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## MANUAL OF THE HISTORY OF THE GERMAN TRAMWAYS

Railways along public streets, i.e. tramways, were at one time by far the most important means of passenger transport in cities with more than 30,000 inhabitants. Only a few cities of that size never had a tramway. Many inter-urban connections also came into being as tramways.

The manufacture and ready purchase of inexpensive motor cars since the Second World War, as well as the scarcely favourable attitude of municipal authorities, have led to a neglect of the tramway as an efficient, space-saving and pollution-free means of street transport. In many localities its previous importance has long been supplanted by private passenger vehicles and public bus systems. Even the majority of tramway advocates have their own motorcars.

An end to the decline of the tramway is not in sight. In a few cities tramways can be expected to retain their old, familiar form, provided that they receive subsidies for extension and modernisation. As a rule, however, the traditional tramways as we know them, which have been operated with light, electrically-powered vehicles on rails laid in the streets or on special track-beds, will be replaced by buses and, on heavily-trafficked routes, by municipal railways, such as suburban commuter, underground and rapid-transit lines.

When an era passes, we begin to reflect and to preserve memories, and accordingly many articles and books have appeared during the past decade, which usually dealt with particular tramway systems, car types, or regions. This „Manual of the History of German Tramways“ complements those for the first time with a compendious reference work on German tramways. Numerous tables and diagrams show the dates and places where tramways operate or used to operate, as well as their importance in the field of public transport. All tramways which existed in Germany and in the Free State of Danzig on March 31st, 1937, are included.