

Week 2 Lecture 2- Railway Class

Railway Morals, Punch, 1864

Guard: "Now miss! Are you going by this train?"

Miss Rebecca "Yes! But I must have a carriage where there are no young men likely to be rude to one"



- Satirical magazine- good place for contemporary information of the time- 1860s
- Clear link between morality and train travel.
- Moral of young women in particular that were at risk at this time; being alone on trains etc.
- For upper class woman, extremely 'perilous' to take a journey unaccompanied where your morals could be uncompromised.

Abraham Solomon, First class- The meeting... and at the First meeting Loved (First version), 1854

Abraham Solomon, First class- The Meeting... and the First meeting loved (Second version), 1855



- **Morality** of women and train travel.
- Two paintings that look similar and are concerned with the same theme but are extremely different.
- When first version was exhibited: caused scandal. Removed from exhibition, regarded as 'unhealthy'/dangerous. Pointed to behavior on the train that was deemed unacceptable by the Royal Academy of arts.
- Assume the relationship of father and daughter between the two individuals; Father has fallen asleep. 'Charming young man'- fishing rod in the background talking to the daughter who is a young girl. Against the moral framework of that time. Spaces of travel, spaces of first class department were regarded more dangerous, cause of anxiety than third class travel because of moral issues. Books become enormously important on the train; people don't want to talk to each other on the train.
- Second version is a reworked version that catered to the taste and moral codes of the time. This time the dad is watching out for the moral condition of his young daughter. The suitor no longer has a fishing rod (no longer suggests idea of leisure, going to the countryside fishing). He is now a suitable young man, good values, good morality, naval uniform and sword in background. The spaces become more feminine; color clothes, flowers, more open light space.
- Paintings give insight into 19th century thought and behavior.

William Powell Frith, *The Railway station*, 1862



- Public spaces (train station and trains themselves), were regarded very much as spaces that could not be controlled in terms of how people came into contact with each other.
- One platform for the first class and the other for the 'unwashed'.
 - o By the 1860s 1870s, the practice of providing different platforms and trains for different class was beginning to die out.
 - o Population was growing, more and more people were taking trains, train station lost its class based control that existed in the 40s and 50s;
 - o No longer easy to control the cross class contact that took place in train stations.
- Masses of people trying to get onto the train. Victorians were fond of painting the 'masses'.
- People who inhabit the space of the station and painting are largely upper middle class and upper class people.
- Not entirely an accurate representation of society that we know existed in Britain at the time. Where are the poor, the working class? Expunged from the space of the painting. They have been outcast from the painting, is it safe to assume that it is a replication of the reality of the social, spacial, politics of the day or is the artist simply accepting the fact that the space were not inhabited so much by the poor. Not spaces where the poor and wealthy meet.
- Artist censoring what he is seeing, what he knows to be true. One poor on the roof putting luggage onto the train, group of people (poor) right off the edge of the painting, cast aside by society. Waiting their turn to enter the train, waiting for the upper class to enter the train first.
- Reflection of the social formation that emerged in Great Britain with the arrival of trains.

George Earl, *Going North, Kings Cross Station, London*, 1893



- What happens in the painting is reflective of the spacial politics of Britain in late 1900s where the poor, the working class, the impoverished were regarded as a ***separate race***.

Week 4 Lecture 1- The Politics of Picturesque

Aesthetics: *Picturesque/Disgust/ Indignation*

Society: *Tourism/Enclosure/Proletarianization*

Technologies: *Ha Ha & First Cameras: Camera Obscura, Camera Lucida, Claude Glass*

Picturesque

- Having the elements of qualities of a picture; suitable for a picture
- Pleasing or striking in appearance; scenic
- Pretty in an undeveloped or old-fashioned way; charming quaint, un-spoilt
- Picturesque stands in contrast to the terms *beautiful* and *sublime*. Beautiful is meant to evoke the idea of pleasure, sublime the feeling of awe. Picturesque is meant to evoke the feelings of curiosity, amusement and interest

Thomas Gainsborough, Mr and Mrs Andrews, 1784



- The term picturesque emerged when the English upper class, land owners took precedence in the English society by means of law through the process of enclosures of land. The main marker of status in the society was the possession of land.

- Two people of high status in society observing and posing with their possession, their land which is the basis of their high status.

- This particular social status

comes among other things from the process which started in the 16th century which was slowly becoming legalized in the 18th century; the process of enclosure.

- Common right to land manifested in the fact that peasants had common grounds which they used for pasture and hay; where they had a system of rotating crops and operated their land communally was brought to an end. Common lands and common administration of land was privatized and much of the population was totalitarianised and thus left without the possession of land, means of organizing production communally and much of the population left for the cities where the industrial production was happening. Turns into a more intense form in the first half of the 19th century with the industrial revolution and the modernization of agricultural and industrial production.

Humphry Repton "View from my own my own Cottage in Essex (Before and After) 1816



- Land is made beautiful by restricting the access to common property. To people who peek into the land, extending the view to unadulterated possession as far as the eye can see, to which commoners do not have visual access to.