

# Railways: Halted Multilateral Cooperation, Valid Multilateral Agreements

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## *Table of Content*

1. Introduction	193
2. Fragmented International Governance	194
3. The International Railway Union During the War: An Organisation Overseen by the SNCF, Itself Involved in Economic Collaboration with the Reichsbahn	197
4. Technical Integration, from the War to the Post-War Period	200
5. Conclusion	204
6. References	204

## *1. Introduction*

Since Raul Hilberg's work in the 1960s, railways have been identified as a crucial cog in the wheel of the Final Solution<sup>1</sup>. This chapter will not focus on that particular aspect of Second World War railway history, which "remains distorted and hugely sensitive"<sup>2</sup>, but on the framework of international agreements that made cross-border railway traffic of all kinds possible during the period. This includes deportee trains, which represent-

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1 See Hilberg, Raul / Pehle, Walter H. / Schlott, René: "The indispensability of the railroads", in: *The Anatomy of the Holocaust: Selected Works from a Life of Scholarship*, New York 2020, pp. 53 – 55. I rely here on the historiographical synthesis of Broch, Ludivine: "Professionalism in the Final Solution: French Railway Workers and the Jewish Deportations", in: *Contemporary European History* 23 (2014), pp. 359 – 380. See also: Hildebrand, Klaus: "Die Deutsche Reichsbahn in der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur, 1933 – 1945", in: Gall, Lothar / Pohl, Manfred (eds.): *Die Eisenbahn in Deutschland*, Munich 1999, pp. 165 – 244.

2 Broch: Professionalism, p. 364.

ed a tragic and tiny fraction of it; in Hilberg's words, freight cars were loaded with Jews and then "sealed, dispatched, emptied, and cleaned, to be filled with new, perhaps altogether different cargoes, in the circulatory flow"<sup>3</sup>.

On the eve of the war, international rail exchanges were governed by numerous conventions and international organisations established during their first century of existence. How did this framework evolve and function during the war? Were other mechanisms planned or implemented to complement or replace it in Europe, possibly bridging post-war developments in this field?

## 2. *Fragmented international governance*

A variety of conventions governed international rail exchanges. In fact, in the mid-twentieth century, a single key (the so-called Bern key) that could open all wagons and carriages across Europe had already existed for several decades, avoiding convoys changes at border crossings, and sparing agents from having to carry an inconvenient key ring. Although they overlapped to a large extent, these conventions and the organizations responsible for governing them differed in terms of purpose, stakeholders, and geography. Two generations of arrangements were intertwined: the first dated back to the 1870s and 1880s, and gave a pre-eminent role to small neutral states; the second dated back to the aftermath of the First World War, and were implemented at the instigation of the Allies<sup>4</sup>.

While companies had been coordinating their freight train timetables since the early 1860s, the Bern Key was developed in 1886 at the Second International Conference of the Technical Unity of Railways, held in the Swiss capital<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, the Swiss Federal Council, together with all those who "use, benefit from and live off the railways"<sup>6</sup>, also pushed

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3 Hilberg: *The Anatomy*, p. 55.

4 Dienel, Hans-Liudger: "Die Eisenbahnen und der europäische Möglichkeitsraum 1870-1914", in: Roth, Ralf / Schlögel, Karl (eds.): *Neue Wege in ein neues Europa. Geschichte und Verkehr im 20. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt 2009, pp. 105 – 123.

5 Ribeill, Georges: "Aux origines de l'utopie du réseau ferroviaire européen intégré", in: *Histoire & Sociétés* 21 (2007), pp. 44 – 59, here pp. 50 – 52.

6 Tissot, Laurent: "Les modèles ferroviaires nationaux et la création d'un système international de transports européens, 1870 – 1914. Coordination, intégration ou

for the development of international law to replace the domestic law of the various parties involved, in order to settle disputes between companies, and between companies and their customers. The aim was to make shippers and carriers more secure by facilitating direct shipments with no transshipment, and by establishing clear and common liability rules, regardless of origin and destination. The International Convention for the Carriage of Goods by Rail was adopted in 1890<sup>7</sup>. Celebrated at the time as “one of the most important and happy events of the century”<sup>8</sup>, it was overseen by a Central Office for International Carriage by Rail. It was largely inspired by the provisions adopted by the member companies of the Verein Deutscher Eisenbahnverwaltungen (Association of German Railways Companies), which had enabled the development of cross-border traffic in a highly fragmented area, doing so first in Prussia beginning in 1846, and subsequently throughout the German states<sup>9</sup>. The last cornerstone of this complex edifice was the International Railway Congress Association, founded after a first congress held in Brussels in 1885 for the purpose of offering the public a continuity of service “as if there were a single network”<sup>10</sup>. Initially ignored by German companies, who saw it as a French platform aiming to counterbalance the influence of the Verein, it became the international forum for public and private operators to discuss all technical aspects relating to the construction and operation of railways<sup>11</sup>.

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unification?”, in: *Relations internationales* 95 (1998), pp. 313 – 327, here pp. 324 – 325.

- 7 Tissot, Laurent: “Naissance d’une Europe ferroviaire: la convention internationale de Berne (1890)”, in: Merger, Michèle / Barjot, Dominique (eds.): *Les entreprises et leurs réseaux: hommes, capitaux, techniques et pouvoirs, XIXe – XXe siècles*, Paris 1998, pp. 283 – 295.
- 8 Lyon-Caen, Charles: “La convention du 14 octobre 1890 sur le transport international des marchandises par chemins de fer”, in: *Journal du droit international privé et de jurisprudence comparée* 20 (1893), p. 465.
- 9 Kaiser, Wolfram / Schot, Johan: *Writing the Rules for Europe. Experts, Cartels and International Organizations*, London 2014, pp. 121 – 128. Kaessbohrer, Adolf: “Der Verein Mitteleuropäischer Eisenbahnverwaltungen”, in: *Archiv für Eisenbahnwesen* 56 (1933), pp. 12 – 380.
- 10 In the words of the Belgian Fassiaux, quoted by Williot, Jean-Pierre: “Aux sources d’une Europe partagée: la médiation ferroviaire au XIXe siècle”, in: Démer, Francis / Musiani, Elena (eds.): *L’Europe: une autre nation?* Bologna 2020, pp. 47 – 62, here p. 55.
- 11 Ribeill: *Aux origines*, p. 50.

Following the defeat and disintegration of the central empires, thousands of kilometres of new borders challenged the pre-war circulation of goods and people. To face the challenge and, at the same time, shift the European rail network's centre of gravity from the German Verein to the West and the victorious Allies, France and Italy initiated an international re-organisation after the Armistice, which was incidentally signed in a sleeping-car belonging to the Compagnie internationale des wagons-lits. New acronyms were created: RIC for Regolamento Internazionale delle Carrozze, and RIV for Regolamento Internazionale dei Veicoli, which in 1921 and 1922 respectively gave rise to what was sometimes called the International Union of Wagons and the International Union for International Direct Car Services; UIC for the International Union of Railways, founded in 1922 in Paris<sup>12</sup>. Seeing the latter simply as the result of a French desire to dominate the new railway order obscures the fact that German companies also supported the operation, and considered it preferable to the creation of a body attached to the League of Nations, which was deemed overly political. The UIC would be independent of the League of Nations. All in all, the UIC ultimately had a weak grip on the supervision of international trade, which remained essentially determined by pre-war conventions and organisations. Only the conference of the Technical Unit went closer to the UIC, which was clearly not the driver of the international regulatory convoy<sup>13</sup>.

This complex, fragmented, and to some extent competitive landscape, gave experts great influence in international rail governance, insofar as they circulated most of the time from one arena to another, and were the only ones capable of holding the various regulations together<sup>14</sup>. Kaiser and Schot conclude that "The war then provided a new opportunity to rethink the position of the various organisations"<sup>15</sup>. While I agree, I would suggest focusing less on reflections in London, and more on what was actually happening in continental Europe.

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12 On this second phase see Anastasiadou, Irene: *Constructing Iron Europe: Transnationalism and Railways in the Interbellum*, Amsterdam 2012.

13 Kaiser / Schot: Writing, pp. 144 – 145.

14 Idem, p. 173.

15 Idem, p. 147.

3. *The International Railway Union During the War: An Organisation Overseen by the SNCF, Itself Involved in Economic Collaboration with the Reichsbahn*

The UIC operated normally in the first few months after the declaration of war, from September 1939 to the invasion of Belgium in May 1940<sup>16</sup>. Its Central Clearing Office, based in Brussels, carried out clearing transactions between members.

The General Secretariat of the UIC then went into dormancy. Its *Bulletin* was no longer published, nor were its statistics. Staff numbers and expenses were reduced to a minimum, although the UIC formally continued to exist in order to “prepare for the resumption of activities”, as it was said after the war<sup>17</sup>. Designated as administration president of the management committee in 1938 for a period of three years, the young SNCF—a semi-public company resulting from the merger and partial nationalisation of French private companies—fulfilled this role throughout the period. In the absence of contributions from members, the company advanced the funds on its own. Its director, Robert Le Besnerais, presided over the UIC, and was assisted by another Frenchman, the organisation’s secretary general since its foundation, Gaston Lerverve. Together they ensured “the execution of a reduced service during a difficult period”<sup>18</sup>, “keeping in touch with the Central Clearing Office, either by correspondence, or by visits of the Director of the Central Clearing Office to the headquarters of our Union in Paris”<sup>19</sup>. As for the Verein, it remained active and even expanded geographically. Its statutes had allowed for the participation of associate members outside German speaking countries since 1929<sup>20</sup>. While Danish, Swedish and Norwegian railways had joined the organization before the war, Central European railways had not, in spite of the explicit invitation extended by its renaming as Verein Mitteleuropäischer Eisenbahnen in

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16 See *Bulletin de l’Union internationale des Chemins de fer* (April – May 1946).

17 “Rapport complémentaire du secrétaire général au comité de gérance de l’UIC”, in: *Bulletin de l’Union internationale des Chemins de fer* (April – May 1946), p. 26.

18 *Bulletin de l’Union internationale des Chemins de fer* (April – May 1946), p. 20.

19 “Rapport complémentaire”, p. 27.

20 Alfred Mierzejewski does not touch on the Verein in his book: *The Most Valuable Asset of the Reich: A History of the German National Railway*, vol. 2: 1933–45, Chapel Hill 2000. On what follows, see *Zeitschrift des Vereins Mitteleuropäischer Eisenbahnverwaltungen* (1939 – 1944).

1932 (Association of Central European Railway Administrations)<sup>21</sup>. Slovakia became a member during the war in 1942, followed by Romania in 1943. Both directly implemented the Verein's regulations. Since 1940, the Verein had postponed all meetings until the restoration of peace. In the meantime, coordination was carried out by mail under the Reichsbahn's leadership. Interestingly enough, there was no acrimonious rhetoric against the International Railway Union in the Verein's journal, quite the contrary. In 1941 the Verein for instance adjusted its freight calculations to adhere to UIC regulations, while many other issues were reported as being carried out in accordance with UIC regulations.

All in all, it is clear that the SCNF played a watchdog role within a sleeping UIC, while the Deutsche Reichsbahn exercised de facto supervision over the Verein. The relation between the two companies was thus formative during this period. In his synthesis on the history of French railways, François Caron focuses on three aspects of this relation<sup>22</sup>. The first is one of domination. The German occupation authorities supervised the SNCF. In stations and offices, there was one German agent (what their French counterparts called "*bahnofs*") for every 64 French agents at the end of 1942. Second, this relation became part of a wider French-German system of negotiation and collaboration between Vichy and the occupier. SCNF assets were key to both. They were run by the Vichy Ministry of Communications, itself bound to respect the terms set by the armistice commission. For the occupiers, the SNCF was key to their policy of wealth extraction, repression, and persecution. Finally, Caron stressed the development of an experiment in technical cooperation between the SNCF and the Reichsbahn, on the use of single-phase 50 Hz industrial current for electric traction. French engineers were authorised to follow experiments in the Höllental valley<sup>23</sup>.

As Alfred Mierzejewski has pointed out: "The SNCF was brought into the continental railway system that the DRB had established"<sup>24</sup>. This idea generally mirrors what the historian Charlotte Pouly has called the "theory

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21 Kaiser / Schot: Writing, p. 147. Mierzejewski, Alfred: *The Most Valuable Asset*.

22 In the last volume, published posthumously: Caron, François: *Histoire des chemins de fer en France, 1937 – 1997*, Paris 2017, pp. 72 – 109.

23 Idem, p. 93, and Armand, Louis: *Propos ferroviaires*, Paris 1970, p. 254. The 50 Hz single-phase solution for electric traction proved crucial in the French network after the war.

24 Mierzejewski: *The Most Valuable Asset*, p. 136.

of the double constraint (German and Vichy Diktat)”<sup>25</sup> with respect to the SNCF during the Second World War: German Diktat in connection with the Armistice and the occupation; Vichy Diktat in the form of tighter control over the economy and state-to-state collaboration. However, Pouly argues for a different perspective. The companies’ archives reveal that they had preserved agency, and even secured greater leeway. As a result, they cannot be presented as the simple technical instrument of an overarching policy. The military diktat of 1940 laid down in the armistice commission was quickly overtaken and circumvented by a return to normal trade relations. After a brief phase of looting, during which French wagons were used as spoils of war and then requisitioned, SNCF equipment was rented rather than requisitioned (over the period, on average, a quarter of the SNCF’s remaining wagon fleet was rented in Germany, while 14% of the fleet used by the company came the other way round from the Reichsbahn). The company was paid for the services rendered to the German military and civil authorities, whether for traffic within the country or in the form of transit (from or to Italy and Spain in particular). The SNCF “will carry out all transport for German interests in France (90% of traffic on average) in a contractual form in return for payment”<sup>26</sup>. This economic collaboration sacrificed the service due to the French public, but generated revenues, thereby avoiding budget deficits, a real spectre at the head of the SNCF; it reciprocally offered the Reichsbahn cheap service, thanks to an advantageous exchange rate and occupancy fees. On a more political level, it was also a means for the managers of these two companies to maintain a relative autonomy, preserving them from direct intrusion on the part of their respective guardianships. Proceeding as it had before -in a time of material shortage, occupation and a “controlled market economy”<sup>27</sup>- is what finally made “the SCNF (...) a secondary belt, a voluntary partner (*Freiwillige*) for the circulation in a vast *Kontinental-Europäische Zusammenarbeit* whose engine is the Reichsbahn”<sup>28</sup>. Ludivine Broch has

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25 Pouly, Charlotte: “‘Räder müssen rollen für den Sieg!’ Regard franco-allemand sur la SNCF et la *Reichsbahn* (1940-1945)”, in: *Revue de l’IFHA* 6 (2014). URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/ifha/8070>; DOI :<https://doi.org/10.4000/ifha.8070>

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 Pouly, Charlotte: “Penser les circulations économiques à travers la SNCF pendant l’Occupation: ‘Circulez y a rien à voir’ ?”, in: *Hypothèses* 18 (2015), pp. 149 – 164, p. 164. DOI: 10.3917/hyp.141.0149.

emphasized the ambiguity of the situation, as well as the lack of a clear demarcation between good and evil for contemporaries:

The occupation was a double-edged sword for the *cheminots*: by keeping the trains running, they fed both the French nation and the German military apparatus; they bridged two zones and ripped communities apart; they brought POWs home and deported children. In general, there was no obvious side on which to stand<sup>29</sup>.

In any case, what is important from our perspective is that all of this happened in accordance with international law as established before the war. According to Pouly, bilateral relations reframed by the wartime context developed “in the continuity of the international peacetime agreements (RIM [sic] and RIV of 1935, among others)”<sup>30</sup>. The rules were seemingly neither suspended nor transformed, but carefully applied, at least in the French-German case. This fits with the idea that both companies managed to carve out their own sphere of autonomous regulation.

#### 4. *Technical integration, from the war to the post-war period*

It is within this framework that further technical cooperation, joint work on operational standardization (e.g. registration and securing of international traffic), and projects such as the “European wagon community” developed<sup>31</sup>. The latter touched on the thorny problem covered by RIC and RIV regulations, namely that of the movement of rolling stock across borders. In order to reduce the cost of international transport, it is obviously preferable not to unload a convoy at the border before re-shiping it to another one: the convoy must be allowed to continue to its destination. Once there, should the wagons be sent back as soon as possible, even if they have to travel empty, in order to quickly return them to their original network and protect them from possible damage? Would it not be more economical to use them at their point of arrival, even if it means paying a rental fee and drawing up a balance sheet at the end of the year? Better still, could part of the fleet be pooled for international transport? This is the last option that the European wagon community project was pursuing, along with the idea of extensive standardisation of equipment. And it is on this project—less grandiose than Hitler’s plan for a new super-broad

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29 Broch: Professionalism in the Final Solution, p. 380.

30 Pouly: ‘Räder müssen rollen für den Sieg!’

31 Ibid.

gauge network—that the Reichsbahn focused its attention. While the Reichsbahn opposed the Breitspurbahn, which it saw (like Transport Minister Albert Speer)<sup>32</sup> as pointless, the idea of a wagon pool was supported by the head of the Main Car Office in the Reichsbahn Central Office Berlin, Johannes Schultz, who had to allocate freight cars throughout Germany. This was even more the case given that the idea was discussed by the Verein's technical committee in June 1939, before the war broke out. Further discussions of the matter were postponed in 1940, in order to hold them in conjunction with the UIC's revision of the RIV, and then actively resumed once again<sup>33</sup>. The course of the war stopped both projects. "History does not say whether [Schultz] was led to participate in the elaboration of the 'EUROP pool' some ten years later"<sup>34</sup>.

The UIC resumed its activities as soon as the war was over, amid the turmoil of returning prisoners and deportees, and the beginning of reconstruction. The idea of a wagon pool gradually resurfaced. A first general assembly was held in Paris in February 1946 (44 delegates representing 16 countries), and a double conference was held in Montreux (on timetables and direct services) in October. Some of them were meeting after years of interruption, while others had disappeared, such as the historic Secretary General, Gaston Lerverve, who passed away in 1945. President Robert Le Besnerais remained. Members of the management committee warmly thanked him<sup>35</sup>, even though he had resigned from his functions as director of the SNCF in autumn 1944, worried about the legal repercussions from the organisation's persecution of communist railway workers at the begin-

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32 Högselius, Per / Kaijser, Arne / Vleuten van der, Erik: *Europe's Infrastructure Transition. Economy, War, Nature*, London 2016, p. 46.

33 *Zeitung des Vereins Mitteleuropäischer Eisenbahnverwaltungen* (1941).

34 "L'histoire ne dit pas si l'intéressé fut amené à participer à l'élaboration du 'pool EUROP' une dizaine d'années plus tard". Picard, Jean-François: "Des réquisitions de la Wehrmacht à la création du 'Pool EUROP', une histoire de wagons de marchandises (1940-1950)", in: *Correspondances* 14 (2004). Online: <http://archivchemindefer.free.fr/wagons/poolEurop.html>.

35 "Malgré les lourdes tâches que lui imposait la période de guerre, M. Le Besnerais a suivi avec une particulière vigilance la vie ralentie de l'UIC, assumant la responsabilité que n'était plus à même de prendre le Comité de Gérance lui-même, avec le souci constant de permettre à notre organisation de reprendre sa vie normale dès que la victoire des Alliés le permettrait". "Rapport du comité de gérance à l'assemblée générale", in: *Bulletin de l'Union internationale des Chemins de fer* (April – May 1946), pp. 48 – 49.

ning of the war and during the Occupation<sup>36</sup>. As persona non grata at the SNCF, Le Besnerais remained at the head of the Union until his death in 1948. He helped strengthen this institution in the European railway landscape in the aftermath of the war, having himself pointed out that a grouping of the various international organisations around the UIC would be advisable<sup>37</sup>. New players on the techno-political scene, such as the European Central Inland Transport Organisation (ECITO) and its successor, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's Inland Transport Committee, supported this trend<sup>38</sup>. Set up by the Allies before the war was over, ECITO brought together the transport experts who had to manage the return of wagons and locomotives scattered across Europe<sup>39</sup>. While the UIC woke up, pre-war international peace agreements were paradoxically suspended. As railway companies argued for the ownership and redistribution of rolling stock, several conventions regulating its circulation across borders simply did not apply. Hence the need for a Wagon Exchange Commission, based in Paris from late 1945 to the spring of 1948, and the idea of a temporary pooling and compensation system. It is in this context that discussions between the SNCF and the West German Deutsche Bahn resumed in the late 1940s<sup>40</sup>. They led in 1951 to the establishment of a bilateral pool of freight wagons for cross-border traffic called EUROP, with the blessing of the High Commission for Occupied Germany<sup>41</sup>. The success of the operation, which quickly led to a significant reduction in operating costs through a drop in empty returns, attracted the interest of West-

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36 Pouly, Charlotte: "Les agents et dirigeants de la SNCF, épurés sous Vichy, épurés après Vichy. Regard croisé autour de la réintégration", in: *Histoire & Mesure* XXIX-2 (2014), pp. 135 – 154, here p. 148.  
<https://doi.org/10.4000/histoiremesure.5115>.

37 Le Besnerais, Robert: "Les grands organismes ferroviaires internationaux", in: *Bulletin de l'UIC* (January – February 1947), pp. 24 – 28, here p. 28.

38 Kaiser / Schot: Writing, pp. 159 – 161.

39 Ibid., pp. 149 – 158.

40 Kopper, Christopher: "Die internationale Zusammenarbeit der Deutschen Bundesbahn (1949-1992)", in: Ambrosius, Gerold / Henrich-Franke, Christian / Neutsch, Cornelius (eds.): *Internationale Politik und Integration europäischer Infrastruktur in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Baden-Baden 2010, pp. 213 – 232.

41 Henrich-Franke, Christian: "Europäische Verkehrsintegration im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert", in: Neutsch, Cornelius / Thiemeyer, Guido (eds.): *Internationalismus und Europäische Integration im Vergleich. Fallstudien zu Währungen, Landwirtschaft, Verkehrs- und Nachrichtenwesen*, Baden-Baden 2007, pp. 133 – 176.

ern European companies. They joined the pool, within the framework of a reinforced UIC<sup>42</sup>.

The new director general (1949-1955) of the SNCF and president of the UIC, Louis Armand, was the driving force behind this dynamic. Although he himself had directly been involved in the resistance against the occupying forces, Armand readily extolled the cordial and professional relations between French and German railway workers, even during the war<sup>43</sup>. Numerous testimonies collected in France<sup>44</sup> confirm a kind of transnational professional camaraderie in the field which, combined with the application of international regulations in force and the absence of generalised breaks in the quarries, marked out a path of railway continuity from the pre-war to the post-war period. However, not all cooperation was successful. If the idea of the pool was successful, technical cooperation on electric traction—which continued in the French zone of occupation in Germany, under the leadership of Armand who had pushed for it on the French side during the war—came up against “technological chauvinism”<sup>45</sup>. German industry abandoned the path of industrial direct current, and despite Louis Armand’s insistence, its standardisation within the European Coal and Steel Community failed<sup>46</sup>. After leaving the SNCF and the UIC, from which he had launched a number of other institutional and commercial initiatives allowing railways to compete with other modes of transport through European cooperation, he chaired the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) for a year, and then became Secretary General of the International Union of Railways from 1961 to 1971. His extraordinary career embodies “the typical (and ultimately mythical) image of the apolit-

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42 Kaiser / Schot: Writing, pp. 169 – 173. Armand: Propos, pp. 284 – 286. See also Henrich-Franke, Christian: “Louis Armand – Between United Atoms and Common Railways”, in: Badenoch, Alexander / Fickers, Andreas (eds.): *Materializing Europe. Transnational Infrastructures and the Project of Europe*, London 2010, pp. 144 – 147.

43 Kaiser / Schot: Writing, pp. 166 – 167.

44 Cited in Broch: Professionalism, p. 368.

45 Armand: Propos, p. 210. On electrification of the railways in Western Germany, see Hascher, Michael: “Die Stromsystemfrage bei der Elektrifizierung der Eisenbahnen in Europa 1950 – 1955. Das Beispiel der Entscheidung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland”, in: Burri, Monika, / Elsasser, Kilian / Gugerli, David (eds.): *Die Internationalität der Eisenbahnen*, Zürich 2003, pp. 177 – 194.

46 Chevandier, Christian / Ribeill, Georges: “Louis Armand”, in: Jean-Claude Daumas (ed.): *Dictionnaire historique des patrons français*, Paris 2010, pp. 29 – 31.

ical technical expert"<sup>47</sup>, for whom the war paradoxically strengthened the feeling of belonging to a transnational technical community, and faith in its ability to build a peaceful Europe.

## 5. Conclusion

How can we characterize wartime cooperation in the railway sector? On the key issue of the transnational circulation of rolling stock, it was formally based on pre-war agreements, such as the RIC and RIV conventions — at least seen from France — or through the Verein regulations. The International Railway Union, a contested institution before the war, did not disappear; it went into dormancy under the French railways, but was not replaced by a new organization. Reading the Verein's *Zeitung*, the Union remained an important point of reference for members of the Verein during the war. This stood in sharp contrast to what happened in the postal and telecommunication sector, where a new organization replaced and complemented pre-war ones. In contrast, during the post-war period the Allies agreed to revive and strengthen the International Railway Union, while in the context of massive damage and the unanswered question of German reparations, they had to temporarily suspend the pre-war agreements regulating the transnational circulation of rolling stock. The Verein also came to an end, and with it the dual institutional setting of transnational railway governance in Europe. The project of a European wagon pool advanced across this divide, taking shape in the Western European sphere.

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47 Henrich-Franke: Louis Armand, p. 147.

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