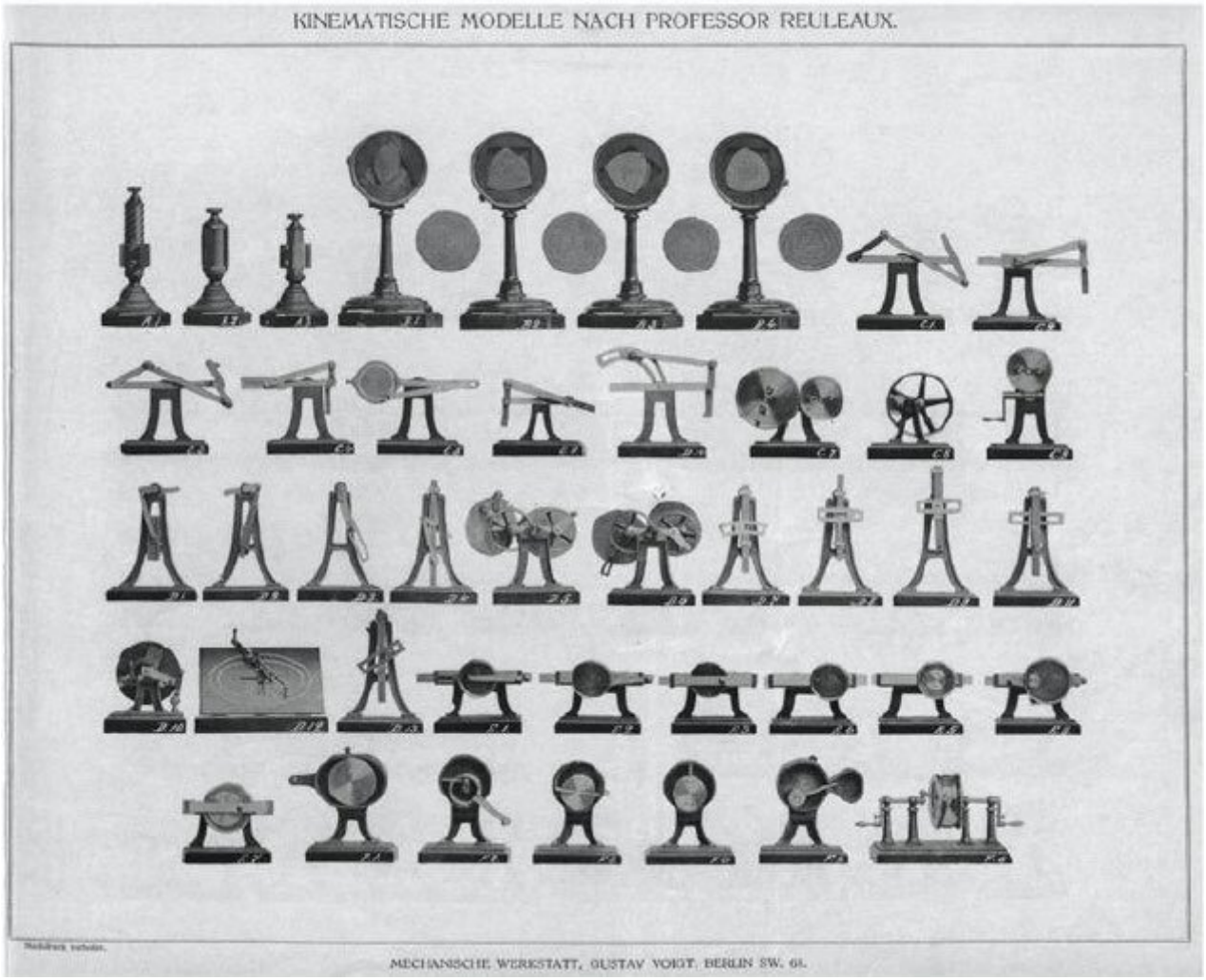
The Language and Poetics of Machines (Deadline: June 5, 2025)



New Call for Contributions: „The Language and Poetics of Machines“ (Deadline: June 5, 2025)
guest editors: DENG Pan and Kevin Liggieri

The intelligibility of mechanical processes lends a peculiar expressive power to the machine. This became explicit in the late 19th century when engineering scientists like Franz Reuleaux or Carl Bach articulated a compositional grammar of mechanical elements. To construct a machine became a way of expressing an idea and promoting cultural development, thus implicated in labor and gender relations and questions of power. According to Ernst Kapp, humans understand themselves in and through the language of machines. We welcome papers from the point of view of philosophy, culural and literary studies, (art) history, or engineering - expanding the discussion to machine theories in western, islamic, and chinese contexts, moving beyond the constructions of mechanical engineers to organic or cellular machinery and the mechanics of digital language processing. Since the intelligibility of the language of machines also affords subversive and reflective approaches in literature and art, the poetics of machines in the works of Lars Gustafsson, Jean Tinguely, or Rube Goldberg should also be considered.