

Narratives on the German City and its Technology around 1900

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Abstract

Around 1900 Germany became a pattern for reformers in both Great Britain and the United States. Picking up concepts from cultural theory, this paper suggest that certain story-lines recur in their narratives of German cities. For example, British and U.S. reformers tended to praise the fact that German mayors were salaried and elected for relatively long terms, and that civil servants were permanently employed experts. German cities were said to be able to plan effectively because they owned relatively large areas of land, and because the authorities had considerable freedom in confiscating private real estate for the public good. As the reformers' narrative had it, these conditions enabled planners to act more independently of vocal interest groups, and to make plans with exceptionally long time-horizons. This same administrative-legal framework also facilitated the installation of technical systems (such as electricity) and infrastructural networks (such as tramlines).

If German self-descriptions usually functioned as means of legitimation inward, they claimed leadership when directed toward an outward audience. Outside observers were impressed by these concerted acts of demonstration, and transformed self-conscious narratives to fit domestic conditions. Whereas German commentators tended to compare present with previous conditions, foreign observers were prone to compare German conditions with those in their home countries. Images and pieces of information circulated in the trans-Atlantic discourse coalition that evolved after the turn of the twentieth century, but they took on a different meaning in their respective national discursive framework.

In the middle of the 1890s the town was one of the first in Germany that designed a publicly owned and managed electric tram network. In all other areas of modern town management it has proven its progressive character - be it in the area of industry or of social life. Among its most notable achievements count the construction of a first-class water-supply and sewerage system, the erection of a slaughterhouse, an electric-power plant and a gasworks, as well as the building of an imposing swimming hall. (Stein 1913: vii)

The talk is here about Darmstadt, a mid-sized town in the Southwestern part of Germany. With these words the town's mayor presented the city's achievements in the areas of industry, finance, hygiene, social policy, and technology (Ibid.: i). The latest developments in urban technology obviously played an important part in the picture that Darmstadt's leading representatives drew of their town - along with the fact that this town of almost 90,000 inhabitants housed "one of the best equipped and most frequented institutes of technology in Germany." While Darmstadt now markets itself as a "science city"

(Wissenschaftsstadt),² highlighting its many research and development institutes, the town's industrial character was considerably more pronounced a century ago. For example, the local company E. Merck, notable for pharmaceutical research today, was in the early 1900s called a "chemical industry of world fame" (ibid.: viii). As the above quotation suggests, a "modern" town was not merely an industrial town. Of course, manufacturing sites, transportation and other technical systems were needed, but a truly "modern" town also featured hospitals, museums and galleries, music halls and theaters, schools and recreational areas.

Darmstadt did not present itself simply as an "industrial town." It also tried to promote itself as a "town of art and culture" with an "extraordinary cultural and technical infrastructure," and as a "residential town" (Schott 1999: 295, 297). The municipal authorities tried to strike a balance between industry and art, culture and nature, labor and leisure, garrison and commerce. In an attempt at squaring the circle, they aimed at accommodating different social groups. To stimulate entrepreneurial activity the authorities designated new land along the railroad tracks for industrial purposes, while at the same time the town attracted wealthy senior citizens, members of the middle class, and famous artists. Front and center here was the so-called "artists' colony", created in the first decade of the century as a sanctuary for the modern avant-garde.

In representing the advantages of their town, Darmstadt's mayor and lord mayor celebrated their own deeds. According to their narrative, the town's attractiveness was to a large extent the result of active policies and a competent administration. Like most German mayors and civil servants they were convinced that only proactive politicians and strong public authorities could guarantee that appropriate institutions be set up and managed, and that all the tasks that a modern city was supposed to provide be carried out and coordinated. The aim - which towns and cities shared with the German Reich - was to guarantee all citizens a certain standard of living, not primarily in pecuniary terms, but as far as basic provisions went. This goal was and is still known as *Daseinsvorsorge* (caring about someone's well-being), and the means as *Leistungsverwaltung* (service-oriented public authorities and utilities) (cf. Blotevogel 1990).

In the English-speaking world, the German program became known as "municipal socialism" (cf. Mumford 1970: 425). Many commentators, not usually attracted by socialism, tended to judge the achievements of German city authorities favourably. By various initiatives and interventions, German civil servants had managed to control urban developments and to create humane living conditions for the masses. Compared to the "urban jungle" of British and U.S. cities - anatomized by English-speaking writers from Charles Dickens to Upton Sinclair, German cities were said to be idyllic and harmonious.

Municipal socialists embraced modern technology. Expanding the influence of the local administration was needed to finance and manage large urban technologies. Although the private sector had constructed a number of technical systems, local politicians came to argue for public ownership to guarantee the maintenance and further expansion of water, gas, electric, and transport systems. City politicians smelled handsome profits in the electricity market, and authorities found that the cleaning of streets and the emptying of cesspools on part of private firms left much to be desired.

Despite the pioneering character of German cities in creating a "modern" city, municipal socialism had already been propounded by some British reformers. The Fabian Society, in the 1880s, had argued not only in favor of the socialization of important branches of industry, but also for public ownership in the areas of energy provision, water supply, and transportation. Their ideas about a peaceful kind of socialism were

appropriated by reformers in Germany. The “Society for Social Policy” (Verein für Socialpolitik), was a key association of radical university professors, civil servants, politicians, industrialists, and journalists, whose lobbying activities brought about a “change in economic policy” on both the national and local levels (Krabbe 1979: 269).

The success of these changes meant that reformers after 1900 looked more to Germany than Britain as the leader in municipal administration. Municipal engineers, architects, and planners from many countries envied the self-consciousness and optimism of their German colleagues. As Andrew Lees and Daniel Rodgers have pointed out in their pioneering works, *Cities Perceived* (1985) and *Atlantic Crossings* (1998), German cities functioned both as a role-model and vision for many Anglo-Saxon urban reformers. The legendary British planner Patrick Geddes, even after the outbreak of the First World War praised the innovative and efficient character of German city authorities. In Britain urban reformers “used the German example of municipal progress as a way of prodding their countrymen to make further improvements in their own towns” (Lees 1985: 239).

Evidence abounds to support this observation. In 1914 the British journalist William Harbutt Dawson explicitly praised German cities for their progressive property policies, visionary planning concepts, and humane welfare facilities. He also discussed the advantages of their mostly publicly owned utilities in gas, water, sewerage, and electric power. Progressive reformers such as the American Frederic C. Howe were impressed by - in their own eyes - the professional character of German urban planning and the way German citizens identified with their own towns: “By 1910 Howe noted that in Germany one found ‘organic’ cities, possessed of ‘communal self-consciousness’” (Rodgers 1998: 141).

The wide-ranging possibilities that German authorities had to control construction and plan cities stunned contemporary commentators from overseas. In the decades around 1900 Germany also became a pattern for reformers in both Great Britain and the United States. Picking up concepts from cultural theory, we suggest that certain story-lines recur in their narratives of German cities. For example, British and U.S. reformers tended to praise the fact that German mayors were salaried and elected for relatively long terms, and that civil servants were permanently employed experts. German cities could plan effectively because they owned relatively large areas of land, and the authorities had considerable freedom in confiscating private real estate for the public good. As the reformers’ narrative had it, these conditions enabled planners to act more independently of vocal interest groups, and to make plans with exceptionally long time-horizons. This same administrative-legal framework also facilitated the installation of technical systems (such as electricity) and infrastructural networks (such as tramlines). Furthermore, foreign visitors believed that local businessmen often identified strongly with their hometowns and were surprisingly willing to bankroll their modernization.

The reform discourse was formed during frequent study trips and numerous conferences. The circulation of information and knowledge was made easier by the translation of books and pamphlets, as well as by mutual invitations for informal talks and more formal lectures. For example, members of the Boston Board of Commerce undertook a long study trip to several European countries in 1911. In the same year the German ambassador in the United States gave talks about German cities to the City Club of New York and the Board of Estimate and Appointment. Ambassador Johann H. von Bernstorff spoke in very self-conscious terms on *The Government of German Cities* (1911). His main message was to show the indispensability of experience and expertise for the management of modern cities, as well as the necessity

of centralizing power and planning capacity. The German system of municipal government and administration, in his view, had:

been shaped by the conviction that the work of governing a town is important and so difficult that it requires the whole working time and all the powers and thought of able men who have acquired special knowledge of the problems of town administration by a long experience of the work. (Bernstorff 1911: 7)

Further, the ambassador defended the municipalization of technical works and elaborated the extensive possibilities of tax revenue that German cities had at their disposal. According to the minutes, the City Club audience approved both instruments.

Urbanization: An International Challenge

Since the early days of industrialization, British cities had gotten a bad press. The young Friedrich Engels joined a flood-tide of critical comments on the disastrous conditions in centres of industry. In *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, (Orig. 1845), Engels (1987: 100) observed how the urban environment sickened the proletariat:

[...] we must admit that 350,000 working people of Manchester and its environs live, almost all of them in wretched, damp, filthy cottages, that the streets which surround them are usually in the most miserable and filthy condition, laid out without the slightest reference to ventilation, with reference solely to the profit secured by the contractor.

Prostitutes, alcoholics, and orphans filled the streets, and even those who were lucky enough to have a job and an apartment could not count on a long life. Industrial safety was an unknown concept. Residential areas were overcrowded, and apartments often damp and cold. Dirt all over the place.

In this situation, reformers and charity organizations faced an overwhelming task. Despite pressure from various reform-minded groups Parliament was slow to pass laws that could lay a foundation for improvements. Investigations made by the Poor Law Commission sometimes even diverted attention away from the basic problems. Its chairman, lawyer Edwin Chadwick, claimed to have shown empirically that the less people ate the healthier they were. In his *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population in Great Britain* (1842) Chadwick downplayed the need for higher wages and better housing, and instead proposed the installation of water closets and the cleaning up of streets as the best means to help the working classes (Hamlin 1998). Education and health propaganda were key ingredients in his controversial recipe for reform.³

When Germany began to industrialize on a large scale in the late-nineteenth century, it experienced similar problems. Several cities grew very quickly; the number of inhabitants in greater Berlin increased almost sevenfold between 1850 and 1910 (Reulecke 1985: 203f.). Untold thousands were housed in large residential complexes, so-called tenement barracks. These disreputable *Mietskasernen* sometimes covered a whole block and could have up to six privy-packed courtyards inside. Apartments were suffocating and dark, and residents suffered in humid basements in the winter or hot attics in the summer.

Compared to British authorities, German city councils and civil servants confronted the “social question” more actively. German mayors had sizable administrations at their disposal, and in most German states they controlled resources unheard of in the Anglo-Saxon world. As far as housing was concerned, just to take one example, the legal framework was successively tightened. Toward the end of the nineteenth century German cities forbade the building of apartments in which living rooms, bedrooms, and kitchens

lacked windows of a certain size. The height of buildings was also subject to rules, as was the distance between buildings.

Conditions in U.S. cities differed substantially from those in Britain and Germany. The rapidly expanding industrial centres would have disgusted Friedrich Engels, but the reasons for misery were largely different, as were possible solutions. American cities had grown out of nothing in a relatively short time, expansion had take place at a breathtaking pace, and the turnover of citizens was usually much higher than in European cities. Immigrants at the lower end of the social ladder encountered health problems due to disastrous housing and working conditions. Upton Sinclair famously documented Chicago's chaos and filth in his best-selling novel *The Jungle* (1906).

In this country of unlimited opportunities, private enterprise had a decisive impact on urban technologies. Municipal authorities had planned and directed urban expansion to some extent, for instance by laying out streets and railroad tracks. In the last decades of the nineteenth century they also set out to design public parks, combat debris in the streets, and erect public baths. Nevertheless, private interests determined the expansion of most urban infrastructures. Waterworks and sewage systems, gasworks and power-plants, not to forget streetcar lines, were - by and large - under private control and had primarily been designed for profit.

Urban problems triggered the reform movement that grew in the United States in the 1890s. These "progressives" were middle-class professionals - most of them journalists, medical doctors, and civil servants, and they aimed at alleviating the worst forms of social inequality and reversing what they considered to be a steady process of urban decay. They eagerly turned to Europe for inspiration. Such European cities as Frankfurt, Birmingham, and Glasgow became influential role models in the progressive struggle for urban improvement. The cleanliness and orderliness of European cities impressed U.S. observers, and they praised how the municipal authorities took responsibility for urban developments. Dazzled by the achievements of Europeans in areas such as public transportation and street cleaning, U.S. progressive reformers tended to accept almost everything they considered European as positive. Although some of them realized that the political system in a country like Germany was not particularly democratic, they were breathlessly impressed by the achievements of German municipal authorities and their allegedly disinterested and non-corrupt character.

"The Example of Germany:"⁴ The British Picture

Geddes and Dawson certainly were not the only Brits who were impressed by German cities. For example, in 1907 the British planner Thomas C. Horsfall announced to an international audience that the German state of Saxony had the "best housing law in the world" (quoted in Albers 1997: 144). Horsfall was chairman of the "Manchester and Salford Citizens' Association for the Improvement of the Unwholesome Dwellings and Surroundings of the People," which worked to improve the urban environment in general and living conditions for the working classes in particular. His book *The Improvement of the Dwellings and Surroundings of the People: The Example of Germany* (1904) reflected the concerns of this society.

The subtitle of Horsfall's book illustrates its tone. On every possible score, German towns rank higher than their English counterparts.⁵ The air in German cities, with the possible exception of Essen, is said to be much cleaner than in any English industrial town. Most German cities have large parks where citizens

can relax and stay healthy. Horsfall notes that streets are cleaner and houses are better maintained in German working-class districts. Even the apartments are tidy and neat:

English observers who visit the homes of German workpeople are generally surprised at the high average of orderliness and apparent comfort which they find in them; and, on the other hand, Germans who visit the homes of English workpeople in the poorer districts of our large towns are surprised to find so many dirty and neglected dwellings [...] (Horsfall 1904: 162)

Horsfall traces these differences to city-sponsored education initiatives that make the population more conscious about personal and public hygiene. German pupils are taught the advantages of cleanliness and an intimate relationship with nature, and at their disposal are warm showers and school gardens. Like his fellow German middle-class representatives, Horsfall was convinced of the benevolence of this kind of policy.

The close connections between members of what could be called the reformers' discourse coalition come out clearly from the strategic way in which Horsfall makes use of German self-descriptions. For example, in his plea for municipal socialism Horsfall draws heavily on a 1902 report from the city authorities in Cologne. This "Report on the Condition and the Management of the Communal Affairs of the Town of Coeln in the Financial Years 1891 to 1900" was an explicit effort at public relations and self-justification. Not least, the report showcased the improvements that had resulted from socializing various private undertakings. The authors adopted the discursive strategy of presenting their own interests as general interests:

There is now an imperious demand that those undertakings, which supply the needs of the whole community, shall be managed by the municipal authorities, as they know better how to protect the general interest than traders, whose first care is to make profit [...] (quoted in Horsfall 1904: 139)

The authors enumerated the various areas now successfully administered by the authorities: the gasworks and the local electricity company, tramlines and parts of the railway, waterworks and slaughter-houses, the harbor and the wharves. They argued that in all these fields of urban technology public ownership and management had proven advantageous to the inhabitants of Cologne. The domestic narratives aimed, in the first instance, at the own citizens. It had an internal purpose.

In British eyes the Cologne report takes on a different line. Horsfall aimed to remake the administration of English cities and towns, and he appropriated the achievements of Cologne to support this goal. At present, Horsfall argues, the English administrative system is plagued by amateurism, and it needs to be replaced by a modern system in which professionals have a decisive say. In order that mayors be fully devoted to their tasks, make informed decisions and stay away from corruption, they have to be elected for longer terms and be given a decent salary. And, perhaps even more importantly, modern mayors need a large staff of experts to provide decision-makers with plans and other documents. In support of his views, Horsfall quotes favourably a certain Mr. Fairlie, who had written the following about German cities:

The active management of municipal affairs is very largely in the hands of a special class of technically trained officials, who apply scientific administrative methods to a degree unknown in other countries. (Horsfall 1904: 31)

As urban technologies become ever more pervasive, ever more professional experts were, so the argument went, needed to maintain and administer various technological networks and projects. The outcome

would be a kind of technocratic system, in which scientific knowledge and methods were paramount. The “necessities of modern life” called for professional administration.⁶ Modernity, it seems, required expertise.

It is self-evident that Horsfall’s book must not be read as an objective investigation. His extremely positive narrative of Cologne and other German cities can only be understood against the background of what he and his fellow reformers considered to be the intolerable situation in many English towns. His discursive strategy may be illustrated by two quotations juxtaposing England and Germany. Already at the outset he declares why his fellow countrymen ought to take German cities as their role model: “German towns [are] much pleasanter to live in than English towns” (Horsfall 1904: 4). And, when he later gets into discussing the concrete advantages of the expert system, he suggests that the building plans that German authorities produce “fill an Englishman [...] with surprise and with admiration” (p. 27). The basic narrative, as it were, was one of contrasts and juxtapositions.

“How the German City Cares for its People:”⁷ U.S. Appropriations

In his all-encompassing treatment of the circulation of reform ideas between Europe and North America Rodgers devotes two chapters to urban policy and planning. He makes clear that the U.S. reception of Western and Central European experiences and practices was a process of active appropriation and not one of simple transfer of ideas. Quite naturally, U.S. observers viewed Europe with their own eyes. Rodgers (1998: 142) notes that U.S. observers tended to concentrate on factors that they meant were different in Europe than in the U.S.: “No wretchedly paved streets and packed streetcars, no corrupt city bosses, no waste, no lawlessness, no anarchy.” Furthermore, U.S. progressives latched onto ideas from Europe that they could utilize instrumentally of on their own home turf and did not try to represent of European cities in their great diversity. For example, Albert Shaw, a U.S. journalist, systematically collected information from European cities, but noted:

[...] my task in all these matters is not to find out the faults of foreign people and foreign systems, but to find out their merits in order that we may profit by their wisdom and be stimulated by their good performances. (quoted in Rodgers 1998: 133).

“The European city” formed a mirror through which Americans could look at themselves and find inspiration for concrete visions and plans. “European-ness” was a construct.

One of the most active preachers of the European gospel was the lawyer and politician-turned-journalist Frederic Howe (Mullin 1976-77). He published several books and numerous popular articles on European urban policy, and helped lead the Public Ownership League of America. With the financial assistance of the Boston Chamber of Commerce Howe helped arrange study trips around Europe. In a 1911 speech to the reform-minded City Club of New York Howe reported from European cities, always comparing them directly with U.S. ones. Instead of granting concessions to private companies to run services such as water supply, street-car lines, and electricity distribution, European city authorities organize these services themselves, and they often make a handsome profit:

In America, our cities give away franchises to public utility corporations whose total value runs into the hundreds of millions. [...] In England and Germany, the city owns these profitable enterprises, and protects its people. We think of the sacredness of private privilege. European people think of the sacredness of human life. (Howe 1911: 17).

And, when Howe describes the glories of German city planning, the story-line is positive beyond the point of plausibility:

The City [authorities] laid off the streets for miles around the city. They laid out broad boulevards with parkways and promenades [sic]. They made them artistic and beautiful. They made the side streets spacious and comfortable. Within a short walk to every man's house they placed a play ground or a garden, and they made the garden as artistic as possible. (ibid., p. 18)

One may rightly ask if Howe and his colleagues had visited Germany or paradise. Like other U.S. progressives, Howe turned to European cities for inspiration. His journeys took him to urban areas which appeared to him like heaven on earth. He brought home with him images of community and consensus, harmony and happiness. Somewhat naively, especially for a former politician, Howe presumed that urban planning was never accompanied by serious conflicts on the European side of the Atlantic. For instance, Howe (1913: 106) claimed that in Europe there "is no conflict between the city and the railway over streets, stations, or terminals."

Juxtaposition, inspiration, and instrumentalization run through Howe's writings on European urban planning. His chief message was that European, especially German, cities had been planned for the common good rather than for profit, and that the outcome of this planning philosophy had been harmony, beauty, and health. By contrast, in the "accidental" cities of the U.S. there reigned chaos, ugliness, and filth. Howe consciously chose the observations he thought would be effective in the U.S. debate, and he changed the very terms of that debate. He was aware that U.S. observers often, and rightly so, criticized the undemocratic German election system. To meet such criticism Howe shifted the concept of "democracy" from questions of suffrage and ownership to the achievements and performance of a strong local government. As Rodgers (1998: 143) put it, Howe's writings "were part of a struggle to socialize the language of democracy - to balance its rhetoric of rights and privileges with a new rhetoric of services, outcomes, and results."

Howe and other progressives preferred a strong public sector to run and maintain the technical systems without which modern cities could not survive. Public transportation built by private companies was, in the U.S., often enough laid out only in areas where profits were high enough. Since that meant that large numbers of the population were cut off from service, private ownership shortchanged society and the economy as a whole. Howe notes that publicly owned street-car systems tend to be of higher quality, provide travelers with better comfort, and cover greater areas.

Not all juxtapositions that Howe presented were particularly fair or objective. When comparing industrial cities, he typically used U.S. cities as a mirror for German ones: "German industrial cities are not mean and tawdry" (Howe 1913: 12). Directly comparing the steel towns of Gary, Indiana, and Düsseldorf on the Rhine, Howe somewhat inappropriately stated that "Gary was planned for the making of iron and steel; Düsseldorf was planned for people" (Howe 1913: 43). One wonders if all inhabitants of Düsseldorf would have supported the second part of this - admittedly rhetorically elegant - utterance. Even men of industry and commerce are said to be convinced of the superiority of public ownership and administration of urban services. Frankfurt businessmen see "the city as a big collective enterprise, with assets which comprise all the wealth and property of all the people" (Howe 1912: 73). Their city is a harmonious whole, a kind of organism, whose survival is dependent on the subordination of particular interests to the interests of the community.

In Howe's world such organic images prevailed. Not only urban politics, but also the technical networks that constitute modern cities are described in organic terms. In *European Cities at Work* Howe observes:

Street railways, gas, electric light, and water are treated as the cities' vital organs to be owned and operated for service, comfort, and convenience. They are owned by the city because they control its life, its growth, its development. (Howe 1913: 106)

Conclusion: Context of Conflict and Corruption

The debates that we have analyzed in this article did never take place in a political, economic, and social vacuum. The writings of progressive reformers on allegedly corrupt U.S. cities can only be understood against the backdrop of conflict and struggle. In the nineteenth century, public works and municipal engineering had emerged as important areas of technical development, and urban planning and hygiene had become academic subjects in many countries. For many engineers cities and utilities had begun to be attractive employers. The foundation of water, gas, and electricity works had been critical in this regard, and to meet their needs new fields of engineering had emerged on both sides of the Atlantic. Municipal engineers began to play a central role in those organizations which were set up to provide the urban population with energy and water, as well as to remove its garbage and sewage. In this position they were not seldom under attack and had to defend their doings. Many German publications had a legitimation function. Several of those texts that U.S. observers read as stories of pioneering achievements had a very different background.

Since the early days of municipal engineering, enormous investments had been made to come to grips with sanitary and urban environmental problems, to ensure a continuous supply of water and energy, and to provide efficient means of transportation. Public baths and private bathrooms had been built, apartments had become less humid and unhealthy, the treatment of refuse and waste had been made more effective, underground water pipes and sewerage systems had been put in place, gas and electricity networks had been laid out, and streets had been made broader and straighter. Although these developments might seem natural from hindsight, they were always contested. Most citizens surely appreciated lit-up streets at night, but they had not always been convinced that gas-lighting was necessary. Even running water had initially been opposed by house-owners and others who had to finance the construction and maintenance of the water-supply system. Thus, it is not surprising to find the head of Darmstadt's waterworks, Rudolph, taking the opportunity to describe the advantages of the public waterworks in his contribution to the monograph series. Instead of recapitulating the ten years' of heated political debate, intense newspaper discussion, and innumerable expert hearings that had preceded the decision in 1877 to build a centralized water-supply system, Rudolph chose to smooth things over. The public opposition and the sluggish decision process were forgotten, and instead Rudolph only talked about the "diverse efforts" of the various participants (in Stein 1913: 154). As in other essays written by various engineers in the "Monographs," Rudolph's narrative is one of continuous technical development and progressive municipal decision-making (Stippak 2000: 118). The need to represent urban technology in an affirmative way post hoc is obvious.

If self-descriptions usually functioned as means of legitimation inward, they, rather, claimed leadership when directed toward an outward audience. Outside observers were impressed by these concerted acts of demonstration, and transformed these self-conscious narratives to fit domestic conditions. As we have seen, the most common strategy of appropriation was juxtaposition. Whereas German commentators

tended to compare present with previous conditions, foreign observers were prone to compare German conditions with those in their home countries. Images and pieces of information circulated in the trans-Atlantic discourse coalition that evolved after the turn of the twentieth century, but they took on a different meaning in their respective national discursive framework.

Notes

- ¹ This paper is an abridged and slightly modified version of a longer text which the authors are presently preparing for a planned volume, edited by Mikael Hård and Thomas J. Misa, *Urban Machinery: Defining and Designing European Cities, 1850-2000*. That volume is an outcome of the work within the ESF-funded network “Tensions of Europe;” see www.histech.nl/tensions. The authors thank Tom Misa for his very detailed language corrections.
- ² Since 1997 this title is indeed officially sanctioned by the central administration in the state of Hesse; see www.darmstadt.de.
- ³ The relationship between urban developments, sanitary action, and medical knowledge is presently being analyzed by Anne Hardy in a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Technology Darmstadt.
- ⁴ Horsfall (1904).
- ⁵ Throughout his book Horsfall talks about England/English rather than Britain/British; when referring to his text, we do the same.
- ⁶ Horsfall (1904: 35) takes this quotation from Albert Shaw, *Municipal Government in Continental Europe*, ca. 1910.
- ⁷ Howe (1911).

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