation of form and content is false, since they are interdependent, and while it is certainly possible to make comments about one or the other, a total assessment should take their interrelationship into account.

With regard to the input of Thea von Harbou, it has been commonly assumed that her novel *Metropolis* formed the basis for the film script, which she wrote subsequently, with little, if any, contribution from Lang. Kurt Pinthus stated in 1927- "...the film *Metropolis* [...] based on Thea von Harbou's novel [...]"- and nearly fifty years later, Tulloch makes the same claim "[...]Thea von Harbou's novel *Metropolis* on which the film script was based." (57) Although there seems to be no concrete evidence

which would allow us to establish for certain whether the film script preceded the novel or vice-versa, it would be reasonable to conclude that the film script was in all probability written before the novel for the following reasons.

The inspiration for Metropolis is said by Lang to have originated from a trip he made to New York in October 1924, accompanied by Erich Pommer: "I first came to America briefly in 1924 [...] and there I conceived Metropolis." (58) The vision of the New York skyline from the harbour gave Lang the idea of making a film about the city of the future. Lang and Pommer returned to Berlin in December of that year, the shooting of Metropolis started just five months later on 22nd May 1925, and the film was completed after a year and a half on 30th October 1926. The first edition of the novel, which was not published until 1926 by August Scherl GmbH, contained 274 pages. After the film was released on 10th January 1927, a second edition of the novel was published, this time with 8 full-page stills from the film and 194 pages. (59) In her reference book on Lang, E. Ann Kaplan writes:

"According to Lotte Eisner, the novel Metropolis seems to have been written (as it was published) after the film rather than the film's having been based on the novel by Harbou." (60)

Despite the error about the timing of the novel's publication, the Kaplan/Eisner assumption would still seem to be valid. This view is also corroborated by Bogdanovich: "Mrs von Harbou published a novel based on the film." (61)

Even if the novel had been written before the film script, the film is not, as Courtade points out, an adaptation of a book but an original screenplay by Lang and his wife, since

"Many of the scenes which appear in the one do not appear in the other, and vice-versa." (62)

The extent to which Lang contributed to the script is not clear, but he himself admitted that although the 'Hauptthese' (main thesis) was from Mrs. von Harbou, he himself was at least 50% responsible for the outcome, since it was he who made the film. (63) For not everything which was in the original script might necessarily have been transferred to celluloid. The permutations are manifold: material in the script might not have been shot at all; scenes could have been shot which were not included in the final release print; and Lang could have added shots or scenes of his own as he made the film. Given that the film was shot over a period of nearly one and a half years, the latter is a distinct possibility. A later comment by Lang is significant in this context:

"Dudley Nichols said - and I think it's one of the basic things to be said about motion pictures - 'A script is only a blueprint - the director is the one who makes the picture.' " (64)

And comparing the pressure of the Hollywood system on shooting schedules with the early days in Germany, he remembers the leisurely flexibility he enjoyed then:

"..you could come to the studio in the morning and sit there and say, 'What shall I do today?'. I mean, the set was ready but you would figure out how to shoot.." (65)

Reading some of the scathing criticisms which blame Thea von Harbou for the outcome of Metropolis, one might be forgiven for thinking that Lang had blindly carried out the written instructions of his wife.

The second reason for the novel Metropolis assuming a far more important role than it deserves lies in its recent function as a source of information about the original release print of the film. It is extremely doubtful, however, whether it is valid to compare the novel and the film, given the substantial differences which separate the two media. For in spite of superficial thematic similarities between the novel and the film, there is a distinct, qualitative difference between them.

Thea von Harbou's novel, written in an almost archaic style, is permeated with a particularly nauseating brand of Romanticism and lacks the 'Expressionist' rigour which is characteristic of the film. The religious references, which are certainly quite predominant in the film, attain an even greater frequency in the novel, with a specific emphasis on the theme of guilt/atonement. For example, when Maria is with Freder in the cathedral at the end of the novel, she persuades him to mediate between the warring factions in the following manner:

"Will you not allow them, Freder, - your father and my brothers - to cancel out their guilt and be absolved and reconciled?" (66)

Nature imagery is sprinkled liberally throughout the novel. In the scene where the Robot is inciting the workers to revolt, the workers' heads in the crowd are described thus: "These waves

seethed, rushed and roared." And when Maria is trying to save the workers' children from drowning, the conceit is adopted of the water speaking to her directly - "Since I came over the earth in the form of the Great Flood, in order to destroy all living things with the exception of Noah's family, God has been deaf to the cries of his creatures." (67)

The novel does not end with the workers and capitalist joining hands on the steps of the cathedral, the much criticized utopian conclusion to the film. Instead, Fredersen seeks forgiveness from his crippled mother, who lives in a thatched cottage surrounded by nut trees. She gives him a letter, which has been left by Hel, his pious wife, for such a time when he had repented his wicked ways. Having read the letter, Fredersen tells his mother that had it been a thousand years earlier, he would have set out on a pilgrimage to find out about his fellow men.

It is certainly understandable that a few recent critics, such as Tulloch, Jensen and Barlow, have attempted to reconstruct an idea of the original film by referring to the novel. Most of these writers are all too aware that it is not an ideal source:

"Obviously there are problems concerned with drawing data from a novel when analysing a film." (68)

The majority of critics, on the other hand, are either unconscious of, or do not attach any importance to, the fact that the film has been cut extensively. Possibly the best, or rather worst, example of this attitude can be found in Alan Williams' article, in which he justifies his acceptance of the truncated version by claiming

"Nonetheless the film as it exists has coherence and has been 'read' easily enough by its audiences; thus our analysis has taken as its point of departure the text as we have it and not as it 'should have been'." (69)

For an historical and political analysis, however, it is essential to have an understanding of what has been cut from the original release print, or indeed of any other changes made to it which have a bearing on its potential meaning.

4. Post Production.

Metropolis was passed by the Film-Prüfstelle in Berlin on 13th November 1926, with the censorship card number 14171 and a 'Jugendverbot' certification. The original length of the film was 4189 metres when it was released on 10th January 1927 at the Ufa-Palast am Zoo in Berlin. It was divided into 9 reels as follows:-

Reel 1 - 538 metres; Reel 2 - 515m.; Reel 3 - 540m.; Reel 4 - 293m.; Reel 5 - 363m.; Reel 6 - 450m.; Reel 7 - 417m.; Reel 8 - 485m.; Reel 9 - 588m.

Lamprecht has indicated that Metropolis was awarded the predicate labels 'volksbildend' and 'künstlerisch' ('popularly improving' and 'artistic') (70). As these did not come from the Film-Prüfstelle, the other most likely source would have been the Lampeausschuß, a semi-official body whose predicate labels were recognized for tax relief purposes. (71)

A few months after the initial release of the film, Ufa discussed the idea of making various changes to it (mainly shortening it because it was generally felt to be too long) and how best to distribute it in the immediate future. The minutes of the executive meeting on 7th April 1927, one of the first under Hugenberg management, show that the first item on the agenda was the distribution of Metropolis. (72) It was decided that the film should continue to run in 10 or 12 provincial cities, and should be re-released in Berlin in the autumn, or in late summer if the weather was bad.

The intention was to use the version which had been edited specifically for the American market. What was, however, stipulated quite explicitly was that the titles 'mit kommunistischer Tendenz' be removed, although no details are forthcoming as to which ones these might be. To go back to the claim by Monaco that there was no "direct influence on the content of German feature films in the 1920s" on the part of capitalists, this instruction from Ufa's management regarding the editing of Metropolis is a clear example of politically motivated censorship.

The strategy regarding distribution was modified, however, after consultation with Parufamet, whose alternative plan was accepted at the Ufa executive meeting on 8th April 1927: Metropolis was to be withdrawn completely for the time being, re-released in the Ufa-Palast in Berlin at the end of August, and then it could run in 60 to 70 cinemas in the provinces. Parufamet calculated that this plan would bring in a few hundred thousand Reichsmarks. Also to be removed, if possible, were the "pietistic bits" which had apparently been added to the American version, although again, no examples are given. (73)

The cuts which were made to the original release print were so extensive that Ufa considered the idea of re-composing the music score, which would have cost 1,500 to 2,000 RM. Parufamet refused to contribute towards this expense, so the suggestion was not taken up. (74) By the time Metropolis was re-released in August 1927, it had been cut from 4189 to 3241 metres, and this missing footage would appear to be lost completely. Further cuts

have since been made by distributors in various countries, with the result that a number of versions of Metropolis now exist.

As important as the subsequent editing of the film was the way in which titles were translated, changed beyond recognition, and omitted completely for distribution in the English speaking markets. The version of Metropolis which was seen by American audiences had been adapted from the original by the playwright Channing Pollock, along with Julian Johnson and Edward Adams. In an incredibly arrogant article entitled "German Film Revision Upheld as Needed Here" (New York Times, 13th March 1927), Randolph Bartlett defended the right to 'adapt' films like Metropolis to suit American tastes. Passages from his article can be allowed to speak for themselves:

"..Yet all that was required was a little ingenuity to work into the scenes the missing elements."

"..all they [the American editors] were trying to do was to bring out the real thought that was manifestly back of the production, and which the Germans had simply 'muffed'. I am willing to wager that "Metropolis", as it is seen at the Rialto now, is nearer Fritz Lang's idea than the version he himself released in Germany." (75)

Those critics who have tried to establish what has been subsequently 'worked in' and 'missed out' have generally pointed out that they would have preferred to base their analyses on the shooting script. It has been assumed that this document no longer exists. Lorrimer's Classic Film Script, which is also

interspersed with excerpts from Thea von Harbou's novel, was compiled according to the following method:

"Since the original screenplay for the film of Metropolis was unobtainable, the version published here has been built up from a shot-by-shot viewing of the version of the film seen in Britain and the United States, with a transcript of the English language titles." (76)

The original shooting script does still exist, however, and comprises 536 pages. It is held by the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek in West Berlin, who are planning to publish it in the near future, and are thus unwilling to provide copies of it.

Yet despite the fact that the shooting script would provide valuable insights into the making of Metropolis, it would still not indicate exactly what was shot and what was included in the final edit. The 'Zensurkarte' (censorship card) on the other hand listed all the titles which appeared in the version released on 10th January 1927. According to an amendment to the Reichslichtspielgesetz of 1920, all film titles had to be passed by the board of censors before the film could be shown to the public. John Barlow states that the Zensurkarte has been lost (77), but there is in fact a copy of it in the film archive section of the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde in Wiesbaden. As well as providing a clearer picture of the structure and content of the film as it was when originally released, these titles show that shifts in meaning have occurred as a result of the subsequent translation and editing processes.

In his essay "The Rhetoric of the Image", Barthes identified the two potential functions of the linguistic message in relation to the image as 'anchorage' and 'relay'. (78) Given the polysemous nature of an image, an accompanying written word can serve to 'fix', or 'anchor', the meaning in favour of one particular interpretation rather than another. The 'relay' function refers to the capacity of the linguistic message to advance narrative, by supplying meanings which cannot be found purely in the image itself. Both of these functions would seem to be particularly relevant to silent films which contain titles, and especially to Metropolis, given the way the film was cut and translated. For example, in the scene where Fredersen meets Rotwang in his laboratory, the titles have been changed completely in the various English versions, substituting a conversation about creating a replacement for living workers for the original dialogue about Hel, the woman loved by both men (see below, p.187-188). The consequences of this change are twofold. Firstly, the meaning shifts within the scene itself, so that Rotwang becomes the servant and accomplice of Fredersen, whereas in the original they were sexual rivals. Secondly, the alteration of this scene affects the development of the subsequent narrative, since other sequences involving Rotwang had to be suitably changed in order to maintain the logic of the Fredersen/Rotwang complicity.

A further example of how the 'linguistic message' can be crucial for interpretation is to be found in the insertion of titles which did not exist in the original version. In the

Eternal Gardens sequence in the first reel, Freder asks on Maria's departure "Who was that?", which remains unanswered. In the English language versions, however, the title "Just the daughter of a worker" has been added (presumably a reply from the major-domo to Freder's question), and in the case of the DDR version (see below) this is reinforced by the further title "If that girl was a worker's daughter..". In locating Maria within the working class, these additional titles remove much of the ambiguity which surrounds this religious figure in the original.

It is clear that an analysis of the omissions and additions which have taken place since Metropolis was first released is not merely an academic exercise in cinematic accuracy, since such changes have wide-ranging implications for an historical interpretation of the text itself. The assessment of the missing sections and changes in titling which follows is based on three main sources:-

1. The Zensurkarte.
2. A publicity pamphlet distributed at the time of the film's release by Ufa, giving details of the shooting of particular scenes, some of which have disappeared completely from present versions (see Appendix 4). This booklet can be consulted in the library of the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde in Frankfurt am Main.
3. Viewings of three different versions of the film -
 - (a) The British Film Institute distribution copy, which is the only version generally available in the UK. It came from the National Film Archive, who in turn obtained it from the Museum of

Modern Art in New York. The NFA also holds a viewing copy of the DDR version. The BFI copy is 3332 feet long in 16mm (equivalent to approximately 2496 metres in 35mm), silent, and has English titles.

(b) The East German (DDR) version. In 1975, the Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR undertook as a project of FIAF the task of compiling a print of Metropolis "that would come as close to the second version [i.e. the one released in August 1927, length 3241m.] as possible by using all available scenes and individual frames of the prints from various film archives." (79) Seven different countries provided prints for the reconstruction - the UK, USSR, USA, Israel, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and West Germany - which explains the discrepancies in title design and names in this version, such as the appearance of 'Eric' for 'Freder'. It is 2868 metres in length (35mm), has English titles, but no accompanying music.

(c) The ARD version. The most recent and complete reconstruction to date was made in the spring of 1982 by the West German broadcasting network, the ARD (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland). The sequences and shots are identical to those in the DDR version, but there are other major differences. The ARD used the Zensurkarte to reconstruct the original German titles, which is particularly significant since all surviving prints would seem to be English language versions. The second alteration by the ARD involved establishing the original running speed, thanks to the discovery of the music score by Gottfried Huppertz,

which makes it clear how long each sequence should last. In addition, the ARD prepared a new musical accompaniment, designed to be played by two pianos: it is based on the original music score, and leaves out the appropriate parts where visual sequences were missing. This version of Metropolis is 1276 metres in 16mm (equivalent to about 3190 metres in 35mm). (80)

Both the DDR and ARD versions can be viewed in the film archive of the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde in Wiesbaden.

The three sources described above provide enough information to justify a reasonable assessment of the missing sections of Metropolis. Moreover, if one compares the parallel sets of titles given in Appendix 2, the extent of the cuts and changes becomes even more apparent. List A comprises the original titles which were detailed on the Zensurkarte, and the translation of them is my own: the titles which are underlined are the ones which do not appear in the ARD version. List B contains the titles in the DDR version, and List C consists of the titles in the BFI distribution copy. The following outline represents an empirical survey of the changes, but their ideological implications will be treated in greater depth in the detailed analysis of the text itself. I shall begin with a reconstruction of the sequences which do not appear in any of the three versions I have seen, and then go on to describe the parts which have been cut from the BFI version, but which have been retained in the ARD and DDR versions. Unless otherwise indicated, the numbers of reels and titles given in brackets refer to List A. The 'description' column is based on two sources of information - Enno Patalas,

who has done extensive work on reconstructing Metropolis, and the Ufa publicity pamphlet.

The first sequence to have disappeared from all existing versions of Metropolis is located at the end of Reel 2 (Titles 26-33). Freder, having descended into the machine room for the second time, comes to the assistance of Georgy (Worker No.11811) who is near to collapse at the clock-shaped machine. He reassures Georgy that he will stay at the machine in his place, and the reel would have continued thus:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Description</u>
T.26 (Freder to Georgy): Listen to me..I want to exchange lives with you..	Cut to shot of a car park, where 'Slim', Fredersen's henchman, is looking at Freder's car.
T.27: Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th Floor.	Freder hands a piece of paper with Josaphat's address on it to Georgy.
T.28: (Freder to Georgy) Wait for me - both of you.	
T.29: Georgy 11811.	This title was probably a close up of the name and number on Georgy's cap, now held by Freder, as they have exchanged clothing. Georgy leaves the machine room and climbs into Freder's waiting car, watched secretly by Slim, who is

T.30: Josaphat. Block 99,
House 7, 7th Floor

pretending to read a newspaper in the car park.

Georgy shows the piece of paper with Josaphat's address to the chauffeur, who tips his cap and drives off. Slim takes a note of the departure time. Georgy sinks back into the comfortable car seat, his face lit up by the lights of passing cars.

T.31: Josaphat. Block 99,
House 7, 7th Floor.

Georgy looks at the piece of paper again. As he is putting it into his pocket, he finds a wad of banknotes, Freder's money. The car brakes suddenly. In a car alongside, Georgy sees a beautiful woman, who smiles at him, as her coat slides off her shoulder. A shower of advertising leaflets descend among the lines of traffic, one of which drifts into Freder's car.

T.32: Yoshiwara.

Georgy reads the advertisement for the nightclub called Yoshiwara. Amidst the ads and flashing neon lights Georgy once more sees the image of the woman in the next car, but this time she is naked.

T.33: Yoshiwara.

Georgy shows the piece of paper with 'Yoshiwara' on it to the chauffeur, who turns the car around.

Reel 5 has virtually disappeared in its entirety from all the existing versions, with the exception of the short scene in the cathedral, where Freder waits for Maria and addresses the stone figures of the Seven Deadly Sins:-

Title 5: If you had come earlier, you would not have frightened me..now I beg you, stay away from me and my loved one..!

It is reasonable to assume that this original title does in fact refer to this scene, since the same words are used by Freder in the novel when he speaks to the figures. In the DDR and BFI versions, this title has been changed to 'The Seven Deadly Sins', and the DDR version contains a second title which did not feature in the original:-

List B, T.80: The cathedral - another machine that had lost its soul.

A résumé of the contents of Reel 5 would read as follows:-

<u>Title</u>	<u>Description</u>
T.1: Interlude.	Freder in the cathedral, as if looking around for someone. Shot of a pulpit, where a monk is praying.
T.2: (Monk) Truly I say unto you: Near are the days	

of which the Apocalypse
speaks -!

T.3: And I saw a woman
sitting on a scarlet
coloured beast, which was
full of names of blasphemy
and had seven heads and ten
horns. And the woman was
dressed in purple and
scarlet and had a golden
goblet in her hand. And on
her forehead was written a
name, a secret: Great
Babylon, the mother of all
atrocities on earth. And I
saw the woman drunk on the
blood of the saints.

T.4: (Rotwang to Robot) You
will destroy Joh Fredersen
- him and his city and his
son!

The monk turns over a page in his
bible. Close up of the text which
reads..

The monk's hand comes into frame,
his finger pointing to the words
'Great Babylon'.

Cut to Rotwang's laboratory. The
Robot is sitting like an Egyptian
god, flooded in light. Rotwang is
crouched opposite it. He stands up
and goes over to it.

Cut back to the cathedral. Freder,

standing in front of the Seven
Deadly Sins, addresses them.

T.5: If you had come
earlier, you would not have
frightened me..now I beg
you, stay away from me and
my loved one..!

Freder leaves the cathedral,
disappointed that Maria has not
come to meet him.

T.6: Georgy 11811

Freder's gaze falls on the cap with
Georgy's name and number, which he
still has in his hand. Cut to
Georgy emerging from the doorway of
Yoshiwara, bleary-eyed and
exhausted. As he is on the point of
getting into Freder's car, a hand
grabs hold of him. It is Slim, who
forces him into the car, onto the
seat.

T.7: (Slim to Georgy) Where
is the man whose clothes you
are wearing?

Georgy does not answer, but Slim
forces open Georgy's closed fist,
and the piece of paper with
Josaphat's name and address falls
out.

T.8: Josaphat. Block 99,

House 7, 7th Floor.

Cut to Josaphat's flat.

T.9: (Freder to Josaphat)

Would you please waken

Georgy? He has to lead me to

the workers' city at once..

Josaphat does not understand what

Freder is talking about.

Cut back to scene in the car: Slim

puts the slip of paper with

Josaphat's address into his

cigarette case.

T.10: (Slim to Georgy)

Number 11811, you will

return to the machine and

forget that you ever left

it - understood?

Slim then gives instructions to the

chauffeur. Cut to Josaphat's flat.

T.11: (Freder to Josaphat) I

must have someone who is

faithful to me, Josaphat.

How else shall I reach my

goal?

T.12: (Freder to Josaphat)

I have to go on - now I must

search alone for the person

Georgy was to have led me to.

T.13: (Freder to Josaphat)

This evening, Josaphat. When

I return this evening..

Freder leaves Josaphat's flat. As he is going down in the lift, Slim is coming up in the adjacent one. Once in Josaphat's flat, Slim catches sight of the cap with Georgy's name and number.

T.14: Georgy 11811.

T.15: (Slim to Josaphat) So, what's your price for leaving this flat and Metropolis tonight?

Josaphat nervously offers him a cigar. Slim declines, instead holding out his cigarette case to Josaphat, which contains the paper with his address.

T.16: Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th Floor.

Slim puts a wad of money down in front of Josaphat, who throws it back in his face. Unmoved, Slim writes out a cheque.

T.17: (Slim to Josaphat) You don't yet seem to understand who I am representing here.

Close up of the cheque with Joh Fredersen's signature on it.

T.18: (Slim to Josaphat) This man does not wish his son to find you still here this

evening!

Josaphat tries to escape, but Slim catches hold of him, and a fight ensues. Slim knocks Josaphat down, and says as he is leaving:

T.19: I will collect you in three hours.

This last sequence with Slim and Josaphat is described in some detail and is illustrated in the Ufa publicity pamphlet.

In Reel 6, a second reference to the Whore of Babylon has been cut (Titles 11-15), but from the information available, it is not possible to ascertain exactly which images these titles referred to. Their most likely location is at the end of the Robot dance sequence, where the false Maria rises up on a circular platform, which is in the form of a seven headed monster supported by stone figures of the Seven Deadly Sins.

Apart from a slight reduction in titles, the rest of Reel 6 is the same in all versions. Title 6 (Rotwang to Freder : "I tell you, she is with your father..!") has been cut, which does not make a significant difference, since it was more or less a repetition of Title 5. Title 7 has also disappeared, which would seem to have been a soliloquy by Rotwang in which he voices his confidence that the Robot will pass for a human being in front of the Top Hundred that evening:

"She is the most perfect and obedient instrument that anyone ever had! This evening you shall see how she passes the test before the Top Hundred! You shall see her dance and if even one of them

notices the machine in her, then you can gladly call me a bungler, who has never succeeded in anything. C. Rotwang. C.A. Rotwang requests Mr Joh Fredersen to be his guest this evening."

This title may alternatively have been a written invitation from Rotwang to Fredersen telling him about the dance.

A considerable amount at the beginning of Reel 7 has been lost, mainly involving a conversation between Freder and Josaphat. In the BFI and DDR versions, a small part of this scene remains, but it would seem to have been moved further into the reel. The following titles, identical in each version, refer:

List B, T. 97-99/

List C, T. 77-79.

Josaphat comes into Freder's room, where Freder is reading a book.

T.97/77: (Josaphat) Maria is inciting the workers to revolt.

T.98/78: (Josaphat) She has told them to destroy everything.

T.99/79: (Freder) I cannot believe it.

Freder puts down the book, gets up from his armchair, puts on a cloak and they both leave.

In the original version, however, this scene was far more extensive, involving flashbacks. A general outline of the missing sequence can be given thus:

Reel 7: T.1 : Furioso Musical term meaning 'with
vehemence'.

T.2: The Revelation of St. Close up of the cover of Freder's
John. Published by Avalun book, which he is reading, seated
& Co, Hellerau. in an armchair.

Enter Josaphat, dressed in workers'
clothing. Freder puts his book
down.

T.3: (Josaphat) I have been
fleeing from Slim in these
clothes..but for ten days now
your father's spy has been
making the workers' city
unsafe..

T.4: (Josaphat) All that is
restraining the workers is
the fact that they are still
waiting for the mediator who
was promised to them.

T.5: Even more strange things
have happened, Freder. Titles 6 to 11 inclusive seem to
have accompanied flashbacks.

T.6: That evening you fell

ill...

Cut/fade to Yoshiwara, where two sons of the ruling elite, Jan and Marinus, are fighting each other over possession of the Robot's garter, first with fists, then with swords.

T.7: ...who were once the best of friends..for this woman...

One of the men draws a revolver, and shoots the other, who falls to the ground.

T.8: ..the other..that same evening..

T.9: The Eternal Gardens lie deserted...yet night after night in Yoshiwara... Probably a shot of the abandoned Eternal Gardens, and shot of merry-making in the night club.

T.10: ..and this woman,at whose feet all the sins are gathered..

Mid shot of the Robot at the centre of the dancing and revelry.

T.11: ..is also called Maria. Cut/fade back to Freder's room.

T.12: (Freder) The same woman to whom those in the depths look up as to a saint?

T.13: (Josaphat) Now many are going to the city of the dead (This refers to the workers' meetings in the catacombs) to a woman who they thought

was as steadfast as a rock.

T.14: (Freder) The mediator
must not be absent when they
go...

Freder fetches a cloak from an
adjacent room, and both men leave.

Cut to Fredersen's office.

T.15: (Fredersen to Slim)
Whatever happens tonight, it
is my express command that
the workers be allowed to do
as they please.

Cut to Rotwang's house.

The scenes in Rotwang's house, where he has imprisoned Maria, have been cut in such a way as to eliminate the notion that Rotwang is deliberately deceiving Fredersen. Titles 21 and 33 reveal that Rotwang is controlling the actions of the Robot, and is intent on double-crossing Fredersen:

T.21: ..but I have betrayed Joh Fredersen. Your double does
not follow his will - but mine alone!

T.33: ..and I have betrayed Joh Fredersen in two ways - for
I did not tell him that his son wants to be the
mediator to your brothers - and loves you -

(Both titles, Rotwang to Maria)

According to Enno Patalas, the second of these titles was overheard by Fredersen, who then knocked Rotwang unconscious, thus allowing Maria the opportunity to escape. This provides a plausible explanation for Maria running out of Rotwang's house

unhindered, and also accounts for Rotwang's dazed emergence from his house towards the end of the film. When he chases Maria into the cathedral, it seems in all the existing versions that he intends to harm or abduct her. He says to Maria:

List B, T.131/List C, T.109 : If the mob sees you, they will
kill me for having tricked
them.

The original title makes it clear that the real reason for his frantic pursuit of the heroine is because he believes, deranged after Fredersen's blow, that she is Hel.

Reel 9, T.10: Now I am going to bring you home, my Hel.

The rivalry between Rotwang and Fredersen, arising from their love for the same woman, Hel, is further confirmed by a remark made by Rotwang after Fredersen has left him alone in the catacombs. The following title, which has been retained only in the ARD version, leaves the viewer in no doubt as to Rotwang's true intentions:

Reel 4, T.22: You fool! Now you shall also lose the last
thing you had left from Hel - your son..

There are two short sequences which have been omitted from the BFI version, but which are present in both the ARD and DDR reconstructions. The first of these occurred near the beginning of the film. In the BFI version, the shots of the workers' city are followed directly by the scene in the Eternal Gardens, whereas there should in fact be a race in a sports stadium separating them. Freder and about half a dozen other ruling class

sons run a race, which Freder wins. The original length of this sequence was 9 metres, 88 cm. (See still in Appendix 3).

The second missing sequence has been cut from Reel 7. Freder and Josaphat have come down to the catacombs to warn the workers that the Robot is not the real Maria. On seeing Freder, however, the workers are incensed by the presence of the Master's son, and set out to attack him. The BFI scene stops at this point. In the original, a worker is on the point of stabbing Freder, when Georgy, who is back among the workers, steps between them to save Freder. He dies in Freder's arms, while the rest of the workers move on to the more important task of smashing the machines. The relevant titles are:

List A, Reel 7, T.34: (Freder to Josaphat) ...and was
faithful after all..

List B, T.110: (Georgy to Freder) You risked your life,
taking my place at the machine - I am only
paying a debt.

As can be seen from a comparison of the three title lists, a few individual titles have been cut from Reel 8, but no sequence of significance would seem to be missing, and the same applies to Reel 9.

Reliance on the censorship card alone to determine the missing sections would be unwise, however, since it does not allow one to establish whether shots or sequences without any titles have been cut. One such example can be seen from remarks made by Friedrich von Zglinicki about the film. He refers to an instance of innovative camerawork, which has subsequently been

cut from all three versions mentioned above. He describes the sequence thus:

"The mass is trying to save itself by getting through the only iron door to the upper world. The door is locked, but in fear of death, the people keep crashing against it again and again." (81)

This missing sequence occurred in the original when Freder, Maria and Josaphat are trying to rescue the children from the inundated workers' city by taking them up the air shafts. A publicity still shows Freder behind this locked iron gate, struggling to open it (see Appendix 3). Patalas confirms that there was such a scene in the original. He has also found that an Australian print of Metropolis contains a shot of Maria running up the stairs inside the cathedral at the end of the film, pursued by Rotwang. To attract attention, she swings on the bell-rope (see also Appendix 3). There are no accompanying titles for either of these short sequences, so the censorship card could not in fact provide any indication of their existence.

In a similar vein, one cannot establish exactly how much footage has been eliminated with individual titles, since there is no fixed relationship between the length of shots and titles. A variety of sources has to be taken into account when 'filling in the gaps', but of these, the censorship card is certainly more accurate and relevant than the novel.

CHAPTER 2.THE CULTURAL CONTEXT AND THE CRITICAL RESPONSE TO METROPOLIS1. The Cultural Context.

Metropolis is frequently referred to as an 'Expressionist' film, and although a certain degree of schematic labelling is inevitable in histories of world cinema, the term 'Expressionist' has tended to be both over-used and inaccurately applied where silent films are concerned. Joseph von Sternberg is reputed to have said that the label can only really be used to describe Wiene's Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari and Leni's Das Wachsfigurenkabinett (Waxworks).⁽¹⁾ This might seem to be overrestricting the category, but the point he is making contains more than just a grain of truth. In the case of Metropolis it would be wrong to ignore the Expressionist elements, while at the same time it is difficult to accept Huaco's claim that it is a representative example of German Expressionist film.⁽²⁾ The inscription of Metropolis within the specific framework of Expressionism requires more rigorous scrutiny than it has received up till now, especially since the result of any neat categorization is a glossing over of the many contradictions about the film. A discussion of two main areas will help to highlight the problematic aspects of the film:

1. Expressionism as a cultural commodity - if one accepts that Metropolis is in no way a consistent example of Expressionism,

what is the significance of the rather self-conscious trappings of Expressionism in the film, and in many other films of the same period?

2. Other cultural influences - the predominance of references to Expressionism has clouded the fact that Metropolis was also affected by other contemporary aesthetic trends and general cultural developments. To understand the film as a product of the highly contradictory culture of the Weimar period, it is essential to examine its relationship with an ongoing romantic tradition in Germany, with the emergence of a 'new realism', and with the impact of both American and Soviet influences during the 1920s. It will become clear that the contradictions in the film arise mainly from the clash between the romantic and the modern elements.

Expressionist Film: Art versus Industry?

After the First World War, the serious battle for supremacy in the world film market began, as the various indigenous industries vied with each other for a bigger slice of the cake. Faced with the increasing dominance of Hollywood in Western Europe, the film industries of France, Germany, Sweden and Italy had to develop strategies which would help to secure their survival. The call for a 'national' cinema was commonplace around this time: Delluc believed that "the French cinema should be cinema and that the French cinema should be French." (3) Paradoxically, the creation of films which were distinct products of a particular culture was seen as the means of securing success

on the international market. In his review of Murnau's Der Letzte Mann (The Last Laugh), Herbert Jhering made the following observation:

"Der Letzte Mann is international, because it is a first-rate German film, just as an American film is international if it is a first-rate American one." (4)

Like many other European directors, Lang was making a conscious attempt at producing films which were distinctly 'national' in character. It is worth bearing this 'cultural nationalism' in mind when assessing the two-part epic Die Nibelungen, although the subject matter of this film does lend itself to appropriation by the reactionary exponents of political nationalism.

German film producers were caught up in a somewhat contradictory situation, however, since in order to maximize profits in what was a high-risk business, films should ideally be able to draw audiences both at home and abroad. Filmmakers were consequently involved, whether consciously or not, in a delicate balancing act in trying to cater for the tastes of the German filmgoing public as well as a potential foreign audience, which would mainly be an American one. There was no point in German filmmakers competing with the successful American products - the entertainment cinema of Chaplin, the slapstick comedies, the Griffith epics or the western - so they developed a particular type of film which was different from anything their rivals were producing at the time. As Lang said in 1924, recognizing that it would be bad policy to imitate American films, "We want to give

them what they haven't already got." (5) Erich Pommer summed up the position succinctly:

"The German film industry made 'stylized' films to make money.[...] It would have been impossible to try and imitate Hollywood or the French. So we tried something new: the expressionist or stylized films. This was possible because Germany had an overflow of good artists and writers, and a great tradition of theatre." (6)

It is not surprising that the brand of German film which developed was so introspective, serious and theatrical, given the tradition of German philosophy and 'high art'. Rudolph Kurtz claimed in 1926 that the term 'analytical' was used abroad to describe German films. (7) It was also understandable that the new art form of film would look for a distinctive 'German' quality to the dominant modernist movement of the previous decade, Expressionism, which despite the affinities with Futurism and Cubism, remained for the most part an aesthetic phenomenon peculiar to Germany.

Expressionism developed initially as a reaction against what was seen as the superficial visual mimesis of Impressionism in painting, but it soon widened out to take in poetry, literature, theatre, music and architecture, as well as film. To outline very briefly some of the basic concepts of Expressionism, it was a movement born to a great extent of the crisis of the self in art and philosophy which erupted around the beginning of the 20th Century in response to the pressures of modern industrial society. The individual could only come to terms with the agonies

of existence through heightened emotional experience and through the creative impulse. In art, this tortured self was expressed through distorted forms which were intended to reflect the intense inner reality of human emotions. The carnage of the First World War led to the radical politicization of many Expressionists, whose subsequent works were based on revolutionary commitment and the ideal of the collective renewal of mankind.

The film which launched the 'Expressionist' or 'stylized' film wave in Germany was Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari (Wiene, 1920) and its success both at home and in the USA prompted a series of films which adopted the same style. In the next few years came, among others, Genuine, Raskolnikoff, and Orlacs Hände, (all by the director of Caligari, Wiene), Das Wachsfigurenkabinett (Leni, 1924) and Von Morgens bis Mitternacht (Martin, 1920), which is based on the play by Georg Kaiser, and is, by reputation, more 'Expressionistic' than Caligari. (8)

It is perhaps over-cynical to suggest that the craftsmen who made these films - the actors, set designers, scriptwriters and directors - were only concerned with cashing in on a marketable trend in creating Expressionist films, yet the financial motive is continually underplayed where 'art' is concerned. The possibilities for artistic innovation which existed between 1919 and 1924, the period which saw the peak of the stylized films, became much more limited during the downturn in the film industry following the currency reform. Experimentation in what was a highly capitalized industry was to a great extent dependent on

favourable economic conditions. It is also likely that the fashion had been exhausted after five years or so of production, with the result that Expressionism ceased to be a main feature of film style after 1924. There can be no doubt, however, that Expressionism was 'in the air' during the 20s, and that it exerted an often profound influence on artists working in literature, theatre, painting, and architecture, as well as in film. The way in which Expressionism influenced other movements was genuine and widespread, but in film it was often used in a superficial and self-conscious manner, more as a gimmick in the service of product differentiation than as a consistently applied aesthetic theory.

The number of Expressionist films was very small in any case, in comparison with the total output, and according to Rudolph Kurtz, they were not particularly popular with the public, with the exception of Caligari. (9) It is, however, this handful of films which have come to be representative of 'German silent cinema' at the expense of the less well known 'Kammerspielfilme' and social realist films. At the time of their production, the stylized films were meant to be both 'artistic' and popular, and there were debates about whether the aesthetic quality of a film added to its box-office potential or not. In many ways Erich Pommer was held up as the example of a producer who could unite what are normally set against each other as opposite poles - art and profit. He was the defender of artistic freedom and supporter of aesthetic innovation who also had the knack of producing extremely popular films. As a powerful

executive at the head of Ufa for a number of years, Pommer was well aware of the exigencies of the market. Following a trip to Hollywood in 1924 by Lang and Pommer, Metropolis was made.

In many ways, Metropolis and the two-part epic Die Nibelungen (Part 1: Siegfrieds Tod, Part 2: Kriemhilds Rache, both 1924) have much in common in terms of the type of films they were. Both were monumental in budget as well as style, and their production each spanned a period of two years. Die Nibelungen was far more successful commercially than Metropolis proved to be, and it was this popularity which had led Ufa to finance Metropolis so lavishly, in the hope of repeating their performance on the export market as well as at home. In both of these blockbuster productions, Lang developed a distinctive style which combined elements of Expressionism with a grand ornamentalism. This represented the culmination of Lang's contribution to the stylized German film, which was clearly distinguishable from the products of other markets. Whereas the Nibelungen epic was still within the 'Expressionist' period of filmmaking, by the time Metropolis was released, its style was out of step with more recent developments in film, characterized by the move towards realism.

Significantly, none of the critics who reviewed Metropolis in Germany at the time of its release perceived the film as in any way 'Expressionist': to my knowledge, this term does not occur at all in this body of writing. It is used, however, by Iris Barry in her review of the film for The Spectator (26th March 1927) -

"..and though part of the film is conceived in an expressionist mood, and part of it quite naturalistically, some of it is mere picture-postcard. The expressionist parts are far and away the best.."

Lang's Weimar films are on the periphery of the Expressionist film wave, if it can even legitimately be described as such. According to Lotte Eisner,

"Lang's intense feeling for the physical character of objects and his skilful use of lighting effects to bring out architectural line were the only contributions he was to make to the evolution of Expressionism." (10)

In Metropolis the acting and the use of crowds have been cited as examples of the influence of Expressionist drama in the film, and the similarities with Piscator's use of the speaking chorus, as well as Reinhardt's mobilization of extras , have also been noted. (11)

The impact of the theatre of Max Reinhardt on German filmmaking during the Weimar years was tremendous, not only in terms of his stage techniques, but also through his training of a long list of famous actors and directors, among whom were Murnau, Leni, Lubitsch, Wegener, Veidt, Krauss, and Jannings. His experimental use of lighting was emulated in both Expressionist stage productions and the German cinema of the 20s, and was particularly noticable in the chiaroscuro effects of the 'stylized' film.

In his German Expressionist Film, John Barlow stresses the thematic Expressionism in Metropolis more than the stylistic

affinities. He lists these representative themes as the urban setting, the social utopianism couched in religious symbolism, the dehumanizing effect of machines, and the father-son conflict. In fact many of the aspects of Metropolis which have automatically been equated with Expressionism might be put into better perspective by referring to the historical tradition of romanticism in Germany and to the other cultural influences during the Weimar period. In widening the sphere of reference beyond the confines of Expressionism, it will help to clarify the film as a contradictory product of a turbulent period in history.

The Romantic Tradition.

The Romantic movement which developed in Germany at the beginning of the 19th Century differed in many ways from the Romanticism of other European countries. While there was a distinctly radical trend in the work of, say, Shelley or Delacroix, the overwhelming tone of German Romanticism was reactionary, due mainly to the prevailing social and political circumstances: the bourgeois-democratic revolution had not reached Germany, where the particularist interests of autocratic princes still repressed the middle classes and the 'lower orders'. To a great extent, the Romantic protest in Germany was sparked off by events elsewhere in Europe. As Ernst Fischer points out:

"..in its disgust with the capitalist aftermath of revolutionary upheavals, German Romanticism turned against those upheavals themselves and their postulates and ideas." (12)

In rejecting the rationalism of the Enlightenment and the spirit of the French Revolution, the German Romantics harked back instead to a mythical past, the organic unity of pre-industrial society, and in the context of the Napoleonic Wars, many became fervent nationalists. German Romanticism was profoundly contradictory in that it combined a critique of the evils of nascent bourgeois capitalism with a horror of revolution, the inevitable result of which was a reactionary ideology. For the protest against the ravages of industrial capitalism can be either progressive or reactionary, depending on what is posed as the alternative. In the case of the German Romantics, the answer lay in a flight into the past away from a distasteful reality, and in their longing for a harmonious unity, they resorted to an idealization of 'the people', which (and the following quotation echoes the sentiments in Metropolis uncannily)

"not only attacked the bourgeoisie but also all manifestations of class struggle, and eventually petered out in a babble of 'social partnership' and the preaching of a false and hypocritical 'brotherhood'." (13)

The spirit of Romanticism remained strong in Germany through the 19th Century, which should be seen both in the context of the powerful idealist currents in philosophy and the slow development of industrial capitalism. Although literary realism flourished in the second half of the century, even its best known representatives, Fontane and Storm, can hardly be compared with Dickens, Flaubert, Balzac or Tolstoy. The weakness of realism in the arts, of positivism in philosophy and of the bourgeoisie and

liberalism in politics should not be seen in isolation from each other: the opposite side of the coin was the strength of romantic ideas, idealism and the policies of Bismarck.

In the period 1870-1914, Germany underwent a process of rapid industrialization, on such a scale that it moved from being a backward and underdeveloped country, relative to the Western democracies, to representing a significant imperialist power. By the outbreak of the First World War, Germany was second only to the USA in terms of industrial production. This rate of development is significant, since the brutal transformations of capitalist society were accentuated more blatantly than in Britain, for example, where changes took place over a far longer time-span. For the academic intelligentsia, many traditional values were eroded, and in particular, their economic predominance receded with the rise of wealthy entrepreneurs and bankers. The result was the emergence of a second phase of romanticism in German culture, which was not a definable 'movement', but rather a strong current of romantic anti-capitalism in academic and philosophical circles, as well as among individual writers and artists.

This same period also saw the growth of the strongest Marxist opposition party in Europe, the German SPD (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands), and a corresponding rise in trade union membership. While the rank and file were organizing against the ravages of capitalism, the intelligentsia turned inwards in the face of distasteful social change.

"Capitalism meant the rule of the rational, the calculating, the bureaucratic mentality. It aroused in the Wilhelmine intelligentsia, not humanitarian horror, let alone socialist commitment, but rather a romantic aestheticist contempt." (14)

In sociological circles there was a liberal, more enlightened tendency in the current of romantic anti-capitalism, which can be found in the works of theorists like Max Weber and Georg Simmel. Both combine a radical critique of bourgeois industrial society with a realization that a return to a supposedly harmonious past is impossible. This pessimistic vision of the future as well as the present constituted the 'tragic world view' which was common to many writers around the turn of the century. The 'romantic' trend in sociology was perhaps more marked in the work of Ferdinand Tönnies, particularly in his opposition *Gesellschaft/Gemeinschaft* (society/community). Modern industrial society, according to Tönnies, is transitory and superficial, a mechanical artifact based on profit and egotism: against this he poses the values of the 'community', the pre-capitalist 'organic' societies, which embody all that is natural and which are characterized by harmonious social relations. Unlike orthodox romantics, however, Tönnies (along with Weber and Simmel) did not long for a return to the organic past, no matter how critical he was of contemporary society.

Outwith the social sciences there was a more reactionary brand of romantic anti-capitalism which believed German 'Kultur' to be under attack from Anglo-French 'Zivilisation', which stood

for democratic ideas and technological progress. This conservative chauvinism was popularized in Spengler's Der Untergang des Abendlandes (The Decline of the West) (1918), and can also be found in the works of Thomas Mann to a certain extent. Lukács pointed out that Mann's Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen (Reflections of an Unpolitical Man) (1918) was "covered over and distorted by a German form of romantic anti-capitalism." (15) The negative pole of romantic disgust at contemporary society reached a peak in art in the elitism of Stefan George,

"who retreated into a narrow circle of disciples and glorified the elect personality against the common mass." (16)

In many ways Expressionism was part of this romantic anti-bourgeois protest in the first two decades of the 20th Century. Like other contemporary avant garde movements such as Futurism and Surrealism, it represented a critique of bourgeois society from within the ranks of the middle classes and was a curious blend of both reactionary and progressive elements. On the one hand there was the utopian revolutionary wing of committed artists (Becher, Toller, Pfemfert, for example), who shared an optimistic, idealistic vision of humanity with the more mystical section of the movement. Other figures such as Benn and Bronnen later became supporters of the Nazis, channelling the subjectivism and 'classless ideal' of Expressionism into right-wing theories based on the leadership of the elect. As Stedman Jones points out,

"The unpalatable fact remains that, depending on the prevailing political climate, romantic anti-capitalism is no less assimilable to right-wing extremism and variants of fascism than it is to socialism [...] The Janus-faced character of this romantic tradition cannot be eradicated." (17)

Metropolis is not a 'Romantic film'. Yet many aspects of the film, in terms of its themes, form and style, can be located within the parameters of this historical tradition of romanticism in German culture. Many other features can equally be explained by reference to influences outwith the boundaries of this tradition; these will be dealt with in the next section.

One of the main themes in Metropolis is the critique of a capitalist society in which the division of labour has polarized the ruling elite from the working masses to such an extent that the latter exist mechanically while the rulers implicitly maintain their superiority by coercion. The evils of mechanization and alienation are condemned, but so too is the revolutionary action of the workers to free themselves from the injustices of the system. As we have already seen, this particular combination of a protest against capitalism and a fear of revolution was characteristic of German Romanticism. What is also distinctly 'romantic' about Metropolis is the longing for unity as symbolized in the motto which came at the beginning of the original German titles:

"The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart."

The same sentiment is echoed by Maria on two occasions, firstly in the catacomb scene and finally on the steps of the cathedral:

"Brain and hands need a mediator. The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart."

(Reel 4, T. 12 and 13).

"The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart."

(Reel 9, T. 20)

This leitmotif expresses the belief that the effects of the division of labour can be overcome by the power of love, which will bring about the organic rebirth of a harmonious community out of the ashes of class conflict. The heavy use of symbolism, both here and elsewhere in the film, links the style of Metropolis with romanticism. Lang's films in general, particularly during his first German period, make widespread use of symbols and metaphors, and he later agreed with Peter Bogdanovich, who suggested that symbols in film should make the point rather than reinforce an idea. (18)

It is significant that the principal character who represents the values of the heart is also a Christian figure - Maria. For a revival in mysticism and various forms of Christianity, Catholicism in particular, was common among the original German Romantics, their successors at the end of the 19th Century, and also the Expressionists. In Metropolis, feeling is set against the cold, calculating rationalism of Fredersen, mainly in the characters of Maria and Freder, but also in Rotwang, who (as has been pointed out) was a tragic figure in the original German version, driven mad through grief for his lost love, Hel - what could be more romantic?

According to Ernst Fischer,

"The dialectical triad - THESIS (unity of origin), ANTITHESIS (alienation, isolation, fragmentation), and SYNTHESIS (removal of contradictions, reconciliation with reality, identity of subject and object, paradise regained) - was the very core of Romanticism." (19)

In terms of *Metropolis*, one might apply this triad as follows: thesis - all men are brothers; antithesis - brain and hands are separated, resulting in conflict; synthesis - the handshake of reconciliation on the steps of the cathedral, brain and hands are reunited. But as well as the main theme being dialectical, in the Hegelian sense, so too is its structure, as John Tulloch points out in his genetic structuralist article.

Tulloch sets out what he sees as a recurrent pattern of thesis/antithesis/synthesis, which is established in the first few sequences of the film. Against the thesis of the dehumanized world of the workers is posed the antithesis of the decadent, idle opulence of the ruling elite, and the synthesis is provided by the meeting between Freder and Maria in the Eternal Gardens.

"..the whole direction of the film is to resolve the major antithesis of worker and capitalist in the culminating act of synthesis on the cathedral steps [...] That the final shot of the film is in no way arbitrary is shown not only by the projected synthesis of boss and worker throughout *Metropolis* but by the carefully structured establishing shots of the film." (20)

While on the whole I would agree with Tulloch's assessment of the structure as dialectical, there are some aspects of his analysis

which are problematical. He sees the meeting between Freder and Maria as the

"synthesising thematic - the pure, "spiritual" leaders, their relationship neither brutal and mechanical nor superficially sexual, but intent, active, instantaneous and utterly compelling." (21)

Far from being 'pure and spiritual', however, the relationship between Freder and Maria is based on a suppressed eroticism, as will be argued in a later section. Instead of the meeting in the Eternal Gardens being the first in a series of syntheses (as Tulloch claims), it could be described as the catalyst of developments, which lead eventually to the synthesis between brain and hands on the cathedral steps. Thus the alternating movement from thesis to antithesis between the opposing worlds of workers and capitalists continues throughout the film, and is not finally resolved until the handshake at the end. At the same time, what might be described as the subsidiary synthesis, Freder's quest for Maria, is also concluded - the love story which tends to overshadow Freder's mediator function throughout the film.

In spite of Tulloch's claim that the final shot is not arbitrary, Fredersen's willingness to reach an agreement with the workers has not been heralded in advance. The only sign that his authoritarian control is wavering is given in the scene in the cathedral when he drops to his knees, and this is because he fears for his son's life. The handshake is not expected, but seems to have been tacked on as an imposed political solution.

"The Romantic creation is characterized by the striving to synthesize opposites." (22)

In Metropolis the tension and contradictions arise mainly from the juxtaposition of the romantic and the modern. Set against those aspects of the film which have been located in the romantic tradition are the thematic and stylistic elements which stem from other contemporary cultural influences and which can be broadly located within modernism.

Other Influences.

The theme of the city reached a peak during the 1920s among artists who reflected their cosmopolitan outlook and concerns about modern urban life in painting, architecture, theatre and literature as well as film.

"..the whole texture of the arts in this period is overwhelmingly urban, with Berlin most consciously at the centre." (23)

The output of Brecht, Döblin, Dix, Grosz, Mendelsohn and Feuchtwanger, among others, showed the pervasive influence of the city on Weimar culture. American cities in particular provided images of a skyscraper civilization which inspired German artists to represent urban themes in their work. The glorification of the city in the cinema was epitomized by Ruttmann's uncritical montage of scenes from city life, Berlin: Die Symphonie einer Großstadt (1927), a formal experiment influenced by the documentary work of Dziga Vertov. Ruttmann was an avant garde artist who later adapted his work to suit the Nazi regime: he continued to make films about German cities during the

Thirties, and advised Riefenstahl on the making of her film about the Olympic Games.

In Metropolis, and the title itself suggests an archetypal city in the manner of the 'Superman' comic strip, the representation of the city is more or less neutral, tending neither towards glorification nor to negative criticism. There is no threatening vision of urban decay, as in Scott's Blade Runner (1982) for example. The images we see in the cityscape montage at the beginning of the film are characterized by grand edifices bathed in light and surrounded by a hustle and bustle of activity. What is significant, though, is the fact that in Metropolis, there are two separate cities - one for the ruling class and one for the workers. It is not 'the modern city' in itself which is criticized, but the social relations which lead to such a rigid and unjust stratification. Under this system, the ruling elite has become degenerate and materialistic, while the workforce is totally deprived by inhuman conditions. It is in this context that Georgy succumbs to the temptations of Yoshiwara, much in the way Wordsworth's Michael was fatally lured by the attractions of the city.

It is difficult to separate the predominance of urban themes from the impact that the USA was having on German culture in general. Writing in 1927, Ilya Ehrenburg described Berlin as 'an apostle of Americanism'.(24) In economic terms, Germany was profoundly dependent on America after the stabilization of the mark in 1924, since massive amounts of US capital had been injected into the German economy through the Dawes Plan, a two-

pronged strategy to ward off the dangers of Bolshevism and to assure the continued payment of reparations to the Western Allies. Yet the links between the Weimar Republic and the USA in the 20s went beyond purely financial considerations. What became known in Germany as 'Amerikanismus' implied a much wider cultural and ideological influence. For in many ways America, the epitome of liberty, equality and high wages, provided a model for the new democracy in Germany - the myth of 'prosperity for all' in a progressive and stable capitalist society. In the arts, America made the greatest impact on German society in the form of jazz music and Chaplin films.

With some justification, Francois Truffaut has pointed out the 'Hollywood' element in Lang's early German films, such as Spione, Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse and Metropolis. (25) Speaking of the reception of Metropolis in America, a later German critic makes much the same point, if somewhat exaggerated:

"The success of the film in America was a particular triumph for Fritz Lang, for the Americans did not want to take 'Metropolis' at first. But then it became evident that Fritz Lang's film was not only almost American, but in fact more American than most American films." (26)

The influence of the United States on Germany at this time was also closely connected with the massive industrial expansion taking place in both countries as a result of rapid technological development. New production methods like Taylorism and Fordism were imported by German industry on a wide scale in order to boost profit levels. Indeed many, though not all, Soviet leaders

believed these new techniques would have to be adopted if the Soviet economy was to be rebuilt to meet the needs of the new socialist system.

Attitudes differed among European intellectuals about the effects of these changes: some saw technology as a great liberating force, capable of alleviating human suffering; others believed it meant the dehumanization of labour and the increased exploitation of the working class. In art, the Futurists indulged in a romantic hero worship of machines while on the other hand the Bauhaus practitioners attempted to integrate art and industry in their designs and products. The cult of technology was an international phenomenon at this time, but was particularly prevalent among Soviet artists such as the Constructivists. A few years later, the effects of technological progress were satirized in film by René Clair in A Nous La Liberté (1931) and then by Chaplin in Modern Times (1936).

In Metropolis, the machine turns into the pagan god Moloch in Freder's imagination, when he witnesses the accident in the machine room. The image of Moloch (which originates from the bible - Leviticus 18, v.21) has been conjured up by a wide variety of writers over the centuries to represent an object to which horrible sacrifices are made: Luxemburg, Milton, Blake and Melville to name a few. (27) Lang's vision of workers being devoured like fodder echoes similar symbolic descriptions in Zola's Germinal, seen through the eyes of the hero, Etienne. In the following extract, the mine is equated with a gluttonous

beast, then the wider link is made between the capitalist system and a pagan god:

"Il ne restait là, sans un arrêt, que l'échappement de la pompe, soufflant toujours de la même haleine grosse et longue, l'haleine d'un ogre dont il distinguait la buée grise maintenant, et que rien ne pouvait repaître. [...] il songeait violemment à ces gens dont parlait Bonnemort, à ce dieu repu et accroupi, auquel dix mille affamés donnaient leur chair, sans le connaître." (28)

Though obviously products of different media, both Metropolis and Germinal have one important factor in common: the main critique is not of machinery per se, but of the social conditions under which the working class has become brutalized and tyrannized. The opening sequence of Lang's film, showing cogs and pistons in motion, verges on being a celebration of technology. It is only when the devastating effects of the machine become clear that it is transformed into a monstrous entity. (29)

Some critics, among them H.G.Wells, (see below, pp.90-91 and p. 94) claimed that Lang's depiction of the technology of the future was ridiculous, since the development of machinery was making labour less, not more, arduous. This assessment totally misses the point that Lang was symbolically representing working class oppression through his images of massive, cumbersome and ugly machines. What jars is the juxtaposition of antiquated looking, steam engulfed Moloch machines with the Expressionist gestures of the workers operating them.

In spite of the contemporary themes - the city, the machine age and class conflict - and the presence of Expressionist style

in acting and in decor, in the end it is the 'romantic' which is dominant in Metropolis. One contemporary critic, Fred Hildenbrandt, described Metropolis as a modern fairy tale, and this location of the film within a romantic narrative tradition helps to explain what have often been referred to as its 'unrealistic' aspects. Bufuel's description of Metropolis as "two films joined by the belly" is valid, though not in the sense he meant - Lang's form versus von Harbou's content. Instead, the division is between the romantic and the modern aspects of the film, and it is in this inherent tension that the contradictions of the film lie.

2. The Critical Response to Metropolis.

The Contemporary Critics and the Aesthetic Background.

The predominant romanticism of Metropolis was out of step with the general cultural climate in Germany during the so-called 'stable period' between 1924 and 1929, when a spirit of realism characterized both political and artistic developments. The post-Expressionist cultural climate involved

"objectivity in place of the previous intense subjectivity, self-discipline in lieu of passion, scepticism instead of solemnity and faith." (30)

The aesthetic movement associated with this wider trend towards 'realism' was known as 'die Neue Sachlichkeit', perhaps best translated as 'the new objectivity'. (31) The term originated from Hartlaub's art exhibition in Mannheim in 1925, which included paintings by Max Beckmann, social critics like Grosz and Dix, and 'magical realists' like Schrimpf and Kanoldt. Their works, and those of other artists subsequently involved in Neue Sachlichkeit shows, consisted mainly of portraits and urban scenes.

The move from the abstract forms of Futurism, Cubism and Expressionism to realist modes of representation was evident in all the arts - in the music of Hindemith, in the functionalist architecture and design of the Bauhaus in Dessau, in the 'street' films, the works of G.W.Pabst, and the 'cross section' documentaries. The underlying feature of 'die Neue Sachlichkeit' was a tendency for most, though not all, of its exponents, to

portray social and political life without criticism, thus implicitly accepting the status quo.

Given the predominance of realism in the arts in the latter half of the 1920s, it is not surprising that the aesthetic criteria by which Metropolis was evaluated reflected this trend. According to Rudolf Arnheim, there was not a trace of 'die Neue Sachlichkeit' in the film. (32) Many of the contemporary reviews of Metropolis focused on what the critics perceived as the 'implausible' aspects of the film. The realism in the arts seems to have percolated through to film critics in the form of a 'literal realism', which was concerned mainly with whether a film had accurately reflected 'real life' or not.

There were very few contemporary reviews which expressed wholehearted praise for Metropolis. The most favourable reaction came from Der Kinematograph (a trade paper), Berliner Tageblatt, and Vossische Zeitung, while for other reviewers, the response ranged from being negative on balance (see Vorwärts, Paimanns Filmlisten, Die Literarische Welt) to more definitely hostile (Das Tagebuch, Die Filmwoche, Der Bildwart). A similar spectrum is reflected in the non-German critics: a very positive review in The New York Telegram, a mixed reaction in The Nation, The Film Spectator, The Spectator, and a veritable onslaught by H.G. Wells in The Los Angeles Times. (33)

In general, those who were most critical of the film focused on what they perceived as 'unrealistic', or 'implausible' aspects of the narrative. Two things in particular were cited as unacceptable in this respect, namely Lang's representation of

what was taken to be the technology of the future, and his depiction of class relations.

According to Paul Ickes, there should at least have been some indication of the function of the M-Machine and the various cogs and generators, since the viewer's natural reaction was to demand what the machines were there for. Exactly the same point was made by H.P., the critic who reviewed the film for *Der Bildwart*: s/he too questioned the apparent absence of purpose in the machinery. Voicing another frequent criticism about the technology in *Metropolis*, Kurt Pinthus asked why Maria had to exert herself to the point of collapse in order to sound the gong - surely an electric bell would have been more likely in the city of the future? The fact that Lang was using extensive symbolism for a specific narrative purpose seems to have been either ignored or discounted by most of the contemporary critics. Ickes directed the following remark at Lang's co-scriptwriter:

"My dear Mrs. von Harbou, don't give me the excuse that everything is supposed to be symbolic - the public doesn't know the difference."

The second allegedly implausible feature of *Metropolis*, which was seen as a fundamental flaw in the film, was the portrayal of class relations, and in particular the bleak vision of a totally oppressed working class. The Marxist critic Axel Eggebrecht felt that Lang had badly misjudged both proletarian and capitalist psychology. Pinthus likewise argued that it would not be in the interests of future capitalists to work their slaves to the point of exhaustion, since explosions could occur

when workers were incapable of carrying out their allotted functions. The American critic Welford Beaton makes the same point:

"None of the things that *Metropolis* says time will do to society seem reasonable to me. Capital will never make slaves of workingmen because it is not good business to do so."

Ickes refused to accept the idea that workers of the future would allow themselves to be treated as slaves, since they would be "descendants of a period of strong workers' organization". Again addressing his remarks to Thea von Harbou, he went on to ask whether she really believed in the cretinization of humanity.

What is evident in these negative reviews is an implicit belief in the potentially liberating power of machinery and a humanist faith in the steady, upwards progression of mankind. History has proved writers like Pinthus and Ickes to be tragically wrong in their projections about the future of the German working class and the role of capitalism. In 1927 it would have been difficult for either of them to have foreseen the unthinkable - the smashing of the strongest labour movement in Europe, the attempted eradication of the Jewish race, and the grand-scale establishment of slave labour camps to satisfy the I.G. Farbens of this world.

The most censorious review in German or English came from the pen of H.G. Wells, who had nothing good to say about the film at all. It is worth going into his comments in some detail, since (a) he was a famous science fiction writer, whose books had always been popular in Germany (as we are told in Vreeland's own

review of Metropolis), and (b) his article was translated into German in both the Frankfurter Zeitung and Der Bildwart, thus giving his views wide coverage in Germany as well as in the United States.

His review of Metropolis was the eighth in a series of articles entitled "The Way The World is Going", covering the outstanding events and tendencies of the year. It appeared on the front page of The Los Angeles Times under the heading 'Film Hailed as Absurd'. He described the film as "ignorant, old-fashioned balderdash", and found nothing original in "the whole pretentious stew". He claimed to recognize aspects of his own "juvenile work of thirty years ago", by which he probably meant The Sleeper Awakes and The Time Machine. Vreeland also found such similarities, since he described Metropolis as "out of the boldest pages of H.G.Wells".

Wells' diatribe contains a number of misconceptions, however, which undermine the strength of his arguments.

1. He seems to have been under the impression that the original German title was not Metropolis but Neubabelsburg [sic], which he claimed was better, and could have been rendered 'New Babel'. This was in fact the name of the production studios where Metropolis was made.

2. He made a great issue about motor cars being the commodities produced by the machines of Metropolis - "We are shown rows of motor cars, exactly alike" - but this deduction is not substantiated by the film itself, nor by all the other reviews

which criticize the film for not specifying what the machines are supposed to be producing.

3. From Maria's sermon in the catacomb, Wells deduced that "The leading idea of her religion seems to be a disapproval of machines and efficiency." This interpretation is not borne out by the titles of the Tower of Babel parable, whose only criticism concerns the lack of understanding between 'brain and hands'.

4. Refuting totally Lang's depiction of the proletariat as an enslaved, exhausted and drab mass, Wells claimed that "The hopeless drudge stage of human labor lies behind us", and made a great fuss about the apparent opposition to 'efficiency' in the film. He based his comments on the English-language version he saw in London, and was presumably referring to the following titles, which were not in fact in the original German version at all:

"Nothing is important except the brain, and what it creates - efficiency - which, in turn, has created all the wealth of the world. Throughout history, efficiency - without soul - has led to war..revolution..chaos..destruction!"

(List B, Titles 23 and 24).

Two main implications run through Wells' argument: one, that Lang has plagiarized his own early works, the ideas of which have now been superceded by events; and two, that he, Wells, could have made a far better job of such a film, particularly given the vast resources allocated to it. His final note is symptomatic of the basic premise of Metropolis' harshest critics:

"It was, I thought, an unresponsive audience, and I heard no comments. I could not tell from their

bearing whether they believed that "Metropolis" was really a possible forecast or not." [my emphasis]

It is not at all clear, however, that Lang did intend the film to be a literal prediction of the future. Those critics who expected it to be a 'forecast' must inevitably have been disappointed, for Metropolis is more concerned with symbolic representation than 'realistic' depictions.

One critic, Fred Hildenbrandt, accepted that the film was riddled with improbabilities, but unashamedly admitted to having enjoyed it in spite of its faults. What made Metropolis a wonderful film in his eyes was its mythical quality, which pushed the flaws into the background: it was, essentially, a modern fairy tale. He also described the general reaction of the café-literati in Berlin's fashionable bar Schwannecke to the première of Metropolis - most of them thought it 'sentimental and pretentious kitsch'.

The label 'kitsch', which was used by several critics to describe Metropolis was by no means a value-free term, but relied to a great extent for its meaning on the 'high art' tradition of those who employed it. Many of the film critics who wrote for the 'quality' newspapers and journals in the 1920s were also theatre critics (Jhering, Arnheim, Jakobs), and as E. Ann Kaplan has pointed out, they

"saw themselves on the side of high culture, taste, and intellect in a world where such values were being increasingly eroded. They adopted a critical position that evolved out of the Romantic

tradition and culminated in Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy." (34)

Almost without exception, the critics blamed Thea von Harbou for the 'kitsch' in Metropolis, while at the same time lavishing praise on Lang for his technical expertise and skilful direction. (35) Hildenbrandt wrote of "the gulf which exists between the technical ability of Lang and Thea von Harbou's script". This division of responsibility, which we have already seen in Buñuel's extreme denunciation of von Harbou, represents an artificial separation of form and content. Similar attempts have been made with other films and directors, perhaps the most obvious example being Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will. Her active function in promoting the ideology of fascism has been minimized, if not ignored, while critics have emphasized her innovative cinematic achievements.

Although Lang escaped the harshest criticism because of his technical and aesthetic skills, he was taken to task by some for his failure to concern himself with the 'story-line' of Metropolis:

"..dear Mr. Lang, do not always think about the individual images! It is your misfortune that you value only the image, and not the idea." (36)

In later years it was precisely this emphasis on visual qualities which redeemed Lang in the eyes of the French critics of the Cahiers du Cinéma group: his mise-en-scène made him a great director, in spite of mediocre Hollywood scripts. One of these critics, Michel Mourlet, pointed out the continuity of style between Lang's early German and Hollywood films in his use of

actors, describing them as "a completely neutralised vehicle for mise-en-scène." (37) In his review of Metropolis, Pinthus described the same tendency, saying that Lang had always been a 'director of images' rather than a 'director of actors'.

Some of the more favourably disposed reviewers provided a second excusing factor (the first being Thea von Harbou's contribution) for the shortcomings of the film. Iris Barry believed that Metropolis just fell short of being a great film "because the cinema as yet fails to be quite adequate as a means of expression."

In the Social Democratic paper Vorwärts, the critic raised the question of whether film should attempt to solve complicated social problems at all, or stick to subjects which could be easily translated into visual sequences. The implication was that Lang had been too ambitious as far as the themes were concerned, whereas his ambitions had been fully realized on a formal level.

What was singularly lacking in the observations of the contemporary critics was an analysis which went beyond admiration for Lang's formal innovations to link the technical achievements with ideology and profit. The criticism itself was bound up within the commercial system of journalism, which entailed selling newspapers as well as assessing films. While there can be little doubt that the response to Metropolis on an aesthetic level was influenced by the growing tendency away from abstraction towards realism, it is also evident that commercial pressures played a part in the critics' reaction to the film, as will be demonstrated in the following section.

The Commercial Background.

Within a few years at the beginning of the 1920s, Lang had established his reputation as a film director with a series of films which were successful both at home and on the international market. Der Müde Tod, Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler, and Die Nibelungen, all well received by the critics, were popular entertainment films which reached a wide public. In 1927, even after the apparent failure of Metropolis, Lang came second as 'the most popular German film director' in an opinion poll carried out by Die Filmbühne. (38) This reputation was significant in a number of ways. Firstly, without such credentials, Lang would never have obtained the level of funding he did for Metropolis. Secondly, the expectations of the critics were understandably high, being based on his previous achievements, yet as we have seen, most of the reviews reveal a profound disappointment in the end product. Hans Siemsen claimed to have read at least two dozen reviews of Metropolis, but found that "only a few had wholesale praise for the film." (39) On the whole, the critics were lukewarm towards Metropolis, giving the general impression that they considered it a mediocre offering from a talented director. On reading a selection of the reviews, however, it becomes clear that there was another factor which contributed to the response to a certain degree, and that was the enormous amount of publicity the film received before its release.

One critic acknowledged Lang's reputation as "one of the most competent German film directors" to be justified on the basis of his previous achievements, but went on to add:

"However, having seen the long-awaited film Metropolis, heralded as a masterpiece long before its appearance, one is tempted to overturn this judgement." (40)

Throughout the shooting of the film, which lasted almost a year and a half, articles with photographs had been appearing in newspapers and journals, and a steady stream of visitors to the studios at Neubabelsberg (including Eisenstein) had followed the various stages of the film's production. (41) Rumours about the costs involved proliferated, and in addition to the unofficial publicity during the making of the film, there would seem to have been a massive advertising campaign to launch Metropolis in January 1927. There was only one other film during the Weimar period which received a similar degree of pre-release publicity, namely Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari, released in 1920.

Given the amount of speculation surrounding Metropolis, most of which would seem to have been encouraged by its producers, it was perhaps not surprising that the actual viewing of the film proved to be a disappointment. The correct balance of stimulating interest without an over-saturation of attention was not achieved. Under great pressure to recoup their substantial investment, Ufa had to use a high profile approach in marketing Metropolis, a side effect of which was over-exposure.

It is crucial to remember that far from being an esoteric art house film, Metropolis was a big budget movie designed to appeal to a mass audience, in the best Hollywood tradition. The intention to make it a 'blockbuster' had implications both for

the style of the film itself and for the way in which it was distributed and exhibited. Many critics described it as a 'Monumentalfilm' or 'Großfilm' which marked the beginning of a new concept in filmmaking, although strictly speaking, Die Nibelungen was the initiator of the new grand-style film genre. Willy Haas explained what he called 'the curse of the monumental film' in his review of Metropolis. According to him, such films have to try to please everyone by allowing for all tastes, since the widest possible audience will increase the chance of covering the costs of production. Thus in Metropolis we find a mishmash of Christianity, of socialism, of Nietzsche..etc. What actually happens, though, is that no-one is satisfied, as they end up being non-committal and superficial.

This type of film also required a new approach to the question of exhibition, as the review in Der Kinematograph pointed out:

"Perhaps in a few years such a production will no longer be anything special. But here we are standing at the beginning, and an impressive beginning, of a new kind of filmmaking. That in itself must be a determining factor for the German cinema owner, who has to bring out this 'grand' type of film in an equally grand manner."

The première of Metropolis took place in the Ufa Palast am Zoo, which, as has been indicated, had been lavishly refurbished a few years earlier, but after the first night the film was moved to the less glamorous Ufa Pavillion. Several reviews described the première as a high society event attended by virtually every well

known figure from political, intellectual and industrial circles in Berlin, including the Reich's Chancellor, Marx.(42) A similar situation was reported at the première of Metropolis in Paris on 17th March 1927 by Arthur Vitner, whose article reads more like a society column than a film review.(43) The launching of Metropolis in a star-studded gala evening was part and parcel of the high profile marketing of a prestige production, which would help to recoup Ufa's investment, and which would also act as an ambassador for the German film industry.

In the face of fierce competition from America, the German film industry was desperately in need of a resounding success, both at home and abroad, to reverse its fortunes. It is obvious that the critics who reviewed Metropolis were fully aware of the industrial politics of the situation, and many of them focused on the fact that the film was a product of the German, as opposed to the American, film industry:

"What has been accomplished here in this German film goes far beyond any American camerawork."(44)

Monty Jakobs believed that the artistic quality of Metropolis would "regain the respect of the world for the German film once again", and according to Fred Hildenbrandt, it was "the most wonderful film that has ever been made by this German industry."(45) One critic, however, felt that Metropolis had been assessed in a less than honest manner because of the fact that it was a German film:

"All that huge expenditure does not stop Metropolis being kitsch, even if it is refined kitsch, and if it had been a question of an

American rather than a German film, you would read that everywhere." (46)

If critics were indeed unduly lenient towards faults in German films, this can be explained by factors other than their own personal nationalistic sentiments. The politics of film criticism were brought out into the open to a certain extent by Hans Siemsen, who accused the reviewers of Metropolis of being dishonest in their tempered criticisms of the film. For Siemsen, the scathing attack by H.G. Wells had been the most truthful response. His accusations sparked off a heated exchange between himself and Willy Haas of the Film-Kurier, who had written a review of Metropolis for Die Literarische Welt. The debate highlighted a number of issues, the most important of which were concerned with standards of film criticism and film production, and, significantly, the relationship between the press and the film industry. (47)

Siemsen claimed that editors were under a great deal of pressure to ensure that their film reviewers did not write an unfavourable criticism of a film, for which cinema owners had taken out an expensive advertisement in their newspaper. This widespread practice of subtle blackmail was exposed when the Frankfurter Zeitung published a letter it had received from a cinema in Berlin. It stated in no uncertain terms that as a result of the appalling review their current film had been given in the newspaper, they would no longer be taking out any advertisements with them. Film reviews were obviously regarded as an extension of the ads column. How was it conceivable, asked

Siemens, to have unbiased film criticism within such a relationship? As far as Metropolis was concerned - a film which had involved a massive advertising campaign - a film critic had actually said to Siemens,

"What do you expect? You dare not tear a film to pieces when it has cost so much money." (48)

The logical outcome of this system was that a big-budget film was given preferential treatment over a low-budget one. Similarly, a German film came under less rigorous scrutiny than an American one, because the US film industry was flourishing at the expense of its German counterpart. A recent postscript to this debate: commenting on the low standard of film criticism in the mid-20s, Hermand and Trommler maintained that if it had not been for a few capable critics, among whom they mentioned both Willy Haas and Hans Siemens, then the accusation that film reviews in the press were no more than an editorial appendix to cinema advertisements might well have been justified. (49)

The Audience Response.

Before attempting to assess the reaction of the general public to Metropolis, it is worth quoting Christopher Isherwood on the subject of Berlin audiences:

"What struck me much more, because I was a great cinema goer, was the extreme intelligence of the audience, and I mean by that a working class audience, at the time when the silent films were just coming to an end.[...] I think there was an extraordinary appreciation of cinema as an art at that time." (50)

He gave an example of a particularly beautiful shot in a film he went to see, after which a large percentage of the audience applauded. This reaction to what was generally considered to be a frivolous art form made a great impression on Isherwood. Such an open demonstration of approval, which would seem very unusual to a filmgoer in the 1980s, was actually fairly common in Europe in the 1920s. The reviews of the Metropolis première also described rounds of applause from the audience after some of the more spectacular technical effects.

Lang's own comments about the sophistication of the filmgoing public bear out Isherwood's observations. In an article written in 1924, entitled "Kitsch - Sensation - Kultur und Film", Lang claimed that cinema audiences would no longer accept what he called 'Lehmanns Anna' films. This sexist description presumably meant 'B' rate sentimental romances catering for alleged female tastes, films which, according to Lang, had been forced to flee to the furthest suburbs thanks to the demand for more cultured, intellectual products. It had been his own experience, he continued, that "audiences of all classes are carried away by so-called artistic films." (51)

This article was an implicit, if not direct, response to the hostile attitude towards film on the part of some critics, who denied that film could legitimately be called 'art' at all. Kurt Pinthus, one of Metropolis' harsher critics, had once said that "cinema can never provide sublime art" (52), and this debate about the aesthetic merits of film continued throughout the 20s. In this context, Lang was consciously helping to establish film as a

serious art form, and indeed it is clear from his comments about the subject that he regarded himself first and foremost as a 'creative artist'. (53) At the same time, he was attempting to reach a wide public with the type of films he was making, which could imply democratic intentions, or, viewed more cynically, might have something to do with box-office returns.

The demands of art and profit might seem mutually exclusive, yet the combination of both was a relatively successful formula for the German film industry, which used 'Expressionism' as a means of product differentiation to cope with American competition. Metropolis is an excellent example of the attempt to fuse art and commerce. Sixty years after its release, Metropolis is normally seen as part of a 'Fritz Lang Retrospective' or 'Season of Expressionist Films' in film clubs or art house cinemas: the 'commerce' side of the equation tends to be forgotten. It is essential to remember the original function of the film as a popular entertainment movie aimed at large audiences.

It is difficult to ascertain precisely how well Metropolis was received for a number of reasons. Firstly, most of the material available is based on reviews of the première, whose audience can hardly be described as typical. The response during an ordinary screening on a rainy afternoon in Düsseldorf remains an unknown quantity. Secondly, the accounts of the same audience at the Berlin première are often contradictory. According to Lichtbild-Bühne, the audience was very appreciative:

"At the end there were repeated rounds of sincere applause."

This view was shared by the critics writing for Der Tag, Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger and various other popular dailies, in which the phrase "a great success with the public" occurs at least twice. (54)

A rather different account was given, however, by other critics, who characterized the audience reaction as lukewarm. One such reviewer remarked that after seeing the film, it was not surprising that

"at the end a few whistles can be heard above the feeble applause." (55)

The descriptions of the audience response seem on the whole to coincide with the feelings of the person who is writing the review. For example, Wells, a scathing critic of the film, claimed that when he saw it in London, the audience was 'unresponsive'. Siemens, who had a similar low opinion of Metropolis, wrote five months after the premiere that there was at least some hope for the cinema-going public in Germany - they had flatly rejected Metropolis, which had failed miserably despite the massive advertising campaign. (56)

Perhaps the most plausible account was given by Hildenbrandt, who defended Metropolis against the usual criticisms and described it as the most wonderful German film ever made. He did not try to manoeuvre the audience onto his side in his review in order to reinforce his own opinion, but admitted that on the whole the audience was not wildly enthusiastic,

although they did applaud some of the more spectacular technical effects. This last point would seem to provide the key to the apparently contradictory assessments of the audience. Viewers could well have appreciated the innovatory visual aspects of Metropolis, which had involved so much time, money and effort (as they were frequently reminded) without necessarily being very enthusiastic about the overall result.

Incompatible claims about the general success or failure of Metropolis did not end in 1927, but have been a recurrent feature of commentaries on the film. Siegfried Kracauer, who was severely critical of the film, stated that it had impressed the German public. (57) Similarly, von Zglinicki wrote that

"..despite its huge success, the film could not avoid representing a loss for Ufa." (58)

On the other hand, we find a slightly different interpretation in Paul Jensen's book on Lang:

"The general disappointment in Metropolis shocked UFA's finances, and reduced Lang's reputation as a creator of art and profits." (59)

Whatever the arguments about the popularity or success of Metropolis, nothing has done more to damage Lang's 'reputation' than the post-war charge that it was essentially a fascist film. An historical and political analysis has to take account of such a serious allegation, which has been made in a number of writings on Lang, and which has occurred often enough to warrant a detailed investigation of the charge.

The Legacy : Metropolis and Fascism. (60)

The first critic to link Metropolis with Nazi ideology would seem to have been Kracauer, whose study of Weimar films, From Caligari to Hitler, was published in 1947. He claimed that the 'heart as mediator' motto could well have been formulated by Goebbels, and cited a not particularly appropriate example of Goebbels' use of the word 'heart' (in a reference to the art of political propaganda):

"..Power based on guns may be a good thing; it is, however, better and more gratifying to win the heart of a people and to keep it." (61)

According to Kracauer, the final sequence of Metropolis proves that Fredersen has in fact reinforced his authoritarian position through his use of Nazi-style propaganda techniques: the visual patterning of the workers advancing towards the cathedral steps shows their willing submission to Fredersen's tyrannical power.

"The whole composition denotes that the industrialist acknowledges the heart for the purpose of manipulating it; that he does not give up his power, but will expand it over a realm not yet annexed - the realm of the collective soul." (62)

Kracauer imputes motives in Fredersen's behaviour which cannot be substantiated one way or the other from the text itself: his psychological projections about Fredersen's future relationship with the workers are of dubious value. He rounds off his case with the anecdote about Goebbels telling Lang that he and the 'Führer' had seen Metropolis, and that they both wanted

Lang to 'make the Nazi pictures'. (63) For Kracauer, this fact justifies the conclusions he has drawn from the film.

Kracauer also makes the connection between the patterning of the masses in Die Nibelungen and similar formations in Triumph of the Will. A few years later in 1952, Lotte Eisner made the same observations about the formal similarities between Riefenstahl's documentary and both Lang films. (64) Subsequent critics, most of whom are, interestingly enough, German, have picked up these points and further developed the aspects of Metropolis and Die Nibelungen which they believe are tinged with Nazi ideology. (65) The best example of the general outlines of this argument is given by the film historians Ulrich Gregor and Enno Patalas, and their comments are worth quoting in full:

"Various writers have concurred in establishing the affinity between Die Nibelungen and Metropolis and Nazism. Together, both films contain a catalogue of all the essential components of Nazi ideology: in Die Nibelungen, the cult of the Nordic, the defamation of the non-German, the submission to the will of the Führer, the glorification of 'heroic death'; in Metropolis, the masking of social differences, the salvation of the proletariat by the will of the Führer, which is above class conflict.[...] The parallels between sequences from Die Nibelungen and the Nazi party rallies observed by writers such as Kracauer and Eisner, show that Lang's direction was objectively not as free from fascist ideology as his subjective convictions would have liked." (66)

The above observations, in which highly subjective evaluations are presented as objective facts, contain some

remarkable instances of critical leap-frogging. Firstly, on each count, the examples of fascist elements they cite could be disputed, either on the basis of their being present in the film in question, and/or on the basis of being intrinsically fascist. Secondly, Gregor and Patalas combine ideological elements from two quite separate films in order to build their case, which is hardly justifiable. Thirdly, they jump from their alleged catalogue of thematic fascism to a statement about the formal affinities observed by Kracauer and Eisner, without any analysis of what exactly constitutes these parallels and whether they are valid. From an implicit acceptance of undefined formal similarities they deduce the presence of fascist ideology in general in Lang's direction. (67)

Francis Courtade put the same type of argument in a rather more extreme form:

"Even more than *Die Nibelungen*, *Metropolis* is a fascist, pre-nazi work." (68)

None of these critics claim that Lang was intentionally inserting Nazi propaganda into his feature films. The issue is, however, as Wilfried Wiegand points out, whether Lang could have unknowingly helped to pave the way for the Third Reich:

"It is really a question of whether both films, *Die Nibelungen* and *Metropolis*, although not consciously made as propaganda, could have unconsciously functioned as such." (69)

Wiegand believes that those critics who accuse Lang of pre-fascist tendencies base their arguments on what is essentially a false premise, that is, a quite fundamental misunderstanding of

Lang's style. This claim will be explored further in the following section on the formal affinities with Nazism.

The issue of Lang's films being in some way connected to Nazi ideology is an extraordinarily complex one. For if one accepts that National Socialism developed from the existing and preceding German culture, it is a logical step to examine the specific historical factors which contributed to the rise of Hitler during the 20s. Kracauer's 'psychological study' of Weimar films was just such an attempt to come to terms with the ideological preconditions of Nazism, but this particular work shows all too clearly the problems involved in the political inscription of a given film or body of films.

The temptation to read back with the benefit of hindsight can be lessened to a great extent by remembering the historical context in which a film was produced. When examining the charge that Metropolis was a fascist film, it is crucial to situate it against the background of a relatively stable parliamentary democracy in 1927. Around this time, the Nazis represented a marginal force in German politics, polling a mere 2.6% of the vote in the Reichstag elections of 1928.

The ideological meanings of a film are produced primarily at the point of its consumption. As far as I can discover, Metropolis was not shown after the Nazis came to power, unlike Siegfrieds Tod. This first part of Die Nibelungen was appropriated by Nazi ideologues to suit the purposes of their propaganda machine : it could conceivably have functioned as Nazi propaganda in 1933, but not in 1923/24 when it was first

released. Similarly, one could cite the example of Wagner's music being played in the concentration camps. Neither the music nor the Lang film were specifically Nazi in themselves, but instead formed part of the strong nationalist cultural tradition in Germany, which provided a rich and acceptable picking ground for a regime singularly lacking in artists of any merit.

Metropolis, conceived, produced and shown between 1925 and 1927, cannot with any real justification be linked with National Socialist ideology on either a thematic or a formal level. The catalogue of fascist elements cited by Gregor and Patalas turns out to have a very tenuous basis. A closer analysis of the alleged Nazism, both formal and thematic, will show that such arguments, while understandable in many ways, are ultimately misleading.

(a). The Formal Affinities with Nazism.

The claim that certain aspects of form in Lang's films can be seen as pre-fascist is normally justified by pointing out the similarities between sequences from Die Nibelungen and Metropolis on the one hand and Triumph of the Will on the other. A comparison is said to reveal the same kind of patterning of human figures to serve a decorative purpose, whereby people are deprived of freedom and individuality, becoming dehumanized ornaments. This argument would seem quite plausible at first, until one moves beyond merely observing visual similarities. For it is clear that the narrative and ideological *function* of the formal devices is different in all three films.

Die Nibelungen consisted of two separate feature length films, Siegfrieds Tod and Kriemhilds Rache, designed to be seen on consecutive evenings. Both parts form a structural whole, in which the first is both a development of and a contrast to the second. For, in the spirit of the original 13th Century epic poem on which Lang's films are based, Das Nibelungenlied, the static symmetry of Siegfrieds Tod conveys the essence of the rigid social structure of the Burgundians, which is doomed to destruction in the chaos of Part 2. Eisner remarked on the "rather surprising change of style" in Kriemhilds Rache:

"The solemn, epic slowness of Siegfried, that melancholy chanson de geste lamenting the death inflicted on the fair-haired hero, has given way to an intense acceleration of destiny, a thundering crescendo which sweeps those responsible for Siegfried's death to their destruction." (70)

The formal organization of Part 1 has a deliberate purpose, the significance of which becomes apparent when it is contrasted with the second part, where the decorative groupings are loosened out and the pace speeded up. It is interesting to note that Part 2 was not shown after the Nazis came to power: the chaos and destruction were obviously thought to be unsuited to Third Reich propaganda.

Likewise in Metropolis, the rigid symmetry of the masses has a specific narrative function, that is, to signify the oppression of the workers by an authoritarian system. The change of shift at the beginning, the workers marching up into Moloch's mouth, or

the bald slaves in the Tower of Babel parable are not presented as visual decoration but as an integral part of the narrative. As with Die Nibelungen, the meaning becomes more apparent through the juxtaposition of contrasting scenes of chaos, when the workers and the slaves in the parable revolt against the inhuman system which is oppressing them.

Kracauer pointed to the fact that the workers regroup at the end of Metropolis, re-establishing the patterning of the beginning. The situation is no longer quite the same, however (since the formation has changed from a rectangular to a triangular shape), and the workers heads are no longer bowed in submission. Order has indeed been restored, but on the basis of cooperation rather than coercion. The slightly different formal symmetry of the workers at the end is consistent with the politics of the film, since, it will be argued, the film is as opposed to revolution as it is to authoritarianism.

In the case of Triumph of the Will, the use of formally symmetrical groupings serves quite a different purpose to those in Lang's films. As Steve Neale demonstrates in his article, "Triumph of the Will: Notes on Documentary and Spectacle" (71), the central focus of attention throughout the film is the figure of Hitler. Shots and sequences alternate between the crowds or troops and the object of their gaze, Hitler, and this oscillating structure is part of the mechanism whereby the ideology of the film is produced. As well as being a foil to the presence of Hitler, the formal patterns are an integral part of the system of display and ceremony which was a crucial component of Nazi

propaganda. This system depended on two key concepts of Nazi ideology for its effectiveness, however, namely militarism and the 'Führerprinzip': Riefenstahl's film is the perfect expression of the latter, which was the central organizational principle of the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei).

"..both in theory and practice, Hitler was the sole representative of the people on all levels of political and social life. He claimed to embody the total unity of that people, leaving no room for opposition or criticism." (72)

In Metropolis, it is precisely this form of totalitarianism which is shown to be unacceptable.

Those critics who point to visual similarities between the films of Riefenstahl and Lang as evidence of Lang's latent fascism are artificially separating formal devices from both narrative and historical context. Form in art cannot be either reactionary or revolutionary in itself, since meaning is produced through an interaction of form, content and extra-textual factors. What is also ignored in discussions about Lang's films and Triumph of the Will is the fact that the former were fictional feature films, produced and shown in a democratic republic, whereas the latter was a staged propaganda documentary, made when the Nazis were already established in power. To indicate the differences in type and exhibition context of the respective films is not merely an academic point, as these factors would influence the response of an audience and the effects produced on it.

It is worth noting that Lang's treatment of crowds has also been compared to Reinhardt's mass choreography of extras, and to the work of Brecht and Piscator in the 20s. Referring to Piscator's use of the speaking chorus, Eisner provides the following visual description, which could almost apply to Metropolis:

"In the Sprechchöre the crowd became a compact sombre mass, often almost amorphous, subject to a heavy machine-like movement.[...] He even contrived to transform extras into architectural elements, which he then projected forward again in swift, preferably wedge-shaped movements, either singly or in groups." (73)

Wiegand makes the same point in response to the charge that Lang's style prefigured Nazism. While there are substantial differences in *function* between similar formal devices used by Reinhardt, Piscator and Lang, it is clear that Lang's films were part of a wider heritage of visual representation in Germany at that time, some of which was subsequently appropriated by the Nazis for their own purposes.

(b) Thematic Nazism.

In a speech to representatives of the film industry on 28th March 1933, Goebbels held up Die Nibelungen as an example of the type of film which German filmmakers should try to emulate:

"Here is an epic film not of our time, and yet so modern, so contemporary, so topical, that even the stalwarts of the National Socialist movement were deeply moved." (74)

Within two months, Siegfrieds Tod had been given a soundtrack and was re-released (75), forming a minor contribution to the Nazi process of 'Gleichschaltung'. That the theme was appreciated by the new masters is reinforced by the fact that the Nibelungen cycle appeared in the work of several Nazi painters, such as Albert Burkart and Paul Bürck. (76) Berthold Hinz points out that classical mythology was actually more popular than its Germanic counterpart in Nazi painting, and states that "many murals exploit themes from history and sagas for National Socialist purposes." (77)

Without denying that Die Nibelungen was suitable subject matter in terms of Nazi propaganda, it must nevertheless be reiterated that it was not inherently Nazi. Interest in this Germanic legend had been rekindled at various points in history by artists such as Wagner and the German Romantics, as well as Lang : it formed part of a nationalist cultural tradition in Germany.

Goebbels' remarks about Die Nibelungen should also be put into the context of the rest of his speech, since he also referred to praiseworthy aspects of three other films - Anna Karenina, Der Rebell, and Battleship Potemkin. He particularly admired Eisenstein's work:

"It is a marvellously well made film, and one which reveals incomparable cinematic artistry."

(78)

It is possible that a similar recognition of directorial craftsmanship lay behind Hitler and Goebbels' much cited

enthusiasm for Metropolis, which they saw in a provincial cinema in 1927. What exactly it was about the film that appealed to them was not specified, but apparently Hitler decided that Lang was the person who should lead the Nazi film industry. This offer was made to Lang shortly after Hitler manoeuvred himself into the Chancellorship. Lang's response was to catch the next train to Paris.

To go beyond merely recounting anecdotes, however, it is important to ask why Metropolis appealed to the Nazis. If we take the two aspects focused on by Gregor and Patalas, it is easy to see how the 'masking of social differences' could fit into the framework of Nazi ideology. As far as 'the salvation of the proletariat by the will of the Führer' is concerned, it is certainly true that the propaganda of the NSDAP nominally espoused the cause of the working class, although in practice, as Bracher points out,

"The Nazi community ideology was unable to gain a footing among the class conscious workers." (79)

It is difficult to fit 'the will of the Führer' into an interpretation of Metropolis, since the only character who represents a strong leader figure is Fredersen. He can hardly be said to 'save' the workers, and his authoritarian image is crushed by the end of the film. The character who does save the workers in a sense is Freder, the mediator, but he is presented more as a Christ figure than as a 'Führer'. As well as being impulsive and prone to fainting fits, he is an instrument of Maria's will, not a decisive leader; at the end it is Maria who

whispers into Freder's ear the suggestion that he might help to unite the warring factions.

On a general thematic level the main thesis of Metropolis - the reconciliation of capital and labour, as symbolized by the handshake in the final sequence - could indeed fit in with the concept of a classless community under National Socialism. It is equally possible to recognize in this collaboration between capitalist and worker the basic principle of bourgeois democracy, and indeed of all political philosophies to the right of the German Communist Party, the KPD. Clearly other factors should be considered before a specific political label can be attached to the film, but here one is confronted with the problem that many things are left unaccounted for in Metropolis, such as the nature of the political state. In a fascist state, capitalism operates within an authoritarian political system, which permits the domination of the working class by coercion, whereas bourgeois democracy implies a liberal, parliamentary system based on consent. The development of Freder in Metropolis expresses an explicit rejection of authoritarian rule in favour of consensus. National Socialist doctrine was openly based on a 'dictatorship of order' which permitted no democratic discussion. In Mein Kampf Hitler had clearly set out the political foundation of the future Nazi state:

"This principle - absolute responsibility unconditionally combined with absolute authority - will gradually breed an elite of leaders such as today, in this era of irresponsible parliamentarianism, is utterly inconceivable." (80)

One of the fundamental aspects of National Socialism which differentiated it from other forms of fascism was its virulent anti-Semitism. The portrayal of Rotwang is described by Tulloch as having the 'strong suggestion of anti-Semitism', and he goes on to claim :

"It is not simply that this deformed and hook-nosed mandarin seems to be an early precursor of the Jewish caricatures in Nazi films, but more specifically that the Star of David, Solomon's seal, is constantly associated with evil in the film, from its very first appearance on the door of Rotwang's house." (81)

Several points might be made in response to this interpretation. Firstly, Rotwang bears little physical resemblance to the later Nazi caricatures of Jews, which were extremely vicious, as typified in Der Ewige Jude. Secondly, the star symbol which appears in Metropolis is actually a five-pointed pentagram, an occult symbol credited with magical powers, as opposed to the six-pointed Star of David symbolic of Judaism. Tulloch does acknowledge this difference in a footnote, but insists on the Jewish connection because it is specifically called the 'Seal of Solomon' in von Harbou's novel. The question is whether contemporary audiences would make such a fine distinction in their minds between the number of points. Anti-Semitism was on the increase in Weimar society, and in such a context, Lang was naive and irresponsible if he did not realize the association that could be made from the star symbol, particularly given the fact that he was part Jewish himself. It is significant that

contemporary critics did not seem to make any anti-Semitic connections. Instead, they interpreted Rotwang as either a magician or a Faustian figure, which suggests that they recognized the pentagram as a mystical rather than Jewish symbol. Axel Eggebrecht, who reviewed the film for the progressive, liberal journal *Die Weltbühne*, described Rotwang as follows:

"His [Lang's] inventor of the evil robot has the features, dress and pentagram of Dr. Faust." (82)

The question of Thea von Harbou's role in introducing any fascist elements into *Metropolis* is problematic and ultimately impossible to prove one way or the other. The facts are that she co-produced most of the scripts for Lang's films during the Weimar period, and that she joined the NSDAP in 1932. It is unwise to draw the obvious conclusion too hastily, that is, that she must therefore have written potentially Nazi elements into the scripts she was responsible for during her collaboration with Lang. For she was actually a member of the Nazi party when she wrote the script for *Das Testament des Dr. Mabuse* (released in 1932) yet the film was banned by the Nazis on 29th March 1933.

In what sounds suspiciously like an attempt at retrospective self-justification, Lang later claimed that his last Mabuse film in Weimar Germany was intended as a subtle piece of anti-Nazi propaganda :

"I put all the Nazi slogans into the mouth of the ghost of the criminal." (83)

Other critics have similarly tried to redeem his reputation by pointing to the series of anti-fascist films made by Lang in America, including *Hangmen Also Die*, a production which Brecht

worked on. This swing to the opposite extreme by critics who are intent on disproving the allegations of latent fascism is equally unjustified. For one thing, the American films were produced in the context of the USA, Lang's adoptive country, already being at war with Nazi Germany, so it is understandable that Lang made clear cut statements to counter any anti-German sentiments. Dieter Dürrenmatt tried to refute the charge of Nazism in Lang's German films, but ended up painting himself into the same tendentious corner as those critics he is challenging. He claimed that Metropolis was in fact an extremely clever film about mass suggestion, which eerily prefigured the catastrophic developments in Germany after 1933. (84) Yet another example of reading back with the benefit of hindsight.

'Fascist' has become an over-used pejorative, a handy label which is frequently mis-applied. This process is dangerous, in that it undermines and distorts our understanding of the true nature of fascism, which represents a very specific form of political organization. The persistent focusing of attention on the allegedly Nazi aspects of Metropolis has detracted from a different interpretation of the ideological orientation. For in the context of Germany between 1925 and 1927, it will be argued that the political position of Metropolis is in fact far closer to the spirit of social democracy than to National Socialism.

CHAPTER 3.

INDUSTRY AND CLASS.

1. Industrial Policy in the Weimar Republic.

Few observers on either side of the political spectrum had any illusions about the form of democratic republicanism which had been set up almost reluctantly by the Social Democrats at the end of the First World War. For in spite of the rhetoric of equality and democracy, it was painfully obvious that the power structures of Wilhelmenian society had survived virtually intact to form the basis of the Weimar Republic. Working class conditions may have improved to a great extent during the first turbulent years of the new regime, as a result of mass action by the workers themselves, but most of the concessions they managed to win were clawed back after the inflation in 1923.

The Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie (RDI), the equivalent of the British CBI, offered to co-operate with the government in its attempts to stem the inflation, on condition that the "other social partners also make sacrifices".(1) This included the extension of the working day to its pre-war level of ten hours instead of eight, the abolition of rent and price controls, the abandonment of industrial participation schemes, and the introduction of "legislation to defend and increase industrial capital".

"The industrialists as good as admitted that if legislation would not meet their demands, then

they could achieve the same goal, a massive increase in profit levels, through the effect of inflation in impoverishing the mass of the population." (2)

While wealthy and powerful magnates like Hugo Stinnes amassed substantial fortunes by manipulating credit during the inflation, real wages were, by the autumn of 1923, down to almost half their pre-war and 1921 levels, and unemployment began its upward spiral. Such was the nature of social equality in the Weimar Republic: big business was on the offensive.

Yet behind the scenes capitalist strategy was divided. Opinions varied in different sectors of industry about how best to tackle the problem of labour relations. Such tactical debates within capitalist theory were, and still are, nothing new, but to find them articulated, albeit rather crudely, in a blockbuster feature film like Metropolis is extremely unusual. Metropolis is commonly assumed to be a film about 'what the urban society of the future might be like', but it can in fact be read as an attempt to come to terms with the more immediate issue of social relations in the Weimar Republic, particularly when the ideas about class in the film are seen in the light of contemporary managerial debates.

Two basic strands of thought dominate these debates, and they have their roots in two employers' associations which had been set up in the late 19th Century and which amalgamated in 1919 to form the RDI. The first of these capitalist organizations was called the Zentralverband Deutscher Industrie (ZDI), in which

heavy industry predominated, although it also represented other manufacturing sectors. The second was a dissident offshoot of the ZDI known as the Bund der Industriellen (BDI), which mainly represented the export-oriented, light and processing industries. One of the reasons for the BDI splitting off from the ZDI was the concern of the 'Fertigindustrie' (finished goods industry) about the attitude of the heavy industry sector towards social policy. The BDI

"considered the ZDI's repressive approach towards labour a fetter on economic expansion." (3)

For if living standards were kept low, workers would be unable to purchase goods produced by the Fertigindustrie, which was also faced with the high tariffs for raw materials set by the coal, iron and steel cartels.

The antagonisms between the sectors of industry may seem to have been pushed into the background in face of the powerful threat from the working class in 1919, as they rejoined to form the RDI, but the conflict of interests remained, coming to the fore again after the inflation, when organized labour was on the defensive. By the beginning of 1924 the prospect of socialist revolution had petered out, and some industrialists felt they could afford to think once more about a more flexible approach towards labour relations. The SPD leadership had shown itself to be a resolutely anti-revolutionary force in politics, so the main aim of industry in the 'stabilized' period between 1924 and 1929 became the further integration of the SPD into the capitalist fabric. Two industrialists (one of whom was Robert Bosch, a major

investor in Ufa in the early years) even suggested that it might be a good idea to fund the revisionist SPD journal Sozialistische Monatshefte so that industry could "guide it in the proper direction". (4)

In a speech given to the RDI meeting in September 1926, Paul Silverberg (who then sat on the board of Ufa) advocated the type of tactics preferred by the dynamic, exporting faction of industry. (5) He claimed that it was time to accept the republic and come to a peaceful arrangement with labour. A 'social partnership' would be best for the nation as a whole, which really meant that it would be in the long term interests of capitalism to defuse working class opposition with limited reforms. But his ideas were vehemently rejected by the representatives of heavy industry in the RDI, who were not in favour of class collaboration:

"They wanted a coalition of the right and, unlike the leaders of the capital intensive and export industries, they were not prepared to compromise." (6)

What, then, was the attitude of the 'other side' of the social partnership equation? Trade union leaders in Germany had established their political credentials in their behind-the-scenes manoeuvring at the end of the First World War. At a time when rank and file organization was strong enough to threaten the social order, trade union leaders joined forces with the ruling class to defuse the revolutionary situation. A series of meetings between October and December 1918 brought together trade union leaders like Carl Legien, Gustav Bauer and Adam Stegerwald and

seven leading industrialists, among whom were Hans von Raumer and Hugo Stinnes. These negotiations led to the signing of an agreement on 15th November which

"prepared the ground for that co-operation which established order in the following few years." (7)

The attitude of the trade union leadership was epitomized by a remark made by the head of one of the largest unions, the Union of Metal Workers, Adolf Cohen, when he addressed the Trade Union Congress in 1920:

"We cannot solve our economic problems alone, without the employers..that would lead to exactly the same state of affairs as in Russia [...] nothing would cause us greater embarrassment than if the others were to say today: 'Here, it is all yours; get on with it!' (8)

It is therefore not surprising that the appeasement philosophy of the dynamic/exporting faction of industry found favour in the trade union leadership. Adam Stegerwald, head of the Catholic unions and future Labour Minister (1930-32) welcomed Silverberg's RDI speech and announced that "Industry is holding its hand out to labour." (9) - a metaphor which would provide a singularly appropriate title for the last scene in Metropolis.

It must be stressed that the call for consensus rather than confrontational politics, as it appeared in Metropolis and as elaborated by industrialists like Silverberg, occurred in the social and political climate of relative stability which existed in Germany in the few years between 1924 and 1929. That capitalist interests could just as easily consolidate in a reactionary direction when under threat was demonstrated all too

clearly after the economic crisis of 1929. Many of the right wing industrialists like Hugenberg, Kirdorf and Thyssen saw the depression as an opportunity to destroy the power of organized labour, which was one of their main reasons for supporting Hitler.

"As in the inflation they had attacked the Eight Hour Day, so in 1930 they immediately launched an attack on the unemployment fund, while resisting the Social Democratic attempt to impose direct taxes.[...] It was class rule on a huge scale, unashamedly pursuing class interests at the expense of the people." (10)

By the end of the Weimar period the possibility of some form of mutual agreement being reached between capital and labour became increasingly remote.

2. Metropolis : A Humanist Critique of the Unacceptable Face of Capitalism.

Pistons, cogs and wheels in motion, the hands of a giant clock ticking towards the hour, a factory siren sounds in the midst of skyscrapers - the montage of the opening sequence of Metropolis might seem reminiscent of similar themes in Ruttmann's feature documentary Berlin: die Symphonie einer Großstadt, which was also released in 1927. Whereas Ruttmann's montage becomes a formalistic technique designed to glorify urban life uncritically, Lang uses the same stylistic device to establish the aesthetic and thematic framework in which the subsequent narrative is developed. The significance of the rhythm of the machines and the ticking of the clock becomes apparent as the critique of class society unfolds in the following sequences. Contrary to what the title Metropolis might suggest, the film is not concerned with an elaborate account of city life per se, but is rather a critical analysis of social relations inscribed in a fictional narrative form.

Irrespective of how one interprets the ideological 'solution' proposed in the film, the initial scenes depicting the nature of social relations in the fictional city remain a powerful metaphor of capitalist exploitation : an alienated and dehumanized working class slaves at machines to produce the wealth required to sustain a parasitical ruling elite. The division of the city into three vertically layered strata - the upper world of the capitalists, the underground machines, and the workers' city even further below them - provides a literal and

metaphorical representation of the separation of the classes. In the hierarchy of *Metropolis*, the machines take precedence over the labour force, which is expendable. When Freder confronts his father with the news of the accident on the Moloch machine, the response is a shrug of the shoulders, a simple gesture which indicates his total lack of concern for the welfare of the workers. Fredersen's attitude is similarly made clear when he sacks Josaphat, his secretary: even white collar workers can be hired and fired at will.

The proletariat in *Metropolis* has been reduced to carrying out mindless, repetitive functions in a labour process which has deprived the worker of all individuality, subordinating him (we do not see any women in the factory) completely to the machine.

"In the factory we have a lifeless mechanism independent of the workman, who becomes its mere living appendage." (11)

The stylized movements of the workers on the Moloch and clock shaped machines not only contribute to the aesthetic credentials of a film aiming partly at the 'Expressionist' market, but they also perform a substantial function within the narrative. They are concise and stark symbols of the alienation caused by the capitalist division of labour taken to its logical conclusion. Indeed this iconic imagery is used as the principal method of portraying industrial relations in the film.

The fact that we do not see an end product appearing from the factory emphasizes that the monotonous, mechanical tasks of the workers constitute estranged labour in the classical Marxist

sense. The contemporary reviewers who criticized Lang for failing to show the purpose of the machines (see P. 91) were apparently so blinkered by a concern for 'plausibility' that they could not appreciate the more obvious reason for Lang's 'omission'. And even if there is no tangible commodity represented in Metropolis, it is clear that the purpose of the machinery is to create profit for the ruling elite. A title which was in the original version, but which was cut from later prints, provided a more definite financial link between the upper and lower worlds:

"Fathers, for whom every rotation of a machine wheel meant gold, had given their sons the wonderful present of the Eternal Gardens."

(Reel 1, T. 5)

This title also implies the connection between the creation of wealth and private property, "the basis and cause of alienated labour". (12)

A whole scene which highlighted the importance of money was similarly edited out of the original version (see p.57-58). Slim, Fredersen's spy, goes to Josaphat's flat to bribe him to leave Metropolis, but Josaphat throws the wad of banknotes back in Slim's face. Unperturbed, Slim then writes out a cheque, which has Fredersen's name on it. Fredersen believes that the power of money will take precedence over Josaphat's friendship with Freder, but the loyalty of the faithful ex-clerk cannot be bought.

If every rotation of a machine wheel means gold, then it follows in capitalist logic that the more rotations you can fit into a working day, the more profit you will make. Time becomes a

precious commodity. Whereas in pre-industrial society a craftsman would complete a task in whatever time it took to do it, the worker under industrial capitalism has gradually been inculcated with a strict time-sense, in which all natural rhythms have been replaced by an enforced discipline from above.

"Through the subordination of man to the machine the situation arises in which men are effaced by their labour; in which the pendulum of the clock has become as accurate a measure of the relative activity of two workers as it is of the speed of two locomotives.[...] Time is everything, man is nothing; he is at most the incarnation of time." (13)

References to time abound in Metropolis. The change of shift at the beginning is heralded by the hands of the huge clock in Fredersen's office ticking round towards ten. The significance of a ten hour shift system would not be lost on a Weimar audience, given that the eight hour day had been revoked after the inflation of 1923. The fact that a shift system is specified in Metropolis is in itself important. Shiftwork has long been recognized as an invaluable way of maximizing profits, since it allows machinery to be kept in operation for twenty four hours a day.

The ticking of the giant clock, which dominates the set of Fredersen's office, is echoed in the mechanical, jerky movements of the workers at the machines, the matching rhythms making explicit the relationship between time, labour and machinery. A further link is made when the workers are going to and from their respective shifts at the beginning: they walk towards the machine

rooms at the same tempo as they work, but at the end of the shift, their movements have slowed down, although the stilted rhythm is the same. Even as they descend the stairs in the catacombs, their steps are still characterized by the same stylized, jerky movements.

The crucial relationship between time and work is perhaps best expressed in the scene where Freder takes over from Georgy at the clock machine, itself an appropriate symbol. Freder obviously experiences a completely different time-scale from the one he is accustomed to in the world of the ruling class, as he cries out in anguish (in a less than subtle evocation of the Crucifixion)

"Father! Father!.. Will these ten hours never end?" (Reel 3, T. 18)

It is not a question of the ruling class of Metropolis subjectively experiencing a different notion of time from the proletariat, for they are actually living within a totally separate time system. When the huge clock indicates the change of shift at ten, Fredersen consults his own wristwatch, which a close-up shows at 4 o'clock on a 24 hour scale. E.P. Thompson expresses succinctly the difference in the conception of time between the classes:

"This [time] measurement embodies a simple relationship. Those who are employed experience a distinction between their employer's time and their 'own' time. And the employer must use the time of his labour, and see it is not wasted: not the task but the value of time when reduced to

money is dominant. Time is now currency: it is not passed but spent." (14)

The increasing concern with efficiency, calculability and productivity was part and parcel of the tendency towards rationalization in the labour process, which reached its peak in the managerial theories of Taylor and Ford in the first two decades of this century. An understanding of the essence of Taylorism is particularly relevant for an analysis of social relations in Metropolis.

Frederick Taylor developed his theory of 'scientific management' in the late 19th century in the United States, and by the 1920s the principles of Taylorism were being implemented on a wide scale in American industry. In Germany, where this process became known simply as 'rationalization',

"the German corporations were probably ahead of everyone else in the practice of this technique, even before World War 1." (15)

Although Taylorism was seldom applied in its pure form, aspects of the theory were, and indeed still are, incorporated into managerial strategies and the concept of 'Taylorism' became widely integrated into the popular consciousness around this time. As has already been indicated, Ufa was itself subjected to strict rationalization when Hugenberg took over the company in 1927, shortly after the release of Metropolis.

Taylorism was originally introduced at a time when productivity levels in industry were already high and working class organization was becoming increasingly stronger. Although this system of rationalization was primarily a means of raising

productivity even further, it was also a response on the part of capitalist management to regulate the growing power of industrial workers.

"Taylor dealt with the fundamentals of the organization of the labor process and of control over it.[...] Control has been the essential feature of management throughout its history, but with Taylor it assumed unprecedented dimensions." (16)

One of the fundamental principles of scientific management consisted in the splitting of an already fragmented labour process into two quite distinct elements - conception and execution. The reasons underlying this separation were as follows. If a worker has any scope for decision making in the labour process, this results in a decrease in the control exercised by management. Added to which, any flexibility increases the possibility of what Taylor called 'soldiering' on the part of workers, namely their 'natural laziness' and deliberately going slow. In the interests of efficiency and control, therefore, every single aspect of the production process has to be dictated to the worker from above, with no deviation from the set pattern which has been calculated to be the optimal one for the job. Thus,

"All possible brain work should be removed from the shop and centered in the planning or laying-out department." (17)

The theme of the 'hands' versus the 'head' in Metropolis reflects exactly this type of separation. Fredersen, the 'brain that plans', is the embodiment of the conception process. He is

first seen deep in thoughts, which evidently require undisturbed concentration, as Freder does not dare to interrupt him. His vast, bureaucratic office - with charts, print-outs, ticker-tape, and a desk with flashing control panels - represents the nerve centre controlling the activities in the machine rooms underground. The geographical separation of the 'head' and 'hands' is also emphasized in Taylorist theory:

"In one location, the physical processes of production are executed. In another are concentrated the design, planning, calculation and record-keeping." (18)

The work of the 'hands that build' in Metropolis, both in the machine room and in the Tower of Babel parable, is a symbolic embodiment of Taylor's notion of 'execution'. This is the ultimate dehumanization of labour, where workers are reduced to automatons performing mechanical tasks in a repetitive process which is devoid of all meaning for them.

It is interesting to compare the factory/management scenes in Metropolis with what are very similar sequences at the beginning of Modern Times (1936). The capitalist who sits at his desk reading comics is a parody of the Fredersen character, while the workers perform the same mechanical tasks as those in Metropolis. If Fredersen's management is an echo of Taylorism, then the object of Chaplin's anarchic humour would seem to have been inspired by Ford's theories, epitomized by conveyor belt production. Again, the notion of 'time is money' is incorporated in the critique of the rationalized labour process, most notably in the scene where Chaplin is the guinea pig for management's

feeding machine which will do away with the luxury of meal breaks. René Clair had made a similar humorous indictment of the dehumanizing effects of rationalization in A Nous La Liberté (1931).

The ideological implications of Taylorism were not immediately recognized in the 1920s, even by Marxists, although Lukács was evidently aware of the role of new 'scientific' methods in further dehumanizing man's labour. A substantial wing of the Bolshevik party was enthusiastic about the potential value of Taylorist principles, which they thought could be appropriated by socialism for the common good. Lenin himself believed that the extremely backward state of Soviet industry would make it necessary to use capitalist methods, though he acknowledged the true nature of Taylorism when he described it as

"...a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work." (19)

It may have been tempting in post-revolutionary Russia to see scientific management as a system which could reduce working hours, raise living standards, and at the same time boost productivity, but the fact remains that Taylorism intrinsically involves taking the control of production from the hands of the producers, and putting it instead into the hands of bureaucratic planners. Taylor had once tactlessly blurted out his all too obvious disregard for humanity by declaring that it would be possible to train an intelligent gorilla to handle pig-iron more efficiently than a man. Antonio Gramsci responded years later by

saying that these new industrial methods could not eliminate man's thought processes, no matter how 'automated' he might be.

Furthermore,

"..not only does the worker think, but the fact that he gets no immediate satisfaction from his work and realises that they are trying to reduce him to a trained gorilla, can lead him into a train of thought that is far from conformist." (20)

Indeed this is precisely what happens in Metropolis. The workers might seem to have been reduced to the level of automatons, but the seeds of rebellion are there. Even in the repressive environment of the machine room, they manage to pass messages to each other about meetings in the catacombs, which are in themselves defiant gestures, signs of independent working class organization. It is clear that even before the robot leads them to revolt, there is a spark of resistance outwith the influence of the 'good' Maria:

"We will wait, Maria...! But not for much longer!"

(Reel 4, T.16)

Maria is the representative of those values which will form the basis for a solution to the iniquities of Metropolis - Christianity, humanism, reformism - and these are fused together in the symbol of the 'heart'. If Maria embodies the values of the heart, then Freder is its agent : the mediator required to bridge the gulf between worker and capitalist by bringing about a mutual understanding between the two. In Metropolis, the traditional Romantic opposition of rationalism versus feeling is reworked to

produce the 'head versus hands' opposition which must be united by feeling - the heart.

The critique of Fredersen's brand of capitalism may be clear enough in Metropolis, but the alternative to it is not elaborated in any great detail: a large question mark hangs over the final handshake. It is possible, however, to locate the basic ideas behind the proposed solution within a certain framework, formed by a combination of the 'Maria values', the notion of mediation, and the symbol of the handshake.

In terms of managerial theory, this constellation of themes corresponds broadly to the spirit of the human relations school, which developed mainly as a response to the worst excesses of scientific management, and whose ideas were popularized by the work of Elton Mayo in the late 1920s. Mayo and his followers recognized the increasing alienation of human labour in industrial society as the root of conflict within the workplace. Rather than introducing stringent measures of control, as in the case of scientific management, the human relations theorists advocated better communications between workers and management, the importance of supervision (in which the foreman played a key role), and the recognition of informal group life within the factory (which catered for the 'natural' social needs of the worker and provided an outlet for frustrations and dissatisfaction). The net result of this approach would, it was hoped, be the reduction of disruptive conflicts in the workplace and a generally more satisfied workforce, all of which would ensure a more smoothly functioning factory or office.

In Metropolis, Mayo's slogan of 'better human relations through effective communications' is reflected in the parable of the Tower of Babel, which refers to the lack of understanding between the planners and the builders. In the original version of the film, the following title, which emphasized the 'confusion of tongues' aspect of the Babel parable (see Genesis XI), pointed to the importance of linguistic communication. It has been cut from all but the ARD reconstruction.

"Speaking the same language, the people did not understand each other." (Reel 4, T.10)

To bridge the gulf separating the two sides, some form of mediation is needed in order to 'unravel the tongues'. In this respect, the foreman performed an important function for human relations exponents in acting as a link man between employer and employee.

The foreman in Metropolis is a rather ambiguous figure, however. His first appearance in Fredersen's office shows him as an obsequious sneak betraying the workers' secret plans to an authoritarian boss, yet by the end of the film he has become a representative of the workers, leading them up the steps of the cathedral, and grudgingly shaking hands with his erstwhile accomplice. His role as a mediator is subordinated to that of Freder, who physically draws the hands of Grot and Fredersen together for the final reconciliation.

The fundamental aims of both Taylorism and the human relations philosophy were in fact indistinguishable, since each approach was meant to achieve the maximization of profit for

capitalist enterprises. What separated them was the question of strategy, with the 'wets' on the human relations side maintaining that a happy workforce will give better results and create less disruption in the long term. These theorists were aptly described in a trade union publication in America as

" 'cow sociologists' seeking to milk the workers by making them more contented." (21)

In many ways the human relations/scientific management opposition is mirrored in the conflicts within German industry which have been described above - same goals, different methods, but both within the framework of total acceptance of the capitalist system. The motto which begins and concludes Metropolis - 'The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart' - combines Silverberg's insistence on the need for collaboration with the emphasis in human relations theory on the value of an entente cordiale between workers and management. Likewise, it is clear from the parable which Maria preaches to the workers that it is not the system itself which is at fault. Inscribed on the Tower of Babel is the eulogy

"Great is the world and its creator! And great is man!" (Reel 4, Titles 5 and 11)

The parable acts as a warning of what will happen in the absence of a communication channel between the 'head' and the 'hands' - the Tower itself will be destroyed. The way to avert such a disaster is to introduce a mediating process, thus defusing a potentially explosive situation.

The solution in Metropolis is double-edged, however, for not only does the film explicitly propose the reconciliation of the

classes through mediation, it also makes an equally emphatic statement about a radical alternative. Metropolis may be a critique of hard-line capitalism, but this is balanced by a rejection of revolution as a possible answer to blatant injustice. As we shall see in the next chapter, the film works hard to produce a denunciation of revolutionary means, and the groundwork for this is laid in the representation of the classes and their development.

3. Class Representation in Metropolis.

Three aspects of the representation of the classes are crucial in marking out the political framework of Metropolis: the initial depiction of both workers and capitalists; the development they each undergo in the course of the narrative; and the final positions occupied by the respective sides. I propose to analyse these different stages, from which it will be seen that certain scenes are pivotal, in that a dramatic change takes place in a member (or members) of one of the classes. Among these are the Eternal Gardens scene, and the second of the scenes in both the catacombs and Fredersen's office. Often their significance becomes apparent when they are compared and contrasted to similar preceding episodes. The two catacomb scenes are a good example of this mirror effect. Likewise, the characteristics of the proletariat and the ruling class are established, particularly in the first few sequences, by means of stark juxtaposition, in the form of black and white shading and different types of movement and immobility.

The characters in Metropolis can hardly be described as well-rounded, psychologically motivated protagonists. Instead, as the contemporary critic who reviewed the film for the SPD paper, Vorwärts, pointed out,

"The characters are for the most part symbols, representatives of classes and types." (22)

If one accepts their function as primarily a symbolic one, then the rather sudden transformations in certain characters, which

take place throughout the film, seem less of a flagrant breach in conventional narrative motivation.

The social groupings and the status of their principal representatives are not totally clear cut, however. Although what might loosely be termed the 'petty bourgeoisie' is virtually non-existent in Metropolis, there are a few peripheral figures, such as 'Slim', Fredersen's clerks, and the doctor who attends Freder (23), who do not fit easily into the two main classes of proletariat and capitalist. Even the class status of some of the central characters is ambiguous, particularly in the case of Rotwang and Maria, who can be taken to represent occultism and Christianity respectively, rather than a particular class. Despite the 'grey areas', the main division in the film is between the working class and the ruling elite, and their three stages of representation form an important part of the ideology of Metropolis.

Stage 1 : Oppressed Proletariat versus Ruthless Elite.

The first scene in which the workers appear, the change of shift, creates a powerful vision of the condition of the proletariat, which is further developed until the end of the first catacomb meeting. Dressed identically in black overalls and caps, the workers shuffle forward with slumped shoulders and bowed heads, irrespective of whether they are on their way to or from their ten hour shift. The significance of the rhythmical, mechanical movements of the workers in establishing their dehumanized condition (the human workforce is purely functional like the machinery it operates) has already been pointed out. The

fact that one worker is indistinguishable from the next adds to the impression that all individuality has been stamped out of them, to such an extent that each is identified only by the number printed on his cap. We see the workers only in their work situation, with the exception of the religious meetings in the catacombs, in which they appear as a mass rather than individuals. Maria's parable of the Tower of Babel sums up the essence of the working class condition in Metropolis : these urban proles are the modern equivalent of the slaves of ancient times. The parable also forecasts the inevitable course of action of such slaves if the mediator is not found.

There can be little doubt that the depiction of the workers' suffering and degradation is designed to evoke a sympathetic response on the part of the viewer. The emotional pull is greatly enhanced by the introduction of the workers' children, whose helplessness and innocence make them a traditional object of pity. There is a certain degree of irony in the fact that these children were recruited by Lang from the poorest quarters of Berlin by virtue of their scrawniness, in the same way as the bald-headed slaves of the parable were taken from the dole queues, as no professional actors were prepared to shave off their hair for such a minor role.

Another device which helps to bring the viewer round to the side of the suffering proletariat is the individualization of the Georgy character, the only worker developed to any extent, apart from Grot the foreman. In the original version of Metropolis, Georgy had a more extensive role than in subsequent cut versions,

in which many of the scenes with Georgy have disappeared. One such instance (described in the Production History section) involved Georgy being tempted by the exotic allure of Yoshiwara after Freder has taken his place at the clock machine. His weakness in succumbing to the desires of the flesh is a result of being liberated from his oppressed condition, but his basic loyalty is proved when he saves Freder's life, only by sacrificing his own. It is significant that the only individualized working class figure is killed off at the very turning point in the general representation of the proletariat. Subsequently, there is no sympathetic character among the workers.

The character of Grot the foreman is developed to a certain extent, although at this stage in the representation of the working class, he is far removed from the rank and file. His first action is to hand over the workers' secret plans to Fredersen in a grovelling and obsequious manner: he is thus clearly shown as a traitor to his class who has instead allied with the capitalists against his fellow workers. The introduction of such an unlikeable character, who is actively conspiring against the interests of the workers, with whom our sympathy already lies, adds to the viewer's sense of injustice about the condition of the downtrodden proletariat.

Tied in with this process by which the viewer is initially made to identify with the working class is the role of Maria. Her function will be examined further in later sections, but it is appropriate at this point to mention her relationship with the

workers. Her class position is not as clear as it seems in the English language versions of the film, as has already been noted (see p.48). In the original version, Freder's question "Who was that?" remains unanswered, although it does seem to be implied that Maria originates from the ranks of the working class. She is portrayed sympathetically from the outset, and this positive representation is consequently transferred to the workers as a whole, since at this stage she is their spiritual leader and spokesperson.

Against the vision of workers' suffering is set the ruling elite, which consists of four different types in the form of the gilded youth, the Top Hundred, Fredersen and Freder. The first two categories do not undergo any significant changes, whereas Fredersen and Freder both develop substantially during the course of the narrative.

The first appearance of the capitalists follows immediately upon the vivid images of the oppressed workers, and this juxtaposition establishes in a literal sense the black and white contrast between the two worlds. The light/dark contrast and the underground/overground stratification is in fact remarkably similar to the representation of the Eloi and the Morlocks in Wells' *The Time Machine*. We see the privileged youths in a race in a massive sports stadium, the rigidity and darkness of the workers' subterranean domain being replaced by the free movement of healthy bodies clad in white silk. The heads of the young men are held high as they race around the track, pursuing a

pleasurable sport, in stark opposition to the wretched march to and from work by the workers, heads bowed.

The following scene in the Eternal Gardens expands the description of the leisured class: when they are not running races against each other, the gilded youth are chasing frivolous and scantily-dressed girls round fountains. Again, the emphasis is on movement, light and beauty. The playful splashing of the water, and the exotic birds, plants and costumes together constitute a pastoral image in which Life is counterposed to the cadavre-like existence of the drab, miserable workers.

It is interesting to note that a title was added to a subsequent English language version which made an explicit connection between the Eternal Gardens episode and the previous images of downtrodden workers:

"From Pagan Rome through the ages, money sweated out of flesh has gone into flesh..and the desires of the flesh. Every rich city has its secret places. As cities grow more rich, these places become less secret." (List B, T.5)

This rather moralistic title is merely voicing what is fairly clear in the visual juxtaposition of the original version, that is, that the privileged elite is only able to live in splendid idleness because of its exploitation of the slaves in the depths.

There is another side to the capitalist world, however, and that is the impersonal, bureaucratic organization which enables the gilded youth to lead their honeyed existence. Frederesen's office is a "New Tower of Babel" (Reel 1, T.14) where he engineers the production of wealth for the Top Hundred. Frederesen starts

out as the embodiment of the repressive regime which has created these stark class differences. In the first office scene, he is represented as the ruthless controller, cold and indifferent to the conditions of the workers and to the fate of his own secretary, Josaphat. His impassivity and sobriety form a contrast to the previous high spirits of the sons in the Eternal Gardens, which is emphasized by his controlled movements and by further contrast with the impetuous gesticulations of Freder. His authoritarian attitude and heartless actions are without doubt meant to produce a negative response from the viewer. This stage in Fredersen's representation as an evil character is sustained for most of the film, whereas Freder steps out of his role as one of the gilded youth very rapidly. For within this 'Stage 1' of opposition between the oppressed working class and its ruthless masters, there is a highly significant development which takes place in the Eternal Gardens sequence.

The meeting between Freder and Maria is an important point in what has already been identified as the thesis/antithesis structure of the narrative, in that it represents the catalyst of those developments which will eventually lead to the final synthesis, the reconciliation of the classes. Again, the significance of the scene is emphasized by means of contrast: when Maria enters with the children, the movement of the preceding sequence is frozen, and followed by a series of static close-up shots of Freder and Maria alternately. The physical contact between Freder and the girl at the fountain is rejected in favour of intent gazes between Maria and Freder, signifying

the ostensible abandonment of superficial pleasures of the flesh in order to pursue a 'higher' moral purpose.

Freder's sudden realization of the plight of his brothers and sisters from the depths begins his role as the mediator, whose job it will be to reunite the opposing sides. The fact that this 'mediator' comes from within the ranks of the ruling classes, and indeed is the direct heir in the oppressive hierarchy, is particularly important for the politics of the film. Benevolent reformism from above, generated by an enlightened capitalist hero, rather than mass action by the workers, is responsible for the eventual changes which take place. The meeting in the Eternal Gardens triggers off a process of inquiry, as Freder sets out like the hero of a 'Bildungsroman' to obtain his practical, worldly education. His function during this stage of representation is twofold: he has to find out the 'truth' about the condition of the workers, and also convince his father of the need for compassion in his management of the system. His pursuit of these two objectives is interrupted, however, by the sexual motivation of his search for Maria and by the interference of the Robot.

Stage 2 : The Reversal of Sympathy.

The initial representation of the working class is designed to evoke pity for its suffering, but this emotion is changed in the course of the film to one of terror, as the oppressed proletariat becomes an anarchic mob. This shift in identification with the workers takes place in the second catacomb scene, in which they are seen to blindly follow the 'false' leadership of

the Robot. The sudden change in viewer response is achieved by presenting the bloodthirsty actions of the workers as reprehensible, when compared to their previous passivity. One device whereby this contrast becomes apparent is the construction of very similar sequences in the catacombs, the first with the good Maria preaching patience and the need for mediation, and the second with the false Maria inciting the workers to violent revolution. The hands clasped in prayer of the first catacomb sequence become the clenched fists of the second, in the same way as the bowed heads become raised, leering faces calling for blood. Whereas the movements of the workers were slow and regular in the first sequence, in the second they are rapid, erratic and violent. As has been pointed out, the killing of Georgy, who is stabbed instead of Freder, marks the beginning of this shift in representation.

Sympathy is further deflected from the workers by their irresponsible behaviour in forgetting about the fate of their children while they indulge in mass insurrection. It is Grot the foreman who reminds them of the danger to their offspring, and it is Maria, Freder and Josaphat who save the children from drowning, rather than their own parents. Fredersen, on the other hand, seems to show a consistent concern for Freder's well-being throughout the film.

The culmination of the viewer's alienation from the proletariat occurs when the workers burn the Robot at the stake. The sudden switch from blind obedience to the false Maria to a call for vengeance against the 'witch' is meant to show the

workers as irrational and superstitious. The dance they perform around the stake as the Robot burns resembles a pagan ritual, as they laugh wildly, hopping from one foot to the other.

While the representation of the workers becomes increasingly negative, the opposite takes place with regard to the erstwhile villain, Fredersen. The change is extremely sudden, however, as his impassive mask breaks only when he asks Slim about what has happened to his son. Once more, the significance of this scene is strengthened when it is compared with previous scenes in Fredersen's office, particularly the first one. In the preceding office scenes, which were brightly lit, Fredersen was obviously in control of the minions around him, his bearing was erect, and his movements were both assured and impassive. As he breaks down, however, the office is in darkness, he is virtually dependent on Slim for information and reassurance, and he puts his hands to his ears like a man in great pain. It is worth noting that the cause for his concern is not the course of events overtaking him, but the fate of his son. From this point onwards, Fredersen takes on the role of 'caring father' in place of 'ruthless capitalist'. When he watches the chase between Rotwang and Freder in the cathedral, the fact that he drops to his knees in anguish is a sign of his vulnerability, especially when this gesture is contrasted to his previously erect posture. The visible greying of his hair is yet another indication of his genuine worry at this stage.

Stage 3 : Reformed Workers and Capitalists.

The final stage of representation takes place on the steps of the cathedral, a short but nevertheless crucial sequence in terms of the politics of the film. At this point the negative/positive reversal of Stage 2 has been completed, and neither the workers nor Fredersen are portrayed in a good or bad light. The viewer's sympathies are divided, since s/he is not encouraged to identify particularly strongly with one side or the other.

The uncontrolled fury and violence of the workers gives way to a disciplined formation advancing towards the steps of the cathedral. The nature of their ranks has changed from the ones we saw at the beginning, however, as the shape is now triangular rather than rectangular, and the heads of the workers are held high, not bowed in submission. Also, they have regrouped voluntarily, as far as we can make out, as opposed to being coerced into their final position. Grot advances as their spokesperson, which adds a hint of ambiguity to the handshake, since Grot's initial role was that of Fredersen's sneak, a class traitor. During Stage 2, however, he had joined in the riotous activities of the workers as they burned the 'witch', thus allying himself more firmly with the proletariat than he had done previously.

Fredersen has regained most of his earlier composure when he appears on the cathedral steps, but like the workers, his position is not identical to the one he adopted at the beginning of the film. It is debatable whether the conversion he has

undergone is convincing or not : Kracauer seemed to think he was not a reformed character at the end. (24) On balance, it would seem plausible that Fredersen was indeed transformed by the traumatic experience which has turned his hair grey, that is, almost losing his son.

The role of the mediator is finally fulfilled in this sequence on the steps of the cathedral. The two opposing sides standing face to face are still suspicious and hesitant to make the first move. Prompted by Maria yet again, Freder draws the worker and capitalist together for the conciliatory handshake. The visual structuring of these last few frames symbolizes the resolution of the main thematic of the film : "The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart". As Freder brings the hands of his father and Grot together, they are all united in a triple handshake - Freder, the heart, mediating between Fredersen, the brain, and Grot, the hands. Thesis and antithesis are thus resolved in the final synthesis.

What, then, are the implications of these three stages of representation for a political reading of Metropolis? By summarizing the principal features of both the workers' and the capitalists' development, it will be easier to locate the broad political framework of the film.

1. Although the peripheral capitalist characters do not undergo any radical changes in the course of the narrative (for they are depicted as decadent and hedonistic from the Robot dance sequence to the dancing in Yoshiwara at the end) the main

capitalist representatives, Freder and Fredersen, both change dramatically as a result of their experiences. Freder's sudden acquisition of a social conscience is eventually transferred to his repentant father, and thus an unacceptable capitalist regime becomes a responsible and legitimate system. The social structure is preserved, but improved and modified.

2. The working class, portrayed throughout as stupid and unattractive, as well as susceptible and malleable, learns the appropriate lesson that nomatter how unjust and oppressive a system may be, violent insurrection is not the answer. Those who have their interests at heart (Freder and Maria) advocate peaceful reform by means of persuasion, whereas those who whip them into a bloodthirsty frenzy, like the 'revolutionary' Robot, (which actually serves the interests of the dominant class) are the cause of their near self-destruction. Active, yet non-violent participation in a social system based on Christian values, combined with a delegation of power into the hands of 'good' mediators, is presented as the desirable course of action for the masses.

3. The final synthesis. Both workers and capitalists are made to realize that cooperation rather than confrontation is the best solution to social problems. Neither side must be allowed to dominate over the other completely ; balance and compromise between the interests of workers and capitalists are essential if the ultimate horror is to be avoided - proletarian revolution.

Given these three elements, it would seem reasonable, in the context of the Weimar Republic, to locate the politics of

Metropolis somewhere along the spectrum between social democracy and the bourgeois-liberal centre. Of particular relevance to the links with SPD ideology are the critique of hard-line capitalism (together with the subsidiary attack on 'decadent' capitalism); the emphasis on reform rather than revolution (in line with the revisionist theory of the SPD, which had, after the turn of the century, gradually gained the upper hand over the classical Marxist programme); and the willingness to collaborate with capitalism in order to achieve piecemeal social, economic and political reforms and to ensure the destruction of any revolutionary movement within the working class. Most of these ideas were shared in some degree by the bourgeois-liberal parties, the mainly Catholic Zentrumspartei, and the Deutsche Demokratische Partei (DDP), both of which were allied in coalitions with the SPD throughout the Weimar period.

In view of the strong religious overtones and symbolism in Metropolis, it is certainly possible to link the centrist political position in the film with the 'third force' in German politics at that time, the Zentrumspartei, the Catholic intermediary between the 'extremes' of Left and Right. Yet it would be extremely misleading to locate the ideology of Metropolis totally within the boundaries of one particular parliamentary party, for the ideas in the film do not combine to represent a coherent philosophy by any means. Instead, they fall within certain parameters which might best be described as 'centrist/reformist' in a broader political sense.

CHAPTER 4.REVOLUTION - METROPOLIS AND GERMANY.1. Revolution in Germany, 1918-1923.

By the end of the First World War, all of Europe was experiencing political upheavals on an unprecedented scale. The Russian Revolution in 1917 had made an enormous impact on the working classes of many European countries, who soon demonstrated their formidable political force on Red Clydeside, in the factories of Milan, and in the Hungarian Soviet. A confidential memorandum from Lloyd George to the French Prime Minister Clemenceau in the spring of 1919 revealed the seriousness of the situation:

"The whole of Europe is filled with the spirit of revolution. There is a deep sense not only of discontent but of anger and revolt amongst the workmen against pre-war conditions. The whole existing order in its political, social and economic aspects is questioned by the masses of the population from one end of Europe to the other." (1)

The focus of attention was, however, Germany. The new Soviet regime firmly believed that revolution in Germany was both necessary and imminent; indeed the future course of their own revolution depended totally on the outcome of German events. In March 1919, Lenin pronounced that

"it is the absolute truth that without a German revolution we are doomed." (2)

It seemed entirely possible in November 1918 that a workers' revolution would follow the collapse of the autocratic Hohenzollern monarchy. In the space of a few days from 5th to 9th November, Workers' and Soldiers' Councils sprang up in cities throughout Germany in a spontaneous upsurge of rank and file activity. Yet although strikes and riots flared up sporadically across the country for the next six months, the German revolution, on which the Bolsheviks were pinning great hopes, did not materialize. The failure of this revolutionary opportunity had widespread repercussions not only for the future of German history, but also for the course of the revolution in the Soviet Union.

There were two main reasons for the defeat of the German revolution. Firstly, there was no German equivalent of the well-organized Bolshevik Party in Russia, with the nearest being the Spartakus League. The Spartakists, who split from the Independent Socialists (USPD) at the beginning of 1919 to form the German Communist Party, the KPD, consisted of only a few thousand members.

"Such an organization was neither powerful nor cohesive enough to provide a disciplined core to the rapidly growing ranks of revolutionary soldiers and workers." (3)

Secondly, the political party which enjoyed the traditional support of the working class masses, the SPD, effectively sabotaged the revolution after its leaders were more or less prodded into taking power due to the forced abdication of the

Kaiser. For if this 'socialist' party, or at least the leadership, was not at all enthusiastic about the prospects of a republic without a monarch at the head, then the idea of a Bolshevik-style revolution was totally repugnant to them. Hugo Preuss, the architect of the Weimar constitution, made it clear in an article written on 14th November 1918 that the new republic would be modelled on the Western democracies, and warned of the dangers of trying to imitate Bolshevism, "the negative plate of Russian tsarism".(4) So an 'unholy alliance' was formed between the SPD leaders and the moderate section of the army on the one hand, and trade union leaders and employers on the other. The express aim of all these groups was to harness the power of rank and file workers , and thus prevent a repeat of the Russian revolution in Germany.

"The officer corps expected the government to fight against Bolshevism and was ready for the struggle. Ebert accepted my offer of an alliance. From then on we discussed the measures which were necessary every evening on a secret telephone line between the Reich Chancellery and the high command."

General Wilhelm Groener.(5)

"It is no exaggeration to say that this cooperation between employers and trade unions [...] saved Germany in the early years from chaos and from Bolshevik revolution. [...] What happened in all other revolutions, that the workers turned against the employers, did not happen here because

the unions cooperated with the employers in the preservation of order."

Hans von Raumer, industrialist. (6)

Consequently, all revolutionary activity was ruthlessly suppressed by the Reichswehr (the regular army) and irregular bands of right-wing hooligans, the Freikorps. The most famous example was the Spartakus uprising in Berlin in January 1919, which was put down on the orders of Noske, the SPD Defence Minister, and which resulted in the infamous murders of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. The Bavarian Soviet, which had been set up by Kurt Eisner, managed to survive until the beginning of May that year, when it was brutally smashed by Reichswehr and Freikorps troops.

In 1920, an attempted right-wing coup was defeated, not by any defensive action on the part of the government and army, but by a general strike. The result was renewed working class unrest in the Ruhr, where a Red Army of 50-80,000 occupied the main industrial cities. Again, the Social Democratic government called on the support of the army, which had in fact been implicated in the right-wing putsch, to suppress this latest Communist insurrection.

The possibility of left-wing revolution remained on the cards even until the end of 1923, when rampant inflation led to social and economic disaster. Hunger and despair mobilized the working class, and conditions became bad enough for the middle class to be amenable to radical social change. The time was ripe for the revolution which was eagerly awaited by the isolated

Soviet Union. Even Stalin, whose speciality would soon be 'socialism in one country', wrote in a Communist journal in October 1923,

"The approaching revolution in Germany is the most important world event in our time." (6)

Close liaison was taking place between the KPD and the Soviet government with regard to the organization of the coming uprising, which seemed an ideal chance to make up for what had been a totally mistimed and disastrous attempt at a Communist coup in March 1921. But the KPD, which had by this time grown to a quarter of a million members, misjudged the situation for a second time, not daring to risk another humiliation after the previous fiasco. Thus a perfect opportunity was missed, and the last sporadic fighting at the barricades in Hamburg was eliminated after a few days. A month later, in November 1923, Hitler and Ludendorff made a feeble attempt at a right wing takeover, but it was quickly put down by the regular army.

Hugo Preuss had proclaimed 'equal rights for all citizens' as one of the fundamental principles which would mark out the new republic from the dreaded Bolshevik dictatorship of the proletariat. The reality was somewhat different, however, when one considers the huge discrepancy in punishments which were meted out to left and right wing offenders against the State in the turbulent years after the war. Ludendorff was not called to account at all for his role in the Munich putsch, while left-wing insurrectionists received stiff prison sentences. Between 1919 and 1921, there were 314 political murders perpetrated against

the left by the right, for which they received a sum total of a mere 31 years; in the same period, the left committed 13 murders of right wingers, for which eight were sentenced to death and the rest given sentences amounting to 176 years. (7) This blatant bias highlights the fact that the threat of Bolshevism far outweighed the fear of right-wing terrorism for a capitalist system which had survived the transition from an autocratic, imperialist monarchy to bourgeois democracy without any significant changes.

This fear of revolution at home, coupled with an awareness of the worldwide impact of the Bolshevik Revolution, did not leave the film world unaffected. The case of Eisenstein's Battleship Potemkin proved that the German authorities did not see film as just art and/or entertainment, but recognized its potential as a powerful ideological weapon.

On 24th March 1926, the Berlin censors banned Potemkin at the request of the Reichswehr. The ban was lifted on appeal by the Film-Oberprüfstelle, mainly because of the intervention of a well-known theatre critic, Alfred Kerr. The film had its première in Berlin on 29th April 1926, but not before the army had made yet another plea to have it banned:

"At the last moment before the première General Seeckt made representations to the Prussian government that so revolutionary a film was dangerously subversive, so the state SPD premier Otto Braun and the head of the Berlin police had to have a special showing before it could go on." (8)

The version of Potemkin which was eventually shown in Germany had been edited and had undergone some changes in titling. Apparently it was very popular with German audiences, which led to its re-release in the Soviet Union, where it had not been terribly successful initially. (9)

Potemkin remained subject to local censorship in Germany for many years, but the fact that it was passed in SPD-controlled Prussia should not be taken as evidence that the Social Democrats in any way approved of the revolutionary sentiments expressed in the film. An item of correspondence between Otto Braun and the Foreign Minister, Stresemann, reveals the true nature of the debate within government circles about the decision whether or not to ban Potemkin.

At a reception in the American Embassy, Stresemann had proclaimed that it was a disgrace that the Prussian government had allowed Potemkin to be shown, and that the masses would undoubtedly be led to violence by this film's encouragement of revolutionary acts: the Prussian government would be to blame if before long communist revolution was to break out and the citizens of Berlin were to have the roofs over their heads set on fire by the communists. When this juicy piece of salon gossip reached the Minister President, Braun, he sent an angry letter of protest to Stresemann, dated 19th May 1926, retorting that

"Prussia has adequately proved in the last six years that it has always been in a position to preserve public order and peace within its borders. The Prussian Government will furthermore

continue to fulfil its duty to maintain public order in the province." (10)

Braun's basic attitude was, therefore, that even in the unlikely event that this particular film could incite the masses to revolution, he was quite capable of ensuring its rapid suppression, as he had always done.

At the same time as the debates about Potemkin were raging in the capital in the spring of 1926, work on Metropolis had just passed its half-way stage. In such a political climate, when the depiction of working class insurrection was a very delicate matter, and it must be remembered that the filming of Metropolis began only eighteen months after the last potentially explosive situation in 1923, it is significant that there was never an inkling of threat felt by the proletarian insurrection in Metropolis. The reason for this apparent lack of concern becomes obvious on examination of the way in which revolution is portrayed in Metropolis.

2. Revolution in Metropolis.

The review of the Metropolis première which appeared in the Vossische Zeitung included a section on the music score. Apparently, a rendering of 'La Marseillaise' accompanied the second catacomb scene in which the Robot incites the workers to riot. The effect was menacing rather than heroic, however, as it was a "grotesquely distorted shadow play of the original".(11) The invocation of the image of the French Revolution, through the use of the immediately recognisable tune of 'La Marseillaise', is interesting; the association of threat rather than ennobling liberation suggests a link with the German Romantics, who were horrified by the events in France in the years following 1789. (see p.75). Although the French Revolution conjures up the idea of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' for those who welcome the overthrow of ruling class oppression, it has a different connotation for those on the right of the political spectrum.

"When the educated layman thinks of the French Revolution it is the events of 1789 but especially the Jacobin Republic of the Year II which chiefly comes to his mind..Conservatives have created a lasting image of The Terror, dictatorship and hysterical bloodlust unchained.."(12)

In literature, even a relatively progressive writer like Dickens helped to promote this neurotic image of the French Revolution in A Tale of Two Cities, with his descriptions of the bloodthirsty mob and ghoulish individuals such as Madame Defarge and 'The Vengeance', who relentlessly pursue indiscriminate retribution.

This fear of revolution, which had become lodged in the minds of the bourgeoisie ever since the Jacobin 'Terror', was revived, first by the upheavals throughout Europe in 1848, and then in the 20th Century by the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. Broadly speaking, the historical parallels between the French and the Russian revolutions could be seen in the initial liberal bourgeois revolution against an autocratic monarchy being superseded by a fully-fledged left-wing insurrection. But it was the similarity between the Russian revolution and its German counterpart which was to have the most dramatic effect on German conservatives. For, the Bolsheviks' logical interpretation of the parallels were as follows:

"The events of November 1918 were Germany's 'February Revolution'; Ebert and Scheidemann were its Kerensky and Tsereteli; Liebknecht would be its Lenin." (13)

Given the temporal and geographical proximity of the events in Russia, it is hardly surprising that the political upheavals in Germany made a lasting and powerful ideological impact on all sectors of society, and that these events should have some influence, however mediated, on cultural production during the 1920s. Appearing on the screen only a few years after the revolutionary turmoil of 1918-23, the workers' revolt in Metropolis would be highly likely to produce certain historical associations in the minds of an average Weimar audience.

That the drawing of parallels between the workers' revolt in Metropolis and historical precedents is not such a reductionist

process is supported to a certain extent by a claim made by Erich Pommer, the producer of the film, who maintained that

"the uprising of the workers was patterned after the Communist attempt to take over Bavaria." (14)

By this, he meant the short-lived Munich Soviet which lasted for a few weeks between April and May 1919. It is wise not to read too much into subjective statements by directors or producers of films, and this particular claim was made many years later in an interview in 1962. Nevertheless, the basic point remains that Pommer, actively involved in the production of the film, should make such an explicit link between events in Germany and an important aspect of the film's narrative. He also went on in the same interview to give his own succinct assessment of the film's 'message':

"This film says that capitalists and workers, the rich and the poor, must join together and cooperate." (15)

If one did not take into consideration the context of the revolutionary situations which had rocked Germany in the preceding years, one might be tempted to interpret the workers' revolt in Metropolis as merely an instance of machine breaking without any political motivation. Indeed the term 'Luddite' occurred in a few of the contemporary reviews of the film. This notion of 'a-political machine breaking' can be refuted on two counts.

Firstly, Luddism was not just a case of workers blindly expressing their frustration at inanimate objects. As E.P. Thompson points out,

"..while finding its origins in particular industrial grievances, Luddism was a *quasi-insurrectionary movement*, which continually trembled on the edge of ulterior revolutionary objectives." (16)

Secondly, the workers in Metropolis are prepared to attack not only the machines, but also the members of the ruling class themselves. When Freder and Josaphat find the Robot inciting the workers to revolt in the second catacomb scene, the workers recognize them, and respond as follows:

"Joh Fredersen's son - ! Kill him, the dog with the white silk coat - !!!" (Reel 7, T. 30 and 31)

The workers then attack Freder and Josaphat, and would have killed Freder, had it not been for the intervention of Georgy. The subsequent death of Georgy is important, in that the violent shedding of blood marks out the nature of the insurrection which is taking place. Also, the revolt is not confined to the machine rooms, since the workers move upwards (via the workers' city where their wives join them) to invade the ruling class areas of the city. The revolt is more than a manifestation of industrial unrest: it has the potential to turn into a full-blooded revolution.

How exactly, then, is the process of revolution portrayed in Metropolis, and why does this representation take such a negative form? After all, the first half of the film involves a powerful depiction of a suffering, oppressed working class and a tyrannical and degenerate ruling elite, so the way is paved for a sympathetic portrayal of a rebellion against injustice, but this

does not materialize. Instead, we are presented with that traditional vision of 'hysterical bloodlust unchained' threatening to destroy the social order. In fact it becomes clear that the reason for the negative portrayal of revolution resides in the positive advocacy of the opposite strategy - reform. There are three main elements which combine in Metropolis to produce a negative statement on revolution : the stereotyping of the workers as an irrational mob; the opposition of the two Marias; and the role of the mediator figure, Freder.

A. The Stereotyping of the 'bloodthirsty mob'.

The construction of this image of the workers begins in the second catacomb scene, building to a crescendo in the final section of the film before the reconciliation on the cathedral steps. This negative representation of the working class is closely interconnected with the reversal in sympathy which was described in the previous chapter. From the second catacomb scene onwards, the movements of the workers are free-flowing, rapid and gesticulatory, and are characterized by raised arms and clenched fists. These replace the rhythmical, jerky movements of the earlier scenes in the machine rooms, and also the immobility and passivity of the first scene in the catacombs. The negative image of the workers is constituted mainly by a combination of long shots and medium close-ups: the former give the impression of disorder and chaos by emphasizing the sheer power of numbers, as the workers are made to resemble swarming ants; the latter focus

on the threatening aspect of the rebellious workers by showing leering expressions on their faces and raised, clenched fists.

Two scenes, other than the second one in the catacombs, are particularly effective in contributing to this stereotype of the workers as an anarchic mob. The workers storming the gates to the machine room stand in stark contrast to their change of shift at the beginning, mainly as a result of the difference in movements. The rigidity and control of the shift change (of which we are not meant to approve, incidentally) are replaced by uncontrolled violence. This sequence is shot from the opposite side of the railings to the change of shift, which means that the workers are trying to smash through the gates towards the camera. The effect is both menacing and dehumanizing, since the workers resemble wild animals trying to break out of a cage. Compared to the storming of the Winter Palace in Eisenstein's October, which constituted an heroic symbol, the similar scene in Metropolis has a totally different effect.

The second scene which reinforces the 'mob' image is in the central power house. Grot the foreman has let the workers into the power house on Fredersen's orders, and now stands silhouetted against a long shot of the throngs of workers at the other end of the vast chamber. This image serves to emphasize the idea of the individual versus the mass, the lone voice of reason in the face of the irrational mob. Again, the camera angle makes it clear where our sympathies should lie, as the viewer sees the mass of threatening workers from Grot's viewpoint.

B. The Two Marias.

Other aspects of the functions of the two Marias, which are nevertheless closely connected with the portrayal of revolution in the film, will be dealt with in the section on women and sexuality. With regard to the construction of the negative statement on revolution, the two Maria figures represent a number of oppositions - peace/violence, waiting/acting, good/evil, the 'true'/the 'false'. By combining all the positive elements in the figure of the heroine, 'good' Maria, while at the same time locating the negative aspects in her physical double, the evil Robot, Lang is able to produce a particularly clear statement on revolution through this contrast of opposites. The parallel catacomb scenes provide the strongest indicator of the two opposing and incompatible strategies, which form the basis of the ideological debate within the film - reform or revolution.

The first catacomb scene is the vehicle for the ideas of the good Maria. Shrouded in a saintly light, she preaches the need for understanding between rulers and ruled, and above all, patience on the side of the workers. Her message to the workers is simple - do not try to do anything yourselves, just wait for the 'mediator' who will bring about the necessary changes on your behalf. She has already taken the first step of confronting a sympathetic member of the ruling class with the spectacle of misery, a conscience prodding exercise aimed at instigating reform of an unjust system from above. When asked by the workers 'where is the mediator?', Maria immediately directs her gaze at Freder. The agent of change will come from the ranks of the

ruling class, who has been made aware of the plight of his 'brothers and sisters'.

The second catacomb scene shows the alternative to the method of peaceful reform. The Robot has assumed the appearance of the 'good' leader in order to deceive the workers, goading them into a course of action which is ultimately proved to be against their own interests. The rhetoric of the false leader is a parody of communist invective:

"Who is the living fodder for the machines of Metropolis? Who oils the machine limbs with his own marrow -? Who feeds the machines with his own flesh? Let the machines starve, you fools -! Let them die -!!" (Reel 7, T.22-25)

We are reminded on two occasions of the contrast between the evil Maria who is inciting the workers to violent revolution, and the good Maria who pacified the workers and kept them under control. When the real Maria is being held prisoner by Rotwang, he says to her in an unexpectedly concerned manner,

"Whenever you spoke to your poor brothers, you spoke of peace, Maria.. today a voice, on Joh Fredersen's orders, is inciting them to rise up against him.." (Reel 7, T. 17)

Similarly, after witnessing the Robot's bloodthirsty speech with Josaphat, Freder calls out

"Maria speaks of peace, not murder! That isn't Maria!" (Reel 7, T.29)

The contrast between the two Marias continues after the second catacomb scene: while the Robot is leading the workers to their destruction, the heroine is taking the workers' children to

safety. It is significant that the eventual destruction of the evil revolutionary is brought about by the workers themselves when they realize they have been tricked. This outcome is ideologically more acceptable than if the ruling class had ruthlessly wiped out the communist leader, as had happened to Rosa Luxemburg.

C. The Mediator.

The concept of mediation is introduced by Maria when she concludes her parable of the Tower of Babel.

"Brain and hands need a mediator. The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart!"

(Reel 4, T.12)

The preceding title, which appears only in the original version at this point, is important in clarifying this idea:

"Great is the World and its Creator, and great is Man." (Reel 4, T.11)

That is to say, the framework within which the idea of 'mediation' has its meaning in Metropolis is that of the Christian, humanist tradition. The task of bringing about such an understanding between rulers and ruled is undertaken by Freder, which again is more explicit in the original version:

Maria: "O mediator, have you finally come..."

Freder: "You called me - here I am!"

(Reel 4, Titles 17 and 18)

In subsequent English language versions, the exchange of looks between Freder and Maria makes it clear that Maria intends Freder to be the mediator, and he in turn realizes and fully accepts this role. The sequence of images conveys the sense of a mystical

communion between them quite effectively without titles. The original does have the advantage, however, of stressing linguistically yet again the notion of the mediator, and also of adding the dimension of a 'mission' or 'calling' being involved in such an undertaking.

The fulfilment of the mediator role and the romantic quest for Maria are the main driving forces in the Freder character throughout the remainder of the film, but that is not to say that these two aspects are totally distinct from each other. On the contrary, his personal search for Maria is closely connected with the task of the mediator, by virtue of the symbolic function of Maria as a crusading, reformist leader. When they are finally united in the embrace in the cathedral, it is more than the traditional cinematic conclusion of the love story: it signals the successful outcome of the mediation process, the triumph of the reformist, humanist values which will bring together the opposing sides of worker and capitalist.

Freder's mediator function is interrupted temporarily by a crisis in his concurrent romantic quest, which is brought about when he finds the Robot being embraced by his father. It is while he is incapacitated as a result of this traumatic discovery that the revolt of the workers takes place. He is brought back on course by the news from Josaphat that 'Maria' is stirring up trouble in the depths, deceiving the workers into a course of action which is at odds with his task as a mediator.

It is important that the workers are persuaded to revolt as a result of false information from the Robot, who tells them that

their promised mediator has failed to materialize and that it is time they took some direct action themselves. The poor, misguided workers are thus goaded into a disastrous insurrection because they swallow the directions of the false Maria, even though her rhetoric and bearing are in total contradiction to her previous persona. Such gullibility reinforces the idea that responsible leaders are needed to guide the workers, who are apparently incapable of making correct decisions for themselves. The mediation theory is thus strengthened. The final achievement of the mediation process takes place on the steps of the cathedral, when Freder unites brain and hands, fulfilling his prescribed role as mediator, and providing a strong visual construction of the abstract notion of mediation on which to end the film.

Reform or Revolution?

In political terms, the mediation process is central to a reformist social strategy in which conditions for the working class are improved in a very real sense, while at the same time, the underlying economic power structures remain intact. The job of the mediator is to reconcile differences rather than highlight inequalities, and to create a climate of harmony and mutual understanding - within the existing capitalist framework of Metropolis. It goes without saying that this political strategy of reform is totally incompatible with the revolutionary alternative which is portrayed in the film. For Freder's missionary role to succeed, the working class must delegate its power to him, and above all desist from independent action

outwith the control of their 'representatives', Freder and Maria. The passivity of the working class is vitally important to such a reformist programme.

The rejection of revolutionary means and objectives in favour of reform of the class system was of acute relevance in contemporary German politics. As has already been indicated, the SPD had undergone significant changes in the first few decades of the 20th Century. From being a mass socialist party based on Marxist revolutionary principles, genuinely representative of the organized working class in Germany, it gradually developed into a bourgeois opposition party. The extent of the shift is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the majority of SPD deputies in the Reichstag voted for the government's war credits in 1914. Only a very small number of SPD leaders, such as Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Zetkin, had the courage to speak out against an imperialist war which was being supported by their colleagues as a 'war of national self-defence'.

The theoretical split within the SPD, which had very real, tangible consequences for the future activity of the party, originated in the development of a revisionist tendency among certain SPD leaders at the turn of the century, in particular in the writings of Eduard Bernstein. The basic aim of this 'revisionism' was to shift SPD policy away from its roots in revolutionary Marxism. According to Bernstein, the SPD should become a party of social reforms rather than social revolution: socialism could be achieved by gradual improvements in the capitalist system being won through trade union activity and

parliamentary democracy. His ideas were scathingly attacked by Rosa Luxemburg in two articles, published together as "Reform or Revolution" in 1900. The following excerpt from the article is worth quoting in full, as it is of prime relevance to the present analysis of Metropolis:

"That is why people who pronounce themselves in favor of the method of legislative reform *in place of and in contradistinction to* the conquest of political power and social revolution, do not really choose a more tranquil, calmer and slower road to the *same* goal, but a *different* goal. Instead of taking a stand for a new society they take a stand for a surface modification of the old society. If we follow the political conceptions of revisionism, we arrive at the same conclusion that is reached when we follow the economic theories of revisionism. Our program becomes not the realization of *socialism*, but the reform of *capitalism*: not the suppression of the system of wage labor, but the diminution of exploitation, that is, the suppression of the abuses of capitalism instead of the suppression of capitalism itself." (17)

This pinpointing of the two different strategies would seem to sum up the essence of the political debate in Metropolis. What is being advocated most strongly in the film is an improvement in social conditions through the mutual co-operation of workers and capitalists, and, crucially, that the proletariat should realize that collaboration rather than confrontation is ultimately in its best interests. On the other hand, the revolutionary alternative is shown in no uncertain terms as evil, destructive, and

undesirable. Metropolis presents the opposition 'reform or revolution' in such a way that the viewer is in no doubt which strategy should be accepted as valid and which should be rejected as untenable.

CHAPTER 5.THE FAMILY, WOMEN AND SEXUALITY.1. The Cultural Background.

"It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and that this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished." (1)

Not only did Marx and Engels perceive the family as one of the main sources of the oppression of women, but they also saw in this institution a microcosm of the wider structural relations of capitalist society. The patriarchal family, as it had developed in class society, ensured the consolidation of private property

"through inheritance and social oppression in all its forms (including ways of thinking geared to the blind obedience of orders 'from above')." (2)

It is generally accepted that this well established belief in the traditional order of things was shattered in Germany after the First World War. Indeed the carnage brought about by the older generation does seem to have led to a widespread questioning of the legitimacy of authority on the part of the disaffected youth of the time. This new spirit manifested itself in a number of ways: in culture, the Expressionist movement was symptomatic of the anti-authoritarian rebellion against traditional forms; in politics, the revolutionary period in the

aftermath of the War was an indicator of the need for profound changes; and in the social sphere, traditional moral values were challenged to an unprecedented degree.

According to Gramsci, this post-war crisis of unique proportions was a result of the enforced sexual abstinence in the trenches and the subsequent numerical imbalance between the sexes. The period of moral decadence which followed came into conflict with the new work methods such as Taylorism, and rationalization in general, which stressed the need for strict discipline, not only on the factory floor, but also in workers' private lives. Hence the importance of the institution of the family for the bourgeoisie. (3) The right was quick to castigate the new Weimar Republic for being responsible for the decline in moral standards and the disintegration of family loyalties. It is certainly indicative of the change in attitudes that the divorce rate more than doubled between 1913 and 1930. (4)

In the cinema, the new liberalism may have been reflected in the series of 'sex education' and soft porn films which aroused the wrath of the Church and moral crusaders like Konrad Lange, but the mainstream popular cinema if anything reinforced traditional moral values. Departures from the bourgeois family code would frequently end either in punishment or in a return to hearth and home. In Nju (Czinner, 1924) the adulterous wife commits suicide, while in Die Straße (Grune, 1923) the adventure-seeking husband finally returns to his wife's soup tureen. In other films such as Die Büchse der Pandora (Pabst, 1929) and Der Blaue Engel (von Sternberg, 1930) the irresistible sensuality of

the female characters leads to the downfall not only of their victims, but, in the case of Pabst's film, to the death of Lulu herself.

It is possible that such moral tales were meant to act as a corrective to what was perceived as an increasingly licentious tendency in Weimar society. The myth has certainly prevailed that Germany in the 1920s experienced a flowering of decadence and sexual liberation, although it is difficult to assess the extent to which reality corresponded to the reputation. The Isherwood novels, Fosse's Cabaret (1972), and the now semi-legendary Der Blaue Engel have all perpetuated this image. It would appear that in more progressive circles, liberals and socialists were calling for free abortion, legalizing the sale of contraceptives, and more tolerance of bigamy, homosexuality, divorce and polygamy. (5) Although such ideas were far from widespread, and were limited to the big cities, they do seem to have led in the Weimar period to

"an increasing openness regarding sexual matters, which had until then been virtually taboo in bourgeois society." (6)

Any so-called permissiveness did not, however, bring with it a substantial improvement in the objective position of women in the years between the wars. For despite the fact that women's suffrage and equal rights for women had been written into the Weimar Constitution, the apparent equality had remained theoretical. It was the economic crisis which in reality marked out the framework for the emancipation of women, as many of the

women who had been incorporated into the labour market to assist the 'war effort' were forced out of their jobs to make way for returning servicemen.

The decline in the fortunes of the women's movement after the war is closely connected to the developments which took place in the SPD around the same time. The eventual polarization into two main groupings, the reformist SPD and the revolutionary KPD, saw a similar split in the women's movement. The most talented of the SPD women, most notably Rosa Luxemburg and Clara Zetkin, went over to the KPD, while the majority followed the new SPD course:

"In line with the new constitution of the Party as a state-supportive mass organization with a reformist orientation, their work lay in the 'details' of the schools service, the trade unions, workers' welfare, councils and parliament." (7)

Social revolution and the concomitant genuine liberation of women had been abandoned in favour of token legal reforms which had little practical effect on the position of women.

Attitudes to the family, women and sexuality cannot be separated from politics in the wider sense. In the same way, the representations of the family unit and the female characters in Metropolis perform an important function in the construction of the film's political statement. An analysis of the way in which the family, women and sexuality are depicted, will help to identify the ideological framework within which the film's possible meanings are located.

2. The Family in Metropolis.

In the hierarchy of Metropolis, the ruling class family occupies a particularly privileged position. From the beginning we are made aware of the importance of family relationships. The "Sons' Club", by its very title, immediately suggests two things: firstly, that it has been given by parents to their offspring, but more significantly, that it involves only male descendants.

"The workers' city lay deep under the earth's surface. Equally as far above it towered up the block of houses called the "Sons' Club", with its auditoria and libraries, its theatres and stadia."

(Reel 1, T.4)

The title which follows further clarifies the situation. Mothers have no part in the endowment of presents to these fortunate sons:

"Fathers, for whom every rotation of a machine wheel meant gold, had given their sons the miracle of the Eternal Gardens." (Reel 1, T.5)

The exclusively patriarchal nature of the dominant class in Metropolis is thus underlined from the outset. The above title, which as I have already pointed out emphasizes the profit motive in the factory system, also suggests that the inheritance of private property was the concern of the capitalists of Metropolis.

The importance of the father/son relationship is seen most clearly in the Fredersen family. The name 'Freder Fredersen' itself symbolizes the patriarchal system of inheritance on which the social structure of Metropolis is based. It is significant that the names of Freder and his father, Fredersen, were changed

in the English language version re-edited for distribution in the American market. (8) These characters were called 'Eric' and 'John Masterman', as is confirmed by two titles in the East German compilation.

"As deep as the workmen's homes lay under the earth, so high above it towered the Masterman Stadium, gift of John Masterman, the richest man in Metropolis." (List B, T.3)

"In these hungry machines, suddenly Eric saw that ancient god into whose fiery mouth the Phoenicians drove their human sacrifices." (List B, T.14)

These changes, simple as they may appear at first glance, in fact result in a shift of emphasis from the dynastic implications of the Freder Fredersen/Joh Fredersen pairing to the more general patriarchal notion in the names Eric/John Masterman.

Consistent with this emphasis on the father/son relationship is the absence of wives, mothers and daughters in the ruling class of Metropolis. The only women who feature in the upper world are the 'playthings' in the Eternal Gardens and Yoshiwara.

For Fredersen, the authoritarian father, the welfare of his son and heir is paramount, and at the end it would seem to be concern for Freder's safety which softens his dictatorial manner. In the midst of chaos and destruction, he asks Slim "Where is my son?" (Reel 9, T.2) and subsequently it is the sight of Freder struggling with Rotwang on the roof of the cathedral that makes him fall to his knees in a symbolic act of capitulation.

This type of authoritarian family was seen by Wilhelm Reich as an iniquitous institution - "a factory where reactionary

ideology and reactionary structures are produced." (9) The domination of the authoritarian father, Fredersen, is more than just a reworking of the father/son conflict. It is symptomatic of the repressive social system as a whole, which is changed, even if only on a superficial level, by the experience of the workers' revolt.

Counterposed to the representation of the ruling class family in Metropolis are the male and female proletarians and their children. In place of patriarchal domination we have a relationship of equal oppression: the male workforce could hardly be described as occupying a superior position to the women, who have apparently been relegated to the home. The wives only emerge from the barrack-like houses as the revolt gets under way, and from that point, they take an equally active part in the destruction of the machinery.

But family structures are crucial to the working class in Metropolis as well as to their oppressors. This is highlighted by the appearance of the workers' children, forlorn and abandoned by their parents. Why are their mothers and fathers not there protecting them? The answer, of course, is that they are irresponsibly smashing the wheels that make Metropolis turn. The absence of the parents is thus linked with the workers' revolt, the implication being that both actions are morally reprehensible. The connection is made clear when Grot is trying to stop the workers in their tracks. He first asks

"Where are your children?" (Reel 9, T.4)

and then follows on with

"Who told you to attack the machines, without which you must all die most miserably, you idiots?" (Reel 9, T.6)

The potential revolution is averted by the realization on the part of the workers that their actions are endangering the lives of their children. The children have in fact been saved by Freder and Maria, who lead them to the upper levels of the city. In this flood sequence, we are presented with an image of the ideal family - Freder the caring leader, and Maria the idealized mother figure, surrounded by dependent children. The absence of the children's real parents is emphasized when Maria asks them

"Where are your fathers and mothers?" (Reel 8, T.7)

Again, the neglectfulness and irresponsibility of the absent parents is shown as the direct result of their involvement in revolutionary politics.

3. Women and Sexuality in Metropolis.

There are four main representations of women in the film which form two sets of balanced opposites: the first and most important of these pairings is Maria and the Robot, and the second the workers' wives and the women in the Eternal Gardens. In addition, there is the absent female character Hel, who does not appear physically, but performs an important function in the narrative. We are told that she died in childbirth, presumably having thus fulfilled her primary function in the male-dominated world of Metropolis. The absence of the mother, Hel, is a key to the personal antagonisms between Fredersen and Rotwang, and Freder and Rotwang. Her place is taken, however, by Maria, who comes to represent a lover/mother substitute for both Freder and Rotwang.

The disappearance of all mention of Hel in all but the ARD reconstruction totally changes a whole aspect of motivation in the narrative, since Fredersen and Rotwang are thus transformed into accomplices whose main aim is to create a robot that will dispense with the need for living workers. In the original version it would have been clear that they were in fact caught up in an 'eternal triangle' which made them sexual rivals rather than allies. The scene in which Fredersen comes to Rotwang's laboratory consisted mainly of an exposition of past events concerning Hel. The following titles expose the bitterness and underlying tension between the two men.

Reel 3.

T.4: (Inscription on marble bust of Hel in Rotwang's laboratory) Hel, born to bring happiness to me and a blessing to everyone, lost to Joh Fredersen, died when giving birth to Freder, Joh Fredersen's son.

T.5: A mind like yours, Rotwang, ought to be able to forget..

T.6: Only once in my life did I forget something - that Hel was a woman, and you a man..

T.7: Let the dead woman rest, Rotwang.. she is as dead for me as she is for you.

T.8: She did not die as far as I am concerned, Joh Fredersen - for me, she lives!

T.9: Do you believe that the loss of a hand is too high a price to pay for the recreation of Hel?

T.10: Do you want to see her?

T.13: The woman is mine, Joh Fredersen. You can have the son of Hel.

Rotwang was trying to re-create Hel in the figure of the Robot, which explains its obviously female form. What has, in edited versions, become an evil scientist was originally a rather more tragic and pathetic figure, embodying the Romantic concept of the distraught lover driven to madness after failure in love. The background of past sexual rivalry between Fredersen and Rotwang, as Paul Jensen points out,

"gives Joh's dependence on Rotwang for advice and inventions an edge of irony that the film [i.e. the edited version] lacks." (10)

Although the main opposition is constituted by the Maria/Robot pairing, the 'good' Maria character is also formulated by contrasting her with other female roles. The first

appearance of Maria with the workers' children in the Eternal Gardens is a good example of this counterposing effect. For the entrance of Maria has been directly preceded by images of the ruling class women, who would seem to be high class whores rather than girlfriends or wives. As ornate as the surrounding Gardens, their frivolous dress equates the women with the beautiful peacocks which strut around the fountains; both the women and the birds are visually pleasing objects for the amusement of the idle young rich. In direct contrast to this playful opulence, the viewer is suddenly confronted with the vision of Maria in long shot with the children around her, advancing towards the camera shrouded in a halo of soft light. After the series of intense looks which are exchanged between Freder and Maria, Freder pushes his bare-shouldered companion behind him in a gesture of rejection.

The use of dress and movement in this sequence is important in establishing the opposing female characters. Maria evokes a stern purity in her simple, Quaker-style dress, which remains tightly laced throughout, and her gestures are controlled and kept to a minimum. The ruling class women, on the other hand, wear elaborate gowns, which are both luxurious and sparse, and their movements are more fluid and playful, as they run around, throwing their hands up in the air. The superficial sensuality of these women is set markedly against the austere sobriety of the mother figure, Maria. This virtuous, virginal image of Maria, established firmly in the first scene, is then developed in the catacombs when she next appears. As well as expanding on the

'good' qualities of the Maria character, this sequence also forms the first part of the main opposition between Maria and the Robot, the second part being the equivalent scene with the Robot in the catacombs later in the narrative.

The maternal imagery is continued in the first catacomb scene, but with the introduction of religious elements the association of Maria with the Virgin Mary becomes explicit. She preaches a sermon, surrounded by crosses, and is again bathed in soft lighting. As in the Eternal Gardens scene, the use of movement, or lack of it, is important. Maria's facial expression is gentle, her lips move slowly, and her eyes gaze serenely, but intently. Her hands are either held palm upwards in a typically religious pose, or else clasped modestly over her chest, as in many religious icons, especially of the Virgin Mary. The maternal image is strengthened when she kisses Freder on the cheek, as he kneels before her. Both Freder and Maria put left hand to left breast in this scene, a rather obvious reference to the theme of the 'heart' which mediates between brain and hands.

In many ways 'good' Maria is an active agent in the narrative, as her intrusion into the upper world of the rulers is the reason for Freder's sudden moral awakening, and she takes direct steps to save the workers' children from the flood. Yet her role as an active protagonist is undermined by her dependence on the male hero, Freder, becoming the mediator between the classes. Although she has been the reformist leader to the workers who 'pleads for peace, not violence', and indeed this partly explains her passivity, she is waiting for someone else

(Freder) to practice what she preaches. Her advocacy of peaceful reform stands in direct opposition to the revolutionary call to arms of her false counterpart, just as her virginity is contrasted to the blatant sexuality of the Robot.

The establishment of the two sides of Maria, her maternal goodness in the Eternal Gardens and her political reformism in the catacombs, is paralleled by a similarly structured development of the Robot. The sexual nature of the Robot is introduced when she is sent to Fredersen for approval, then further elaborated in the dance sequence. Her role as evil revolutionary is subsequently made clear in the catacombs.

It is worth noting that one of the techniques used to distinguish the Robot from the real Maria is the use of heavy eye make-up and lipstick, which is particularly noticeable in the scene in Fredersen's office. Here, we are shown the Robot's face in close-up, as she gazes seductively at Fredersen, then winks slowly. In a survey carried out in 1929 by Erich Fromm into the political, cultural and social attitudes of German workers, one of the questions asked was "Do you like the use of powder, perfume and lipstick by a woman? Why/why not?". A large proportion, 84%, gave negative responses, most of which fell into the category that it was "immoral, superficial, deceptive" or "unnatural".(11) One respondent described the use of such cosmetics as "unaesthetic, pernicious, seductive, false". The exaggerated make-up of the Robot was therefore likely to produce an association of 'falseness' in the mind of the average viewer, in contrast to the 'naturalness' of 'good' Maria.

The dance sequence, organized by Rotwang to prove the credibility of the Robot, not just as a human being but specifically as a woman, firmly locates the false Maria as a sex object. Layers of clothing are discarded in what amounts to a strip-tease act, and her near naked silhouette girates before the all-male audience of industrialists. The montage of gleaming eyes, the leering faces and licking of lips leave no doubt about the sexual implications and the effectiveness of her performance.

Just as the virginal quality of good Maria was continued and elaborated in her catacomb sermon, so too is the evil sexuality of the Robot carried through into a further phase of development in the second catacomb scene. The contrast between both Marias is striking, as the Robot adopts blatantly sexual poses, with her legs astride, her chest forward and one eye sultrily half-closed. Whereas Maria had demurely clasped her hands across her breasts, the Robot virtually pulls open the laced-up front of her dress. In the same way that good Maria's purity is equated with her message of political reformism, the pseudo-communist rhetoric of the Robot is combined with the notion of overt sexuality, both of which, it is implied, are dangerous and ultimately destructive. The political and the sexual become intertwined in a negative critique.

The association of sexuality with violence and destruction was even more explicit in the original version of Metropolis, in which there were two extensive references to the Whore of Babylon (see Production History section). The following titles have been cut from subsequent versions:

"Truly I say unto you: near are the days of which the Apocalypse speaks! And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet coloured beast, which was full of names of blasphemy and had seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and had a golden goblet in her hand. And on her forehead was written a name, a secret : Great Babylon, the mother of all atrocities on earth. And I saw the woman drunk on the blood of the saints." (Reel 5, T.2 and 3, and Reel 6, T. 11 and 12)

According to the Biblical source on which this powerful image is based, the evil harlot caused the downfall and apocalyptic destruction of the city of Babylon. For such wantonness and depravity she was ultimately punished by being "utterly burned with fire". (12) In Metropolis the same fate awaits the Robot, who is burnt at the stake by irate workers.

Another scene which does not appear in existing versions of the film consisted of a flashback reconstruction of a duel between two men in Yoshiwara. The incident is related to Freder by Josaphat (Reel 7, T.5-8). Jan and Marinus, erstwhile best of friends, become involved in a brawl over possession of the Robot's garter. One ends up shooting the other as a result of the all-pervasive influence of the depraved woman.

Not only is sexuality equated with violence and foreboding, it is also linked explicitly with sin and death, mainly through repeated appearances of the Seven Deadly Sins and Death the Reaper. When Freder finds his father with the Robot, which he naturally perceives as his beloved Maria, he collapses. His

subsequent hallucination takes the form of a montage of the female figure, the stone figures of the Seven Deadly Sins, and Death itself. Similarly, when he is recovering in bed from this ordeal, he has a vision which coincides with the Robot dance, and again, Death approaches wielding his scythe to punish those with evil, immoral thoughts. The Death figure had already featured prominently in Lang's earlier work, Der Müde Tod, and can be traced back to the German Romantic tradition, where love and sexuality were often associated with death, especially in the works of the poet, Novalis.

The repeated appearance of the Seven Deadly Sins figures makes it clear that the association between libidinal sex and moral transgression in Metropolis is a reflection of Christian ethics, according to which sex should serve procreation alone, not pleasure. Wilhelm Reich, who was scathing about the role of the Church in matters of sexuality, described the process of sexual repression as follows:

"The cult of the Virgin Mary is drawn upon very successfully as a means of inculcating chastity. [...] Thus, in the emotional life of Christian youths, the Mother of God assumes the role of one's own mother, and the Christian youth showers upon her all the love that he had for his own mother.." (13)

In the context of the absent mother, Hel, the relationship between Freder and Maria can be seen partly as a result of this displacement from the real mother to the Virgin Mary figure. The obviously incestuous implications lead to a suppression of what

Reich calls 'genital sexuality' in favour of an asexual tenderness. This is evident in the first catacomb scene where Maria adopts a maternal stance in relation to Freder, confirming her association with the Virgin Mary: he kneels before her adoringly, while she rests her hands on his shoulders, then slowly kisses his cheek. Their mutual lowering of eyelids suggests a kind of suppressed ecstasy at this seemingly innocent contact with each other, a signal that Freder's devout reverence for Maria, the Mother figure, will develop into a not-so-asexual attraction for Maria, the desirable woman. By the end of the film, the kiss on the cheek has been superceded by a passionate mouth-to-mouth embrace, in a traditional romantic conclusion.

Sexual ethics were the concern not only of the established Church, but also of the new breed of management which rose to prominence at the beginning of the 20th Century.

"The truth is that the new type of man demanded by the rationalisation of production and work cannot be developed until the sexual instinct has been suitably regulated and until it too has been rationalised." (14)

The point being that workers who have indulged in a night of debauchery will not have the concentration required for the perfectly timed movements of the new production line. Gramsci's remark about the corresponding tendency in management is also pertinent to Metropolis.

"The male industrialist continues to work even if he is a millionaire, but his wife and daughters are turning, more and more, into 'luxury mammals'." (15)

The women in the Eternal Gardens are the epitome of such 'luxury mammals'. Their complementary opposites, the workers' wives seem to have been regulated into totally asexual beings. Although the proletarian women, like their husbands, are portrayed as a drab, unattractive mass, any sympathy for their downtrodden condition is tempered by the way they leer and rage like wild animals, and by their aggressive action in burning the 'witch'.

The burning at the stake of the so-called witch is a particularly violent image to round off the critique of the sexual woman. Although witchcraft in its historical context was not confined to women, but included male witches as well, the term 'witch' has come to mean an evil, female figure in popular mythology. Furthermore, the phenomenon of the witch-craze can have more than just a social or religious dimension. As the historian Trevor-Roper points out,

"It can be extended deliberately, in times of political crisis, as a political device, to destroy powerful enemies or dangerous persons."

(16)

Revolutionary politics, anathema to the reformist message of Metropolis, can thus be disposed of by burning the Robot at the stake, which at the same time eliminates the threat of the false Maria's sexuality. Like the Biblical Whore of Babylon, she is 'utterly burned with fire'.

An analysis of the representations of women in Metropolis reveals an underlying attitude to women which can hardly be described as positive or progressive. It is tempting to explain this neurotic stereotyping of women by referring to Lang's

recurrent obsession with the 'femme fatale' which goes back to his early scriptwriting days. The destructive effect of female sexuality runs through such films as Halbblut (1919), The Woman in the Window (1944) and Scarlet Street (1945). As far as his output in the 1920s is concerned, it does not compare particularly unfavourably with the work of most of his contemporaries. Positive portrayals of women were few and far between in Weimar cinema. It must also be said that the stereotyping of the female characters in Metropolis is also present in Thea von Harbou's novel, in which the opposition between the Whore of Babylon and the Virgin is quite explicit.

The division of the female character into either vamp or virgin, the archetypal split with a long cultural history, was certainly a frequent feature of Weimar films, but in Metropolis it took on a new dimension. The customary moralistic tale about the dangers of sexuality becomes the vehicle for an explicit ideological message: the sexual politics are an integral part of the political statement. Set against the disruptive effect of the Robot's blatant sexuality is the emphasis on family unity and feminine virtues embodied in the 'real' Maria. The polar opposition of the two physically identical female characters gives strength and directness to the message of reform through mediation instead of violent revolution.

CHAPTER 6.RELIGION.1. The Church and Religion in the Weimar Republic.

It is difficult to measure the strength of support for the Christian Church, both Protestant and Catholic, during the 1920s in Germany. Modern capitalist society does seem to have seen a decline in religious activity on the whole, yet the Christian Church during the Weimar period apparently commanded a stronger allegiance than one might have expected, given the myths about the rampant decadence of the Twenties.

The nominal membership of the Protestant Church at this time was 40 million (60% of the population) though active churchgoers, who were mainly from the ranks of the middle and upper classes, represented 18% of the population. (1) Rather surprisingly, perhaps, Christian youth movements were well supported, in spite of the post-war liberalism. According to Reich, there were 1.5 million members in these Christian youth movements in the years between 1930 and 1932, a figure which was thirty times higher than the combined membership of comparable groups in the Communist and Social Democratic parties. (2) Similarly, a large section of the trade union movement belonged to specifically Christian organizations, both Protestant and Catholic, quite apart from the many members of the secular trade unions who were also members of a church. The membership of these Christian trade unions rose to 1.1 million in 1920. (3)

After the abdication of the Kaiser in 1918, church leaders feared that the new Republican government would introduce policies which were detrimental to the church. The Erfurt programme of the SPD had, after all, declared that religion was a matter for the individual, and that church subsidies from the state should cease. Their fears proved to be unfounded: as with the rest of the social structure, the effects of the German 'revolution' were minimal.

"Church privileges were confirmed while state control over the church was reduced. The SPD was justified in arguing that this had produced a situation in which the church was free of the state but the state was not free of the church." (4)

This favourable outcome was mainly due to the intervention of the Catholic Zentrumsparlei, which took a steady vote of about 4 million around this time, and exerted considerable influence on government policy in matters relating to the church of both denominations. (5) As far as the Protestant Church was concerned, it professed to be neutral vis-à-vis party politics, but in practice it was closely aligned with the DNVP, the conservative nationalist party. The Protestant hierarchy never quite came to terms with what it regarded as secular government, and despite an official oath of loyalty to the new Republican constitution, the traditional, conservative Protestant leaders remained hostile to the socialist parties. They were also resentful of the greater political power of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Protestant vote was not, however, the exclusive province of the right-wing DNVP. The liberal parties, the DVP (Deutsche Volkspartei) and DDP (Deutsche Demokratische Partei) also had a considerable degree of Protestant support. The more left-wing of these, the DDP, had been founded by Friedrich Naumann, a prominent figure in the Protestant Christian Social movement at the turn of the century:

"..he insisted in all of his writings upon the necessity of reducing the gulf that existed between the working classes and bourgeois society.." (6)

Needless to say, it was only the more progressive wings of both the Catholic and Protestant Churches which advocated an improvement in the lot of the lower classes. This form of 'Christian Socialism' was in keeping with the traditional concern of the church for the poor, but was, as Miliband points out, hardly revolutionary in orientation:

"Such concern, however, is not in the least 'dysfunctional' and 'non-integrative'; nor, save for some notable exceptions, have most religiously inspired movements of reform wished it to be such." (7)

On the contrary, reformist clergymen can be seen in the same light as those enlightened industrialists in the mould of Paul Silverberg, who believed that social stability could best be served by class collaboration: the net effect in each case is the defusion of violent opposition by an exploited working class.

The film industry in the Weimar Republic was not exempt from the attentions of the Church hierarchy, who took an active

interest in the influence of the new medium. During 1923, the government was in the process of re-drafting the 1920 censorship law in accordance with a decision of the Reichstag on 7th December 1922. It was intended that the new law should offer more protection against 'Schund und Schmutz' (obscene materials - literally 'trash and dirt'). One submission to the Home Office came from Cardinal Bertram on behalf of the Fulda Bishops' Conference. I could not find the original letter, apparently written on 20th April 1923, in the Bundesarchiv file, but it does have the reply from the Home Office Minister to Dr. Bertram, which gives a reasonable idea of the contents of the Cardinal's original submission. (8) The Minister, Oeser, (9) begins by agreeing that not all branches of the film industry seem convinced of the cultural mission of the moving picture, as one of the most influential means of education. He goes on to say,

"The greater part of this industry, which is overwhelmingly capitalist in orientation, is unfortunately predominantly concerned with business interests."

Thus most films are geared towards the lower instincts of the viewer. Cinema owners in particular are guilty of trying to entice viewers with sensational and often offensive advertisements (i.e. in newspapers) which are not covered by present censorship. Oeser then points out that the new draft legislation will bring advertisements and film titles under stricter control (Section 5, Paragraph 2 and Section 3, Paragraph 2).

Dr. Bertram also seems to have complained about irreverent representations of Biblical themes, the behaviour of religious cults, and Church figures. Oeser claims to be unaware of such films passing the censors, and asks for more details. As far as the bishops' suggestion that censorship boards be set up in all provincial capitals is concerned, he states that this would be too expensive, and that in any case, local authorities already have the power of veto.

The final complaint from the Cardinal would seem to have been about the lack of Church representation in censorship matters. The Minister's response is that clergymen already sit on censors' boards, and are called in as experts for the examination of certain films depicting religious cults and the like.

This submission represents a clear attempt on the part of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to influence government policy, thus furthering the interests of the Church and religion. The Protestant Church was also involved in similar political interventions. As well as opposing any liberalization of censorship and licensing laws, it fought against changes in the laws relating to sexual behaviour, divorce and the penal system. (10) It claimed the right to intervene in public life in return for promising allegiance to the state, a reciprocal arrangement which was stated in a declaration by the General Assembly in 1927, and which was given wide press coverage. The terms were as follows:

"True to the instructions of the Scripture the church prays for nation, state and authority (Obrigkeit). Equally the church makes certain

moral demands on the state. In particular, the church cannot renounce the right to apply independently and candidly eternal moral standards to legislation and administration and to represent Christian principles in all public life." (11)

There is no record to my knowledge of how the Church assessed Metropolis, according to these 'eternal moral standards' and 'Christian principles'. However, as we shall see in the following section, the representation of religion in the film was hardly likely to arouse the indignation of the Church - quite the opposite.

2. Religion in Metropolis.

Many critics have remarked on the religious symbolism which permeates Metropolis, yet few have gone into a detailed analysis of what Paul Jensen has called "an abundance of direct, unsubtle religious references". (12) Even though he acknowledges the wealth of this material, he deals with it in a few sentences, merely drawing some obvious parallels between the characters of Maria, Freder and Joh and the Biblical figures of the Virgin Mary, Christ and Jehovah respectively. Barlow, who reminds us of the frequent use of Christian symbolism in Expressionist works, also points out that its manifestations in Metropolis are extremely confused:

"The Blessed Virgin, the prophets, and John the Baptist are all combined in the figure of Maria. Joh Fredersen's only Jehovan attribute is his power. There is very little that is Christ-like about Freder, especially since we see him running around in desperate anguish most of the time." (13)

The characters do not always fit comfortably into the shoes of their Biblical counterparts. Likewise, the particular form of religion which is represented cannot be pinpointed as, say, Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, since no specific doctrine is consistently worked through. The most that can be claimed with any certitude is that the religious imagery corresponds to Christianity in the widest sense.

Other critics like John Tulloch have developed the analysis of religious symbolism further by situating these references in 'relational terms'. Tulloch sees the 'subtext' of the film as

made up of a series of 'shifting antinomies', two of which are Christian/diabolic and spiritual/materialist.(14) While not agreeing with all of his analysis in this respect, I find his attempt to interpret the religious imagery in a wider context worthwhile. There does seem to be a conflict in the religious symbols caused by the intrusion of the Frankensteinian elements, which stem from an atheistic tradition. Yet the equation of Rotwang with the diabolic and materialist side of the 'antinomies' is undermined by the motivation for his actions lying in his obsessive love for the dead woman, Hel, a motivation which has been eradicated from most of the edited versions of the film.

Although Barlow is justified in pointing out the inconsistencies in the Christian symbolism, the reason for this confusion lies to a certain extent in the cuts which were made in 1927 after the film's initial release in Berlin. For the original version contained more explicit religious references, as can be seen from the Zensurkarte titles. The subsequent omissions provide important clues for an interpretation of the style of the film.

Two distinct yet interconnected strands can be identified in an analysis of the religious imagery. Although there are still one or two references which do not fit easily into either strand, they do not detract from the importance of these categories. The two main loci of meaning are, then, (a) The Tower of Babel parable and (b) The Revelation of St. John references. The former are the primary source of the film's political statement, and the

latter a key not only to the style, but also to subsidiary themes.

The Tower of Babel.

In the Bible, the Lord punishes men for their presumption in building a city and tower for their own, rather than his, glory: where they had previously spoken one language, he now confounds their tongues, "that they may not understand one another's speech" (Genesis xi, verses 1-9). Maria's parable, the standard Biblical technique of storytelling with a moral message, is an embellished version of these verses from Genesis, adapted slightly for the needs of the workers in Metropolis. Her sermon takes place in the catacombs far below the city, a reference to the persecution of the early Christians under various Roman emperors. Surrounded by candles and crosses, the scene is set for her 'message' to the downtrodden workers. In the East German reconstruction, a rather misleading title, which was not in the original, appears before her speech:

"The Forgotten Christ" (List B, T.61)

It immediately precedes Maria's parable, so it seems reasonable to assume that it is meant to refer to Maria herself. Alternatively, it could be Rotwang's answer to Fredersen, since the title follows on from Fredersen asking Rotwang what it is about the catacombs that interests the workers.

In Maria's story, the hubris of man which was the cause of the trouble in the Bible is replaced by a misunderstanding between those who had conceived the idea of the Tower and those who had been hired to build it.

"But the hands that built the tower knew nothing of the dream of the brain that had planned the tower." (Reel 4, T.7)

As the next title indicates, the result is "Babel" - confusion. The answer to the problem of the lack in communication is stated quite explicitly at the end of the parable.

"Brain and hands need a mediator. The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart!"

(Reel 4, T. 12 and 13)

The second of these titles appears on two other occasions in the film, at the very beginning and the very end: the first title in the original version in the form of a 'motto' and the last title before 'The End', both of which were identical to Title 13.

The prominent position occupied by these statements about the heart being the mediator between the hands and the brain indicates their importance for the overall meaning of the film. In fact the Tower of Babel parable can be seen as embodying the essential political argument of Metropolis in miniature. As has already been indicated, the 'heart' is the agent of conciliation, and the character who represents all the values contained in this symbol is Freder. The focus on Freder as mediator in this scene has been prefigured in two incidents. The first is after Freder has witnessed the accident in the machine room, when he runs to his waiting car and directs the driver "To the new Tower of Babel - to my father!" (Reel 1, T.14). The corresponding title in the DDR and BFI versions reads simply "To my father!" (List B, T.15 and List C, T. 10), thus considerably weakening the connection established between the mediator figures, Freder and Maria, even

before Freder has heard Maria's parable. The second incident is when Freder takes over from Georgy on the clock-shaped machine. His stance makes clear the equation of Freder with Christ on the cross (the crucifixion of an important historical 'mediator'), to say nothing of his anguished cry "Father! Father!..Will these ten hours never end?" (Reel 3, T.18).

The symbol of which Freder is the main representative, the Heart, is traditionally associated with love and compassion. In Metropolis, these values have distinctly Christian and humanist overtones. Maria stirs the conscience of Freder in the Eternal Gardens with the words "Look, these are your brothers!" (Reel 1, T.8 and T.9 - same title repeated). Thereafter Freder's frequent references to his 'brothers' show his concern for his fellow man. When asked by his father why he was in the machine room, he replies "I wanted to look closely into the faces of the people whose little children are my brothers and sisters"(Reel 2, T.4), and later, he tells Josaphat of his intention to go "Into the depths - to my brothers"(Reel 2, T.20). One title which was not in fact in the original version , but which has been added in the East German reconstruction, is a statement by Freder to Josaphat when he is asking him to join forces with him:

"We will prove that the world was not made for one man - or a 1000 - but for all mankind."(List B, T.37)

Yet another example of an unnecessary embellishment of the original.

The Christian humanism of the film is also neatly encapsulated in the inscription on the Tower of Babel, "Great is the world and its creator, and great is man" (Reel 4, T.5 and T.11). Taken together with the 'motto', this inscription represents the basic political message of the film. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the system: all that is required is some compassion to bring about a harmonious relationship between rulers and ruled, within a framework of Christian humanist values.

The Revelation of St. John.

When Josaphat comes to Freder's apartment to tell him what has been happening in Metropolis while he has been lying ill in bed, he finds Freder sitting in an armchair reading a book. In the DDR, ARD and BFI versions, most of the conversation which takes place in this scene has been cut, along with an extremely important title - the name of the book Freder has been reading:

"The Revelation of St. John. Published by Avalun & Co., Hellaerau" (Reel 7, T.2)

Likewise, titles which have been taken directly from this book of the Bible have been omitted in subsequent edited versions. The significance of these titles for the sexual politics of the film has already been discussed in the previous section. They appear in identical form at two points in the narrative:

"Truly I say unto you: near are the days of which the Apocalypse speaks! And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet coloured beast, which was full of names of blasphemy and had seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was dressed in purple and

scarlet, and had a golden goblet in her hand. And on her forehead was written a name, a secret: Great Babylon, the mother of all atrocities on earth. And I saw the woman drunk on the blood of the saints." (Reel 5, T.2 and 3; Reel 6, T.11 and 12)

Before analysing the relevance of these references for Metropolis, it is worth giving a brief overview of the basic content and context of Revelation. It is commonly assumed that it was written at the end of the first century A.D., probably during the reign of the Emperor Domitian. It was a troubled time for early Christians, who suffered persecution at the hands of various tyrannical rulers. The following summary of the situation reveals definite thematic similarities with Metropolis.

"The Empire continued on its wicked way. Oppression and wrong abounded. Evil men prospered. Idolators persisted in their idol-worship, and the cult of the emperor flourished." (15)

It was to a beleaguered church, then, that Revelation was addressed. This book is generally accepted among theologians to be one of the most difficult writings in the Bible, mainly due to its wealth of strange and fantastic symbolism. It is an example of a type of writing called 'apocalyptic', dating from the last two centuries B.C. to the first century A.D. Apocalypses were usually meant to be revelations made by celestial beings to well known Biblical figures (like an angel to Abraham), and the message was conveyed by vivid imagery, which was often difficult to interpret. John's Revelation is a prophetic tale, full of sounding trumpets, the opening of seals, and visions of beasts

and dragons. In the end, God triumphs over his enemies and a magnificent heavenly city is established for his followers.

If one relates all this to Metropolis, several striking parallels can be detected. Firstly, in terms of the style of the film, the vivid and monumental images have much in common with the florid and apocalyptic symbolism of Revelation. An acceptance of this affinity, given the direct references to this particular book of the Bible, makes the equation of Lang's style with Nazism even less plausible.

Secondly, certain themes of the film correspond closely to aspects of Revelation. The part which is directly relevant to Metropolis is Chapter xvii, dealing with the Judgement of the Whore of Babylon. John sees a vision of an evil harlot sitting on a scarlet beast, the incarnation of sin and godlessness. Babylon was a symbol of the great city which seduces mankind away from God with temptations of the flesh. Theologians have pointed out the possibility that the 'whore' symbol referred to contemporary Rome. (16) And just as the Biblical Babylon can, by extension, be taken to refer to any modern city, so too can the same symbol in Metropolis be understood as a reflection of Berlin in the 1920s, or of other 'sinful and decadent' cities.

In the Bible, the fall of the Whore and the city are a result of sin and blasphemy, a punishment by God for the worshipping of pagan gods instead of Him. In Metropolis the pagan gods are the machines, a connection made directly by Freder when he shouts 'Moloch' on seeing the accident on the M-Machine. The name Moloch originates from Leviticus xviii, verse 21: it was a

Canaanite idol to whom children were sacrificed as burnt offerings.

The symbol of the Whore of Babylon in Metropolis, like its Biblical counterpart, can be read in a number of (not necessarily exclusive) ways. On one level, it forms part of the vamp/virgin opposition which is so crucial for presenting the political debate about reform and revolution. It could also be seen as an indictment of technology 'without a soul', since both references to the Whore would seem to have accompanied or preceded appearances by the Robot in the form of the evil, seductive harlot (see Production History). It should be pointed out, however, that the title in the DDR reconstruction "It has everything but a soul.." (List B, T.51: Rotwang showing Fredersen his new invention) did not exist in the original title list.

In Revelation, the devil is finally thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone to join the beast and the false prophet: the grand finale of Metropolis sees Rotwang falling to his death from the roof of the cathedral and the Robot being consumed with fire. In both narratives, the sweeping destruction of all that is evil is paralleled by the triumph of good, which reaches its climax in Metropolis with the reconciliation on the steps of the cathedral. The threat of revolution has been averted and the way is clear for a mutual understanding based on Christian humanist principles.

CONCLUSION.

The insistence throughout this analysis has been on Metropolis as a product, both artistic and commercial, of Weimar society. In trying to establish the ideological meanings inherent in the film, I have constantly sought justification for my own particular interpretation in the social, economic and political background in which the film was made. The difficulties of such a materialist approach are considerable: on the one hand the tendency towards determinism might be alleged, while on the other hand, the danger of being too tenuous in connecting external factors with images and themes in the film is ever present. It is impossible to 'prove' a direct link between, say, the revolutionary turmoil in Germany after the war and the workers' revolt in Metropolis. Even if Lang were still alive to be asked specific questions about aspects of the narrative, the answers might not provide the full picture - not because he would be deliberately dishonest - but because he himself might not be aware of his own motivation for including one thing or excluding another.

The fact that film is not an individual enterprise, but a joint effort, also complicates matters. Lang may have accepted a cameraman's suggestion to shoot a scene in a different way, for example. And as was shown in the post-production section, the subsequent editing and translation of titles which took place at the behest of foreign distributors resulted in considerable shifts in meaning from the original. It is also clear that the

position of Ufa and the indigenous film industry with their paradoxical dependence on, combined with rivalry with, their American counterpart, was to a large extent responsible for the type of film Metropolis turned out to be.

In its cultural context, Metropolis was in many ways a by-product of the Expressionist market, a work which contains modernist trappings, yet remains deeply rooted in the German romantic tradition. The response of the contemporary critics reveals how this contradictory blend was out of step with the dominant cultural trends in the second half of the Weimar Republic.

The history of subsequent criticism is made up of two main schools: those who, like most of the 'class of 27', divide Metropolis into two separate components, its visual splendour and its naïve message; and those who combine form and content analysis to produce an assessment which classifies the film as essentially proto-fascist. It has been claimed here that this type of 'analysis with hindsight' is, ironically enough, ahistorical and on balance unjustified. Not all post-Third Reich critics have been seduced by the allegation of Nazism, which seems to have originated from, and predominated among, German writers. A few French critics, like Georges Sadoul and Noël Simsolo, have seen in Metropolis a basic Christian humanist message in the service of an embattled Social Democratic/Catholic centre coalition. (1)

In general, I have tended to concur with this assessment of the film's political position in my analysis of certain themes in

the text (industry and class; revolution; the family, women and sexuality; and religion). These categories, which from the outset were acknowledged as not constituting a comprehensive list in any sense, reveal more than just a party political tendency in the film. They also contain wider ideological implications, reflecting, among other things, the influence of managerial theories like Taylorism at that time, the powerful impact of the Bolshevik revolution on European society, and the persistence of a romantic tradition in German culture. Some of the themes in Metropolis may seem rather outmoded sixty years on, but many are still relevant in today's political climate, such as the bourgeois fear of proletarian revolution and the concomitant appeal for consensus - 'working together' sensibly for slow-moving reforms.

A central objective of this thesis has been to reconstruct a reasonably accurate idea of the original version of Metropolis, given that large sections of footage have been completely lost. To this end, I have tried to consult as much source material as was available, in order to base my interpretation on historical facts wherever possible.

In this respect, the discovery of the censorship card, listing the original titles for the film, has been of vital importance in clarifying previously ambiguous aspects of the narrative and providing at least some idea of the missing sections. It has also been invaluable in providing the yardstick by which to compare the titling of subsequent edited versions of the film. Clearly the additions, omissions and mis-translations

of titles have had wide reaching effects on the potential interpretations of the film, as can be seen from the above analysis of individual themes, where apparently minor changes in certain titles could result in significant shifts in meaning. Similarly, the original Ufa documents (such as the minutes of board meetings and the accounts of the Neubabelsberg studio) and the SPIO report on the film industry provided a wealth of background material which have helped to explain why certain decisions were made in the production of Metropolis, and under what circumstances.

Full Circle : Metropolis, 1984.

In 1984, Giorgio Moroder released a new version of Metropolis which was accompanied by a rock music score in full Dolby sound. Moroder, a successful record producer and winner of Academy Awards for his music scores for Midnight Express and Flashdance, charted the history of this project in an interview for the French newspaper, Le Matin. (2) He wanted to do the kind of thing that had been done with Gance's Napoléon, although he did not particularly have Lang's film in mind from the outset. After viewing many films, he eventually chose Metropolis, which had long been a favourite of his. He felt it would appeal to young people because of its storyline, and that it would suit the type of music he wrote. A test with a short extract of the film confirmed this for him. Then there was the question of whether he should do a purely instrumental score, or add lyrics as well.

Some market research with a group of about 400 young people established their preference for 'songs' rather than music alone.

So what exactly did Moroder do in his new version? In place of the original score by Gottfried Huppertz, which had recently been restored in the ARD version, Moroder added an original rock-cum-New Wave soundtrack, with songs performed by Adam Ant, Freddie Mercury, Bonnie Tyler et al. He used stills with explanatory captions to fill in the gist of a couple of missing scenes, substituted subtitles for the traditional intertitles of silent films, and added colour tinting to the print.

There are a number of points to be made about Moroder's adaptation. In spite of his professed desire to do a Brownlow-style reconstruction, his version of Metropolis is hardly an exercise in historical accuracy. Nor did he in fact set out with this in mind: it was only after he had started work on the film that he realized there were scenes missing. (3) At the beginning of the Moroder version (and on the dust-jacket of the accompanying LP), we are told that the film has been restored as closely to the original conception as possible. Indeed he has added two missing sections of footage which are present in the Canberra Archive copy: the duel between Jan and Marinus, and Maria on the bell-rope in the cathedral. (4) He has also added stills from publicity material, with captions to fill in the narrative, for example in the scene where Georgy takes Freder's place and goes by car to Yoshiwara, while Josaphat waits for him. The bust of Hel also appears as a still with an explanation of her function.

However, Moroder's adaptation has resulted in omissions as well as additions. When asked in the interview in Le Matin about the allegation that he had trimmed certain scenes, Moroder replied that all that he had done in the way of shortening was to substitute subtitles for captions. This is not strictly true, though, as at least one scene is incomplete. In the first scene in Fredersen's office, we see clerks writing furiously, taking dictation from Fredersen, then packing up to leave. This is present even in the BFI distribution copy, one of the shortest versions of the original. The clerks do not appear at all in the rock version: a definite cut, perhaps not terribly significant, but a cut nevertheless.

Furthermore, the translation of the titles is loose and clipped, to say the least, if not downright inaccurate. The reason for this is more than likely twofold: firstly, a change in register was probably thought necessary for a contemporary audience, particularly a young one; and secondly, certain contradictions in the narrative have apparently been 'ironed out'. For example, during the workers' revolt, Grot consults Fredersen by the CCTV phone about what course of action to take. In the original version, Fredersen commands him to open the doors leading to the machine room, thus allowing the workers to destroy the machines, whereas in Moroder's version, Grot is told to "Stop them!". This is perhaps more in keeping with the Fredersen character, yet it eliminates what in the original was a rather ambivalent command. In the first scene in Rotwang's laboratory, the bust of Hel has indeed been added, but Moroder has also

retained the titles which were added to the English language version about the Robot not having a soul:

Rotwang: "All it is missing is a soul"

Fredersen: "No, it's better without one".

No such titles were present in the original release print. And another example of a total omission in the rock version can be seen in the absence of all reference to Moloch, presumably because Moroder doubted whether it would mean anything to a contemporary teenager.

Above all else, the music predominates in this new adaptation, beginning even before the first image. And while the rock beat does in fact complement the visuals rather well on the whole, there is a tendency for the powerful images and the narrative to recede in the face of the competition from the Dolby stereophonic sensation. As Michel Pérez has pointed out, the combination of rock music and silent film runs the risk of producing a sort of 'super-vidéoclip', since the natural rhythm of the silent film is overwhelmed by the beat of the modern soundtrack.⁽⁵⁾ Similarly in the case of Moroder's Metropolis, the love theme assumes a greater importance than it had in the original film, mainly because of the strength of songs like 'Love Kills' and 'Here's My Heart'.

Elsaesser goes further in his review of the new version in claiming that this change in emphasis is achieved by Moroder having interfered with the original type of editing characteristic of Lang:

"..Moroder gives the narrative a unilinear direction - establishing shot, scene dissection,

close-up - by the simple expedient of relying on reverse field editing and point of view shots to generate continuity, cutting out most of the inserts which in Lang's version had separated - in time and space - the character's gaze from its object." (6)

Whether Moroder did in fact change the visual language of the original or not (intentionally or otherwise), the end product has the necessary ingredients to appeal to a larger audience in 1984 than could conceivably be reached by a simple re-release of the standard Lang version, with or without missing scenes. The love story and the rock score are the keys to the box-office.

Fundamentally not much has changed since the first release of the film: Metropolis has once more been adapted for market requirements. The popular commercial film of 1927 has been transformed to fulfil the same function in the 1980s. Viewed cynically, Moroder has cashed in on a number of marketable trends - the current vogue of restoring silent films à la Brownlow; the popularity among a young audience of well-known stars like Freddie Mercury, Bonnie Tyler and Adam Ant (with a devoted following in their own right, no doubt); and even his own reputation as an Academy Award winner, which is prominent on the publicity material for the rock version - get your LP of the Metropolis soundtrack.

It is also worth mentioning that Moroder's idea of combining rock music and Metropolis was not an original one. For the rock group Be Bop De Luxe used sections of Metropolis as back projection for some of the numbers they performed on their UK

tour in the spring of 1977. An album released in conjunction with the tour has stills from the film on the cover: the Robot in Rotwang's laboratory on the front, and a scene from Fredersen's office and a cityscape on the back. (7)

Metropolis: Iconic Imagery. A Work of Art?

Certain images from Metropolis have attained an almost legendary status in Western culture, recurring in various contexts over the years since its initial release. They have been used fairly loosely as symbols for German film, silent film, the sci-fi genre, Expressionism, modernism in general, and Lang's work as a whole. In particular, the image of the Robot has made a striking emblem, more often than not as a still for book covers and journals: for example, Simsolo's Fritz Lang, a volume of Issues in Radical Science, and publicity material for the Moroder version. (8) The sequence involving the creation of the Robot has also appeared in both Android (Lipstadt, 1982) and the video which accompanied Queen's hit single 'Radio Gaga', in which clips from Metropolis formed a kind of post-modernist backcloth for the rock music.

Other images from Metropolis which have been chosen as representative of German culture include the famous still of Freder in crucified pose at the clock-machine (used as the title page of the Screen Series Germany), and the workers on the Moloch machine, which was taken for a cover of the journal Media, Culture and Society, in an issue devoted to mass communications in West Germany. (9) Although no actual images from Metropolis are

present in Ridley Scott's Blade Runner (1982), the debt to Lang's depiction of the cityscape of the future is obvious, if much bleaker. A striking example is the Tyrrell corporation building, which shows a marked resemblance to the Tower of Babel in Metropolis.

In his essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", Walter Benjamin traced the decline in what he described as the 'aura' of the work of art in the 20th Century, that unique existence of an object which is rooted in a particular tradition and which possesses 'authenticity' - "the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced." (10) He saw, or at least implied, the potentially progressive nature of this development, since art would thus be freed from its ritual function and instead become based on politics. In a time when fascism was aestheticizing politics, the age of mechanical reproduction would see a politicization of art. He also pointed out the increasing emphasis on the exhibition value of a work of art, which has resulted from the ability of modern technology to reproduce art in its various forms, particularly photography and film.

What had perhaps not become quite so evident in Benjamin's day was the chameleon-like capacity for *adaptation* which has become the hallmark of art under advanced capitalism. Witness the use of classical music in advertisements, or indeed the addition of rock music to 'Classical Silent Films'. Nor has the age of

technical reproducibility seen the complete demise of the notions of 'aura' and 'authenticity'. The lasting quality of the image of the Robot from Metropolis betrays something of Benjamin's concept of 'aura', that strangeness of a cult image, the "unique phenomenon of a distance however close it may be".(11) The iconic stature of images in Metropolis can still guarantee a captive audience, and with it, the clink of money changing hands. The editing, translation, re-writing and additions to Metropolis are a testimony to the power of the market in determining the historical development of a 'work of art'.

APPENDIX 1.

Original German titles as listed on the Zensurkarte.

Sinnspruch: Mittler zwischen Hirn und Hände muss das Herz sein.

1. Rolle. 1. Metropolis. 2. Schicht. 3. Tief unter der Erde lag die Stadt der Arbeiter. 4. So tief die Stadt der Arbeiter unter der Erde lag, so hoch über ihr türmte sich der Häuserblock, der "Klub der Söhne" hiess, mit seinen Hörsälen und Bibliotheken, seinen Theatern und Stadions. 5. Väter, für die jede Umdrehung eines Maschinenrades Gold bedeutete, hatten ihren Söhnen das Wunder der Ewigen Gärten geschenkt. 6. Wer, meine Damen, hat heute den Vorzug, Herr Freder, Joh Fredersens Sohn, Gesellschaft zu leisten? 7. Freder! Freder! 8. Seht, das sind Eure Brüder! 9. Seht! 10. Das sind Eure Brüder! 11. Wer - war das? 12. Dies aber war das Erleben Freders, - Joh Fredersens, des Herrn über Metropolis, Sohn - auf der Suche nach dem Mädchen. 13. Moloch! 14. Zum neuen Turm Babel - zu meinem Vater!

2. Rolle. 1. Wie kommt es, Josaphat, dass ich durch meinen Sohn von der Explosion erfahre, statt von Ihnen!

2. Einzelheiten! 3. Was hattest Du in den Maschinen-Sälen zu suchen, Freder? 4. Ich wollte den Menschen in die Gesichter sehen, deren kleine Kinder meine Brüder, meine Schwestern sind. 5. Deine herrliche Stadt, Vater - und Du das Hirn dieser Stadt - und wir alle im Licht dieser Stadt. 6. Und wo sind die Menschen, Vater, deren Hände Deine Stadt erbauten -? 7. Wo sie hingehören. 8. Wo sie hingehören? 9. ..in die Tiefe! 10. Und wenn die in der Tiefe einmal aufstehen gegen Dich? 11. Der erste Werkmeister an der Herz-Maschine, Grot - mit wichtiger Meldung. 12. Da sind wieder zwei von den verdammten Plänen, Herr Fredersen. 13. ..in den Taschen von zweien, die heute an der M-Maschine verunglückt sind.. 14. Wie kommt es, Josaphat, das mir diese Pläne von Grot gebracht werden, statt von Ihnen? 15. Die G-Bank wird Ihnen Ihr Restgehalt auszahlen.. 16. Vater, weisst Du, was das heisst, so von Dir entlassen zu werden? Das heisst hinunter! - Vater - hinunter! In die Tiefe! 17. Wissen Sie, was das heisst, von Joh Fredersen so entlassen zu werden? 18. Wollen Sie zu mir kommen, Josaphat? 19. Gehen Sie heim, Josaphat, und warten Sie auf mich.. Ich habe heute nacht noch einen weiten Weg zu gehen. 20. In die Tiefe - zu meinen Brüdern. 21. Von heute an wünsche ich über jeden Schritt meines Sohnes genau unterrichtet zu werden. 22. Brüder.. 23. ..die Maschine! Es muss ein Mensch an der Maschine sein! 24. Es wird ein Mensch an der Maschine sein.

25. Ich. 26. Höre mich an..Ich will mein Leben mit Dir tauschen. 27. Josaphat. 99 Block, Haus 7, 7 Stock.

28. Wartet auf mich - beide. 29. Georgy 11811 30. Josaphat. 99 Block, Haus 7, 7 Stock. 31. Josaphat. 99 Block, Haus 7, 7 Stock. 32. Yoshiwara. 33. Yoshiwara.

3. Rolle. 1. Mitten in Metropolis lag ein seltsames Haus, das die Jahrhunderte vergessen hatten. 2. Der Mann, der darin wohnte, war Rotwang, der Erfinder. 3. Joh Fredersen.. 4. Hel, geboren mir zum Glück, allen Menschen zum Segen, verloren an Joh Fredersen, gestorben, als sie Freder, Joh Fredersens Sohn, das Leben schenkte. 5. Ein Hirn wie das Deine, Rotwang, müsste vergessen können.. 6. Ich habe ein einziges Mal im Leben etwas vergessen: dass Hel ein Weib war und Du ein Mann.. 7. Lass die Tote ruhen, Rotwang..Sie ist Dir wie mir gestorben.. 8. Mir ist sie nicht gestorben, Joh Fredersen - mir lebt sie.. 9. Glaubst Du, der Verlust einer Hand sei zu hoher Preis für die Wieder-Erschaffung der Hel? 10. Willst Du sie sehen? 11. Nun, Joh Fredersen? Lohnt es sich nicht, eine Hand zu verlieren, um den Menschen der Zukunft - den Maschinen-Menschen - geschaffen zu haben? 12. Noch 24 Stunden Arbeit - und kein Mensch, Joh Fredersen, wird den Maschinen-Menschen von einem Erdgeborenen unterscheiden können! 13. Mein ist die Frau, Joh Fredersen! Dir bleibt der Sohn der Hel! 14. Und was führt Dich zu mir, Joh Fredersen? 15. Ich brauche Deinen Rat, wie stets, wenn alle meine Sachverständigen versagen..16. Kannst Du mir diese Pläne enträtselfen, die man seit Monaten in den Taschen meiner Arbeiter findet? 17. ..um zwei.. nach dem Schichtwechsel! Sie hat wieder gerufen.. 18. Vater! Vater! Nehmen zehn Stunden niemals ein Ende?? 19. ..es ist ein Plan der zweitausandjährigen Katakomben tief unter den Tiefbahnen Deiner Metropolis..

4. Rolle. 1. ..es ist ein Plan der zweitausandjährigen Katakomben tief unter den Tiefbahnen Deiner Metropolis.

2. Ich möchte doch herausbekommen, was meine Arbeiter in den Katakomben zu tun haben.. 3. Heute will ich Euch die Legende vom Turmbau zu Babel erzählen.. Die Legende vom Turmbau zu Babel. 4. Auf! Lasset uns einen Turm bauen, dessen Spitze bis an die Sterne reiche! 5. Und an die Spitze des Turmes wollen wir schreiben: Gross ist die Welt und ihr Schöpfer! Und gross ist der Mensch! 6. Aber die den Turm Babel erdachten, konnten den Turm Babel nicht bauen, allzugross war das Werk. Da warben sie fremde Hände um Lohn.. 7. Aber die Hände, die den Turm Babel erbauten, wussten nichts von dem Traum, den das Hirn, das ihn erdacht hatte träumte. 8. Babel. 9. Babel. Lobgesang des Einen

wurde Fluch des Andern. 10. Gleiche Sprache sprechend, verstanden die Menschen sich nicht... 11. Gross ist die Welt und ihr Schöpfer, und gross ist der Mensch. 12. Einen Mittler brauchen Hirn und Hände. 13. Mittler zwischen Hirn und Händen muss das Herz sein! 14. Und wo ist unser Mittler, Maria? 15. Wartet auf ihn! Er kommt gewiss! 16. Wir werden warten, Maria..! Aber nicht lange mehr. 17. Mittler Du, bist Du endlich gekommen.. 18. Du hast mich gerufen - da bin ich! 19. Rotwang, gib dem Maschinen-Menschen das Gesicht diese Weibes.. 20. Ich will Zwietracht sähen zwischen ihnen und ihr! Ich will ihren Glauben an diese Frau zerstören.. 21. Lass mich nun allein, Joh Fredersen.. Du wirst den Rückweg ohne mich finden.. 22. Du Narr! Num sollst Du auch das Letzte verlieren, das Du von Hel noch hattest..Deinen Sohn.. 23. Auf Morgen, im Dom! 24. Ende des Auftakts.

5. Rolle. 1. Zwischenspiel. 2. Wahrlich, ich sage Euch: Nahe sind die Tage, von denen die Apokalypse spricht -

3. Und ich sah ein Weib sitzen auf einem scharlachfarbenem Tier, das war voll Namen der Lästerung und hatte sieben Häupter und zehn Hörner. Und das Weib war bekleidet mit Purpur und Scharlach, und hatte einen güldnen Becher in seiner Hand. Und auf seiner Stirn geschrieben einen Namen, ein Geheimnis: die grosse Babylon, die Mutter aller Greuel auf Erden. Und ich sah das Weib trunken von dem Blut der Heiligen. 4. Du wirst Joh Fredersen vernichten - ihn und seine Stadt und seinen Sohn! 5. Wärest Du früher gekommen, Du hättest mich nicht geschreckt..jetzt bitte ich Dich: Bleibe mir und der Liebsten fern..! 6. Georgy 11811 7. Wo ist der, dessen Kleider Sie tragen? 8. Josaphat. 99 Block, Haus 7, 7 Stock. 9. Wollen Sie bitte Georgy wecken? Er muss mich sofort in die Arbeiterstadt führen.. 10. Nr. 11811, Sie kehren an die Maschine zurück und vergessen, dass Sie sie jemals verlassen haben - verstanden? 11. Ich muss einen Menschen haben, der mir treu ist, Josaphat - wie soll ich sonst ans Ziel meines Weges kommen. 12. Ich muss weiter, Josaphat, - muss nun allein den Menschen suchen, zu dem mir Georgy den Weg zeigen sollte. 13. Heute abend, Josaphat - heute abend wenn ich wiederkomme.. 14. Georgy 11811. 15. Also - welchen Preis verlangen Sie dafür, dass Sie diese Wohnung und Metropolis heute abend verlassen haben? 16. Josaphat. 99 Block, Haus 7, 7 Stock. 17. Sie scheinen noch nicht begriffen zu haben, in wessen Auftrag ich hier bin.. 18. Dieser Mann wünscht nicht, dass sein Sohn Sie heute abend noch hier findet! 19. In drei Stunden hole ich Sie ab!

6. Rolle. 1. Komm! Es ist Zeit, der Mensch-Maschine Dein Gesicht zu geben! 2. Maria! 3. Maria! 4. Wo ist Maria?
5. Sie ist bei Deinem Vater. 6. Ich sage Dir, sie ist bei Deinem Vater. 7. Sie ist das vollkommendste und ge-
samste Werkzeug, das je ein Mensch besass! Heute abend sollst Du sehen, wie sie vor den Augen der oberen Hundert
besteht! Du sollst sie tanzen sehen, und wenn nur ein einziger in ihr die Maschine erkennt, will ich ein Stümper
heissen, dem nie etwas gelungen ist! C. Rotwang bitter Herr Joh Fredersen, heute abend sein Gast zu
sein.. 8. Ich will, dass Du zu denen in der Tiefe gehst, um das Werk Deines Vorbildes zu vernichten! 9. Maria!
10. C.A. Rotwang bittet Herr Joh Fredersen, heute abend sein Gast zu sein. 11. Wahrlich, Ich sage Euch, nahe sind
die Tage, von denen die Apokalypse spricht..! 12. Und ich sah ein Weib sitzen auf einem scharlachfarbenem Tier, das
war voll Namen der Lästerei und hatte sieben Häupter und zehn Hörner. Und das Weib war bekleidet mit Purpur und
Scharlach, und hatte einen güldnen Becher in seiner Hand. Und auf seiner Stirn geschrieben einen Namen, ein Geheimnis:
Die grosse Babylon, die Mutter aller Greuel auf Erden. Und ich sah das Weib trinken von dem Blut der Heiligen.
13. Alle sieben Todsünden um ihretwillen! 14. Der Tod ist über der Stadt..! 15. Ende des Zwischenspiels.
7. Rolle. 1. Furioso. 2. Die Offenbarung Sankt Johannis. Im Avalunverlag, Hellerau. 3. Ich flüchtete vor dem Schmalen
in diese Tracht..Aber seit zehn Tagen macht der Spürhund Ihres Vaters auch die Arbeiterstadt unsicher. 4. Was allein
noch die Arbeiter im Zaume hält, ist, dass sie noch immer auf den "Mittler" warten, der ihnen verheissen wurde. 5. Es
sind noch mehr der seltsamen Dinge geschehen, Freder.. 6. An jenem Abend, als Sie krank wurden.. 7...die einst die
besten Freunde waren..um diese Frau.. 8. ..der andere..am gleichen Abend..9. ..Die Ewigen Gärten liegen verwaist..
doch Nacht um Nacht in Yoshiwara..10. Und diese Frau, an deren Füße sich alle Sünden heften.. 11. ..heisst auch Maria.
12. Dieselbe, zu der die in der Tiefe aufsehen wie zu einer Heiligen? 13. Jetzt gehen viele in die Stadt der Toten, zu
einer, die sie treu wie Gold befunden haben. 14. Dabei darf der Mittler wohl nicht fehlen..15. Was heute nacht auch
geschieht: es ist mein ausdrücklicher Befehl, die Arbeiter gewähren zu lassen. 16. Joh Fredersen will, dass die in der
Tiefe sich durch Gewalttat ins Unrecht setzen, damit er das Recht zur Gewalt gegen sie bekommt .17. Wenn Du zu Deinen
armen Brüdern sprachst, hast Du zum Frieden geredet, Maria..heute hetzt ein Mund auf Befehl Joh Fredersen zum Aufrühr
gegen ihn..18. Sie wird den Glauben an den Mittler zerstören!" 19. Ihr wisst, ich habe immer zum Frieden geredet..aber

Euer Mittler ist nicht gekommen... 20. Ihr habt lang genug gewartet! Eure Zeit ist da! 21. .. aber ich habe Joh Fredersen betrogen! Nicht seinem Willen folgt Dein Ebenbild - nur meinem allein! 22. Wer ist das lebendige Futter für die Maschinen für Metropolis? 23. Wer schmiert die Maschinen-Gelenke mit seinem eignen Mark? 24. Wer flüttert die Maschinen mit seinem eigenen Fleisch? 25. Lasst die Maschinen verhungern, Ihr Narren! Lasst sie verrecken! 26. Schlagt sie tot - die Maschinen! 27. Du bist nicht Maria! 28. Du bist nicht Maria! 29. Maria redet zum Frieden, nicht zum Mord! Das ist nicht Maria! 30. Joh Fredersens Sohn! 31. Schlagt ihn tot, den Hund im weiss-seidenen Fell! 32. Holt Eure Weiber, Eure Söhne aus der Arbeiterstadt! Keiner bleibe zurück! Tod den Maschinen! 33. .. und zweifach habe ich Joh Fredersen betrogen! Denn ich verschwieg ihm, dass sein Sohn der Mittler Deiner Brüder sein will - und Dich liebt! 34. ..doch treu gewesen... 35. Kommen Sie, Freder! Wir müssen noch durch die Arbeiterstadt! 36. Frauen und Männer, keiner darf heute fehlen! Tod den Maschinen! 37. Keiner - keine ist zurückgeblieben! 38. Weg von den Maschinen! Lasst sie sich zu Tode rasen! 39. Zur Herz-Maschine!

8. Rolle. 1. Zur Herz-Maschine! 2. Gefahr. 3. Oeffnen Sie die Tore! 4. Du sollst die Tore öffnen! 5. Wenn die Herz-Maschine zugrunde geht, bleibt im Maschinen-Viertel kein Stein auf dem anderen! 6. Seid Ihr verrückt geworden? Wenn die Herz-Maschine zugrunde geht, versäuft die ganze Arbeiterstadt! 7. Wo sind Eure Väter, Eure Mütter? 8. Wissen Sie, dass Ihr Sohn unter den Arbeitern ist? 9. Ja - Du! Du bist Maria! 10. Zu den Luft-Schächten - schnell! Schnell! Die Staubecken sind explodiert! Die Stadt ersäuft! 11. Wir bringen die Kinder in den Klub der Söhne! 12. Warum brennt nirgends Licht?

9. Rolle. 1. Warum brennt nirgends Licht? 2. Gewissheit muss ich haben! Wo ist mein Sohn? 3. Tausende werden morgen in Wut und Verweiflung fragen: Joh Fredersen, wo ist mein Sohn? 4. Wo sind Eure Kinder? 5. Die Stadt ist ersoffen, die Schächte voll Wasser bis an den Rand! 6. Wer hat Euch geheissen, Euch an den Maschinen zu vergreifen, ohne die Ihr alle verrecken musst, Ihr Idioten? 7. Die Hexe ist Schuld! 8. Wir wollen zusehen, wie die Welt zum Teufel geht! 9. Sucht die Hexe, die schuld ist an allem! Schlagt sie tot! 10. Jetzt gehe ich, Dich heimzuholen, meine Heil! 11. Die Hexe! Die Hexe! Da ist sie! Da ist sie! 12. Wo sind unsere Kinder, Hexe Du? 13. Verbrennt die Hexe - auf den

Scheiterhaufen mit ihr! 14. Auf den Scheiterhaufen mit ihr! 15. Maria! 16. Maria! 17. Hel! Meine Hel!

18. Eure Kinder - gerettet! 19. Hirn und Hände wollen zusammenkommen, aber es fehlt ihnen das Herz dazu..

Mittler Du, zeige ihnen den Weg zueinander.. 20. Mittler zwischen Hirn und Händen muss das Herz sein. 21. Ende.

APPENDIX 2.

LIST A: Original titles from censorship card
Titles underlined are those omitted from the
ARD version. My own translation.

Motto: the mediator between brain and hands
must be the heart.

Reel 1: 1. Metropolis. 2. Shift. 3. Far below
the surface of the earth lay the workers' city.

4. The workers' city lay deep under the earth's
surface, and just as high above it towered up
the block of houses called the "Sons' Club",
with its auditoria and libraries, its theatres
and stadia.

5. Fathers, for whom every rotation of a
machine wheel meant gold, had given their sons
the miracle of the Eternal Gardens.

6. Gracious ladies, who has the privilege
today of keeping Master Freder, Joh Fredersen's
son, company today?

7. Freder! Freder! 8. Look, these are your

LIST B: Titles in DDR reconstruction

1. The Day Shift. 2. The workers'
city, far below the surface of the
earth.

3. As deep as the workmen's homes lay
under the earth, so high above it
towered the Masterman Stadium, gift
of John Masterman, the richest man
in Metropolis.

4. But 'Athletics' were not the only
diversions of gilded youth in
Metropolis. 5. From Pagan Rome
through the ages, money sweated out
of flesh has gone into flesh..and
the desires of the flesh. Every rich
city has its secret places. As cities
grow more rich, these places become
less secret.

6. Freder! 7. Look, these are your

LIST C: Titles in BFI distribution
copy.

1. The day shift. 2. The workers' city,
far below the surface of the earth.

3. And high above, a pleasure garden
for the sons of the masters of
Metropolis.

4. Freder! 5. Look, these are your

brothers! 9. Look! 10. These are your brothers!
11. Who was that? 12. But this was what Freder
experienced, the son of Joh Fredersen, the
Master of Metropolis, as he searched for the
girl.

13. Moloch!

14. To the new Tower of Babel - to my father!

REEL 2. 1. How is it, Josaphat, that I am
finding out about the explosion from my son,
and not from you! 2. Details!

3. What were you doing in the machine rooms,
Freder? 4. I wanted to look into the faces of
the people whose little children are my

brothers!

8. Who was that? 9. Just the
daughter of a worker.

10. If that girl was a worker's
daughter.. 11. Subsequently he
cared and was determined to see for
himself. 12. The great machines, far
underground, yet high above the
workers' city.

13. MOLOCH!

14. In these hungry machines,
suddenly Eric saw that ancient god
into whose fiery mouth the Phoeni-
cians drove their human sacrifices.

15. To my father!

16. John Fredersen, the Master of
Metropolis. 17. Father! 18. Such
accidents are unavoidable. 19. Why
was my son allowed to go into the
machine room?

20. Why did you go down there?

21. I wanted to see what my brothers
looked like.

brothers!

6. Who was that? 7. Just the
daughter of a worker.

8. The great machines, far underground,
yet high above the workers' city.

9. MOLOCH!

10. To my father!

11. John Fredersen, the Master of
Metropolis. 12. Father! 13. Such
accidents are unavoidable. 14. Why
was my son allowed to go into the
machine room?

15. Why did you go down there?

16. I wanted to see what my brothers
looked like.

brothers and sisters.

5. Your wonderful city, Father- and you the brain of this city- and all of us in the light given by this city -.

6. ..and where are the people ,Father,whose hands built this city of yours? 7. ..Where they belong.. 8. Where they belong? 9. ..into the depths..! 10. And if those in the depths ever rise up against you?

11. The foreman of the Central Machine,Grot, with an important piece of news.

12. Here are two more of those damned plans, Mr. Frederesen. 13. ..in the pockets of two men who were injured today on the M-Machine.. 14. How is it, Josaphat, that these plans are brought to me by Grot and not you?

22. For centuries we have been

building a civilization of gold and steel! What has it brought us? Peace? Understanding? Happiness?

23. Nothing is important except the brain, and what it creates - efficiency -which in turn has created all the wealth of the world.

24. Throughout history, efficiency -without soul ..has led to war.. revolution..chaos..destruction!

25. It was their hands that built this city of ours,father. 26. But where do the hands belong in your scheme? 27. In their proper place,- the depths. 28. What will you do if they turn against you some day?

29. The foreman from the central dynamo room is here with an urgent message.

30. More of those plans, sir.

31. They were found on two of the men who were killed today.

32. Joseph, why was it not you who brought me these plans?

17. It was their hands that built this
18. But where do the hands belong in your scheme?

19. In their proper place, the depths.
20. What will you do if they turn against you some day?

21.The foreman from the central dynamo room is here with an urgent message.

22. More of those plans, sir.

23. They were found on two of the men who were killed today.

24. Joseph, why was it not you who brought me these plans?

15. The G-Bank will pay you the balance of your wages.
16. Father, do you know what it means to be dismissed like that by you? That means going down!- Father!- right down, into the depths!
17. Do you know what it means to be dismissed like that by Joh Fredersen?
18. Do you want to work for me, Josaphat?
19. Go home, Josaphat, and wait for me - I still have far to go tonight.
20. Into the depths - to my brothers.
21. From today, I wish to be told of my son's every move..
22. Brothers..
23. ..the machine! A person must stay with the machine. 24. There will be someone with the machine. 25. Me.
26. Listen to me..I want to exchange lives with you.. 27. Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th floor
28. Wait for me - both of you.. 29.Georgy 11811
30. Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th floor.
-
33. You are dismissed. Go to the G-Bank for the balance of your wages.
34. Father, don't you realize what it means to be dismissed by you?
35. Joseph, I need your help.
36. Will you come to me, Joseph?
37. We will prove that the world was not made for one man -or a 1000 - but for all mankind. 38. I will not live any longer on the sweat of other men.
39. My son has some strange ideas.. see that no harm befalls him.
40. I have far to go today - alone, into the depths - to my brothers.
41. The machine! Someone must stay with the machine. 42. I will stay at the machine.
-
25. You are dismissed. Go to the G-Bank for the balance of your wages.
26. Father, don't you realize what it means to be dismissed by you?
27. Joseph, I need your help.
28. I have far to go today - alone, into the depths - to my brothers.
29. The machine! Someone must stay with the machine. 30. I will stay at the machine.

31. Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th Floor.

22. Yoshiwara. 33. Yoshiwara.

Reel 3. 1. In the middle of Metropolis was a strange house, which the centuries had forgotten. 2. The man who lived in it was Rotwang, the inventor.

3. Joh Frédersen..

4. Hel, born to bring happiness to me and a blessing to everyone, lost to Joh Fredersen, died when giving birth to Freder, Joh

Fredersen's son. 5. A mind like yours, Rotwang ought to be able to forget.. 6. Only once in my life did I forget something: that Hel was a woman, and you a man.. 7. Let the dead

woman rest, Rotwang.. she is as dead for me as she is for you. 8. She did not die as far as I am concerned, Joh Fredersen - for me, she lives! 9. Do you believe that the loss of a hand is too high a price to pay for the re-creation of Hel? 10. Do you want to see her?

11. Well, Joh Fredersen? Is it not worth losing a hand to have created the human being of the future, the robot? 12. One more day's work, and no-one, Joh Fredersen, will be able

43. In the middle of the city was an old house.

44. Here lived Rotwang, the inventor.

45. John Fredersen!

46. At last my work is ready.

47. I have created a machine in the image of man, that never tires or makes a mistake.

48. Now we have no further use for living workers.

49. Isn't it worth the loss of a hand to have created the workers of the future..the machine men?

50. Give me another 24 hours, and I

31. In the middle of the city was an old house.

32. Here lived Rotwang, the inventor.

33. John Fredersen!

34. At last my work is ready.

35. I have created a machine in the image of man, that never tires or makes a mistake.

36. Now we have no further use for living workers.

37. Isn't it worth the loss of a hand to have created the workers of the future..the machine men?

38. Give me another 24 hours, and I'll

to tell the robot from a mortal! 13. The woman is mine, Joh Fredersen. You can have the son of Hel.

14. And what brings you to me, Joh Fredersen?
15. I need your advice as usual, when all my experts fail me. 16. Can you decipher these plans for me, which they have been finding for months in the pockets of my workers?

17. ..at two..after the change of shift! She has called another meeting..

18. Father! Father!..Will these ten hours never end?

19. It is a plan of the 2000 year old catacombs far below the underground ways of your Metropolis..

Reel 4. 1. It is a plan of the 2000 year old catacombs far below the underground ways of your Metropolis.

2. But I would like to know what my workers are doing in the catacombs..

will bring you a machine which no-one will be able to tell from a human being. 51. It has everything but a soul.. 52. It is better without one. 53. ..and a name. 54. Call it efficiency. 55. As always, when my experts fail, I come to you for advice. 56. For months now, we have been finding these plans in the workers' clothing. What do they mean?

57. At two - at the end of this shift. She has called another

meeting. 58. Father, father - I did not know that ten hours could be torture.

59. These are the plans of the ancient catacombs - far below the lowest levels of the workers' city.

60. What is down there that interests the workers?

61. The Forgotten Christ.

bring you a machine which no-one will be able to tell from a human being.

39. As always, when my experts fail, I come to you for advice.

40. For months now, we have been finding these plans in the workers' clothing. What do they mean?

41. At two - at the end of this shift. She has called another

meeting. 42. Father, father - I did not know that ten hours could be torture.

43. These are the plans of the ancient catacombs - far below the lowest levels of the workers' city.

44. What is down there that interests the workers?

3. Today I want to tell you the story of the Tower of Babel..the story of the Tower of Babel
4. Come! Let us build a tower whose summit will reach to the stars! 5. And right at the top of the tower we will write: Great is the world and its creator! And great is man!
6. ..but those who conceived the idea of the Tower of Babel could not build it - the task was too great. So they hired the hands of others..

7. But the hands that built the tower knew nothing of the dream of the brain that had planned the tower.

8. Babel. 9. Babel. One man's hymn of praise became the other man's curse.

10. Speaking the same language, the people did not understand each other. 11. Great is the world and its creator, and great is man.
12. The brain and the hands need a mediator.
13. The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart!

62. Today I will tell you the story of the Tower of Babel.

63. Let us build a tower whose summit will touch the skies -

64. -and on it we will inscribe: great is the world and its creator. And great is man.65. Those who had conceived the idea of this tower could not build it themselves, so they hired thousands of others to build for them. 66. But these toilers knew nothing of the dreams of those who planned the tower. 67. While those who had conceived the tower did not concern themselves with the workers who built it.

68. BABEL. 69. The hymns of praise of the few became the curses of the many. 70. BABEL.

71. Between the brain that plans and the hands that build there must be a mediator. 72. It is the heart

45. Today I will tell you the story of the Tower of Babel.

46. Let us build a tower whose summit will touch the skies -

47. - and on it we will inscribe: 'Great is the world and its Creator. And great is Man!' 48. Those who had conceived the idea of this tower could not build it themselves, so they hired thousands of others to build for them. 49. But these toilers knew nothing of the dreams of those who planned the tower. 50. While those who had conceived the tower did not concern themselves with the workers who built it.

51. The hymns of praise of the few became the curses of the many.
52. BABEL.

53. Between the brain that plans and the hands that build there must be a mediator. 54. It is the heart

14. And where is our mediator, Maria?
15. Wait for him! He is sure to come.
16. We will wait, Maria! But not for much longer!
17. O mediator, have you finally come..
18. You called me - here I am!
19. Rotwang, give the robot the face of this woman..
20. I want to sow discord between them and her. I want to destroy their faith in this woman.

21. Leave me alone now, Joh Fredersen.. You will find the way back without me..
22. You fool! Now you will also lose the last thing you had left from Hel - your son..

23. Till tomorrow, in the cathedral!

24. End of the prelude.

Reel 5.1. Interlude. 2. Truly I say unto you:

Near are the days of which the Apocalypse

speaks! 3. And I saw a woman sitting on a

scarlet coloured beast, which was full of

that must bring about the understanding between people.

73. But where is our mediator Maria?
74. Be patient, he will surely come.
75. We will wait, but not for long.

76. Rotwang, make your robot in the likeness of that girl.
77. Hide the girl in your house, I will send the robot down to the workers to sow discord among them and destroy their confidence in Maria.

78. Leave me here, John Fredersen.

79. Until tomorrow - in the cathedral.

that must bring about an understanding between them.

55. But where is our mediator, Maria?
56. Be patient, he will surely come.
57. We will wait, but not for long.

58. Rotwang, make your Robot in the likeness of that girl.
59. Hide the girl in your house, I will send the robot down to the workers to sow discord among them and destroy their confidence in Maria.

60. Leave me here, John Fredersen.

61. Until tomorrow - in the cathedral.

names of blasphemy and had seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and had a golden goblet in her hand. And on her forehead was written a name, a secret: Great Babylon, the mother of all atrocities on earth. And I saw the woman drunk on the blood of the saints.

4. You will destroy Joh Fredersen - him and his city and his son! 5. If you had come earlier, you would not have frightened me.. now I beg you : stay away from me and my loved one! 6. Georgy 11811 7. Where is the man, whose clothes you are wearing?

8. Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th floor.

9. Would you please waken Georgy? He has to lead me at once to the workers' city.

10. No. 11811, you will return to the machine and forget that you ever left it -

understood? 11. I must have someone who is faithful to me Josaphat - how else am I

supposed to reach my destination? 12. I must go on, Josaphat, and search alone for the person, to whom Georgy was to have led me..

13. This evening, Josaphat - this evening

80. The cathedral - another machine that had lost its soul. 81. The Seven Deadly Sins.

62. The Seven Deadly Sins.

when I return. 14. Georgy 11811. 15. So what's your price for leaving this flat and Metropolis tonight? 16. Josaphat. Block 99, House 7, 7th floor. 17. It seems you have not yet understood on whose orders I am here.. 18. This man does not wish his son to find you still here this evening! 19. I will collect you in three hours.

Reel 6. 1. Come! It is time to give the robot your face. 2. Maria !!! 3. Maria!!! 4. Where is Maria ? 5. She is with your father... 6. I tell you, she is with your father..! 7. She is the most perfect and obedient instrument that anyone ever had! This evening you will see how she passes the test before the Top Hundred! You shall see her dance and if even one of them notices the machine in her, then you can gladly call me a bungler, who has never succeeded in anything. C. Rotwang. C.A. Rotwang invites Mr. Joh Fredersen to be his guest this evening.

8. I want you to go down to those in the depths to destroy the work of the woman you were modelled on. 9. Maria!

82. Maria was a prisoner in Rotwang's house. 83. Come, I am going to make the robot look like you. 84. Maria! 85. Maria! 86. Where is Maria? 87. She is with your father.

63. Maria was a prisoner in Rotwang's house. 64. Come, I am going to make the robot look like you. 65. Maria! 66. Where is Maria? 67. She is with your father.

88. The copy is perfect. Now go down to the workers and undo Maria's teaching: stir them up to criminal

68. The copy is perfect. Now go down to the workers and undo Maria's teaching: stir them up to criminal

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be his guest this evening.

11. Truly I say unto you, near are the days
of which the Apocalypse speaks...! 12. And I
saw a woman sitting on a scarlet coloured
beast, which was full of names of blasphemy
and had seven heads and ten horns. And the
woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and
had a golden goblet in her hand. And on her
forehead was written a name, a secret: Great
Babylon, the mother of all atrocities on earth.
And I saw the woman drunk on the blood of the
saints. 13. All Seven Deadly Sins because of
her! 14. Death is over the city ! 15. End of
interlude.

Reel 7. 1. Furioso. 2. The Revelation of St.
John. Published by Avalun & Co, Hellerau.

3. I have been fleeing from Slim in these
clothes..but for ten days now, your father's

acts. 89. Maria! 90. C.A. Rotwang
bittet Herrn Joh Fredersen heute
abend sein Gast zu sein.91. Now we
shall see whether people believe
the robot is a creature of flesh
and blood.

acts. 69. Maria! 70. C.A. Rotwang
bittet Herrn Joh Fredersen heute
abend sein Gast zu sein.71. Now we
shall see whether people believe
the Robot is a creature of flesh
and blood.

spy has been making even the workers' city unsafe.. 4. All that is restraining the workers is the fact that they are still waiting for the mediator who was promised to them. 5. Even more strange things have happened, Freder.. 6. That evening you fell ill.. 7. ..who were once the best of friends..for this woman... 8. ..the other..that same evening.. 9. The Eternal Gardens lie deserted..yet night after night in Yoshiwara.. 10. ..and this woman, at whose feet all the sins are gathered.. 11. ..is also called Maria.. 12. The same woman to whom those in the depths looked up as to a saint? 13. Now many are going to the city of the dead to a woman whom they considered as completely reliable. 14. The mediator must not be absent as they go. 15. Whatever happens tonight, it is my express command that the workers be allowed to do as they please.. 16. Joh Fredersen wants those in the depths to put themselves in the wrong by using violence, so that he can be justified in using violence against them.. 17. Whenever you spoke to your poor brothers, you spoke of peace, Maria..

92. John Fredersen is looking for an excuse to use violence against the workers.

93. Maria, you always pleaded for peace - but now the robot in your

72. John Fredersen is looking for an excuse to use violence against the workers.

73. Maria, you always pleaded for peace - but now the Robot in your

today, on Joh Fredersen's orders, a voice is inciting them to rise up against him...

18. She will destroy the faith in the mediator!
19. You all know I have always spoken of peace. ..but your mediator has not come!

20. You have waited long enough - your time has come !

21. ..but I have betrayed Joh Fredersen. Your double does not follow his wishes - but mine alone!

22. Who is the living fodder for the machines of Metropolis? 23. Who oils the machine limbs with his own marrow? 24. Who feeds the machines with his own flesh? 25. Let the machines starve you fools! Let them die! 26. Kill them - the machines! 27. You are not Maria! 28. You are not Maria! 29. Maria speaks of peace, not murder! That is not Maria!

30. Joh Fredersen's son! 31. Kill him, the dog with the white silk coat!

Likeness has been commanded to incite the workers to violence. 94. The workers accept the robot as Maria. 95. I have preached patience - 96. But your mediator has not come - and will never come. 97. Maria is inciting the workers to revolt. 98. She has told them to destroy everything. 99. I cannot believe it. 100. You have waited patiently too long. The time has come to act!

101. Who keeps the machines going?
102. Who are the slave of the machines?

103. Let the machines stop!
104. Destroy the machines! 105. You are not Maria! 106. Maria pleads for peace, not for violence. This is not Maria!

107. Joh Fredersen's son! 108. Kill him!

Likeness has been commanded to incite the workers to violence. 74. The workers accept the Robot as Maria. 75. I have preached patience - 76. But your mediator has not come - and will never come. 77. Maria is inciting the workers to revolt. 78. She has told them to destroy everything. 79. I cannot believe it. 80. You have waited patiently too long. The time has come to act!

81. Why should you sweat yourselves to death to benefit the Lords of Metropolis? 82. Who keeps the machines going? 83. Who are the slaves of the machines? 84. Let the machines stop. 85. Destroy the machines! 86. You are not Maria! 87. Maria pleads for peace, not for violence. This is not Maria!

88. Joh Fredersen's son! 89. Kill him!

32. Fetch your wives and sons from the workers' city. Let no-one remain behind - death to the machines!

33. ..and I have betrayed Joh Fredersen in two ways -for I did not tell him that his son wants to be the mediator for your brothers - and loves you. 34. ..and was faithful after all..

35 Come, Freder, we have have still to go through the workers' city. 36. Women and men, none of you may stay away today! Death to the machines! 37. No man or woman stayed behind. 38. Come away from the machines - let her kill herself with rage! 39. To the Central Machine!

Reel 8.1. To the Central Machine! 2. Danger.

3..Open the gates! 4. Open the gates , I tell you! 5. If the Central Machine is destroyed, no two stones will remain together in the machine area. 6. Have you all gone mad? If the Central Machine is destroyed, the whole workers' city will be flooded!

109. Let no-one remain behind - we are destroying the machines!

110. You risked your life - taking my place at the machine. I am only paying a debt.

111. Not one man or woman remained behind.

112. To the central power house!

113. The workers are destroying the machines. 114. What shall I do?

115. If they destroy the power house, the workers' city will be flooded.

116. Open the doors.

117. Have you gone mad? You are flooding your own homes.

90. Let no-one remain behind, we're destroying the machines!

91. Not one man or woman remained behind.

92. To the central power house!

93. The workers are destroying the machines. 94. What shall I do?

95. If they destroy the power house, the workers' city will be flooded.

96. Open the doors.

97. Have you gone mad? You are flooding your own homes.

7. Where are your fathers and mothers? 8. Do

you know that your son is with the workers?

9. Yes - you! You are Maria! -

10. To the air shafts - quickly! quickly! The reservoirs have exploded! The city is drowning!

11. We'll take the children to the Sons' Club.

12. Why are all the lights out?

Reel 9. 1. Why are all the lights out?

2. I must be certain - where is my son?

3. Thousands will be asking in rage and despair tomorrow - Joh Fredersen, where is my son?

4. Where are your children?

5. The whole city is under water, the shafts full to the brim with water!

6. Who told you to attack the machines, without which you must all die most miserably, you idiots?

7. The witch is to blame! 8. Let's watch the world going to the devil! 9. Seek out the witch who's to blame for everything! Beat her to death!

118. At last Maria managed to escape.

119. Yes, you are the real Maria.

120. To the airshaft- quickly! The reservoirs have burst!

121. Where is my son?

122. Tomorrow dozens will ask in anguish - where is my son? 123. Save the children - I will tell the workers that they are safe.

124. Where are your children?

125. The entire workers' city is under water.

126. Who told you to destroy the machines, you fools - and thus to destroy yourselves?

127. The witch! She's to blame for all this. Find her! Kill her!

128. Let's watch the world going to the devil! 129. Maria!

98. At last Maria managed to escape.

99. Yes, you are the real Maria.

100. To the air shaft - quickly! The reservoirs have burst!

101. Where is my son?

102. Tomorrow thousands will ask in anguish - where is my son? 103. Save the children - I will tell the workers that they are safe.

104. The entire workers' city is under water.

105. Who told you to destroy the machines, you fools - and thus to destroy yourselves?

106. The witch! She's to blame for all this. Find her! Kill her!

107. Let's watch the world going to the devil! 108. Maria! 109. If the

10. Now I am going to bring you home, my Hel -

11. The witch!! The witch!! There she is!

There she is! 12. Where are our children, you witch? 13. Burn the witch - onto the stake with her! 14. Onto the stake with her! 15. Maria!

16. Maria! 17. Hel! My Hel!

18. Your children - saved!

19. Brain and hands want to come together, but they lack the heart to bring this about...0

mediator, show them the way to each other..

20. The mediator between brain and hands must be the heart. 21. The end.

130. What have I done? 131. If the mob sees you they will kill me for having tricked them.

132. The witch! The witch!

133. Where are our children?

134. John Fredersen's son has saved your children. 135. Save my son!

136. Save him - and for ever more I will remember that all men are your sons! 137. Thank heaven!

138. There can be no understanding between the hands and the brain unless the heart acts as a mediator. 139. THE END.

mob sees you, they will kill me for having tricked them.

110. The witch! The witch!

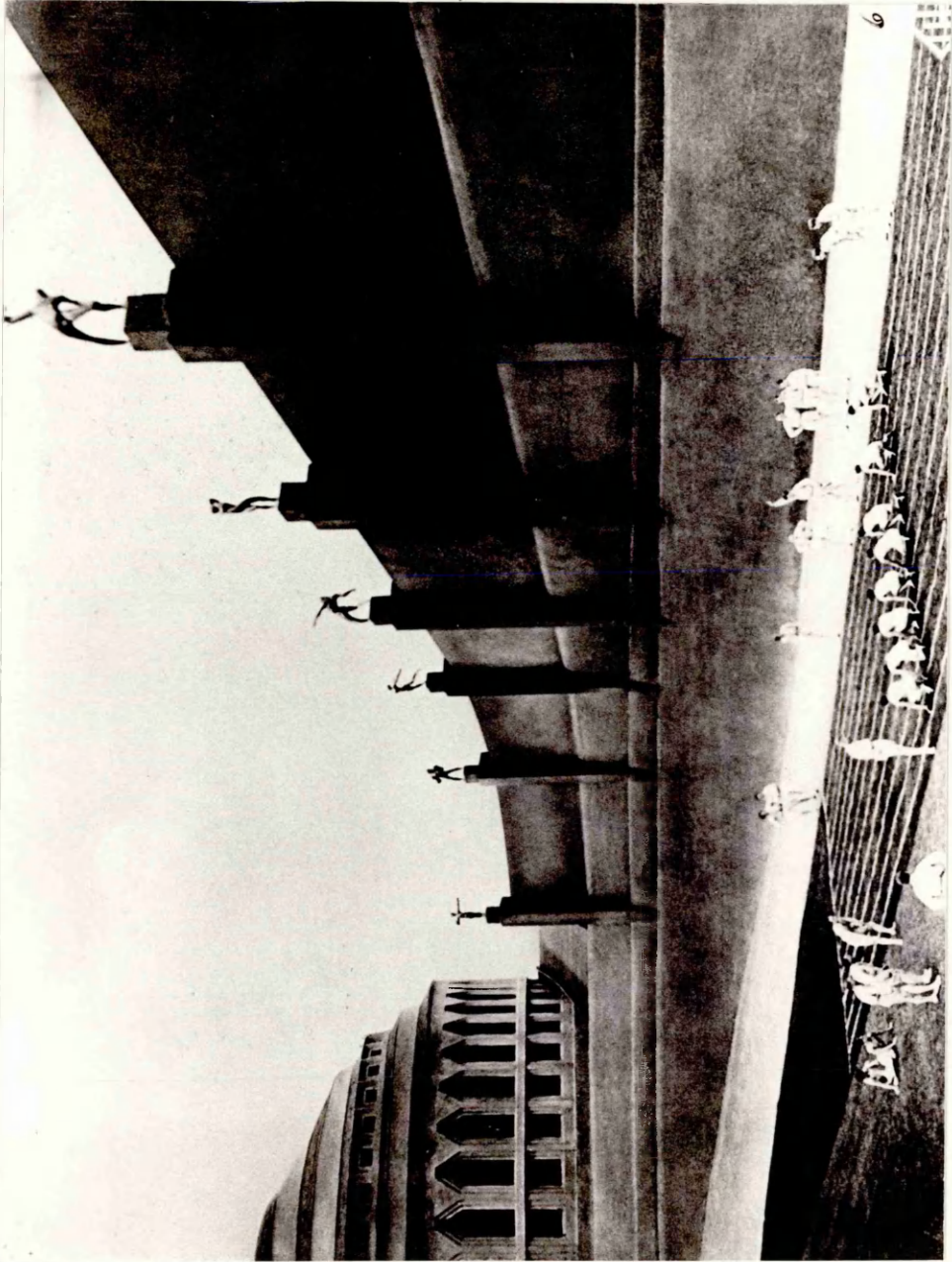
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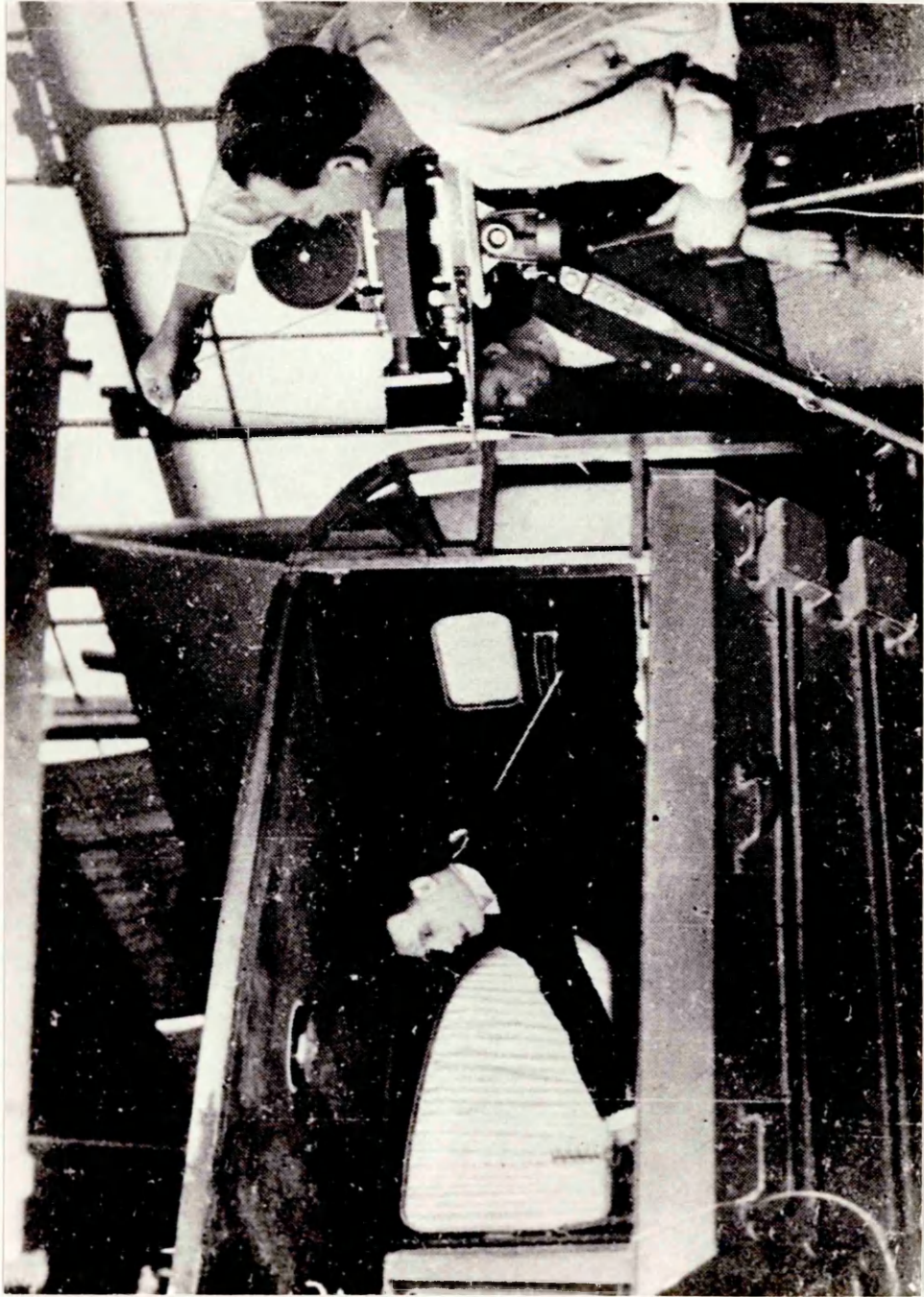
APPENDIX 3.











APPENDIX 4.

METROPOLIS



GRAUL

30 Pfg



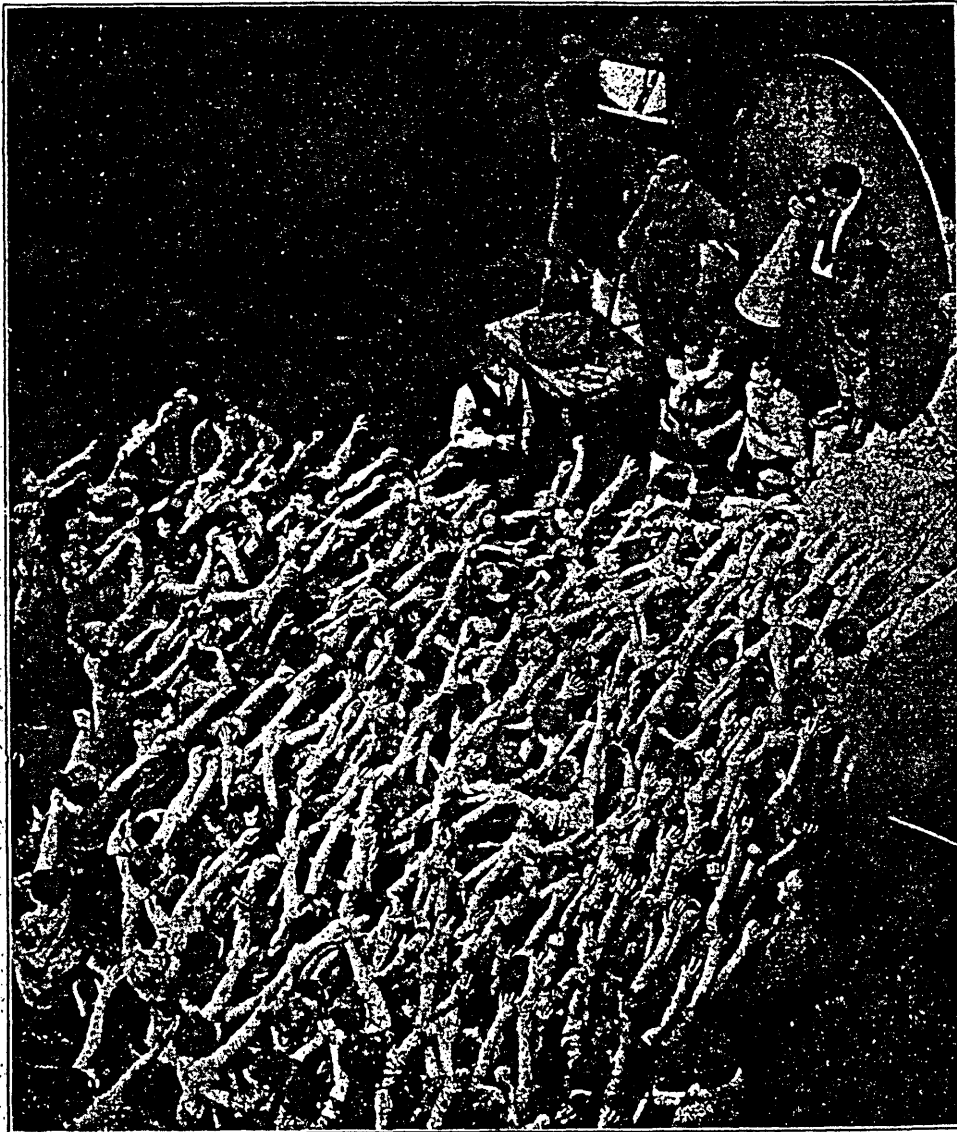
METROPOLIS



Ein Film von Fritz Lang



Hergestellt von der Universum-Film Aktiengesellschaft
Verleih: Ufa-Paramount-Metro Verleihbetriebe G. m. b. H.



500 Kinder schreien um Hilfe!

Fritz Lang inszeniert die Ueberschwemmung der unterirdischen Arbeiterstadt.

255

Mittler zwischen Hirn und Händen muß das Herz sein!

Notiz des Sinnesprüches:
Andante

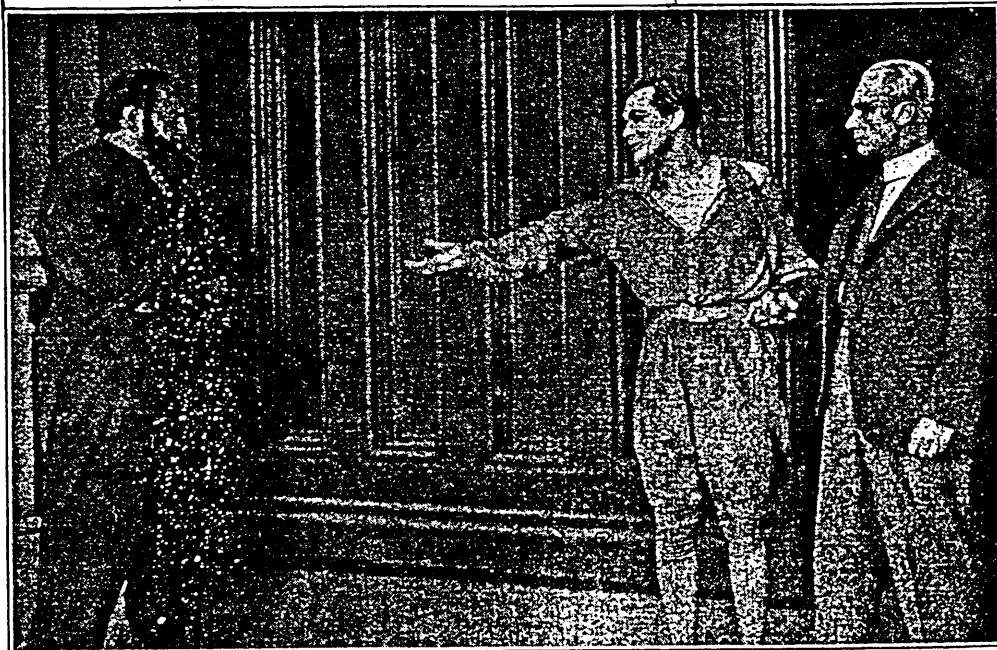


Gottfr. Huppertz
31. XII. 1926



Gottfried Huppertz,
der Komponist der
Metropolismusik.

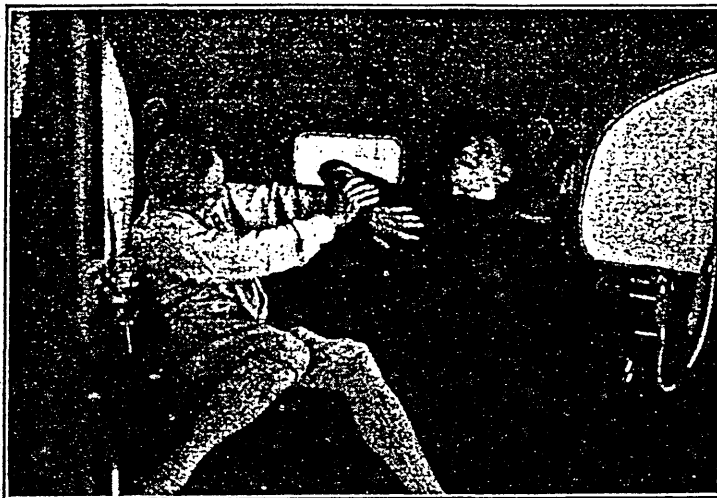
Links: Eine Seite aus
seinem Notizbuch.



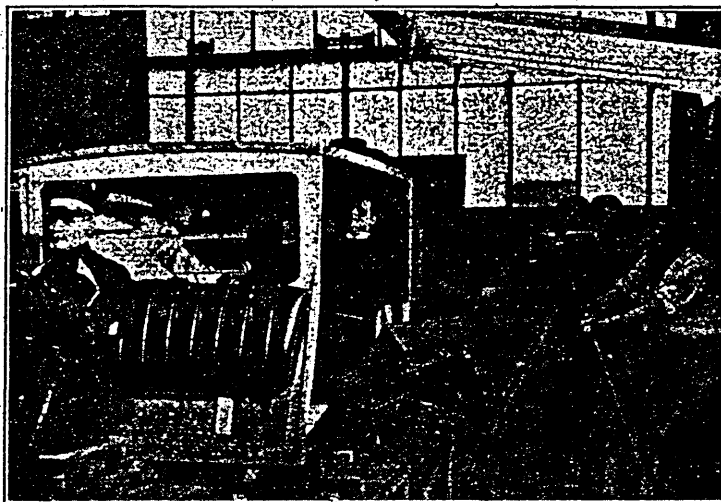
Der „Mittler“ am Werk.

Wie es gemacht wurde

Von Karl Freund



Der Kampf in dem Auto



... und wie er gedreht wurde.

Um die Szene ruhig spielen zu können, musste das Innere des Autos im Atelier aufgebaut werden.

Der am Boden liegende Kameramann Karl Freund dreht eine Szene mit einem winzigen Aufnahmeapparat.

Wir drehten, wir drehten . . . Die Zeit verflog, und plötzlich war der Film fertig! So einfach erscheint mir jetzt die jahrelange angestrengte Arbeit an „Metropolis“. In glühender Hitze, in eiskaltem Winter standen wir in dem Atelier . . .

Wochenlang lebten wir auf dem Wasser, als die Überschwemmung gedreht wurde . . . Tagelang schlossen wir kein Auge, weil wir nächtliche Freilichtaufnahmen hatten . . . Und dies alles scheint mir jetzt so einfach, so selbstverständlich, so mühelos . . .



*Pst! Hier wird verraten
wie eine Kampfszene gedreht wird*



Ein Boxkampf zweier Millionärssöhne um das Strumpfband der Tänzerin Maria.



Der eine zog den Revolver und schoß . . .



Fritz Lang feuert, am Boden sitzend, den Kämpfenden an.

Als der Schuß losgehen soll, schießt er mit einer Pistole Rauch zwischen die beiden.



Der Tote fiel um . . .
auf die auf den Boden hingelegten weichen Kissen, damit er sich ja nicht verletzt.

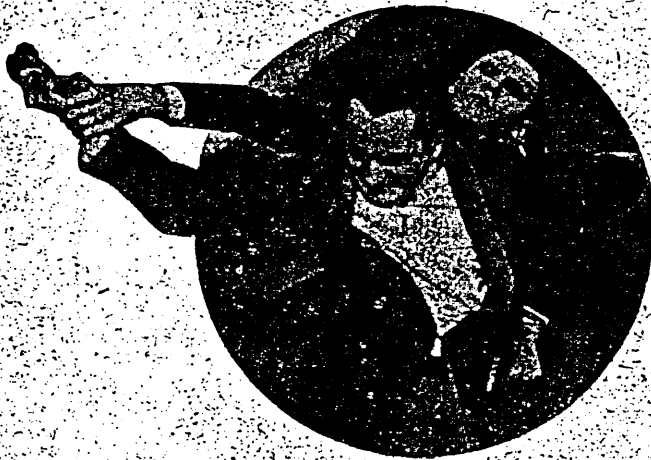
Der Schauspieler hat das Wort!

Fritz Rasp:

Das Erlebnis des Schmalen.

„Der Schmale zuckt bedauernd die Achseln, greift in die linke Brusttasche, holt wieder ein Paket Banknoten heraus, schiebt es zu dem ersten über den Tisch hinüber. Kaum hat er die Hand davon gelassen, als Josaphat die Banknoten vom Tisch aufreißt und dem Schmalen ins Gesicht fetzt.“

Diese Worte standen schwarz auf weiß in dem Manuskript. Das kann gut wer-



den, dachte ich. Da wirst du endlich mal im Film wieder geohrfeigt. Ja, das ist das Los der Schauspieler!

Aufnahme! Ich spiele nichts Böses ahnend, die Szene. Reiche meinem Freunde Theodor Loos das Banknotenbündel. Nun soll er mir die Scheine in mein Gesicht fetzen. Bei der Probe hat er das gültigst nur markiert. Jetzt aber — aufgestachelt von Fritz Lang, der die plötzliche Reaktion in meinem Gesicht auf das Filmband bannen wollte, — bearbeitete er mich mit dem Banknotenpaket dermaßen, daß ich nach der Szene ohnmächtig umfiel. Wie mir die Anwesenden versicherten, habe ich noch nie in meinem Leben so natürlich gespielt. (Kunststück.) Und das ist schließlich die Hauptsache. Aber in dem geheimsten Winkel meiner Seele — jetzt kann ich es ja ruhig eingestehen — sann ich auf Rache. Und meine Stunde schlug auch bald. Denn einige Tage später sollte die Kampfszene zwischen mir und Josaphat gedreht werden.

Den Kampf können Sie ja in dem Film sehen. Was ich da angegeben habe, dazu brauche ich ja wohl keinen Kommentar

geben. Aber was Loos nach der Aufnahme bei der Betrachtung seiner blutunterlaufenen Handgelenke mir zuflüsterte, ist wert, für die Nachwelt erhalten zu bleiben. Er teilte mir mit einem ironischen Lächeln um seine Mundwinkel mit, daß er denke, daß seine Schläge doch kräftiger waren. Das fehlte mir noch! Diese Worte waren wie Spiritus auf mein Feuer.

Wir mußten ja die Szene für die Großaufnahme wiederholen. Fünf-, sechsmal durfte ich dem armen Loos den Arm ausdrehen. (Nicht aus Bosheit, nein, Gott bewahre. Ich tat es nur, damit er einen ganz natürlichen Schmerzensausdruck in seinem Gesicht haben sollte.) Als wir mit der Aufnahme fertig wurden, war Theodors Kraft auch zu Ende. Vollständig erschöpft sank er in einen Stuhl mit den Worten: „Du, wenn ich gewußt hätte, daß das so weh tut, hätte ich vor einigen Tagen mit dem Banknotenbündel noch viel ärger zugeschlagen!“

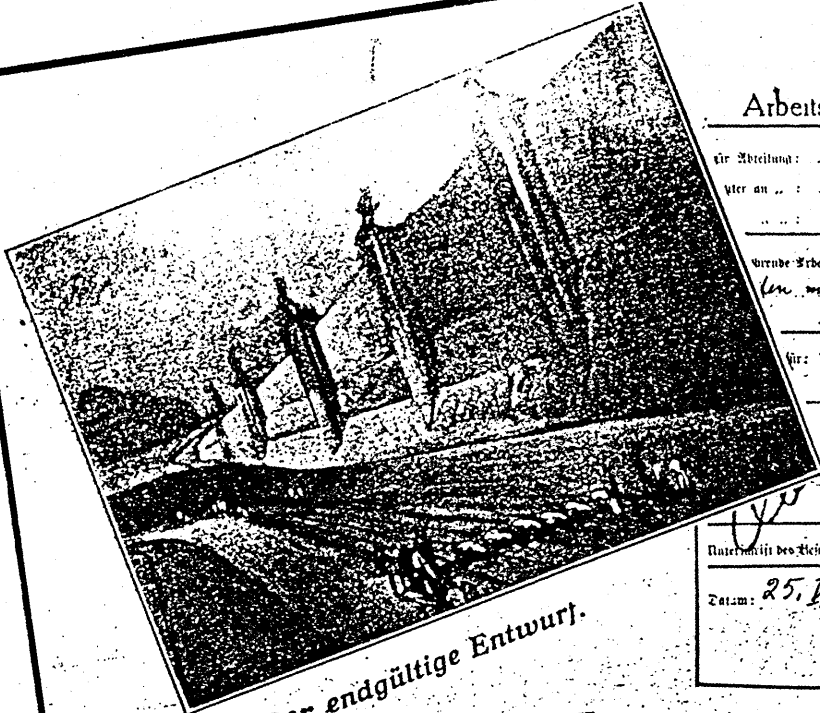
Brigitte Helm:

Wie ich entdeckt wurde.

Es kommt mir heute alles so vor, als wäre es ein Traum. Ich hatte immer Sehnsucht nach dem Theater und spielte bereits im Johanna-Heim in sämtlichen Schülervorstellungen die Hauptrollen. Man sagte mir damals schon — ich war kaum zwölf —, daß ich schauspielerische Begabung hätte und unbedingt zum Theater gehen sollte. Und so träumte ich lange Nächte hindurch von Kunst, Ruhm, Popularität... Sehnsüchtig wartete ich auf den Moment, daß ich endlich einmal in einem „richtigen“ Theater auftreten könnte. Die Wochen, die Monate vergingen, aber dieser Moment kam nicht. Meine Mutter sah meine Verzweiflung und, um mir zu helfen, schrieb sie Fritz Lang einen Brief. Bald erhielten wir die Antwort, daß wir nach Neubabelsberg kommen sollten. Meine Aufregung war unbeschreiblich. Ich stand in dem mächtigen Atelier — zitternd, bebend. Alles war so neu, so sonderbar, so phantastisch.

Man gab mir einen Brief zu lesen, und während ich die Zeilen durchflog, wurde das Licht eingeschaltet, der Kameramann kurbelte. Kurzerhand: Ich wurde gedreht. Dann kam der Schauspieler Alberti auf mich zu, schrie mich an, beschimpfte mich. Dieser kleine Zwischenfall war nötig, damit Fritz Lang meine Ausdrucksfähigkeit prüfen konnte.

So wurde ich entdeckt. Die Probeaufnahme gefiel und man hat mich für die Doppelrolle des Metropolis-Films engagiert.



Der endgültige Entwurf.

Arbeitsauftrag Nr.

für Abteilung: Kunst
 über an: Schönborn
Karlstr. 109
 Grunde Arbeit: Bereitstellung von
im und Jahr
 für: Metropole Theater
20. I. 25

Unterstützt des Reichs: Metropole
 Datum: 25. VII 25
 Unterschrift: Reyher

Ein Arbeitsauftrag.

Auftrag für Einkaufs-Abteilung.

von Abteilung: A. Bestellung

Nr.	Bestellung
257	257 Schlemmkreide
258	258 Sportschuhe
259	259 Sporthosen

Handwritten notes: 257 Schlemmkreide, 258 Sportschuhe, 259 Sporthosen

Signature: Reyher

Material-Anforderung

Nr. 625 Datum: 15.8.25

Abteilung: Kunst

Abteilung	Material	Menge	Einheit
Kunst	Schlemmkreide	25	Paar
Kunst	Sportschuhe	25	Paar
Kunst	Sporthosen	25	Paar

Signature: Reyher

Material-Anforderung

Nr. 625 Datum: 15.8.25

Abteilung: Kunst

Abteilung	Material	Menge	Einheit
Kunst	Schlemmkreide	25	Paar
Kunst	Sportschuhe	25	Paar
Kunst	Sporthosen	25	Paar

Signature: Reyher

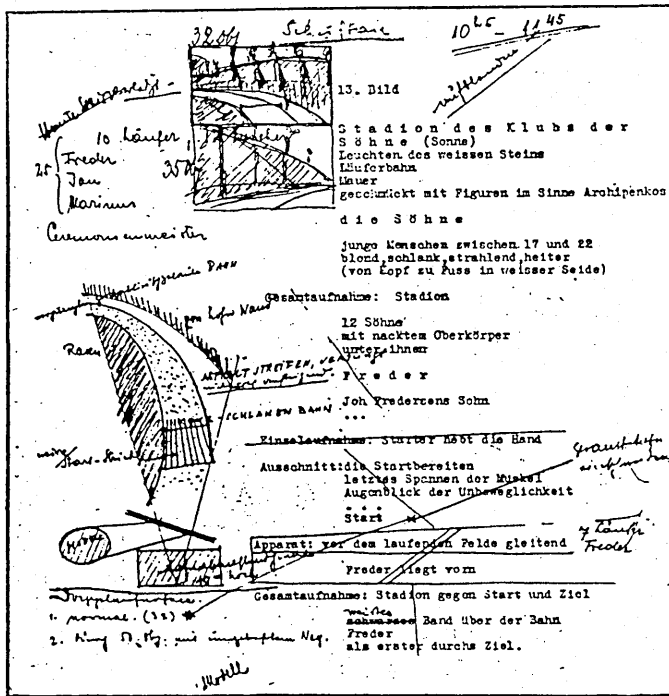


Eine von den 30 cm hohen Modellfiguren, die in dem fertigen Bild wie Riesenstatuen wirken.

Brennspritus und Nägel werden angefordert.

Links oben: Die Einkaufsabteilung muß Schlemmkreide, 25 Paar Sportschuhe, 25 Sporthosen etc. besorgen.

Farbe wird gebraucht!



Die Manuskriptseite nach der Regiesitzung

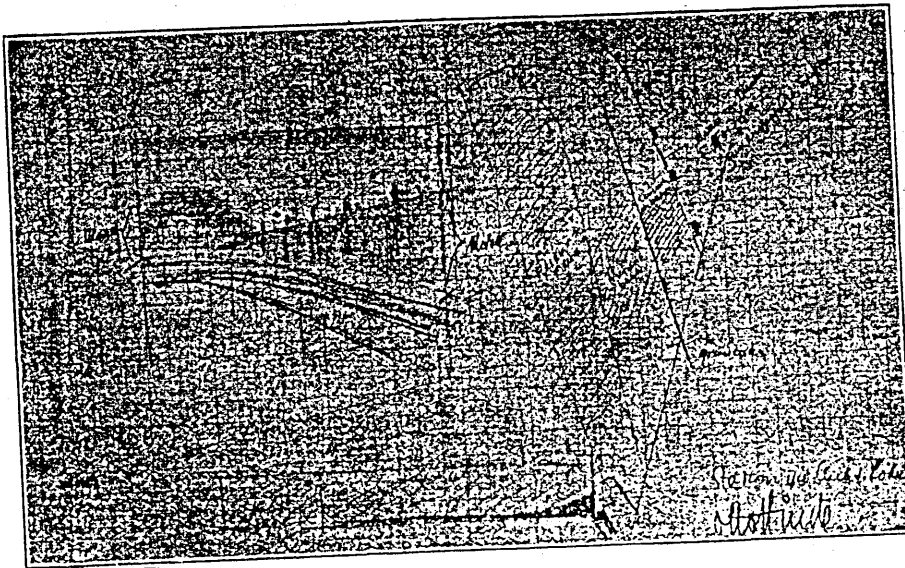
Die Skizzen auf der Seite sind Fritz Lang's Vorstellungen von den anzufertigenden Bauten.

Mitte.

Der erste Bauentwurf der Architekten

Um die enormen Kosten des Riesenbaues zu sparen wurde die Dekoration teilweise als Modell aufgebaut. Nur den unteren Teil des Baues stellte man in

natürlicher Größe auf. Das Modell wurde nach dem Schüfflanschen Verfahren in den Apparat eingespiegelt. Kein Mensch würde, wenn er den Film gesehen hat, glauben, daß der Entwurf auf der linken Seite des Blattes in Wirklichkeit nur in einem kleinen, ein Meter breiten Modell aufgebaut war. Die Skizze auf der rechten Seite ist der Grundriß zu dem monumentalen Unterbau.



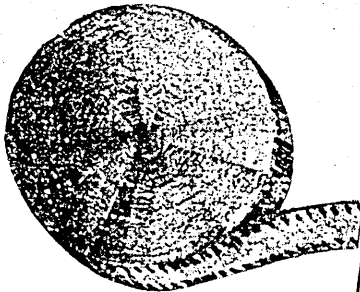
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6.	4207/111	Stadion der Söhne	5.100.--	3.400.--	-	-	8.500.--
7	4348	- Dom mit Galerie und	6.205.34	7.673.07			7.878.42

Der Schreck der Direktion — der Kostenanschlag!

Bei dieser Szene trat der seltene Fall ein, daß der Kostenvoranschlag sogar unterboten wurde. Die Zahlen in der ersten Reihe waren kalkuliert, in der Wirklichkeit aber wurden die Beträge in der zweiten Reihe ausgegeben. Die Ersparnis war demzufolge 681.58 M.



Die Szene wird geprobt
 Der fertige Bau sah in der Wirklichkeit
 so aus. Der fehlende obere Teil war o
 kleines Modell aufgestellt.



283 m Film wurde verdreht.

Rauchen streng verboten!

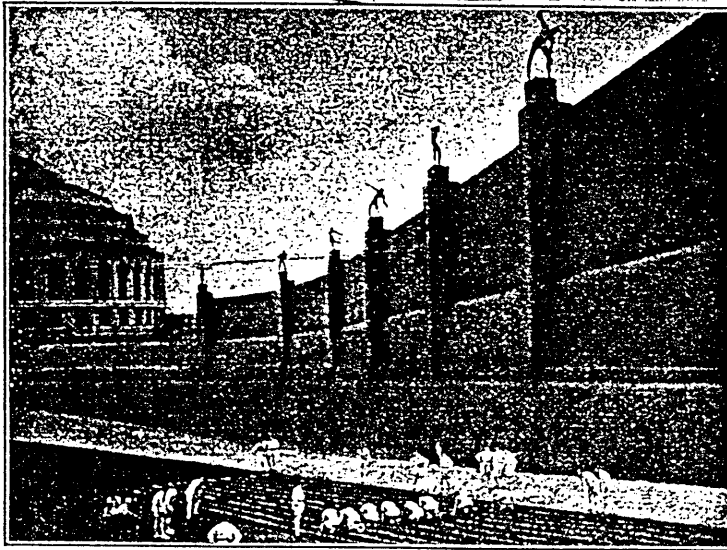
Dieser Korb ist nicht nach Betrieben anderer Fabrikanten
 zu versenden, sondern nur für die Werkskassa bestimmt.

Film: 025 Metropolis

Herrn Otto Köhler Nr. 44
 Frau, Pfl. Photodamm Am Kanal 77
 Wohnort: Berlin 105
 Straße und Hausnummer:
 Geboren am: 8. I 1886

Wir verpflichten Sie für eine Aufnahme am 10. X 16 zu einem Tageshonorar
 von Mk. 40 (in Buchstaben Mk. vierzig) zu einem Tageshonorar
 abzüglich des gesetzlichen Steuerabzuges (siehe im übrigen Rückseite) + 3% zu Gunsten des parität. Stellenausschusses
 Sie sind verpflichtet, sich pünktlich um 8 Uhr vor in unsern Betrieb Neubabelsberg
 einzufinden, bzw. bei Außenaufnahmen um 8 Uhr vor in unsern Betrieb Neubabelsberg
 zur Beauftragung: (brennt! Garderobe pp)

Unterzeichnet: Kompars Herr Georg dem Hilfsregisseur
 Beschrieben von der Kompars-Film Neubabelsberg zu melden.
 Mk. vierzig Das Steueramt (ohne Abzug des Honorars) ist beim Exzerpt
 als vereinbartes Honorar empfangen zu haben. Für die Aufnahmeführung: J. P. George
 Anmerkung: 1.20 in bar auszuschütten
 Hauszahl: 1018 Lohn-Umrechnung erkenne ich die amstehenden Bedingungen
 als mir bekannt an. Ich erkläre mich damit einverstanden.
 Unterschrift des Darstellers: Mark Bauer



**Die sportliebender
 Millionärssöhne wur
 durch diese Kompars
 zettel engagiert**

**Und endlich das Resultat der Riesenarbeit:
 Die fertige Szene,
 die im Film 9 m 88 cm lang ist.**

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- (2) Petley, op.cit.

- (3) Noël Burch, "Fritz Lang: German Period" and Robin Wood, "Fritz Lang: 1936-60", both in R. Roud (ed.), Cinema: A Critical Dictionary, Vol.2. (New York, Viking, 1980), pp.583-609; Gavin Lambert in Sight and Sound, Vol.25, No.1, p.15-21 and p.55, and No.2, pp.92-97 (Summer and Autumn 1955); Peter Bogdanovich, Fritz Lang in America, (London, Studio Vista, 1967); François Truffaut in Cahiers du Cinéma, Vol.6, No.31 (January 1954).

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- (6) Bill Nichols(ed.), Movies and Methods, (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1976), p.622.

- (7) Ronald Abramson, "Structure and Meaning in the Cinema" in Movies and Methods, op.cit., p.566.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PRODUCTION HISTORY OF METROPOLIS.

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- (24) Spiker, op.cit., p. 39.
- (25) Monaco, op.cit., p.29.
- (26) Spiker, op.cit., p.41.
- (27) Monaco, op.cit., p.30.

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- (28) E. Zola, *Germinal*, (Paris, Livre de Poche, 1974), p.72.
 Translated by S. & E. Hochman, *Germinal*, (New York, Signet,
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"All that remained unchanged was the steady sound of
 the exhaust from the pump, still wheezing with the
 same heavy, labored breathing - the respiration of an
 ogre, whose appetite nothing could satiate and whose
 steaming breath he could now see. [...] He thought
 wrathfully about those 'somebodies' Bonnemort had
 spoken of, and about this unknown, glutted and
 crouching god to whom ten thousand starving people
 fed their flesh."

- (29) The following chapter contains further analysis of machines
 and technology in *Metropolis*.
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- (31) On the difficulties in translating the term "Die Neue
 Sachlichkeit", see Willett, *op.cit.*, p.112.
- (32) Rudolf Arnheim, "Metropolis" in *Das Stachelschwein*,
 1st February 1927. Précis of this review given in
 Kaplan, *op.cit.*, p.147.
- (33) The following contemporary reviews of *Metropolis* were
 consulted for this thesis. Henceforth, they will be
 referred to by author only, or by the name of the
 journal/newspaper in the cases where the full name of

the author is unknown.

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 H.P., in Der Bildwart, Heft 4/5, April/May 1927;
 o.V., in Der Kinematograph, No.1039, 16th January 1927;
 Axel Eggebrecht, "Metropolis" in Die Weltbühne, 18th January 1927;
 Willy Haas, "Metropolis" in Die Literarische Welt, 21st January 1927;
 Fred Hildenbrandt, "Metropolis" in Berliner Tageblatt, 11th January 1927;
 Paul Ickes, in Die Filmwoche, No.3, 19th January 1927;
 Monty Jacobs, "Metropolis: Uraufführung im Ufa-Palast" in Vossische Zeitung, No.10, 12th January 1927;
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(b) American and English.

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(c) French.

- René Schwob, "Un Monde Imaginaire à L'Ecran: Métropolis" in Une Mélodie Silencieuse, (Paris, Grasset, 1929) pp. 197-208;
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- (34) Kaplan, op.cit., p.1.
- (35) See Buñuel, op.cit. and reviews by Jacobs, Hildenbrandt and Ickes.
- (36) Ickes review.
- (37) Quoted in Stephen Jenkins, op.cit., p.13.
- (38) Die Filmbühne, No.8, 1927, p.5.
- (39) Hans Siemsen, "Die Situation der deutschen Filmkritik" in Die Weltbühne, 26th July 1927.
- (40) Der Bildwart review.
- (41) See Hildenbrandt review. Details of Eisenstein visit in Maibohm, op.cit., p. 84.
- (42) See reviews in Der Kinematograph and Lichtbild-Bühne.
- (43) Vitner review.
- (44) Haas review.
- (45) Reviews by Hildenbrandt and Jacobs.
- (46) Der Bildwart review.
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- (48) Quoted in Hans Siemsen, "Die Situation der deutschen Filmkritik", Die Weltbühne, 26th July 1927.

- (49) Hermand and Trommler, op.cit., p.265-266.
- (50) Christopher Isherwood, speaking on Channel 4 programme, "Memories of Berlin", Saturday 29th January 1982.
- (51) Lang, "Kitsch - Sensation - Kultur und Film", reproduced in Albrecht, Retrospektive, p. 4c/1 - 4c/5.
- (52) K.Pinthus, quoted in A. Beyer-Wolperndorf, "Das Problem der Filmkunst", Der Kinematograph, No:654, 16th July 1919.
- (53) See "Kitsch-Sensation-Kultur und Film"; Lang, "Moderne Filmregie" and "Fritz Lang", in Albrecht, Retrospektive, pp.4d/1 -4d/3 and p. 4a/1.
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- (59) Jensen, op.cit., p.69. See also Jerzy Toeplitz, quoted in H.H.[Henning Harmssen], "Kühle Reserve Empfohlen", Stuttgarter Zeitung, 6th August 1976.
- (60) Where the term 'fascism' and its variants are used, they refer to the National Socialist form of fascism, unless otherwise indicated.

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- (80) Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, (London, Hutchinson,1974), trans. by Ralph Manheim, p.410.
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CHAPTER 4.

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- (16) Max Marwick (ed.), Witchcraft and Sorcery, (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1970), p.144.

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- (2) Reich, op.cit., p.153.
- (3) Grebing, op.cit., p.195.
- (4) Wright, op.cit., p.19.
- (5) For the voting figures, see Barraclough, op.cit., p.450.
For the influence on government policy, see Wright, op.cit., p.53.
- (6) Craig, op.cit., p.185.
- (7) Ralph Miliband, *The State in Capitalist Society*, (London, Quartet, 1973), p. 182.
- (8) Bundesarchiv: Reichskanzlei Luther File R 431/2498.
- (9) The autographed signature on this typewritten document appears to be 'Oeser'.
- (10) See Wright, op.cit., p.51.
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- (15) Rev. Canon Leon Morris, *The Revelation of St. John: An Introduction and Commentary*, (London, Tyndale, 1969), p.19.
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CONCLUSION.

- (1) See Sadoul, op.cit., p. 542 and p.546, and Noël Simsolo, Fritz Lang, (Paris, Edilig,1982),p.33.
- (2) Le Matin, 8th August 1984.
- (3) Ibid.
- (4) See Production History section. Information from Enno Patalas about the location of the missing sections.
- (5) Michel Pérez, "Rock Around Metropolis", Le Matin, 8th August 1984.
- (6) Thomas Elsaesser, "Metropolis" in Monthly Film Bulletin, Vol. 51, No.611, December 1984, p.363-364.
- (7) Information about the Be Bop De Luxe use of Metropolis was obtained from a colleague who attended one of the concerts on that particular tour in 1977.
- (8) Simsolo, op.cit., and Issues in Radical Science, (London, Free Association Books,1985), [Radical Science Journal No.17].
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