

Annotated bibliography



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Metropolis: The Message and the Medium Metropolis (1927) by Director Fritz Lang is a film that has become a archetypal classic of science fiction as well as an analyses of utopias versus dystopia. However, upon its initial release it garnered mixed reviews and gained popularity with factions that it was actually aimed at discrediting. Although misunderstood and quite expensive, German audiences came to see the spectacle of the film and few were disappointed, but many left scratching their heads. Many critics panned its American release (even more edited) but audiences still wanted to see the cinema fantastique phenomenon that is Metropolis. Initially touted as a vision of the future, the message often became lost in the medium. Metropolis will be analyzed for its intention of purpose by the filmmaker and its reception as an entertainment of the day as well as the different messages both intended by its creator and as perceived by its audience.

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Cook, David A. A History of Narrative Film. New York: W. W. Norton, 1996. This book, while wide ranging, set the films in the backdrop of history and culture as well as box office and sales. Cook also goes about getting little know information that is not available elsewhere. He notes that Metropolis, although aimed at decrying the current state of affairs in Germany, especially the Nazi part, became one of Adolph Hitler's favorite films. So much so that Fritz Lang, the films director was offer the position of, " the leadership of the German film industry by the Nazi propaganda minister, Josef Goebbels," (Cook 115) but he respectfully declined and being " Half-Jewish and a political liberal" (Cook 115) he respectfully declined and soon fled Germany for the Untied States. Cook also analyses the different version of the film that were shown in the US and the different, edit both for time

and content, and the reactions each received. There are also excellent publicity posters throughout the book as well as descriptions of the cutting-edge film processes of the time that were used in the creation of the film to amaze and interest its audience.

Koepnick, Lutz. *The Dark Mirror: German Cinema between Hitler and Hollywood*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002.

This book also put the film into historical perspective but goes into more detail about the costs of production and the time of change from silent films to talkies and how that had affected the distribution of the film as well as the production problems it had and the expenses it incurred. Sound was becoming the investment that UFA was throwing their money into leaving silent films behind. Kopenick also discusses the genre of German Film at the time and what part Lang and other played in its development both in the area of technique as well as imagination and message. While political in nature and a philosophical warring that the makers of the machines must also remember to put their heart in their work, the film is finally analyzed for its entertainment value as well.

Telotte, J. P. *Science Fiction Film*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

This text goes into tremendous detail of the film as a science fiction pioneering event, but also the event and impact that its director and cast had on both its German audience as well as its American Audience. It has quote reviewers of the time and contrasts them with criticisms of the present. A reviewer in the *New York Times* of 1927 states, " ... a remarkable achievement.... a technical marvel with feet of clay... a picture as soulless as the manufactured woman of the story..." (Telotte 81) as opposed to a more

recent 1984 comment, “ A monumental film, Metropolis is the classic of the genre, unparalleled in scope and ingenuity until Kubricks 2001 - A Space Odyssey...” (Telotte 81). He not only place the movie in its time but help the reader understand the culture and concepts of the audience. This make Tellote’s book a perception into the empathy of the age and the audience.