

1 INNOVATION AND 19TH 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.

16 1. INTRODUCTION

17 To date, sources which describe the history of the English hotel industry¹ 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,

¹ The focus of this research is on the English hotel industry.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

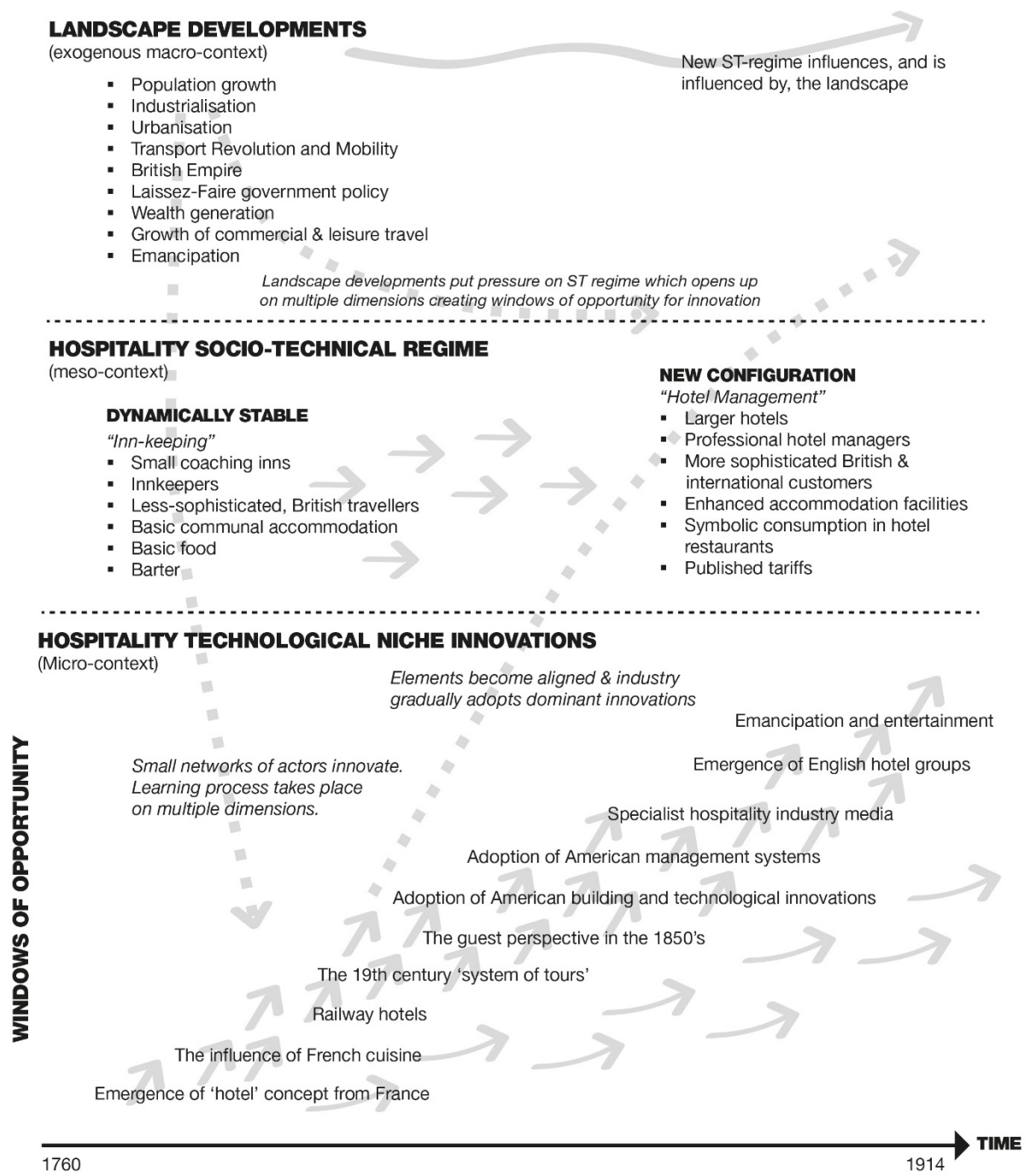


Figure 1 A multi-level perspective of socio-technological transitions in the English hotel industry (1760 – 1914).

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

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

2. THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURY INN-KEEPING SOCIO-TECHNOLOGICAL REGIME

Throughout the 18th and the early 19th centuries, demand and supply of inns increased in towns and along the roads of England (Borer, 1972). This demand was linked to the growth 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 19th 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

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

3. MACRO LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. SOCIO-TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS WHICH TRANSFORMED 19TH CENTURY HOSPITALITY IN ENGLAND

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

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

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

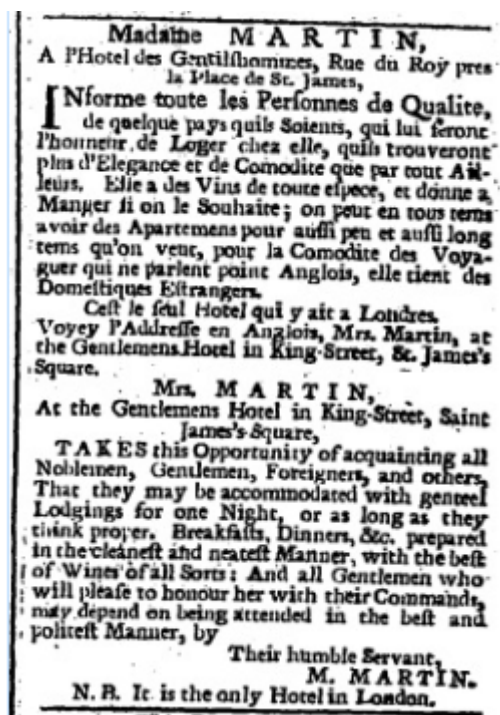


Figure: 2 Advert for Madame Martin's Gentlemens Hotel, *London Evening Post* (London, England), November 17, 1764.

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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 19th 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

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

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

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

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

4.2 *The influence of French cuisine*

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

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

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

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

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

4.3 Railway hotels

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

4.4 *The 'system of tours'*

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

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

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

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

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

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

4.5 *The guest perspective in the 1850's*

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

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

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

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

4.6 *Adoption of American building and technological innovations*

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

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

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

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

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

4.7 Adoption of American management systems – the ‘American Plan’

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

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

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

4.8 *Emergence of a specialist hospitality media*

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

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

4.9 *The emergence of English hotel groups*

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

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

These early hotel groups², targeting a range of different market sectors, began to develop more rigorous approaches to management services, including improving the standards of quality,

² 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.

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

4.10 *Emancipation and entertainment*

The culmination of the nineteenth century emancipation movement in Western cultural life, especially women's emancipation and the liberation from sexual and social taboos (Barzun, 2000, p. 627), was reflected by consumers' behaviour, and especially their conspicuous consumption, in English hotels between 1890 and 1914. Some events at The Savoy illustrate how London society enjoyed *La Belle Epoch*. To create atmosphere and encourage diners to linger, Ritz engaged Johann Strauss and his Viennese Orchestra to play in the Restaurant; this was the first time that such dinner entertainment was provided in English hotels. Its success was quickly imitated by London, provincial and resort hotel restaurants (*The Caterer and Hotel Proprietors' Gazette*, 1894); and the Savoy's 'after-theatre suppers became the fashion' (Ritz, 1939, pp. 150 - 152). Another Victorian social convention was that respectable women did not smoke in public. The first report of a woman smoking in public occurred at the Savoy Restaurant in 1896, when the Duchesse de Clermont-Tonnerre smoked several cigarettes at dinner (Savoy Hotel, 2015). Throughout the period newspapers like the *Illustrated London News* revealed smart society celebrating events lavishly, including the flooding of the Savoy front court to create a Venetian canal complete with gondolier for the millionaire Alfred Beits' dinner, see Figure 3. Such conspicuous consumption was not restricted to London; and by the turn of the century English hotels became palaces of the people by providing a 'centre of social functions ... with no restriction of membership and no distinction 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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521 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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