

# 1 INNOVATION AND 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY HOTEL INDUSTRY EVOLUTION

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## 3 ABSTRACT

4 This article adopts a novel methodology to explore the transformation of the nineteenth century  
5 English lodging industry from an inn-keeping model in the late 1700's to a professional hotel  
6 management model in the early 1900's. The multi-level perspective methodology employed in this  
7 research is a mid-range theory, which uses elements of technological transitions and the concept of  
8 niche innovation cumulation to explain the evolution of the hospitality industry from the mid 1760's  
9 to 1914. At the beginning of the nineteenth century English inns provided a rudimentary  
10 experience. By the end of the century, the English hotel industry had adopted domestic and  
11 international innovations, to improve service quality and comfort.

12

13 Key words: Hotel industry history; Niche cumulation; Technological transition; Tourism  
14 methodology'; Tourism history.

15

## 16 1. INTRODUCTION

17 To date, sources which describe the history of the English hotel industry<sup>1</sup> do not engage  
18 with complex theoretical constructs to explain the evolution of the industry from its origins in  
19 the mid eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. This article makes a  
20 contribution to tourism history research by providing a novel methodological approach, a  
21 multi-level perspective, to analysing hotel industry evolution. The article also responds to John  
22 Walton's translation of Sherman's observation in *Paradis a vendre* that tourism research 'has  
23 gravitated around two disconnected poles, that of meta-theory and that of micro-history but  
24 a more fertile approach would be to think of both perspectives at the same time' (Walton,

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<sup>1</sup> The focus of this research is on the English hotel industry.

25 2009, p784), by adopting the multi-level perspective (a mid-range theory) to explore the  
26 cumulative socio-technological innovations which transformed the English hotel industry in  
27 the long nineteenth century.

28 At the end of the eighteenth century accommodation offered to travellers in England was  
29 rudimentary (Borer, 1972; Granville, 1842; Harper, 1906; Simmons, 1984; Smith 1855; Taylor,  
30 2002; and White, 1968), but by the end of the nineteenth century an English hotel industry  
31 had emerged which provided a greater range of enhanced facilities/services and catering for  
32 a wider range of customers (Slattery, 2009; Taylor, 2003). This transformation from an inn-  
33 keeping business into a more professional hotel management industry was not dependent  
34 upon a single factor, innovation or personality. It was the accumulation of a wide range of  
35 different innovations which combined to transform the system of hospitality at that time.

36 In historiography, there are grand theories and grand narratives which seek to generalise the  
37 history of a country, industry or period – for example Jurgen Osterhammel’s global history of the  
38 nineteenth century, *The Transformation of the World* (2014). Then there are empirical articles which  
39 focus on data collection and analysis at a micro-level – for example O’Mahoney & Clark’s (2013)  
40 research in to the evolution of public houses in Colonial Victoria, Australia. In between grand  
41 theories and micro-level empirical data, the concept of middle-range theories was proposed by  
42 Robert Merton to enable sociologists to develop an intermediate theory which builds upon empirical  
43 research but is not sufficiently generalizable to be designated as grand theory (Merton, 1949).  
44 According to Gabriel and Norbert (2011), middle-range theories concentrate on a specific field, a  
45 historical period and a geographical region. ‘The multi-level perspective (MLP) is a middle-range  
46 theory’ (Geels 2011, p. 26), which has been adopted by academic researchers in a variety of different  
47 areas including archaeology (Raab & Goodyear, 1984), labour migration (Williams, 2007), and in  
48 tourism by Romero and Tejada (2010).

49 Historical tourism research has employed a wide range of methodologies including  
50 the supply and demand approach linked to Schumpeterian innovation in Majorca, Spain (Cirer,  
51 2012); historical narrative and interpretation in the Chinese Eastern Jin Dynasty period (Yan  
52 and McKercher, 2013); the Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC) framework combined with urban  
53 studies and tourism literature in Asheville, North Carolina, USA (Strom and Kerstein, 2015);  
54 and a density-based model of localised competition in Manhattan, New York, USA from 1898  
55 to 1990 (Baum and Mezias, 1992).

56 However, histories of the English and British hotel industry are primarily descriptive  
57 narratives which lack contextualisation, interpretation or synthesis; examples include Mary  
58 Borer's *The British Hotel Through The Ages* (1972) and Derek Taylor's *Ritzy* (2003). One  
59 exception is Slattery (2009) who provides a supply and demand framework to explain the  
60 historical development of the hotel industry in *The Economic Ascent of the Hotel Business*.  
61 Although these sources offer interesting insights, the narratives do not convey the complex  
62 interaction of multiple innovations over the nineteenth century which transformed the  
63 character, scale and structure of the English hotel industry. The main aim of this article is to  
64 provide a more complex, nuanced analysis of that transformation by explaining the  
65 cumulative socio-technological innovations within the context of the macro, meso and micro  
66 environment.

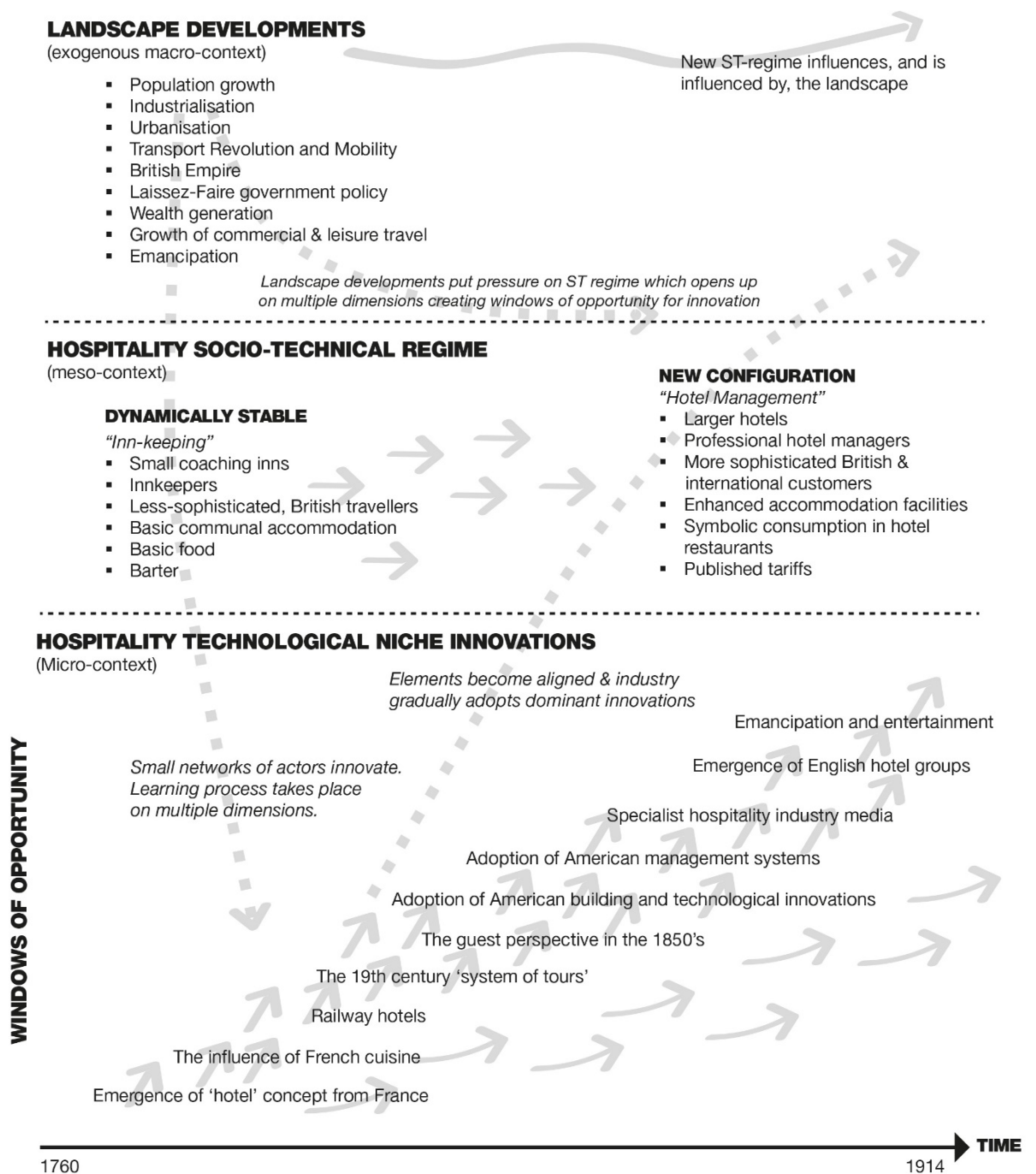
67 Geels (2002) developed a MLP framework which incorporates a macro-level of  
68 landscape developments; a meso-level of socio-technical regimes; and micro-level innovative  
69 technological transitions. The landscape comprises long-term political, economic, socio-  
70 cultural and technological macro developments including significant political movements, war,  
71 economic trends, population changes, social evolution and technological revolutions which  
72 influence consumers and businesses. Socio- technical regimes comprise the multi-actor  
73 network of different social groups who populate an industry and who adhere to a 'semi-

74 coherent set of rules' (Geels, 2002, p. 1260). A socio-technical regime provides stability within  
75 a given period. The actors in a socio-technical regime might include the producer network, its  
76 user groups, suppliers, financial network, distributors, societal groups and national or local  
77 government who all interact and influence the socio-technical regime in various ways.  
78 Changes in the landscape can disrupt an existing stable socio-technical regime which creates  
79 opportunities for niche innovations to be introduced and gradually become accepted. Over  
80 time, a series of technological innovations – described as niche cumulation (Geels, 2002, p.  
81 1271) - are adopted which combine to disrupt an existing socio-technical regime, and  
82 eventually establish a new stable socio-technical regime. Geels defines Technological  
83 Transitions (TT) 'as major technological transformations in the way societal functions such as  
84 transportation, housing, feeding' and includes changes in 'user practices, regulation, industrial  
85 networks, infrastructure and symbolic meaning' (Geels 2002, p. 1257).

86         There are similarities between Geel's MLP and the theory of figurational sociology originally  
87 developed by Norbert Elias in the 1930's (Elias, 1978). Figurational sociology uses processual  
88 research to explore interdependent relationships between people whose lives evolve and are  
89 shaped by social figurations (Rojek, 1985). For Elias, since figurations are historically produced and  
90 are always in a state of flux, sociological research needs to incorporate a dynamic, temporal  
91 dimension – instead of a static focus (Mennell, 1998). By recognising the historical/temporal fluid  
92 context and incorporating macro-level and micro-level analysis in to the research, a reconstructed  
93 socio-genesis of a figuration can explain developments in human knowledge (Baur and Ernst, 2011).  
94 Geels' idea that multiple niche technological innovations influence the micro-context and the  
95 exogenous landscape to help transform a socio-technical regime, echoes Elias's concept of waves of  
96 knowledge, advancing in complementary processes and constantly changing a given social figuration  
97 (Elias, 1978). Apart from the conceptual similarities between Elias' figurational sociology and Geel's  
98 MLP, one of Elias's advocates - Stephen Mennell - adopted a figurational or sociogenetic approach in

99 his comparative history of cooking and eating in England and France, and the civilising of appetite  
 100 (Mennell, 1996).

101 Figure 1 is an adaption of Geels' (2002) framework and provides an illustration of those  
 102 landscape developments and the socio-technological niche innovations, which gradually  
 103 combined to change the 18<sup>th</sup> Century traditional English inn-keeping socio-technical regime into  
 104 a new configuration of professional hotel management by the early twentieth century.



106 Figure 1 A multi-level perspective of socio-technological transitions in the English hotel  
107 industry (1760 – 1914).

108 The methodology employed in this research is historical narrative where ‘the significance of an  
109 event or fact is derived from its position or role in the overall historical account rather than as a  
110 discrete, testable occurrence’ (Decker et al, 2015, p31). The historical method adopts an  
111 interpretative approach which investigates ‘the causal motors that drive change through time’  
112 (Smith & Lux, 1993, p595). The theoretical context is based upon Geel’s MLP framework (Geels,  
113 2002) and figurational sociology (Elias, 1978). Secondary data from generic and specialist historical  
114 texts, such as Barzun (2000) and Wolmar (2007), is used to explain nineteenth century landscape  
115 developments; whilst specialist hotel and restaurant history texts support the industry context.  
116 Although some of the industry texts, e.g. Borer (1972) and Slattery (2009) are largely derivative, it is  
117 evident that Taylor’s *‘Ritzy’* (2003) and Spang’s *‘Invention of the Restaurant’* (2011) are based upon a  
118 considerable amount of original research.

119 Primary data sources include contemporary business directories (1794 – 1901); memoirs by  
120 travellers (Granville, 1842) and notable chefs (Escoffier, 1997); and national and specialist hotel  
121 industry newspapers (1764 – 1897). Eleven business directories were manually analysed to explore  
122 the growth in the number of hotels in four different locations which are listed in these publications.  
123 However, in this period not all businesses were listed in business directories (Cook, 1843) so the data  
124 is not complete and the evidence can only demonstrate trends. To produce valid research outputs,  
125 business historians need to ensure that their sources are authentic – known as external criticism -  
126 and that the details ‘in a source are credible’ – known as internal criticism (Wood, 1990, p84). It is  
127 clearly evident that the business directories, memoirs, and newspapers were published at the time  
128 and are therefore authentic. The veracity of the content of business directories is transparent; but  
129 newspaper editorials, readers’ letters and reports comprise peoples’ opinions at the time and can  
130 therefore be contested. However, most of the newspaper evidence used in this research does not  
131 engage in controversial or political commentary and these sources have a good degree of credibility.

132

## 133 2. THE 18<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY INN-KEEPING SOCIO-TECHNOLOGICAL REGIME

134 Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, demand and supply of inns increased  
135 in towns and along the roads of England (Borer, 1972). This demand was linked to the growth  
136 of stagecoach travel but, upon arrival at their destination, the vast majority of travellers lived

137 in lodging houses and private homes (Granville, 1841). A small number of coaching inns, like  
138 the White Bear Inn, Piccadilly in London and the George at Stamford were grander  
139 establishments but typically inns were modest (Taylor, 2003).

140 The literature reveals two alternative perspectives of the welcome, comfort and service  
141 provided by coaching inns. One perspective provides a romantic attachment to Dickens'  
142 Pickwickian concept of a 'hospitable host ... roaring fire ... inviting spread ... best wines ... jovial  
143 company' (Matz, 1922, p. 18). The other critiques 'the many shortcomings' (Granville, 1842, p.  
144 78) and 'exorbitant charges' (Harper, 1906, p. 51) of English inns.

145 Inns normally provided at least one more comfortable room for wealthy customers who  
146 travelled in their private coaches, but the majority of coach travellers shared rooms (Borer,  
147 1972). The customers were mainly male, 'women of the middle classes did not travel a great  
148 deal in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century' (Borer, 1972, p. 164). The inns provided rudimentary  
149 communal accommodation for most travellers, with modest food and no choice (Mennell,  
150 1996, p137), all of which was paid for by post-consumption bartering – a contentious  
151 negotiating system because prices were not published in advance and customers had limited  
152 bargaining power. A *Times* comment in 1787 criticised how the inn-keepers of Portsmouth  
153 were at 'open-war' with their customers by making 'double charges' (The Times, 1787) and  
154 this reproach reflected popular attitudes to inns. Although Clark's (1983) social history of  
155 English alehouses does not focus on inns, his research and observations about public houses  
156 in the late Hanoverian period is analogous to inns of the same era. Clark identified a number  
157 of trends including an increase in the 'size and specialisation of premises' (p273); well-  
158 established landlords who had often been employed in domestic service (p282); and  
159 increasing economic and social challenges (Clark, 1983, p250).

160 This established socio-technical regime of inn-keeping at the beginning of the long  
161 nineteenth century was to be challenged by multiple dimensions of the exogenous landscape

162 which created opportunities for the gradual adoption of socio-technological innovations  
163 which ultimately transformed the industry.

164

### 165 **3. MACRO LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENTS**

166 A. N. Wilson's description of the Victorian era as 'the most radical transformation ever  
167 seen by the world' (2003, p. 1) succinctly captures the revolutionary essence of this period.  
168 The key features of the nineteenth century macro landscape include population growth,  
169 industrialisation, urbanisation, the transport revolution which enhanced mobility, social and  
170 political reform, and wealth generation. These factors amalgamated to stimulate an  
171 extraordinary demand for commercial travel and leisure tourism. Britain achieved the highest  
172 rate of population increase in Europe, from 5.9 million in 1750 to 40.8 million by 1911  
173 (Crouzet, 1982, p. 20); and in spite of this rapid population growth, industrialisation enabled  
174 per capita income to grow throughout the century (Court, 1965, p3). From the origins of the  
175 Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century, there was a  
176 'self-sustaining process of (cumulative) innovation' which powered technological  
177 developments (Mathias, 1969, p. 129). A general mechanisation of British industry, combined  
178 with steam-powered railways and iron ships, created an intercontinental economy which by  
179 1900 raised living standards across Europe (Allen, 2009, p. 273). England was the first  
180 industrial nation (Mathias, 1969) and for most of the nineteenth century the British Empire  
181 had an economic and political power which fascinated contemporaries in the rest of the world  
182 (Crouzet, 1982, p. 1). Throughout the nineteenth century, Britain was the richest country in  
183 Europe (Crouzet, 1982, p. 6) and consumers had more time to enjoy leisure (Flanders, 2006).

184 The transport revolution was an integral element in the industrialisation and urbanisation  
185 process, which enhanced mobility between rural and urban areas and critically moved people  
186 and goods faster within cities (Osterhammel, 2014, p. 911). The number of British railway



187 passenger journeys grew from 24.5 million in 1842 to 507 million in 1875 (Gourich, 1980, p.  
188 26) and this democratisation of 'faster and cheaper travel also stimulated the growth of  
189 leisure activities, particularly in coastal resorts' (Gourich, 1980, p. 31). Indeed, the railways  
190 created a social as well as a transport revolution, 'in a world which had been so immobile'  
191 (Wolmar, 2007, p84), and this transformation drove demand for both business and leisure  
192 accommodation. Morgan suggests that 'travel was both cause and effect of the growth of a  
193 highly commercialised touring industry in the Victorian period (Morgan, 2001, p. 16). The  
194 growth of tourism was also dependent upon cultural, social and political reform which  
195 historians describe as emancipation (Barzun, 2000); and 'the nineteenth century was a  
196 century of emancipation' (Osterhammel, 2014, p. 915). Emancipation included reforms such  
197 as the abolition of slavery; the spread of democracy, education and literacy; and a growing  
198 movement for children's, women's and worker's rights.

199 The concept of travel 'as an end in itself' (Flanders, 2006, p. 219) evolved in the mid-late  
200 eighteenth century and interest was fuelled by an increasing number of travel books and  
201 guides (Flanders, 2006, p. 220). As the English became wealthier, more literate, had more  
202 leisure time, and were more mobile, so the demand for leisure tourism – and the demand for  
203 leisure accommodation – grew throughout the period. Whilst the nobility and landed gentry  
204 had travelled for leisure from the early-seventeenth century, middle class travel was already  
205 established by the end of the Napoleonic Wars (Towner, 1985), and working class leisure  
206 travel emerged in the 1840's and 1850's (Flanders, 2006). Also there was a significant  
207 increase in the demand for business accommodation generated by manufacturing companies  
208 and the services sector (Slattery, 2009).

209 The development of hotels in England during this period is well-established, however a  
210 simple demand and supply analysis does not provide an explanation of how traditional inn-  
211 keeping was transformed into a professional hotel management industry. A series of socio-

212 technical innovations gradually cumulated throughout the century to transform the concept  
213 of inn-keeping.

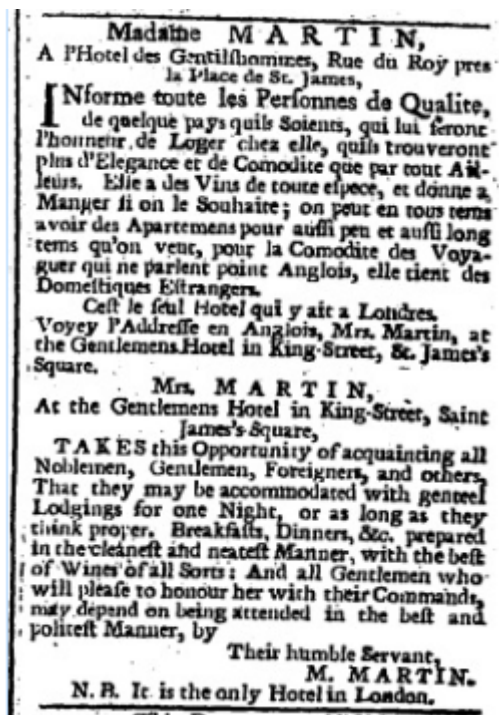
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#### 215 4. SOCIO-TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS WHICH TRANSFORMED 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY 216 HOSPITALITY IN ENGLAND

217 The following section provides a brief review of ten key socio-technological innovations which  
218 influenced the development of the English hotel industry in the long nineteenth century.

##### 219 4.1 *The origins and early diffusion of the hotel concept in England*

220 The innovative concept of a 'hotel' as a superior form of genteel accommodation for  
221 travellers was introduced to England from France in the 1760's (Denis, 1986). The first adverts for a  
222 hotel in English newspapers was for Madame Martin's Gentlemens Hotel in St James Square, London  
223 in November and December 1764 (*London Evening Post*, 1764).



224

225

226 Figure: 2 Advert for Madame Martin's Gentlemens Hotel, *London Evening Post* (London, England),  
227 November 17, 1764.

228

229           These adverts emphasise the French influence by the use of French language in the first  
230 paragraph; clearly position the quality of the 'hotel' by targeting 'Noblemen and Gentlemen;' and  
231 the footnote claims 'it is the only hotel in London.' From 1767, adverts appeared for several other  
232 London hotels including the London Court Hotel (*Public Advertiser*, 1767), the English Hotel in  
233 Leicester Fields (*Public Advertiser*, 1768), and by 1769 Peter Berlon was advertising his new coffee  
234 house, inn and tavern in Exeter as a hotel, firstly in English and also in French (*Middlesex Journal*,  
235 1769).

236           In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, town and county directories provided local information including listings  
237 of residents and tradesmen; these were commercial directories and participants paid to be listed.  
238 Table 1 provides data about hotels, inns and taverns listed in 12 directories from 1794 to 1901; the  
239 listings are for London, the capital; Leicester, a mercantile midlands city; Scarborough, a northern  
240 coastal resort; and York, a historic civic and social centre. The data reveals that by 1805 London had  
241 a large number of small hotels which were converted either from existing inns/taverns or domestic  
242 houses. However, in the provinces only a few hotels were established in the first half of the century.  
243 The names of accommodation establishments were easily changed. For example, Thomas Etridge  
244 owned the Ringrose Inn in York in 1805 (Holden, 1805); he changed its name to the eponymous  
245 Etridge's Hotel by 1809 (Holden, 1809); and by 1828, perhaps following a visit by royalty, changed  
246 the name again - to the Royal Hotel (Pigot, 1828). Few directories listed lodging houses; but the  
247 importance of this accommodation sector to resorts like Scarborough is evident by there being  
248 listed, and by the growth from 71 in 1828 (Pigot, 1828) to 538 in 1890 (Bulmer, 1890). Throughout  
249 the century, and in all locations, the listings demonstrate how coffee-houses, tea gardens, inns and  
250 taverns could all have 'hotel' added as a prefix or a suffix to the business name. It was only in the  
251 final quarter of the century that hotel development dramatically increased in the provinces; and  
252 although the number of hotels listed in London directories did not increase as dramatically, the size

253 of London hotels and the range of amenities offered were transformed later in the period (see  
 254 section 4.6).

<b>LONDON</b>	1805 (Holden)	1841 (Kelly, F)	1891 (Kelly, E)
Hotels	75	166	245
Inns/Taverns	N/A	197	24
<b>LEICESTER</b>	1794 (Weston)	1843 (Cook, T)	1901 (Bennett)
Hotels	1	4	87
Inns/Taverns	30	242	296
<b>SCARBOROUGH</b>	1828 (Pigot)	1840 (White)	1890 (Bulmer)
Hotels	2	2	48
Inns/Taverns	64	70	56
Lodging Houses	71	193	538
<b>YORK</b>	1805 (Holden)	1843 (Smith)	1900 (Cook, W)
Hotels	1	10	42
Inns/Taverns	3	209	180

255

256 *Table 1 Hotel listings in English Business Directories, 1794-1900.*

257

258 Whilst this data demonstrates trends in the evolution of the English hotel industry, the  
 259 actual figures should be treated with caution. Businesses had to pay to be listed and many choose  
 260 not to. Thomas Cook in the ‘compiler’s tablet’, which was in the preface to his 1843 Directory,  
 261 explains the difficulties of ‘obtaining a correct list of names,’ when compiling a directory of all  
 262 tradesmen, by explaining how many requests for information ‘were treated with indifference ...  
 263 (and) ... contempt’ (Cook, 1843). In particular the number of inns and taverns is almost certainly  
 264 under-represented in these directories. Murray’s (2004) review of York pubs states that in 1795  
 265 there were 164 licensed premises compared to Holden’s listing of only 3 inns/taverns in 1805  
 266 (Holden, 1805).

267

#### 268 4.2 *The influence of French cuisine*

269 The concept of the modern restaurant, with menus, fixed prices for individual dishes,  
 270 and customer’s ‘own tables’, originated in France in the late 1760’s (Spang, 2011, p79). French

271 cuisine was regarded as the preeminent style of cooking in England - partly because France  
272 was 'the origin of elaborate cooking'; partly because English and European nobility regarded  
273 French cuisine as fashionable; and partly because the French Revolution democratised the  
274 concept of the restaurant (Ganter, 2004, p. 440). Indeed gastronomy, which is 'the art of good  
275 eating', was developed in Paris in the early 1800's and was championed by Grimrod in his  
276 annual *Almanach des gourmands*; this innovative restaurant review created the  
277 knowledgeable and sophisticated 'gourmand' and helped to transform cuisine into an art form  
278 (Spang, 2011, p150-157). Throughout the nineteenth century French cuisine's hegemony over  
279 England meant that French chefs, such as Careme and Escoffier, monopolised professional  
280 cookery book writing and promulgated *haute* and *grand cuisine* at the expense of the English  
281 'farmhouse' tradition – helping to denigrate English cooking (Mennell, 1996, pp 134-135).

282         One consequence of the French Revolution was the emigration of cooks from L'  
283 Ancien Regime, who brought their culinary skills to new-style restaurants and hotels in  
284 London and the provinces (Osterhammel, 2014, p. 232). By 1856, *Cunningham's Guide to*  
285 *London* describes a wide range of hotels and restaurants which serve French cuisine  
286 (Cunningham, 1856, p. xxxv – xxxix). From the 1870's onwards, the hotel and catering media  
287 devoted extensive coverage to French cuisine (*The Weekly Chronicle, 1888; The Hotel World,*  
288 *1892*). Fashionable restaurants such as the Café Anglais in Paris were regularly featured. Their  
289 high quality menus, aristocratic customers and the 'excellence of its cuisine and cellar' (*The*  
290 *Caterer and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette, 1879*) were presented as examples of best restaurant  
291 practice. Towards the end of the century, D'Oyly Carte's Prospectus for the Savoy Hotel stated  
292 he would establish a 'Restaurant which shall equal such famous establishments as Bignon's  
293 and the Café Anglais in Paris ... French cuisine will naturally occupy the first position' (*The*  
294 *Savoy Prospectus, 1889*).

295         Although French cuisine was regarded as the pinnacle of restaurant cooking, it was Ritz who  
296 recognised the critical role of a successful restaurant as central to a hotel's popularity (Ritz, M,

297 1938). Escoffier who introduced his innovative kitchen brigade management system to the Savoy in  
298 1890 created the first large scale systematic restaurant system in England (Ganter, 2004). While  
299 Escoffier's industrial, mass production, assembly-line technology revolutionised the English kitchen  
300 management, his championing of simpler menus, with lighter but more intense sauces to create  
301 balanced dishes using 'a few superb ingredients', appealed to the new restaurant market of mixed  
302 fashionable society (Mennell, 1996, pp 158-160). With brigades of up to 200 chefs and trainees  
303 working in his kitchens, Escoffier trained 100's of young English chefs who emulated his  
304 management system. Escoffier in his memoirs stated 'the Savoy Hotel, including its restaurant, soon  
305 became a model of modern hotel management' (Escoffier, 1997, p. 90).

#### 306 4.3 Railway hotels

307 In 1839, the first railway hotel was built in London at Euston, originally called the Victoria  
308 and Adelaide (Denby, p. 46) and, during the Railway Mania of the next seven years, many station  
309 hotels were built; but the railway companies did not operate these hotels, they leased them to  
310 tenants at high rents. The railway companies were able to raise significant capital to invest in the  
311 building of larger and grander hotels; and eventually the management of railway hotels developed  
312 into proto-type hotel groups (see 4.9). By 1911, 23 railway companies owned 107 hotels in major  
313 provincial cities and towns, and most were managed not leased (Carter, 1989). Despite the small  
314 number of railway company-owned hotels, they had a significant influence on the nascent and  
315 evolving English hotel industry.

316

#### 317 4.4 *The 'system of tours'*

318 In the nineteenth century, the English hotel industry was completely fragmented.  
319 There was limited multiple ownership and no industry organisations to represent the  
320 thousands of small independent hotels and inns. The concept of marketing was restricted to  
321 basic advertising; and the concept of distribution channels was unknown. Indeed, the entire

322 tourism industry of this period – the railway companies, the stagecoach operators as well as  
323 hospitality businesses - lacked coordination. Each business and each sector operated in silos  
324 and competed in a chaotic market place.

325         The origins of tourism distribution and promotion, including the role of Thomas Cook  
326 as a ‘tourist pioneer’ in organising/promoting excursions in the 1840’s, are well-documented  
327 (Brendon, 1991; Cook, 1857; Cook, 1861; Flanders, 2006; Morgan, 2001; and Withey, 1998).  
328 As part of his tourist system, Cook searched for ‘inexpensive, clean and conveniently located’  
329 accommodation establishments, preferably run on temperance principles (Withey, 1998, p.  
330 140). Cook, a Baptist temperance campaigner, always had a ‘special regard for the humbler  
331 class of traveller’ (Cook, 1861) and championed travel opportunities for ladies either travelling  
332 in groups or alone. Cook recommended specific hotels and boarding houses with an indication  
333 of what was a reasonable charge. His ‘Scottish Tourism Official Directory’ of 1861  
334 recommended ‘first class hotels ... at very moderate rates’ and suggested that beds should  
335 cost between 2s 0d and 2s 6d (Cook, 1861, pp. 25 - 26).

336         The advantages of Cook’s commercial strategy for English hotel-keepers was  
337 transparent at the time. In 1853, the Chambers’ Edinburgh Journal stated it is ‘worthwhile to  
338 (the) inn-keeper to supply comfortable meals and comfortable beds at lower charges, when  
339 he can secure many customers at one time’ (Cook, 1861, p. 33). Eventually the concept of  
340 creating an ‘entire system of tours’ bringing together railway-owners, steam-boat owners,  
341 stagecoach-owners, hotel-owners to work together for the benefit of tourists instead of  
342 ‘fleecing them’ (Cook, 1861) evolved into a single-ticket, all-inclusive tour price. By 1867 Cook  
343 had introduced a successful coupon system, where travellers paid in advance for  
344 accommodation, meals and service at a set price at participating hotels – since the coupon  
345 ‘was in lieu of payment’, hoteliers must have had considerable trust in Cook’s system (Seaton  
346 and Bennett, 1996, p484). The tour market evolved into a competitive tourism system which  
347 promoted and distributed a significant number of hotels, operating in all market sectors via

348 operators like Gaze, Frame's Tours, Henry Lunn, as well as Thomas Cook & Son (Brendon,  
349 1991, p. 185).

350 From a hotel industry perspective the development of promotion and distribution  
351 channels helped to provide travellers with appropriate information about hotels; expand the  
352 market for women and working class travellers; raise service standards; reduce hotel charges;  
353 and all these factors combined to increase hotel occupancies and profitability.

354

#### 355 4.5 *The guest perspective in the 1850's*

356 As users, guests are an integral component of the socio-technological regime, but in Victorian  
357 times there were limited opportunities for customers to publicly comment about their hotel  
358 experiences. In September 1853, *The Times* received 'upwards of four hundred letters' (*The Times*,  
359 1853) from English hotel customers complaining about high charges for poor accommodation and  
360 food - especially compared with hotels in Continental Europe and North America. *The Times*  
361 published approximately 85 of these letters. Complaints included the overall atmosphere, décor and  
362 comfort in hotels; the need to tip for poor service; the lack of printed tariffs; and additional high  
363 charges for items such as 1 shilling and 6 pence for a wax candle to provide light in the bedroom -  
364 essential in an age before electric lighting, (Bowie, 2016). The only sector which seemed to  
365 effectively cater for their customers were inns accommodating commercial travellers.

366 The letter writers reflected a wide spectrum of hotel users including MPs, magistrates, the  
367 clergy, Cambridge graduates, professionals, merchants, the military, and tradesmen (Bowie, 2016).  
368 Letter writers recognised that the current laws on limited liability inhibited the development of  
369 modern hotels; others called for the need to build larger, more efficient hotels similar to American  
370 hotels and to publish tariffs so that customers knew what they would be charged before staying; and  
371 the poor treatment of lady travellers was highlighted (Bowie, 2016). *The Times* and national  
372 newspapers joined in the debate and campaigned for English hotels to improve their service, reduce



373 their charges and introduce innovations from abroad such as the 'American Plan'. A popular  
374 pamphlet printed 2 years later called *The English Hotel Nuisance* endorsed these criticisms of English  
375 hotels (Smith, 1855).

376           The evidence from these letters suggests that there was a growing demand for better  
377 quality, better value, and more professionally managed hotels in England. These knowledgeable  
378 travellers understood the deficiencies of mid-century Victorian commercial accommodation,  
379 proposed remedies to improve the failings, and some were even prepared to invest in new hotel  
380 companies. As guests, arguably, they understood the needs of customers better than the hotel  
381 proprietors and their complaints contributed to changes in limited liability company legislation.

#### 382 4.6    *Adoption of American building and technological innovations*

383           Nineteenth century hotel development in the USA was quite different to the traditional  
384 European inn-keeping model. The volume of demand generated by mass immigration created the  
385 need for considerably larger hotels which provided a greater range of services to the community  
386 (Denby, 2002). American hotel building adopted the technology of commercial architecture used in  
387 public buildings such as concrete to construct larger hotels, called caravanserais, and incorporated  
388 elevators, gas lighting, and plumbing (Brock et al, 2002). Although the Tremont House, Boston,  
389 pioneered several innovations including in-door lavatories and in-door bathrooms in 1830 (Denby,  
390 2002), the first 'grand new hotel' to be built in America was the luxurious Baltimore City Hotel which  
391 opened in 1826 with 100 bedrooms, private suites, and 'was kept by an experienced, professional  
392 hotelkeeper (King, 1957, p181). English travellers in the United States quickly realised that American  
393 hotels were built and operated on very different principals to English hotels (King, 1957).

394           Until the mid-19th century *all* the investors in a British company were liable for *all* the  
395 company's debts; this meant that if a company went into liquidation, the investors could lose not  
396 only their investment but also 'everything else he has in the world' (The Times, 1855). This constraint  
397 was such a significant inhibitor to the creation and development of new ventures, including new

398 hotels, that eventually the law was changed. Following limited liability legislation (1856/57), there is  
399 considerable evidence of the adoption of American technological innovations in London hotels and  
400 the provinces.

401       Between 1860 and 1890, 16 major London hotels opened (Taylor, 2002) including the  
402 Westminster Palace (1860), the Midland Grand St Pancras (1873), the First Avenue Holborn (1883),  
403 and the Savoy (1889). These London hotels borrowed the architectural scale of American  
404 caravanserai hotels and the size increased from 103 bedrooms (the Great Western Royal Hotel,  
405 1853); to 300 bedrooms (the Langham 1865); and by 1896 the Cecil opened with 800 bedrooms  
406 (Taylor, 2003). American technological innovations were also quickly transferred to England. The  
407 Westminster Palace installed lifts only three years after Otis installed the first lift in a New York Store  
408 in 1857 (Simmons, 1984). The Savoy Hotel incorporated contemporary American building techniques  
409 including a very high ratio of bathrooms (67 bathrooms for 400 bedrooms), compared to the more  
410 typical ratio of 4 bathrooms for five hundred guests provided at the recently opened Hotel Victoria  
411 (Borer, 1972, p. 199). Other American inspired technological innovations, which improved the  
412 efficiency of hotel operations in England, were introduced: 'our go-ahead (American) cousins ... are  
413 credited with ... being the first to institute hotel laundry' (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette*,  
414 1892a); and 'fans driven by small motors are used for the ventilation of kitchens, billiard and dining  
415 rooms' *The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette*, 1892a).

416       The adoption of American building and operational technological innovations was not  
417 accidental. From the late-1850's, English hotel Directors encouraged their managers to travel abroad  
418 to learn and this practice continued (Bowie, 2016). The Midland Railway Company sent their  
419 architect and hotel manager to visit hotels in America 'to get the best information as to the structure  
420 and management of hotels' *The Manchester Guardian*. (1897).

421

422 4.7       *Adoption of American management systems – the 'American Plan'*

423           With larger hotels, American hotel managers developed more efficient systems to manage  
424 the greater volume of guests. This management system, which 'by 1830 (was) known as the  
425 American Plan' (Berger, 2011), comprised fixed daily tariffs for rooms and meals, the requirement  
426 for customers to register and pay for the lodging/food upon arrival, and pre-determined times for  
427 dining. The Tremont House, Boston not only introduced building innovations but also developed  
428 novel service attributes such as private locked bedrooms, free soap, and 'training their staff to be  
429 guided by respect for the customers' (Denby, 2002, p. 34). *The Times* stated that 'the word "hotel" in  
430 its broadest sense in the States includes much more than merely food and lodging' and described  
431 extensive facilities including several 'parlours, reading, writing and smoking rooms ... billiards, pool  
432 room, ten-pin alley ... restaurant, wine and coffee rooms ... (and) all kinds of shops' (*The Times*,  
433 1887). Indeed Berger, taking a socio-cultural perspective, suggests the modern luxury hotel was a  
434 product of American nation building and luxury American hotels were symbolic 'palaces of the  
435 public' where the concept of a hotel as a democratic public place was established (Berger, 2011).

436           English hotels adopted many American management and service practices. In 1858, the  
437 New York Hotel near Leicester Square, London, was one of the first English hotels to adopt the  
438 American Plan (Bowie, 2016). However, an indication of the lengthy adoption period is  
439 provided by the Windsor Hotel, London, which adopted the American Plan thirty years later  
440 (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette*, 1888). Even the names of new English hotels  
441 reflected the American idiom. Several hotels incorporated 'palace' into their name, examples  
442 include The Palace at Buxton and the Palace at Southport (Taylor, 2002); and the name of the  
443 First Avenue, Holborn, London clearly borrows from the lexicon of the American city  
444 (Simmons, 1984). Minor American management concepts were adopted such as the hotel  
445 detective (*Hotel World*, 1883) and a 'lady typewriter' for guests' correspondence (*The Caterer  
446 and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette*, 1893).

447        These innovations and some of their social consequences were apparent at the time. In  
448        1881 it was reported ‘the construction in England during the last twenty years of gigantic  
449        hotels upon the American system’ has contributed to changes in social relationships including  
450        ‘scrapping the wholesale acquaintance with other visitors *without* the medium of a mutual  
451        introduction’ (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors’ Gazette*, 1881).

#### 452    4.8    *Emergence of a specialist hospitality media*

453            A significant innovation for all sectors of the English hotel industry was the  
454        introduction of specialist hospitality management newspapers. The influence of the catering  
455        and hotel press on a rapidly growing industry can be gauged by the number of specialist  
456        hospitality publications launched in Britain between 1866 and 1909 – the British Library  
457        National Newspaper Archive reveals that 17 were published, although several only lasted a  
458        few years. A key feature was the publicity given to foreign hospitality managerial innovations  
459        such as an article describing the operations of American hotels provided details about staffing  
460        and salaries (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors’ Gazette*, 1883); and another, suggesting the  
461        many potential uses of electricity stated if ‘we wake up about 1950 ... observe the progress of  
462        electricity’ and the novel possibility of cooking on electric (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors*  
463        *Gazette*. (1892c).

464            The significant number of articles in the catering press describing foreign innovations  
465        and descriptions of best practice from all around the world enabled English hoteliers and their  
466        employees to read about, and where appropriate, adopt these new ideas. In 1890 an  
467        advertisement for the *Caterer and Hotel Proprietor* in Willing’s British and Irish Press Guide  
468        and Advertiser’s Directory and Handbook states that there is a ‘certified circulation of 70,000  
469        copies’ (Willing, 1890). Since most copies would be read by several people working on the  
470        hospitality premises, the diffusion of ideas and innovations must have been significant.

471

472 4.9 *The emergence of English hotel groups*

473 The concept of a group of hotels managed by the same company gradually evolved in the  
474 1880's and 1890's, firstly through railway company hotels and secondly, through the actions of  
475 visionary entrepreneurs and philanthropists. In the early 1880's the Midland Railway appointed  
476 William Towle as a group catering manager (Taylor, 2002). Towle recognised that leasing hotels was  
477 unsatisfactory because of the difficulties in providing uniform quality of service standards for the  
478 customer (Carter, 1989); and introduced more consistent, enhanced service standards in the  
479 Midland Railway Hotels.

480 At the same time several entrepreneurs, including Frederic Gordon, D' Olyly Carte, and later  
481 Earl Grey, began to develop collections of hotels which evolved into prototype hotel brands. Gordon  
482 built several hotels in London, including the First Avenue and Metropole, as well as Metropole hotels  
483 in Brighton, Whitby, Cannes and Monte Carlo before floating his eponymous hotel group, Gordon  
484 Hotels, on the London Stock Exchange in 1890 (Taylor, 2002). After building the Savoy, D' Olyly Carte  
485 bought Claridges, the Berkeley and the Connaught. These London hotels, known as the Savoy Group,  
486 maintained Ritz' service standards and became a recognised English luxury brand serving an  
487 international clientele. In the 1900's the philanthropist, Earl Grey, championed the establishment of  
488 county trusts to take over and upgrade semi-derelict, older coaching inns with a focus on selling  
489 food, non-intoxicating drinks and rooms (Pope, 2000). By 1914, there were 37 Trust House hotels, 32  
490 of them with accommodation (Taylor, 2002, p. 185).

491 These early hotel groups<sup>2</sup>, targeting a range of different market sectors, began to develop  
492 more rigorous approaches to management services, including improving the standards of quality,

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<sup>2</sup> British Transport Hotels, Gordon Hotels, the Savoy Group, and Trust House Hotels were all leading British hotel brands until the second half of the twentieth century; and Ritz Carlton is still trading as a Marriott brand today.

493 services and facilities, training (Slattery, 2009, p. 42), and brand advertising. In 1900, the recently  
494 floated Frederick Hotels promoted 'summer holidays at modern English hotels' in an advert for their  
495 hotels in London, Bexhill, Dover, Folkestone, Harrogate and Whitby (*Illustrated London News*, 1900).

496

#### 497 4.10 *Emancipation and entertainment*

498 The culmination of the nineteenth century emancipation movement in Western cultural life,  
499 especially women's emancipation and the liberation from sexual and social taboos (Barzun, 2000, p.  
500 627), was reflected by consumers' behaviour, and especially their conspicuous consumption, in  
501 English hotels between 1890 and 1914. Some events at The Savoy illustrate how London society  
502 enjoyed *La Belle Epoch*. To create atmosphere and encourage diners to linger, Ritz engaged Johann  
503 Strauss and his Viennese Orchestra to play in the Restaurant; this was the first time that such dinner  
504 entertainment was provided in English hotels. Its success was quickly imitated by London, provincial  
505 and resort hotel restaurants (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette*, 1894); and the Savoy's  
506 'after-theatre suppers became the fashion' (Ritz, 1939, pp. 150 - 152). Another Victorian social  
507 convention was that respectable women did not smoke in public. The first report of a woman  
508 smoking in public occurred at the Savoy Restaurant in 1896, when the Duchesse de Clermont-  
509 Tonnerre smoked several cigarettes at dinner (Savoy Hotel, 2015). Throughout the period  
510 newspapers like the *Illustrated London News* revealed smart society celebrating events lavishly,  
511 including the flooding of the Savoy front court to create a Venetian canal complete with gondolier  
512 for the millionaire Alfred Beits' dinner, see Figure 3. Such conspicuous consumption was not  
513 restricted to London; and by the turn of the century English hotels became palaces of the people by  
514 providing a 'centre of social functions ... with no restriction of membership and no distinction  
515 between the sexes' (The Times, 1899).

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518

Figure 3 Alfred Beit's Venetian dinner at the Savoy Hotel. *The Illustrated London News*. 1906.

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520

521 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

522           A schematic of the multi-level perspective of socio-technological transitions in English  
523 hotel industry during the long nineteenth century (Figure 1) presents the exogenous macro  
524 drivers, which generated pressure on the traditional inn-keeping meso, socio-technical regime  
525 and created windows of opportunity for a series of micro, niche innovations to become  
526 established. This multi-level perspective captures the complex interaction between multiple  
527 landscape developments and a broad range of socio and technological innovations which  
528 transformed the industry and fashioned a new configuration of professional hotel  
529 management.

530 The fragmented characteristics of the English industry and the diversity of the different innovations  
531 meant that the rate of adoption, which was the decision of thousands of individual owners/managers,  
532 was variable. Inevitably there will have been a number of 'laggard' inns and hotels which were slow  
533 to adopt innovations. As a result of the hospitality socio-technical innovations which were gradually  
534 adopted by most hotels at the end of the long nineteenth century, the old eighteenth century amateur  
535 inn-keeping regime was replaced by more professional hotel management. This new socio-technical  
536 regime comprised larger, modern hotels, with enhanced facilities and incorporating contemporary  
537 technology, serving more sophisticated British and international customers. These modern hotels  
538 provided higher quality restaurants, offering fixed-price and a la carte menus with more choice, and  
539 were managed by more professional hotel managers. In London, major towns, cities, and resorts,  
540 modern hotels provided entertainment and enabled consumers to engage in symbolic consumption.  
541 Finally, customers did not need to engage in a bartering system to pay the hotel charges, since  
542 published tariffs ensured that guests knew exactly what the price was.

543           The application of Geels's (2002) technological transitions, akin to Elias's (1978) concept of  
544 waves of knowledge, to the evolution of the English hotel industry in the long nineteenth  
545 century provides a more balanced and nuanced evaluation to analysing hotel industry  
546 development compared to existing English hotel history narratives. This approach allows for a  
547 deeper exploration of the complex and diverse drivers of change. As a mid-range theory this



548 article also responds to Walton's (2009) call for a new approach to tourism history research by  
549 integrating historical meta-theory and micro-history with a meso-context in a combined  
550 analysis.

551 There are of course a number of limitations which need to be discussed. In exploring the  
552 development of the English hotel industry over a 150-year period, inevitably the breadth and  
553 scope of the article takes a broad canvass approach which restricts the discussion of specific  
554 sectors in more depth. For example, the selection of the ten innovations discussed in this article  
555 could be contested, as could the weight of discussion for each innovation. There is more  
556 attention given to the luxury than the mid or budget sectors; and developments in London are  
557 discussed in more detail than the provinces or resorts. Despite these limitations, the article does  
558 provide an original methodological approach to analysing tourism history which encompasses  
559 a more complex analysis.

560 There are several future research directions emerging from this paper. The  
561 methodology adopted in this article could be used in a variety of tourism history contexts; for  
562 example the historical evolution of the hotel industry in different countries and during different  
563 epochs. From a broader tourism management research context, a multi-level perspective  
564 research methodology could enable the development of mid-range theories in other fields of  
565 tourism research - such as sustainable tourism.

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