



Call for papers

Railway Modernization:

The 19th and the 20th centuries- an historical
perspective

Second International Conference of the Railway History Association (IRA) / Association
Internationale d'Histoire des Chemins de Fer (AIHC)
Lisbon (Portugal), November 27- 29, 2006



The International Railway History Association, the Centre for Portuguese Modern History are very pleased to invite researchers in Railway History, Science and Technology History, Economic and Social History to our International conference.



**Railway Modernization:
an historical perspective of the 19th and 20th centuries**

When the European Commission liberalized the railway trade, it also emphasised the importance of trans-European railroad modernization. This should enable to transfer part of the road transportation to the railway in order to allow an improvement of passengers and cargo flows. This policy also had the aim of reducing the pollution levels in Europe.

A compared historical research about railway modernization should be kept up with the modernization of European railway's networks. Present day's debates led us to assume the relevance of this subject as the main theme of the Lisbon conference: an exploration of the several modernization processes that took place throughout the history of railways.

How important were these improvement processes through the years? Which obstacles have intervened in the railway modernization? Some of the stages have still occurred during the 19th century or in the beginning of the 20th century. These were the cases of the changeover of type, size and material of railroad tracks, as well as the introduction of new signalling systems or traffic management. Other phases came about between the two World Wars, like the introduction of the Taylor's model of management in the engines' and carriages' production and repairing, or the replacement of steam by diesel and electric power. More recent changes began to take place during the early 70^s when high-speed trains and cargo containers were introduced.

Technological innovation and the research that supported it derived from a range of teams who were integrated in different institutional environments. If we keep in mind the multiplicity of nationalities from which enterprises and technologies emerged from, it's possible to recognize the relevance of studying technological transference, as well as the responsibility of the leading enterprises in innovations' spreading. The role of those who were mediators in this process, such as engineers or qualified workers, is also a relevant topic for this theme.

The final date for proposals will be April 15th, 2006. Proposals (max. one page) and a short CV should be sent to Magda Pinheiro, member of the Council of the Association. The final decisions will be taken by the scientific committee of the Railway History Association (IRA) / Association Internationale d'Histoire des Chemins de Fer (AIHC) at the end of May.

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