



OLD TRAIN STATION SCHAERBEEK

China at the end of the 19th century

Europe and Japan push aside China on its own territory

During the 19th century, the power of the Qing Dynasty waned and prosperity declined. China became prey to social unrest, economic stagnation, a population explosion and increased interference by the Western powers. The plans by the British to open up trade, and in particular to continue selling opium, which had been banned by Imperial edicts, led to the First Opium War in 1840 and a Chinese defeat .

In 1842 the Treaty of Nanking granted the United Kingdom the cession of Hong Kong and the opening of other ports to trade with Europe. Subsequently, the United Kingdom and other Western powers as well as Japan obtained 'concessions', small territories under their control, as well as trade privileges. During the Second Opium War of 1857-1860, French and British troops marched on Peking and sacked the city.

The Taiping Rebellion of the 1850^s and 1860^s completed the impoverishment of China. The rebellion was crushed with the help of the West and caused 20 to 30 million deaths. It had been triggered by the sufferings of the peasants due to the decline of the Empire and to foreign interference.

The Chinese authorities were reluctant to admit foreign traders. The Westerners therefore had to content themselves with establishing 'spheres of influence'. The European powers and Japan used military force several times to keep order and gain a foothold in the Middle Kingdom.

As of the 1860^s, the government in Peking, which was controlled by Empress Dowager Cixi, faced a dilemma. Should it initiate reform, which might lead to discontent, or should it encourage the status quo? The modernisers finally prevailed. Their plans included the construction of railway lines to connect North and South China. However, the modernisers were wary of the ambitions of the great Western powers. This was why they decided to call on Belgium, a small country with acknowledged railway expertise and far more modest ambitions than the greater powers of the time.

Converging visions and four-handed creation

To enrich this epic tale of the Chinese railway with an artistic vision, two outstanding graphic artists, François Schuiten and Li Kunwu, have produced joint works in connection with the construction of the Peking - Hankow line. Both artists, one from the East, the other from the West, have often depicted the railways of China and Europe. On the occasion of this exhibition, they have joined forces for the first time to revive the fascinating lost world of the pioneering railway-builders of China. Around 20 original works by Li Kunwu, inspired by the railways of his country, are also on display.

Peking to Hankow: a Belgian adventure in China

At the beginning of the 20th century, Belgians and Frenchmen built the world's then longest railway that connected the north and south of China, between Peking (now Beijing) and Hankow (now a part of Wuhan). This extraordinary and fascinating exploit, which bore comparison with other major works such as the digging of the Panama and Suez Canals, was achieved by engineers, technicians and workmen, but also by Western and Chinese diplomats and financiers, chief among whom was Jean Jadot.

A young Belgian engineer, then aged only 37, he coordinated and implemented this massive project on which tens of thousands of people worked for seven years. However, work on the 754-mile line was temporarily broken off by the violent Boxer Rebellion. The project's crowning achievement was an immense 1.9-mile bridge over the Yellow River, a truly spectacular attainment for the time. Astonishingly, Empress Dowager Cixi would return from exile to Peking by making her first train journey on this line, which was to become the backbone of the Chinese railway network. Many documents, previously never made public, illustrate the story of one of the early 20th century's greatest construction projects.

This exhibition has been organised on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belgium and the People's Republic of China.

France and Belgium: two economic and railway heavyweights

At the end of the 19th century, when Belgium and France decided to join forces to build the Peking - Hankow line, both countries had already developed a vast railway network. Their dynamic railway industries enabled them to export their acknowledged expertise.

The first locomotives used in France and Belgium were British. However, the national manufacturers soon proved capable of building their own.

In Belgium, although trains had been running only since May 1835, Cockrill delivered the first Belgian-made locomotive, *Le Belge*, in December of the same year. Other national producers followed suit. It was no longer necessary to order from the British.

This was a time of prodigious railway development in Belgium, and a source of great wealth. The country boasted no less than 20 manufacturers, who would produce over 15,600 steam locomotives between 1835 and 1950. 30% of these were made for the Belgian State and 70% for export as well as the country's private industry.

The French railway network developed more slowly, and the related French industry grew in the 1840^s, when six main locomotive manufacturers were founded. Due to the institution of import taxes, the French manufacturers would fulfil a substantial part of the orders from their own national market. Indeed, to beat this protectionism, several Belgian manufacturers would set up subsidiaries in France.

It is a little-known fact that despite the country's modest size Belgium's rail industry competed with that of France.

A promising project in China

Both countries competed with each other throughout the 19th century, but also cooperated on large-scale projects in Spain, Italy, Russia and Latin America. At the end of the 19th century, China began to be viewed as an extremely promising market. Cooperation between both countries was also a logical development. Which is why, when opportunity struck, Belgium and France joined forces within the Société d'étude de Chemins de fer en Chine. This company was founded in Brussels in 1897 and opened up to French capital in 1899. Indeed, French savers were the majority contributors to the funding of the Peking - Hankow line.

(A) (B) Li Kunwu, a master comic artist

Li Kunwu, a complete artist

Painter, caricaturist and journalist for some thirty years with the Yunnan daily paper (Yunnan Ribao), he is the author of some thirty graphic books in the province of his birth, Yunnan. Having published some ten documentary graphic books in France, Li Kunwu is an extraordinary artist. Born in 1955, right in the middle of the Mao-era, part of a generation unable to get an artistic or academic education, he taught himself to draw. He came to graphic books by accident, through a series of different encounters. He was soon known in France thanks to his "A Chinese Life" trilogy, now studied in many French High Schools. Translated into some fifteen languages, this impressive graphic series brings us to see contemporary Chinese history through the prism of his own story. The breathtaking style is due to his exceptional mastery of multiple artistic techniques: traditional painting, propaganda and newspaper drawings, caricature, clear lines, ink, ink wash, aquarelle, etc.

All his drawings relate to Yunnan, his birth region located "south of the clouds" (as Yun means cloud and Nan the south). Neighbouring Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam, and bringing together within its land area more than half of the ethnic groups present in China, this province peaks at an average altitude in excess of 2,000 metres. Yet, Yunnan benefits from a subtropical climate where tobacco and sugar cane thrive in abundance. Li Kunwu holds the regional particularities dear, as he has drawn the 18 oddities of Yunnan - 云南十八怪 -, among these, smoking large bamboo pipes or taking a train streaking off to the South when you want

to head North. This is a nod to the Yunnan railway that in the early twentieth century opened the way out from Southern China via Vietnam, from whence a boat would take you to Peking. . . there were no inland routes through Yunnan yet.

Since 2015, in partnership with Est-Ouest 371, Li Kunwu has developed large, even very large sized new forms of artistic expressions that relate less to comics and more to contemporary art. His drawings have been the subject of numerous exhibitions: at the Cernuschi Museum (Paris, 2015), the Toulouse-Lautrec Museum (Albi, 2017), in Shanghai with the Michelin Corporate Foundation (2016) or the Vuitton Collection (2018); at FRAC Auvergne in Clermont-Ferrand (2018); at the Guimet Museum in Paris (2019) where, for one evening, the artist presented his impressive 21 metre long fresco (exhibited in the station hall); or just recently at Chapelle des Dames Blanches in La Rochelle (2021).

The incredible epic of the Yunnan railway

The works presented here show the unique epic of the Yunnan railway. In the early twentieth century more than 60,000 people built this famous "railway under the clouds". The motto then defended by the Third Republic of France (1870-1940) was, to quote Paul Doumer, Governor General of French Indochina (1897-1902), that "civilisation must follow the locomotive". The aim set out by France, present in the Tonkin region (Northern Vietnam) since 1883, was to extend its influence into Southern China to import new natural resources able to feed its colonial expansion.

The challenge was on. Except that Yunnan province is one of the most inhospitable mountainous provinces in China. And what a challenge,

as everything had to be imported from France before it was carried along mountain paths – sometimes cut into the rock – on horseback, by mule and also men's own backs.

In the end, in record time (1903-1909) some 4,000 engineering structures were built under the supervision of French engineers including Paul Bodin (1847-1926), one of the very first engineers to use Gustave Eiffel's technology for the famous "Le Pont à Arbalétriers" ("crossbowman's bridge"). In all, this railway line was to comprise 3,400 bridges, viaducts, aqueducts, 180 tunnels of which over a hundred exceed twenty metres in length.

The Southern China heights saw one of the ancestors of our modern-day trains in action: the railcar called "Micheline", imported by the Indochina and Yunnan Railway Company, . Of the three Michelines delivered to the Company in the 1930s, one can still be seen in the centre of the magnificent railway museum in Kunming, a major source of inspiration for Li Kunwu.

A true master with Indian ink wash, Li Kunwu uses a distorting prism, which is what makes his vision so unique, to show us the evolution of this spectacular work which, as a result of ingenuity but also of terrible sacrifices (12,000 deaths), has reached the end of its daunting mission.



① **Paul Spingaerd, the missionary diplomat**

The beginnings of a big project

Despite the difficult political environment of the late 19th century, China's leaders were aware of the potential of the railway to help develop the country. In this context, the technical skills of the Belgians, their industrial capacity and the fact that they displayed no overt imperialist ambitions were reassuring.

In 1896, Li Hongzhang, a close adviser to Empress Dowager Cixi, began a tour of Europe and America. Leopold II invited him to Belgium. Li Hongzhang spent five days there in July 1896. During a reception at the Royal Palace, the foundations were established for future cooperation with Belgium on the construction of a railway line from Peking to Hankow.

During that same year, the Chinese Imperial Railway administration was founded. It was run by Sheng Xuanhuai, a friend of Li Hongzhang, whose role was to finance railway construction, and in particular a line from the country's capital to its south.

In Belgium, the Société d'étude des Chemins de fer en Chine was founded in 1897, the main shareholders were a bank, Société générale de Belgique, and some major Belgian industrialists. The company's primary aim was to finance the project. As not enough investors could be found in Belgium,

Société générale de Belgique began to search for funding in France. Two banks, Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas and Comptoir d'Escompte de Paris, were interested, as well as a number of major French industrialists.

Belgium's ambassador in Peking, Baron de Vinck, called on his French counterpart, who dispatched Paul Claudel, a diplomat and later a famous writer, to second Emile Francqui, the Belgian Consul in Hankow. This was where Paul Splingaerd came in. He was a Belgian who had been appointed a mandarin (a bureaucrat of Imperial China) by Li Hongzhang and who would later prove invaluable to the development of the Belgian presence in China.

The building and operating contract for the line was signed in Shanghai on June 26, 1898. It was validated on November 11 of the same year by the emperor.

Loan shares of the Peking - Hankow line were first issued on April 19, 1899 and raised almost twice the amount required. Four fifths of the amount of the loan were taken out on the Paris Stock Exchange and the remainder on the Brussels exchange.

Sedan chairs

The need for modern transportation in China

Before the railway came to China, people used sedan chairs to travel within and in the vicinity of towns. Their luxurious materials and workmanship, as well as the number of bearers, show that these were high-ranking individuals.

For longer-distance travel, people and goods were transported by camel in North China, as well as on the Grand Canal, which connected fertile re-

gions in the North and South. This immense artificial river was begun in the first century BCE and completed during the sixth century.

In the early 19th century, poorly maintained roads were used for transport, as well as coastal shipping from spring to autumn. By building railway lines between China's main centres and its ports, and a trunk line between the country's north and south, the Chinese authorities were able to equip their country with fast, modern communications. These lines also made it possible to swiftly implement Imperial decrees in the provinces and opened up promising economic prospects.

The first attempt to build a railway in China, between Wusong and Shanghai in 1876, soon failed. The first standard-gauge railway was built in Kaiping in 1881 to carry coal from the mines to the nearest waterway. By 1888, it had reached Tianjin to the west and Shanhaiguan to the east. Seven years later, it was extended to the outskirts of Peking.

At the end of the 19th century, China's political and financial weakness attracted the Western powers and Japan. In 1896 and 1897, the Russians founded the East China Railway Company and the South Manchuria Railway Company to build almost 1,000 miles of line through Manchuria to Port Arthur (now part of Dalian) on Bohai Bay.

Other lines would then be financed by foreign countries, such as the Shantung Line by the Germans, the Shanghai - Nanking and Shanghai - Hangchow - Ningbo lines by the British and the Yunnan Line by the French. As well, of course, as the Peking - Hankow line by the French and Belgians.

② **Jean Jadot, the chief engineer of the Peking-Hankow railway**

Jean Jadot was born on August 2, 1862 in On (Jemelle), a small village in the Belgian Province of Luxemburg. On the side of his mother Elise Cousin, he came from a family of engineers.

He was the eldest of six children. A gifted student at Leuven University, he earned his engineering degree at the age of 20. Jadot was then appointed engineer in charge of the local railways of Luxemburg Province. He managed the construction of many lines. In 1887, when he was just 25, his father died. He then became the family breadwinner, supporting his mother and five siblings.

In 1894, the Empain Group offered Jean Jadot the management of the Cairo Tramways Company. This gave him the opportunity to make more money to support his family. After a year, due to the energy and speed with which he worked, the Empain Group appointed him general manager of the Lower Egypt Railway Company, which he ran efficiently from 1895 to 1898.

It was then suggested that he might be placed in charge of building the Peking-Hankow line, the contract for which had just been signed. In September 1898, he married his cousin Maria Cousin, and on October 9 the young couple boarded ship at Marseilles and sailed to China. Jean Jadot would spend seven years there directing the construction of the Peking-Hankow line and supervising its operation.

After he returned home, King Leopold II asked him to contribute to the statutes of the three '1906 companies' which would underpin the industrialisation of Belgian Congo. Jean Jadot joined Société générale de Belgique, where he managed industrial projects in Belgium and the Congo. In 1913, he became Governor of the bank.

During World War I, he remained in Belgium and agreed that Société générale act as an issuing bank as the Belgian National Bank had been shut down. The banknotes of the time therefore bear his signature.

After the war, he invested in the development of higher education and scientific research and helped collect capital to finance the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research. With his support, Société générale's companies soared and became increasingly influential in the social and economic life of the Congo.

Exhausted by his full and active life, Jean Jadot died on March 1, 1932, at the age of almost 70.

A single man for an immense project

To complete the huge project that was the Peking - Hankow line, it was essential that it be headed by an experienced man with both technical ability and experience of works overseas. This was the reason Jean Jadot was appointed by the chairman of the Société d'étude des Chemins de fer en Chine. He was hired in October 1898 as 'engineer-controller'. His job was to supervise design and engineering, build the line and run its operation.

Jean Jadot disembarked in Shanghai on December 22, 1898. He immediately left for Hankow and took up his position on January 9, 1899.

When he arrived, the 80-mile stretch to the north between Lugouqiao and Baoding had almost been completed, while to the south only some preparatory work had been done.

By the end of 1901, 92 miles of railway were being operated in the direction of the south. Three years later, the trains were running to Zhumadian, 194 miles from Hankow, where a marshalling yard was built. The Yellow River, 342 miles from Hankow, was reached on January 4, 1905.

The construction of the line was completed by September 1905. Its commercial operation could now be organised from end to end. The line was 754 miles long and 609 miles were operated directly by the Société d'étude. The total cost of building the Peking - Hankow railway was 125 million francs (the equivalent of €780 million today).

At first, the line comprised only a single standard international-gauge track. However, all 2,420 bridges had been designed for a second track.

The construction of the Peking - Hankow line lasted almost seven years. As soon as it was commissioned, it proved immensely profitable. The Chinese government therefore decided to repurchase the loan so as to manage the line itself. As it did not have the necessary funds, it took out a loan from a consortium of British and French banks.

Despite the purchase of the Peking - Hankow line by the Chinese, it continued to employ many Westerners until the 1930^s.

The Spruyt collection

The Spruyt brothers and their collection of Chinese antiques

Born in Ghent, Philippe and Adolphe Spruyt were both doctors and had earned their diplomas at Brussels University. Both worked for railway companies in China.

Philippe arrived in China in 1898 and practiced his profession on behalf of the Peking - Hankow line company. Although based in Hankow, he travelled up and down the line to supply medical care to both Europeans and Chinese.

A lover of Chinese antiques, he spent his spare time collecting over 1,100 artefacts, including porcelain, bronzes, costumes, furniture and everyday objects, mostly dating from the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912). He was an excellent photographer and his pictures bear lively witness to life in China in the early 20th century.

He would leave his antique collection to the Ghent City Museum (STAM) in 1954, while his 550 photographic plates are now preserved by Ghent University. In this room, a selection of items from Philippe Spruyt's collection is displayed.

③ Cixi, the Chinese empress Dowager

A Manchu, Cixi was a member of the last dynasty to rule the Middle Kingdom, the Qing. She was Empress Dowager of China from 1861 to her death in 1908.

Selected as a teenager by Emperor Xianfeng to become an Imperial concubine, she bore a son who would become Emperor Tongzhi after Xianfeng's death. A born intriguer, she managed to acquire and exercise a certain amount of control over decision-making at Court.

When Tongzhi died in 1875, she was able to place her nephew Guangxu on the throne. In 1898, when Guangxu began to attempt reform, which she opposed, she seized back the reins of power and had the emperor locked up in a palace inside the Forbidden City.

In the spring of 1900, she sided with the faction in her government that supported the Boxer Rebellion. When the Allied troops managed to free the Westerners under siege in Peking's Legation Quarter, she fled with her Court and took refuge in Xi'an.

After agreeing to a series of institutional reforms, she returned to Peking in January 1902. She then appointed reformers to key positions and agreed to receive foreign diplomats.

A few days before her death, she decided to have the emperor assassinated. This was only three years before the fall of the dynasty and the advent of the first Republic of China in 1911.

Cixi's trip on the Peking - Hankow line

In 1901, Li Hongzhang asked Jean Jadot to organise the return of the whole court to Peking. This was the first time a ruler of China had agreed to travel on a train. It was a major political event. The Court boarded at Zhengding, over 155 miles from Peking. The Imperial retinue included over 1,500 people and their luggage. During the trip, Jean Jadot met Empress Dowager Cixi, who was enchanted by the journey. In return for organising her return to

Peking in the best conditions, Jean Jadot was awarded the Imperial Order of the Double Dragon Precious Star, Second Class, Third Grade.

The Boxers Rebellion

The Boxer Rebellion interrupted the work on the Peking - Hankow line

The Boxer Rebellion was an insurrection by a religious cult known as the Harmonious Fists (hence their Western name of 'Boxers'). Its members were angry at Western interference and the laxness of the Chinese Imperial dynasty. At that time, the Empress Dowager also wished to be rid of Western influence. In 1899, Cixi managed to tilt the Court towards anti-foreigner sentiment. By siding with the Boxers, she united the Court and the rebels against the West and Japan.

The Boxers' exactions then spread to Peking. Railway lines were attacked, telegraph wires cut and churches destroyed. Over 500 foreign missionaries and thousands of Chinese Christians were murdered. The situation degenerated in 1900, developing into a full-blown popular revolt.

The rioters entered Tianjin and Peking, and on June 20 began a siege of the Legation Quarter, where the Diplomatic Corps had taken refuge. This episode was later known as the '55 Days of Peking'. An international task force of 50,000 men was set up. The rebels were beaten and the task force reached Peking on August 14. The Imperial Court fled to Xi'an, over 600 miles from Peking. The Allies then conducted punitive expeditions in areas where foreigners and Christians had been attacked and murdered.

No real distinction was made between the rebels and local inhabitants, meaning many innocent people were murdered.

On the southern side of the Peking - Hankow line, things remained calm. Viceroy Zhang Zhidong had not supported the rebels and assured the diplomats in Hankow that in his province they had nothing to fear.

Traffic finally resumed on the northern section of the line, which had already been completed, in February 1901.

Since the beginning of the works, the Société d'étude had tried in vain to get permission to connect the operating stretch of line to Peking. The presence of foreign troops in the capital ensured the consortium was given a permit to pierce the city wall and take the line directly into the city. At the end of January 1901, the end-of-line station was built to the southwest of the Qianmen Gate. The line would henceforth be known as Pehan (Peking - Hankow).

④ **Qing Fen, a Chinese labourer on the Pekin – Hankow railway**

Chinese labourers and the bridge on the Yellow River

For the construction of the Peking - Hankow line, labourers were recruited locally. Over the seven years of the project, they probably numbered several tens of thousands.

China's main concern was not to save on labour, but to subdivide it indefinitely so that as many labourers as possible could feed themselves. This was the reason the Chinese authorities refused that machinery be used for a very long time.

The Peking - Hankow line was supposed to cross the Yellow River, China's longest river after the Yangtze, which flowed for almost 4,000 miles from the Tibetan plateau. The riverbed was, however, a 52-foot layer of loose sand, on which it was impossible to build a firm foundation for the bridge piles. The river was also so wide that the bridge needed to be 1.9 miles long, whereas the longest bridge of the time, the Forth Bridge in Scotland, was only 1.5 miles long.

This was therefore a major challenge for Jean Jadot and Joseph Clavier, the Belgian engineer in charge of this section of the line. 11,000 tons of steel were required for the bridge's piles and deck. Half the steel was supplied by French steelworks and the other half by the Belgians.

Construction began in December 1903. The bridge was built using 102 spans over a total length of 1.87 miles. The deck was 18 feet above water. The spans were supported by tubular piers connected by metal caissons to create a platform.

The piers terminated in cast-steel screw piles which were sunk deep below the river's low-water level. This bridge - in which the world's largest ever number of screw piles was probably used - was considered in 1906 to be temporary and guaranteed for 20 years. However, it remained in use until 1958, with the scour caused by the strong river currents being constantly repaired.

The construction of the last major bridge on the Peking - Hankow line ended in August 1905, one month before the line was commissioned.

⑤ **Sheng Xuanhuai, the director of the Chinese railways**

Sheng was a protégé of Li Hongzhang, to whom he owed his career. He founded the Chinese Telegraph Company, of which he became general manager in 1882. He was also appointed general manager of the Hanyang steelworks, which were built by Belgian steelmaker Cockerill and located near Hankow. In 1896, he was appointed general manager of the Chinese Imperial Railway administration and took over the management of the Peking - Hankow line project. Sheng also signed many foreign loan contracts for the construction of railways in China. He was to retain this position until October 1905, when he was replaced by his rival Tang Shaoyi at the head of the Imperial Railway administration. Tang wished to repay the loan for the construction of the Peking - Hankow line as soon as possible so that the Chinese could take over the line, which by now was highly profitable.

Société d'étude undertook to negotiate the repurchase loan. However, in 1906, the British and French, newly friendly under the Entente Cordiale, founded the Chinese Central Railway, in which British bank Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation and its French counterpart Banque d'Indochine were shareholders.

Despite Jean Jadot's endeavours, the Chinese signed an agreement with these two banks for the takeover of several railway lines, including the Peking - Hankow line.

The operation of the line was officially transferred to the Chinese on December 31, 1908.

Once it had taken over, the Chinese Imperial Railway administration decided to retain a team of foreign engineers and technicians to provide technical operating support and train the Chinese staff. Half a dozen Belgians remained in Changxindian, the maintenance yard near Peking, to run the technical services and make improvements to the line.

They also standardised the infrastructure, operation and rolling stock. The pragmatic Chinese continued to purchase equipment overseas, as they acknowledged the expertise of the West in this area. Belgium and France thus carried on supplying China with railway equipment.

After the 1949 Revolution, the line was duplicated and some stretches were altered. A new metal bridge was built on the Yellow River in 1958 to replace the one built under the management of Jean Jadot.

Today, the line still exists. However, a high-speed line was commissioned in 2012 near the old line built by Jean Jadot. Nowadays, it only takes 4 hours and 18 minutes to travel from Peking (Beijing) to Hankow, now a part of Wuhan.

© **Chinese railways today**

AREP, France's premier architecture practice, bringing unique expertise to Chinese station design for over 20 years

At the dawn of the 20th century, the French and Belgians pooled their forces to build the Peking - Hankow line., At the start of the 21st century it was French railway expertise that made it possible to undertake major projects in China in the very advanced field of high speed train station design and construction.

AREP, the French interdisciplinary architecture practice, was chosen by the Chinese Railways to imagine and build the Wuhan high speed train station, pushing the former Hankow station back to a mythical past. They were also called in to design future high speed train stations like the ones for the Beijing Winter Olympics in 2022.

AREP, inventing a post-carbon future

Some 120 years after the end of the works in Pehan, France is still an active force in China. AREP, whose mission is to invent a post-carbon future, is involved with, and innovates in, all of the specialities that are essential in renewing architecture and territories.

France's premiere architecture practice with over 20 years of experience in supporting China, is now inventing the railway of the future, anticipating on tomorrow's major challenges around low-carbon design and mobility. Designing a 100% renewable energies station that minimises its carbon impact, one that is restrained in its use of materials while offering a haven for the living and an urban climate refuge.

Heritage is a capital to build on, while today's climate challenges present around the world call for finding answers: the links between China and France are more than ever essential when innovation is required to serve tomorrow's railway system.