

SESSION ABSTRACTS

Session 1. Cultural and Sensorial Experiences of the Railway Journey

Doru RADOSAV (Romania: Professor, Faculty of History and Philosophy, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca): *The Railway Station - Lieux de mémoire: Encounters, Farewells, Memories. A Historical Semantics Approach*

Radu MÂRZA (Romania: Associate professor, Faculty of History and Philosophy, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca)

Romanian Train Travelers Discover Landscape

“To Franzensbad, the train passes through a land of no beauty, barren and poor”. The quotation comes from a travel account to Franzensbad and Karlsbad, published in 1901. Many similar ones exist. They drew my attention to the fact that in 1900 a passenger could spend many hours at the train window, looking out heedlessly or carefully observing the landscape passing before his eyes.

The traveler's concern for the landscape and nature he is crossing is recent. Until the 18th century and especially during the first half of the 19th century, travelers did not place much value on them. From the sources they have left us, travelers do not seem to be very concerned about the beauty (or lack of beauty) of the landscape. However, during the Enlightenment, and even more so during Romanticism, they discover nature and landscape and they associate symbolic values to them.

The development of the railways also brings about a new relation between traveler and nature. The train runs through the wild nature, but the journey is fast and convenient. The traveler no longer makes an effort in going through nature, but rather looks at it comfortably from the window of the train. Sometimes he is observing it, sometimes not, sometimes he is observing the people and their settlements, villages, plants or train stations, or even the passengers aboard the train.

I am asking myself: is there a special way of seeing the landscape from the train? What does the traveler see from the train window? I am looking at Romanian travelers from the first century of railways (1830-1930) and the specific sources they produced: travel books, diaries, memoirs, articles and reports, from the first Romanian train traveler – Petrache Poenaru (1831) to journalist and poet Demostene Botez (1936).

Johanna RUSTLER (UK: PhD student, University of Aberdeen / National Railway Museum)

Britain's Home Front: Railway Stations and War, 1914-1918

In order to uncover the history of railway operations during the First World War on the Home Front, this study examines the role played by London's railway stations in wartime. London, as the best-connected city in Britain, is the geographical focal point of this study. Women's roles in railway stations were especially important, as conscription-age men were drafted to the Front, and have been largely neglected by historians. The mass mobilisation of British Expeditionary Force soldiers, their departure and return from the trenches, fundraisers organised by women, leave and Armistice celebrations gave railway stations a unique position as communal places of togetherness, festivity, celebration and sadness. Railway stations during the war were places filled with charged emotions, where goodbyes and the insecurity of a reunion between soldiers and their relatives took place. This insecure and vulnerable environment was also the place where volunteers worked providing refreshments via the Free Buffet Movement, moral support and simply being there as an encouraging presence. Railway stations, in a new development, were a location for emancipation as women undertook roles traditionally associated with men and also dangerous places because of regular air raids.

Csaba GIDÓ (Romania: Teacher, Kós Károly High School, Odorheiu Secuiesc)

The Impact of the Railways on Reading Culture

One of the 19th century's most important inventions, the railway removed the constraints of time and space. Millions opted to travel by train, so it quickly became the most useful and favourite means of travel. People had many options as how to spend their travelling time: they chatted with their traveling companion, they ate, slept, played cards and read quite often. The more important railway stations had book and newspaper stands, and very often in the smaller stations paperboys offered newspapers for travellers. Starting from the second half of the 19th century people's reading customs were influenced by what people read on trains.

The paper aims to present the reading habits, the diversity of books and written material travellers had access to on the trains of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy at the turn of the 20th century, and how this phenomenon influenced people's reading culture in this particular age.

Session 2. The Railway Journey during the Cold War

Gergely PETERFFY (Hungary: National Archives of Hungary, Department of Economic Archive, Budapest)

Travelling by Train in Northeast-Hungary during Stalinism

Hungary's most important industrial zone before World War II were in the two northeastern county, Borsod and Nógrád. The coalmines, forges and ironworks required significant railway transport needs. After the war, the eastern half of Europe fell under Soviet sphere of interest so every country had had to change the political, economic and social structure as Moscow wanted. Preparing for World War III the Soviet leadership ordered satellite states to increase the performance of heavy industry, thus expensive investments started raising the capacity of ore-mining, metallurgy, steel production and mechanical engineering.

That is the reason of many industrial projects launched Northeast-Hungary, to develop the already existent factories. The new works increased appreciably its transport needs, due to enormous demands of overheated economy. Not just raw-materials and products delivered by railway, but employers shuttled between home and workplace as well. Besides, the great constructions lured many people from poor, agrarian areas. For that very reason the Hungarian State Railways (MÁV) had to manage both the daily, the weekly and the monthly commute. However, the MÁV did not have enough passenger cars to carry the workers in minimal comfort, and thanks to insufficient infrastructure, often delayed the trains, especially in autumn and winter.

The main purpose of the presentation is showing the culture-historical aspects of travelling by railway from the end of World War II to the uprising in 1956. To present the develop of railway travelling, the change of conditions and habits within this 12 years, we have to apply MÁV-documents, orders and inner service reports, timetables and memoirs to get a view of passengers.

Maria ADAMOPOULOU (Italy / Greece: PhD student, Department of History and Civilization at the European University Institute in Florence)

Rail Stories: The Experience of Train Travel among the Greek Labor Migrants in West Germany

Transnationalism refers to immigrants' long-term attachment to their country of origin, as shown by participation in homeland politics, frequent returns home, consumption of cultural products from the homeland, the maintenance of transnational family structures, remittances or border-crossing entrepreneurial activity. These activities often lead to the creation of dense transnational networks linking immigrants' country of origin and their adopted homeland. At least through the 1970s, German immigration policy encouraged immigrants to integrate just enough to be effective

workers and to prevent them from being socially disruptive, but not enough to break their connection to their countries of origin.

In 1963 the Hellas-Express train, which ran from Dortmund to Athens through Yugoslavia, was established. The whole trip lasted over two days. In 1967, the Acropolis international train service between Munich and Athens, again through Yugoslavia, was launched. Both continued to run until the early 1990s, when they were terminated due to the Yugoslav wars. There is no data available on the number of Greek migrants who travelled to their place of birth while on vacation. Reportages made on board these trains offer us an insight of the numbers, frequency and atmosphere that reigned during the long journey.

In the present paper I would like to explore stories connected with train journeys from Greece to West Germany and vice-versa, through migrants' oral accounts and press releases from the Greek press of the time (1960-1990). Why do they choose this type of travelling and what are the pros and the cons? What is the atmosphere inside the wagons and what kind of people travel together? What are the practicalities involved in the travel: cost, frequency, routes, delays, accidents etc.? Finally, could we assume this transnational train route as a metaphor of their mobile lives?

Mara MĂRGINEAN (Romania: Researcher, "George Barițiu" History Institute, Cluj-Napoca)

Gateways to the City: Expert Knowledge, Railway Commuting, and the Politics of Industrial Youth in the 1970s Romania

Preliminary research has unveiled two intellectual perspectives on housing for young workers as an agent of territorial growth in the 1970s Romania. On the one hand, sociologists employed Western-inspired industrial sociology methods to assess performance on the shop floor. Looking at young employees' motivation, career expectations, and life plans, these experts showed that youth considered housing less important than family ties. Such findings grounded a cost-effective solution, namely rural-urban daily commuting and some investments in railway network as opposed to financing the building of new public urban residential estates. Architects, on the other hand, argued that urban housing was part of a modern approach to industrial labor and made a case for massive spending in building state-owned urban dwellings. While both intellectual perspectives dealt with forms of economic reorganization that would have subordinated development of the transport infrastructure and the subsequent framing of social policies (housing, or educational and health infrastructure) to the needs of flexibilization of the labor market and to the constraints of international economic competition, the conflicting approaches to housing show how as the state and other actors were reconfiguring the social perimeters of labor, they also produced tensions between nation-building and local development, as well as between institutions and actors, which defines the premises around which acceptance, rejection, and negotiation of official industrial territorialization occurred.

My presentation aims to evaluate the sociological approaches to railway commuting in Romania in the 1970s as part of an encompassing trend of making the industrial youth into an object of professional knowledge and research in the socialist state. It considers how and by whom such knowledge was produced as well as the political relevance of these ideas. It also looks at the ways in which the decision-making factors have instrumented locally the experts' findings. Based on archival documentation, and surveys of the main professional publications (*Viitorul social*, *Revista de statistica*, research conducted by the Center for the Study of Youth Problems), I aim to go beyond the dominant scholarship that links the post-1968 urbanization policies to Ceausescu's personal agenda and to enlarge the analytical space so that working youth, railway infrastructure and industrial development be seen as encounters of flows of knowledge and models of territoriality, which has dominated the political and scientific agenda since the 1970s worldwide.

Session 3. Train Travel Representations in Visual Arts

Olga GRĂDINARU (Romania: Assistant professor, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca)

Trains and Railway Journey in Recent Russian Films about Revolution and Civil War

The recent wave of Russian films and TV series about the First World War, Russian Revolution(s) and the Civil War may be regarded as an attempt to offer an alternative view to the already existing Soviet one. In truth, most of these filmic productions are nostalgic depictions of the Imperial Russia or the so-called “lost Russia”. These depictions are merely reduced to romanticised images of brave honourable officers of the Imperial and White Army, idealised images of noble *loisir* and majestic love stories. Both the Russian melodramatic blockbusters and the TV series on the aforementioned topic include scenes with trains and railway journeys. We intend to reveal the main hypostases of the train: as means of escape (in *The Fall of the Empire*, 2005; *The Heritage of Love*, 2016; *The Life and Adventures of Mishka Yaponchik*, 2011); as symbol of revolutionary power and progress (in *Trotsky*, 2017); as comfortable and safe means of travelling (in *Demon of the Revolution*, 2017). The railway journey is also the certain path to death in case of two main heroes – Captain Mishka Yaponchik and Admiral Kolchak. Moreover, the railway station is undoubtedly directors’ favourite place for surprising meetings and romantic heart-breaking farewell (*The Admiral*, 2008, *The Heritage of Love*, 2016).

Ion INDOLEAN (Romania: Film critic, Faculty of Theatre and Television, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca)

Looking Beyond the Railway in New Romanian Cinema

In the internationally acclaimed Romanian New Cinema, one of the most common subjects revolves around the precarious intellectual and financial situation of the characters. They all share the desire to live a better life and, why not, to emigrate in the Western World. They all live on the margins of society, being left somehow outside of reality. And they are all unable to reach a stable personal situation.

This paper revolves around the symbolistic and ideological functions of railway as an object and as a borderline in the Romanian society, as it is seen in films made in the last decade. We are interested in understanding that part of society which is always left behind and therefore cannot integrate. In the same time, we are interested to understand the aesthetical function of the railway in films such as *Dincolo de calea ferată* [By the Rails], *Undeva la Palilula* [Somewhere in Palilula], *După dealuri* [Beyond the Hills], *Bucureşti-Wien 8:15* [Bucharest - Vienna, 8:15], *Periferic* [Outbound], in order to see how the scenographer and the director work together in making it the center of their visual and narrative concepts.

Cristina PURCAR (Romania: Associate professor, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Cluj-Napoca Technical University)

The Motive as Motif. The Image of the Romanian Railway Space in Painting and Graphic Art

This paper is mainly based on a comprehensive investigation of art albums published by the print-house Meridiane between the 1960s and the 1990s, both individual-artist issues and synthesis works, in collections such as “Romanian Art Masters” [*Maeştrii artei româneşti*] or “Little Art Library” [*Mica bibliotecă de artă*].

Works by artists like, among others, Octav Angheluţă, Jean Cheller, Octav Grigorescu, Petre Iorgulescu-Yor, Tasso Marchini, Ştefan Popescu, Arthur Segal, Lascăr Vorel are retrieved and analysed through the lenses of questions like: To which extent does art history mirror railway history? Why would a certain artist choose the railway as motif, which railway aspects tend to be preferred during which period and which is the cultural significance attached to the image of the railway at different times? Is the railway a figure of progress, of power, of performance, is it one of the picturesque, or rather of misery, alienation or marginality? Is it rather the rolling stock that is depicted, or rather lines crossing the countryside, isolated watchman houses or busy stations?

During specific periods, is railway space perceived and represented as industrial or rather as public space? An integral ingredient of the bucolic rural landscape (“a machine in the garden” in Leo Marx’s words) or rather a troubling alien, stage props for a surreal vision? Which parallels can be drawn between the occurrences on the Romanian territory and the famous railway depictions by Manet and the French Impressionists (especially Monet) in the 1870s and 1880s, the German Expressionists (such as Kirchner) before and around WWI, or for instance the Belgian Surrealists (Magritte, Delvaux) in the 1940s-1960s?

Studying the motive as motif, this research aims contributing to a little-studied art history topic as well as to architectural, urban and landscape history, since it interweaves research on the railway in the built environment with the questioning of its cultural reception and artistic representation.

Session 4. The Railway Journey in Everyday Life

Dorin STĂNESCU (Romania: Independent researcher, Ploiești)

Between Fear and Necessity. The Railway Journey in Romanian Rural World (1869-1923)

János MAJDÁN (Hungary: Professor, University of Pécs)

Railways and Lifestyle Changes in Hungary

The new method of transportation had a great impact not only on economic life and military movements but also on the changes on the lifestyle. Completely new elements of life, like the founding of joint stock companies, purchasing of land, entries of shares were brought into the focus beginning with the preparations of railway building. New entrepreneurs, often foreigners, took part in the constructions, new engineering solutions were implemented, new professions were created, which all brought great changes on the lifestyle in the affected areas. The sudden increase in traffic caused the real boom.

The railway staff became a model for citizens in the whole country, since they had uniforms, corporate apartments, family travel discount, pension, associations. This profession ensured one of the fastest ways of social mobilization for the rural population, and the changes in the way of life followed. The passengers were also affected by entirely new impressions: the furnishings (clocks, timetables, advertisements) in the waiting rooms of the railway stations, the surroundings of the buildings (pebble roads, flowerbeds, chestnut trees, toilets, drinking fountains). The pull-down windows, electric lights, advertisements, and later on heating and water toilets in the passenger wagons were also new phenomenon, along with the station restaurant (“resti”) at the railway junction, where they could eat and drink. The resti made the Wiener schnitzel popular in Hungary – it was only made from veal and as large as a 36 cm plate – and it was also a place to drink draft beer. The parents bought scones and raspberry syrup with soda for the children. The tables had checkered tablecloths. In all the railway stations of the Hungarian State Railways that had large traffic, the resti was equipped in the same way. In many of them the waiting passengers were entertained by live gypsy music. The railway spread geraniums in the country, as they bloom nicely in any weather. There was even a special contract regarding the different types of geraniums for the Hungarian and the Austrian State Railways. The trains granted access to schools and theatres, and travel to ecclesiastical indulgences and exhibitions. Goods such as new types of urban furniture (Thonet), clothes and foods arrived via train traffic.

The railway had a great impact on the unification of civilian lifestyles in only fifty years.

Virgil POP (Romania: Professor, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Cluj-Napoca Technical University)

Cristina PURCAR (Romania: Associate professor, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Cluj-Napoca Technical University)

Restored for the Journey. A Study of Railway Station Restaurants in Transylvania

Among the most emblematic railway station spaces, restaurants synecdochically evoke the railway journey from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. This paper is an investigation into the cultural values of this particular aspect of the railway heritage, which has been, to our knowledge, so far little researched as such.

The article first outlines a geography of station restaurants in and around Transylvania, based on Baedeker's 1911 *Handbook for Travellers. Austria-Hungary with excursions to Cetinje, Belgrade and Bucharest*. Mapping the c30 railway restaurants mentioned in the handbook onto the railway system, we discuss which stations were endowed with restaurants and / or buffets and why, according to their relative importance in the territory and in the network. A classification is thus set up, distinguishing between restaurants at main-town stations, at railway-junctions and at border stations. The territorial-scale reading is related to a building-scale analysis of planimetric configurations and functional articulations of restaurant / buffet within the station layout as well as of their furniture and interior design.

While an insight into the original atmosphere of railway restaurants is gained via contemporary treatises, historic architectural drawings, post cards, but also via subjective sources such as literary depictions, the long-term fate of the mapped places is gauged via *in situ* investigation and press surveys. We aim at portraying the station restaurant as cultural *milieu*, epitomising shifting values and perceptions about the railways during more than 150 years. *Lieux de prestige – Belle Epoque* symbols, dubious grogshops, vacant spaces, amnesiac chain stores, vintage chic bistros etc. - railway history's uneven course is expressed *in nuce* by the contrasting facets of these improbable *lieux de memoire*.

Session 5. National and Trans-national Issues in the Planning and Building of Railways

Hugo PEREIRA (Portugal / UK: Postdoctoral researcher, Faculty of Sciences and Technology, University NOVA of Lisbon / Institute of Railway Studies, University of York)

Portuguese Railways (1853-1914): Representations, Expectations and Achievements from the Periphery

Since the early 1850s, Portugal, a country from the European periphery, undertook an ambitious public works programme, based on the principles of Saint-Simonianism, in which railways played a decisive role as tokens of progress and creators of civilizations of circulation. The main goal was to draw the nation closer from those of the European centre. From the 1870s onwards, that programme was transferred to the Portuguese overseas colonies (Angola, Mozambique, and Goa, India) in an effort to ascertain Portuguese sovereignty in those areas that were being coveted by other more powerful European nations. By the eve of World War I, the mileage of the mainland network was about 2,500 km, whereas in the colonies the network extended throughout more than 3,500 km.

In this paper, I will analyse the representations Portuguese technocrats (State engineers and those of private companies, politicians and statesman, and army officers) had about the mainland and overseas territories under Portuguese rule and what their expectations were about the investment in railway construction (in economic, political, diplomatic and symbolical terms).

I will proceed with a comparative analysis between what was expected and what was achieved: what lines were built, with which characteristics, how much did they cost, what was their operation revenue, did the traffic meet what was anticipated, did railways fortified Portugal as an imperial nation: and so forth. I will then conclude to examine the key factors that determined the

shape of the network in the mainland and overseas and the key agents (national and foreigner) in that shaping: engineers, statesman, army officers, entrepreneurs or investors.

To do so, I will rely on parliamentary debates, reports from the experts (technical, military, and colonial), statistics (of construction and operation, when available) and the general literature about those technical systems.

Oliver SCHULZ (France: Program coordinator, Etudes franco-allemandes, Université Clermont - Ferrand)

Salomon Mayer von Rothschild and the Construction of Railways in the Habsburg Empire in the 19th Century

Salomon Mayer von Rothschild was a railway pioneer in Austria and actively promoted and financed the “Emperor Ferdinand Northern Railway”. Apart from the impact this project would have on the urban landscape in Vienna, the paper is to analyze the opponents of Rothschild’s railway activities in a larger perspective, such as members of rural communities outside Vienna, who feared the new railway line would impede with their traditional business activities, or Rothschild’s competitors in the banking sector in the Austrian capital who were actively involved in the planning and construction of railway lines themselves.

The business activities of James de Rothschild in France constitute an interesting parallel and a possible case-study using a comparative approach. When, in 1846, an accident occurred in France on the line of the “Compagnie du chemin du fer du Nord”, this led to a virulent anti-Semitic pamphlet which held the Rothschilds responsible for the accident. And, in a way, railway planning and construction were perceived as “Jewish activities” and became a facet of economic anti-Semitism in the early 19th century. As outbursts of anti-Jewish sentiment and violence would occur in Vienna during the revolution in 1848, this opens the interesting perspective to study the question whether Salomon von Rothschild, like his brother in Paris, was a target of anti-Semitic agitation due to his railway (and other business) activities, and, if so, whether French and other foreign pamphlets and publications were quoted and used in the Austrian context. The paper is mainly based on Austrian sources (Vienna city and state archives, newspaper holdings of the National Library in Vienna), which are put into perspective by cross-reference mainly with French sources from the 1840s: Were these texts known in Central Europe and did the transfer of anti-Semitic ideas and stereotypes happen?

Timo MYLLYNTAUS (Finland: Professor, Turku School of Economics, University of Turku)

Politics and Economy behind the Iron Horse: Building Railway Network in Finland

Today, the economies consist of many nested and cross-cutting technological systems that we may not notice in everyday life, but if a system, such as electricity distribution, ceases to function, we will be shocked by our powerlessness and, in the worst case, the whole country will stop. With the assistance of technology, all modern countries have a basic infrastructure on which almost all the functions of society are built. This paper discusses how societies have ended up to the current situation, and how dependent we are on the technological infrastructure surrounding us.

A century ago, in 1919, major technological systems were only under construction in Finland. The road network had been under construction since the Middle Ages, a telegraph network from the 1850s, a railway network from the 1860s, a telephone network from the 1870s, electricity networks since the 1880s. These systems contributed to the emergence of internal cohesion and the formation of a shared national identity instead of being split to separate provinces. For example, only the opening of rail transport between Helsinki and Vyborg in 1870 led to uniting the entire country to the same time zone. Before that, big cities, such as Helsinki and Vyborg, had different times, because earlier they had followed the “natural time of the sun” according to their respective location.

Railways emerged as one of the first large technological systems in Finland. The paper examines how the country constructed this system, and what peculiarities characterize it. The result of the

development was a state-owned company, which in the mid-20th century was the biggest employer in the country. Furthermore, the density of the Finnish railway network per square km is one of the highest, and the number of track kilometres per capita is the fifth largest in the world – just after Canada, Australia, Namibia and Sweden.

Shunsuke MUNAKATA (Japan: PhD student, Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo)

The Planning of the Panama Isthmus Railroad and U.S. Expansion into Asia

Although previous research on the railroads has mainly focused on their influence on U.S. national politics, the aim here is to illustrate how congressmen tried to utilize railroads as a vital tool to expand the country's commercial and diplomatic activities overseas. The applicant analyzes evidence from debates inside and outside Congress between 1848 and 1855 (as recorded in the *Congressional Globe* and several newspapers) about plans to build the Panama Isthmus Railroad. This reveals the intention of politicians to achieve American expansion into Asia.

With Thomas Jefferson's promotion of the Louis and Clark Expedition in 1803, the United States began creating ground and marine transportation routes that could extend to Asia. With the subsequent promulgation of "The Monroe Doctrine" in 1823, some influential Americans started to harbor ambitions to secure the geopolitical dominance of the United States over the Western hemisphere, and to establish an economic foothold in Asia. The U.S. victory in the Mexican-American War and the Gold Rush in California also demanded improved transportation as the number of migrants moving west skyrocketed. The Panama Isthmus was the best location to satisfy this requirement.

The United States and Nueva Granada (which ruled Panama at that time) signed the Mallarino-Bidlack Treaty in 1846, permitting the U.S. to move American citizens and cargoes through the Panama Isthmus. The New York-based Pacific Mail Steamship Company, accredited to operate maritime transportation between Panama and the American west coast, petitioned the federal government to subsidize the construction of a railroad across the Isthmus, arguing that it would not only speed the carriage of people and cargo but also boost American trade activity with Asian countries.

The Panama Isthmus Railroad plan was supported by members of the "Young American Movement", one of whose objectives was to obtain right-of-way in Panama. They asserted that building a railroad in Panama would be pivotal in facilitating U.S. political and economic expansion into Asia. This political advocacy, and the company's generally enthusiastic attitude, were crucial in ensuring the railroad was opened in 1855.

Session 6. Railways and the City

Zsuzsa FRISNYÁK (Hungary: Senior research fellow, Institute of History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences)

Railway Use in Transylvania at the End of the 19th Century: The Spatial Dimension of Embourgeoisement

In the 19th century, Hungarian railway undertakings were publishing exquisitely detailed series of data (including for example the civilian and goods traffic of railway stations, dispatched and inbound commodities) which gave an insight into railway use. The presentation is based on the analysis of traffic data and the maplike demonstration of spatial differences. Areal differences in railway use are spatial imprints of economic and social processes.

The railway's power to mobilize the population reached a remarkable level in the 1890's in Braşov and its vicinity. All of this was the spatial expression of Braşov's commercial attractiveness. The intensive interaction between Braşov and its vicinity took place in a 50-km zone, larger than that of Budapest and its proximity. In most parts of Torontál county railway usage was low in relation to the size of the population; the number of journeys per person was between 0 and 2. Several localities were characterised by more intense railway usage: at the

railway station of Leșu, located near Oradea, the number of journeys per capita per year was 21. The frequency of interactions occurring through the railway – realized in journeys – can be perceived as the manifestation of a relation of interests a very revealing example of which is the discrepancy between Arad and Timișoara in terms of the use of space.

Based on the volume and structure of the goods streaming out of and into micro-regions, the number of residents, and the number of railway journeys per capita, Hungarian micro-regions can be classified according to the openness of their production and consumption structures. Micro-regions with an open production and consumption structure were characterised by complex product structures (a wide spectrum of goods transported via rail) and a complex consumption (a wide range of incoming products); such regions are, for example Arad, Timișoara and Oradea.

Toader POPESCU (Romania: Assistant professor, “Ion Mincu” University of Architecture and Urbanism, Bucharest)

On the Fast Track: Social and Urban Patterns in the Evolution of the Railway District in Romanian Cities

The final decades of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century are the “heroic age” of railroad construction in Romania. At the end of this interval, most of the current rail network had already been built. The development of the cities included in this network was heavily influenced by the presence of railway infrastructure and by its associated opportunities and restrictions.

My paper will follow the specific development of urban areas surrounding the newly built railway stations, by trying to answer several research questions:

- a. Is there a pattern in the choice of the areas in which stations were built and, if so, how was it generated?
- b. Are there specific urban operations associated to these areas, following the construction of railway infrastructure?
- c. Do these areas exhibit a specific type of development (from a functional and social perspective) during the ensuing decades?
- d. Are there any particular elements to the Romanian case (as opposed to the general case of the European city) in the answers to the questions above?

The research method will rely heavily on case studies, as identifying specific patterns requires covering as many cities as possible. Aside from Bucharest (which is always an unavoidable case, because of the scale and complexity of its problems), I will also cover several other relevant towns in the Old Kingdom.

My primary sources for the study of the Romanian situation will be mainly cartographical and archival; as the international situation is not the main focus of my research, and is used merely for comparative purposes, it will generally be covered from secondary sources.

Walter ROTHSCHILD (Germany: Rabbi dr.)

Rails to the Holy City

Jerusalem has always been a difficult city to categorise. Strategically and economically a backwater, it produces nothing except prayers, it has no natural resources, it is not even on the way to anywhere important (at least, not unless one counts Heaven!) – and yet a lot of people have always wanted to go there! In consequence there has been a steady stream of pilgrims and others who have travelled – often from the coastal port of Jaffa – up into the Judean hills.

From 1892 this was possible by means of a metre-gauge railway, the Ottoman concession for which was obtained after much effort by a Jerusalemite Jew but which was built and owned by a French company. American- and later German-built steam locomotives hauled Belgian-built carriages but the line was not a financial success.

Then came the War and in 1915 the Ottoman Army regauged sections to 105cm. to integrate the line with their new network built for military purposes. Barely three years later the British Army

was regauging it again, this time to standard (1,435mm) gauge. From 1920 to 1948 the Palestine Railways attempted (with interruptions due to sabotage by Arabs in the 1930's and Jews in the 1940's) to run regular trains to Jerusalem; From 1949 the new Israel Railways recommenced service from Tel Aviv and later Haifa to what had now become a rather provincial capital city. Now Belgian and American diesel locos hauled carriages built in France, Germany and Yugoslavia, before being replaced by Danish diesel units.

Despite several re-buildings and re-alignments much of the 1892 route is still in use, though both the original terminal stations have been turned into open-air museums and cultural centres. However September 2018 saw a step-change with the initial partial opening of a brand-new route on viaducts and through tunnels which forms a modern double-track electrified line aimed more at commuters than pilgrims.

Session 7. Political and Military issues in Building and Operating the Railway Network

Csaba HORVÁTH (Hungary: Senior lecturer, Széchenyi István University, Department of Humanities and Human Resources)

Military Organization of the Railways in Hungary During the Great War

On 28 July 1914, the Austro–Hungarian Monarchy declared war on Serbia after its negative response to the ultimatum. Partial mobilization began on July 29 at midnight towards Serbia, where the first front of the Great War was opened. It required a new organizational framework and organizational work from the railway of the Monarchy. In peace time, the Hungarian railways were built up of 12 business management departments (railway headquarters) led by the Minister of Commerce, or subordinated to a separate board, or their own administrative organization. The commitment of the railway network for military purposes was managed in peacetime by a joint 5/Eisenbahnbüro (EB) department of the Ministry of War and the Chiefs of Staff, which had 27 railway commanding centre subordinated to the Monarchy, therefore the entire Hungarian network as well. With the outbreak of war, the 5/E.B. dissolved and military railway authorities were established while the existing railway headquarters started their operation with extended competence. The Central Transport Leadership, which was established at that time, led the entire railway service during the mobilization and then to the stations assigned by the chief of military traffic in the hinterland. Subsequently, further transport was carried out by the Field Transport Management. The Central Transport Management was the accurate developer, implementer and control body of the planned and ordered rail transport transports with national general and partial competence in all rail transport issues and with full right of disposal. It was divided into a military, a railway department, a locomotive and a car coach management. It was also subdivided into regional and local rail transport, supply and service units. The aim of my presentation is to present the military organizational transformation of the Hungarian railways and their operation during the war period.

Jeffrey PENNINGTON (USA: Executive director, Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, University of California, Berkeley)

The Sum of its Parts: The Changing Geography of the Former Hungarian Northeastern Railway

This paper traces the history of the former Hungarian Northeastern Railway between Debrecen, Hungary and today's Yasynia (Hungarian: *Kőrösmező*), Ukraine in the northeastern Carpathians, demonstrating how such a railway served to link the people and natural resources of historical northeastern Hungary to the markets of the Alföld and Budapest. Originally constructed between Debrecen and Máramarosziget (Romanian: *Sighetu Marmăției*) in the period 1868–1872, the Hungarian Northeastern Railway (*Magyar Északkeleti Vasút*) made it possible for the salt and timber of the northeastern Carpathians and the fruit products of then northeastern Hungary to be transported quickly and cheaply to markets in Debrecen and Budapest, and in exchange allowed

manufactured and consumer goods to reach the people of northeastern Hungary. Nationalized in 1890 and made part of the Hungarian Royal State Railways (*Magyar Királyi Államvasutak*), the line was extended north to the Hungarian-Austro-Galician frontier at Kőrösmező. Passenger traffic along the route facilitated seamless travel between Budapest and the northeastern Carpathians.

World War I and the resultant dismemberment of Hungary dealt a crippling blow to the unity of this railway line. The paper continues by recounting the fate of the line in the interwar period, now split between three countries: Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia; changes brought about by the First and Second Vienna Awards immediately prior to World War II, including reincorporation into the Hungarian state railway network; and the post-World War II situation. The paper concludes with an outline of today's circumstances.

Michal ĎURČO (Slovakia: PhD student, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Institute of History)

The Formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 as the Turning Point in Railway History of the Region: Interwar Plans, Actors, and Consequences

Slovakia became the part of the First Czechoslovak Republic in October 1918. Czechoslovakia was established on the idea of one nation formed from its two limbs – Czechs and Slovaks. However it was only political vision.

It was clear, that for the next existence of the state will be necessary to make its parts compatible. Bohemian Lands were the part of Austria and Slovakia with Subcarpathian Ruthenia were integral parts of Hungary in pre-war Austro-Hungarian Empire. Different acts and different administration system were in use for Slovakia, Bohemian Lands and Subcarpathian Ruthenia. Slovakia was not on the same level in economic development, its industrialization was still unfinished and level of urbanization was low. Thus unification was necessary in all areas.

One of the most urgent issue was transport. Austria and also Hungary were making mostly their own transport policy before 1918. In conclusion there were not capable transportation networks between Slovakia and Bohemian Lands. The only one well developed infrastructure were the railways. Statistically there were 12.7 km of the railways on ten thousand inhabitants in area of Slovakia. So the new development plans of the infrastructures were approved. More that 250 km of the new railways, 320 km of modern new roads were finished and more than 30 % of the houses were connected to electricity until 1939, when the existence of the interwar Czechoslovak republic ended.

We will be analyzing how railway network was formed in Slovakia from nineteenth century when this area was part of Hungary and how new Czechoslovak system builders had to change this network in interwar period. In addition to that we will be speaking about economic and social consequences of this development.

Andrzej DUBICKI (Poland: Associate professor, University of Lodz, Faculty of International and Political Studies)

The Beginning of Polish-Romanian Collaboration in Transportation (1919-1930)

Poland and Romania have been neighbours since 1919. From the very beginning close collaboration between both countries was established from important reasons. First of all it was necessary because of political reasons – close collaboration against the Ukraine, later Bolsheviks. Another important issue was connected with economy. Both countries were eager for exporting their goods to another country. For Poland Romania was also important as a transit country on the way to the Black Sea, with key position for the Levantine trade. In spite of mentioned importance there was only one railway border crossing between both countries, which was useful for the trade (Śniatyn – Bogdan Voda) on a Lwów-Jassy Railway. There were also other links but they were unimportant from an economic point of view. The aim of the paper is to present the circumstances of establishing the mutual connection, and also other initiatives connected with transportation, especially with opening the air link between Warsaw and Bucharest, which will be the closing point for the article. Article will be based on the sources from Polish and Romanian Archives.

Session 8. Economic and Societal Issues in Building and Operating the Railway Network

Tomáš NIGRIN (Czech Republic: Assistant professor, Institute of International Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Prague)

Czechoslovak Rail (ČSD) 1945-1990: Successful Modernisation or Speeded-up Stagnation?

Shortly after the end of the world war II in 1948 the political regime changed into communist totalitarianism. Democracy returned to Czechoslovakia after more than 40 years in 1990. The communist rulership in the country changed politics, economy and society and also influenced the way of post war-renovation and further modernisation. The railway industry in Czechoslovakia and especially the transportation policy was strictly shaped by the principles of socialist economy. The railway traffic became the key transportation branch for the economy and society, but it still had to fulfil the demands of centrally planned socialist economy.

The development of Czechoslovak railway can be divided into two phases between 1945 and 1990. The first one is a very successful period full of investment, improving of railway network and new rolling stock. Czechoslovak railway (ČSD) was deeply affected by the war destruction of tracks and rolling stock. Therefore, the state initiated a massive investment into the railway industry during the first post-war decade. Thus was Czechoslovak railway able to fulfil its tasks in centrally planned economy, transport massive numbers of passengers and volumes of goods. The economic crisis of 1960's and the increase of road traffic brought the state of the Czechoslovak railways in long-during stagnation. The gap of investment demands and state budget ability was raising in the 70's and 80's. Czechoslovak railways was not able to continue with its modernisation anymore. It became an archetype of socialist railway with old rolling stock, bad-condition tracks, low quality standards in passenger and freight transport and low number of innovations and modernisations.

The presentation focus on the transportation policy in the centrally planned economy and the definition of the role of Czechoslovak railway. Then it will characterize the period until mid-60's and the post war development in modern and capacity railway company. The speeded up stagnation lasted until the end of Socialism in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak railway was not able to secure quality standards of passenger and freight transport anymore, which led to inability to introduce (or continue) the necessary modernisation. For all these reasons it became clear after the fall of Iron Curtain how bad was the shape of Czechoslovak railway in comparison to the western railway companies.

Vlad POPOVICI (Romania: Assistant professor, Faculty of History and Philosophy, "Babeş-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca)

Judit PÁL (Romania: Professor, Faculty of History and Philosophy, "Babeş-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca)

Societal Cooperation as a Prerequisite for Railway Building in Transylvania before 1918

As the turn of the century approached, horizontal societal cooperation, involving various levels of political administration on the one hand, and associative forms of the civil society on the other, became more and more visible in the Eastern part of the Habsburg Monarchy. In Transylvania in particular, the latter seems to have been functioning mostly within ethnic boundaries, although the outlines remain somehow shady. As the development of Transylvanian associational life was overlapped by the constant radicalization of the political discourse, and the sharpening of nationalisms, the need for key-individuals to step in as mediators sprung-up. This process was also visible in the field of economy, and in particular in railway building, especially due to the high costs of investments and the multitude of co-interested actors.

Our paper intends to focus on three case-studies, revealing the important part played by such intercessors in the process of expanding local railways – some of which later became main

branches of today's railway infrastructure in Romania. By choosing examples from among all three major Transylvanian national groups we hope to recreate to a wide as possible an extent the networks that allowed such individuals to act as intercessors, to identify patterns of action and intervention, and also to highlight the cooperation between various, otherwise competing or opposing, institutions and entities, towards the common good.

Steph GILLETT (UK: PhD student, History Department, University of Bristol)

Agents of Change? Promoters & Decision Makers in Nineteenth Century Railway Development in England

Railway development in the UK during the nineteenth century was greatly dependent upon private promoters and private investors. Authority to construct a railway was subject to an Act of Parliament but the British Government of the day refused to develop a strategic plan for the railway network despite pressure from some railway promoters, commentators and politicians of the period to do so.

This paper will draw on ongoing postdoctoral research using primary sources in local archives in the south-west of England, the University of Bristol's Special Collections, and The National Archives at Kew. Reference is also being made to the UCL (University College of London) Legacies of British Slave-ownership database to identify the potential effect this investment had on railway developments in the study area. The paper will look at some of the agents involved in proposed and constructed railways, and explore their relationships, around Glastonbury in the county of Somerset (circa 1845 to 1860) and others intended to provide links between the counties of Wiltshire and Gloucestershire in the period 1840 to 1890. The underlying research question is 'why were some railways built and others not?'

New railway developments were dependent on securing the financial and political support of many individuals, and subject to the opposition of others, including affected landowners and other railway companies. This paper will present some preliminary findings and consider how social networks may have benefitted some proposals over others; subsequent research will explore whether similar patterns could be found across the industry or if each proposed railway had essentially unique circumstances.

Iosif BALOG (Romania: Researcher, "George Barițiu" History Institute, Cluj-Napoca)

Tariffs, Prices and Profit vs. Regional Development: Railways in Transylvania and Banat (1868-1914)

The inauguration in 1868 of the Arad-Alba Iulia railway meant the connection of the intra-Carpathian Transylvania to the railway network of the Habsburg Monarchy. Then followed in 1873 the commissioning of the second line, Oradea-Cluj-Braşov (Eastern Railway) in length of 609 km. The two railways built with the help of foreign capital owned and operated from the beginning by MÁV represented the main rail transport corridors in Transylvania. The construction of the two lines was carried out during the so-called "fever of railway constructions", a period which coincided in Austro-Hungarian Monarchy with the famous Gründerzeit.

Then followed the economic recession triggered by the crisis of 1873 which drastically diminished for a couple of years the construction of new railway lines.

The new phase after 1880 marked a breakthrough in the construction of local interest lines, built mainly with the help of private capital, connected to the two main lines. In this case, an important role was played by local interests, but also by the state that favored private investments through favorable legislation, various forms of subsidies and tariff policies.

On the other hand, during the whole mentioned period, an extremely important issue in Hungary was the profitability of the railways. In this regard, both the state and private companies have developed various strategies to ensure profitability: reducing tariffs, introducing technical innovations in order to reduce operating costs, facilities for building industrial lines, etc. The construction of the railway lines of local interest ensured a steady increase of the revenues of the state railways, as these lines connected more and more isolated areas. The quantitative data clearly

shows that the number of passengers and the volume of goods transported steadily increased during 1868-1914.

Starting from these considerations we will analyze the relationship between the tariff policies practiced over time, the increase in the number of passengers, the volume of goods and the profitability rates of the railways in the region of Transylvania and Banat in the 1868-1914 period.

Session 9. The Evolution of Railway Infrastructure in Nowadays Romania – a Geographical Approach

Andrei NACU (Romania: Research assistant, Romanian Academy, Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities, Sibiu)

Historical Evolution of the Railways in Romania (1854-2019): A GIS Approach

The Geographic Information System (GIS) is a computer system that allows us to capture, analyze, integrate and display spatial data. A GIS vector database includes information about the locations and shapes of geographic features recorded as points, lines or areas, as well as their attributes. The implementation of GIS to map the historical evolution of the railways was realized for several European countries and even on a pan-European level. In the case of Romania, this is the first attempt to build such a detailed database. We started by identifying a reasonably accurate vector file showing the present-day railways in Romania and in the territories that were formerly part of Romania between 1918–1940/1944 (Southern Dobruja, Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina). The written documentation and historical maps were used to find out when a railway line was opened, was upgraded to double track or was electrified. We have also indicated the private or state-owned company which constructed each rail section. Adding the international borders allowed us to observe the importance of the frontiers in the evolution of the railway infrastructure. The present research was focused on passenger transportation, but we hope to add the numerous forest and freight lines that have largely disappeared after the second half of the 20th century to our database.

Henry JACOLIN (France: Honorary President, International Railway History Association)

At the Margins of the Empire. Railway Building in Transylvania until 1918

Róbert GÉCZI (Hungary: Research Fellow, VERITAS Research Institute and Archives / John Wesley Theological College, Budapest)

Chapters of the History of Railroads of Historic Satu Mare (Szatmár) County

Railroad infrastructural development in Hungary trailed that of Great Britain and Western Europe by approximately two decades. Hungary's first piece of railroad legislation – Act XXV of 1836 – planned out the directions the main lines would go. Construction of the lines, however, would not take place until the 1850's. The positive effect that railroad development had on settlements may be summarized in the following points: significantly improved market efficiency, growth in trade between cities and the countryside and the expansion of urban agglomeration centered on railroad junctions. The first railroad line in historic Satu Mare (Szatmár) County was put into use in 1871, while the entire railroad network was essentially completed by the time of WWI and remains in use today. This presentation attempts to acquaint the reader with the history of the process.

Attila HUNYADI (Romania: Assistant professor, Faculty of History and Philosophy, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca)

The Railway Network Reconstruction Public Works in Romania Financed by the League of Nations

The International Labor Organization (ILO) founded in 1919, advisory body of the United Nations Organization, is the single international organism still in function in present, which survived the League of Nations. The ILO gained importance not only in promoting worker rights and social emancipation, but fulfilled also a salient role in solving the effects of the Economic Crisis and financial depression by introducing and financing great, transcontinental and national infrastructural development programs. We will present on the basis of League of Nations’ Archives the Romanian Government’s railway (re)construction and modernization program during the thirties.

These public works were part of the trans-European investment financed and coordinated by the ILO and the League of Nations, which resulted in an infrastructure that is still used and useful 85 years later. The Romanian government asked and obtained League credits for rebalancing its balance of payment and household, being supervised by the international committee led by the French economist, Charles Rist. During this reconstruction program, Romania received League credits and ILO technical and financial experts to modernize its countrywide railway network. Some segments were even electrified during this period, for instance the Câmpina-Predeal-Braşov line. Electric locomotives were bought, administrative palace for the Romanian Railway Company was built. The Romanian railway rehabilitation program comprised a) the lines to be electrified; b) the bridges to be built; c) signalization and centralization of data for the securitization of the network; d) the administrative palace; e) the cereal warehouses (silos) built. The sum of all these was estimated to 24 billion lei, that was 732 million golden francs (francs or). These public works were planned to last 10 years and to employ 50 000 workers a day, thus reducing the unemployment.

Session 10. Engineering Issues of Railway Building

Loránd MÁDLY (Romania: Researcher, “George Bariţiu” History Institute, Cluj-Napoca)

Steps toward the Transylvanian Railway: The Secondment of the Engineer Franz Kazda to Transylvania

The construction of the Transylvanian Railways was one of the most important, complex and long lasting political and economical achievements of the 19th century and can be considered as one of the highest achievements of the reforms which began much earlier. In the swift economic progress and modernization in the second half of this century, the development of the means of communication was one important condition and stimulant for newer developments, forging the crown lands of the vast Empire together. Newly built or modernized roads, bridges and waterways, as well as the introduction of telegraph and railways led to a proper circulation of products, workforce and capital. Thus, the extension of the railways to the peripheral land of Transylvania was an important political goal, pursued in several forms and under different political circumstances: in the years of the Revolution of 1848, in the years of Neoabsolutism and decisively in the years of Liberalism, characterized generally by an economical expansion and political liberalization through the means of *Reichsrat* and the provincial Diets. In this context, in which at Transylvanian level a modern administration was to be built and a Diet representing all interests and nationalities constituted, the decisive steps were made towards the building of the railroad network, although it was a politically complex undertaking. In this project, the lesser known secondment of an engineer – Franz Kazda – from the technical-administrative general Directorate of the State Railway in Vienna was an important step. His mission, to search for the best locations and routes, can be followed through his reports and letters to the political authorities of the province which can be found in the Viennese Archives.

This presentation aims to outline, based on the edited and archival documents, the main moments in the endeavor of building the railways, and to retrace the mission of Franz Kazda in Transylvania, presenting many details from his letters.

Dirk FORSCHNER (Germany: Researcher, China Center, Institute for Philosophy, Literature, History of Science and Technology, TU Berlin)

Standardization of the Motive Power and the Rolling Stock of the Schantung Eisenbahn Gesellschaft / China, 1899-1935

After occupied the Jiaozhou area and built the Qingdao Colony, Germany started - as an essential plan of the occupation - the building of the Schantung Eisenbahn Gesellschaft ("SE") from Jinan West to Qingdao. As an isolated railroad, the SE started its operation in 1904 in Shandong province. When the SE was connected to the Tientsin - Pukow Rly ("TPR"), the German standards for air brakes, coupling systems and other locomotive equipment were not in line with the Chinese standards applied to the TPR and other railways. Therefore, step by step, the SE had to make adjustments in the above-mentioned aspects mainly by creating the Henricot coupling system and using Westinghouse air brakes. Using this multi standard coupling and brake equipment the task to offer running through mail carriages from Berlin via Moscow, Ha'erbin and Tianjin to Qingdao could have been started; unfortunately the first world war broke out shortly after the Berlin Qingdao mail line was opened and so this service was cut down.

By 1930s, all relevant – not usable - German standards were annulled, by which SE started to become aligned with the standards of other Chinese railways.

The coupling system solution of those days, could become relevant for the one belt one road initiative of today, when rolling stock will run through between Europe and China.

Ruxandra COROIU (Romania: PhD student, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Cluj-Napoca Technical University)

Key Features of Narrow Gauge Railways in Transylvania

Narrow gauge railway lines are typical for areas that used to be part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, hence their great presence in Transylvania. The reason behind their common use at the end of the XIXth century, especially in the mining and forestry industries, is limited to the need to adapt this method of transport to narrow spaces which would otherwise not allow the construction of larger gauge systems. Smaller dimensions, lightweight steam locomotives and wagons and reduced curve radii were less costly solutions in terms of construction, endowment and operation than normal or wide gauge elements. As such, the low exploitation costs explain their use in industrial complexes. In addition, the narrow rail has the advantage of providing the appropriate technical possibilities for mountainous landscape or tight valleys, making it easier to adapt to the terrain. In some cases, these routes have been designed to serve communities in isolated locations, where traffic potential would not have been financially justified for the construction of a regular track gauge.

Most of the narrow gauge railways have been abandoned over the years. They are at great risk not only to slowly disappear physically, but from our collective consciousness as well. This paper explores the various motives for narrow gauge railway construction, addressing some key issues of the most particular lines in Transylvania. A few case studies have been conducted in order to determine the reasons behind their development and the main features that characterize them. Landscapes, halts, areas of natural resource exploitation, the route, technical elements and architectural heritage are all constituting parts of the railway. Examining these immovable components in parallel to the mobile rolling stock still preserved until now can lead to a more complete image of this distinct type of industrial heritage and the urgent need for its salvation.

Claudiu SACHELARIE (Romania: Teaching assistant, Faculty of History, Philosophy and Theology, "Dunărea de Jos" University, Galați / Society of Historical Sciences in Romania)

History of Narrow-Railway Brăila - Râmnicu Sărat, 1917-1946

After four months of military campaign in Romania, the Central Powers' army was stopped on the Siret Line and on the Oriental Carpathian Line. On 10th January 1917, the German armies and

their allies entered in defensive positions. There followed a relatively calm period on the Romanian Front until the great military operations of the summer of 1917. During January - July 1917, the Germans built the defensive lines on the Lower Siret Line: three parallel lines of trenches, supply points with food, clothing and ammunition, aerodromes and other specific military arrangements. For the efficient supply of material and soldiers, the Germans built a narrow-track railway line in the spring of 1917 in the front section between Brăila and Râmnicu-Sărat. The railway was parallel to the front line and made the connection (at Traianu, Brăila County) with the Brăila - Buzău railway line. The importance of this railway line is evidenced, for example, by the supply operations carried out on the Latinu front sector (Brăila County), where 400 tons of cargo were transported daily. Also, the Romanian Army understood the special importance of this objective and tried to destroy it through aviation missions. In the interwar period, the iron road was taken over by the Romanian Railways (C.F.R.) and was named Narrow Railroad (C.F.R. Îngustă). This railway served the population in the area and functioned until 1946.

Through this study, I intend to achieve three objectives: the history of the construction of the Narrow Railway Brăila - Râmnicu-Sărat; proving its effectiveness during war; proving the effectiveness of the railway in peacetime. The sources of this study are mostly new and come from the Military Archives of Freiburg.