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THE INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



EDITORIAL

by Fernanda de LIMA LOURENCETTI

Chief-Editor

Internationally, railways have been a tool in conflict scenarios since the early 20th century. The Portuguese Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineering Eduardo Corregedor Martins wrote, in 1939, that it was during the First World War (1914-1918) that railways revealed their full value as a military instrument. During the Second World War, the train was an important tool for the 'Blitzkrieg', defined as surprise attacks using combined arms.

Currently, the role of railways in the war in Ukraine has prompted the European Union to review its rail transport strategy, including the integration of parts of the infrastructure into the EU Military Mobility Programme; in the war in Iran, railways are being used as a means of delivering care to civilians and intimidation between the nations involved.

In this newsletter, alongside topics such as sustainability and cross-border connections, readers will find information on the history of railways during wartime, as the launch of the second volume of the book "Railways in the First World War", edited by the IRHA.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue!

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Andrea GIUNTINI and Stefano MAGGI

Few weeks ago, the second volume of the conference proceedings - which we announced in this newsletter - was published. The conference was organised by our association in Budapest in 2018. It represents a significant academic achievement: the studies contained therein completely redefine the role played by the railways in the First World War.

In a few months' time, a second volume, the one relating to the first conference held in Italy by IRHA in November 2024 will also be published by the Italian publisher Siena- Firenze University Press (in open access). The conference, entitled 'Railways and Environmental Sustainability. A long-term view on a global scale from the origins to the present', was very well received, with participation from scholars from 16 countries around the world and the presentation of a wide range of case studies.

The collection phase is now complete, and the selected essays, which will form part of the forthcoming volume, cover a wide range of topics, demonstrating that the conference theme was particularly well-chosen as it addressed a broad spectrum of academic interests across various countries: from the inexorable decline in the use of the main means of

public transport to environmental mobility studies, from the environmental impact of transport to the advent of the motor car and the rise of private road mobility, from urban transport to mass tourism.

The collected texts methodologically span the field of research with a diverse range of proposals; they explore a wide variety of topics, developing them along novel lines, and cover extremely varied regions of the world. The theme of environmental sustainability has been approached from multiple angles, like a prism revealing its various facets, thereby facilitating useful insights starting from the search for new mobility models. The chronological depth also represents an added value for the forthcoming IRHA publication.

Underpinning the project behind the volume is the conviction that limits must be placed on road traffic to reduce pollution and congestion and increase rail use, highlighting the centrality of soft mobility—a principle that the European Union has also embraced for decades now in the name of a new collective environmental consciousness. This also applies to the field of tourism, a topic addressed on several occasions in the proceedings of the Siena conference, including with regard to the reuse of disused railways that have now been reactivated as tourist lines. Right on the outskirts of Siena lies one of the most significant examples of railway reuse for

tourism: the Val d'Orcia Asciano- Monte Antico Railway, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this May. Thus, this forthcoming publication also helps us to rethink the role of railways in contemporary society through the lens of history.

TRENO NATURA STEAM TRAIN WILL HEAD TO TORRENIERI

By Stefano MAGGI



On 17 May 2026, the Treno Natura steam train will head to Torrenieri, a village that grew up around the railway, where the 'Festa del Treno' takes place: a traditional event featuring typical 19th-century costumes.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the reactivation of the railway service with tourist trains. The Val d'Orcia Railway was established in May 1996 and has since carried over 350,000 passengers to discover the region.

A day combining a historic journey, the landscapes of the Val d'Orcia and local culture, with the Torrenieri festival as the highlight of the experience.

On the day, the 150 students on the Railway Culture and Tourism training course, organised by the University of Siena in collaboration with Fondazione FS Italiane, will take part in a training workshop with their tutors.

Departure from Siena at 8.50 am, arrival in Torrenieri at 11.15 am.

FROM THE TRAIN TO THE PITCH: HOW RAILWAY HISTORY STILL SHAPES FOOTBALL IN SÃO PAULO'S CITIES (BRAZIL)

By José Claudinei MESSIAS

President of the Sorocaba Railway Workers' Union

The São Paulo Men's Football Championship has already kicked off and features 64 clubs across four divisions. The Paulistão, first held in 1902, is one of the oldest championships in the country – and its history is closely linked to the expansion of the railways in the state of São Paulo.

Before football gained modern stands and well-maintained pitches, it spread across the interior of São Paulo, following the route of the railway lines. In many towns, the first matches took place on pitches near stations, attended by railway workers who brought to the new urban centres not only transport, but also cultural practices, forms of social interaction and the habit of supporting their beloved clubs. This relationship between football and the railways left its mark, which can still be seen today in the urban landscape, in the clubs and in the collective memory.

The link between football and railways in Brazil remains alive, though mainly in a symbolic sense. Today, there are no pitches criss-crossed by railway tracks, nor are there any major amateur tournaments centred along railway lines. **Nevertheless, some places preserve this heritage, such as the Nicolau Alayon Stadium in Barra Funda, listed for its**

working-class origins linked to the São Paulo Railway, and the historic Paranapiacaba pitch, considered the country's first stadium with official dimensions and built in the late 19th century for the village's railway workers. Although trains no longer run through these areas, both retain an identity marked by their proximity to tracks and railway structures.

(...) **More than a century after its first edition, the Campeonato Paulista de Futebol continues to captivate entire cities, now under new formats and regulations.** In many of these towns, however, supporting a team remains a gesture of remembrance. The legacy of the railways remains present in the footballing identity of towns shaped by railway expansion, and in places such as Bauru, Araraquara or Jundiaí, supporting clubs born of labour on the tracks is to acknowledge a past of migration, collective effort and a sense of belonging. Thus, **even though the trains no longer whistle at the edge of the pitch, their echo still resonates in the stands and sustains a history forged between the rails and the ball.**

Source: [Revista Ferroviária](#) (translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

ASTRES INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: ‘TRANSPORT, MOBILITY AND TOURISM: DECARBONISATION, DEMOBILISATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?’

Lumière Lyon 2 University, France, 24–27 November 2026

The issue of the interplay between transport, mobility and tourism appears to be crucial on several levels. Given that transport is essential to the growth of tourism, how are practices and analyses evolving in relation to the decarbonisation of transport, the relative democratisation of transport, and tourist sites facing closure initiatives in light of a location's carrying capacity (the Sugiton Calanques, Venice, Canigou, etc.).

The need for a broader approach to studying the **links between tourism and transport is the focus of the 15th edition of the AsTRES International Conference**. The conference will draw on papers from a range of disciplines (planning, geography, administration and management, history, economics, sociology, urban planning) and on insights from practitioners (tourism stakeholders, policymakers, associations, etc.). Several avenues for reflection present themselves to us.

Within the general framework of the conference as previously defined, papers may address different scales, from local to international, and different case studies, ranging from monographs to comparisons,



as well as offering more distanced, epistemological, or theoretical reflections.

If necessary, the conference will offer several videoconference sessions.

Proposals should be sent to the following address:

<https://transportourism.sciencesconf.org>

Source: *Rails & Histoire*. (Translated by Fernanda Lourencetti)

10TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RAILWAY HISTORY

Alcázar de San Juan, Spain, 24-25-26, June, 2026



The territory that today conforms the Autonomous Community of Castilla-La Mancha has witnessed the evolution and development of railways since its early years of operation. In fact, part of the Madrid-Aranjuez railway, the second line to be built in the Iberian Peninsula, which will celebrate its 175th anniversary in 2026, ran through the municipality of Seseña in Toledo province. Therefore, it is a territory with a very significant railway history that is to be recognized through the celebration of this 10th Conference in the city of Alcázar de San Juan, where railway has been essential for the economic and social development. Nowadays the city is one of the most important railway nodes on the Iberian Peninsula.

The Iberian Association of Railway History, whose fundamental purpose is historical research, organizes this 10th Conference on Railway History maintaining the international character

that has characterized previous editions.

The 10th Conference includes a specific session on Railways in Castilla-La Mancha with a wide range of research topics. The Conference on Railway History is possible thanks to the support of Alcázar de San Juan City Council, the city that hosts this edition and maintains a firm commitment to the history and future of this mode of transport. Also, thanks to the commitment of the Spanish Railway Foundation and its Railway History Program, an institution that has been promoting historical railway research from all thematic perspectives and has played a fundamental role in the conception and organization of previous Conferences since it was created.

With this initiative the Iberian Association of Railway History invites everyone to the 10th Conference on Railway History.

(Source: [ASHIF](#))

CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY: MIGRATION, LOGISTICS AND GEOPOLITICS

Győr, Hungary – October 14-17, 2026

The Széchenyi István University in Győr is pleased to invite you to Cross-Border Mobility: Migration, Logistics and Geopolitics of T2M the International Association for the History of Transport, Traffic and Mobility. The conference aims to provide an academic platform for researchers, professionals, policymakers, and stakeholders to present



their work and research on the history of mobility and its contemporary human implications. **By fostering collaboration and adopting multidimensional approaches, the conference seeks to identify pathways toward a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future mobility.**

Deadline for submission of abstract: 21 May

(Source: [SZE WordPress](#))

THE TRANS-EUROPE EXPRESS PROJECT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (1957–1987). THE ROLE OF THE RAILWAYS IN CONNECTING EUROPEANS

IRHA online conference on Tuesday 12 May at 6 p.m. CET

Dr Michèle MERGER, Honorary President of the International Railway History Association **will discuss the book:** Il progetto Trans Europe Express nella costruzione europea (1957-1987). Il ruolo delle ferrovie nel connettere gli europei, **in presence of the author, Dr Anthony GOUTHEZ**

The discussion with the author will be in English. Join us <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/328013103707846?p=LFQdyNllnoZTfddsXH>

“CLIMATE, MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE”

Konkuk University, Seoul, 29 - 31 October 2026

The conference significantly encourages scholars ‘to intervene epistemologically and politically in an ontology of infrastructure for its transformation, occasionally mobilising creativity and imagination’ (Adey et al. 2024) to create more just mobility futures. That is, **this conference is committed to ‘imagining other forms of social life’, what Amitav Ghosh (2016) refers to as ‘the challenge posed by the climate crisis’. This will be achieved more effectively through cross-disciplinary discussions about climate, mobility, and infrastructure, that traverse multiple scales of humans, nonhumans, and more-than-humans, and that attend both physical and hybrid mobility infrastructures and envisioned, speculated, or sensed mobility infrastructures, embedded in literary, cultural, visual, and creative endeavours and works.**

This conference invites proposals from different disciplines within climate, mobility and infrastructures studies, including, but not limited to: literary and cultural studies, philosophy, history, art and design studies, anthropology, geography, media and communication, architecture, urban planning, climate and environmental studies, science technology studies, AI and data research, tourism, transportation, education, Black and Indigenous studies, gender and sexuality studies, and others. It will present an opportunity for scholars to share their ideas and inquiries at the intersection of climate, mobility infrastructure, and the humanities, transcending the conventional divide between the social sciences and humanities and the arts.

Key Dates:

_1 June 2026 Deadline for the submission of abstracts and full, pre-organised sessions
29 June 2026 Notification of acceptance for abstracts and sessions
29 June 2026 Early Bird registration opens
3 August 2026 Early Bird registration closes;

_14 September 2026 Registration closes;

_29-31 October 2026 Conference

For any questions, send an email to: 2026GMHC@gmail.com

(Source: [Transport, Traffic & Mobility](#))

MOISSON EXPRESS EXPOSITION

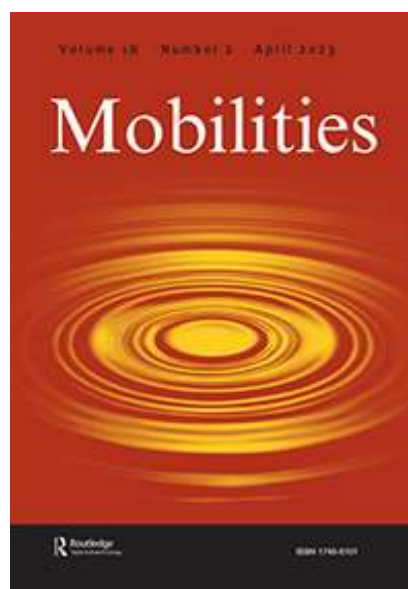
COMPA - Le musée de l'agriculture, France, 13 March 2026 to 3 January 2027



Drawing on the history of the Chartres railway roundhouse, the setting for our museum, **the exhibition traces the use of steam in transport and agriculture, starting locally and extending across France.** Against the backdrop of the excitement – and anxieties – of the First Industrial Revolution, followed by the rationalisation of the 20th century, technical developments tell a story of men and women. What a transformation in lifestyles and landscapes!

Through a historical journey, featuring never-before-seen exhibits and iconic machines, visitors are invited to immerse themselves in this journey between railway lines and fields. This rotunda, a unique building, thus becomes a witness to a significant past and the keeper of a precious narrative about our shared heritage.

RAILWAY READINGS

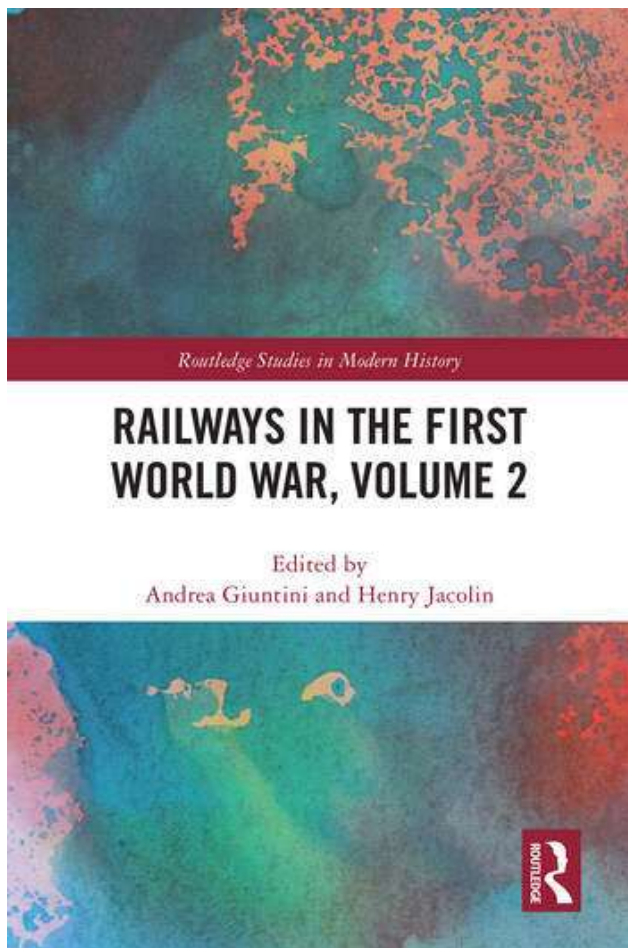


The first issue of 2026 of the journal [Mobilities](#) published many articles about the **Vulnerable (im)mobilities between imperial legacies and colonial logics of war.**

Among them there is:

'Seeing like a train: the viapolitics of emergency mobilities during Russia's war against Ukraine

Marta Jaroszewicz, Dovilė Jakniūnaitė & Peter Adey



Railways in the First World War

Andrea GIUNTINI; Henry JACOLIN (eds.)

The publication of Volume 2 of *Railways in the First World War* brings to a close a long editorial process, making the proceedings of the Budapest conference now fully available in a coherent, ambitious two-volume work. **Conceived within the most active framework of the International Railway History Association, the project brings together 37 scholars from different countries and historiographical traditions**, whose contributions collectively address a major gap in First World War studies: the central role of railways in mobilization, logistics, and communication.

This second volume features 18 of these contributors and reflects both the scale of participation and the wide range of perspectives involved. It draws together studies spanning multiple geographical and thematic contexts, including the Eastern Front, Egypt, and Canada, alongside a substantial focus on the post-war period. **The book is divided in five parts: the first one, *On the Fronts* examines railway operations in key theatres of war; *Beyond Europe: Global Railway War* expands the analysis beyond the European context; *In the Trains* focuses on the human and social dimensions of railway systems; *After the War* addresses reconstruction and institutional reorganization; and, finally, *Aftermath: A Long Run View* situates these developments within a longer-term framework of international coordination and change.**

The volume consolidates the broader aim of the project: to reposition railways at the centre of the multifaceted history of the First World War and to establish a new, internationally grounded reference point for future research.

By Federico Meneghini SASSOLI

RENFE HISTORIA DEL FERROCARRIL PÚBLICO ESPAÑOL, 1941-2004

by Miguel Muñoz Rubio



This is the **second edition** published by the Spanish historian Miguel Muñoz Rubio of his doctoral thesis, *Renfe (1941-1991): Half a Century of Public Railways* (1995). **Although it retains the structure of the original work, it incorporates the research he has carried out over the past thirty years to compose a comprehensive history of Renfe**, the Spanish public company that managed the railways between 1941 and 2004. The monograph has a diachronic structure which, distinguishing between the Franco era and democracy, unfolds through a detailed analysis of policy, organisation, productive forces, traffic and economic results. The book is organised into seven

chapters and an epilogue, includes a name index, and retains the foreword written by Miguel Artola for the first edition.

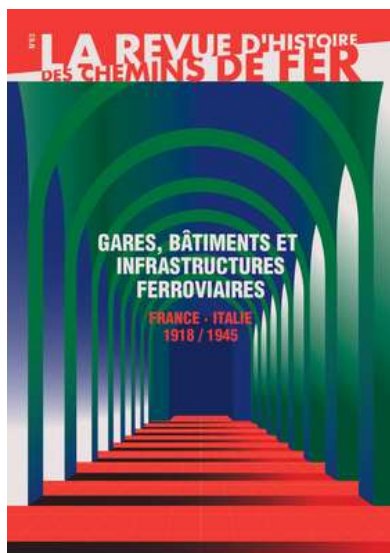
The *Revue d'histoire des chemins de fer* launched the issue 62, based on the proceedings of the conference entitled 'Hubert Haenel: a key figure in the regionalisation of rail transport', that took place on 14 November 2024, in the prestigious setting of the Pavillon de l'Orangerie at the Palais du Luxembourg.

In 1995, the so-called 'Pasqua' Act on regional planning and development paved the way for a new organisational structure in which the region, alongside the State and the SNCF, became a key partner in the development of passenger rail transport. Through three round-table discussions, testimonials from key players and two presentations, this conference highlighted the key role

played by Hubert Haenel, Senator for the Haut-Rhin, in the implementation of regionalisation, particularly through his commitment to dialogue. Jacques Chauvineau, director of the Regional Action Department at the SNCF – which he established in 1983 – supported him, notably in the task of winning over railway workers on the ground, for whom the new powers granted to the regions posed a risk of the dismantling of their company.



Take a look to the issue 63 too, dedicated to the publication of the proceedings of the symposium 'Railway stations, buildings and infrastructure between modernity and territorial identity in France and Italy: 1918-1945'.



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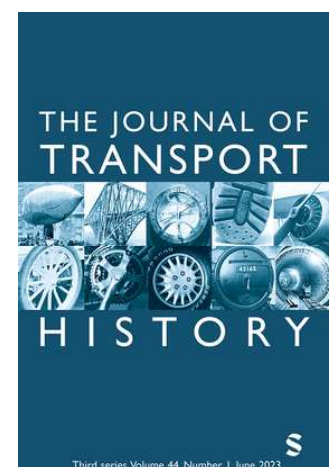
p. 245 - 246 • **Du côté du centre de documentation**

During the first months of 2026, the journal [Journal of Transport History \(JTH\)](#) published different articles, where you can find some interest information about the railway world:

Book Review:

To the Sea by Train by Andrew Martin

[Andras Palmai](#)





Association Internationale
d'Histoire des Chemins de fer

International Railway
History Association

Asociacion Internacional
de Historia Ferroviaria

Do not forget to visit
our website!

[https://aihc-irha-
aihf.com/](https://aihc-irha-aihf.com/)

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SEE YOU AROUND:

"(...)and beneath this wondrous sky the black valley, utterly still, the train moving through it making a great noise but unable to wake this dead world."

(Denis Johnson, [Train Dreams](#))