

**Modernisation in the Metropolis:
Interiors, Gender and Luxury in the Regent Palace Hotel
(1888 – 1935)**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Kingston University
for the degree Doctor of Philosophy**

**By
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October 2013



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Acknowledgements

I am in debt to many for contributing ideas and responses to the various stages of this research, first and foremost, I would like to thank my two supervisors, Professor Anne Massey and Dr Trevor Keeble, for their guidance and support throughout the research process and in writing this thesis. Also, to show gratitude to Kingston University and the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture for the financial support I have received. Within the university many colleagues have listened and offered advice, in the School of Art and Design History, they include: Alice Beard, Helen Potkin and Charles Rice. In the research realm of post-graduates and post-doctoral researchers, I would like to thank Patricia Lara-Betancourt, Fiona Fisher, Claudia Marfella and Pat Wheaton. Senior researchers within the Modern Interiors Research Centre: Pat Kirkham, Alice Friedman, Brenda Martin and Penny Sparke, for offering useful advice during the writing of the thesis. In the wider academic field of design history and cultural studies, colleagues at the University of Brighton have responded to work-in-progress, including Louise Purbrick and the members of the IOTA seminar series. The CHORD network provided a platform to share my research at their annual conference, and I should also wish to thank Jane Hamlett and Sandra Cavello from the Centre for the Study of the Body and Material Culture at Royal Holloway, University of London. More recently, in presenting a somewhat more finalised paper, I must thank Chiara Brigante, Kathy Mezei, Francis Spalding and the Modernist Studies Association. Various members of staff in archives, museums and libraries have assisted in the direction of this research, foremost is Anita Blythe at Worcestershire County Museum and the J. Lyons & Co historian Peter Bird and the Managing Director of the Regent Palace Hotel, Leigh Smith. London Metropolitan Archives was a mainstay as I thank the staff there and those at the RIBA library, National Art Library, the British Library Colindale and St. Peters House Library in Brighton. Further archives whose staff aided enquiries include: City of Westminster Archives Centre, The National Monuments Record and the London Transport Museum Archives. Finally, my sincerest thanks go to my family and close friends who have listened and shown much interest in the thesis and its developments, I am especially grateful to Paul who has been a great support throughout the last six years and beyond.

Abstract

This thesis explores the catering firm J. Lyons & Co as contributors of hotel expansion in the West End of London between 1888 and 1935. Introducing the development of the steel-framed building type, it aims to provide a design historical explanation for the advance of hotels in location, design and interior decoration. The spatial layout of the West End and Piccadilly provide a specific focus for the Regent Palace Hotel, as a building proposed upon the redevelopment of the Regent Street quadrant in 1915. A central argument includes an emergence of the economy hotel in the public space of Edwardian urban reconstruction, as a consequence of material, technological and social processes of the early twentieth century. Removing the imperialist connotations represented by the previous grand Victorian hotels, this study uses design history to investigate the history of interior design and architecture in new luxury hotels. Specifying site location, building facades and urban geographies in Piccadilly as extended architectural frameworks from thoroughfares to thresholds. The main objectives are to reveal how new hotels were built in the late Victorian and Edwardian period, by examining interiors, gender and luxury in relation to one hotel. Analysing the public and private rooms on three levels: lower ground, ground, and upper floors, the thesis examines these as socio-spatial layouts. The large public rooms in the Regent Palace Hotel adapted to incorporate new modes of interior decoration, which established how the new luxury hotel attracted a broader clientele in the modernisation of the West End. The Regent Street quadrant had originated on empire and spectacle in a period of economic transformation, yet in the Edwardian period this space witnessed increased patterns of consumption and a new commodity culture. The study emphasises the capitalist enterprise in hotels, new services and industries, by placing J. Lyons & Co into the urban history of the West End.

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Introduction

*Wonderful - That was how one of the 300 hoteliers who inspected our Greenford Factory on April 12th described the Lyons' organisation. "A fine joint" and "a slick plant" were other terms of praise. The ladies among the visitors were especially interested in the Welfare Department. After luncheon in the pavilion at Sudbury, Major Isidore Salmon in addressing the visitors, said, "the hand that cooks the breakfast rules the world", and went on to prove it. Mr T. D. Green, President of the American Hotel Association, said, "I have just seen one of the most wonderful institutions in my experience. We pride ourselves in America on efficiency and wonderful management, but I have had some of the conceit taken out of me to-day. There is a great deal that I will take home to America."*¹

This statement from 1926 encapsulates how a British company had evolved in local and national retailing using the newly formed American system of manufacture. The evolution of J. Lyons & Co was due to the improvement of spaces for consumption, by providing efficiency and standardization at national exhibitions. As a result of late nineteenth century industrialisation and hotel expansion, this thesis argues that new luxury hotel owners capitalised on this particular moment of modernisation in the metropolis. A point when industry, technology and interiors converged inside such buildings to provide comfort and luxury for a larger customer base. A systematic hospitality was initiated in the West End for the new middle classes, and in doing so catered for the accommodation and employment of women. Importantly, this thesis outlines the attractions of the London hotel for the transatlantic elite class, by proposing an argument for a new hotel type in London at the turn of the twentieth century.

A physically enormous city, an American visitor in 1895 commented on the scope of this geography by commenting that 'one may go east or north or south or west from Charing Cross and almost despair of ever reaching the rim.' London's outer ring stretched from six to fifteen miles in every direction from the centre, containing the new suburbs made possible by the development of commuter trains. From Monument, that was erected as a memorial to the great fire of 1666, located near the heart of London's financial district, tourist's could pay a three pence admission fee, to enter the inner spiral staircase of 346 steps, and emerge able to gaze in all directions without seeing an end to the vast metropolis beneath.² Documentation by American visitors to London illustrated how the immense spaces of the British capital attracted transatlantic tourists in the fin de siècle. Such panoramic views of the city illustrate a breadth of spatial identification, heights and attractions. Amongst these attractions were the commercial

¹ 'American and Continental Hoteliers visit Greenford' in *The Lyons Mail*, May-June 1926, pp. 24-25

² Schneer, Jonathan, *London 1900*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.4

sites of pleasure, famous spaces and destinations in London's West End. Containing a succession of terraces, parks, and gardens, upon which were concentrated the most lavish displays of wealth and ostentation. The sites for the first new luxury hotels compensated for the illusion of the capital as highly desirable and attractive in terms of location, design and experience. A blueprint for forthcoming commercial buildings in less luxurious, yet attractive zones in the centre of the capital including those which emerged in the West End.

Built at the pinnacle of an Edwardian building expansion, focusing on the years between 1888 and 1935, this study examines one hotel in the West End of London. Providing a detailed investigation of a building undocumented in design history that includes an evaluation of each room in the hotel as a vehicle to discuss a broader context. First specifying how the Regent Palace Hotel emerged as an economy version of the new luxury hotels at the end of a period of commercial Edwardian urban renewal. Centrally located at the top end of the Regent Street quadrant in Piccadilly Circus, the building was designed and executed by the sites main architect, Henry Tanner Junior. The design of the hotel complied with the requirements of the regeneration of Regent Street in 1912, as the streets facade and inspiration came from the Paris boulevards. 'The notebooks Henry and his brother Earnest Tanner brought back from their Paris studies included such details as the tabernacle windows, balconies, cornices and dormer windows, which later featured on their Regent Street buildings'³ and further, the Regent Palace Hotel. The continuous borrowing from continental building styles meant that the beaux-arts underpinned the streets design and facades where hotel building types were formed. Resulting in an economy culture of construction in London during the First World War and interior updates throughout the inter-war years.

The thesis explores the late Victorian expansion into hotel building, to provide an explanation for the foundation of J. Lyons & Co and their involvement in the production of luxury establishments and commissioning of popular interiors. Such an important moment of transition for the hotel building type and its national identity has ultimately, until now been focussed on the Victorian years. However, as proposed in this thesis, the hotel's interior has consolidated how modernity, technology, taste and style became manifested in public urban environments in later years also. The study intends to reveal how transatlantic interior design emerged at a point when similar building types were, defined by various cultural sites and architectural structures associated

³ Gray, Stuart, *Edwardian Architecture*, (London: Duckworth) 1985, p.78

with pleasure. As well as functioning through representative facades and layouts, these welcoming establishments contributed to the democratizing effects of large-scale luxury in London.

A departure was marked in the nineteenth century for the manufacturing of new commercially viable building materials, particularly for prestigious commercial and public buildings. Some examples of municipal architecture included local town halls and larger office buildings in the north and south of England. The various forms of terracotta as a primary decorative cladding for internal and external walling for popular buildings included the emergence of various companies. Burmantofts of Leeds entered the commercial mainstream of terracotta manufacturing in the nineteenth century and experienced an increase in architectural commissions. A consequence of demand for quality architectural ceramics in Britain, Julie Gillam Wood explains: 'projects encompassed the simplest back street public house or domestic interior through to the largest and most prestigious of commercial undertakings.'⁴ New materials exemplified how public building types became widespread in the period and consequently how the popular classes began to socialise in their leisure time. With a focus on urban buildings in the West End of London, the widespread advance in new materials expanded alongside the influx of visitors to the metropolis.

By further examination of this and the West End as an area for entertainment and pleasure. Arnold Bennett's 1907 novel, *The City of Pleasure: A Fantasia on Modern Themes*, was published as primary evidence by Rappaport to prove how the mass leisure industry had transformed urban life into a type of amusement park. The "City of Pleasure", could also have been a portrait of the Edwardian West End:

Lined with multifarious buildings, all painted cream – the theatre, the variety theatre, the concert hall, the circus, the panorama, the lecture hall, the menagerie, the art gallery, the story-teller's hall, the dancing rooms, restaurants, cafes and bars, and those numerous shops for the sale of useless and expensive souvenirs without which no Briton on holiday is complete... Add to this the combined effect of the music of bands and the sunshine, and do not forget the virgin creaminess of the elaborate architecture, and you will be able to form a notion of the spectacle offered.⁵

⁴ Wood, Julie Gillam, *Behind the Facade: An Insight into Burmantoft's Trading Ethos*, Journal of the Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society, Vol 10, 2004, pp.3-11

⁵ Rappaport, Erika Diane, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (Chichester: Princeton University Press) 2000, p.767

A description of commercial buildings for urban pleasure derived from tourism and entertainment, illustrates that hotels cannot be identified as one building type. The thesis, however, establishes that between the years of 1915 and 1935, a transition took place for the economy hotel that was mapped by the physical changes to the West End. Updates to the public and private hotel rooms were modernising forces that aligned with the temporal and socio-cultural events that emerged inside and outside. Built in the heart of Piccadilly, the Regent Palace Hotel was its most successful in attracting guests and visitors in the inter-war period. Interior design helped to illustrate the attraction of hotels, reflecting urban environments, facades and layouts. The masculine and feminine environments, in doing so, reinforced the formation of empire driven interiors to the French beaux-arts style inside and outside the Edwardian hotel.

Below the ground floor the mapping of masculine identity in the Regent Palace Hotel revealed the Turkish influence on American and British interiors in the twentieth century. Evident in masculine interiors attributed to Turkish style in public houses and later moving into hotels. For example, the 'Turkish cosy corner' continued to be a decorative archetype representing informality and bodily comfort. Indeed, although the idea of comfort changed over the years, it remained emblematic of the Victorian to Edwardian masculine, orientalist interior. The association between consumerism and eclecticism was contrasted with more staid British tastes. As Gulen Cevik states:

It was possible to speak of a 'Victorian' style in both Britain and the United States. The French often played the role of protagonists of taste, whereas the English and Americans were mostly interpreters. In the case of Turkish furniture, a common trajectory can be observed: design fashions started in France evolved in England and were disseminated last in America.⁶

Mapping not only a physical route from the first new luxury hotels built in the 1880's to the opening of the Regent Palace Hotel in 1915, I also argue for a transformation of gender specific spaces of Piccadilly and the hotel. Reaching a point at which many of the new hotels came to update their interior schemes, in moving with cyclical tastes and changing consumers of entertainment spaces. In the years between 1915 and 1935 much emphasis was applied to the formation and representation of the public rooms. Presented by the spatial planning of the Piccadilly site, the ground floor plans shape the thesis into a structure situated on foremost, the public space and latterly private spaces below and above these. Initially the advertising of rooms exclaimed that

⁶Cevik, Gulen, 'American Style or Turkish Chair: The Triumph of Bodily Comfort' in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 2010, p.371

'rooms may now be reserved' in a column evoking private sensibilities, adjacent to a piece of information that highlights the restaurant, grill room and rotunda court as public spaces to attract potential guests.

In evaluation of the construction of the hotel building type, the thesis positions the material culture of the Regent Palace Hotel into a dichotomy of steel-frame architecture, Edwardian urban expansion and diminishing imperialist restraints. French styles and tastes in interior architecture are linked to a relationship with emulation theories of commodity aesthetics and capital. The rooms and spaces functioned not only as interiors, but also as socio-cultural environments of class and capitalist enterprise. Architecturally, these leisure spaces are proven to have been manifested from a range of establishments and influenced from a number of angles including cafe and tearoom, to the national exhibitions and in part creating a sense of public spectacle. Until now, authors have overlooked the similarities apparent in exhibition space, in relation to, urban planning. Therefore, this work intends to bridge this gap by assessing such spaces as influential in the conceptual development of the production of permanent rooms in Piccadilly and the West End.

Evaluating a combination of socio-spatial meanings and the shifting of gender roles in public space. As a consequence of managerial masculinity and privacy, women would come to symbolise the publicity and public service of the company in hotel and trade literature. Privately the male space and terrain of the inside of hotels and other spaces in Piccadilly were fortified indirectly and discreetly. Modernity and mass leisure was manifest through democratic interior design within the walls of new luxury hotels, translated in the French Louis XVI style of Charles Mewes and Arthur Davis. Commercialising aspects of taste and the transatlantic bourgeoisie for visitors and guests in London.

'As engines of modernity, hotels served as successful models for various aspects of urban life, functioning as a sort of patterning device, an institution in which people developed expectations and behaviours appropriate to new modes of city living.'⁷ A number of writers including Mica Nava and Cheryl Buckley have argued that modernity was the most important factor in women's confidence, identity and employment during the inter war period, closely related to advertising and images of capitalism. Frank Mort's research on the locale of the West End in the twentieth century, responds to the perspective of geographical location, as an informant on the areas social and cultural

⁷ Sandoval-Strausz, A. K., *Hotel: An American History*, (London: Yale University Press) 2007, p. 209

history. Mort's evaluation of source material showed evidence for criminal activity in the heart of the West End in Soho and close to Piccadilly Circus. A space that serviced not only the traditional rich of Mayfair and a new middle class of civil servants and clerks, as Mort suggests:

New figures appeared in this urban landscape, most significantly "girls in business," neither ladies nor prostitutes, but working women employed in the tertiary sector of the economy, there to assist the large numbers of "shopping ladies," attracted to the new feminised world of department stores that had been created for them in the centre.⁸

Private spaces, such as hotel bedrooms are a point for discussion here also, in relation to women and the sequence of events that took place in the rooms themselves and as framed in the popular press. A consequence of this publicity was a notion of crime reported through the anecdote or representation of the hotel. Suggesting that a hotel stay had become accessible to many and that women's relationships to such spaces had manifested into a two-fold, class and status image-based phenomenon situated on public and private sensibilities.

Advertising for the opening of the Regent Palace Hotel, illustrated public rooms and bedrooms (As seen in fig. 0:1). The hotels advertising played through a series of statements promoting the new technological amenities and suggested a level of comfort at a reduced cost. Advertising was formed from Lyons knowledge of retailing, focusing on the material production of the hotel as a commercial commodity and its dissemination as an experience. This consumer culture was bound by space, services and the images that became representative of the company. Claiming that: 'the public rooms are the largest and most spacious in Europe, and every one of the 1,028 bedrooms is provided with independent service of hot and cold water, and fitted with an Electric Heater for use when required.'⁹ An illustrated price list for the bedrooms and the public rooms, divided into private, at one side and public to the other, show how aspects of visual culture carry meanings associated with the uses of actual space. Luxury, Service and Economy are keywords used to exemplify a representation of the accommodation, stating that 'in decoration, furnishing, and catering it inaugurates the highest standard yet attained'. 'Rooms may now be reserved'.

⁸ Walkowitz, Judith, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London*, (London: Virago) 1992, p.24

⁹ Daily Express, 26th May, 1915, p. 2

The West End illustrated a destination point for the shopper and tourist seeking comfortable modern accommodation in a spatial and socio-cultural route of fashionable consumption. Shopping was not simply about realising dreams or an enjoyable leisure activity. It involved the work of decoding and encoding new and complex signifiers that enabled women to acquire cultural capital, whether as housewives or single women. 'Retailing enabled working class women to inhabit the same public spaces as their middle class counterparts and to do so as 'experts' in the complexities, both literal and symbolic, of consumption.'¹⁰ As Cheryl Buckley and Hilary Fawcett observed:

Discussions around femininity raised anxieties about women's roles as wives and mothers, and the price to be paid for their economic and personal independence, as well as foregrounding a host of issues about women's sexual identity and their relationships with men and with each other.¹¹

That said, the notion of family was paramount in the culture promoted by the hotel, whilst women were employed they'd also attracted other females into the hotel. Democratizing effects, helped by the welcoming female, were encouraged to build a broader customer base; employees represented the notion of the Lyons family and invited guests into the hotel on that premise. As a less mediated space the hotel could be characterised as a modern, urban site of privacy and capital. Articulating desire of a safe space and yet one of luxury – private rooms enabled guests to make permanent an event, visit or celebration. A notion of space and object signified through surveillance meant that 'just looking' enabled women to position themselves as both subject and object as they gazed upon displays of luxury goods in the city.

The feminisation of the West End and the Regent Street quadrant embraced by the male owners of commercial and catering establishments was marked through an introduction of staff rooms in the Regent Palace Hotel by 1935. Luxuries such as dustless spaces for efficiently useful rooms and the inclusion of sink units and mirrored glass, were incorporated in the staff annexe, and separated by a bridge built across Sherwood Street to the main building on Brewer Street. Some innovative work for the interior architect Oliver P. Bernard, who commissioned the new interiors. However, the thesis does not fully investigate the interior schemes in 1935 in any great detail, due to the fact that design history and studies of interiors history, have previously focussed on the influence of the modern movement in architecture and design. Therefore an

¹⁰ Giles, Judy in Casey, Emma & Martens, Lydia (ed) *Gender and Consumption: Domestic Cultures and the Commercialisation of Everyday Life*, (Aldershot: Ashgate) 2007, p.7

¹¹ Buckley, Cheryl & Fawcett, Hilary, *Fashioning the Feminine: Representation and Women's Fashion From the Fin De Siecle to the Present*, (London: I. B Tauris) 2002, p. 84

(Fig. 0:1) Daily Express, May 26, 1915

explanation for the critical introduction to the public, everyday, popular designs inside buildings of the leisure industry around 1900, are instead considered in this research.

The thesis identifies the architectural philosophy in the West End as an imperialist, empire driven British geography. Situated on French Beaux-Arts classicism spurned by British nationalism during the baroque classical revival in the 1890's. A popular style throughout the first decade of the new century, Edwardian taste has been useful to identify a distinctive architectural period from that of the buildings widely associated with Victorianism. Even though both Arts and Crafts architecture and the Baroque revival started well before Edward VII's reign (1901-10) and finished after it.¹² In the Regent Street quadrant by 1901, modern innovations and devices introduced by shopkeepers to attract custom had obscured John Nash's well-proportioned, stucco-faced buildings.

New shop fronts had appeared with plate glass windows crowned by a continually mounting level of lettered fascias, awnings, crested flower boxes and Royal Warrant Holders' coats of arms. Supporting cast iron columns cased in mirrors created the illusion of a continuous display of goods in the windows, while gas lamps or electric lights illuminated them from outside.¹³ As Stuart Gray confirmed:

The stripped classical style that emerged before and after the First World War marked the dilution of the Ecole des Beaux Arts style. By which point, the modern French influence of Art Nouveau appeared in some architectural fittings and interiors in Europe. For Britain, modernism in architecture flourished in new builds and the many more public interiors and their designers would embrace the subsequent style of Deco Moderne.¹⁴

Emphasis on the facades of buildings in Piccadilly proved that whilst an interior threshold mirrored exterior surroundings in materials, stylistic details and classical motifs. French transatlantic influences in the Savoy and Ritz produced international luxury, rituals of etiquette, display and fine dining that became popular blueprints for the new luxury hotels. From its inception the Savoy Hotel was intended to attract American visitors to London, as the original building by the Thames was considered remarkable for its fireproof construction. 'Having six 'ascending rooms' or lifts, and above all, for offering as many as 70 en-suite bathrooms when the number of such

¹² Service, Alistair, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 1977, p.8

¹³ Gray, Stuart, *Edwardian Architecture*, (London: Duckworth) 1985, p.77

¹⁴ Ibid, p.169

exotic facilities in other recent grand hotels in the capital remained still rather unrealised.¹⁵ People with adequate economic means were attracted to a style of resort life that permitted social contact with those of similar interests, backgrounds and to improve one's social status. Vacation resort establishments, particularly the massive and luxurious grand resort hotels, had particular appeal to the affluent and career accomplished, such as socialites and the leaders of business and industry. 'For many the resort hotel setting provided an openly public, almost theatrical setting for the display of social position, fashion, and wealth, as well as the opportunity to observe and critique other guests who were similarly motivated.'¹⁶

Furthermore, due to cultural capital and the professionalization of interior design, masculine entrepreneurs were able to capitalise and embark on the powers of commerce inside these new establishments. David Bush and Derek Taylor's history published in 1974, stated that 'A hotel is a factory for producing goods' as well as a place for people.¹⁷ The lure and mystique of the experience, along with the realism of building and site, were effectively conveyed through the rhetoric of the printed word and accompanying visual illustration. These acted as important educational vehicles for attracting would be customers to the resort. In marketing their assets, hotels liked to enhance their appeal as symbols of personal achievement and national potential by publicly disclosing the facts about the technology, building practices, and management techniques that had contributed to their creation.¹⁸

West End stores, hotels, restaurants and bars sought to publish the changes to their establishments in the media to promote their businesses, it is evident that all were responding to the needs of increasing numbers of visitors to the area. Continuing updates to London transport and the road systems in Piccadilly revealed the expansion of the consumer economy, guest's needs and a wider culture of selling in Lyons establishments and hotels. Enabling the customer to purchase everything in one place was an advantage advertised by the owners of department stores from their early days. Encompassing a range of things and departments in one place, the importance of geography within shopping and retail practices, meant that stores could operate

¹⁵ Stamp, Gavin, 'Savoy Hotel', *Apollo*, Vol 173, No. 583 (2011), p.70

¹⁶ Tolles, Bryant F. 'Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks: The Architecture of a Summer Paradise. 1850-1950 (London: University Press of New England) 2003, p.2

¹⁷ Bush, David & Taylor, Derek, *The Golden Age of British Hotels*, (London: Northwood Publications) 1974, p.7

¹⁸ Tolles, Bryant F. 'Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks: The Architecture of a Summer Paradise. 1850-1950 (London: University Press of New England) 2003, p.11

independently. While this was the case, geography of specialised shopping streets could be drawn to consumer knowledge in the West End.

By drawing on a body of work that positions the street, its representations and lived experience to the heart of the city and a notion of the urban.¹⁹ Attracting visitors and guests to the new Lyons hotel, the management maintained a long relationship with the press. Providing full coverage of the hotel's re-development over the forthcoming years, a blueprint for advertising the Regent Palace Hotel was created upon its opening. Including illustrations of the building and the image of the street where motorcars and people gathered for the grand opening. Each business, it seems, was vying for the tourist capital in the West End, by creating a 'habitus' consisting of the cultural capital of Piccadilly in name and location. The hotel consumed conspicuously as part of a self-affirming social display for the visitor and guest contributed to a wider set of meanings. Tourist attractions were structures that provided direct access to the modern consciousness, or a material realisation of it. Breaking tradition and fracturing the structure of the city street, progress of modernity and expansion of society intimately linked in diverse ways to modern mass leisure.²⁰ It was this that informed the Salmon and Gluckstein families to identify a gap in the hotel market, as a past employee confirmed:

The hotel's secret was simple. Firstly it relied on giving the public real value for their money and backing this up with ordered efficiency 'behind the scenes', the site of the hotel in Piccadilly Circus was ideal. It was in the very heart of the West End of London, in the centre of theatre land and the great shopping points and was easily accessible to all the big railway terminals. The average number of guests sleeping in the hotel every night was 1,660.²¹

Aims and Objectives

The thesis examines specific questions that include the extent to which J. Lyons & Co identified the West End as a crucial site for the Regent Palace Hotel? Once built, the hotel was a destination for the visitor to London who wanted a reliable service, choice of accommodation and a place to dine. Furthermore, I consider how visitors regarded the interiors and spatial sense of the site inside and outside. The building itself within the baroque landscape of the popular West End and Piccadilly was determined by careful planning, building regulations, and designed by reliable architects familiar with the site. The material facings of the exterior mirrored the popularity for a major revival

¹⁹ Ibid, p.39

²⁰ MacCannell, Dean, *The Tourist: a new theory of the leisure class*, (London: University of California Press) 1999, p. 3

²¹ A report written by a management trainee of J. Lyons and Co – 1978-80, p.1

in terracotta in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. Contributing highly in the development of a particular type of cladding that was used for new types of West End buildings, including the Regent Palace Hotel. This thesis is positioned within a framework of approaches and has evolved out of design history, borrowing evidence from authors who have conducted similar studies of interior design. In recent years debates have emerged within the fields of architectural studies and design history that have indicated a need for more analysis into popular spaces of the Edwardian period. New studies into the modern interior have indicated the growth of design history and broadly emphasise how the subject has expanded from object centred material culture. While this study incorporates traditional methods and approaches in the field, the aim is to provide a multi-faceted argument that underpins the development of these approaches into new areas, such as interior design history. Using primary research to focus a case study of the Regent Palace Hotel into a wider debate outside of architectural history. Previously design historians; cultural geographers and architectural historians have examined the buildings and spaces of London's West End. This study seeks to include interiors research into this categorisation, as a newly emerging field of enquiry that has moved away from the parameters of design history and into a new discipline. Marked by the writings of specific design historians whose work is included throughout the thesis, my intention is to second their opinions by adding to established research on public spaces. Importantly this is to prove that there is a moral ground for the investigation of popular hotel interiors of the pre war years and to reveal how interior design as a profession was a source for this.

Primary Sources

The material culture of the hotel consists of a series of photographs commissioned for J. Lyons & Co by the Edwardian photographer Bedford Lemere. Copies of these photographs were kept in the hotel offices until closure in 2006 when thereafter further material was examined at London Metropolitan Archives. Extensive documentation of the Regent Palace Hotel included advertising and promotional photography, postcards and company ephemera (business records, receipts and historical ephemera), examined as primary material for an examination of interior design in the hotel. A main source has been the coverage by the architectural press and in particular *The Architectural Review* of 1915. Further to this, a number of smaller articles reported on the building including *The Builder: An Illustrated Weekly Magazine for the Architect, Engineer & Co* who published plans and sections of the hotel. Stating that the new hotel had 1,028 bedrooms on nine floors above the ground floor and two miles of corridor, the structure used over 6,000 tons of steelwork. The frame and the foundations were evidently of some complexity, for the publication goes into some

detail on these, rather than focusing on the interiors themselves, which are described as follows:

The ground floor is chiefly occupied by lounges, a large winter garden, dining room, restaurant, drawing room, and writing rooms. In the basement there are grill and billiard rooms of ample size, ladies and gentlemen's toilet saloons, and all the necessary adjuncts which go to the making up of a modern hotel.²²

The scope and view of *The Builder* journal provide core evidence for the design of the interior and the way the space and interiors were used. One can also identify how the decoration evoked the use of space for the business or intended leisure pursuits inside and outside of the hotel.

Some specific research has been undertaken in relation to the number of craftspeople, guilds and plasterwork specialists who were employed by the architects in mounting the original interiors. This particular work was carried out in museums and local archives, for example Worcestershire County Museum, Worcestershire County Council Archives and site visits to Glasgow's People's Palace and exhibition grounds including the Glasgow tearooms. Furthermore, many experts on the history of J. Lyons & Co have offered anecdotes and guides on how the company functioned as a large-scale enterprise. However, as most or all of the Regent Palace Hotel collection went to the City of London, this collection has maintained a foothold and aided with planning records and duplicate material from Westminster City Archives. It was the managers of the hotel itself, who over the years documented the material and social changes in this West End hotel, keeping financial records and ephemera.

By examining the original plans of the hotel, figure 0:2 illustrate the size and scale of the site and how the interior space is divided, with a number of rooms inside. A tour of the hotel based on these plans, show that from the bottom left hand corner marked the Vestibule, guests would enter the Regent Palace from the apex of the site on the ground floor level. This was the main entrance into the hotel. They would then walk through the Entrance Lounge into the Hall and Bookings Space and then into the dome covered Winter Garden that was also known as the Rotunda Court, finally continuing through to the main dining room.

Methodology

This thesis uses the original plans and further primary research for an enquiry approached from a design historical, cultural studies and interiors history viewpoint.

²² *The Builder*, June 4th, 1915

Methodologies include the study of the interior using archive research that enabled the examination of J. Lyons & Co material culture. Various authors support the fact that interiors play a large role in evidencing how the lives of designers and consumers of new luxury interiors, in the late Victorian and start of the Edwardian period contributed to the making of the modern city. Suggesting how we might read the practices of the design industry and commercialisation of it. Penny Sparke explored the notion of private and public in her research into the domestic and modern interior, and it has become apparent that as the West End of London, or cities for that matter grew, many boundaries of architecture and interior started to mutate. Especially as women's lives were opened to new shopping experiences, as Sparke explains a link to modernity and industrialisation, by claiming that 'the era of industrial modernity is, inevitably, to align the modern interior with the effects of industrialization. The advent of mass production clearly changed the nature and availability of goods destined for interior spaces.'²³

Specifically in further chapters the reader moves through a series of rooms, investigating how interior spaces maintained relationships to thresholds with physical and humane experiences attached to them. When architecture transcends into the interior it is based on a number of factors converging. In his text, *The Emergence of the Interior: Architecture, Modernity, Domesticity* Charles Rice writes of architecture's relation to the domestic interior, taking up the idea that the interior emerged in addition to constructional, ornamental and surface definitions of inside space that were architectural. Rice explains:

The interior was articulated through decoration, the literal covering of the inside of an architectural 'shell' with the soft 'stuff' of furnishing. And as an image-based phenomenon, the interior began to be represented in ways visually distinct from conventional architectural representation. Yet this separation also involved an intimate association. The interior impacted in significant ways on the development of particular architectural techniques, and the terms by which architects joined cultural debates.²⁴

With these views on the domestic in mind, we might also consider how far the designer decorator attempted to redefine the public interior as a comfort zone, and whether domesticity contributed to this? Many of the critical studies in interiors and interior architecture, have focused upon gender and predominantly the movement of women in the home or private spaces for contemplation. While these are important for a

²³ Sparke, Penny, *The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion, 2008) p. 13

²⁴ Rice, Charles, *The Emergence of the Interior: Architecture, Modernity, Domesticity*, (London: Routledge, 2007) p. 3

development or understanding of the city, this research is concerned with gender and public leisure. The use of rooms in the hotel reinforce the separate spheres and the urban space itself cannot be written without addressing notions of men's and women's places. This implication of the intersection of gender, space and experience, for women was established through social actions and where identity was produced. 'Positions that they took up remained deeply contested and within certain boundaries, but opportunities for developing new identities, which differed from the social expectation, were offered at various sites in the city, both private and public.'²⁵

Literature Review

In piecing together a foundation for a new study of the hotels in London, a consideration of the secondary literature published previously can be placed into two categories; first the hotel histories (to be examined in chapter one), and secondly those which emerged through academic disciplines as critical writings in Britain in the 1980's. As a result of this, hotels might be more accurately identified on the breadth of material published in the United States. A fairly recent issue of the *Journal of the Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, published in 2005, reviewed the modern design of *The American Hotel*. A specific analysis of interior design and design history of a range of hotel types, established these buildings within the study of interior architecture. Two years later, a text entitled 'Hotel: An American History' by A.K Sandoval-Strausz was published in 2007. A cultural history that provided more current debate for the understanding of the cyclical, spatial and social processes hotels inhabited.

The intention of this thesis is to consider how the West End hotel in London was reconfigured on American lines from the 1890's and how modern conveniences influenced the dissemination of public comfort. As hotels existed on international lines as places of destination, hope, leisure fulfilment and luxury, A. K Sandoval Strauss argues that:

As important as economic motivations were in the creation of the hotel, other vital influences were also at work. For as surely as the exigencies of commerce determined the hotel's structure and function as a travel accommodation, conflicts over culture and sociability defined the shape of its public spaces and the way they were used. If the impressive exteriors of the first generation of hotels symbolized their connection with the movement of people across oceans and continents, their interiors reflected social relations and cultural aspirations in the communities where they were built. Hotels were part of a long term trend in England and America in which people grew increasingly preoccupied with beautifying their material surroundings. As the rise of market economies and

²⁵ Ainley, Rosa, ed., *New Frontiers of Space, Bodies and Gender*, (London: Routledge, 1998) p. 66

(Fig 0:2) Regent Palace Hotel, Ground Floor Plan (Source: LMA ACC/35/27) 1915

social mobility began to erode the importance of aristocratic titles and other kinds of hereditary status, people turned to style, decor, behaviour, and other visual cues to demonstrate their social standing.²⁶

Examining the wider perspectives of past and present writings from a range of viewpoints including historical retrospective, documentary and academic approaches. The recent publication of 'Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality', 2013, initiated the subject of interior architecture in connection to hotels and established this within the fields of design history, interiors theory and architectural studies. (See Appendix 1) A cross-discipline study of architectural plans, sites and materials the hotel was considered for its architectural triumph and from international perspectives. Where influences are national or international, the urban hotel is a force for evaluating leisure and luxury in the public spaces and spatial layouts of the city. Regarding how the hotel functions, Anne Massey explains:

The hotel lobby is a product of western modernity. The anonymity of the hotel lobby - a space for circulation and display, for booking into a private bedroom, for hiding and being discreet, for lounging and waiting, for personal transformation – is a relatively recent type of architectural space that blurs boundaries between the private and the public. This is an interior form that is packed with potential – an anonymous place, the site of exclusion or inclusion, where public and private are divided, the life of the street and the exclusivity of the luxury hotel are clearly signalled by the hotel lobby.²⁷

Beyond this account there have been many useful publications on the London hotel including 'The Luxury Hotels of London' by Chris Sheppardson, 1991. Providing a unique overview of the London hotels that came into prominence due to elite travel in the mid Victorian period. Sheppardson's aims were to trace a social history of the first luxury hotels opening in London from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. As 'the hotel industry has, throughout its history, been subject to the influences of varying socio-economic cycles'.²⁸ The rise of the hotel also connoted something that went beyond its basic function and indicated a change in the way people understood their world. The hotel made hospitality into an important model for other human relationships and institutions. Hotels construction was thus a material manifestation of cultural tolerance, a significant episode in the development of the modern idea of a pluralistic,

²⁶ Sandoval-Strausz, A. K, *Hotel: An American History*, (London: Yale University Press) 2007, p.33

²⁷ Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, (ed.) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.49

²⁸ Sheppardson, Chris, *The Luxury Hotels of London*, (Sussex: The Book Guild Ltd) 1991, p.11

cosmopolitan society.²⁹ *Ritz: British Hotels 1837-1987* explores this specific geography also. Derek Taylor re-published his text in 2003 and the book contributes to a number of political and economic changes in the hotel industry. Taylor claimed that in regard to industry contribution:

The great success story was the growth of J. Lyons & Co., whose tea shops were all the rage and who distributed to their fortunate shareholders, on four successive years, the stupendous dividend of 42.5%. Where Gordon's in their heyday had struggled to achieve profits of £250,000, Lyons notched up figures in excess of £1.5 million only 10 years later. The Salmons and Glucksteins opened their first hotel, the Strand Palace, on September 14th 1909 and it had 470 rooms but not a single private bathroom. Lyons' philosophy was: "pile it high and sell it cheap". They made a fortune out of tea shops and they became a national institution and a major public company, from its inception, the business was run by the Salmons and Gluckstein's. A lot of the major decisions were made, not at divisional management meetings, often not at board meetings, but at meetings in the homes of the family directors.³⁰

Establishing the West End hotel in the field of interiors research, through cultural studies and writings on various public and private spaces, this work contributes to an existing design history. Uncovering how the design of space impacted on the culture of the West End and vice versa. More specifically attempting to reconsider the hotel interior through an assimilation of historic debate and primary source analysis. The special issue of the *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* (2005), entitled *The American Hotel*, characterised the hotel as a complex site of social and cultural production by a host of competing ideas and ideologies:

Focusing primarily on the period 1875 to 1945, these decades are appropriate for studying the American hotel. They coincide with the maturation of American industrial capitalism and the expansion and consolidation of enormous wealth. American hotels were both a product and an agent of those economic and organizational processes.³¹

This edited special issue contributes various essays that focus the hotel as a culturally defined building type. The content of articles range from a number of h types including those of the company Schultze and Weaver, Henry Flagler's hotels, and latterly those of the interior designer, Dorothy Draper. The importance of this particular issue, is that the stance of many case studies were not singularly pinpointed on these buildings as structural elements alone. Interior designers in the United States emerged in various

²⁹ Sandoval-Strausz, A. K, *Hotel: An American History*, (London: Yale University Press) 2007, p.3

³⁰ Taylor, Derek, *Ritz: British Hotels 1837-1987*, (London: The Milman Press) 2003, p.192

³¹ *The American Hotel. The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, (Wolfsonian - Florida International University) Issue 25, 2005

forms including those who decorated private residences to the public ostentatious types of the mid twentieth century. Alice Friedman's essay on Morris Lapidus is a case in point, the designer who understood the spatial use of openly leisured structural spaces, Friedman writes: 'He not only placed his distinctive stamp on the American resort hotel, one of the period's most significant building types, but also created highly successful new forms of tourist accommodation and entertainment in a period of increasing leisure and prosperity.'³² Lapidus's success stemmed, in large part, from his ability to appeal to the disparate and sometimes conflicting desires of his audience. His hotels combined elements of sleek modern architecture and the latest forms of new technology, combining romantic imagery and motifs drawn from history and from exotic, faraway places... Unlike his contemporaries, Lapidus fully embraced the challenge of creating fantasy experiences that permitted guests to escape, however fleetingly from the everyday.

Molly Berger's essay follows and approaches the connection between luxury hotels and upper class life from a different architectural association: that of elite Gilded Age mansions and luxury hotels. Berger argues that these two kinds of wealthy urban residences were the same building type, existing on opposite ends of a design continuum of size and ownership. Many of the elite families whose residences lined upper Fifth Avenue also invested in similarly conceived and decorated hotels. Extending industrial capitalism to the middle classes, in support of the industrial practices that produced their wealth by renting bedrooms and other spaces in the hotel. The construction of private residences and palace hotels, of the Vanderbilt's and the Astor's, spanned the period between 1880 to the beginning of the First World War. During which families with enormous industrial wealth communicated a forceful statement about power, status, and social organisation through their architectural projects. The material world that they created served to shape, promote, and reproduce economic and social relationships and the values that underpinned them. The American Gilded Age mansions and luxury hotels were, derived from the same category of housing that blurred the boundaries between private and public and in production and consumption. Palatial homes and hotels were the material manifestation of an industrial society that encouraged the enhancements of social status, comfort, and happiness through conspicuous consumption. Reproducing an elite social order through the organisation of space. Berger writes:

³² Friedman, Alice, 'Merchandising Miami Beach: Morris Lapidus and the Architecture of Abundance' in *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, (Wolfsonian – Florida International University) Issue 25, 2005, p.216

Hotels are particularly important institutions to study if we are to fully understand our nation's past because they bind the material, economic, social, and cultural worlds in ways that are perhaps unique. Luxury hotels became a public venue for extending the very same fruits of industrial society represented by the palace home to the middle classes, whose support was a vital part of the industrial system's success.³³

The impact of the interior designer as a profession has also been important for developing the subject of interiors history. Prominently, research on the early twentieth century designer has aided a broader understanding for work on gender, the gilded age and commissions for aristocratic wealthy clients. In doing so, the taste and decoration of domestic interiors has contributed here. Penny Sparke's extensive writings on the society designer Elsie De Wolfe have appeared in a selection of texts since 2004. In the edited volume 'Interior Design and Identity' in her article *The Domestic Interior and the Construction of Self: the New York Homes of Elsie De Wolfe*, explains that:

Women's ability to see their homes as mirrors not only of broad cultural themes but of their individual selves coincided with their growing professionalization in a number of distinct spheres, especially in areas which were seen as 'natural' extensions of their accepted gendered roles, such as education, nursing and interior decoration. The idea that decorating the domestic interior could be seen as a viable form of paid work for women emerged first in Britain in the last two decades of the nineteenth century as a natural extension of women taking the responsibility for home decoration on an amateur basis and of increasing numbers of women being trained as architects but ending up working on interiors rather than the exteriors of buildings.³⁴

The modern interior had become a pertinent means of entry into examinations of material culture as spatially effective ways of understanding clearly and historically how people lived and used their interior and object surroundings. Further addressing the interior design and decoration for public consumption Penny Sparke identified J. Lyons & Co, in her text on modern interiors by stating:

Early signs of the emergence of a new, public space interior aesthetic were visible from the early nineteenth century onwards in a range of buildings from shopping arcades, exhibition halls, museums, railway stations to department stores. From a 'separate spheres' perspective, that development could be seen as a form of anti-domesticity. Its primary relationship was with commerce and its light, airy, neutral forms were made possible by new building technologies and new materials. Glass, iron and steel facilitated the construction of those

³³ Molly W. Berger, 'The Rich Man's City: Hotels and Mansions of Gilded Age New York' in *The American Hotel. The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, (Wolfsonian - Florida International University) Issue 25, 2005, p.46

³⁴ McKellar, Susie & Sparke, Penny, (ed.) *Interior Design and Identity*, (Manchester: MUP) 2004, p.73

large, open plan interior spaces and the high levels of transparency which helped to emphasise the objects frequently located within them.³⁵

Making a further point about such interiors, and ultimately relevant to this study, is that:

By 1914 the new inside spaces dedicated to modern commerce, work and leisure were fully formed. They were the result of technological advances, the work of engineers and planners, and of new rational thinking about ways of improving productivity and efficiency. Above all they had emerged as solutions to problems, and as responses to opportunities presented by the advent of industrial modernity.³⁶

Two more edited volumes have contributed new viewpoints on the subject including 'Designing the Modern Interior: From the Victorians to Today', published in 2009. A selected volume of essays situated on the interior as a means for investigating the processes and cultural meanings attached to environments. Explained in the general introduction:

While the history of the interior has been part of the territory of the architectural and the design historian of the modern era, it has, in some ways, tended to fall into the gap that exists between those two disciplines. Architectural history, the elder of the two disciplines, has, where an account of the period 1870 to the present is concerned, tended to adopt a modernist perspective and, following that movement's prejudices and preferences, to marginalise the interior, seeing it as a poor relation to architectural structure and space. Equally, design history, born in the 1970's out of late modernism and only fairly recently free of its ideological shackles and able to look at the impact of consumption as well as that of production, has focused on the material, mass-produced object and largely ignored the spatial and the idea of the 'ensemble', both key characteristics of the interior.³⁷

Furthermore, in 2011, a second publication expanded the interest for interiors history. In 'Performance, Fashion and the Modern Interior: From the Victorians to Today' Trevor Keeble introduced the period of emergent changes in an urban context. 'The modernity of change which characterised the first half of the twentieth century focused primarily upon the spectacular form of the city... it was the city with its increasingly mass cultures of consumption, leisure and entertainment that became the source and referent for fashionability and change'.³⁸

³⁵ Sparke, Penny, *The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion Books) 2008, p.113

³⁶ Ibid, p.128

³⁷ Sparke, Penny, Massey, Anne, Keeble, Trevor & Martin, Brenda (ed.), *Designing the Modern Interior: From the Victorians to Today*, (Oxford: Berg) 2009, p.2

³⁸ Fisher, Fiona, Keeble, Trevor, Lara-Betancourt & Martin, Brenda, (ed.), *Performance, Fashion and the Modern Interior: From the Victorians to Today*, (Oxford: Berg) 2011, p.75

This publication introduced the importance of fashionable interiors for public spectacle, by enquiring into the ways in which interiors employed modern technology and popular customs for the enjoyment of a mass audience. Centred on city cultures in the early twentieth century, the hotel also contributed to this history. Christopher Breward's essay 'At Home' at the St James: dress, décor and the problem of fashion in Edwardian Theatre, illustrates the Louis XVI Restaurant, at the Piccadilly Hotel in Regent Street. Depicting the characteristics of polite society and the fashionability of theatre going and charity suppers of the Edwardian age.³⁹

Breward's earlier writings are a combination of cultural history, gender studies and geography. Contexts for revealing the consumption patterns of the masculine, middle class patronage of the traditional tailoring trades in Piccadilly. The West End examined in contemporary trade literature, provides primary evidence for an interpretation of socio-cultural identity in Piccadilly. The 1890's West End is identified by Breward in Regent Street and Savile Row, as the place for masculine consumption. Gender was displayed popularly on the promenade in Hyde Park or Piccadilly and the purchase of fashionable goods, experience and consumption extensively examined through the viewpoints of contemporary critics, such as C. Scott:

In the intervening years Scott credited the commercial prowess of colonial entrepreneurs, alongside the increasing presence of respectable women, for transforming and sanitising the social scene, noting that 'London saw no greater change in its old conservative habits of eating and drinking than when Spiers and Pond arrived from Australia and set up in various parts of London their gilded saloons and drinking bars.'⁴⁰

Breward writes of a:

Metamorphosis of the claustrophobic and corrupted pleasures of the 1860's into the bright democratised leisure industry of the 1890's to an insidious 'Americanisation' of London culture. Its effects evocatively conveyed by Thomas Burke, who remembered that 'it was a London that was going ahead. American ideas and ways of life had been infecting it for some time, and where it had been rich and fruity it was becoming slick and snappy.'⁴¹

³⁹ Breward, Christopher, 'At Home at the St James's: dress, décor and the problem of fashion in Edwardian Theatre', in Fisher, Fiona, Keeble, Trevor, Lara-Betancourt & Martin, Brenda, (ed.), *Performance, Fashion and the Modern Interior: From the Victorians to Today*, (Oxford: Berg) 2011, p.87

⁴⁰ Scott, C. 'The Wheel of Life: a few memories and recollections' 1897, in Breward, Christopher, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life 1860-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999 p.177

⁴¹ Burke, T, 'The Streets of London Through the Centuries' (London: Batsford, 1940, in Breward, Christopher, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life 1860-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999, p.178

Edwardian public leisure in the popular West End created a particular masculine consumerism, which emerged in parallel with the attractions of the music hall:

'Parasexual' masculine style associated with the glamorous escapism of the music hall promenade fed outwards in three directions: to the representations of masculine fashionability paraded on the stage, into the public world of commerce, and through to the life of the streets. As the department store and the women's magazine provided a complete template for *fin de siècle* versions of fashionable femininity, so the music hall fed the consuming desires of men in a manner which often prioritised their gender over their class in an open celebration of sybaritic pleasures.⁴²

Latterly a number of historians from various academic disciplines consisting of cultural geography and architectural studies have underpinned views of the city as urban history and London as an imperial centre. Further examinations of the masculine sphere in the West End have emerged in these studies, including the work of Bronwen Edwards. Writing of the geographically driven enquiries of masculine space and consumption in the department store, Simpson of Piccadilly. Foremost, her essay in the edited volume entitled 'Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century', 2003. Questioned the consequences of modernity, as seminally termed by Marshall Berman, as the 'maelstrom of modern life'⁴³ Edwards proposes a mapping of masculine identity in the formation of large-scale stores built in the West End during the 1930's, stating that:

The opening of Simpson Piccadilly was a specific moment when architectural modernism, modern masculinity and modernity converged in the West End of London. The unstable relationships between place, design, retailing and gender mean that the changing geographies of the West End can be used as a way of understanding shifting notions of modern metropolitan masculinity. The store adopted a version of modernity which allowed for experimentation in gendered retail practice, which was able to encompass tensions between exclusivity and democracy, and which found a visual expression in a stylish form of modernism.⁴⁴

This key approach to mapping the spaces of buildings in the West End follows in accordance with this research on the Regent Palace Hotel. Specifically beaux arts classicist architectural facades in the imperial city promoted masculine characteristics

⁴² Breward, Christopher, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life 1860-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999, p.222

⁴³ Gilbert, David, Matless, David and Short, Brian (ed.) *Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century*, (Oxford: Blackwell) 2003, p.2

⁴⁴ Edwards, Bronwen, 'A Man's World? Masculinity and Metropolitan Modernity at Simpson Piccadilly' in Gilbert, David, Matless, David and Short, Brian (ed.) *Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century*, (Oxford: Blackwell) 2003, p.165

of architectural space in the Regent Street quadrant. A type of national identity apparent in the representation of late Victorian exhibitions has meant that the colonial buildings and public space of the West End has come into question. In view of my primary research this is symbolised in the building styles themselves and the socio-culture of the West End until the first world war. Jonathan Schneer's study 'London 1900: The Imperial Metropolis' unravels colonial undercurrents in the centre of popular cultures in the fin de siècle, because Schneer states:

The public art and architecture of London together reflected and reinforced an impression, an atmosphere, celebrating British heroism on the battlefield, British sovereignty over foreign lands, British wealth and power, in short, British imperialism. The impression was not hegemonic, for London's public art and architecture broadcast mixed messages, and in any event London residents did not all absorb the implicit lessons of the classical baroque style unthinkingly. Nevertheless it was an integral and influential presence in London life.⁴⁵

A distinctive feminisation that crept into the West End and in the tearooms, restaurants and hotels of the nineteenth century indicates how J. Lyons & Co participated or represented a culture of consumption in the West End. A most prevalent source for investigation is Erika Diane Rappaport's 'Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End' where it is claimed that 'as the city became a pleasure zone, the shopper was designated as a pleasure seeker, defined by her longing for goods, sights, and public life.'⁴⁶

Some further texts have considered the rituals of women and statuses of the spaces frequented by urban individuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Also claiming Lyons imprint on the commercial culture of the restaurant. Rachel Rich has profiled the emergence of fine dining in the West End. Her text 'Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914' includes accounts of Lyons restaurants, she claims:

London saw many new catering venue open and thrive through the 1880's and 1890's. Among these were the immensely popular Lyons teahouses and corner houses, which remained a recognisable feature of London's busy streets well into the 1960's. Here key features of French restaurants, such as fixed prices, pleasant decor and separate tables were combined with a more English style of cuisine, which made ordering and eating accessible to a wider range of people. At the same time, prices were high enough to limit the clientele to what was considered respectably middle-class. While providing elegant surroundings, this

⁴⁵ Schneer, Jonathan, *London: 1900: The Imperial Metropolis*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999

⁴⁶ Rappaport, Erika Diane, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press) 2000, p.5

new genre of restaurant made eating out appear respectable and safe, in the sense of the familiar. Diners in Lyons teahouses or corner houses, like at the Savoy under Escoffier, did not need to fear ridicule for inappropriate behaviour, and did not need to confront foreign - French – dining customs, which might have been intimidating.⁴⁷

The instruction of rituals in such restaurants had already been realised on the highly designed and organised, ocean liners, as Anne Massey established in her text 'Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat', 2006. Interiors began to be modelled on luxury hotels, mutually reinforcing how French transatlantic influence was blurred in these two building types. Also, both spaces provided restaurant services and accommodation, the description of which reads like the West End hotels. Massey claims:

The *Amerika* was the first liner to carry an electric passenger lift, and this introduction of new technology as an attractive novelty for first class passengers mirrored the practice of hotels rather than palaces. The dining facilities were also novel. Up to this date (1905), dining saloons had served meals on board liners to all passengers at set times. The new style restaurant was run by Cesar Ritz, who trained the staff, with the food created under the management of Auguste Escoffier. The maître d'hotel of the Ritz-Carlton Grill, Nagel, ran the restaurant for the first year. Mewès designed the interior for this new venture , recreating the Ritz-Carlton Grill ambience for the passengers at 25 separate tables. The space had windows on three sides. Cream and gold walls were lit by ormolu sconces and subtle table lights. The furniture was mahogany, and stood on a dark blue carpet, and the linen and crockery displayed the Carlton crest.⁴⁸

Such luxury spaces symbolised the attractions of fine dining and leisured experiences in the metropolis, and as evidenced by Christophe Grafe in 'Cafés and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display' 2007:

In the developed capitalist metropolis of the nineteenth century, the rise of a sizeable urban middle class offered the conditions for an extraordinary diversification and the almost infinite inventive energy of cafe entrepreneurs and brewers. The emergence of coffee houses, cafes and bars in eighteenth century Paris or nineteenth century Vienna, but also the development of the English pub into a place designed to provide a spark of glamour in the lives of the industrial working-class, reflect the social and functional differentiation, newly established distinctions between spheres of production and leisure, the

⁴⁷ Rich, Rachel, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 2011, p.155

⁴⁸ Massey, Anne, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat*, (London: Routledge) 2006, p.41

everyday and the ceremonial and the crystallization of a bourgeois public sphere.⁴⁹

Such bourgeois luxuries were paramount in the interwar years increasingly expanded in terms of high style decoration and the emancipated woman employed in the masculine space of the West End. Considered in Cheryl Buckley and Hilary Fawcett's study 'Fashioning the Feminine: Representation and Women's Fashion from the Fin De Siècle to the Present' 2002. 'Social distinctions based on income and class, increasingly eroded in the 1930's due to women's access to better paid work in the manufacturing industry'.⁵⁰ A consequence of this was the employment of women during the First World War and the deteriorated gender distinction in the professional industries thereafter.

Identifying influences and cultural networks involved in the evolution of the new luxury hotel, this study is not concerned with the social histories of the period including women's contributions in the Great War. While women and gender are prominent aspects of the design history of hotels and form the focus of one chapter, the author has made a conscious decision not to cover this well-worn ground. This study of architecture and interiors in production and consumption uses primary sources to lead the enquiry. Therefore, all evidence for the plight of women are un-documented apart from the evidence for the expansion of staff rooms, although Lyons confidently employed women across all their establishments, the main focus is on the material culture of the hotel. Each chapter in the thesis identifies how interior design and the uses of spaces by producers and consumers characterised the public and private rooms on the ground floor, lower ground and in the upper floors of the Regent Palace Hotel. The management claimed it to be the largest in Europe, when it opened in 1915. The size and scale of this large building, made it possible for the public rooms to be designed on an open plan scheme using the new steel-framed building method. The Regent Street quadrant re-developed in 1912-15, was deeply debated in the intellectual publications of architectural and aristocratic interest. An urban history that would unify the public interior as a representation of the expansion in central London, of a mapped democratization of luxury in the Edwardian West End interiors of hotels and leisure spaces.

⁴⁹ Grafe, Christoph & Bollerey, Franziska, *Cafés and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, (London: Routledge) 2007, p.6

⁵⁰ Buckley, Cheryl & Fawcett, Hilary, *Fashioning the Feminine: Representation and Women's Fashion from the Fin De Siècle to the Present*, (London: I.B Tauris) 2002, p.6

The thesis is divided into six chapters and approaches the interior design and socio-cultural meanings of the West End hotel between the years 1888 to 1935. The reasons for choosing this period of transition, is to elucidate how the demise of the Victorian Grand hotel was superseded by the new luxury hotels beginning with the building of the Savoy in 1889. Forming a new dimension by 1915 when economy hotels opened and to evaluate this in regard of interior updates during the inter-war years until 1935. The relevance of the hotel as a building type is further approached in geographical terms through facades and the exterior architecture, related to the sites in which these hotels were built. Specifically at the forefront of this research is my main case study and reason for researching the Edwardian hotel in the West End of London. J. Lyons & Co represent as a company, one of the strongest forces of the British consumer market throughout the period of expansion for leisure in London. Participating in the new commercial culture as large-scale caterers establishing a chain of successful restaurants, they decided to enter the hotel industry.

The Regent Palace Hotel was the second of two hotels built in the West End by the company. The first located in the Strand was a conventional building, leading to a second hotel built in close proximity and playing its part in a clear lineage of new luxury hotels. In the centre of Piccadilly Circus I focus on the hotel and its development of interior design until the 1930's. Interior rooms and the public spaces of the Regent Palace Hotel, newly built in 1915, present new areas for interiors history largely untapped by earlier authors in relation to public leisure and design in London.

Chapter One: West End Hotels (1888-1915) examines the urban narrative of Edwardian sites and identifies how styles for interior design and external buildings emerged. Drawing on the historiography of the hotel and new architectural builds, the steel-frame building as a structure is expanded upon as a technological blueprint for architectural cladding. Profiling existing published material on the London hotels, to a further examination of the influence from the continent and the United States, based upon industrial strength and the resort as a destination inhabiting luxury hotel types. The chapter argues for a comparable relevance for the new luxury hotels in attracting a wider international clientele and tourist, profiling design styles and tastes reflected in similar hotel builds.

Chapter Two: Facades and Thresholds: Regent Street to the Regent Palace Hotel identifies the symbols of empire prevalent in the facades of Regent Street and the quadrant after 1900. Considering how such new buildings were perceived as encroaching on traditional street vistas, an argument is situated on the streets and

thoroughfares in the West End introduced in chapter one. Using the thoroughfare and the open space and route to the resort of Piccadilly, to establish how the hotel lobby functioned as a nexus, or point at which the inside and outside meet. I set out a brief analysis of the formation of public space within the interior of the hotel vestibule and entrance hall, using Turner's reconsideration of Arnold Van Gennep's concept of *liminality*.⁵¹ This theory has evolved from its applicability to the negotiation of spaces, either on the geographical periphery or as socially manifest on the margins from one type of space or function to another. For example the notion of the liminal can be applied to thoroughfares and routes that exist without walls. This means that the partitioning of a space, either inside or outside a building could be manifest from individual journeys through public spaces. Liminality represents the movement and encounter from one point of entry to the next. It forms from the constantly shifting aspects of space, given meaning through inhabitation. In the next chapter the concept of a *liminoid* experience is developed in the winter garden, approached from the hotel lobby. The liminal becomes liminoid when positioned within one space, upon the purchase of goods and consumer actions undertaken within the walls of a public room. It involves the division of external or internal spaces. The idea of a liminoid construct is the perfect prism for evaluating the lucid form of the glasshouse, turned café room, broadly understood as a semi-confined space of refreshment.

In *Chapter Three: Grand Exhibitions and the J. Lyons & Co Winter Garden* the glasshouse is examined as the protagonist formation of social spectacle and performance. Its advent into the Edwardian hotel was the culmination of public entertainment, space and a culture of display. People flocked to the natural light artificial room as the interior and resort for visitors in the new luxury hotel that was first introduced in pavilions and arcades. The winter garden presented a dichotomy of empire and spectacle, as a rotunda court, I argue an influence of other spaces on the periphery. Palaces on the seaside resort and the open space of the Victorian exhibition all contributed to the dissemination of the people's palaces and winter gardens. They entered into hotel interiors as spaces of liminoid consumption, popular pleasure and as grand cafes under domes in the West End. A number of highly decorated rooms in the Louis XVI style formed in the hotels and their main restaurants held international connections between London and Paris in luxury dining and interior design.

⁵¹ See Arnold Van Gennep *The Rites of Passage: A Classic Study of Cultural Celebrations*, (London: Routledge) 1960 and Victor Turner *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*, (Maryland: John Hopkins University Press) 1982

Chapter Four: Feminine Spaces: Louis XVI Restaurants and Fine Dining looks at the formation of classical interior design in tangent with decorative crafts-based commissions for commercial buildings. Further, the chapter examines the extent to which beaux-arts style was prevalent in new luxury hotel design and the Regent Palace Hotel restaurant. Transatlantic interior design in the Louis XVI style attracted escorted ladies into the public sphere to dine and shop in a proliferation of leisured spaces in the West End. Coinciding with the emergence popular travel and mass leisure, many restaurants in hotels were able to capitalize on this and the French dining experience in London.

Chapter Five: Masculine Spaces: Rooms and Rituals, argues for the safety of the masculine imperial identity of Regent Street and the quadrant which had prevailed since the nineteenth century. As the main areas of Piccadilly Circus became more feminized from 1900, the smaller backstreets kept a traditional gentlemanly identity that would not suffer due to a central location. The Lyons establishments inhabited rooms for men that were often situated out of sight and below ground floor level in the Regent Palace Hotel. Billiards and smoking rooms were decorated in an imperial orientalist décor that was typical of the masculine club in the Victorian to Edwardian period. Changing to brightly lit and highly modernised spaces of deco moderne in 1934-5, the modernist inspired streamlined style manifested itself in the hotel. Transforming the private spaces of male consumption in various establishments, the impact of democracy through décor manifested itself in the use of materials and the consumption of them in less elite public spaces.

In *Chapter Six: Accommodating Employees and Guests*, the study continues to evaluate the democratization of the West End that produced new positions for women, inside and outside the hotel. J. Lyons & Co as practising reformists of mass culture incorporated a paternalistic culture in the management of employees. This process emerged as a successful measure for the caterers to adopt, using modern methods and a highly mechanized work-force, the American system of mass production was adopted by the company. Creating a process of organization allowed them to produce all amenities and goods themselves, whilst also showcasing their employees in the process. Lyons Waitresses illustrate how women in occupational roles during the inter-war years entered a modernized employment zone. Moving upstairs the chapter considers in what ways the bedrooms functioned as private rooms for guests? The national press of the period is used as evidence for the assessment of nervosa or interiority in the hotel bedroom. Looking out of the hotel window, facades of Brewer Street faced towards the streets of Soho, where close boundaries could be mapped or

marred in the frenetic pace and modernity of the city. Hotels welcomed all levels of guests and became more accustomed to the mass public by offering economy and luxury for all. In Piccadilly Circus the panorama of attractions concealed the dark side of a visit to the capital and the Regent Palace Hotel was often reported as the place where sinister events occurred.

Assessing the hotel building and the site of the Regent Palace Hotel, the thesis explores the surrounding West End and its entertainment and leisure spaces as specified in terms of interiors, gender and luxury. From the outset, the research reveals that women were paramount in constructing luxury identities for the new hotels in the West End from the late nineteenth century. Inside the new twentieth century hotel, the lobby, winter garden and restaurant welcomed women as employees or guests of J. Lyons & Co. Latterly, as employees, women waitresses served the public spaces of the hotel, instead of men, who'd previously serviced the Victorian exhibitions of empire. However, male custom prevailed below the ground floor of the Regent Palace Hotel. The representative image of imperialism that masculinity conveyed became less distinct into the new century and consequently, in this study, is proven in the re-design of the interiors to attract a new clientele to the hotel.

Chapter One

Historiography: West End Hotels (1888-1915)

The general histories of European and British hotels provided an introduction for this research and informed on the many hotels built across Britain from the early nineteenth century onwards. Bush and Taylor wrote the first social history entitled *The Golden Age of British Hotels* in 1974, publishing a later revised edition in 2003.⁵² Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd and David Watkins produced a similar social and architectural history of luxury grand and palace hotels in 1984. Explaining that the position of hotels as viable structures for historic enquiry began during the expansion of industrial and commercial industries, they claimed that:

Conventional histories of western architecture concentrated up to the mid eighteenth century on two building types: the church and the palace. Thereafter the types increased rapidly, for example the opera house or theatre, the library and the museum, were in fact attributes of the palace expanded to cater for a prosperous middle class.⁵³

Since the 1980's new academic writings have emerged from the fields of Design History, Architectural Studies and in the fairly new subject of Interiors History and Theory. Focussing on a national and international context to situate the London hotel, this chapter explores a discourse of European, Grand and American hotels. Specifically introducing the philosophy behind steel-frame construction and a critical explanation for the new luxury hotels built in London from 1888 to 1915. This was a formation of urban social and geographical patterns of elite class building identified in resort expansion and the more popular locales of London including the West End.

The London hotel was influenced by larger and more luxurious examples of continental and European grand hotels and reveals that the expanse of the West End in terms of tourism and leisure responded to this. Advances in hotel accommodation and greater levels of convenience and soft comforting were previously credited to the United State from the mid to late 1800's. This study will show that a number of factors contributed to the design of the building types, which I term the 'new luxury hotels'. These are best defined as the well-known names in London throughout the last century including the Savoy and the Ritz, the also lesser known Cecil, next to the Savoy on the

⁵² Bush, David & Taylor, Derek, *The Golden Age of British Hotels*, (London: Northwood Publications) 1974; Taylor, David, *Ritzy: British Hotels 1837-1987*, (London: the Milman Press, 2003) p. 13

⁵³ Montgomery-Massingberd, Hugh & Watkin, David, *Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: The Vendome Press) 1984, p.13

Embankment. Furthermore, within twentieth century mass tourism, the chapter also reveals how the status of the hotel moved from a venue for public display, into a highly standardised and rationalised machine offering efficiency⁵⁴ As Greg Votolato outlines:

Due to industrialisation, railways and the steam locomotive, a rapid development of the railway networks quickly led to the virtual merger of two new building types: the hotel and the railway station, a development that had significant consequences for the purpose and form of the hotel in similar structures around the world during the heyday of train travel. Until this time the railway hotels were built from brick or stone, thick walls provided the struts for holding up monumental structures that provided a home away from home.⁵⁵

Priscilla Boniface writes of the developments in the hotel industry between 1837 and 1862. Primarily connected to the growth of the railways and British industrialisation, this dominated the growth of London's large hotels up until the 1880's. The first of these hotels were the Euston hotels, opened in 1839 by the London and Birmingham Railway Company, followed by the Great Western at Paddington and the Grosvenor in Victoria in 1855. Upon the opening of the Charing Cross Hotel in 1865, Boniface explains:

Before 1860 London was ill equipped with hotel accommodation, unlike North American and European cities. The Westminster Palace Hotel was built in 1860, the first grand hotel removed from the London railway termini and not erected by a railway company. Two years later the Langham hotel opened in Portland Place, a way from the stations and Belgravia.⁵⁶

The opening of the Westminster Palace Hotel at the top of Victoria Street and of the Langham in Portland Place in 1860-2, led to the emancipation of the big London hotel from the railways. The management of such hotels began to identify customers rather than merely receiving casual passing travellers. The Westminster Palace Hotel, from its geographic position, had a strong political character suggesting that most hotel building types were representative of their geography, location and potential custom. This hotel accommodated members of parliament, whereas, The Langham was in the principal diplomatic quarter and equipped itself with an Ambassador's audience room. Three more station hotels appeared at the same time: the Grosvenor at Victoria, those at

⁵⁴ Identified in the introduction of the latest text to evaluate the culture of interiors and spaces of the hotel lobby in Avermaete, Tom & Massey, Anne (ed) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2012, p.1

⁵⁵ Votolato, Gregory 'The Hotel Lobby and Local/Global Journeys' in Avermaete, Tom & Massey, Anne (ed) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.74

⁵⁶ Boniface, Priscilla, *Hotels and Restaurants: 1830 to the Present Day*, (London: NMR) 1981, p.2

Charing Cross and Cannon Street, both due to subsidiary companies of the South Eastern Railway.

The new London hotels constituted in a number of ways a different kind of provision from what had been usual in Britain before – built expressly for purpose, in the fashion of those in America and the Hotel du Louvre in Paris – having been established at the termini of the chief railways... and in other quarters of London. To their credit, the railway companies were very conscious of their responsibility to London's architectural landscape and commissioned many of England's top architects to design the hotels. They had fixed tariffs of prices, and coffee rooms for ladies as well as for gentlemen. The pricing policy of these hotels was new in London: designed to inform the guest immediately just what he would have to pay for including room, service, light, attendance, food. And, socially most important of all – they offered dining accommodation suitable for women. Boniface writes 'the whole world of inns and hotels, still more of eating rooms, in London had been a man's world.'⁵⁷

Chris Sheppardson's study *The Luxury Hotels of London* (1991) goes further in explaining the relevance of the Victorian hotel and the expansion of new entrepreneurs who identified British resorts in large hotels in the 1880's. The rise of the first major independent hotel company was the founding of Gordon Hotels by Frederick Gordon. Building his first hotel aimed specifically at the middle classes. In 1881 the Grand in Trafalgar Square opened and was a huge financial success, followed by the First Avenue Hotel in Holborn (1883) and the Metropole in Northumberland Avenue (1886). Gordon Hotels had opened three hotels within five years and by 1888 these hotels were showing a profit of £210,000.⁵⁸

Derek Taylor has identified how the tourism industry was influenced by popular authors, whose writing attracted a wider public to visit the capital, stating:

Visitors to London in 1880 could obtain the advice of the greatest living British novelist on all their problems, by purchasing Charles Dickens' *Dictionary of London*. Dickens lists the well known hotels, like the Langham, Westminster Palace, and the Buckingham Palace Hotel just opposite the great ballroom window, but also discussed the cheap ones: "there is also a large class of comfortable and more old fashioned hotels, such as the Bedford, Convent Garden for families and gentlemen; the Tavistock also in Covent Garden for bachelors where bed, breakfast and attendance costs seven shillings and six pence".⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.3

⁵⁸ Sheppardson, Chris, *The Luxury Hotels of London*, (Sussex: The Book Guild Ltd) 1991, p.23

⁵⁹ Taylor, David, *Ritzy: British Hotels 1837-1987*, (London: the Milman Press, 2003) p.111

London of the 1880's had become the imperial capital and centre of trade and commerce, attracting persons of leisure and wealth from overseas presented a challenge, as London's hotels did not reflect transatlantic standards. Falling behind the hotels of America in one respect: they had no private bathrooms – at the most two or three baths to each floor.⁶⁰ The industry, primarily, used the technology of the home, although hotels were among the first to introduce many new inventions to the public including: lifts, private bathrooms and electricity.⁶¹ The most important of the new generation of hotels for efficiency and new comforts was the Savoy, built in 1889 and in time for the hotel expansion in the West End between 1900-1914. Many hotels opened during this period of expansion including the Piccadilly, Ritz, Waldorf, Imperial and Lyons' Strand Palace Hotel, charging only six shillings.

It was the Savoy that inhabited the newest and most luxurious amenities of the new hotels although most of the secondary literature positions the Ritz of 1904-5 as the supplier of highest-end luxury due to a largely European influence. While there is very little written on the Savoy, historic texts include Stanley Jackson's *The Savoy: The Romance of a Great Hotel* (1964) and later *The Savoy: A Century of Taste* (1989), it is assumed that Lucius Beebe's survey *The Savoy of London* (1979) is a biographical survey.⁶² The Savoy advertised its launch based upon the attraction of electricity and illumination, which for a previous eight years had been experimented with in the adjacent Savoy Theatre. With modern potential in installing its own power plant, the hotel expanded on a range of new services including electric light. In experimenting with new technological luxuries, guests were also encouraged to partake in new activities including the use of speaking tubes in their rooms in requesting the hotel's refreshment services. The novelty of these inventions was that they were almost entirely alien unless guests had visited the French and Italian resort hotels, Thomas Edison's 1879 invention of the electric light system contributed to 'the early adoption of electric lighting by urban theatres had some relevance to the burgeoning role of the grand hotels of the late 19th century'.⁶³

While the Savoy was known for a combination of electricity and illumination hidden within decorative high style, the Ritz was considered highly modern and luxurious in terms of its construction and design. Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd and David Watkin published a case study entitled *The London Ritz: A Social and Architectural*

⁶⁰ Colby, Reginald, 'London's Palm Court Hotels' *Country Life*, April 16 (1964): 898

⁶¹ Taylor, David, *Ritzy: British Hotels 1837-1987*, (London: the Milman Press, 2003) p.13

⁶² Jackson's latter text published in 1969 and Beebe's of 1979 have not been consulted due to unavailability.

⁶³ 'Savoy Lights', *Pentagram Papers*, No. 29 (2000)

History (1989) where the authors align the hotel structurally and visually to a Franco-American tradition with virtually no English roots to its design at all. Stating that 'the exterior represents an evocative confluence of various Parisian architectural traditions.'⁶⁴ Marcus Binney has written an extensive account of the hotel entitled *The Ritz Hotel London* (2006) it addresses the reasons for the geography of the grand luxury hotel as a fashionable location where it can command the attention of every passer-by. Hotels in the wealthier districts of central London clarified this, as the Savoy and the Hotel Cecil both stood on the Strand, with a spectacular view over the Thames to the south. Other grand hotels built around 1900 included the Carlton, the Piccadilly and the Waldorf, as these too commanded careful positioning along major thoroughfares, including the Ritz with a Beaux Arts style Parisian arcade, reminiscent of Sir Reginald Blomfield's and Sir Richard Norman Shaw's work on Regent Street facades in the creation of destination points and places of repose within what I consider to be urban resort developments in the West End of London.

Examining these new luxury hotels has enabled a further understanding of the dominance of design styles for facades, faïences and the lucid relationship between classical exteriors and interiors. Within an architectural historiography I have relied upon *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*, by Alistair Service (1977) as recent texts appear to have eliminated examination of the Beaux Arts in great detail. It is written that Edwardian classicism can be divided into at least two clear phases:

"Before 1906 it was dominated by bold Baroque forms largely developed from the vigorous British architecture of the eighteenth century. After that, the influence of French architecture led to more chaste Classical designs, while the necessity of combining stone frontages with steel frame structures produced an intriguing neo-mannerism and other variations. High Edwardian Baroque represented what was known as an English Renaissance style of architecture that commemorated Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1887 amongst the privilege's of the upper middle classes and a celebration of the British Empire. Early public buildings that evolved in the style around 1900 were Greenwich Royal Hospital, St Pauls Cathedral and Blenheim Palace."⁶⁵

Given the dynamic of Edwardian classical architecture before and after 1906, I have been able to identify the style of the Regent Palace Hotel as of the French influence from 1906-07 in comparison to the work of Charles Mewes and Arthur Davis. In figure

⁶⁴ Montgomery-Massingberd, Hugh & Watkin, David, *The London Ritz: A Social and Architectural History*, (London: Aurum Press) 1989, p.43

⁶⁵ Service, Alistair, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 1977, p.142

(Figure 1:1) Inveresk House, Aldwych 1906-7 (Source: Service, 1977)

(Figure 1:2) Main Elevation, Regent Palace Hotel, 1915 (Source: Modern Building Record)

1:1 an illustration of Inveresk House, Aldwych London designed for the Morning Post newspaper, it becomes obvious that a comparison can be made for site elevation and the potential and depth of triangular sites. Similarly, the Regent Palace Hotel in figure 1:2 holds the same structure and mansard roof and figurative details. Once more the pedestrian spaces allow for access to the larger perimeter of the building and the block is entered through a main door to the apex of the site. When Mewes and Davis' work emerged as the latest in Parisian style it was highly regarded and still popular when Lyons opened the Regent Palace Hotel in 1915. By this point ostentatious luxury was the label accorded to the classical house style adopted for the Lyons hotels and restaurants, proven by a quote from the Economist in 1914, stating that:

Ostentation is part of the stock-in-trade of the high-class hotel. To keep up, the hotel has to spend, the spending building up the capital of the company but not the value. The keenness of competition consists not so much in price-cutting as in presenting lavish and costly luxuries to attract custom.⁶⁶

The lavishness of consumer attractions in the West End was reflected in the size, scale and location of commercial buildings in the West End, known mainly for shopping, dining, visiting. The new hotels provoked debate within the architectural elite, as they were perceived as progressive due to their construction on steel-frames. Beforehand, hotels used traditional types of brickwork and presented a respectable set of codes that responded to the old rules of craft and construction.

Steel Frame Buildings

The architectural debates that surrounded developments in British Edwardian urban renewal are important for establishing whether buildings on steel-frames challenged the traditional forms of revival classicist architecture. Such buildings were perceived as industrial structures without merit for their strength, longevity and adaptability as mere architectural shells, their relevance as steel-frames is the fact that the 'new luxury hotels' from 1905 onwards were constructed on this industrial building type. Observed in Alistair A. Jackson's 'The Development of Steel Framed Buildings in Britain 1880-1905' in *Construction History*⁶⁷, a contemporary viewpoint is provided by Sven Bylander's 1938 study, 'Steelwork in Buildings: Thirty Years of Progress'⁶⁸ and P.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.145

⁶⁷ Jackson, Alistair A. 'The Development of Steel Framed Buildings in Britain 1880-1905' in *Construction History*, Vol. 14. 1998

⁶⁸ Bylander, Sven, 'Steelwork in Buildings – Thirty Years of Progress', in *Structural Engineer*, Vol. 15. No. 1. 1937

Jackson's article questions when the first commercial steel-frame building types emerged in London. In this article he uses two commercial West End buildings, The Ritz hotel completed in 1906, and Selfridges department store of 1908, as case studies for exploring why Britain took so long to adapt to this new way of building. Questioning to what extent the United States lead in steel-frame construction, it seems that little was written about this period of building between 1880-1905. Setting the context for contemporary building practice, the railway industry, and developments in Europe and America. The philosophy, education and training of architects and the contemporary engineering understanding of materials and structures had a significant effect on how the early steel-framed buildings were perceived and designed. Jackson provides a definition of them:

"A steel-framed building consists of a framework of primary vertical and horizontal steel members connected to provide full resistance to static, live environmental forces. In such a structure the role of masonry can, but does not have to be, reduced to load-bearing status."⁶⁹

Publishing their first steel section book in 1887, Dorman Long and Co, the construction specialists for the Regent Palace Hotel had become the leading contractors of steel framed building nationally. Most structures had evolved through trade with the railway and in the construction industry industrially. Evidence is shown that this evolved into hotels and civic builds, as well as breweries and factories. Jackson also states that this type of building was also 'referred to in Britain as the 'American' system, but in fact was an entirely logical way to build a based structure having continuous stanchions. With the notion of architecture in mind, it is my intention to show how the steel-frame structure was an ideal building type for the potential of interior cladding. Challenging the traditional sense of a building type, Jackson has also indicated how this industrial form sparked debate within formal architectural circles in the late Victorian period. Jackson believes that there was a delay in introducing steel into the British construction industry and quotes Ruskin's vision of 1849 as a reason for this. From the truth to materials in architecture and a range of viewpoints from architects to engineers who responded to this, the Ritz Hotel was deemed as the first of this type in Britain.

⁶⁹ Jackson, Alistair A. 'The Development of Steel Framed Buildings in Britain 1880-1905' in *Construction History*, Vol. 14. 1998, p.21

Although it was in London and with the erection of the National Liberal Club designed by Sir Alfred Waterhouse in 1887 that steel-framed building emerged in London.⁷⁰

Further users of this type were Richard Norman Shaw, from the 1890's onwards, assessed later in the thesis in relation to the Regent Street quadrant. It was also in 1938 that Sven Bylander, the leading steel building designer wrote a seminal paper on the possibility of steel framed construction over traditional methods. Bylander, the man who was responsible for the building of the Ritz hotel explained the pitfalls he experienced with planning regulations at the time. In 1894, the newly established London County Council introduced the most comprehensive Building Act since the Rebuilding Act of 1667, following the Great Fire of London one year earlier. It was not, however, until 1909, when the Amendment Act to the London Building Act was passed, that considerable progress could be made in structural design, especially in the use of steel and concrete and for some part explains why steel-frame construction was not widespread in London until H. Gordon Selfridge submitted his planning application for an American department store in the West End.

The drafting of this legislation was assisted by the work of the British Fire Prevention Committee, who were a body of architects and surveyors who preventing fire damages to buildings were testing out fire resistant building elements.⁷¹

A further article that has illuminated this debate is Jeanne Catherine Lawrence's, '*Steel-Frame Architecture Versus the London Building Regulations: Selfridges, the Ritz, and American Technology*'. The article examines the modern methods of steel frame and reinforced concrete construction from its inception in the United States. The Chicago School of Architects ideas were critical to Selfridges's vision of an enormous technologically advanced department store, due to the fact that Daniel Burnham was employed to complete the project.⁷² Burnham was responsible for the 1909 Chicago Plan intended to open up large spaces and buildings for the masses, by re-making the

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 28

⁷¹ Bylander, Sven, 'Steelwork in Buildings – Thirty Years of Progress', in *Structural Engineer*, Vol. 15. No. 1. 1937, p. 72

⁷² Daniel H. Burnham was the chief architect and Director of Works of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Before coming to London to work on the new Selfridges department store, he was involved with the building of Marshall Fields department store in Chicago. A leading contributor of the City Beautiful Movement, 'Burnham promoted the "baroque plan", which is seen in the grand plan for Chicago with its parkways and diagonal avenues.' Moe, Christine E, *Daniel Hudson Burnham, Architect and Planner* (Monticello: Illinois) 1980. A number of texts are devoted to his work including Hines, Thomas S. *Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner*, (London: University of Chicago Press) 2009, and Smith, Carl, *The Plan of Chicago: Daniel Burnham and the Re-making of the American City*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) the RIBA hold a biographical file on his talk at the RIBA in 1910 on Town Planning.

city on the lines of Paris. Working on the design of the Marshall Fields department store in Chicago, he was ideal as Harry Selfridge's choice of architect for the building of the first American Department store in London. Many of the architects who created the first modern steel-framed buildings in Chicago were trained in the office of William le Baron Jenney who founded the 'Chicago School' (1880-1910). Campbell wrote that:

By 1895, this construction method was firmly established in all major American cities, but, at that period, Chicago had more high-rise steel-framed structures than all the other cities put together. The emergence of the structural steel-frame, together with the introduction of successful passenger lifts, the need to minimise construction loads to make substructure designs sensible, and the growing demand for larger windows, profoundly influenced the work of engineers and inevitable resulted in the evolution of this architectural form.⁷³

A.K. Sandoval Strauss in his text *Hotel: An American History* claims that in the United States, steel-frame construction was introduced in commercial buildings, particularly department stores in the 1880's. This construction boom included hotels of all kinds, but its most visible manifestations were the luxury establishments. In a crowded and competitive industry, leading hotel builders sought ways to make their houses stand out from the rest, and the most obvious solution was to erect structures that were distinctively ostentatious. In New York City, such imperatives gave rise to two hotels whose names became synonymous with opulence. Sandoval Strauss describes these:

The massive and ornate Waldorf-Astoria Hotel was built in two parts by one of the nation's wealthiest families: William Waldorf Astor financed the construction of the Waldorf Hotel, which opened in 1893; four years later, his cousin John Jacob Astor IV presided over the opening of his own adjacent and equally eponymous palace hotel, the Astoria. The two halves of the thousand room caravansary were linked by a three hundred foot-long marble-faced corridor that became such a favoured venue for self-display among the wealthy, beautiful, stylish, and famous that it garnered the nickname Peacock Alley.⁷⁴

In the early 1900's the London Building Regulations contained no provisions for structures of this kind, therefore hindering the construction of buildings with wide internal spaces and vast street level windows that Selfridge desired. These regulations

⁷³ P. Campbell, '1890-1910', in A. R. Collins (ed.), *Structural Engineering – Two Centuries of Achievement*, (Chiselhurst), 1983, p.72

⁷⁴ Sandoval-Strausz, A. K., *Hotel: An American History*, (London: Yale University Press) 2007, p.127

were contained in the London Building Acts of 1894 and 1905. The 1894 Act incorporated all previous Acts from 1844 to 1893, and was aimed at the regulation of 'widths of streets, lines of frontages, open spaces to dwellings, heights of buildings and projections there from, ventilation and height of habitable rooms and the control and prevention of the spread of fire.'⁷⁵

Collins explained the progress in steel-frame construction that was already commonplace in America, Stating that:

This method was little used in Britain before 1900 and, on the continent, steel framing was restricted mainly to railway stations and factories. The first load-bearing steel-framed building of any significance to be built in this country was London's Ritz Hotel (1904), which was followed, two years later, by the east wing of Selfridges. The London Building Act of 1894 still required the external walls to be of full load-bearing thickness and prohibited the riveting of beam-to-stanchion connections.⁷⁶

In England, steel-frame construction had not commenced in general, as the cast-iron column was in favour as were internal steel beam framing and steel filler joists for thick breeze concrete floors. Most buildings were constructed in self-supporting brick walls and with wooden joist floors. The external walls had to be of full thickness as required by the London County Council, but they were carried on steel at each floor. The style and details for pillar splices above the floor level, the top and bottom brackets on pillars connecting the beams, and the framing generally, were the same as were used at that time in New York steel-frame buildings. The Ritz was the first building for which such steel detail design was adopted in London. (See figure 1:3) The authorities desired to widen Piccadilly, and in order to erect the Ritz hotel it was necessary to extend the building over the foot pavement, and hence the Arcade (which is similar in design to the Ritz Hotel in Place Vendome, Paris) which had become a landmark in London. The erection of this steel-frame building did much to increase the agitation for revisions of the London Building Act. The new amendment act for steel-frame buildings was completed by the London County

⁷⁵ Lawrence, Jeanne Catherine, 'Steel-Frame Architecture Versus the London Building Regulations: Selfridges, the Ritz, and American Technology', in *Construction History*, Vol. 6, 1990, p.23

⁷⁶ Neither of these requirements was enforced in these projects and other new features that were incorporated in the designs did much to increase pressure on the authorities to revise the London Building Act, which was inhibiting the development of steel-frame construction. P. Campbell, '1890-1910', in A. R. Collins (ed.), *Structural Engineering - Two Centuries of Achievement*, (Chiselhurst), 1983, p.77

(Figure 1:3) The Ritz hotel, Piccadilly, 1904 (Source: Collins, 1983)

Council in 1909, and until that time very little progress was made in the use of steel in building construction.⁷⁷

The American influences of capitalism and luxury became more apparent in the late nineteenth century period, as London department stores and entertainment venues emerged in the West End. Hotel proprietors recognised this and realised that there was a gap in the market for large-scale luxury hotels that would function along the same lines as their American counterparts. Selfridge's building, east wing, was erected about 1906, before the passing of the Steel Frame Act. This was one of the first buildings of importance to be erected in London for commercial purposes having large bays or wall panels, the centres being 22 to 24 feet in length. The external walls were made self-supporting and strengthened with piers and stone columns, and no steel pillars were introduced in the external walls. The interior of the building was a complete steel frame with solid reinforced concrete floors. Bylander explains:

"I believe that Selfridge's building introduced a new aspect of building construction, and architects began to study a varied form of elevation, adopting larger panels and designs more suited to the steel frame type, and now many buildings can be seen in London of bolder design and more practical and yet, I believe it is said, very pleasing in appearance."⁷⁸

The east wing of Selfridge's building had internal division walls, (see figure 1:4) and these were carried on steel and not self-supporting, to allow these walls to be taken down at a later date if and when the London County Council would permit of more than 250,000 cubic feet for each section of the building.

Lawrence argues that the 1894 and 1905 Acts impeded the construction of the Selfridge building through their regulations for fire prevention and structural stability. Although reinforced concrete flooring could be used to create larger (yet fire resistant) spaces, and structural steelwork could be employed to support the loads and stresses of a building, the building regulations served to inhibit the erection of large structures whose interior and exterior appearance fully benefitted from these advances in technology. When building Acts were reformed after years of recommendation by engineers, architects, and businessmen in support of construction and structural steelwork.

⁷⁷ Bylander, Sven, 'Steelwork in Buildings – Thirty Years of Progress', in *Structural Engineer*, Vol. 15. No. 1. 1937, p. 2

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 6

(Figure 1:4) Selfridges Ground Floor Plan, 1909 (Source: Architectural Review)

The London County Council General Powers Act of 1909, otherwise known as the Steel Frame Act, officially recognised steel-frame construction. In the reform of the Building Acts to accommodate new construction methods, Selfridge's department store played an important and instrumental role. The building was not solely responsible for legislative change. However the highly publicised construction techniques employed by structural engineer Sven Bylander, first on the Ritz hotel (1904-5) and then on Selfridges daring commercial and architectural venture, were an important part of the process which led the LCC to take account of progressively more sophisticated methods of steel and reinforced-concrete construction. Lawrence explains:

"In effect, the Selfridge store was a transitional building, erected under the prevailing regulations, but with the knowledge that they were soon to change. H. Gordon Selfridge fully expected, and therefore anticipated, legislative reform; he consistently petitioned for waivers from the regulations, and, through his persistence, helped the building reforms come to pass. Selfridges department store therefore became the first large building in London to fully exploit steel-frame and reinforced concrete construction so that both the interior and exterior of the building revealed the use of these modern methods of structural engineering."⁷⁹ (See figure 1:5)

The Ritz was the first steel-framed hotel of importance in London, designed with a complete steel frame which carried all loads, including the reinforced concrete fire-proof floor system. Conforming structurally to the LCC regulations of 1894 and the 1905 Building acts, the Ritz walls measured 39 inches in thickness at street level and 14 inches on the sixth floor level. The Waring White Building Company constructed the hotel designed by Mewes and Davis, with Sven Bylander as structural engineer, in 1904-5, amidst excitement in the architectural community. The description of the Selfridges department store, which opened on 15th March 1909, reads like the new hotels, in that the building occupied the whole of its 250 by 175 ft site. There were nine passenger lifts, two service lifts, and six staircases. The store's eight floors (five above ground and three below) averaged fifteen feet in height, and housed over 100 departments as well as a vast range of amenities. Including an Information Bureau, First Aid Room with trained nurse; French, German, American and Colonial retiring rooms "typically furnished", restaurant, luncheon hall, tea-room and roof garden. Some 1400 employees had been hired to ensure the smooth running of Oxford Street's new commercial palace.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Lawrence, Jeanne Catherine, 'Steel-Frame Architecture Versus the London Building Regulations: Selfridges, the Ritz, and American Technology', in *Construction History*, Vol. 6, 1990, p.25

⁸⁰ Ibid, p.31

(Figure 1:5)
Selfridges Exterior, East Wing and Steel-frame Under Construction, 1908-9
(Source: Collins, 1983)

Resorts, Location and Luxury

The sites for the new luxury hotels were just as crucial to the success of the architectural plans and interior designs of these buildings. As the next stage of this analysis focuses on the resort as a destination point, placing where hotels were often built, whether on the edge of a thoroughfare, waterfront or countryside lake. The resort hotels in America and Europe developed more rapidly than in Britain, functioning as 'machines of modernity' they are particularly pertinent for this research on London hotels. Not only did the influx of visitors to resort hotels indicate that people had more leisure time and the economic means of exploring this. A need was created in a global context for travellers becoming amenable to new facilities and services, often complimented by opulent and ostentatious interior surroundings. It would be the locations of these hotels that would often situate the image of the hotel for the patron. A wealthy district illustrated economic interests and representations of luxury for the elite classes who stayed at the Savoy on the Embankment, whilst clearly the guest at the Regent Palace Hotel, relied on a lower set of standards. Both hotels emphasised luxury and leisure in the West End, two locales sharing central geographical locations, inhabiting various social, economic and cultural meanings . Therefore, studying hotels offers a new way to look at people's responses to modern life because the hotel was a microcosm of some of the key challenges of modernity. Hotels were points of contact between local communities and the larger society beyond – spaces that simultaneously emphasised and blurred the distinctions between insider and outsider, self and other. Because hotels were by their very nature centers of mobility, transience, and anonymity, they were places where traditional forms of community-based social control broke down. Yet at the same time, they also functioned as important community gathering places, locations where local people came together to meet, mingle, confer, and celebrate.⁸¹

To evaluate this, I will assess the cultural shifts between American resort hotels in the Adirondack region of New York circa 1880-1907 and Florida resort hotels of the same period. In comparison to European counterparts in Berlin and Ostend and the 'new luxury hotels' namely The Cecil built in 1896, the Savoy hotel of 1889 and the European resort facades of the Carlton Hotel, in the Haymarket, opened by César Ritz in 1901. Eventually this route ends in Piccadilly at the Ritz (1904) and the Piccadilly Hotel (1908) and the Regent Palace Hotel (1915).

⁸¹ Sandoval-Strausz, A. K, *Hotel: An American History*, (London: Yale University Press) 2007, p.4

The relationship between hotels and resorts is addressed by Bryant F. Tolles' and used for an examination of the Adirondack developments. In his text *'Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks: The Architecture of a Summer Paradise: 1850-1950'* He explains:

Encouraged by improved means of transportation and altered attitudes, Americans in significant numbers began to seek out tourism and the resort experience in the early nineteenth century. Prior to that time, leisure time travel had been restricted primarily to mineral springs and selected rural locales. By the 1830's and 1840's hotels comparable to the Tremont and Astor houses and other upscale city lodging facilities began to appear at desirable American mountain, lake, and seaside locations with potential for resort development.⁸²

In London during earlier centuries, grand aristocratic mansions including the Grosvenor, Dorchester and Londonderry House along Park Lane and Marlborough, Clarence and Lancaster House overlooking The Mall had largely taken the prime positions along great streets. Devonshire House overlooking Green Park stood almost opposite the Ritz. Further along Piccadilly stood Burlington House, taken over by the Royal Academy in 1854.⁸³ The mystique of a high-class and stylish location enhanced the reputations of resort hotels and to convince patrons of these establishments many hotels built after 1890 were imaginative interpretations of French chateaux, Italian or Spanish Renaissance palaces, Mediterranean country villas, or Moorish Castles. The Adirondacks, however, represented a clear exception to this trend, and much hotel architecture there was conceived in the Queen Anne style, sometimes in combination with other design vernaculars. Contrary to the new interest in European derived styles, many American architects of this era chose not to abandon their national heritage. Influenced by cultural pride colonial motifs were utilized to produce innovative buildings. Others were instrumental in the development and application of the Colonial Revival, which became widely recognised for its superlative proportions, charming domestic forms, and successfully integrated classical elements. The revised American version of the English Arts and Crafts also achieved popular status by the end of the century, and, along with the shingle and the colonial revival, was utilized in hotel design. All three of these styles were evident in Adirondack hotel architecture into the first three decades of the twentieth century. These resort hotels included the second Whiteface Inn (1900-1) in the Shingle style, the second Leland House (1915) in the

⁸² Tolles, Bryant F. *'Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks: The Architecture of a Summer Paradise. 1850-1950'* (London: University Press of New England) 2003, p.5

⁸³ Binney, Marcus, *The Ritz Hotel London*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 2006, p.31

Colonial Revival, and the third Whiteface Inn (1914-15) in the Swiss Chalet version of the Arts and Crafts.⁸⁴ (See figure 1:6)

The key to successful aesthetic and functional impact and a pleasurable guest experience was the combination of imposing size, visual appeal, and properly configured and furnished interior spaces. In the Adirondacks, a region of New York in the United States, this was achieved not just in the few hotel buildings that were architect designed but also in the majority that were planned and constructed by local contractors working closely with their originators. In figure 1:7 this is apparent in the floor plans for the Third Whiteface Inn, Lake Placid, where a grand retreat is illustrated with large interior spaces on the ground and office floors. These hotels acted as resorts because their purpose was to facilitate the fact that all leisure pursuits undertaken would be situated on outdoor life, sport and leisure, including boating, baseball, tennis, cycling, hiking, horseback riding, fishing and swimming. The buildings themselves were signposts of a retreat with added benefits.

This is why the 'new luxury hotels' had much to compete with in terms of Americanised luxury and how they might communicate this in specific urban climates. By using the same interior design language this was possible, however London hotels had to make their public spaces within the hotel successful in ways that the American resort hotels gained additional strongholds, through the scope of exterior spaces and their interiors within the hotels. In figure 1:8 an illustration of the palm court in the Cecil hotel on the Strand, clarifies how luxurious interior spaces defined the pursuits of various destination points. In London and other major British cities, the Edwardian hotel style soon became a symbol of the pleasures and luxury of the upper middle classes on holiday and the main features of their interior spaces included a palm court, promenade, spacious dining rooms and cast plaster mouldings of decorative work.⁸⁵ In turn many public entertainment venues included a series of theatres built in London and other cities by architects such as Frank Matcham, with similar classical influences and motifs. Producing conflicting evidence of what actually constitutes the differences in public interiors, and in hotels, as figure 1:9 illustrates, the palm court inhabits a closely aligned style of Beaux Arts interior design prevalent in London theatres. Boniface explains that: 'Richard D'Oyly Carte, impresario and owner of the new Savoy

⁸⁴ Tolles, Bryant F. 'Resort Hotels of the Adirondacks: The Architecture of a Summer Paradise. 1850-1950 (London: University Press of New England) 2003, p.11

⁸⁵ Service, Alistair, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 1977, p.161

(Figure 1:6) Piazza of the South Wing and the North Wing from Northwest. Second Whiteface Inn, Lake Placid. New York. Circa 1908 (Source: Tolles, 2003)

(Figure 1:7) Floor Plans, Third Whiteface Inn, Lake Placid. New York, 1914-15
(Source: Tolles, 2003)

(Figure 1:8) Hotel Cecil, The Strand, 1912. Illustration of the Palm Court by Charles E. Dawson
(Source: National Monuments Record BL21576)

(Figure 1:9) Hotel Cecil, The Strand, 1912. Photograph of the Palm Court by Bedford Lemere.
(Source: National Monuments Record BL21584)

Theatre, was impressed by American hotels and was determined to provide the same type of service in his new Savoy Hotel building to appeal to the American market with an emphasis on quality'.⁸⁶ The Savoy was known as a high-class hotel inhabiting all the modern comforts including a number of bathrooms and electric lighting, its restaurant soon attained great distinction also. Some of the hotel arrangements were not right from the outset, and Carte called in two new men to reform what was wrong. César Ritz and Auguste Escoffier attracted discriminating clients, including the wealthy American market that all hotel owners sought to attract afterwards. Working with the young architect C. B Young, and interior architect, T. E Collcutt, D'Oyly Carte appears to have been the main creative force in his own hotel's design. Lighting was the visual essence of this. 'The Savoy's famous electric lighting system may have been conceived as a herald of modernity, and an emblem of careless luxury, soon serving as an accomplice to a succession of dramas of excess. By the time electric lighting had become commonplace, The Savoy Hotel was fully established as the place where high society's social drama's were performed.'⁸⁷

In figure 1:10, the Savoy is shown as a newly built urban resort hotel and the first of the gilded age style in London. A building that was monumental and continental, an individual example of a 'new luxury hotel' it appeared that there was some linear resemblances in hotel design reflected by European counterparts. If compared to the beachfront Hotel Continental in Ostend, (see figure 1:11) the repeat in structural design is clear. Although the Savoy has a complete symmetrical exterior, viewed from the Embankment, there is flow between the larger turrets on the corners of each building. Where the Continental structure appears to have been extended, the Savoy's is obsolete from view (the hotel was extended in 1903 on to the Strand), although its frontages and signage look out to the edge of the ironwork and greenery upon the river. The thoroughfare hotel engaged with a street or parade of similar building types in a single location, part of a line of buildings that overlooked land or water, given the nature of their sites as resort hotels

⁸⁶ Boniface, Priscilla, *Hotels and Restaurants: 1830 to the Present Day*, (London: Royal Commission on Historical Monuments) 1981, p. 4

⁸⁷ 'Savoy Lights', *Pentagram Papers*, No. 29 (2000)

(Figure 1:10) The Savoy Hotel, The Strand, Overlooking the Embankment, 1889.
Photograph by Bedford Lemere (Source: National Monuments Record BL09665)

(Figure 1:11) Hotel Continental, Ostend, Circa 1880's. (Source: Montgomery-Massingberd and Watkin, 1989

providing open space within sheltered environments that cohabited with the geographical surroundings in which they were part. The Savoy was also a leader in providing a characteristic domestic technology and efficiency in the hotel, in figure 1:12 an image of the bell system, a gilded and highly decorative device is presented against the wallpapered backdrop of the hotel room. Guests could press a button and point the clock mechanism to the service, which they desired. The electronic functioning allowed guests the luxury of refreshment with minimal communication, in allowing for the utmost privacy in such accommodation. A Louis style decorative frame illustrates the subtle technique of presenting a domestic setting as part of the modern efficiencies of the new luxury hotel. Also an innovation for 1889, six lifts were installed at the Savoy which the American Elevation Company claimed were the largest and most efficient in Europe.

The next example of a London hotel illustrates the architectural trends that travelled back from Europe in straightforward classical styles. Figure 1:13 illustrates how the exterior of a central building on the Haymarket area also showed signs of the resort style. Ritz and Escoffier collaborated on the new Carlton Hotel in the Haymarket, quickly making the hotel and its restaurant the fashionable place in which to be seen. The flat roofed palm court was copied in hotels throughout Britain and the interior decoration conceived by Waring and Gillow was photographed for their records (see figure 1:14). Cesar Ritz after holding many positions in the hotel and restaurant business, among others in the Grand Hotel in Monte Carlo in 1880, joined forces with Auguste Escoffier, believing that 'comfort, cuisine and service' should work in tandem. In 1888, when the London Savoy, built by the London Theatre impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte, neared its finishing stages, he asked Ritz to take over the management. However, Ritz became involved with the Carlton before giving his name to the forthcoming Ritz hotel. The Carlton had a distinctly continental palace style in its design as an exterior building. The chief resorts with gigantic palace hotels were to be found in Switzerland, at St Moritz, Gstaard and Lucerne; in the South of France at Nice, Monte Carlo, Cannes, Biarritz, the French spa towns of Aix-le-

(Figure 1:12) Bell System in Guest-room of the Savoy Hotel, Circa 1889
(Source: Montgomery-Massingberd and Watkin, 1989)

(Figure 1:13) Carlton Hotel, Haymarket. Photographed by York and Son, 1899-1900
(Source: National Monuments Record DD97/00353)

(Figure 1:14) Carlton Hotel, Interior, Palm Court. Photograph by Bedford Lemere,
1899-1900 (Source: National Monuments Record BL15679/101)

Bains, Evian-Le-Bains, Vichy and Vittel and in Germany at Karlsbad and Baden-Baden.⁸⁸

In the coastal resorts in the United States, Susan R. Braden in her text *The Architecture of Leisure: the Florida Resort Hotels of Henry Flagler and Henry Plant*, (2002) explains that many of the hotels occupied scenic locations near the seacoasts and waterways of Florida, their sites made easily accessible only because of the railroads, contributing to what became known as “the metropolitan corridor”. To John Stilgoe, the cultural geographer, metropolitan corridors constituted a “fourth distinctive environment along with rural, suburban, and urban environments.”⁸⁹

Furthering my point that the new luxury hotels proposed themselves as settings and resorts that evolved from a linear pattern of geographical and spatial development, the cultural meanings of such spaces whether they were coastal, rural or urban capitalised on location, facade, exterior builds and importantly the interior. In order to achieve a sense of relative independence, a resort hotel necessarily became as multifaceted as a small city – and sometimes, more technologically advanced. Such complexity proved especially necessary in Florida, where guests, even in remote and underdeveloped areas, expected all the creature comforts of a lavishly appointed gilded age club or country estate. Service buildings and auxiliary structures – typically containing entertainment pavilions, modern kitchen and laundry services, and recreational facilities – surrounded the hotels. Often luxury winter resort hotels provided housing, in the hotel or on the grounds, for the necessarily large and disparate hotel staff that seasonally catered to the needs and desires of the guests.⁹⁰

Improved Hygiene and Sanitation Facilities

The introduction of improved hygiene and sanitation facilities was not generally an issue until the influx of wealthy Americans arrived, who were attracted to the new luxury hotels in the 1890's. They had experienced high quality facilities at their resorts and initially it was the Savoy management who recognised this requirement. Introducing Brass beds, as well as the allocation of a bathroom to each room, were innovations for the Ritz, Paris and was considered one of the civilizing influences in

⁸⁸ Montgomery-Massingberd, Hugh & Watkin, David, *Grand Hotel: The Golden Age of Palace Hotels An Architectural and Social History*, (New York: The Vendome Press) 1984, p.19

⁸⁹ Stilgoe, John R. *Metropolitan Corridor: Railroads and the American Scene*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983

⁹⁰ Braden, Susan R. *The Architecture of Leisure: the Florida Resort Hotels of Henry Flagler and Henry Plant*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida) 2002, p.14

Europe of the 1880's. With 70 bathrooms at the Savoy, D'Oyly Carte insisted this innovation would set the standard for the future. Also the years leading up to the opening of the Ritz saw a series of technical innovations that were to transform the experience of grand hotels: first there was electric light, replacing gas and candles, next came running hot water and private bathrooms, and then the telephone. In all these developments the Ritz was intended to surpass everything that had gone before. The dramatic increase in the number of bathrooms required the provision of a vast volume of water. This had to gush in abundant quantities through both hot and cold taps at all times of the day.⁹¹

A useful comparison can be made between the Savoy bathroom of 1889 (see figure 1:15) and a newly installed bathroom suite in the Ritz, figure 1:16. Mosaic tiles cover the floor and walls provided a surface that was easy to keep clean allowing room for individuals to move freely from sink to bath. The Ritz bathroom is more open-plan, incorporating double sink units, a glass shower enclosure over the bath and telephone for room services. Mirroring design influences from Paris and the United States, the *Ritz Monthly* provides an illustration of one of the bathrooms in the London Ritz, showing a freestanding white porcelain bath, pedestal washbasin standing on a short fluted column, and a heated towel-rail furnished by Waring and Gillow. The walls and floors in the image include vast amounts of marble, a luxury example of modern hotel bathrooms, with pale white marble bands of richer colour on the walls and a border of tiles around the edge of the floor. *The Caterer and Hotelkeeper's Gazette* purports of 'exceptionally spacious' rooms with 'glazed tiles, whose green tint relieves the general whiteness.' Sanitary fittings, according to *The Times* of 26 May 1906, were supplied by Messrs Doulton & Co.

Hygiene and sanitation were becoming essential for the expansion of hotels in the early years of the twentieth century, therefore, the large city hotel entered a mature phase of spatial development and stylistic elaboration calculated to excite and delight its patrons. Among the grandest of these, the Ritz in London stands out for the combination of its palatial sobriety, advanced American steel and concrete construction, its elegant Louis XVI interiors by the Anglo-French architectural practice of Mewes and Davis and the buildings fluent sequence of reception spaces described as the Grand Gallery. An extravagantly detailed palm court, raised above the level of the main axis by three broad steps.

⁹¹ Binney, Marcus, *The Ritz Hotel London*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 2006, p. 102

(Figure 1:15) Savoy Hotel, Bathroom, 1889
(Source: Montgomery-Massingberd and Watkin, 1989)

(Figure 1:16) Ritz Hotel, Bathroom, 1904-5 (Source: Binney, 2006)

On 2nd February 1905, the Daily Express published a report by Francis Stopford, its society editor, headed 'London a City of Hotels – Metropolis becoming the Pleasure Resort of the World – Demand for Luxury'. The article continued:

"At the moment there are six first-class hotels either being built or about to be built in London. Each of them will be a palace of luxury. The new Ritz is rising on the site of the old Walsingham House. The Piccadilly will occupy the site of the St James's Hotel and restaurant. A new and enlarged Gaiety Hotel has risen from the ashes of the old one, and will soon be opened; and close by there will soon be a London Waldorf-Astoria."

The main points of this article clarify the expanse of hotel building within a West End geography that embraced the materials and means within which to attract the wealthy elite to London by identifying key sites and thoroughfares. 'The article pointed out that even ten years earlier more than thirty reputed hotels, including the Carlton, the Russell, the Cecil, the Hyde Park and Claridges, were not yet in existence.

Beyond the Paris exhibition of 1900, French Beaux Art styles adapted classicism to the new steel-frame structures and after 1906 they became more acceptable by the architectural elite. Alistair Service explains:

The French influence appeared in London through the Ritz hotel and the work of its architects Mewes and Davis. Arthur J. Davis (1878-1951) was a London born son of a wealthy Jewish businessman with European connections. Davis had a brilliant career at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and the established hotel architect Charles Mewes (designer of the Paris Ritz) made the Englishman his London partner in 1900. Their first contracts were interiors for the Carlton Hotel and then they were commissioned for the Ritz in Piccadilly. The exterior is very Parisian with high Mansard roofs, street arcade and simplified classical stone.⁹²

Binney positions Mewes' style to the work he engaged in with Cesar Ritz on his Paris hotel, and the result had been acclaimed a triumph and launched Mewes reputation and career, having been placed fourth in the prestigious competition for the Grand Palais and Petit Palais, erected on the Right Bank of the Seine for the 1900 Paris International Exhibition. Arthur Joseph Davis (1878-1951) was employed to prepare the drawings after attending the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. ⁹³The London Carlton and Ritz hotels were just the first in a series of steel-frame builds considered to be remarkably handsome and accomplished by Mewes and Davis', including the RAC club and mentioned earlier in this chapter the *Morning Post* building in Aldwych, showing the

⁹² Service, Alistair, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 1977, p.161

⁹³ Binney, Marcus, *The Ritz Hotel London*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 2006, p. 34

influence that inspired Henry Tanner and F.J. Wills in designing the Regent Palace Hotel. The French classical style followed throughout the hotels was one of the great features of the Louis style, and indeed the whole meaning of French classicism, was to treat the entrance hall as if it was part of the external architecture of the hotel rather than the internal decoration only. The Ritz's public role, was planned from the arcades' embrace of the street to the grand procession of the interior. The ground floor, although not large, concentrated in purpose to the public spaces. 'Its decoration unified in Louis XVI style to convey elegant simplicity as well as contrived formality.'⁹⁴

The ground floor plans of the Ritz hotel illustrated in figure 1:17 show the structural elements involved. Its public spaces were presented to great advantage, paralleling the street arcade outside, the lobby's grand procession started with the circular vestibule and progressed through a gallery with alcoved, undulating walls and the restaurant its destination. Perpendicular to the main axis and at the end of a shorter axis is the heart of the hotel's public space. The palm court turned winter garden, with three steps, elevate it above the main gallery and enhance this perfect setting at which to see and be seen - an iron-framed glass roof, a fountain sculpted in marble and gilded metal, spectacular electric chandeliers and French neo-classical furniture produced by Waring and Gillow completed the interior.⁹⁵ (See figure 1:18)

Within the cities, grand hotels from the last quarter of the nineteenth century acted as promoters of urban densification. Moreover, they resembled each other stylistically: even their interior disposition points to consistencies with features such as glazed cupolas, lobbies and entrance halls and prestigious staircases. They all possess a multi-functional character that, in various ways, combines possibilities to consume, for leisure activities, refreshment and work.⁹⁶

Explored further by Gregory Votolato in *The Hotel Lobby and Local / Global Journeys*, he claims that:

Ritz hotels appeared in many of the major cities of the world, following the models established by Cesar Ritz in his Paris and London venues, and these later buildings established a reputation for the warm welcome they offered their patrons. This necessitated lobbies spacious enough to accommodate platoons

⁹⁴ Berens, Carol, *Hotel Bars and Lobbies*, (New York: McGraw-Hill) 1997, p.146

⁹⁵ Votolato, Gregory 'The Hotel Lobby and Local/Global Journeys' in Avermaete, Tom & Massey, Anne (ed) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.75

⁹⁶ Bollerey, Franziska, 'Beyond the lobby, Setting the Stage for Modernity – the Cosmos of the Hotel' in Avermaete, Tom & Massey, Anne (ed) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.25

(Figure 1:17) The Ritz, Ground Floor Plan, 1904-5 (Source: Binney, 2006)

(Figure 1:18) The Ritz, Palm Court, 1904-5 (Source: Binney, 2006)

of hotel staff deployed to greet arriving guests, to deal with their extensive quantities of luggage, to facilitate and minimise the check-in formalities and to conduct patrons and their retinues of valets, maids and secretaries to their rooms. To do this with little fuss and disturbance to other guests, but with a dignified ceremonial display, was the goal of efficient lobby design. The London Ritz achieves this by providing long vistas, quiet vestibules and alcoves, screens of columns and changes of floor level, in addition to its potted palms, carefully arranged furniture groupings, a fountain, thick carpeting, large areas of mirror and glittering ornamental distractions in every direction, such urban palaces were a central part of a highly integrated travel experience that buffered their guests from the stresses and strains of arrival and departure, that glorified the well-to-do guest and that provided a sophisticated and glamorous amenity, redolent of the adventure and excitement of travel, for the metropolitan community.⁹⁷

Interior Design and Ostentatious Luxury

Carol Berens explained that in contrast to American hotels, which were built as palaces for people, continental hotels were designed as palaces for royalty. 'Although they never evolved into the civic laboratories of the American hotels, European hotels nonetheless remain important sites of social ritual and design advances. Regal as these hotels and their clientele were, they could not forever remain aloof from the products and inventions of their times.'⁹⁸ In evaluating this point, we can turn to the interiors of the hotels in France and Germany. Figure 1:19 illustrates the theatre and billiard room / bar in the Montreux Palace (1908) where these internal spaces illustrate dual functions and ornate interiors. They retained traditional qualities including murals of picturesque scenes overlooked by a domed theatre and a billiard room with lounge, bar and recreational space. In figure 1:20, the palm court at the Hotel Esplanade, Berlin evokes the high design of the 1880's in contrasting styles that appear to be a combination of the baroque and Queen Anne. Nautical circular windows and curved coving plasterwork was reminiscent of hotel interiors of the early 1900's. Even in the United States, the predilection during the gilded age for eclecticism and materialistic excess led interior decorators to include picturesquely exotic, and often oriental motifs and styles within classical interior spaces. Associated with pleasure, comfort, and escapism, such spaces including "Turkish Corners" and Moorish smoking rooms enjoyed great popularity with the leisured and upper middle classes. Sometimes interior decoration entered the realm of masquerade as well as fantasy. Whole rooms of furniture, complete with panelling and painted ceilings, were removed from European sources and shipped to America for redeployment in New York's gilded age

⁹⁷ Votolato, Gregory 'The Hotel Lobby and Local/Global Journeys' in Avermaete, Tom & Massey, Anne (ed) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.75

⁹⁸ Berens, Carol, *Hotel Bars and Lobbies*, (New York: McGraw-Hill) 1997, p.145

(Figure 1:19) The Montreux Palace Hotel, France, 1908.
Theatre (Source: Montgomery-Massingberd and Watkin, 1989)

(Figure 1:19) The Montreux Palace Hotel, France, 1908.
Bar and Billiard Room (Source: Montgomery-Massingberd and Watkin, 1989)

(Figure 1:20) Hotel Esplanade, Palm Court, Berlin, Germany 1908
(Source: Montgomery-Massingberd and Watkin, 1989)

mansions.⁹⁹ Evidently domestic interior styles moved from European models to private houses and back to hotels, subsequently this aspiration reflected trends in design style categorised by class and hotel establishments. Berens argues that:

The grand European hotel evolved from palaces accommodating travelling royalty into places where the aspirational flaunted their social status. Patrons not of royalty or related nobility were among the very wealthy and aspiring bourgeoisie. Opulent and ostentatious design emulated aristocratic tastes and pursuits for both the socially secure and the arriviste. Hotels trumpeted their design excursions to an irretrievable past, romantic image of royal pedigree.¹⁰⁰

Beaux Arts Style and New Luxury Hotels

Not far from the Ritz (see figure 1:21), the Piccadilly Hotel opened in Regent Street in 1908. Designed by Sir Richard Norman Shaw, this monumental building took eighteen months using a phenomenal amount of material that included 104,000 cubic feet of Portland stone, 7,000 tons of iron and steel work, 160,000 floor joists, 16,000 electric lights and 8 passenger lifts. Consisting of nearly 300 bedrooms and 150 bathrooms, telephones in each room, a restaurant and an open first floor terrace of 6,000 square feet. Dining was enjoyed either alfresco, or in the public rooms of which two were dedicated to the style of Louis XIV. Part of a grand colonnaded façade on the southern side of Regent Street, the overall design characterised the larger architectural scheme of the Quadrant.

The Interior design and decoration inside the hotel comprised three specialist contractors dealing with particular spaces. Goodalls of Manchester dealt with the grillroom and the ground, first and second floors in where French neo-classicism prevailed. Floors three to five went to Liberty of London, and floors six to nine were shared between two Norwich firms, Chamberlain and Bunting.¹⁰¹ The style of the internal décor was eclectic, reflecting the tastes of the period, which were capable of embracing and combining the gothic with the neo-classical. Included a grillroom, kitchen, Turkish and swimming baths, cellars and other offices, two billiard rooms, lavatories and lifts. Above ground and the entrance foyer from Piccadilly, the Rotunda adjoining the Quadrant entrance and the grand lounge between the two made an impressive introduction to the restaurants and other public rooms. The grillroom was

⁹⁹ Braden, Susan R. *The Architecture of Leisure: the Florida Resort Hotels of Henry Flagler and Henry Plant*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida) 2002, p.46

¹⁰⁰ Berens, Carol, *Hotel Bars and Lobbies*, (New York: McGraw-Hill) 1997, p.146

¹⁰¹ Denby, Elaine, *Grand Hotels Reality and Illusion: An Architectural and Social History*, (London: Reaktion) 1998, p.238

(Figure 1:21) The North Front of the Ritz Hotel, Piccadilly 1904-5.
Photograph by Adolphe Augustus Boucher, 1912 (Source: National Monuments Record BL21620)

(Figure 1:22) The Piccadilly Hotel, Front Elevation, 1905-8
(Source: National Monuments Record BL20353)

modelled on several of the galleries of the Palace of Versailles. The ladies drawing room was decorated in the favourite style of Marie Antoinette. There were many styles of decoration employed within the bedrooms and sitting rooms including Old English, Georgian, Adam, Chippendale, Sheraton and Empire.¹⁰² The Piccadilly hotel was a complete culmination of the exterior and interior design styles of the previous 'new luxury hotels', even though the new amendment act for steel-frame buildings wouldn't become complete by the London County Council until 1909. A more traditional style of structure was found in Regent Street, as opposed to the new open steel-frame plan in Oxford Street at Selfridges. Shaw's use of load-bearing walls with an iron frame complied with Tanner's approach leading to Piccadilly Circus, although this arrived with a lack of scope. The site was restricted to building vertically, rather than horizontally, because numerous small windows featured in the classical exterior behind pillars. Selfridges enabled many more possibilities, including larger sheets of glass on the ground floor, composed of steel frames working across a larger site in a more straightforward design. Illustrated by the use of an open plan unit, supporting smaller divisions of space from the first floor upwards.

Norman Shaw's influences emerged from an amalgamation of various styles due to a broadened acceptance by leading architects of the period including Sir Reginald Blomfield. His writings on the revival classicism in *A History of Renaissance Architecture in England 1500-1800*, published in 1897, was one of the most influential texts in England. However, early domestic commissions for country houses led Bromfield into a fascination towards a Beaux Arts Classical style marked in his publication *A History of French Architecture* of 1911. Consequently this resulted in the elevation for the whole western part of Piccadilly Circus, the second phase of Beaux Arts style in designs for urban dwellings were accepted circa 1913 after a long controversy over alternative schemes. They include the buildings on the left and right at the top of Lower Regent Street, both sides of the great curving quadrant of Regent Street (apart from Norman Shaw's baroque Piccadilly Hotel of 1905-08 in the centre) and the domed Westminster and County Insurance building of Lower Regent Street.¹⁰³ (See figure 1:23)

¹⁰² This hotel was established by Polydore Keyser who was the son of the founder of the De Keyser Hotel sited on Blackfriars Bridge. In 1904, De Keyser set up the P & R Syndicate (1904) Limited which promised to potential investors that the hotel would produce profits of at least £60,000 per annum. Sheppardson, p.44

¹⁰³ Service, Alistair, *Edwardian Architecture: A Handbook to Building Design in Britain, 1890-1914*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 1977, p.165

In conclusion, the West End hotels would inhabit the resort in the hotel by incorporating a palm court, more simply known as a rotunda or winter garden. By the outbreak of the First World War, the success of many central hotels in London was defined by these spaces and became destinations for the rich and famous. The emulation of this by lesser known and new hoteliers indicates the growing fascination for attracting a wider public. By visiting the West End, patrons of the leisure space as would be seekers of luxury and excitement could find a place of refuge within a clearly specified scale of affordability and taste.

Whether there were many differences between Continental and American Resort hotels in principle to their design is debateable. The American resort hotels copied classical influences from France and Spain, including the interior spaces displaying as much complexity between interior and exterior. The changes in the resort hotels in the early twentieth century were reminiscent of the changes in the United States and the United Kingdom. Hotel builders had begun to design their structures for maximum functional and commercial viability. Service and efficiency, rather than mere luxurious surroundings, became the points in which hotels were standardised and guests and hotel managers judged their resorts through these purposes. 'Guest room sizes became standardised, as machine made items replaced handcrafted ones and traditionally carved stone sculpture gave way to concrete and plaster, hotel designers chose simpler and often less expensive furnishings and ornamentation for their public rooms and guest rooms'.¹⁰⁴

In light of this, the next chapter explores developments in Regent Street as the main thoroughfare leading to Piccadilly and the entrance of the Regent Palace Hotel. Relationships between resorts and hotels explained in chapter one will be used as a basis for an examination of the street in relation to the hotels public lobby. The chapter also considers the buildings and the facades leading to the quadrant, in an assessment of collective identities and West End architecture. For example, the debates paramount in 1911-13 included the re-development of the West End as a key factor for growth, opposed to the traditional views that the quadrant must remain the same. Contemporary literature is considered to explore the surrounding area of the Regent Palace Hotel and the importance of building design in the quadrant. As explained in the next chapter, the lobby was a threshold and connection point for various public and private rooms in the hotel.

¹⁰⁴ Braden, Susan R. *The Architecture of Leisure: the Florida Resort Hotels of Henry Flagler and Henry Plant*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida) 2002, p. 310

(Figure 1:23) Piccadilly Circus western side Regent Street Quadrant, Overall design Circa. 1913
(Source: Service, 1977)

Chapter 2

Facades and Thresholds: Regent Street to the Regent Palace Hotel

The following chapter reveals how comparisons can be made between streets, thoroughfares and interiors by examining the exteriors and facades that turned the steel-framed building type into a model hotel structure. Specifically, the reader is introduced to the Regent Palace Hotel as a singular entity and model of the new luxury hotels, identified in the previous chapter. Urban manifestations of enhanced technology, efficiency and luxurious interiors were for the most part connected to the public hallways and corridors of the hotel, therefore the lobby is specified as a focal point for evaluation. Space and movement will be considered in terms of the commercial site within the physical proximity of Piccadilly. Whereas surface and decoration relates to social tastes that materialised in the architectural styles and facades of the hotel and surrounding buildings, leading from Oxford Circus towards Regent Street and Piccadilly Circus.

The systems of the luxury hotel based upon technology, efficiency and services were all prominent aspects of the spatial and material configurations of the lobby. However, as will be proved here, these specifics of modernity and industrialisation were manifested from the built space and exterior environment in which the hotel building was formed. Regulated styles of architectural design were determined by site development in Regent Street and the Piccadilly Circus Quadrant (1912-15). This formed criticism from the architectural elite of the changes to the West End, as shopping and leisure were determining and influencing what types of buildings would be suitable for the street. Moving towards the popular tastes of tourists visiting the resort, shops and theatres on a vacation or day trip to London. Advertising played a leading role for most establishments and the selling point was often characterised by location, as its prime Piccadilly Circus site defined the Regent Palace Hotel.

In this chapter I argue that spatial meaning responded to the varying manifestations of space including the interiors formed by the objects and rituals carried within them. Capitalism's influence on the leisure industry as commodity centred attractions in the West End of London attached the people and spatial ties between the lobby and the street. Composing rhythms and movements in reflection of the mechanistic identity of hotels, modern building types and the beaux-arts taste attracted American guests to locales and environments of the burgeoning commercial commodity culture.

The public space of the West End and particularly Piccadilly, was important for understanding the routes that could be taken from street to interior, and the mapping of

areas inside the building and the floor plans of the hotel. Guests could flow into the lobby through a vortex of movement that was interconnected with the functions and protocol of the hotel itself. Within the lobby external forces from outside extended inside the hotel, from points of contact for directions to exchanges of etiquette and financial transactions. The reception desk, cloakroom and staircase became adjuncts to the liminal sensuality of the space while approaching the threshold. The commercial anonymity people experienced outside, in the street or inside the foyer were playing on the format of visual pathways becoming concrete physical experiences. This chapter considers the relevance of pathways, avenues and thoroughfares as a point of movement leading to the Regent Palace Hotel. Transferring outside to the creation of space inside, steel framed architecture formed long linear lines, on the apex of a triangular site of long and oblique views looking on from Piccadilly Circus and the statue of Eros.

In terms of fashionable interiors, 'London entertaining in a new Edwardian house usually took place in grandly classical rooms – sometimes richly English, Palladian, or in the Adam manner, sometimes in a French style, especially that of Louis XVI.'¹⁰⁵ The new luxury hotels reflected a trend for period rooms, and in some cases presented one style throughout the building. In the Regent Palace Hotel, the Louis XVI style decorated the lobby and length of the ground floor space. Reflected in the external appearance of the building, an influence of mixed styles and structures in the surrounding area of the quadrant and the newly opened space of Regent Street to Piccadilly Circus, this style was commented on by C. H Reilly, writing for *Country Life* he stated:

The sweep of the Quadrant with its long, uninterrupted lines must impress everyone. Neither New York nor Paris has anything like it. The architecture is of the simplest, consisting of long lines of cornice and balcony with plenty of plain wall space and an almost endless repetition of the same units in windows and shops. Yet how satisfying it is! How wide, too, the street looks here in its majestic curve – how much wider than it does towards the head of Regent Street! Yet it is of the same width. The explanation is in the buildings; in their height and in their simplicity.¹⁰⁶ (See fig. 2:1)

To evaluate the scale and size of individual buildings in the Quadrant, contemporary critics were responding to spatial configurations of the new streets and businesses in the area. Indeed Reilly was not agreeable to the changes in buildings emerging in Regent Street, writing in detrimental effect of the commercial successes due to increased tourism and capital. Historically, the public spaces of London had become focus points

¹⁰⁵ Service, Alistair, *Edwardian Interiors*, (London: Barrie & Jenkins) 1982, p.133

¹⁰⁶ Reilly, C. H 'London Streets And Their Recent Buildings II – Regent Street Continued' in *Country Life*, June 10th, 1922, p.777

including the many parks, open spaces and avenues in a debate that formed around the placing of London as an Imperial metropolis or capital city, in European terms. Regent Street and its well known adjacent parks and squares had retained a respectability built on its residential nature, this was also perceived as a strength in visions of central London as part of the empire. For example, the Victorian writer Alexander McKenzie, classed the public parks of London as the “lungs of the metropolis.”¹⁰⁷ He argued that their comparison to international urban settings allowed London’s comparisons with the open spaces in Paris. This was if the Bois de Boulogne and the Bois de Vincennes, situated beyond the natural limits of the French metropolis were excluded in a framing of the picturesque urban site. London’s Squares that were not open to the public in the mid to late nineteenth century, became forces for the argument that London’s open spaces, public spaces and network of squares and thoroughfares indeed did compare to its European counterparts. However in the West End this would prove to be a complex argument, as industry was congesting the air and relaxation of Piccadilly and Regent Street. Once considered a promenade its culture had changed from domestic inhabitation to urban renewal of a central site for pleasure founded on conspicuous means. (See fig. 2:2) Serving a multitude of purposes, offering a handsome speculation for London builders and enhancing the income of the Crown estate. It provided a triumphal roadway to impress visiting royalty, and a north-south route for ordinary traffic to relieve the already notorious congestion of London’s streets. As Donald Olsen explains:

It gave the idle and opulent a stage on which to display their clothes and equipages and at the same time incorporated a main line of underground sewer linking the suburban development at Regent’s Park with the existing main sewer in St. James Park, thus stimulating retail trade, providing new housing, and sweeping away insanitary slum property.¹⁰⁸

In view of those comparisons between London and Paris, McKenzie identified that central districts in London could not be less densely populated . Claiming that:

We can never hope to see, in the heart of London, numbers of wide thoroughfares and boulevards such as those which form the most attractive features of the French metropolis... the busy pedestrians of our London thoroughfares are all intently fixed upon their own immediate business, and have no time to sit and sip their coffee in the streets.

¹⁰⁷ McKenzie, Alexander, *The Parks, Open spaces, and Thoroughfares of London*, (London: Waterlow & Sons) 1869, p.16 (RIBA library: Special Collection 18/07/13)

¹⁰⁸ Olsen, Donald J, *The City As A Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna*, (London: Yale University Press) 1986, p.19

(Figure 2:1) Regent Street Quadrant (Source: Country Life) 1922

(Figure 2:2) Map of the thoroughfare through Regent Street showing the arteries, squares and avenues.
(Source: Country Life) 1922

The vested interests of our great commercial city render it impossible to convert Cheapside, the Strand, or Oxford Street, into imitations of the boulevards St Michel and Sebastopol; but an examination of the map of London will prove that there are several ways by which free and open currents of air, fresh from the country, may be brought to invigorate the lungs of those who, from the nature of their avocations, are compelled to live in densely populated districts.¹⁰⁹

This was certainly apparent in the Edwardian Quadrant area, as a built up space, it allowed little room for the planting of trees or creation of a natural setting, or place of repose. However, in the next chapter an examination of the winter garden will illuminate how built spaces incorporated plants and glass within popular public settings. In the West End, the new buildings in Regent Street were explored by Reilly, whose views on these structures explained that street architecture if it were to have any unity, must emphasise the horizontality of the street and not otherwise. Most of the 'new modern buildings' did have one level of main cornice, this cornice was generally one of so many other cornices that it was difficult to decipher the principle one, and above, all sorts of vertical features including turrets, domes and pointed gables, meant that the emphasis of the building became vertical rather than horizontal. Therefore challenging the unity and simplicity of Sir John Nash's designs, described here:

The street therefore becomes like an irregular set of badly grown teeth rather than the necklace of matched pearls it should be. The result is a restlessness which, in spite of its broad pavements, will make Regent Street no longer a place in which to stroll about. The shops will no longer have the same opportunities to tempt the casual buyer. Instead one will only drive direct, in taxi or omnibus, to or other of the great department stores when the occasion is really urgent, dive in and dive out again, and no more.¹¹⁰

A suggestion of convenience evident in Reilly's view, points to the fact that the regeneration of the Quadrant was highly influenced by the new steel-frame building type and the styles and tastes to which they represented. The chaotic mix of various styles of architecture were changing the area and not presenting a respectable unity in their appearance. Robinson and Cleaver erected a store from No. 170-160 (see fig. 2:3) a block with two circular corners at either end in pink polished granite up to the second floor level with grey polished granite in between. Above the corners sprung heavy turrets massively buttressed and crowned with domes, against these turrets as an anti-climax were pediments on blocked columns, giving still further vertical emphasis. Reilly thought the building suggested anything but the fine fabrics sold

¹⁰⁹ McKenzie, Alexander, *The Parks, Open spaces, and Thoroughfares of London*, (London: Waterlow & Sons) 1869, p.16

¹¹⁰ Reilly, C. H 'London Streets And Their Recent Buildings II – Regent Street Continued' in *Country Life*, June 10th, 1922, p.778

within, aligning the polished granite corners to the style of public houses or banks. Defining some buildings in comparison to regional examples, Reilly suggests that tame architectural features appeared in rows and in provincial character. St George's house at No's 193-97 seems exactly to fit those requirements, based on the style of the French Second Empire, a building by Thomas Verity, the famous theatre architect (see fig. 2:4) with fine fluted classical columns. Owing to this by its strongest marked cornice, with a frieze and windows underneath, it had the necessary horizontal character needed for a 'stunning' front. No shop-keeper could fail to find it sufficiently ornate, for it was a highly modelled and decorated building. The American expedient of metal filling between the columns, gave a very large window area. Indeed this building seemed to solve many of the problems of shop-front architecture.¹¹¹

The tensions between architects, shop-keepers and consumers within the Regent Street to quadrant area was documented by the Crown's architects who wanted Regent Street to display London's status as the "imperial" capital. Regent Street's shopkeeper's instead, yearned for a commercial avenue that would appeal to the diverse public they now served. Once its preserve to sell exclusively to the wealthy, and thus relying less on window display to attract the passersby, compared to Oxford Street or Westbourne Grove, this changed by the turn of the century – after which point many of the streets shops were patronized by a fairly broad crowd. Believing that the expansion and electrification of the tube had contributed to this change, in 1907, for example, restaurant, theatre, and store owners reported a surge in business after the recent opening of the Piccadilly Circus Station.¹¹² Regent Street's traders argued that the Crown's plans, designed by Richard Norman Shaw, would not appeal to trade of this nature. Instead of vast expanses of uninterrupted glass, Shaw's design was a street of heavy, monumental stone arches and pillars. The shop keepers asserted that Shaw's minimal use of plate glass would not allow enough light into their stores nor would it enable them to install dramatic window displays that would attract a large shopping crowd. Rappoport wrote of this in her text *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, stating:

Shaw's design ignored what was perceived as the "feminine" and "mass" nature of modern Regent Street, one trader protested that: there is a high class of shopkeeper who do not require a big window shop... that is not the trade which is done in Regent Street. The Regent Street shopkeeper needs a large number of customers and wants to catch a floating population.¹¹³

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.780

¹¹² Rappoport, Erika Diane, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (Chichester: Princeton University Press) 2000, p. 151

¹¹³ Ibid, p.152

(Figure 2:3) Robinson and Cleaver's, Regent Street
(Source: Country Life) 1922

(Figure 2:4) St George's House, Regent Street
(Source: Country Life) 1922

Whilst the traditional traders were satisfied with the scheme, the new modern stores commented on by Reilly justified larger features to be included in their architectural facades. Attracting tourists and female shoppers from the Oxford Street end of Regent Street towards Piccadilly Circus, the principles of commerce were led by the larger department stores.

Indeed, this expansion of the modern ideal and spectacle in new product display methods shared the same philosophies of affordable luxury and presentation that was the premise of J. Lyons & Co's expansion. Trade ideas were considered as "vulgar" and inclusive of an "appalling mixture of plate glass and tawdry wood and brass work" according to Aston Webb who sided with Shaw's scheme. With imperialism at the forefront of the image of the city, 'the battle lines were drawn between the shopkeeper's "feminine" glass-loving, commercial proposals and the Crown's "masculine" heavy stone, imperial designs. In this conflict, mass commerce and its feminine appeal threatened the British Empire and British Masculinity'.¹¹⁴ Later in this thesis, the challenges to masculinity, commerciality, class and gender will be evaluated to position the new luxury hotel as a revolutionising force that reflected the changing social space of the West End.

Classical facades with numerous obscured windows were visual effects that failed to entice the modern consumer. Exterior facades in Regent Street and the Quadrant abided by a set of architectural rules, which in retrospect have presented challenges for identifying how the culture of public space functioned in the West End. Such barriers must have caused shops, theatres or hotels to find new selling points to promote their goods and services on offer. A central geographical area aided Lyons in attracting business from the nearby Trocadero, Piccadilly Tube Station and surrounding restaurants and destinations.

Also faced externally with Burmantofts Marmo, the Regent Palace Hotel was one of a quick succession of architectural commissions for the Leeds firm who supplied faience for up to thirty-five new stations built by the Underground Electric Railways to designs by Leslie Green (from 1906). The facades of London's Edwardian tube stations mark the most systematic use of faience ever to be achieved in Britain in terms of standardization. In relation to steel structures, tile designs created a tight corporate identity, unique in conveying an utterly consistent house-style. The entrances to the underground stations were designed to convey an aura of cleanliness and efficiency;

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p.153

tube lines with their electric trains had to be distanced from the smoke ridden archaism of the steam-operated routes. Leslie Green, appointed as architect to the Underground Electric Railways Company in 1903, had to design more than fifty stations in a period of five years to match the pace with which the tube lines were completed. He used the same composition, whether the entrance was for the Northern, the Bakerloo or the Piccadilly line. The ox blood colour and the arrangement of an arcade with round-edged pilasters and semicircular arches were repeated from one station to the next, the use of ceramics being justified by their resistance to fire. The steel-frame permitted wide entrances and exits, designed to speed the flow of passengers. The mezzanine, with its large glazed arches and flanking circular windows of smaller size, housed the lift machinery. These pavilions were given flat-roofs so that extra floors, for offices or apartments, could be set on the steel framing.

Regent Street Quadrant to Revolving Door

The Regent Palace Hotel was positioned centrally to the quadrant and witnessed the changes over commercial floor space in regard to Sir Richard Norman Shaw's new design for the top end of Regent Street. Expanded and leaving the County Fire Office (Fig. 2:5) as an original classical arcade, new luxury hotels, including the Piccadilly Hotel in Regent Street marked the advent of modern tourism in the area. When the Regent Palace Hotel was built in 1915 the changes to the quadrant were factored as a cyclical process of urban development. 6,000 tons of steelwork was required for the structure and nine floors arose above ground level, with a lower ground floor, basement, and sub-basement. During the latter half of the 19th century, architectural ceramic for external use was usually unglazed and appeared in the form of buff, pink or red terracotta. The unglazed surface was already matt and could be used with great effect across the whole facade. When glazed faience was used it altered the whole character of the exterior because it created a glossy light-reflecting surface. Several architects found this a disadvantage and manufacturers responded by producing faience with matt glazes. Doulton made Carraraware, and Burmantoft's, which the Leeds Fireclay Company had taken over from Wilcock and Co in 1889, began to produce a similar material marketed as 'Marmo' (see fig. 2:6) Marmo became very popular with architects and their clients. It proved to be a hard-wearing faience for external use and was able to withstand all the ravages of rain, frost and soot laden air. Marmo was used to cover the whole facade of the building including window ledges, door-frames, cornices and any sculptural embellishments. It is distinctly different from other types of faience in appearance, having a body of whitish clay covered with a

gray-white eggshell glaze which the manufacturer claimed gave it the appearance of white marble.¹¹⁵

The architectural press, reported on the Regent Palace Hotel construction:

The main entrance is at the apex facing towards Piccadilly Circus. Here one enters through a vestibule into a circular lounge lined with marble, and having a richly embellished ceiling in the form of a shallow dome. The vestibule opens into the reception hall; on one side of which is a staff counter and office, while on the other are a marble staircase and three passenger lifts serving the various floors. Beyond, entered through large swing doors, is the Rotunda Court.¹¹⁶

The vestibule, lounge and hall were the main spaces of the hotel lobby and consecutively defined the public space of the Regent Palace Hotel. In an image of the ground floor plans (fig. 0:2) doorways into the main entrances were positioned directly onto the street and the main entrance itself had four entrance doors with an additional two either side. Once the visitor entered the hotel a new threshold presented as a revolving door invited the guest to enter the formal space of the lounge and lobby. This enabled a private off-street setting for visitors that were free from the speed and noise of Piccadilly; as the hotel was to be central to the circus and its entertainment.

The foyer was the first point of contact a visitor or guest had with the hotel and this movement upon the threshold opened out into wider parts of the building and sphere of the lobby. Unique to the lobby in this case was the fact that it transformed into a number of particular spaces for public use. The lobby 'arms' reached towards other spatial functions. In most cases, it was placed axially behind an entrance and a vestibule and combined with an entrance hall, leads to a winter garden, great dining hall or lounge.¹¹⁷ Hotel lobbies aimed to combine the character of transition spaces between street and hotel room for resting and repose, as a place to sit or stay for a temporary visit.

¹¹⁵ Lemmen, Hans Van, 'Burmantoft's Marmo' in *Glazed Expressions: Journal of the Architectural Ceramics Society*, No. 5, 1983, p.2

¹¹⁶ Construction Section – Regent Palace Hotel, *The Builder*, (1915): October 15, 281

¹¹⁷ Bollerey, Franziska, 'Beyond the Lobby Setting the Stage for Modernity – the Cosmos of the Hotel' in (ed) Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.15

(Figure 2:5) County Fire Office, Piccadilly Circus, Regent Street Quadrant
(Source: Country Life) 1922



(Figure 2:6) Regent Palace Hotel, Piccadilly Circus,
(Source: Postcard, LMA B07/002/001) 1915

From the beginning of the twentieth century, the revolving door would become a common feature of hotel architecture in such cities as Paris, Berlin, London and New York. However, it not only played the role of a climatologic filter for the hotel lobby, but also came to represent one of the hotel's basic organizational principles; a flow of in and outgoing guests. The very architecture of the revolving door came to symbolize that the characters in the hotel lobby can and will be replaced by new guests as soon as the old ones are gone, according to the rhythm of the turning panels. The revolving door defined a new sort of limit between inside and outside space.¹¹⁸

This modernity and the microcosm of inside and outside allowed flows to be fragmented in the spatial layout of entrances, interior thresholds, the interconnected spaces and parameters of public spaces on the ground floor. The larger material framework of the steel-frame structure and its marble cladding turned exterior to interior as the Regent Palace Hotel's vestibule characterised this with a combination of faience and plasterwork used throughout.¹¹⁹ In this case, the threshold separated the public and private sphere, private and common property. As an architectural element or spatial configuration, it highlights specific, culturally determined zones of transition, in which certain gestures and activities were performed. Exemplary for this in material form was the revolving door. Its development traced from the mid nineteenth century and employed by the metropolitan hotel, the process and very nature to synthesise and articulate the double demand made on threshold architecture to be simultaneously open and closed, to create in a building optimal permeability for increased public traffic on the one hand and hermetic closure on the other.¹²⁰ As early as 1912, the Van Kannel Company of the USA, registered a patent for a 'power assisted revolving door', driven by an electric motor that obviated the use of sheer force to move what were, frequently, doors of solid timber and brass. Significantly, Van Kannel's revolving door was praised not only for its technical refinement but also for its moral benefits. 'It saves lives' asserted a journalist eulogizing its inventor. Exactly how was explained some lines later: 'Every time a swinging door opens, those people [clerks, elevator operators and salespeople] are hit by a draft from the street, a draft that may bring with it another

¹¹⁸ Avermeate, Tom, 'The architectonics of the Hotel Lobby: The Norms and Forms of a Public-Private Figure' in (ed) Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.61

¹¹⁹ For an explanation of the qualities of faience for interior design and exterior work in restaurant and hotel see Stratton, Michael, *The Terracotta Revival: Building Innovation and the Image of the Industrial City in Britain and North America*, (London: Victor Gollancz), 1993; A history of terracotta and its craft in Fidler, John, *The Manufacture of Architectural Terracotta and Faience in the United Kingdom*, in APT Journal, Vol XV, No. 2, 1983; the Leeds Fireclay Industry and Lyons establishments see Wood, Julie Gillam, *Behind the Facade: An Insight into Burmantoft's Trading Ethos*, Journal of the Tiles and & Architectural Ceramics Society, Vol 10, 2004, pp.3-11

¹²⁰ Stalder, Laurent, "Turning Architecture Inside Out: Revolving Doors and Other Threshold Devices" in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Oxford: OUP) 2009, p.69

sniffle, another cold, another case of pneumonia'.¹²¹ This was a significant comment, perfectly in keeping with European and American endeavours to improve standards of hygiene during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth.

The revolving door combines the notion of bridge and door, consisting of huge panes of glass, creating the illusion of an exterior disappearing into the interior, and an interior expanding out into an exterior, all in perpetual movement *vis-a-vis* a well travelled bridge.¹²² It is neither a door or a bridge, yet it operates as both. In its action as a revolving door, it momentarily captures interior and exterior space and connects the two, only, in the next instance, to cut each space off from the other. The limit of the revolving door is no longer gradual or abrupt, but rather invisible and detached. Once inside the swing door, the individual remains detached from the space, and the interior becomes as alienating as the exterior. The revolving door also functions as a bridge in that, regardless of the direction of travel, one is bound to pass someone travelling in the opposite direction. It offers the possibility to enter the lobby momentarily, just to look around and then disappear again. The revolving door turns public space inside out.¹²³

As seen in fig. 2:7 the sharply cut and smooth surface of the vestibule interior gave a textured appearance throughout the public space and ground floor level of the hotel. The decorative surfaces newly embellished with female profiles amongst garlands and such arrangements, spanned the ceiling to enclose the space as a luxurious zone upon entrance into the new threshold. Containing privacy from the street and protected by the closed doors, the immediacy of the vestibule as the first aspect of the hotel interior protected and yet alluded to the city outside. As an interior, the building mimicked the usual characteristic of a luxury hotel, yet the triangular site allowed for a lineage and depth of thoroughfare inside for the flow of traffic in and out of these spaces. The Builder reported scale proportions to allow their readers to envisage the size of the lobby and public rooms:

¹²¹ Ibid, p.71

¹²² See *The City Cultures Reader*, (London: Routledge) 2004 and the previously published *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*, (London: Sage) 1997

¹²³ Avermeate, Tom, 'The architectonics of the Hotel Lobby: The Norms and Forms of a Public-Private Figure' in (ed) Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.62

Immediately on passing through the main entrance vestibule access is had to a lounge, circular in plan and having a diameter of about 35 ft., and this leads to the inner hall, where a fine staircase and lifts lead to the upper floors and the enquiry and cashier's office are arranged. A large winter garden is situated behind this inner hall, with a large domed roof, the apartment being octagonal shaped, with a width of over 70 ft. between two opposite faces and, in addition, having two large recesses which extend through the building to Glasshouse-street and Sherwood-street. From the winter garden the visitor passes into a fine coffee and dining room, which has a maximum length of over 110 ft, and a maximum width of 100 ft. The remainder of the ground floor is devoted to a drawing room, waiting room, several suites, cloak rooms, services, and a large luggage room, the latter being entered directly from Sherwood-street, and thus avoiding any inconvenience with luggage at the main entrance.¹²⁴

In comparison to Sir Richard Norman Shaw's Piccadilly Hotel, a replica of the Ritz Hotel, Reilly's theory of horizontality is performed in the scale of rooms such as the frontages and entrance hall (see fig. 2:8-9). The Regent Palace Hotel was an amplified version of Ancell's earlier Strand Palace, Burmantofts Marmo was used and the pavilion roofs and mansards were covered with green slates dressed with cast lead.¹²⁵ While reflecting the elevational scheme of Mewes and Davis's Ritz Hotel and Shaw's Piccadilly Hotel, the Regent Palace Hotel was of greater bulk with a multiplication of smaller units (the Glasshouse Street front, for example, was twenty six windows long). The important rooms on the ground floor were given little external expression. The exterior ornament consisted mainly of giant pilaster strips and great cartouches. Throughout their years of trade, Burmantofts had promoted strong working ties with architects such as Alfred Waterhouse and these relationships brought the commercial security of repeated commissions and a degree of financial stability. However, the introduction of Marmo seems to have brought about an even wider range of contacts with London architects and developers. Architects who had previously favoured Doulton's white glazed Carraraware were now clearly specifying Burmantofts Marmo. At some point around 1900, Marmo a type of white-faced faience was introduced and proved to be Burmantofts saviour after falling profits. Marmo had the advantage of being factory bonded to a block that could be used as a load bearing element in the construction of a building, rather than being purely decorative, a case in point regarding the Regent Palace Hotel and its interior/exterior make up.

¹²⁴ Construction Section – Regent Palace Hotel, *The Builder*, (1915): October 15, 281

¹²⁵ British History Online accessed 12.05.08 www.british-history.ac.uk

(Figure 2:7) Vestibule, Regent Palace Hotel (Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive) 1915

(Figure 2:8) Piccadilly Hotel, Facade and Entrance Exterior
(Source: National Monuments Record BL20351_001) 1908-12

(Figure 2:9) Piccadilly Entrance, Lobby and Steps, Piccadilly Hotel
(Source: National Monuments Record BL20351_008) 1908-12

Also, the material was capable of production into moulded designs; the finished blocks could be extremely decorative and yet were robust enough to allow the product to be site assembled by relatively unskilled labour without risk of damage; thereby offering a significant economic advantage. The glazed finish claimed to resemble white marble and proved to be remarkably weather and pollution resistant; whilst having an outstanding ability to accept a finely detailed or deeply moulded form and was particularly suitable for reproducing the complexity of deep relief required in detailed classical decorations. Much was made of these attributes as well as the materials ability to retain the original colour values, within the marketing of the project. Initially used on the Daily Telegraph Office, Brighton in 1907. It soon became synonymous with cinemas, hotels and other commercial buildings, although the production of other types of terracotta continued in declining quantities through the early part of the 20th century.¹²⁶

Examining the interior surfaces of the Entrance Hall revealed that the cartouches and sculptural profiles normally decorating facades and stained glass windows, had been executed in a free style within the hotel (see fig. 2:10). The Vestibule at the Regent Palace Hotel was shaped in a circular construction with floor patterns to define the flow of traffic in and out of the hotel. A sparse amount of furniture and domestic objects within the space illustrate that the management sought to welcome guests with an allusion to comfort. Overtly-decorated ostentatious ceiling and wall mounts, indicated the tastes of the new luxury hotels in a French Adam style of decoration and plasterwork.

Ventilated Air and Service Technology

Considering the re-structuring of the urban environment beginning in the nineteenth century, it is possible to identify the integration of technology into urban dwelling or networks of urban infrastructure inside the hotel. Warm air systems began in 1840, water and sewerage systems from 1850, steam powered heating as of 1890, or machines to dehydrate, dry or cool the air from 1900. 'Circulation systems designed to convey and regulate, included the elevator successfully tested in 1853 and electrified in 1880, escalators or 'moving pavements' were introduced in the 1890's and seen as part of these strivings to control streams and currents, human and otherwise.'¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Wood, Julie Gillam, *Behind the Facade: An Insight into Burmantoft's Trading Ethos*, Journal of the Tiles and & Architectural Ceramics Society, Vol 10, 2004, p. 7

¹²⁷ Stalder, Laurent, "Turning Architecture Inside Out: Revolving Doors and Other Threshold Devices" in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Oxford: OUP) 2009, p.70

(Figure 2:10) Vestibule, Regent Palace hotel
(Source: Architectural Review) 1915

Built on technological advancements in private and public space, the Regent Palace Hotel was enhanced by mechanisation. Fitted with heating, ventilation and electricity to show that the hotel was designed for modern standards of living. The lighting for the building included the installation of 6,000 Osram lamps and the wiring had been laid out in two systems to comply with the London County Council regulations. The required number of lamps in all the public spaces of the hotel were supplied from what was known as the "council main," which fed two principle distribution boards. There were also two general lighting boards, from which a supply was given to the rest of the lamps in the buildings.

Five electric passenger lifts, with a signalling arrangement, were the latest devices for this purpose and employed to service the hotel. Each cage was fitted with a flashlight annunciator signal fixture. Reported by the Architects' & Builders' Journal:

When a passenger wished to call a lift she/he pushed the button, on the enclosure, and this illuminated in each cage a miniature lamp representing that particular floor, and also operated a small buzzer to call the attention of the operator to the signal. In all there were thirty-two lifts, including service and restaurant lifts.¹²⁸

The lift has been understood through a series of classifications that were dependent on the building or hotel type. Elevator is an American term, while in French they are called *voiture*. In some cases it was considered a vertical railway, although in the *Encyclopedia of Cottage, Farm and Villa Architecture*, written by J. C Loudon in 1835, it was considered as 'an ascending and descending platform'. In London, the Westminster Palace (in 1860) and the Charing Cross Hotel called it an Ascending Room, the Grosvenor Hotel named it the Lifting Room.¹²⁹ Whilst staircases played an important role that reached far beyond being a vehicle to get hotel guests from one place to another, or to mediate the semi-public character of the lobby to the intimacy of the rooms, elevators would also become the focus of design activity. Explored by Franziska Bollerey, she explains:

Hotel plans were arranged, particularly to increase circulation and to improve flows of both people and services, from the lobby through the lounges to the dining area, while also maximising ease of transport to other areas of the hotel through careful placement of lifts that would take inhabitants to the private bedroom spaces.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Engineering Plant At The Regent Palace Hotel, *The Architects' & Builders' Journal.*, June 30, 1915.

¹²⁹ Pevsner, Nikolaus, *A History of Building Types*, (London: Thames and Hudson) 1976, p.187

¹³⁰ Bollerey, Franziska, 'Beyond the Lobby Setting the Stage for Modernity -- the Cosmos of the Hotel' in (ed) Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional*

With the most contemporary of technological operation systems, the heating, ventilation, and general engineering, to the supply of electrical equipment, lighting and power, was carried out by the hotel company's own staff. In terms of electric power, the most important section was required for driving the ventilating fans and lifts. The electric motor nevertheless played an important part in the kitchen equipment, for example, a motor driving a "Hall" refrigerator, an ice-making machine, an almond crusher, and a whisk. In the French bakery there were motor-driven bacon cutters and mincing machines.¹³¹ Heating of the hotel was partly by hot-water radiators and vacuum steam, and in some part by electric heaters. The whole of the reception-rooms on the basement, mezzanine, and ground floor were supplied with low-pressure hot-water radiators from duplicate steam heaters fixed in the sub-basement. Circulation by natural gravity, accelerated when necessary by electrically driven pumps. This arrangement was such that the temperature of the water circulating to each of the principle reception-rooms could be operated under independent control.¹³² The Architects' & Builders Journal reviewed this by stating:

The ventilation of the principal reception-rooms is on what is known as the "balanced system." Fresh cooled air is supplied by two large general fans. Each principle room has its own independent extract fan. Fresh air is thus forced in while vitiated air is simultaneously withdrawn from the room in any desired quantity. Air is admitted into the hotel in a large setting chamber fixed near the corner of Air Street and Glasshouse Street. In this chamber all the heavier dust and other impurities are allowed to settle. The air next passed through a large washer where it is thoroughly cleansed of dust and other impurities, cooled, and humidified. In the hot days of summer provision is made for cooling the air through a considerable range by refrigerator, cold water, or ice, as required. In cold weather it is suitably tempered by passing over a battery of warm pipes. From the air washer it is led through two centrifugal fans and driven through underground ducts to all parts of the building. The ducts are so arranged that either fan can be employed for the supply to the whole building, thus minimising the risk of heated air. There are two ducts for each room, one for warm and the other for cold air. Warmed or cooled air can be admitted in any proportion to any of the principle rooms independently of one another, so that one room can be supplied with cold air and an adjacent one simultaneously with warm air.¹³³

The systematic processes ensuring elements of comfort in the hotel reveal how the organisation of this particular type of manufacture functioned on the new technologies of the period. Electricity became more popular in the homes of the privileged and in some cases had been paramount in the most luxurious hotels beforehand. J. Lyons & Co had adopted an American system of manufacture to produce goods for their

Hospitality. (London: Routledge) 2013, p.69 see Siegfried Giedion, *Space. Time and Architecture: the growth of a new tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 1941, p.210

¹³¹ Engineering Plant At The Regent Palace Hotel, *The Architects' & Builders' Journal*., June 30, 1915.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Engineering Plant At The Regent Palace Hotel, *The Architects' & Builders' Journal*., June 30, 1915.

tearooms and restaurants, establishing their factory in Greenford Ealing. In their new hotel ventures, it was important for them to supply the most modern and innovative services possible and this included mechanisation to enhance productivity.

Interior Arcades: The Lobby as Commodity

Upon entering the hotel lobby the revolving door permits entry into or exit from a space and establishes in the course of its usage spaces for trade, consumption or residency. Openings not only permit transition but also establish narratives of exclusion or inclusion, control or comfort, cleanliness or privacy, which become inscribed in the daily practice of their use and in turn also influence that use.

Whilst doors represent a clear border between interior and exterior space, the differentiation of threshold architectures, which ensued from the use of devices and machines, led to their fragmentation, to a series of individual threshold elements, each with its own way of drawing borders.¹³⁴

The lobby and its borders are explored here as *interior arcades*, thresholds that change into various purposes as the guest enters into the productive environment of systems and goods undercover. Creating the effect of the promenade, the entry from the street to the lobby, approaches the winter garden in a long and oblique view. From the point of entry into the hotel and vestibule the lobby may be compared with the layout of the country house estate; where a long corridor opens out to a larger stately construct. As the tradition of 'the avenue' was strong in the building of large estates; not only was the approach to the house itself often marked by a straight, tree lined avenue that prepared the visitor for the sight of the house but interiors were designed in the *enfilade* principle, by which the doorways of consecutive rooms were aligned along a linear passageway - along the straight line.¹³⁵

Instead of trees and exotic plants the guests are met with the commercial commodity culture of the West End hotel. Adjacent to the avenue/thoroughfare, lobby/promenade and lifts/elevators that sat horizontally with staircases leading to one's private rooms, offices and enclosures to larger and stately rooms. The main thoroughfare of the hotel lobby led to the resort inside the winter garden and beyond this the dining hall, drawing room and writing room. Again, such terminology is forever suggestive of the Beaux Arts luxury style, the notion of leisure (undercover) and the expansion of the leisure classes.

¹³⁴ Stalder, Laurent, "Turning Architecture Inside Out: Revolving Doors and Other Threshold Devices" in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Oxford: OUP) 2009, p.74

¹³⁵ Crossing thresholds, see Arnold Van Gennep 'The Rites of Passage'. First published 1960.

The study of the evolution of words used for naming urban forms can be a helpful element in studying the development of attitudes towards city building. The terms *boulevard* and *avenue* have been adopted throughout both the French world and in other linguistic realms. Unlike the more common French word *rue*, these two generic terms tend to designate prestigious grand streets. Some of them are emblematic urban forms, urban history's equivalent of the role that emblematic architectural types (cathedrals, theatres, railway stations, skyscrapers, malls etc.) play in the history of architecture.

These exceptional urban forms embody and condense particular town planning paradigms: they reflect the urban habits and desires of elites, as well as the limits of their power to impose their own culture upon the whole city. Emblematic urban forms are most commonly spread through the use of models – physical manifestations that illustrate dominant attitudes towards the built form.¹³⁶ Promenade and boulevard are urban elements serving the hotel. To 'see and be seen' was a social requirement the tourists brought with them. Inside the hotel, social and public spaces served this desire. Switched between landscape and architecture, patios, arcades or colonnades offered the adequate outer frame for these activities.¹³⁷

The hotel characterised many perceptions of vision, including circulation and the movement of goods and leisured capital. The term 'panorama' has been used to denote the specific stage of the circulation of commodities that characterized the latter half of the nineteenth century. The large department stores of the period were illustrative of 'panoramic' perception: they enshrined a sales system that gathered 'a mass of heterogenous goods under one roof' arranged according to a concept.¹³⁸ The attraction these emporia had for the public gave them an enormously accelerated turnover, and thereby allowed them quickly to render traditional forms of retail outlet outmoded. Visible prices had revolutionised the West End shopping experience, as it symbolized the way that the transition of goods, and their exchange value had become intrinsic qualities, replacing the tangible quality of goods themselves as use valued. The dominant value was associated with the goods 'commodity aesthetic'. Commodity culture and the character of objects in department stores can be traced directly to the

¹³⁶ Darin, Michael, 'Designating Urban Forms: French *boulevards* and *avenues*,' in *Planning Perspectives: An International Journal of History, Planning and the Environment*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 2004, p.134

¹³⁷ Bollerey, Franziska, 'Beyond the Lobby Setting the Stage for Modernity – the Cosmos of the Hotel' in (ed) Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.28

¹³⁸ Freeman, Michael, *Railways and the Victorian Imagination*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.140

basis of economic circulation of commodities and growth underpinned by railway transport into the centre of London and the resort as a destination for the consumption of goods and display of luxuries aligned to urban movements.¹³⁹

For Marx, the commodity was 'present everywhere, but fully concentrated nowhere',¹⁴⁰ as industrialisation allowed for the consistency of production in providing systems and goods, this was further characterised within the processes of capitalisation and became part of what Marx termed the 'fetishism' of the commodity, seen yet not felt in any obvious forms. For the function of the hotel building with its services and experiences formed upon this system of capital, the visitor would move through a commodity aesthetic of space and mechanisation. In Siegfried Gideon's *Mechanisation Takes Command* this is also apparent and Berman writes of the less concrete aspects of modernity in *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. Both authors offer a potential thought for the influx of new modern inventions in an interpretation of time and space. Modernised experiences in the urban realm were somewhat experienced subconsciously, as space is not formed from a singular source or object yet can be placed to an object experience.¹⁴¹ The pace of the West End with a new underground system underneath the quadrant would position this modernity through Marx's views on 'the generalised function of improved transportation, which according to Marx, is to accelerate the circulation time of capital and to do so with greater efficiency and greater reliability.'¹⁴²

By 1900 men and women, the working class and the wealthy, local residents and foreign tourists thought of the West End as a special arena for consuming. With new and improved transportation links, it was a place for a day in the city, a big night out, or a week of shopping and sightseeing. The expansion of retailing, catering and shared economic and discursive characteristics, grew as modes of consumption.¹⁴³ In the West End, buying images and buying goods were overlapping experiences that intensified and amplified one another. As consumers could reach out, touching things

¹³⁹ See Marx, Karl, *Capital II*, (London: Harmondsworth) 1978; Richards, T, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914*, (London: Stanford) 1990; Freeman, Michael, *Railways and the Victorian Imagination*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.91

¹⁴⁰ Richards, T, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914*, (London: Stanford) 1990

¹⁴¹ In design history, these two texts have been useful for the identification of modernity and patterns of industrialisation within the confines of individual practices and philosophies of mechanisation, particularly in understanding efficiencies in the domestic and public sphere in relation to the city and urban capitalisation. (Giedion, 1948); (Berman, 1983)

¹⁴² Freeman, Michael, *Railways and the Victorian Imagination*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.92

¹⁴³ Rappaport, Erika Diane, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (Chichester: Princeton University Press) 2000, p. 190

was another way of thinking about space and experience, social mobility and the body.¹⁴⁴

Carol Berens proposed that central to the hotel experience was the nexus of interior and exterior, the lobby, where ordinary life enters into the realm of high drama. More than any other design they represent realised fantasies, whether they are a setting for the urban rendezvous, resort, or home away from home, office away from office, lobbies held a special character and atmosphere. As stage sets, lobbies are backdrops for the human to unfold. Within space the social interaction and energy provided by guests contributes to the production of it, engaging in two roles simultaneously: actor and spectator. Active participants are to be seen, or to view others.¹⁴⁵ The West End was similarly a multifarious nexus of commercialized pleasures, advertised to men and women, consumer products were represented on the streets as posters, electric signs and store windows. Several memoirs are published that recalled working and lower middle class consumers who sought a day or night in "town". For example the *Queen* publication printed an article entitled "The Changing West End" in 1905, and claimed that: "Piccadilly is, indeed a wonderful conglomeration of great mansions, clubs, hotels, and shops where the great, the learned, the rich, and the business man and women are to be found side by side as it were."¹⁴⁶ E. B Chancellor claimed in 1908 that Piccadilly Circus, the centre of the West End's entertainment district, was the place where "east and west meet on common ground" ¹⁴⁷Although far from a democratic public sphere in which all could meet on equal terms, the Edwardian West End entertained a diverse crowd. At the same time, its growing service based economy also offered men and women employment.¹⁴⁸

Bodies, Performance and Liminality

As a central space in the hotel, the lobby is the main gathering place and site of sociability, it is a room that welcomes and entices, but one that limits experience, as it is devoid of personality, it can be sterile and imposing. Indeed although the hotel lobby is a conduit and takes on meanings in relation to the areas that it links, it is also a place that some people do not pass through. Instead, it becomes a rest point in the busy space of the metropolis. A spatial element inside the lobby is the reception hall, where

¹⁴⁴ Freeman, Michael, *Railways and the Victorian Imagination*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.19

¹⁴⁵ Berens, Carol, *Hotels, Bars and Lobbies*, p.3

¹⁴⁶ *Queen*, May 13th, 1905, p. 767

¹⁴⁷ Beresford, Chancellor, E., *Wanderings in Piccadilly, Mayfair, and Pall Mall*, (London: Alston Rivers) 1908, p. 76

¹⁴⁸ Rappaport, Erika Diane, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (Chichester: Princeton University Press) 2000, p. 148

guests are received and a 'rite de passage' is performed. Visitors become guests that are officially welcomed and inscribed in the register. The desk functioning as a unit that controls the 'passage' between the public space of the lobby and the semi-private spaces of the upstairs. A barrier or control post along the hotel entrances and circulation ways.¹⁴⁹

Characterised as a liminal space, the hotel lobby, identified in the work of Victor Turner, defines 'liminality' as a moment of discontinuity in the social fabric and in social space. This occurs when people are in transition from one point to another and has been translated into readings of space within architectural studies. Rob Shields has also identified the liminal relationship between places and modernity, for example, 'in visiting a place or site presented as a life changing experience, liminality liberates one from the regimes of normative practices and performance codes'¹⁵⁰

Turner continues to explain the 'transition between' a threshold and the negotiation of one's journey.¹⁵¹ By using the spaces inside the hotel the liminal turns into liminoid space, because of a chosen activity by the guest to inhabit the space. As seen in figure 2:11 beyond the vestibule through the entrance and reception hall, an interior shaped by furnishings including rugs, chairs, the reception desk and the careful placement of things. The social is bound by the construction of the spatial and what Anthony Giddens has called the social binding of time and space.¹⁵² This includes the fundamental coordination of perceptions and understandings allowing for the sociality of everyday interaction and the creation of durable social forms and institutions. The image of the Regent Palace Hotel lobby presents a *place-image*. It is a means to express ideas – an intellectual shorthand whereby spatial metaphors and place images convey a complex set of associations. The manner in which this is most visible is in spatial practices and in the connotations people associate with places and regions in the everyday. Shields writes of this in his section on *Honey Lunacy*, by placing the situation of marriage, in relation to tourism, he explores how the honeymoon serves as

¹⁴⁹ Avermeate, Tom, 'The architectonics of the Hotel Lobby: The Norms and Forms of a Public-Private Figure' in (ed) Avermeate, Tom & Massey, Anne, *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge) 2013, p.66

¹⁵⁰ Shields, Rob, *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity*, (London: Routledge) 1991, p.84

¹⁵¹ Turner, Victor, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*, (New York: PAJ Publications) 1982, p.55

¹⁵² See Giddens, Anthony, *The Constitution of Society*, (London: Harper) 1984.

(Figure 2:11) Reception Hall, Regent Palace Hotel, 1915 (Source: LMA ACC/3527/591)

a period of adjustment. 'It stands as both a *rite de passage* and as an event.'¹⁵³ In relation to his case study of Niagara Falls, the image of the place turned out to be different in actuality and experience from the preconceived expectation. Given the comparison here, the act of the honeymoon was a popular ritual and one that took place while visiting a luxury hotel.

For example one can trace the rise and fall of a specific conception or image of a place partly through the record of the number of people who visited it and a knowledge of what activities people engaged in when they were there. Such *place images* come through stereotyping and over simplification.¹⁵⁴ I have also observed that such entities can be evidenced in objects themselves. This is proven in the promotional material J. Lyons & Co produced for the hotel, including match boxes, cigarette cards, postcards, menu's, and other paraphernalia, as outlined by Rob Shields:

Places and spaces are hypostatized from the world of real space relations to the symbolic realm of cultural significations. Traces of these cultural place-images are also left behind in the litter of historical popular cultures: postcards, advertising images, song lyrics and in the settings of novels. These images connected with a place may even come to be held as signifiers of its essential character. Such a label further impacts on material activities and may be clung to despite changes in the 'real' nature of the site.¹⁵⁵

Given that threshold architectures in this respect increasingly give centre stage to the performative aspects of building (and of their users' disciplined bodies), they constitute not so much a structural element as an apparatus, one that renders explicit the individual functions of a threshold and simultaneously shapes the human body. In figure 2:12 the lobby is absent of soft furnishings, lighting, and appears incomplete. However the space is in effect defunct without the spatial network of bodies and interior design, the inside of outside space is presented in the image as a simultaneous facade. Therefore, the technical innovations associated with threshold architectures reflect the rationale of a progressively refined technological system as well as spanning the poles of requisite comforts and disciplinary strategies, which in turn influences people's use and perception of architecture.¹⁵⁶ The individuation of experiences made in passage across a border fragments the body, the wholeness of which consequently

¹⁵³ Shields, Rob, *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity*, (London: Routledge) 1991, p.151

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p.46

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p.47

¹⁵⁶ Stalder, Laurent, "Turning Architecture Inside Out: Revolving Doors and Other Threshold Devices" in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Oxford: OUP) 2009, p.74

(Figure 2:12) Entrance Hall, Regent Palace Hotel, 1915
(Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive) Photographer: Bedford Lemere

becomes palpable only by crossing through a variety of distinct limits or borders; the body no longer knows inside and outside but only a continuous state of transition. Of spaces of self and other, interiority and exteriority, a dichotomy between self and other, is often interrupted through a language of spatial containers. Instead of the notion of a qualified presence between here and there, we have binaries of inside and outside and presentand absent operating at a range of levels.¹⁵⁷ The meaning of spaces interlock with the material and the sociological and sensual. The lobby is a point of departure and welcomes at the same time, it provides a series of visions at all sides and is a panoramic space. A thoroughfare within the interior space, the outside is held within the entrance hall.

In conclusion, this chapter has shown that when approaching the threshold of the Regent Palace Hotel guests entering the space experienced the physical layout of Piccadilly inside and outside of the building. The curved thoroughfare at the end of Regent Street with its neo-classical facades produced a generic appearance until the influx of modern windows that resulted in structural and cultural changes. The new luxury hotels in Piccadilly followed the classical lines that appeared in Regent Street's architecture, although the production of built space outside the hotel left little or no space for parks or open spaces. The geography of the West End positioned it at the centre of the metropolis and connected it with the wider networks and spaces of the city. Arriving at the underground station and the hotel held similar experiences, especially when faience was employed for most building facades. Hotel lobbies were extensions of exterior space, transformed undercover and directing those who sought to visit the winter garden and restaurant. Acting as an adjoining route into an open space under glass, the next chapter explores how J. Lyons & Co would incorporate exhibition planning in advancement of their restaurants and café's in the hotel. Participation in the grand exhibitions allowed the company to expand in catering, therefore these spaces are examined as part of the growth of the economy hotel.

¹⁵⁷ Crang, Mike & Thrift, Nigel, *Thinking Space*, (London: Routledge) 2000, p.7

Chapter 3

Grand Exhibitions and the J. Lyons & Co. Winter Garden

For J. Lyons & Co the experience they gained in late Victorian exhibition catering would become a force of development for their hotels and restaurants. Exhibition spaces were contributing factors in engaging with patrons as a representation of citizenship and national identity. In a period of expansion and transition for public exhibitions, museums and large-scale exhibitions, royalty and empire were paraded in imperial London. The highly congested streets, as explained in the previous chapter, left little room for the delights of open green spaces to be enjoyed. Therefore hotels, in a bid to appeal to local, national and international audiences created lavish resorts within the confines of their interior walls.

The Regent Palace Hotel's largest public space was its winter garden, as seen in the ground floor plans in fig. 0:2. An illustration of the point at which the hotel lobby ends, a room also called the Rotunda Court, was an open multi-purpose public space, sheltered by a large stained glass dome. The winter garden symbolised hybrid qualities, because architecturally it was a glass-house, yet it functioned as a semi-domestic interior within public buildings and hotels. A transformation in its design development in the nineteenth century meant that it was becoming less architecturally defined. The hotel winter garden had become the pinnacle product of a long transition from the plant-house to an exhibition space that became a commoditised form by the twentieth century.

This chapter examines the transition of the winter garden from its previous industrial, urban and public locations. Within the hotel, the space of the glasshouse had not resembled the winter garden of the late nineteenth century, or that of the rotunda court in the new luxury hotel. The Ritz and Savoy palm courts, as shown in chapter one, had taken on a number of new meanings and designs for commercial building that would contrast to the new winter gardens. In this chapter, an argument is placed on the hotel winter garden as an interior intended to represent various manifestations of empire, ones that were slowly fragmenting away by the end of the luxury hotel boom in 1915. These spaces were literally 'the last resort' in an attempt by hotel owners to remain closely aligned to the luxuries presented in the continental hotels of Europe and in promoting national identity and imperialism in London. They were however, also aligned to popular pleasure and tastes manifest in ballrooms or theatres, buildings that represented the periphery of social class and leisured enjoyment. Furthermore, such details as elaborate domes and interior plasterwork, revealed how such popular tastes in

architecture became manifested in colonial style interior spaces. It was this ritual of ceremony that has identified the differences in Victorian and Edwardian exhibitions, increasing technological demand, and the availability of commodities and luxury experiences to be had in elaborate displays of interior architecture. The city-dweller in the industrial age could no longer experience nature in its elemental form, but could only experience it as altered by a personal existence and modernity.

Elucidated in the work of Charles Baudelaire in 19th century Paris, an observer of modernity and the impacts of industrialisation on the modern life and spectacle of the capital. Walter Benjamin also philosophised Baudelaire's readings, producing an account of the fleeting city experienced in the urban spectacle of the enclosed shopping areas and commodified spaces of the arcade.¹⁵⁸

Taking into account the growing connection between commodities and leisured spaces, this chapter moves into a territory that shows how exhibition spaces formed an enclosure for the products of empire. Identified as a commercial experience in the formation of the winter garden as a popular space in the new luxury Lyons hotel. Modernity and the experience of the city produced a discourse of work on the arcades of Paris as discussed by Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin. Their observations revealed how modern sites such as public parks, promenades, streets, arcades, theatres, music halls, department stores, international exhibitions and museums have been situated within the arena of urbanisation. Further reinforcing the fact that modernity, in itself fractured and plural, was variously experienced in a number of different contexts, or as Rob Shields identified as, 'alternative sites of modernity'.¹⁵⁹ Unlike the former hotels, by 1915, entertainment spaces in the West End were determined by similar interior characteristics in a number of guises, in terms of interior design, craftwork and commissions. When the late nineteenth century new luxury hotels drew a crowd for the domestically decorated, aristocratic and sometimes private palm court, the hotel winter garden in contrast, reflected changing social issues, public entertainment and class based structures and boundaries.

¹⁵⁸ Charles Baudelaire's *The Painter of Modern Life*, first published in 1863, was re-published in many formats (London: Phaidon) 1964; Walter Benjamin's account entitled *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism* and *The Arcades Project* written 1927-41 (London: Belknap Press) 1999, contributed to a breadth of enquiry into urban spectacle and display, Susan Buck-Morss translated Benjamin's writing into English in *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (London: MIT) 1991

¹⁵⁹ Shields, Rob, *Places on the Margins: Alternative Geographies of Modernity*. (London: Routledge) 1991

Private Palm Houses and the First Winter Gardens

An indoor garden under an artificial sky, the winter garden arose from the old and often repeated dream of setting up a Garden of Eden by artificial methods. Whereas the hothouse had served primarily only for the preservation and rearing of plants, the winter garden was conceived for social purposes, pleasure, and for private contemplation. It represented an indoor garden separated by glass from the outdoor garden in forming a culmination of it. Because of this, the winter garden owes a departure from its function purely as a plant house and was subject to the rules of the gardener's art. The indoor garden was to correspond to the aspect of a quasi-natural landscape; however, the plants were to be exotic. It was also governed by construction methods and by spatial forms. The early winter gardens, originating in the 17th century, were orangeries on country estates and besides serving as show places, they were a necessary symbol in the lifestyle of the nobility. Often situated at the end of an axis and executed in a simplistic yet elaborate style as a contrast to the mansion, they not only caught the eye but also served as places for banquets, theatrical productions, and festivals.¹⁶⁰

The most well known of such was Joseph Paxton's building at Chatsworth marking an important period in the history of modern glass-houses (see fig. 3:1), in his conservatory of 1836-41 he had created the first large-scale interior which was lit by daylight. J.C Loudon and Paxton's buildings largely established the pattern of glasshouse building of the future.¹⁶¹ A reason for Great Britain's superiority in this field was its traditional passion for the garden, as England had assumed the lead in garden design in the Eighteenth century. Initiating the transformation from geometrical gardens after the French pattern to the landscape garden. English supremacy in hothouse construction lay more in an advantage, not only in this special field, but also as the leading economic country in terms of industrialisation and economics of the nineteenth century. England developed into a modern industrial society, there was a movement from the countryside to the towns, the population increased enormously and towns and cities grew beyond anything that had been seen before. All these changes necessitated the development of the means of communication and by the middle of the century Britain had an extensive railway network and a system of canals for transporting goods and raw materials.

¹⁶⁰ Kohlmaier, Georg & Sartory, Barna Von, *Houses of Glass: A Nineteenth-Century Building Type*, (London: MIT Press) 1986, p. 25

¹⁶¹ J. C Loudon wrote a seminal text 'Remarks on the Construction of Hothouses in 1817.

(Fig 3:1) Chatsworth Estate, Great Conservatory. Design: Joseph Paxton, 1837-40
(Source: Pevsner, 1976, p. 241)

The British Empire was, in the nineteenth century, the largest colonial empire. The British colonies in Asia, Africa, America and Australia covered a quarter of the surface of the earth.

The colonies, the most important market for Britain's manufactured articles, supplied raw materials and much newly discovered agricultural produce. This created a great deal of interest in the exploration of the vegetation of the colonial countries. Many plants which were first and foremost useful to the economy can still be seen in the palm house at Kew. They yielded crops like coffee, cocoa, bananas, rubber and, above all, cotton for the English textile industry. Palms were of great importance in tropical countries, producing not only food but also materials used for clothing and shelter.¹⁶²

A contention between gardener and architect emerged out of the incorporation of a winter garden into the private home, beginning a conflict of aesthetics. This conflict was rooted in the unprecedented problem of combining masonry architecture with a transparent glass-and-iron building— as it were, with a non-architectural form. So long as the winter garden (like the orangery or corridors leading to it) consisted of solid walls and roofs, no difficulty arose in achieving architectural unity.¹⁶³ The spread of the private winter garden was made possible by the introduction of tropical and subtropical plants and by the development of the technical means, especially heating, glass manufacture, and iron production. Aside from its inherent luxury, the winter garden was the recognised sign of an exalted position in society.¹⁶⁴

Botanical explorations were supported not only by the public and private gardens, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century appeared everywhere, but also by the horticultural societies like the London Horticultural Society (1802) and the Prussian Horticultural Society. These associations corresponded with each other and exchanged plants. The Royal Botanic Society had a garden in Regent's Park in London, and before the Large Palm House at Kew was finished opened its own palm house there, designed by the same architect.¹⁶⁵

The garden had become a land of illusion, a place of refuge from the civilized world. An illusion of unfamiliar parts of the world and of the past was created with the help of exotic and historical settings. Chinese pavilions, Egyptian pyramids, Gothic chapels, the ruins of Roman aqueducts and the bogus graves of poets and philosophers of the classical period excited the imagination and

¹⁶² Koppelkamm, Stefan, *Glasshouses and Wintergardens of the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Granada) 1981, p. 15

¹⁶³ Kohlmaier, Georg & Sartory, Barna Von, *Houses of Glass: A Nineteenth-Century Building Type*, (London: MIT Press) 1986, p. 26

¹⁶⁴ They were direct extensions of the living quarters, usually joined to the open rooms of the house, including the salon, the library, or the billiards room.

¹⁶⁵ The winter garden of the Royal Botanic Society was opened in Regent's Park, (1846), the palm house at Kew (1848) designed by Decimus Burton; architect and garden designer (1800-81) & Richard Turner; iron-founder (1798-1881)

awoke a longing for the Golden Age and the lost innocence of the Garden of Eden.¹⁶⁶

The palm house and the intimate winter garden were private places in which the owner and his friends could become encircled and submerged in the stillness of the plant world. The public winter garden, in contrast, presented the aspect of a brightly coloured jumble of visitors pressing fleetingly through a tropical flora for the sake of amusement. Some wealthy middle-class people were also able to afford comparatively regal glasshouses as shown by the Kibble Palace in Glasgow. (See fig. 3:2) This structure is pertinent as an example of a glass-house for the public good, the Glasgow Botanic Gardens were founded in 1817, and at first only admitted paying members of the Royal Botanic Society. The general public was only allowed in on Saturdays for an entrance fee of one shilling and on certain days the gardens were open to the 'working classes' at an entrance fee of one penny. The large glasshouse originally belonged to John Kibble, the son of a wealthy Glasgow merchant. 'Kibble Palace' was moved to the Botanic Gardens after Kibble had reached an agreement with the Botanic Society which gave him the right to hold concerts and other performances in his building for the next twenty-one years.

Re-named the 'Crystal Art Palace' in 1873, the building is an example of national pride and unity for Glasgow, where in the nineteenth century more national exhibitions were held than in any other region of the British Empire.¹⁶⁷ With the creation of the glasshouse there was the first historic appearance of a room completely flooded with light, "a spatial vacuum and yet a room,"¹⁶⁸ a negation of conventional stone architecture which in imitative representation of the load bearing function of its hierarchically ordered members formed a massive barrier between exterior and interior.

The relationship between winter gardens and botany houses lies within the aristocratic taste for private palm houses and its introduction inside the new luxury hotel as a palm court. Whilst external winter gardens existed as plant houses, they became sites for performance and urban spectacle, their uses changing into a form of exhibition space

¹⁶⁶ Koppelkamm, Stefan, *Glasshouses and Wintergardens of the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Granada) 1981, p. 17

¹⁶⁷ Thanks to a grant from the city of Glasgow, the Botanic Gardens were able in 1881 to buy Kibble out, and to transform the Crystal Art Palace into a winter garden. Many of the tree ferns planted at the time can still be seen there.

¹⁶⁸ Kohlmaier, Georg & Sartory, Barna Von, *Houses of Glass: A Nineteenth-Century Building Type*, (London: MIT Press) 1986, p. 26-27

(Fig. 3-2) Kibble Palace, Glasgow (Source: Personal Photographs 2009)

of display. In the hotel winter garden consumption patterns of the social classes aligned with the field of tourism.

In terms of liminality; social forces; space and conception, all the structural elements of the glasshouse were visible. In addition to the plants, the elements of the structure were on display themselves and hence were to be perceived as part of the aesthetic effect. Structural form, spatial shape, and ornament were not separated and rendered independent, their combined effect made it possible to understand the architectural structure at one glance. With its display of the structure as a self evident manifestation of its inherent aesthetic aspects combined with a form built on the simplest possible lines. The nineteenth-century glasshouse appeared as a utopian anticipation of the avant-garde architecture of the early twentieth century.¹⁶⁹

Urban Modernity: Public Glasshouses

The 'new' materials, including iron and glass, were of crucial importance in the technological development of building in the nineteenth century. Winter gardens transformed by the Victorian imagination, emerged from the 1850's and throughout Queen Victoria's reign became attractions. Exhibition spaces, enclosures, symbols of congregation marked success and power over industrialisation. They were showcases for the British Empire that gave new meanings for the population of how the United Kingdom might be observed by the outside world. Excitement and achievement was sought to reinforce a national unity and to partake in an international statement of identity. Whilst the early winter gardens were established in the previous two centuries as botanic gardens, orangeries, hothouses, greenhouses and palm courts. The full function of an interior winter garden became realised in the mid to late nineteenth century. For this research, its penultimate stage of development is when it embraced the inside of buildings and became a social and architectural precedent for a new luxury hotel.

Iron was at first only employed to manufacture machinery, but by the last quarter of the eighteenth century it began to be used in buildings. Chiefly developed in England and France, iron was mostly confined to bridges and railway stations, exhibition halls, glasshouses and business premises such as arcades and warehouses. Only much later, after the middle of the nineteenth century, was iron increasingly used in traditional types of buildings. The iron foundries were mostly centred in Scotland whom dominated the market at the time. One of the best known was Walter McFarlane & Co.,

¹⁶⁹ Kohlmaier, Georg & Sartory, Barna Von, *Houses of Glass: A Nineteenth-Century Building Type*, (London: MIT Press) 1986, p. 26

a foundry that had been started in Glasgow in 1850. Their two volume catalogue of 1882 contains more than 700 pages of cast-iron parts for the building trade – glasshouses and winter gardens were offered for sale. The Sydenham Crystal Palace of 1851, in its massive scale, constituted the first glass-covered urban “forum” combining trade, culture, and social contact.¹⁷⁰ The Crystal Palace was a novelty not only because of its radical use of industrial prefabrication for an architectural project, but also because of the feeling of space the building produced. There had never been an industrial interior of such dimensions. By the recurring use of the same building components, an impression of infinity was created, while the fact that the walls were transparent gave the illusion that the outside world was part of the building.¹⁷¹

The early urban assembly places and centres of entertainment, especially dance halls, cafes and restaurants, were the first reasons for the creation of public winter gardens. It was soon realised that the provision of glass-covered indoor gardens increased the attractiveness of a business. These winter gardens for the citizenry were received with enthusiasm. The inhabitants of the cities felt a powerful urge to find a place in which they could gather freely and without restriction. This was also an early example of the system and technology inhabited by new spaces of leisure: raw and urban, the streets were exposed to the winter, and the covered streets and arcades were not heated, so people were not encouraged to linger and talk in cold weather. With the winter garden, rooms resembling open-air promenades allowed men and women to gather in the midst of a tropical plant display protected from unpleasant weather. The first large public winter garden originated between 1842 and 1846 in Regent's Park, London, founded by the Royal Botanic Society and Queen Victoria a patron, women of the ruling classes became recruited as members.

The magnificent displays of tropical plants brought with them the misgiving that colonialism and the organized exploitation of the world would set in motion the destruction of the existing state of affairs in distant lands. In order to preserve the vision of paradise, there was a need to conserve nature, at least symbolically, by putting it under glass.¹⁷² The nineteenth century glasshouse was like a museum in which the masterpieces of nature were gathered together, listed in a catalogue, and

¹⁷⁰ The intricate network of the exchange of experimental construction experience and scientifically based building techniques is demonstrable not only in the historical development of glass and iron structures but also in the personal histories of individual designers. John Claudius Loudon, Richard Turner, Joseph Paxton, Charles Rohault de Fleury, August von Voit, Hector Horeau, and Alphonse Balat are the best known.

¹⁷¹ Similar buildings had included cathedrals and spaces of worship, including interior features in metal and woodwork by secular guilds.

¹⁷² Kohlmaier, Georg & Sartory, Barna Von, *Houses of Glass: A Nineteenth-Century Building Type*, (London: MIT Press) 1986, p. 26

preserved for the future – the influence of this was rather blunted in that spectators considered them as items of popular science.

The character and display of the hothouse made it the precursor of the great world exhibitions of the nineteenth century and therefore a certain urban modernity for open spaces and promenades. Along a labyrinth of interwoven pathways, plants from all over the world were placed in the best lighting conditions, arranged according to land of origin, genus, and species. It was in the tropical forest of the botanical hothouse that some tensions were articulated in the metropolis. The hothouse, in the manner of its construction, enacted a tension between mobility and stability. But it also enacted the tension between concealed and open spaces. With a vista shaped by plants and trees an avenue is presented in large public glasshouses such as the Crystal Palace, in contrast, the foliage and privacy of the hothouse to get lost amongst the trees provided a privacy and secrecy which was not the premise of the winter garden. Hothouses were private domains, attached to large halls or country estates, essentially private residences.¹⁷³

It was in the interiors of many winter gardens that exoticism was rampant, ostentation and self-glorification were of primary importance, it was impossible to be content with a plain building erected by engineers. Soon after the Great Exhibition, Joseph Paxton suggested transforming the Crystal Palace into a 'Winter Garden and Garden under Glass' with enough space for people not only to go for walks, but also for riding and driving in carriages. In the public winter gardens, not only were individual plants presented, a complete show like a theatrical presentation was included in the entrance fee. The monumental winter gardens, which were run as commercial companies from the middle of the nineteenth century and in which thousands of people could assemble at the same time, proved that they could pay their way:

In the international exhibitions, where the whole world displayed its commodities, the arrangement of endless pathways was borrowed from the hothouse – the grouping of the displayed objects according to the continents; the principle of diversity; the placing side by side of the smallest up to the largest, the most insignificant with the mightiest, the most common items with the rarest, all in accordance with laws of aesthetics.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Hassam, Andrew, 'Portable Iron Structures and Uncertain Colonial Spaces at the Sydenham Crystal Palace' in Driver, Felix and Gilbert, David (ed) *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999, p.186

¹⁷⁴ Information about the construction of the early British hothouses is to be found in the contemporary accounts, particularly those by John Claudius Loudon (1817, 1818) and Charles McIntosh (1853). In 1842, M. Neumann described individual British, French and Dutch greenhouse structures. The *Handbook of Architecture* (1893) gave the first review of the state of the art of greenhouse building, but without special treatment of structural details.

Even the space and the construction of the hothouse were adapted to the purpose of displaying industrial products. With the consciously pursued objective of bringing the public inside to view the plant kingdom, the winter garden was an early portrait of the entertainment industry. The individual was seen as an anonymous buyer of a spectacle of nature and of organized amusement. The general desire for nature "at second hand" was the product of the city, the factory and modernity.

The nineteenth century glasshouse was the reflection of the city dwellers new fascination with nature, domestication of the plants and animals of distant lands under glass seemed to be the highest stage of this evolution in discovery. The plants in the greenhouse, in spite of their artificiality, were representatives of the organic world that became ephemeral victims of inevitable death. In the majestic world of the greenhouse, the plants lost their aspect of utility, presenting themselves to the eye as natural beauty and ephemeral shapes. The greenhouse was a place of retreat from the real world, but at the same time it was full of the politics of the day. One can reconstruct a connection between the growing social tensions in the expanding city and the growth of the illusion of nature in the form of greenhouses, parks, and green boulevards. It was not by chance that the first public winter garden (in Regent's Park, London: 1846) and the first recreational establishment to include plants (the Jardin d'Hiver in Paris: 1848) came into being at a time of conflict between class interests. The introduction of greenery always had a moral and ethical background in the "plight of the working class" and its harmony with working conditions. In this sense the illusion of nature in the city was always an illusion of society as well. This was realised in the form of sister structures to the plant house, in Glasgow Kibble was not the only believer in the plant house or conservatory, as the People's Palace and Winter Garden was opened in 1898 (see fig. 3:3 / 3:4). It was designed as 'a palace of pleasure and imagination around which the people may place their affections and which may give them a home on which their memory may rest.'¹⁷⁵ As will be evidenced later in the chapter, it was indeed the exhibition spaces of empire that proposed a space for the pleasure palaces in brick and glass to form in the public consciousness. The author visited the site of the People's Palace (2009), one of two structures still in existence within a huge open space in a suburb of Glasgow City Centre. It was apparent that such buildings survived on site to serve their communities and larger public.

¹⁷⁵ Baxter, Neil, *The Extraordinary Story of Glasgow Green: Britain's Oldest Public Park*, (Glasgow City Council) 2007, p. 69

PEOPLE'S PALACE – WINTER GARDENS

(Fig. 3:3) Postcard purchased from the museum in 2009.

(Fig. 3:4) Concert in the Winter Gardens, 1910 (Source: Baxter, 2007)

Other ostentatious and ambiguous structures that appeared in the mid to late nineteenth century, included the pier, which can also be seen as a site for the experimental use of iron and the built structures upon which formed distinct class identities. It was the malleability of the material that allowed many of these intricately shaped spaces to be produced. Utilising both wrought and cast iron, and typically, examples of the techniques of corrugation, extrusion, fabrication and casting. Pier design explores the full potential of this material and as such, is one of its greatest advertisements, but it represents the end product of years of earlier architectural structures, that have their roots in the discipline of garden design. Not only are piers steeped in the rhetoric of gardens, as they incorporate pavilions, winter gardens, walks and bandstands, but the interior elements of the space also find inspiration in gardens – the buildings follow in direct lineage from greenhouse and conservatory construction.

As Barry observed:

The architectural buildings of the pier combine the function and styling of the pleasure garden and the material technology of the greenhouse on a grand scale. Primarily built to attract visitors and increase the reputation and prestige of the resort. Oriental in style, the seaside pavilion exemplified a mixing of styles, located at the liminal space of the coast utilising exotic idioms the Royal Pavilion at Brighton illustrates the most flamboyant use of this in an interior space.¹⁷⁶

In considering the development of such mutually designed structures, the pier pavilion was influential as an interior space for leisure on British coastlines, often incorporating such features as rotundas and domes, they found a place within the ball room or dancehalls of the seaside. Resorts were the potential for building developments in and around the coastal piers, with many large grand hotels overlooking them, they revealed a language in architectural and interior design as liminal, location based attractions.

People's Pavilions: Exhibition Spaces and Grand Cafés

The hybridity of the winter garden is prevalent in its manifestation during the nineteenth century, a connection with leisure and the pursuit of pleasure. An attraction for the mass public and people, informed by commercialism and commerce, the Great Exhibition of 1851 began the promotion of goods and international prowess. Invention as a key proponent of progress in nineteenth century London, provoked the

¹⁷⁶ See Clare Barry's useful account of pier architecture; *Victorian Pier Design 1860-1900* V&A/ RCA Unpublished MA thesis (2006)

emergence of often strange yet wonderful or spectacular showcases. The Great Exhibition of 1851 provided a focus for portable iron houses, and for portable iron structures generally.

Twentieth century cultural historians have tried to understand the social significance of the escalating use of glass in the nineteenth century, which was permitted by changes in glass production technology. From perspectives of geography, museums history and class, this has been interpreted through the means of panopticism and surveillance. Including large numbers of people in public spaces and in stressing the opening up of the interior of the building to the regulating eye of the spectator in glass and through visibility.¹⁷⁷ As Barry observed:

The Victorians had a fascination with collecting the artefacts of other cultures and displaying them in glass cases; the Crystal Palace can be seen as a giant glass receptacle containing products of empire within a casing of British technological triumph. As an attraction, it is no less an expression of this ambiguousness, a semiotic rhetoric of the numerous national and International exhibitions of the nineteenth century were no less statements of British Imperialist power.¹⁷⁸

Established in 1887 as exhibition contract caterers, J. Lyons & Co required large quantities of equipment from marquees and furniture to napkins and toothpicks. Most of these supplies remained in store at Olympia and formed the Hire Department becoming one of Lyons first business diversifications outside catering. As seen in fig 3:5, *Temporary Structures for Balls and Weddings*, illustrating flooring, decorations and marquees for hire, evidently Lyons were able to facilitate and adapt to many spatial environments. Indeed, with the notion of empire at its peak, the late nineteenth century was marked by the many grand exhibitions that captivated the public imagination. Such spectacles provided not only a showcase for British industry, but also entertainment of which most citizens had never seen. In 1887 Isidore, Montague and Joseph Gluckstein, with their brother in law Barnett Salmon and Joseph Lyons, started their

¹⁷⁷ Hassam, Andrew, 'Portable Iron Structures and Uncertain Colonial Spaces at the Sydenham Crystal Palace' in Driver, Felix and Gilbert, David (ed) *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999, p.178

¹⁷⁸ Barry, p.55

(Fig. 3:5) Programme for Lyon's Services and Hire Department.
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/329) 1891

exhibition catering enterprise from the tobacco business address 34 Whitechapel Road. This was the year Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee, and Lyons formation at this time could not have been coincidental. All over Britain festivities and exhibitions celebrated not only the past successes of the empire, but also the high expectations for future national prosperity and enterprise.¹⁷⁹

Lyons pavilions, designed along the lines of the Grand Café, reflected the Victorian showmanship of the company.¹⁸⁰ Consumer tastes began to form around the spectacle of attractions and goods, as the company's consumer knowledge grew in the participation of such exhibitions. It was at the Newcastle exhibition of 1887 where they became most well known for their Indo-Chinese Grand Pavilion Cafe. (See fig. 3:6) Joseph Lyons provided his name to the business and to undertake preliminary negotiations with exhibition organisers, while the Salmons and Glucksteins provided the finance and the organizational skills in the background. The General Manager of the Exhibition later recorded how he was approached by Joseph Lyons with a proposal for securing the temperance catering contract at Newcastle, the licensed agreement having already been made with a separate company. He stated:

"I well remember being approached by Mr. Joseph Lyons who stated that his business was whether he would have any chance of securing the contract for the catering at the exhibition... After a further talk with him I felt confident that he was the man for the purpose and I recommended the committee to accept his offer, which they did, and he proved to be a well deserved success. He built a veranda right round the gardens where tea, coffee and other light refreshments were served, with a band playing in the centre and I was very glad when he told me he had made sufficient money to give him a good start in life".¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Bird, Peter, *The First Food Empire: A History of J. Lyons and Co.* (Chichester: Phillimore) 2000, p.187

¹⁸⁰ Lyons were involved in the establishment of large scale catering, as well as national exhibitions of the late 1880's through to the 1920's. They were participants of the Newcastle Jubilee Exhibition (1887) presenting the Indo-Chinese Pavilion Café, Glasgow Exhibition (1889) British Palace Café, Venice in London Exhibition (1891) Café Florian, The Great White City Franco-British Exhibition (1908) Grand Restaurant, Lagoon Grill Room and Popular Café, and finally the British Empire Exhibition in 1924. Lyons began building their restaurants in 1896, the first was the Trocadero, and then they continued with The Throgmorton (1900), the Coventry Street Corner House (1907), The Strand Palace Hotel (1909), followed closely by the Regent Palace Hotel (1912-15), the Strand Corner House (1913-16) and the Oxford Corner House in 1928. Bird, Peter, *The First Food Empire: A History of J. Lyons and Co.* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2000) p. 108

¹⁸¹ Letter from T.H Amos to J.Lyons & Co. Ltd. 5 September 1929.

(Fig. 3:6) Indo-Chinese Pavilion Cafe, Newcastle Jubilee Exhibition
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/809) 1887

The Lyons catering syndicate built an elaborate pavilion in the exhibition grounds and began selling in these luxurious surroundings best quality tea at 3d a pot rather than 2d a cup, which was the accepted price, or 4d a cup which had been charged by some exhibition caterers. Newcastle did offer another opportunity for the firm to show its potential in a clearer way, and one which attracted considerable publicity. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* of 9th May 1887 reported extracts of exhibition plans from the *Jubilee Chronicle of the Newcastle Exhibition* mentioning 'a stand of goodly dimensions belonging to Messrs. Lyons and Co. of London, where cigars, pipes and cigarettes will be made.' The newspaper continued:

The first building, which the visitor reaches on leaving the North Court, is a representation of the old Carlol Tower, which has been produced at the instance of Mr. Lyons, a London Gentleman who, after Messrs. Gibson & Co., is the largest speculator in the Exhibition. The model of the familiar building that used to grace New Bridge Street will be utilised for the sale of English and colonial fruits and flowers. The Indo-Chinese Pavilion, which also belongs to Mr. Lyons, was designed by Mr. J. S Fairfax of London, and has been constructed under the superintendence of Mr. Charles Brooks. Light and elegant, it will be recognised as one of the handsomest buildings on the ground. Externally it is decorated in the Indian style, and the combined appearance of domes and minarets, with a profusion of bright colours, produces a very fine effect. Downstairs there is an Indian court, and upstairs a Chinese court, in both of which light refreshments will be sold. The building is almost ninety feet long and forty-feet wide, and it is estimated to seat about 1,200 persons.¹⁸²

When the exhibition threatened to close prematurely, the Lyons firm decided to keep the tea pavilion open as an attraction in its own right, as part of this service the firm employed a Hungarian orchestra to play at the tea pavilion. This orchestra had been the main feature of the exhibition from its beginning, and the company had to pay £150 a week to retain its services. (See fig. 3:7) Ornate pavilions continued to draw crowds to exhibition grounds and Joseph Lyons provided characteristic contributions to these attractions. Building a shooting gallery complete with moving animal targets and scenic effects, the Newcastle exhibition turned the company into a popular democratic representation of British national identity. As Montague Gluckstein charitably observed, "The thing was later destined to become common enough, but in those days it was more than a seven days wonder. It was indeed a marvel."¹⁸³

¹⁸² Newcastle Daily Chronicle, 9/05/1887

¹⁸³ J. Lyons and Co were responsible for three main areas: a reproduction of Newcastle's fourteenth century Carlol Tower; where fruit and flowers were sold; a replica of the entrance to Alnwick Castle, which was used as the archery and shooting gallery, depicted as an Indian jungle with animals and birds; and the Indo-Chinese Pavilion Cafe for the sale of tea, coffee and light refreshments. The Salmon and Gluckstein families had made a huge investment in design, construction, furnishing and decoration, creating an impact for the visitors to the exhibition. *How Lyons Earned its Name as an Exhibition Caterer*, London Metropolitan Archives (ACC/3527/227)

(Fig. 3:7) Lyons Hungarian Band, Newcastle Jubilee Exhibition
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/622) 1887

Inventing fantastical refreshment structures, Lyons moved on to build the Bishop's Palace Café at the Glasgow Exhibition of 1888 (see fig. 3:8/3:9) by taking the Bishops Palace Rooms. They were re-decorated, modernised and visitors were waited on by waitresses dressed alike and wearing Marie Stuart caps. The Glasgow exhibition was an important departure resulting in the building of the People's Palace that included a large winter garden, a pinnacle for the company in learning what the mass public enjoyed most, establishing Lyons as quality purveyors of popularly designed catering establishments.¹⁸⁴ This entertainment value characterised a specific commodity meaning in service and experience that capitalised on the interior as an all encompassing event, providing a representation of the excitement awaiting the inhabitants of the interior spaces and larger exhibition grounds. The semiotic rhetoric of the tea pavilion and the palace cafe hold specific empire situated symbols that were paramount in circulating wider cultural meanings for the company.

The geographical span of such large-scale exhibitions related to the expansion of the business as a producer, manufacturer and wholesaler of tea. For the British public, the commodification of tea identified with more than a purchase of luxury, establishing how conditions of national unity could be proliferated as a force for the publicity and endorsement of the British Empire. J. Lyons & Co, continually drew on these empire based fictions in publicity and actuality, in 1891, Lyons invented the 'Colossal Iceberg', 'a recreation of the Arctic regions and celebrating the British routes in trade and empire, 'showing the perils of officers and crew of HMS "Investigator" during their journey through the North-West Passage' as stated in the programme (see fig. 3:10). With no apparent illustrations published of the exhibit, a description for the exhibition programme, explains that 'the interior of the Iceberg was opened on May 7th by H. M. The Queen, their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales and members of the Royal Family, who expressed their greatest pleasure with the marvellously realistic Arctic scene before them.' This royal seal reinforced the colonial aspects of the exhibition and Lyons promotion of commodity fetishism, as the programme discusses crusades to other lands, obtaining 'rich silks of China or Japan' sharing a wealth and availability of luxuries.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ See MacKenzie, John M, 'The Second City of Empire': Glasgow – Imperial Municipality' for an examination of the city; national identity, exhibition planning and colonial relationships in Driver, Felix and Gilbert, David (ed) *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999

¹⁸⁵ Programme for the 'Colossal Iceberg' designed by J. Lyons and Co. Ltd, at the Royal Naval Exhibition, 1891.

(Fig. 3:8) Bishops Palace Café, Interior, Glasgow Exhibition
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/625A) 1888

(Fig. 3:9) Bishops Palace Café, Exterior, Glasgow Exhibition
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/625B) 1888

(Fig. 3:10) Programme for the 'Colossal Iceberg' designed by J. Lyons & Co Ltd at the Royal Naval Exhibition, 1891 (Source: ACC/3527/329)

Forever capitalising on service, space and geography, Lyons continued to participate in a number of exhibitions, managing to gain a contract for the Irish International Exhibition of 1907. The official guide even provided a hint of standard and popularity anticipated by another tea-room:

The Dining Rooms, Restaurants, and Tea Rooms are numerous, most spacious, and luxuriously appointed. The well-known London caterers, Messrs. J. Lyons and Co., Ltd, manage these for the exhibition, and popular prices are the rule. In the splendid "Palace" Restaurant the service is equal in all respects to that of the best London Hotels and Restaurants.¹⁸⁶

This is the first point of evidence that identifies a level of luxury accorded to London and J. Lyons & Co before the opening of their new luxury hotels. However, it was indeed this formation of publicity material that identifies many of their forthcoming ambitions. In fig. 3:11, the Palace Restaurant illustrates the metropolitan language developed for the design of exhibition spaces, the restaurant is spatially defined by a boulevard, street lighting, a seated arena and in the structure itself. A colonial neo-classical style of architectural design reminiscent of the newly established patterns in the West End of London for metropolitan building types, most typically represented by travel and the expansion of the railways. London was the empire's capital, and the imperial metropolis of the world, appearing unique. Paris may have been more beautiful, but it was less imposing than London, and it served as metropole to a smaller empire than the British.

With imperialism promoted on all forms of public spectacle and promotion in London, imperial markers were everywhere, saturating daily life. Apparent in many productions staged in the West End, including theatres and music halls, these themes also pervaded popular exhibitions and displays. This was especially the case in the Earls Court exhibition grounds, where Imre Kiralfy imported wild animals and colonized peoples and presented them in dramatic spectacles based upon Britain's imperialist triumphs in Africa and Asia.¹⁸⁷ J. Lyons & Co collaborated with Kiralfy on the *Venice in London* exhibition, after catering for the Barnum and Bailey Circus at Olympia in 1889.

¹⁸⁶ Irish International Exhibition, Official Souvenir, (Dublin: Hely's Ltd) 1907 (ACC/3527/331), p.2

¹⁸⁷ Schneer, Jonathan, *London 1900*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.10

THE PALACE RESTAURANT.

(Fig. 3:11) Irish International Exhibition, Official Souvenir,
(Dublin: Hely's Ltd) 1907 (Source: ACC/3527/331)

Joseph Lyons and Harold Hartley, owner of the Pure Water Company, decided to exploit the increasing Victorian popularity of exotic settings and ingenious spectacle, by combining these elements in a theatrical entertainment. By agreeing to rent Olympia for £300 per week for an extended period, the planned *Venice in London* exhibition of 1890 would include an immense stage in the Grand Hall, with an elaborately painted backdrop depicting historical Italian scenes representing love, warfare, festivities and marriages. For those preferring to walk, there were ample promenades, and thirteen bridges criss-crossed the canals with gondola's for hire, which were lined with simulated marble palaces, picturesque houses and shops selling Italian glass and leather goods. This all contributed to the expanse and creativity of thought in the larger scheme of Lyons future plans, securing their catering contract with Olympia for the next sixty years.

Furthermore, writing in the *Jewish Chronicle* of 26th October 1906, Joseph Lyons did outline his ambitions for building and operating music halls. He reportedly aimed to build beautiful variety theatres offering refined entertainment for the middle class hitherto not properly addressed in the popular music halls of the period. His intention was to run them as temperance houses with attached winter gardens and other attractions. Primarily sponsored by Joseph Lyons himself, the theatre project came to nothing, but music and entertainment did feature strongly in many of the company's future restaurants and hotels.¹⁸⁸

Popular culture in the metropolis ran counter to the imperialism apparent in London's popular entertainments and recreations, and the messages they broadcast conveyed imperialists as heroes. Late Victorian London's innumerable exhibitions and presentations of peoples and artifacts from the imperialized territories were communicated by historic, national and commercial means. The South Kensington Museum represented a vast imperial archive that listed, categorized and ordered subject peoples and their arts and crafts. By 1900 exhibitions and spectacles consciously designed to combine entertainment and tuition in the benefits of empire had become a staple of London's public image. In August 1900, Earls Court, "with its deep, cool, shady nooks, its beautiful grounds, its sparkling lake," was immensely popular, but not simply because it enabled Londoners to escape the summer heat. The site contained, among other amusements, Boerland, a shooting gallery where patriots

¹⁸⁸ Bird, Peter, *The First Food Empire: A History of J. Lyons and Co.* (Chichester: Phillimore) 2000, p.25

might “wipe something off the slate” and “snipe the enemy,” a model goldmine in full operation to remind viewers of the profits accruing to London through the empire.¹⁸⁹

Formed to oversee the construction of the *Franco-British* Exhibition of 1908, the International & Colonial Commercial Co. Ltd built 20 palaces and 120 exhibition buildings, waterways, bridges, roads and other structures in completing what became known as ‘The White City’. The French Chamber of Commerce first conceived the idea of an exhibition in which both France and Britain would display and promote their respective industrial achievements, after the employment of the impresario Imre Kiralfy. A 140 acre site north of Shepherd’s Bush Green was allocated and the ornate Grand Restaurant staffed and managed by Lyons, marked twenty years of exhibition catering. By 1908, the Grand Restaurant at the Franco British Exhibition (see fig. 3:12/13) shows the ultimate realisation of the grand restaurant and pavilion for J. Lyons & Co. Also catering for the Olympic Café at the event, the urban modernity positioned into the Edwardian climate existed in parallel to the demise of the vast Victorian exhibition spaces. The places of consumption and spectacle were now reflected in the new establishments off Regent Street, Piccadilly Circus or the Strand, whilst architecturally remaining symbols of the British Empire. Intersection of urban life and imperialism were at a particular moment, when both the city and the empire of which it was the capital were at their zenith. To the establishment, London’s meaning was disclosed in the city’s physical appearance, in the layout of streets and avenues, and in the buildings and public monuments which lined them. London’s built environment intended to be appropriately imposing and conveying a sense of Britain’s world role. Perceived by those who embraced this view, the imperial metropolis was not so much a machine for making money as it was, at least potentially, a machine for making imperialist-minded citizens.¹⁹⁰

London was not merely the heart of a global empire: it was a place in which an enormous variety of imperial sights could be seen. Particular aspects of empire including political authority, commercial power, cosmopolitan consumption, scientific progress and popular display, were advertised and realised through a range of imaged and real experiences inhabited in the movement of the city on rail networks, tube lines, across seas or in imperial air travel. ‘In these images the rhetoric of modernity - of mass leisure and consumption – mapped the empire on to the city: if the imperial city

¹⁸⁹ Schneer, Jonathan, *London 1900*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p.94

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.13

(Fig. 3:12) Lyons Grand Restaurant and Pavilion, Franco-British Exhibition, London 1908
(Source: Peter Bird Archive)

(Fig. 3:13) J. Lyons & Co Ltd. Olympic Cafe, Franco-British Exhibition Site, 1908
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/633)

was at the centre of the world, the empire was now at the heart of the urban experience.¹⁹¹

Empire and Modernity: The Transition of the Winter Garden to the Rotunda Court

The fact that the winter garden was shaped by industrial strength, modernity and empire presents an interior paradox, formed from the concept of nature and an imperialist exoticism. The rotunda court in the Regent Palace Hotel was an emblematic construction, illustrated with its large stained glass dome the space presented a language of colonialism (See figure 3:14). Incorporating Indian style carpets, to palm leaves and dark lighting, a space that had become realised from the construction of the imperialist city. Hotels were part of the urban landscape that the winter garden began to inhabit, realised as a destination point inside public buildings. They played a huge role as imperial symbols for visitors and travellers to resorts in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century incorporated business techniques that allowed the mechanistic elements of the space to function in real terms, similar to the pier and pavilion at the seaside, people were enticed by the new illumination of electric lighting, extravagant interiors and the realm of leisure that the public rooms emphasised. The machine of the Regent Palace Hotel was one of systematic construction, learnt through the company's decision to move from trade in exhibition to restaurants and hotels.¹⁹²

As a prominent interior feature of the winter garden room, the styles of virtually all great periods of architecture could become retranslated with characteristic Victorian irreverence for history within urban commercial interiors. Most were modelled on the great domes of the past, the globular and panoptic connected with connotations of ritual and worship, as the dome in the Regent Palace Hotel offered patrons a chance to examine the craft and allegoric scenes depicted by the experience of space. Also the artistic production and making of materials for the interior of the winter garden in the hotel connected commercialism with the arts and crafts.

¹⁹¹ Colonial urban development is translated thoughtfully in the introduction to Driver, Felix and Gilbert, David (ed) *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999 p. 5

¹⁹² A year after the Franco-British exhibition of 1908, J. Lyons and Co opened the Strand Palace Hotel, in a baroque neo-classical house style. Whilst the original interior of their first hotel was reminiscent of the Victorian pavilion in white plasterwork in 1909, potentially influenced by the 'White City' exhibition spaces, by 1915 the opening of the Regent Palace Hotel revealed an educated change in commissions for the architectural and decorative craftwork in the hotel, this further aligned the interiors to commercial luxury rooms experienced in a range of public environments, signalling the cyclical processes of urbanisation, taste and style in terms of modern debates surrounding the quadrant outlined in chapter two.

(Fig. 3:14) Postcard, Winter Garden in the Regent Palace Hotel, 1915. (Source: LMA ACC/3527)

The stained glass dome produced by the Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Arts, provides a case for the examination of the interior design in various mediums from glass to metal and woodwork in the period leading to 1915. A crafts movement formed in the nineteenth century, informed the establishment of regional guilds to find some meaning for the tasks of labour, whether for making or meaning. The morals of the arts and crafts are at times unclear, although lend themselves to this evaluation, in that, in the modernity of Victorian industrialisation, craft skill became transformed, into a larger, commercial aspect of interior design. The transitional space of industrialisation met with the philosophies of the guild artisan in composition of decorative stained glass, wood panelling and plasterwork in hotels.

The increased production of stained glass in the nineteenth century, escalated between 1835-60 and was the most important episode in the history of British glass-painting, as many windows were commissioned and made in this period¹⁹³. By the late nineteenth century many craft based workshops had been established in Britain and for this research *The Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Arts* has become a focus for the material culture of the Regent Palace Hotel. Examining commercial interior spaces produced before the First World War has allowed an understanding of how the commercial crafts emerged in the Edwardian West End. Many of the Bromsgrove Guild's commissions were ecclesiastical, yet after 1900, they took secular work away from the midlands and established an office in London. Further contracts included the interiors in the first class lounge of the ocean liner *Lusitania*, panelled with mahogany, with a top light fitted in stained glass, including deep coving and richly moulded plasterwork. The dining saloon was a very large apartment, covered in the centre by a dome. (See fig. 3:15) Decorated in the Louis XVI style, the woodwork was painted in a cream colour, with gold enrichments. Anne Massey's point that 'the effect was obviously intended to make the Edwardian sailing public believe that they had never left their London club or the Savoy tea rooms'¹⁹⁴ is an appropriate description of the influence and skills of guild workers before the advent of professional interior designers. Architects were employed to manage the production of interiors in the Regent Palace Hotel. Luxury hotel building and other commercial spaces allowed for a small number of designers to emerge in this field, including James Miller who was responsible for the architectural decoration on the ocean liner *Lusitania*.

¹⁹³ Cheshire, Jim *Stained Glass and the Victorian Gothic Revival*, (Manchester: MUP) 2004, p. 5

¹⁹⁴ Massey, Anne, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat*, (London: Routledge) 2006, pp.54-57

(Fig. 3:15) Bromsgrove Guild, lounge of the Lusitania, stained glass and plasterwork.
(Source: Worcestershire County Museum) 2009.

Employing The Bromsgrove Guild to carry out the metalwork on the ship, included light fittings, ornamental balustrades and lift enclosures.¹⁹⁵

The patterns of work were dependent on individual craftsmen in guilds who remained anonymous. Groups of men were responsible for a single project, with a team including the designer, modeller, the men concerned with casting in metal, the polishers, gilders, engravers, workers in lead, wood and stone. In 1900 the guild won an award for its entry in the Paris exhibition that consisted of a bedroom in the British pavilion. Decorated and furnished in the Art Nouveau style, the candelabra and electric fittings were purchased by the Director of the Vienna Art Museum. After 1906 the Guild obtained their most important project, the iron and metalwork for the gates at Buckingham Palace. This created a demand by a variation of civic and public authorities, for example, in 1911 the Bromsgrove Guild completed the mythical Liver Birds, mounted on the towers of the Royal Liver Assurance Company in Liverpool. Continuing afterwards to London and their work on the Royal Coat of Arms for the British Museum in 1912. 'The Bromsgrove Guild's original, broad-based approach to the arts and crafts was being replaced by a sharper focus on those areas where profit margins were greatest'¹⁹⁶. Opening a London office in Piccadilly in 1914, most specified skilled workers had migrated from Europe to Britain and helped to establish the guild by producing the highest quality commissions.

Working on the J. Lyons & Co commission for a dome in the winter garden, produced a sense of the exotic ideal in architecture. The hotel winter garden had transformed from the complete glasshouse into a spectacle and attraction within the Lyons hotel. Victorian progress and the neo-classical styles emergent in the new luxury hotel in the West End, illustrate that the architecture of commerce could be manifest in a number of designs and from various influences. Such variations reflected the professionalization of interior design into specific decorative spaces, a point for investigation in the forthcoming chapter.

In fig. 3:16, a surface of gold leaf fretwork in a neo baroque style is presented as the ceiling of plasterwork and decoration is a main characteristic of the interior. For health and natural light the huge dome of stained and clear glass is the predominant aspect of the design, a remaining part of the Victorian civic and public buildings in London. Entrance into the threshold was encountered by three sets of double doors in the

¹⁹⁵ Watt, Quintin, (ed.) *The Bromsgrove Guild: An Illustrated History*, (Bromsgrove: Bromsgrove Society) 1999

¹⁹⁶ Townshend, Jenny, 'The Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Arts' in Watt, Quintin, (ed.) *The Bromsgrove Guild: An Illustrated History*, (Bromsgrove: Bromsgrove Society) 1999, p.34

(Fig. 3:16) Winter Garden upon completion in the Regent Palace Hotel, 1915
(Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive, 2006)

centre of the hotel lobby, where guests or visitors were open to refreshment and entertainment, previously showcased at the grand exhibition. Many spaces of urban spectacle and modernity allowed for the decorative luxury of glass and panopticism to be viewed in the window displays of the West End. A liminal flow of traffic would pass through the Rotunda Court as thoroughfare, arcade or tunnel towards the Louis XVI restaurant. Liminoid elements were contained in the rituals of consumption including afternoon tea, functions of service, and as a result, the spectacle and display of the Rotunda Court in the systematic concept of the hotel.

The hotel attracted a larger customer base, in addition to the hotel guest staying for short or long breaks, day trippers, tourists and urban spectators moved in and out of the densely concentrated paths of the metropolis. Belonging to the arcade, a space with a sense of movement and liminoid phenomena, the space of the winter garden inhabited social forces or vortex's of movement. These concentrated moments of contemplation and stillness, characterised as the cultural debris of forgotten liminal rituals. The "liminoid" setting and wider socio-cultural meanings related to many public arenas including bars, pubs, cafes and social clubs allowing for natural disjunctions in the flow of natural and social processes'.¹⁹⁷ Accorded to process or processional activity within a space, the liminoid provided a commodity meaning by confining entertainment space in the hotel. As Victor Turner claimed:

The liminoid is more like a commodity, within a grouping or controlled sense of meaning, 'more idiosyncratic, quirky, to be generated by specific names individuals in particular groups – "schools," circles, and coteries – they have to compete with one another for general recognition and are thought of at first as ludic offerings placed for sale on the "free" market, at least in capitalistic society'.¹⁹⁸

The Winter Garden was a meeting place of many people. It was totally surrounded by ferns and was made famous by the 'nippie' girls. They served tea, cakes, pastries and snacks throughout the day. There were tea dances in the afternoon and in the evening the guests were entertained by the resident orchestra. The Winter Garden's busiest time was during afternoon tea on Sundays when people would come from all over London and have tea and cake at a cost of 10d. The room would be packed solid and many guests, normally non-resident would have to be turned away. The room could accommodate 750 people. Guests could also have alcoholic beverages and cigars

¹⁹⁷ Turner, Victor, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*, (New York: PAJ Publications) 1982. P. 52

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p.54

were served from liqueur and cocktail trolleys. Although the Grill room remained the hotels main a la carte restaurant, situated below the Winter Garden seated 350 and was open from 12-3pm and 6-11pm, here guests were also entertained by an orchestra throughout the day.¹⁹⁹ Various primary accounts leave traces of the hotel as a combination of systems of leisure and popular play. These include accounts of celebrations in which the winter garden was an ideal space for these arrangements, on New Year's Eve, dated 14th December 1918, requiring the employment and engagement in sight and sound of an orchestra. As stated in J. Lyons & Co. historical documentation 'the grill room orchestra will play from 11pm to 12.30am and in the winter garden from 10.15 to 12.30am.'²⁰⁰ Providing a place to stop and contemplate, movement could still be felt in the rhythms of the winter garden as physical actions, social gestures and flows. Defined as mutually social and architectural, J. Lyons & Co, invented patriotic spaces and commodified experiences introduced to the general public as a spatial setting of modern convenience and luxury.

This chapter concludes that the winter garden was transformed into a space that represented various interpretations of empire, leisure, social class and popular pleasure in the Edwardian hotel. The details of elaborate domes and ornate interior plasterwork formed a growing connection between leisure spaces and the grand exhibitions in which J. Lyons & Co participated. Pavilions and restaurants designed like grand cafes warranted potential for commercial space in the hotel. Grand exhibitions helped Lyons to recognise how space, structures and sites were important for promoting the company. In doing so, the business grew and developed into an expansion of restaurants and hotels. The next chapter deals with restaurants and hotels in the West End. Focusing on those owned by J. Lyons & Co. Assessing international influences in London and how Parisian tastes in fine dining emerged. Louis XVI rooms appeared in many public establishments when transatlantic style emerged in the interior design of hotels and passenger ships. Reminiscent of a high style found in the continental spaces introduced in chapter one. New interior architects devised these interiors and the Parisian trained architects Charles Mewes and Arthur Davis introduced the Louis XVI style to London.

¹⁹⁹ Management Trainee: historical notes - 1978-80, Regent Palace Hotel Archive, 2006.

²⁰⁰ Cuttings Book (1) London Metropolitan Archives (un-catalogued Aug 08).

Chapter 4

Feminine Spaces: Louis XVI Restaurants and Fine Dining

The alignment of London and Paris in a mapping of metropolitan space and exterior architectural style, not only relate to debates surrounding urban modernity, they further continue to arise as influences for luxury dining experiences. Interior spaces of the restaurant, lounge and private rooms of the hotel pinpoint not only socially stratifying spaces, reached through the lobby and winter garden. Moreover, they also aligned with a decorative symbolism evidenced in the latest interior design styles in public urban spaces in late Victorian to Edwardian London.

Exploring how the restaurant inhabited a less public purpose than the winter garden, as a space that developed within the new luxury hotels for a la carte dining and pre-theatre supper. To further identifying how by 1915 some dining spaces were designed on a transatlantic Parisian style, the Louis XVI interior came to reflect a popular taste for decorative commissions in a revival of the Georgian style introduced by Robert Adam in the 18th century. Guilds commissioned for urban appointments from 1900, included the Bromsgrove guild and commercially George Jackson and Son were to undertake decorative plasterwork for a number of hotels and restaurants. In terms of a socio-cultural aspect to the West End hotel, Lyons had gained a name for themselves through their teashops, although more importantly establishing the Lyons Corner Houses, situated near the Regent Palace Hotel at Coventry Street (1909), The Strand (1915) (opposite Charing Cross Railway Station) and latterly Oxford Street (1928) (See fig. 4:1, 4:2, 4:3). This landscape was not only consumed by the general public, because J. Lyons & Co, in a bid to transform their business, expanded into the central district of the West End by purchasing sought after sites. Identifying the conspicuous female consumer at the turn of the century, they mapped a route from the suburbs into the metropolis. From the 1890's to 1915 luxury dining had become more widespread, echoing parallel designs of interior rooms that emerged in a new ritual that was distinctly Parisian in character. Lyons employed these niches into their two larger establishments; the Strand Palace and Regent Palace Hotels, as proven in Chapter Three, their knowledge gained in exhibition catering meant that J. Lyons & Co entered into the hotel industry at the precise moment when London and Paris were united as empires in national terms also. These cultural meanings held mutual metropolitan meanings that would combine in the West End through rituals of luxury eating, dining and accommodated habits. Furthermore, at this point many American visitors to London mapped a journey in transatlantic style, informed by the tastes in continental

(Fig. 4:1) Coventry Street Corner House (1909) (Source: P. Bird Archive)

(Fig. 4:2) Strand Corner House (1915) (Source: BL22997 NMR)

Figure 4.3: Publicity, Oxford Corner House (1928) (Source: P. Bird Archive)

(Fig. 4:3) Publicity, Oxford Corner House (1928) (Source: P. Bird Archive)

hotels. I argue that while Lyons introduced high Louis XVI style into their first Strand Palace Hotel in 1909, in comparison the Regent Palace Hotel emerged at the moment when Parisian influence was at the pinnacle of popular taste.

Introduced at the Savoy in the 1890's, fine dining would expand once the Victorian grand hotel was superseded by the Edwardian twentieth century hotel. In 1915 when the Regent Palace Hotel opened, it was celebrated in the manner of the birth of a great ship, its interior comprised the craftwork of men who in the decorative trades had spent their time working on interiors for ocean liners such as the Lusitania and Mauritania, sister ships that also reflected a design discourse representative in further commercial hotel projects, such is the case for my study on the Lyons hotel. The Regent Palace Hotel was literally the outcome of experimentation in all the trades required in the production of a modern leisure environment within the new steel-frame building type on an independent scale. A West End geography had formed in the Piccadilly Circus area, as a space for masculine identity, in architecture and the many clubs and emporiums (to be discussed in chapter five). Although women shopped in the nearby Oxford Street, they were welcome in the Lyons Trocadero restaurant (1896), if only escorted by a male companion, the hotels consequently, catered for a certain spectacle in the performance of dining out, the luxury surroundings of a gilded age are identified here in the Parisian cafe and the modern hotel.

Once a French aristocratic form of spectacle and display had become democratized, London became a metropolitan centre that could be conceived on Parisian lines. The Beaux Arts style in architecture and the Arts had influenced the main capital cities of New York, London and Paris. Various trends in urban development led to different styles of dwelling places, and also different ways of organising restaurants. Larger than in Paris, London restaurants comprised several rooms with each providing diners with slightly different menu options, although the majority of restaurants in Paris contained a single large space, in which all diners chose from the same set of menu options. London's restaurants, which were often connected to hotels, were divided into several functionally distinct rooms. A variation of hotel suites or private rooms might be named and decorated in a particular style, most hotels contained a dining room, grill room, as well as the billiard room, smoking room, bar and winter garden. As suggested by Rich, 'in most cases the name of a room suggested the type of meal that would be eaten or the activity carried out in a part of the restaurant.'²⁰¹

²⁰¹ Rich, Rachel, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 2011, p.138

Architectural reports commenting on such styles of decoration in hotels and restaurants, revealed how contemporary discourses either attracted or distracted from the purposes of good taste. As shown previously, the ostentation issue was prevalent in comment of architectural facades. However, I am interested in facts surrounding the interiors of public rooms in seemingly democratized leisure spaces, which in retrospect appealed to a broader socio-cultural spectrum.

In the case of the Regent Palace Hotel, the site layout and plans of the building position certain rooms in suggestion of public and private spheres, aligned as a particular social stratification (see fig. 0:2). Most visitors came to the hotel for the winter garden and restaurant with private spaces situated at the back for hotel guests. Defining front and backstage elements in terms of level, convenience and luxury, only guests could dine and inhabit the Louis XVI Restaurant, Drawing room and Writing room. This was normal procedure until Auguste Escoffier influenced the trend for visits to hotel restaurants by non-staying guests. Members of the urban flow moved through the lobby, stopped to take tea in the winter garden and watched other diners in the restaurant. The spaces of such culture were socially and spatially defined on a higher scale of luxury in ornate decoration, personal identity and social display. These levels of stratification are clearly identified in the hierarchy of J. Lyons & Co businesses, from teashop, to cafe, to restaurant, and finally hotel. Metropolitan luxury prevailed in these establishments welcoming men and women into a democratized, internationally influenced philosophy embracing space/movement, surface/decoration and a mechanised type of service and experience.

By accepting that eating could form a leisure activity in the increasingly commercialised public sphere, middle-class diners were making a statement about themselves, their bodies and their wealth. As industrialisation enabled food to be transported more quickly across greater distances and the possibility of preserving food by refrigeration, meant that greater numbers of people could make a choice about what to eat, with seasons and region largely removed. Linked to the impact of industrialisation, were the effects of modernity, in speeding up the pace at which people experienced their lives, and therefore introducing the continual desire for novelty. This began around the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the subsequent exhibitions hosted by London and Paris. These prompted commentators to discuss ways of speeding up and modernising meal service as well as the influence of foreign foods. These discussions suggest links between a European eating culture and recent research on food and Empire and the

ways in which Europeans felt they were imbibing other cultures by consuming their cuisines.²⁰²

French Influences: Parisian Dining in London

A relationship between fine dining spaces and Beaux Arts interiors evolved in popularity in Paris and London for luxury hotels, office buildings and exclusive residences. It was also the fashionable style for the elite on the East coast of America, giving a transatlantic influence on bourgeois taste in the habitation of the French à la carte restaurant.²⁰³ Through its common attitudes and practices, the bourgeoisie was clearly a transnational class. They read, consumed and travelled extensively enough as a class to be aware of what was going on in other areas. Their aspirations, too, made them look beyond parochial identifications and towards 'good taste' from wherever it might come. Londoners looked to Paris for trends in food and fashion. To Parisians, Londoners could appear the arbiters of good taste in domestic arrangements, and the British Royal family were role models for many fashionable Parisians.²⁰⁴

The meals of Paris and London can be seen as part of a broader culture of the consumption of goods and leisure. There is a historical geography to this commercial sphere, which can help us to situate the middle classes and their movements. In Paris, fashionable consumers wanted to be seen on the Champs-Élysées and the grand boulevards, as well as the Bois de Boulogne. The grandest restaurants were on the Champs-Élysées. The parks and gardens on the outskirts of Paris were used for public eating of a different kind, in the picnics taking place on summer weekends. In London, the West End was where fashionable shopping and eating took place, and also where the most elite clubs were located, along St James' and Pall Mall. Eating routes followed mappings of shopping space in London and Paris that had developed before, however, the advent of the *fin-de-siècle* diversified and played an ever-growing part in shaping both eating habits and leisure pursuits in the metropolis.

It was Cesar Ritz and Auguste Escoffier's style of restaurant management, which contributed to the appeal of luxuries in London, Paris and large cities into a culture of eating out. By first encountering location and luxury, the new consumers found their

²⁰² see for example Bickham, T. 'Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth Century Britain', in *Past and Present*, Vol. 198, No. 1, 2008, pp.71-109; Doring, T., et al, *Eating Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Food*, (Heidelberg: Winter) 2003.

²⁰³ Massey, Anne, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat*, (London: Routledge) 2006 p.54

²⁰⁴ See Harvey, D, *Paris: Capital City of Modernity*, (London: Routledge) 2006 and Tiersten, L., *Marianne in the Market: Envisioning Consumer Society in Fin-de-Siècle France*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001)

tastes reflected in luxurious surroundings of French revival interiors. In London, this was more pronounced with the arrival of Auguste Escoffier to the Savoy Hotel. Escoffier's talent for haute cuisine was unquestionable, he was the author of many classic dishes, seeing his role as giving French cuisine the international supremacy it clearly deserved. At a time when professionalization was occurring in many fields, and the role of the expert was exalted, Escoffier claimed the same position for those working in the catering trade as for any other highly trained professionals.

In this he was part of a broader trend that saw chefs go from being domestic servants to specialised workers in the leisure sector, Rich explains:

The Savoy attracted the wealthiest and most distinguished guests, and was a favourite dining place of the Prince of Wales and his set. Escoffier recognised that capitalist enterprise did the rest on attracting elegant diners, ones already versed in the language and etiquette in consuming the French restaurant meal. Early in his stay at the Savoy, Escoffier saw that many English diners, intimidated by the French in general use on the menus of fine restaurants, eschewed making choices and let themselves be guided instead by the maitre d'hôtel. Changing this, he created a *prix fixe* menu that contained most of the items offered on the *à la carte* menu.²⁰⁵

In fig. 4:4 the Savoy restaurant illustrates how the steel-frame was clad in the Beaux Arts style, its most obvious detail features in the Georgian revival white plasterwork and detailed tiled columns. Starched white tablecloths and a tea stand emphasised the level of display and choice of goods. This dining room illustrated the level of colonial influence still prevalent in the Victorian interiors of hotel restaurants, similar to winter gardens, although more intimate. Patterned carpets and wood panelling provided a comfort and gentility in the surrounding interiors.

In this thesis I have argued that the Savoy was the first of the new luxury hotels that incorporated a systematic experience of elite service and technological modernity, clad with the most luxurious decorative interiors. In view of this, the Savoy is classed as a Victorian Grand Hotel, and was the first building in modern standards to enable continental visitors to London, to have an experience found in the most international settings. In the forthcoming examples of restaurant interiors, the patterns and dissemination of the elite class style will emerge in tandem with the development of the beaux-arts style interior in various forms.

²⁰⁵ Rich, Rachel, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 2011, p.135

(Fig. 4:4) The Savoy Hotel, Restaurant
(Source: BL 12025 National Monuments Record) 1893

For example the Louis XVI room at the Cafe Monico in Piccadilly was opened in 1888-89, designed by the architects Christopher and White for Giacomo and Battista Monico. The room as seen in fig. 4:5, shows a complete Louis room with simple baroque plasterwork detailed around archways. The furnishings of upholstered chairs and fitted carpeting with a centrepiece oval-shaped dining room table draped in starched white linen, show table arrangements from cutlery to floral designs. In giving the impression of a private suite, the restaurants rise to prominence within the world of haute cuisine is part of the story of the emergence and growth of the hotel restaurant as a regular part of bourgeois eating habits. While dinner parties continued to be a central stage upon which to display taste, manners and a tasteful home and palate, increasingly in the 1880's and 1890's, eating out became a socially accepted leisure activity. Like a dinner party, a restaurant meal afforded an opportunity to display cultural capital. Further, it also allowed diners to be seen in public, and some sources explicitly cast diners at neighbouring tables as forming an audience in front of whom to perform.²⁰⁶ The Victorian cafe, restaurant and dining room would focus what Thorstein Veblen termed 'conspicuous consumption' into the central arena of aristocratic tastes and emulative strategies of the newly emergent luxury hotels and restaurants in the West End, albeit within the parameters of international cuisine and interior design.²⁰⁷

However, reputation and the proliferation of taste and classical style became more fluid and nuanced with the arrival of the new luxury hotels. Revisiting the Carlton, identified in chapter one, it is possible to elaborate on the particular argument that democratized luxury expanded in a number of forms. Decorative design reflected imperialism, power over the seas and promotions of empire. For example in fig 4:6 the Ritz-Carlton restaurant for the Hamburg-Amerika Line, illustrates how public dining spaces became similar from 1900, this transition of an Edwardian aesthetic attracted those who travelled and stayed in various geographical locations.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p.136

²⁰⁷ Veblen Thorstein, (1899) *Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study in the Evolution of Institutions* (New York: Macmillan) 1994

(Fig. 4:5) The Louis Room at the Cafe Monico, Piccadilly Circus
(Source: BL23071 National Monuments Record) 1915

(Fig. 4:6) Ritz Carlton Restaurant, Hamburg-Amerika Line (Source: The Esoteric Curiosa) 1905.

Even at sea, Anne Massey's research has identified that 'the White Star ships were characterised by their elaborate interior fittings, which were informed by a special tour made by Harland and Wolff gentlemen apprentice, William James Pirie (1847-1924), to English and continental hotels.' These trips to European hotels established what was fashionable and appealing in the interior decoration of the transient, public space.²⁰⁸ Working on the interior decoration of the *Amerika* in 1905, closely modelled on the luxury hotel. The public interiors of the ship were designed by Mewés, based on the success of his design of the Ritz Hotel in Paris, in 1898 and decorated in the fashionable Beaux Arts style, as he had studied at the École des Beaux Arts in the 1880's, Charles Mewés remodelled London's Carlton Hotel in partnership with his recently appointed junior partner, Arthur Davis. "No other London architectural firm better exemplified the great Beaux-Arts spirit in transferring a distinct and monumental eclecticism intact from Paris into the rich fabric of Edwardian London".²⁰⁹

The influences of the Savoy and Mewés and Davis' input in providing French elegance and luxury expanded by 1900 into various interior settings of mirrored surfaces, patterned carpets, marble, plasterwork, starched linen, a la carte options and silver service. Anne Massey's research on the fitting out of the Cunard ocean liners *Mauritania* and *Lusitania*, compare to the contemporary fitting out of London hotels. The structural designs of the two ships were very similar, so their interior design would serve to distinguish them. From the very beginning, given the contrasting attitudes towards fees, the *Mauretania* was far more costly and luxurious than the *Lusitania*. The sum spent on interior decoration for the public rooms was £130,000 for the *Mauretania* and £82,000 for the *Lusitania*. This was largely due to higher labour costs and more lavish work undertaken on Tyneside. Harold Peto's background was in upper class, country house design, and this was the experience he brought to the design of the interiors of the *Mauretania*. Domestic design, albeit it the top end of the market, was his model, rather than that of the luxury hotel. In contrast, the *Lusitania* whose layout was identical to that of the *Mauretania* differed in terms of interior design: James Miller decided to decorate the first class dining room with enamelled, white panelling in Louis XVI style, with gilded, carved detail.²¹⁰

It would be the Cunard's white star liner (1913-14) that proved to be Mewés and Davis' triumph. Unlike dining saloons on board earlier Cunard superliners, the *Aquitania*'s

²⁰⁸ Massey, Anne, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat*, (London: Routledge) 2006, p. 25

²⁰⁹ Maxtone-Graham, John, *Crossing and Cruising: From the Golden Era of Ocean Liners to the Luxury Cruise Ships of Today*, (New York: Scribner) 1992, p.75

²¹⁰ Massey, Anne, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat*, (London: Routledge) 2006, p. 7

restaurant was not solely panelled but painted (see fig. 4:7). 'The dining room gleamed with light and colour, its columns were marble rather than walnut and its floor entirely carpeted in rich blue wool instead of Cunard's traditional, prosaic linoleum intersected by drugget paths.'²¹¹ The Architect's Journal reinforced these comparisons between ships and hotels by profiling the interiors in a section solely devoted to the architects work on the vessel. Stating that:

Aquitania has many fine architectural apartments. The decoration of the restaurant is in the Louis XVI style, and the woodwork is in panelled mahogany. The whole is enriched with carved ornament, pilasters and columns. Between the pilasters and on the panels of the vents are hung decorative paintings, representative of the work of masters of the eighteenth century. In the ceiling of the well is a decorative painting representing the Triumph of Flora. The well is surrounded by a rich wrought-iron balustrading, with motifs forming panels representing the monogram of the company and of the ship, with two anchors crossed on a trident, symbolical of Neptune, the God of the Seas.²¹²

The symbolism of ships as hotels at sea was a further consequence of 19th century industrialisation and urbanisation. Transatlantic travel enhanced the symbolism of many companies including Cunard, although 'railway companies themselves were among the first to introduce this sort of hospitality in the grand hotels built as part of their mainline station terminals'.²¹³

By 1909 a distinctly similar pattern had formed in the making of the modern hotel. J. Lyons & Co had built the first of two West End hotels, the Strand Palace Hotel, employing W J Ancell for architectural planning, for the now established Strand Hotels Ltd. Considered an Edwardian Grand Hotel, it is revealing to assess how the interiors of its dining spaces fared in comparison to previous examples. As was the case with individual shipping lines, and indeed sister ships, there was a level of experimentation, as seen in fig. 4:8, the Strand Palace Hotel's restaurant presents a room of Louis XVI plaster mouldings and upholstered chairs, in sequential lines dressed for dinner. The impact is the finish of a white room, long and vast, retaining the Parisian elegance on a lower scale in providing luxury for all. Such principles based upon: luxury and elegance to attention and detail, with all the modern conveniences money could buy, emerged near the end of the luxury hotel expansion, thus available for everybody who afforded customary dining. Where the food they served was French, the appeal was

²¹¹ Maxtone-Graham, John, *Crossing and Cruising: From the Golden Era of Ocean Liners to the Luxury Cruise Ships of Today*, (New York: Scribner) 1992, p.82

²¹² 'The Architecture of the Ship', *The Architects' Journal*, October 25, 1922, p.552

²¹³ Dawson, Phillip and Peter, Bruce, *Ship Style: Modernism and Modernity at Sea*, (London: Conway) 2010, p.16

(Fig. 4:7) RMS Aquitania, Restaurant (Source: The Architects' Journal) 1922

(Fig. 4:8) J. Lyons & Co. Strand Palace Hotel, Restaurant
(Source: BL20701/009 National Monuments Record) 1909

Restaurants allowed diners to sit at separate tables, meaning that a restaurant meal was effectively a private party, which just happened to be located in a public space. A second key feature was the simple formula for ordering and paying, brought about by printed menus, which included prices for each item. In theory, allowing anyone with money to inhabit the space and eat the food provided by the restaurant. A third feature of restaurants was their conformity with middle-class domestic patterns of architecture and design, including the separation of space according to function, and the creation of back and front stage areas for the performance of eating dinner, restaurants were neither public nor private, but were a new and ambiguous space.²¹⁴

Transatlantic Style: The Louis XVI Restaurant

The Louis XVI room was the Regent Palace Hotel's exclusive dining space, it was a five star a la carte restaurant which seated 120. The three dining spaces serviced by the main restaurant which accommodated 500 diners, began the day by serving full English breakfast to about 1,200 while 350 breakfasts were served to guests in their rooms. A leading design periodical, the Architectural Review, profiled the newly decorated interior of the Regent Palace Hotel (see fig. 4:9); a reviewer describes the main aspects and adjacent spaces:

"Opening out of the Rotunda Court is the Louis XVI Restaurant, another huge apartment, one portion of which is shown by the illustration on this page. The walls are of a light tone, with dark brown hangings to the windows. From one side of the Rotunda Court access is gained to a corridor off which open the general writing room, the drawing room, and the ladies' writing room."²¹⁵

This interior including a glass skylight and simpler details in plasterwork was completed by the Birmingham Guild, whom shared the decorative work for the interior of the Regent Palace Hotel with George Jackson and Son Ltd. However it is reputed that the Bromsgrove Guild may have assisted with decorative plasterwork in the restaurant. Bath Cabinet Makers could well have assisted in the decorative scheme, although as craftsmen in wood, this would perhaps have aligned only to the panelling and fitting of walls for the interior space.²¹⁶ The Bromsgrove Guild was involved in fibrous plasterwork for ceiling, stucco for walls, marblwork, firegrates, electric light fittings, woodwork and iron grilles for doors and screens, indicating their role in the surface and decoration of the interior.

²¹⁴ Ibid, p.137

²¹⁵ The Architectural Review: A Magazine of Architecture and the Arts of Design, Vol. 38. July-Dec 1915.

²¹⁶ *Current Architecture: The Regent Palace Hotel*, The Architectural Review: A Magazine of Architecture and the Arts of Design, Vol. 38. July-Dec 1915.

(Fig 4:9) View in Louis XVI Restaurant, Regent Palace Hotel, 1915
(Source: Architectural Review)

It is inescapable to avoid a comparison between the ocean liners and the new luxury hotels in London, as not only the Hotel Cecil, Savoy and the Ritz shared many fixtures produced from the same artist craftsmen in the industry between the mid nineteenth and early twentieth century. Anne Massey's research has examined the impact this had on the shipbuilding industry and the interior design industry as whole, as she explains the reasons for this:

The situation began to change during the second half of the nineteenth century, when the appearance of the interiors became an important commercial factor in attracting passengers, as the number of lines and liners grew. This was paralleled by a marked escalation in the activity of the decorating firms, such as plasterers Jacksons and Sons, were employed to add decorative plasterwork to the interiors of three significant ships, the SS Great Western, SS Great Britain and the SS Great Eastern. These ships were highly significant in terms of technological innovation, and nineteenth century crowds marvelled at this spectacle of modernity; the huge machinery contrasting with the decoration on board.²¹⁷

As the nineteenth century progressed and dependent on the shipbuilder, less colonial interiors were constructed within the floating public rooms at sea. It is my belief that once the baroque colonial interiors developed into a French Beaux Arts style, many public interiors followed in this trend, with interior designers gaining experience from continental travel in researching hotel builds.

Arthur Joseph Davis was considered to be a cosmopolitan English architect who emerged from his thorough training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Just after the turn of the century he returned from Paris to his home in London. His partnership with Mewes wouldn't be formally established until 1903, by which time the two men had already completed their pioneering Palm Court and Grill for the Carlton House Hotel. 'It was an instant success, characterised some years later by the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* as having introduced "French standards of elegance into modern British Architecture."²¹⁸

As a consequence of their success Charles Mewes is reported to be the first to create a style of architecture and decoration 'which was generally adopted for hotels all over the world and which replaced the rather stuffy and over-elaborate productions which

²¹⁷ Massey, Anne, *Designing Liners: A History of Interior Design Afloat*, (London: Routledge) 2006 p. 7

²¹⁸ Maxtone-Graham, John, *Crossing and Cruising: From the Golden Era of Ocean Liners to the Luxury Cruise Ships of Today*, (New York: Scribner) 1992, p.74

were formerly considered a necessary accompaniment to all well-equipped establishments of this type'.²¹⁹

Developments in the design of the new luxury hotels were paramount in the period leading to the First World War, due to the improvements in hotel construction. Frederic Lees wrote an article entitled 'Two Metropolitan London Hotels: The Ritz and the Waldorf' proposing that London had a very high standard notably exemplified by the Waldorf and the Ritz. He claimed:

Both are in very central positions; each possesses noteworthy features from the point of view of its exterior and interior architecture; and as regards the question of comfort each has such good points that the difficulty is to choose between them.²²⁰

The different transatlantic styles that emerged were shown in the difference between the interiors of the restaurant in the Strand Palace Hotel of 1909 and the Regent Palace Hotel of 1915. I must also add that this new modern hotel was a detached structure, built in the style of the beaux-arts in its truest form, as shown in chapter one. Whereas Lyons first Strand Palace Hotel was built on the site of the Exeter Music Hall, impacting itself into the existing facades along the Strand, with less scope for urban renewal. Whilst the interior of the Strand Palace Hotel was beautifully executed and followed the detailing of Victorian plasterwork, that is more refined with an emphasis on more rather than less decoration, in comparison to the Regent Palace Hotel that was a larger, ambitious structure evoking the most modern manifestations of the French baroque to be executed in the West End.

As shown near completion in fig. 4:10, with rolls of wallpaper and materials arranged into a central reservation point, a team of decorators are seen in the far right of the image working in a fluid scheme of production putting detail to the walls. With an image of a new restaurant, is the visual sense of a clean interior that is unused, unexplored and a space that is absent and unfinished. However, the white plasterwork in smooth lines and a mild baroque design become lit by the natural light flowing in from the window, as the chandeliers wait to beam the new artificial electric light throughout the evenings for dinner service. This photograph was used as a record for private use by J. Lyons & Co, showing a larger, open-plan scale of room, divided by marble-clad steel-

²¹⁹ 'The Creator of the Modern Luxury Hotel, Charles Mews, Architect, 1860-1914', *RIBA Journal*, October 1947, p.603

²²⁰ 'Two Metropolitan London Hotels: The Ritz and the Waldorf', *Architectural Record*, Vol.36, November 1914, p.465

(Fig. 4:10) Louis XVI Restaurant near completion, 1915
(Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive)

(Fig 4:11), Louis XVI Restaurant, 1915 (Source: LMA ACC/3527)

frame columns, low ceilings and the building structure itself. As shown earlier in the thesis, the steel-frame structure invented on American technological construction methods, clarified open spaces and adaptability for interior cladding, as Selfridges illustrated in chapter one, a new style of consumerism and experience had entered the West End and Lyons were to follow by incorporating the latest in decorative surfaces to an efficiency in service encapsulated overall by a transatlantic essence that prevailed until after the first world war.

Such a parlour was represented in further west end establishments, such as Selfridges department store in the nearby Oxford Street. These spaces were designed to attract female consumers and to become receptacles for the new urban modern experience. The hotel in the West End shopping district attracted the wives of the businessmen in the area and Lyons waitresses were expected to provide a standardised service reflecting the highest luxury. (See fig. 4:11)

By bringing eating out of the house and into the commercial arena, restaurant-goers were blurring the boundaries between public and private. Both sociability and food consumption patterns were affected by this shift, as the public gaze influenced the choices people made. Joanne Finklestein, in *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners*, argues that by bringing eating into the public sphere, diners abdicated the responsibility of making choices for themselves by adhering to prescribed behaviours.²²¹ An element of controlled movement inhabited such spaces, and as will be explored later in the thesis, Lyons paternalistic culture meant that this was framed two-fold in relation to employees and consumers.

Interior Decoration and Revival Tastes

To evaluate the advancement of the Louis XVI style and a Beaux Arts influence on interior decoration, by situating British craftsmanship into this debate, I have investigated the firm of George Jackson and Son. Beforehand, it is notable to recognise the dominant arguments upon style in the period. Informed by the writings of the Incorporated Institute of British Decorators, founded in 1894, I have discovered that many specifications of knowledge had become required in this commercialised and growing industry.²²² In a meeting dated 10th November, 1914 the chairman announced:

²²¹ Finklestein, Joanne, *Dining Out: A Sociology of Modern Manners*, (Cambridge: Polity Press) 1989, p.138

²²² This institute represented a membership of the most skilled and qualified craftsmen decorators in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and expatriates in countries around the world. A special resolution adopted in 1953 changed the name of this institute to: The Incorporated Institute of British Decorators and Interior Designers.

There is now a greater call on the decorator for knowledge of style. One is constantly asked. "to what period does this or that style belong?" And, "Is such a design, or scheme of decoration, true to its period?" "Is this or that pure in origin, and what are the elements that go to making a style distinctive and characteristic?" especially is this knowledge necessary in those styles which have their origin in the mother style, Italian Renaissance. Style, we shall find, is nothing more than a selective quality evolved from a parent style. A break will sometimes appear in the course of evolution which has to be accounted for, and may be explained by the influence of a passing vogue, reaction, or a return again to the parent style. It is interesting to note also the recurrent influence of the East (particularly of China) which made its appearance in the reigns of Louis XVI and XV in France, and in that of Charles II and William and Mary in England.²²³

In the acceptance of classical tastes it was furthered considered that the constant changes in the style of decoration, whether for patriotic or commercial means, would be considered as the arrival at a discriminating taste. This would be perceived to either approve or condemn the trade productions that were put before it, whether they'd be in iron, wood, plaster, or woven and printed textile. It was considered that decoration was based upon architecture, and naturally takes its character from it. Decoration, therefore, having no root in architecture, is bound to have a short life with little hope of resurrection and that style is something outside the creative artist. An instrument or means of classification discovered in a collection of works by the historian or critic to analyse the character of art and to determine its relationship. It is a tradition formed of assimilative elements obtained during a limited time in certain definite conditions of sentiment and movement.²²⁴ With this in mind, I would suggest that the emergence of a transatlantic Beaux Arts style might have encouraged more debate about ostentation and tastes in West End. However, as discussed in chapter one, the space and geography of the Regent Street quadrant displayed such complexities as early as 1908-12, in the debate over shop facades and the modern window display. At least interiors would not interrupt the masculine exterior facades, and in doing so, concealed the popular public entering new hotels or shopping establishments. It appears that the rules of decoration may not have been under as much scrutiny from the architectural elite as first imagined. A change in tastes and potential for more decorative schemes was reflected in the commissions of arts and crafts studio workers. Architectural periodicals revealed that the interiors of the Lyons hotels were comprised of those skills of decorative craft. Instructed by the architect, the profession of interior designer was yet to emerge.

²²³ Incorporated Institute of British Decorators, "Historical Styles in Decoration" a meeting on 10th Nov, *The Builder*, 20th November 1914, p. 489

²²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 489

Importantly in this chapter, the biography of the firm G. Jackson's & Sons Ltd, helps to inform this research of the changes within the interior decorating industry. Established as decorative woodcarvers in 1780 by George Jackson, a contemporary and friend of the Adam brothers, Jackson worked as a woodcarver and frame-maker from a small shop in Goodge Street, near Tottenham Court Road. Here he produced 'small plaster ornaments' amongst many English and Italian artisans working with their own secret compositions. Robert Adam in his search for a method to produce the effect of carved designs in interiors, without the time consuming process of carving, acquired a recipe for a plaster composition devised by a Swiss pastor, John Liardet. He entrusted George Jackson with the task of carving reverse boxwood moulds and pressing out designs in this new material. The demand for this technique quickly increased and G. Jackson's & Sons Ltd undertook a wide range of commissions for decorative plaster relief work for interiors as well as continuing to produce woodcarving. George Jackson moved the company to premises at Rathbone Place, off Oxford Street, London, in 1817 and soon built up a large collection of moulds representing the many English and French styles of the 17th, 18th and later the 19th centuries. The company also acquired the Carton-Pierre plaster process and introduced a fibrous – plaster patent from France.

Various important interior commissions were employed on the basis of such new discoveries, including when the Prince of Wales in 1811 instructed John Nash to transform the Royal Pavilion in Brighton between 1815-1823. Part of the interior decoration was in the hands of Frederick Crace of London, who employed Jackson to embellish several rooms including the Music Room. By 1826 George Jackson was the proud holder of a royal warrant from George IV, which was re-issued at the beginning of William IV's reign when the warrant also listed the names of Frederick and Henry Crace.²²⁵ Further, Queen Victoria commissioned a state banqueting hall at Osborne House. Where G. Jackson & Sons were instructed to complete the Durbar Room – an Indian word meaning a state reception and the hall in which it was held. Such colonial spaces would reveal the closer relationships between the inside and outside spaces of empire endured in Victoria's reign.

The growth in this method of interior architectural embellishment included a number of commissions, Jackson's trade catalogue for 1889 lists over 40 theatres, numerous clubs, hotels, shops/offices, banks, churches and asylums including commissions in Germany, India, USA, South Africa and the West Indies. Plaster ornaments were

²²⁵ May, Marion R. *The Ornamental Jacksons: A Brief History of Two Hundred Years of Decorative Plasterwork*, (University of Central Lancashire: Un-published BA Thesis) p. 2

shipped 'painted and gilt' to Malta and South America. "They also advertised that 'their large stock of moulds includes examples of Greek, Roman, Gothic, Elizabethan, Queen Anne, Adams's Italian and French Renaissance. 'Under the heading of 'private works' they give the following famous properties: - Sandringham, Althorp, Knebworth, Grosvenor House and Carlton House Terrace."²²⁶ In 1907 the firm amalgamated with Holland and Sons Ltd, furnishers, they worked jointly on interiors in the public and commercial sectors and for private clients.²²⁷

Denoted by the continuous re-use of period styles, it is not surprising to learn that various societies debated their popularity in contemporary literature. Assisted by the specialist press, in which there were many titles in the trade during the 1800-1900's, that included: *The Decorator: an illustrated practical magazine and advertiser for the furnishing trades* (1864) *The Decorator and Furnisher* (1884) *Decoration and Art Trades Review* and later a *Decorators' and Painters' Magazine* (1901-1939). The Louis XVI style, was considered as 'the triumph of the pretty' by the Incorporated Institute of British Decorators, the continuation of a Victorian debate, identification of respectable decorative schemes are proclaimed as architecturally prescribed:

If one considers the great historical homes built in this country it is not difficult to see that they strike a note of some definite period of architecture, and as all ornament and decoration is dependent upon architecture it would be a very easy thing to strike a discordant note through the introduction of a weak interior decorative scheme, or indeed a scheme entirely at variance with the style adopted by the architect. We speak of an Adam house, a Queen Anne, and a Georgian house, and it is the decorators business to see to it that nothing enters into it of a hybrid or impure nature. While there is no objection to certain rooms in these houses having a decorative scheme of an Eastern style, good taste would forbid further incursions into other styles of a foreign character.²²⁸

Respectable Rooms for Women

By the second half of the nineteenth century the language of Victorian domesticity had become a feature of the interior landscapes of a range of semi-public and public spaces that included hotels. 'That replication challenged the separation of the spheres such that modernity, and by extension, the modern interior, were ultimately defined by the cross-over between the private and the public arenas, rather than the distinction

²²⁶ Ibid, p. 2

²²⁷ Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War new premises were acquired in Rainville Road, Hammersmith, London. The last Jackson left the company in 1957. In 1989 G. Jackson and Sons Ltd was bought by Clark and Fenn Ltd. At the same time the premises in Rainville Road, London were closed and the business was moved to the Mitchum Industrial Estate, Mitchum G. Jackson Sons Ltd, *Decorative Plasterers, Records, 1838 – 1978* (V&A Archive of Art and Design AAD/1994/7)

²²⁸ Incorporated Institute of British Decorators, "Historical Styles in Decoration" a meeting on 10th Nov, *The Builder*, 20th November 1914, p. 489

between them.’²²⁹ The distinction of the separate spheres alludes to the planning of the Regent Palace Hotel. Next to the Louis XVI restaurant, a drawing room, writing room and ladies writing room illustrate how transitional gendered spaces were manifest in the hotel. In assessing how the space of the drawing room transformed from the privacy of the home to the new luxury hotel, it is useful to consider such a room through decorative style.

Furnishing for aristocratic homes also relied on the French style, as Penny Sparke has proven in her work on the society decorator Elsie De Wolfe.²³⁰ The buildings displayed in Chicago at the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 had heralded a neoclassical revival that would be called the Beaux Arts. In Britain this became an embodiment of social tastes and interior design for transatlantic visitors to London. This style was still apparent by 1915 in the Regent Palace Hotel and was clearly manifest from Mewes and Davis’ designs for the Ritz. Investigating De Wolfe, Sparke clearly identifies how fluidity of the Louis XVI style was publicised in wealthy domestic interior rooms. Key examples of De Wolfe’s commissions included rooms of a private and public nature, in these public spaces within domestic domains, Sparke identified a winter garden in 1907-8. Containing furnishings including a colonial style tripod table and Louis XVI chair, next to a modern upholstered sofa, a mismatch of period styles within one room emphasised traditionalism and modernity as one.²³¹

I believe that this was also a clear point for hotels rooms, as various styles proliferated, the ladies’ drawing room of the Piccadilly Hotel was decorated in Marie Antoinette style, in grey and gold, with sprays of painted flowers on the walls and garlands on the domed ceiling. The large dining-room and adjoining reception-room decorated in various shades of cream and biscuit, was restrained for its simplicity of ornamentation. In the Adam dining-room and reception-room, a background showing delicate shades of green, rose, and grey, illustrated how Adam influenced so many examples. In the private sitting rooms, and for the bedrooms, many standard styles of decoration and equipment were represented – old English, Georgian, Adam, Chippendale, Sheraton

²²⁹ Sparke, Penny, *The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion) 2008, p. 22

²³⁰ Elsie De Wolfe came to the fore at a moment when women across a range of social classes were negotiating their entrance into modernity; at a time when the domestic interior had taken on a particular potency as a marker of class and gender identities; and most significantly, before avant-garde modernism had come to define the hegemonic concept of ‘good taste’ which was to dominate design practice through the twentieth century. Sparke, Penny. ‘Elsie De Wolfe and her Female Clients, 1905-15: Gender, Class and the Professional Interior Decorator’ in Martin, Brenda & Sparke, Penny (ed.) *Women’s Places: Architecture and Design 1860-1960*, (London: Routledge) 2003, p.49

²³¹ Sparke, Penny, *Elsie De Wolfe: The Birth of Modern Interior Decoration*, (New York: Acanthus Press) 2005, p.75

and Empire. As in the case of architecture, the decoration and furnishing, was a responsibility divided more definitely and systematically.²³²

Focusing on fig. 4:12, the Regent Palace Hotel drawing room presents a furnished Adam style interior with dainty chairs positioned around a domestic fireplace. The ornate detail of the room is clearly in the Lyons neo-classical style. With mirrored glass and light reflecting from the window, this private room works within the realm of public space as a place of repose for the male and female user. Characteristic of a bourgeois sensibility concerned with presentation and appearance, the display of oneself in an appropriate venue was an important element in building a reputation, respectability and success.

This commercial interpretation of the home was reinforced as a refuge, within this sphere men were increasingly marginalized and women assumed a role of protective competence and solicitude.²³³ Domestic strategies were employed to make public space of performance to appear 'respectable' venues for the middle-classes. Underpinning the same desire for respectability sought in the domestic aesthetic seen in first class saloons aboard ocean liners or hotels, women's clubs were established to provide a facility for middle-class women. Replicated on the domestic environment they were experienced more as private, than as public, institutions. Other urban sites of modernity for women in the period – restaurants, tea-shops, museums and art galleries among them – offered a variety of interiors which complimented a trip to the department store. In Piccadilly (opposite the Regent Palace Hotel) the Criterion pleasure complex, designed by the architect Thomas Verity in 1871 and built three years later, combined an underground theatre with a lavish restaurant, the walls of which were decorated with tiles and gilt mosaic patterns.²³⁴ The hotel unlike the theatre was a discreet 'home away from home' yet it still appealed to the public flow of the pleasure seeker or female shopper in the West End of London.

Therefore the Restaurant, Drawing Room and Writing Room were not only representative spaces of style and décor in this period, they were further instilled with a socialised and gendered characteristic formed from the nineteenth century. The domestic middle class home was further exposed to the public sphere through its developing relationship with the expanding mass media of the period.

²³² The Piccadilly Hotel, London, *Architectural Review*, Vol. 24, Oct 1908, pp. 199-208

²³³ Loeb, Lori Anne, *Consuming Angels: Advertising and Victorian Women*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 1994, p. 21

²³⁴ Sparke, Penny, *The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion) 2008, p. 32

(Fig. 4:12) Drawing Room, Regent Palace Hotel, 1915
(Source: Architectural Review)

Along with the advent of mass production, mass consumption, and the idea of the separate spheres, the expansion of the mass media was a key feature of industrial modernity. Like the development of 'home from home' the relationship of the media to the domestic sphere served to facilitate and enhance the consumption of goods for the home. Sparke explains:

Through images in magazines, trade catalogues and other printed materials, as well as through room constructions at exhibitions and trade fairs, idealized domestic spaces stimulated desire and encouraged consumers to construct their own modish domestic interiors through the purchase of a new armchair or a piece of curtain fabric. Like the architecture which contained it, the modern domestic interior was defined by its engagement with the mass media. Most significantly it was transformed through that engagement into an idealized phenomenon used to encourage the consumption of goods. In that idealised form the interior itself became a mass medium, a vehicle for the transmission of modern values of various kinds. Indeed, almost as soon as it had been created, the modern domestic interior became an 'object of desire', so widely represented that it rapidly became impossible to separate its idealized forms from its realized manifestations.²³⁵

Women's domestic interiors accompanied them on their shopping journey and were visible in the railway station waiting rooms in which they sat, the train carriages in which they travelled, and the department stores, hotels and theatres they visited. These surrogate homes provided them with a level of comfort when they ventured outside their domestic environments, and helped them redefine themselves as consumers as well as homemakers. Hotels provided an alternative and it wasn't until the nineteenth century that the modern idea of the grand urban hotel came into existence. Early examples included the Grand Hotel in Paris, the Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York and the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago. Many others followed in the principal cities of Europe and the USA. The modernity of those buildings, with their grand, usually neo-classical, interiors, lay in their relationship with the new railway and road systems that had opened up Europe and the USA to travellers and shoppers.

The gendered distinction between private and public life emerged when domestic and paid labour moved out of the home. A direct consequence was a separation of middle class men and women, physically and mentally. Inevitably they continued to venture out of their homes for a multitude of reasons, whether it was to worship or to participate in leisure activities. 'The notion that a women's place was in the home became an ideological assumption reinforced by the visual, material and spatial differences between the interiors in the two spheres, it also became a physical reality that, in turn,

²³⁵ Ibid, p. 15

confirmed those distinctions.²³⁶ For Edwardian women, one of modernity's key features, the continuing expansion of interior spaces, or 'interiorization' helped to create and control social and cultural distinctions and hierarchies. A modern interior crossed the bridge between high life and everyday culture that was a complex entity at the time. It may have been understood in a number of different ways, that is, as an image, or as a number of material objects or as a space. In turn it could be represented in various forms as architectural plans, drawings, photographs, objects or constructed spaces.²³⁷

The buildings or places, both public and private, which were the arena of women's groups and networks, became sites of lived female identities in London, and constituted a different mapping of the city. However, drawing out a single narrative strand from the larger urban fabric is not so useful, highlighting women's presence and achievement and perhaps thereby blunting the critique of sexual difference accounts for their absence. Certainly, the focus on one group of women (i.e. those associated with the Women's Movement) does eradicate, if only temporarily, the representation of the experience of numerous and divergent other urban women. Users and producers of the spaces of the West End included working class women, many of whom also lived there and toiled in their thousands as servants in the great houses of the West End. Many were street sellers and entertainers, barmaids and female drinkers, prostitutes and performers and middle-class proprietors of shops. More than forty women shop owners were listed in Regent Street alone in 1891 and lower middle-class and working-class shop assistants in the burgeoning department stores of Oxford Street and Regent Street. Further, there were many kinds of students and teachers, and thousands of consuming visitors, both foreign and domestic. Sheer numbers, or at least critical mass, were important to women's identity and experience of the city, and to their impact on spatial definitions and material culture. However, in late nineteenth century London, class divisions remained as sizeable as gender bonds.²³⁸

Public space and its associated organisations, was claimed and utilised to promote feminist goals and projects, which, by extension, normalised women's presence in the city. This presence and proximity of women in the city, combined with their privileged backgrounds and positions, helped secure access to the public sphere and facilitated women's participation in public life and the development of a public ideology for women.

²³⁶ Sparke, Penny, *The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion) 2008, p. 14

²³⁷ Ibid, p. 12

²³⁸ Walker, Lynne, *Home and Away: The Feminist Remapping of Public and Private Space in Victorian London*, in *New Frontiers of Space, Bodies and Gender*, (London: Routledge) 1998, p.66

Both men and women had spaces in the home designated for their use, which were both less and more private. Men, for example, invited others into their billiard and smoking rooms, but probably not their studies, while women entertained in the parlour but undoubtedly less so in the bedroom or boudoir. Within their private spaces the codification of the furniture and décor served as an aid to the construction of men's and women's self-identities, while in the more public areas of the home it was their social identities that were being formed and reinforced.²³⁹

The West End of London was understood as the centre of the world of work and of institutions of power, 'the masculine domain of modern, public, urban life' from which women were excluded. But viewed in another way through the experience of the independent middle-class women who lived and worked there, this highly masculinised terrain can be remapped as a site of women's buildings and places within the urban centre. Associated with the social networks, alliances and organisations of the nineteenth-century Women's Movement. A woman's place in the public sphere was supported and encouraged by clubs which became a prominent feature of the West End in the second half of the nineteenth century. Access to the city gave feminists a base from which to promote their agenda, while the poor provision of facilities directed their concerns to meeting women's basic needs. The Ladies' Institute was one of the first nineteenth century clubs where women could eat, read and meet their friends when away from home. Nevertheless, even in the early clubs, class lines were rarely crossed when it came to membership or location. Some clubs, such as the New Somerville, the Victoria and the Tea & Shopping, were located in Oxford Street and Regent Street, but in the main, women's clubs clustered off the main thoroughfares in the Mayfair streets associated with aristocratic shopping and elegant eighteenth century mansions.²⁴⁰

As Sparke has clearly outlined, 'modern interiors could be clothed in period styles as well as in contemporary ones. They could also facilitate both private interiority and public mass behaviour. Nineteenth century domestic parlours could be found in department stores, railway carriages and hotels'.²⁴¹ Women became producers as well as consumers of the built environment, whose presence helped determine the spaces that were provided and the building types constructed. Women's needs represented how it felt to be in public space and the representations they were able to make when using architecture and the public realm. The Ladies' Writing Room was a personal

²³⁹ Sparke, Penny, *The Modern Interior*, (London: Reaktion) 2008, p. 25

²⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 72

²⁴¹ Ibid, p. 10

space that confined and comforted. Surface decorations are shown in fig. 4:13, illustrating how the modern hotel interior was idealized as a replica of the domestic interiors of the affluent. While hotels did not strictly sell objects they nonetheless played an important role in the consumption of goods in as much as, in collaboration with the railways, they helped to ensure that consumers could access cosmopolitan urban experiences. For a variety of reasons, therefore, the language of the nineteenth and early twentieth century private, domestic interior moved outside the home, rendering ambiguous the spaces of feminine modernity. The detailing of these interior rooms illustrate silk wall-paper, white ceilings in decorative plasterwork, a huge mirrored palate above fireplaces, patterned rug carpets, clear-glass doors with stained glass details, and a transatlantic modernity. Such spaces represented the new technologically driven interior, found on ocean liners, hotels, railway stations and in the new Selfridges department store. These commercially vibrant means of communication were used to appeal to a wider female population when the new luxury hotels were well established. For example, within the public space of the West End women had been formalised into a routine of venturing out from the home and into the shopping arena, by specified clubs tailored to their needs until around 1909.

By this point the department stores were opening their own specific clubs, in store. Selfridges was the first department store to attract women on this premise without promoting the collective term or existence of the women's club ethic. Selfridge incorporated the functions of the female club within the space and meaning of the department store. By 1909, shopland and clubland were interchangeable territories of female pleasure, female clubs had moved from being outposts in a hostile and barren urban frontier to symbolizing the commercial metropolis. Due to this every imaginable West End business sought to satisfy the female public. Many 'ladies only' teashops opened in London including the Ladies Tea Association, Mrs Robertson's Tea Room's and "The Dorothy" a women's only restaurant, in 1888. Serving workers, students, and weary shoppers, indeed from this evidence, it is apparent that the democratization of the central leisured spaces of London did not fully form until the advent of the larger tea chains of the early twentieth century. The Aerated Bread Company (known as the A.B.C) and J. Lyons & Co teashops started in the 1880's and 1890's, with Rappaport stating that in 1909, Lyons claimed to serve over 300,000 customers daily in their teashops and restaurants. Fuller's was a further known establishment and while all men were served, these businesses relied on the broader female public.²⁴²

²⁴² Rappaport, Erika Diane, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (Chichester: Princeton University Press) 2000, p.103

(Fig. 4:13) Ladies' Writing Room, Regent Palace Hotel
(Source: Architectural Review) 1915

Hetero-social amusement became a fashionable pursuit after the opening of the Savoy in 1889, although a rule that unescorted women were not permitted was likewise, communicated by further West End establishments including Lyons Trocadero restaurant in Piccadilly. A male diner could invite a companion without trouble, the catering industry constructed their own visions, which asserted that the large, modern restaurant and hotel emancipated women and introduced a new moral code into public life. A pamphlet researched by Rappaport, printed in connection with the opening of the Trocadero restaurant, championed the veneration of "free trade in pleasure" as J. Lyons & Co stated themselves:

My experience teaches me that restraints, checks, and grandmotherly legislation in connection with amusement have always encouraged vice and vicious pleasures; whereas free trade in pleasure has been of an enormous advantage, socially, intellectually, and morally, to the people at large. In this good, healthy want, Joseph Lyons and his friends have been spirited pioneers.²⁴³

The narrative that the mass market had initiated a modern notion of public life based on "free trade" in pleasure quickly entered Edwardian popular imagination and has become a truism of most recent historiography. However, the convergence of interior design styles in a number of public urban environments has shown how the era of the Belle Epoque was paramount for the tastes and styles of Parisian design and decorative applied arts. Entering the international arena through the 1889 exhibition, the *ecole de beaux arts* graduated designers disseminated these styles. The Regent Palace Hotel dining room, restaurant was executed in a Louis XVI neo-classical style that used cleaner lines compared to the decorative work in the vestibule and lobby. Some areas used wood panelling for the walls and the white finish would create a lavish backdrop to the simple furniture employed for the clientele. As performance was an important aspect of respectable life and respectability was almost entirely based on appearance one's behaviour was assumed to be a clear indicator of moral worth. The role of performance in shaping identity, a matter that has long been of interest to sociologists, has recently come to engage historians. Restaurants were perfectly designed for performing by spacing out separate tables, all within view of several others, allowing diners to perform and become an audience simultaneously.²⁴⁴ Although the private and public spaces of the drawing and writing rooms reveal gender differences, a new style of transatlantic modernity appeared in specific female rooms. It

²⁴³ Scott, Clement, *How they dined us in 1860 and how they dine us now*, (London: N.P) 1900, p.22

²⁴⁴ Rich, Rachel, *Bourgeois Consumption: Food, Space and Identity in London and Paris, 1850-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 2011, p.140

is worth noting that a softer, romantic style was prevalent in the Louis XVI interior, compared to the dark exotic masculine style of the oriental smoking room and grill. This will be discussed in the next chapter, an earlier, commercial version of the 'streamlined historicist style'²⁴⁵

In conclusion, this chapter has explained how in London, urban modernity converged in the new luxury hotel and the surrounding restaurants in Piccadilly. Pre-theatre excursions to the French Louis XVI style interior spaces became popular and contributed to the feminisation of the West End. Popular amongst the middle classes and the international visitor to London, transatlantic styles appeared in the new twentieth century hotel by 1915. A debate about ostentatious styles and tastes formed around the commercialisation of traditional guilds and decorators. Who having opened offices in London, were commissioned to reproduce period styles that the hotels and leisure industries wanted to portray. Edwardian women welcomed into the public and private spaces of the hotels, found interior surroundings that embraced luxury in the West End. Due to this feminisation, in the next chapter, Piccadilly is examined as a space of traditional masculine mapping and will be investigated through the men's rooms in the Regent Palace Hotel. While women visited the ground floor and entered through the main entrance, men could discreetly enter the hotel from a side street that led to the lower ground floor. Their rooms of comfort away from the public gaze were found in hotels and private clubs. Spaces for smoking and tea drinking were founded upon the grand exhibitions explored in chapter three. Many new types of tea-rooms became apparent in cities after their introduction at exhibitions in Newcastle and Glasgow, often including a male smoking room with oriental decoration. These Victorian spaces symbolised masculine restraint and were often secluded downstairs or at the back of hotels or cafes, avoiding the public female aspects of the establishments.

²⁴⁵ Sparke, Penny, *Elsie De Wolfe: The Birth of Modern Interior Decoration*, (New York: Acanthus Press) 2005, p.269

Chapter 5

Masculine Spaces: Rooms and Rituals

The basement of the Regent Palace Hotel accommodated public and private spaces:

Stairs leading down to the apartments on the lower ground floor included an immense Grill Room, a Smoking and Reading Room, a small Palm Court, and a Billiard Room, the Kitchen and Kindred Offices, and in the sub-basement the heating, ventilating, and power plant.²⁴⁶ (See fig. 5:1)

Managing to fit in the accoutrements established by many of the new luxury hotels, the space of the lower ground floor incorporated the masculine habitat that commercial outlets now sought to include. The West End was becoming an increasingly feminised public sphere, although traditionally these streets were the heartlands of masculine consumption. As argued in chapter one, this permeated in the symbolism of Regent Streets neo-classical facades and had become situated in the corners, main streets, thoroughfares, squares, arcades and spaces of West End imperialism. Indeed, in this chapter I will argue for the safety of the masculine built environment, in view of the cyclical processes and modernity of the hotel interior. To show how commerce and social rituals consolidated aspects of masculinity in the basement interiors of the Regent Palace Hotel.

Mapped as a contrast to the femininity on the ground floor, the masculinity determining the flows of power in the architecture and design of the quadrant also helped in forming its redevelopment. Masculine spaces that remained 'traditional' had entertained gentleman clients in the area since the 1890's. The Regent Palace Hotel formed part of a network of stopping points for the metropolitan male for refreshment and repose, providing an entrance to the building on the ground floor and a further side entrance, down a fleet of steps from Glasshouse Street to the lower floors.

Importantly, as Edwards research has shown, these mappings produced front stage and back stage aspects of the establishments that welcomed men in the West End. Further, 'lauded by contemporary accounts in guidebooks and newspapers as one of the few remaining spaces in the capital where time stood still. Modernity was spurned

²⁴⁶ The Architectural Review: A Magazine of Architecture and the Arts of Design, Vol. XXXVIII. July-Dec 1915. P. 16

(Fig 5:1) Basement Floor Plan, 1915 (Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive)

by the continued use of old-fashioned shop-fronts, window displays and retail methods.²⁴⁷ Where a privileged urban knowledge was required to find and use the traditional establishments in the gentlemen's tailoring and shopping space of Jermyn Street. The placement of the Regent Palace Hotel on the apex of a large site adjacent to Regent Street and Shaftesbury Avenue, made such a destination a public and front-stage event. However, the discreet knowledge of the Grill, Smoking and Billiards Room underground, is suggestive of a model for masculine consumption of discreet, private areas away from the feminised street level of tea drinking opportunity founded on the busy centre of Piccadilly Circus. As Edwards proved in her study of the West End shopping networks, 'a second access point to buildings was crucial, for it enabled internal circulation routes to tap directly into the street network.'²⁴⁸

A lack of primary sources available for an evaluation of the basement rooms indicates that Lyons had documented very little about their interior design commissions before the 1920's. This has created a difficulty in identifying the use and value of such spaces as contemporary private and public interiors. However, in the *Full statutory list description for the Regent Palace Hotel (main building and bridge) Grade II, listed on 10 May, 2004*. English Heritage's report claimed that:

Decoration from 1915 survives visibly only in the basement grill room, now bar and restaurant, and adjoining service corridor with its lincrusta walls and plaster filigree ceiling. The walls of the bar/restaurant are panelled in mahogany, with pilasters, inset pier glazes and, above friezes of sphinxes. The trabeated ceiling has moulded cornices and now inset with 1930's lights in glazed strips. Marble-clad square columns with brackets forming capitals. Windows, giving on to false area and backlit, have small panes of coloured glass in lead kames set in mullions – as originally existed on upper floors also.²⁴⁹

In this single description of the Grill Room, much can be gleaned for relating the modern interior into the context of 1915-35. Indicating that traditionalism was apparent in the upgrading of the restaurant, it was saved from a complete re-design in 1934-5. This marked the end of the luxury hotel boom, and the Regent Palace Hotel was still built in the latest version of the Louis XVI style. As shown in chapter four, transatlantic tastes formulated from a growing international tourist population. In this chapter I contemplate how the the centre of Piccadilly revealed a masculine mapping of the

²⁴⁷ Edwards, Bronwen, 'A Man's World? 'Masculinity and Metropolitan Identity at Simpson Piccadilly' in Gilbert, David, Matless, David & Short, Brian (ed.) *Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century*, (Oxford: Blackwell) 2003, p. 155

²⁴⁸ Ibid, p.155

²⁴⁹ Full statutory list description for the Regent Palace Hotel (main building and bridge) Grade II, listed on 10 May, 2004.

space, which slowly began to reshape in contrast to the new feminised shopping space of Oxford Street. J. Lyons & Co welcomed males and females into their popular establishments, into what might also be called hetero-social environments²⁵⁰. A map is drawn here to illustrate the growth and expansion of the Lyons restaurant, whether independently situated on the street or found in their hotels. (See fig. 5:2)

Ultimately, the intention is to show how this mapping of the site and the interior decoration of rooms, track the re-design of an area, but also a re-development of social space in ritual and consumption. To do this, I use two seemingly unrelated examples outside of London to elucidate how Lyons involvement in late Victorian exhibitions, assisted to form new ideas for their catering enterprise. Glasgow as the second city of empire and where Lyons housed the large-scale Bishops Palace Cafe in 1888, tapped into an emerging tea room culture. Latterly, the realisation for modernisation would be reflected in the advent of the American bar in the hotel, mirroring Adolf Loos' response to modern consumption and the design of the Kartner Bar. The importance of highlighting such examples is merely to document how avant-garde impressions of the *fin-de-siecle* became formulated into everyday popular geographies in the late 1920' to 1930's.

Designing the layout of the basement, the architect followed the same principle as the ground floor plan. Below the vestibule was the Billiards Room, nearby the Smoking Room, a general lounge, and the larger Grill Room. The grill restaurant was influenced by the emergent café culture burgeoning throughout Europe and in parts of the Britain in the early 1900's. When the mass public became familiar with such environments, private spaces, such as the Billiards and Smoking Rooms, further reinforced them as private masculine environments. While the style of these spaces adapted during the interwar years, they too, importantly, illustrated the transition from a private man's space to a non-specific one. The private disappeared from empire inspired interiors, and arose as public transatlantic styles that popularised style and luxury.

The first of many J. Lyons & Co catering establishments appear to have been designed with a common visual identity. Using a common architectural appearance to reinforce the image of their restaurants, the architect W.J Ancell, developed a mildly Jacobean style. Executed in brick and stone, at the Trocadero Restaurant on Shaftesbury Avenue (1896) a multi-use complex, the interior rooms comprised the Empire Ballroom (see fig. 5:3) and to be examined later in the chapter, the Long Bar.

²⁵⁰ See Rappaport (2000) and Houlbrook (2005)

1. Oxford Corner House (1928) 2. Maison Lyons (1933) 3. Coventry Street Corner House (1909) 4. Maison Lyons (1915) 5. Strand Corner House (1915) 6. Cumberland Hotel (1933) 7. Strand Palace Hotel (1909) 8. Regent Palace Hotel (1915) 9. The Trocadero (1896)

(Fig 5:2) Site Map, 2014 (Source: www.kzwp.com)

(Fig. 5:3) Empire Room, Trocadero, Piccadilly Circus
(Source: BL18712 National Monuments Record) 1905

(Fig. 5:4) J. Lyons & Co, Tea Room – Café, Oxford Street
(Source: BL20144 National Monuments Record) 1907

(Fig. 5:5) Willow Tea Room, Glasgow
(Source: Grafe and Bollerey) 1904

However, the firm adopted the use of white faience cladding in a rich Baroque manner, in presenting a representational ethos for the Lyons tea-shop (1893) (see fig. 5:4). Beginning a series of buildings improvements that produced the most popular places to go in the West End, interiors claimed similarities between establishments too. Although, not challenging the latest in art and design styles, the expansion of these spaces represented how unique various businesses could be. For example, Business and art were triumphantly united in Glasgow's most famous tea-rooms, those of Mrs Cranston. Her committed patronage of what is now called the 'Glasgow Style' introduced Glaswegians to a direct experience of art and culture by showcasing avante-garde interiors by Charles Rennie Mackintosh.²⁵¹ (See fig. 5:5)

It was indeed almost twenty years after Kate Cranston's brother, opened the first tea room in 1875 that Joseph Lyons established his successful chain in London. The climate of openness to new ideas which produced the tea-rooms alongside so much mercantile and industrial innovation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century worked in tandem with Central Europe. A strong sense of patronage aligned to the applied arts, followed from fine arts disciplines to commercial projects. Seen in the material fabrics and avant-garde designs of many European cities, London would not display such a sense of the international arts in the same way until after the First World War. However, the cafe culture discussed in the previous chapter produced a Parisian culture for dining out. The idea of a café had provided a venue that could be inhabited, in grander, more comfortable and luxurious surroundings outside of the private home. The gradual development of the London coffee houses in the 1700's from simple rooms with dark wooden floors into the refined classical interiors of Robert Adam's coffee house became more visible in the Parisian cafes with their mirrored walls and gilded ornament In London. The desire to render the coffee house into an exclusive venue catering to a defined circle of customers, eventually led to the demise of the institution. Initially a place open to everyone; from the mid-eighteenth century, coffee houses started to re-open as exclusive gentlemen's clubs, diminishing in character by the mid nineteenth century.²⁵²

²⁵¹ Kinchin, Perilla, *Tea and Taste: The Glasgow Tea Rooms 1875-1975*, (Oxford: White Cockade) 1996, p.16

²⁵² Robert Adams coffee house was a four storey building of 1770, with three bays, each floor featuring a large tri-partite window divided by columns. Inside, plans followed the conventional layout of the Georgian London house on a grander scale. On the ground floor and directly accessible from the street there was a coffee room and the bar. A second entrance gave access to a corridor connecting to a staircase leading to the first and second floor, with no records of the interior decoration or furnishings. Bollerey, Franziska & Grafe, Christoph, *Café's and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, (New York: Routledge) 2007, p.19

Investigations in this chapter look towards the mutual comparisons between cafes, restaurants, bars and grills. Which are then approached through the masculine expansion of the Lyons establishment, to identify the cultural significance of the West End as a gendered leisure environment. The imperialist decor in the private room and basement in the Regent Palace Hotel maps a route of specific male consumption. Reinforced by the legacy of exhibitionism and of the empire, to the larger fragmentation and culturally significant social and cultural redevelopment of the quadrant.

As investigated in chapters three and four, exhibition catering introduced Lyons to the production of leisure spaces for the late Victorian consumer, shown in such evidence as company records, sub-contracts and further business projects. Assisting them in expanding the company name, by the 1920's they would have assembled a gigantic spectrum of catering establishments and productive outputs. Discussed in an article published in the *Lyons Mail*:

The leading features of the distribution arrangements of Messrs. J Lyons & Co Ltd., are roughly as follows: - a) The collection and after preparation, the delivery of everything consumed, with utensils and building work in some 200 catering and other establishments in London and other groups in Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Bradford, Nottingham, Bristol, the South-Coast towns and railway stations, and for outside catering at exhibitions and functions, etc., b) house to house bread and grocery delivery in London and other towns., c) The sale and delivery to about 170,000 grocers and dairy shops over the United Kingdom of a weekly or fortnightly order for tea, coffee, cocoa, chocolate and other grocer' commodities., d) Export and import trade with India and Ceylon, Africa West Coast and other trading centres from London and Jersey.²⁵³

Such a description maps a breadth of scale and expansion directly situated on Lyons commodities, and also, enables the reader to gain a transparent view into the networks of exchange values for the company. In doing so, this description of exchanges reveals the links to British trading points and the distribution of named brand object experiences. As Bollerey and Grafe pointed out:

The improvement of the economic situation of urban populations, the concentration of the brewing trade and the development of tourism as a middle-class phenomenon, later also benefitted the working class. Railway hotels comprising grand cafes, large *brasseries* and beer halls, music halls to cafe concerts and the large metropolitan English pubs of the late Victorian period,

²⁵³ 'Distributing Lyons' Commodities' in The Lyons Mail, January 1923

can be seen as the results of these processes of economic concentration and the emergence of a mass market.²⁵⁴

Cafe culture resulted in a pioneering leadership for many entrepreneurs and in Glasgow remained a leading economic and aesthetic factor for the citizenship and national identity of the city from the 1890's. The years from 1888 to the First World War were the most prominent for Glasgow, in which a sense of sophistication and wellbeing pervaded the city, as tea-rooms grew and multiplied. The Glasgow exhibition, (discussed in chapter three) gave a tremendous boost to the idea of tea drinking for pleasure and while the substance of the exhibition lay in its spectacular displays of manufactures and machinery for educational and commercial benefit, it was predictably the colourful ambience that made an impression. 'Tea with its oriental associations seemed to fit the scene perfectly. Visitors could play at the imperial way of life during an unusually fine summer by taking tea on the verandah of the Royal Bungalow Restaurant, with service by an assortment of fascinating 'real live natives'; or in the Indian or Ceylon Tea Rooms.'²⁵⁵ These reflected not only Glasgow's strong trading links with this part of the Empire, but also the rapidly increasing popularity of their tea. The middle-class ethos of the exhibition meant that there was plenty of provision for the temperance market, and various levels of tea-room provided.

Lyons' Bishops Palace Cafe represented the utmost luxury on a large-scale for mainly men, employing female waitresses. At the top end of the scale for women was the large oriental kiosk run by a fashionable local confectioner, named Assafrey's. Ladies rested in elegance inside tea-rooms and matching smoking kiosks catered for men taking coffee and cigarettes whilst relaxing on oriental divans. These spaces provided compartmentalised gender specific spaces for female tea and male coffee and tobacco consumption, divided upon a floor plan that promoted the separate spheres. The 1888 exhibition left Glasgow with an upbeat economy, new social tastes and tea rooms poised for expansion, for would-be employers there was no shortage of trained waitresses: Lyons for example had employed 170 staff. Therefore, Kate Cranston opened her first tearoom on the site of the Alexandra Cafe in Buchanan Street, a year before on 5th May 1897. On five floors, with kitchens in the basement, smoking and billiards rooms on the top floor, assorted tea and luncheon rooms on the other floors,

²⁵⁴ Bollerey, Franziska & Grafe, Christoph, *Café's and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, (New York: Routledge) 2007, p.30

²⁵⁵ Kinchin, Perilla, *Tea and Taste: The Glasgow Tea Rooms 1875-1975*, (Oxford: White Cockade) 1996, p.42

and the exciting modernity of a passenger elevator, the tea-rooms were remarkable inside for the work of the young designers George Walton and Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Cranston was for Mackintosh the ideal patron, as a complete controlled environment combining the qualities of a domestic interior for public use with a brief eminently suited Mackintosh's talents. The Japanese influence on his approach, with its subtlety of spatial relationships, use of screens and refinement of line, was commented on by the *Studio* in 1906 stating: 'it is not easy to imagine what would be the position of modern decorative art in Glasgow to-day, apart from the group of tea-houses controlled by Miss Cranston': with the commission to Walton in 1888 'decorative art may be said to have entered on a new phase at Glasgow.'²⁵⁶ The opportunities she gave Mackintosh under Walton at Buchanan Street and Argyle Street established the reputation for furniture and interior design that brought with it an increasing proportion of his work, and she gave him all her major commissions thereafter. This was a continuous stream of produced work from all phases of his development, from the organic inspired to the severely geometric, from white paint to vibrant colour.

The Willow Tea Rooms, comprising several different salons, was not the first establishment that Mackintosh had designed, but was the first commission that gave him complete control over both interior and exterior. In fig. 5:6 the interior of the first floor café highlights the use of organic beams, and Japanese influenced wall cladding, the white painted woodwork completed an overall design. A choice of colours and materials in the tea-rooms reflected the contemporary gender-specific design of the different rooms of the house, it was previously where Mackintosh had experimented in his designs for his home. The public interiors of luncheon, smoking and billiard rooms were completed in dark, masculine colours with heavy furniture, whereas light, feminine colours and more delicate furniture were used for the ladies tea-rooms.²⁵⁷ Mackintosh's patronage is inextricably linked to the enormous popularity of tea-rooms in Glasgow and of artistic tea rooms in particular. This was also a period when the Temperance Movement was very active in combating alcoholism. Cranston's business drive was in defiance of contemporary convention, her tea rooms were not aimed solely at ladies, but also at Glasgow's numerous business men. Glasgow, second only to London in the British Empire, inhabited heavy industry and in particular shipbuilding. The outfitting and internal design of the big steamers and passenger ships for transatlantic and orient lines provided work for ship's carpenters and interior designers.

²⁵⁶ Kinchin, Perilla, *Tea and Taste: The Glasgow Tea Rooms 1875-1975*, (Oxford: White Cockade) 1996, p.21

²⁵⁷ Bollerey, Franziska & Grafe, Christoph, *Café's and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, (New York: Routledge) 2007, p.136

(Fig. 5:6) Willow Tea Rooms, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow
(Source: Grafe and Bollerey) 1904

Charles Mackintosh began his career as an apprentice designer of ship interiors. In Glasgow's dynamic economic climate, the working day became ever longer, pushing the main meal of the day to the early evening. In opening her first tea-rooms or luncheon rooms, therefore, Miss Cranston addressed herself in particular to businessmen: 'the situation is suitable for gentlemen attending the exchange, courts, banks and warehouses', adding 'smoking room open next week.'²⁵⁸

The particular attractions of the smoking rooms had been noted in 1895 by *The Evening News*: 'in the bigger and more pretentious tea-rooms of the city, the smoke-room is a capacious apartment, with accommodation for upwards of a hundred'. Here office bosses mingled easily with junior clerks, reflecting the lack of social discrimination notable in masculine Glasgow life. They served as clubs for the clerk of modest means. 'Everything that the heart desires,' stated John Muir, 'from coffee and cigarettes to illustrated papers and draughts and dominoes, is ready to hand.' The other distinguishing features of the tea room noted by Muir are 'the scheme of their decorations and the location of some of their premises.' Tea-rooms had sprung up all over the centre of Glasgow, often in previously unused basements, where rents were low. Smoking rooms in particular were frequently beneath the pavement, safely protected from the traffic of ladies above.²⁵⁹

A taste for the exotic, turned to a realisation for temporary structures and interiors as main selling points for tea rooms and cafe's in the oriental style that started in the public spaces of exhibitions. Following these precedents, coffee tents appeared also in entertainment parks such as Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens in London. Unlike the urban coffee house, these temporary establishments were open to, and popular among women. If the middle-class cafe had almost from its beginnings been a place that affirmed the social and cultural aspirations of its users by providing them with a luxurious entourage, the second half of the nineteenth century added another dimension. The metropolitan establishments of this period introduced an increase in scale and effort that constituted a comprehensive departure from the model of the 'home away from home'. Rather than reassembling refined houses, cafes now developed into veritable purpose-built palaces combining entertainment and the consumption of beverages and food.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Ibid, p.134

²⁵⁹ Kinchin, Perilla, *Tea and Taste: The Glasgow Tea Rooms 1875-1975*, (Oxford: White Cockade) 1996, p.59

²⁶⁰ Bollerey, Franziska & Grafe, Christoph, *Café's and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, (New York: Routledge) 2007, p.29

Tobacco and 'Club-Like' Smoking and Billiard Rooms

Salmon and Gluckstein's long experience as tobacco retailers had taught them the importance of careful siting of shops, and of design. With this experience in the tobacco trade the directors of the company had tight links to the discerning male consumer and tradesman in the late Victorian and Edwardian London. They produced a range of cigarette cards showing patriotism and memorial to the empire, as well as their own business enterprise in form of the Grand Restaurant at the 1908 Franco-British Exhibition. Shakespearean characters and music hall actresses found fame on printed images of Lyons' merchandise (See fig. 5:7). This subsidiary of tobacco production reflected individual ways of advertising products. Smoking in the nineteenth century allowed for a spatial escape through the retreat of a gentleman into his study, tobacco permitted men to meet, converse and to bond as this was a culture not confined to connoisseurs. Commercial companies sought to encourage a wider tobacco industry, including Cope Brothers of Liverpool who issued a series of cards, posters and calendars that featured illustrations of famous literary, cultural and political figures of the day.²⁶¹ Many of the Lyons teashops, particularly those situated in London's finance and business centres, had a masculine club-like atmosphere. Dominoes, draughts, newspapers and magazines were made freely available to customers occupying the smoking room as businessmen and merchants had done in the coffee house era.²⁶²

Smoking was an important element in male bonding rituals, both in club smoking rooms and at home and this particular interior was aimed at the masculine middle-class. Unusual for middle-class women to smoke in public, a comment made in 1846 by Charles Dickens described his entrapment in a room of a grand hotel. Responding to ladies who began to light up, he wrote: 'in five minutes the room was a cloud of smoke... I never was so surprised... for in all my experience of ladies of one kind and another, I never saw not a basket woman or a gypsy smoke before'.²⁶³ In the nineteenth century, pipes and cigarettes became as much an attribute of assertive masculinity as the omnipresent, and equally phallic, top hat. The arrival of the mass-manufactured cigarette from the mid 1880's led to a revolution in smoking patterns, but the communal and social elements of the tobacco habit persisted. The cigarette fitted well with the norms and values of the emerging 'modern' culture that developed in the first decades of the twentieth century. It was noted that during the First World War

²⁶¹ Gilman, Sander L & Xun, Zhou, *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, (London: Reaktion) 2004, p. 128

²⁶² Bird, Peter, *The First Food Empire: A History of J. Lyons and Co*, (Chichester: Phillimore) 2000, p. 43

²⁶³ Gilman, Sander L & Xun, Zhou, *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking*, (London: Reaktion) 2004, p. 129

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(Fig. 5:7) Salmon and Gluckstein Cigarette Cards
(Source: Peter Bird Collection) 1910

soldiers employed cigarettes to relieve their anxiety and boredom. But strikingly, cigarettes would also be cited as an antidote to a range of modern concerns about the frenetic pace of urban industrial society. As the boundaries of where and when to smoke eroded during the 1920's and 1930's, the cigarette was rapidly diffused into the public, urban landscape, from the shop, to stores, restaurants, and transport, that comprised the new consumer world.²⁶⁴

For the leisured bourgeois gentleman the most glorified place of smoking companionship was the gentleman's club. The club was mythologized as an idealized smoking utopia of rest, meditation, loungeful conversation and, most of all, sheer dedicated concentration on the joy of one's cigar. Men came here to be solely in the presence of other men and their pipes or cigars.²⁶⁵ Christopher Breward explored the male consumer in his writing on the newfound bachelor that in some part was an imagined version of the Victorian flâneur, occupying a characterisation described as follows:

Here was a dandified position that comfortably accommodated sexual conformity, advanced tastes and commodity fetishism within its remit. Of particular significance are the references to music hall, slang, sport, new technology and travel. Beyond the expected mention of club life, gambling and hunting which would have denoted aristocratic excess in a list produced fifty years earlier, this engagement with the modernity of London, in company clearly defined as male, positioned the potential flâneur in the midst of a culture enthralled rather than repelled by the notion of masculine pleasures. More than this, the figure of the leisured London bachelor, targeted by the publishers of such guides, had himself come to symbolise a modern and fashionable position by the 1890's, as potent in commodity terms as the Gibson Girl or the Dollar Princess. And, like his sisters, he was utilised by retailer and consumer as a prop upon which products and attitudes could be hung.²⁶⁶

The elevation of certain forms of metropolitan recreations to the status of a bachelor 'specialism' had been a marked characteristic of popular writing from the mid nineteenth century. The 1860's were identified with the beginnings of a celebration of the romantic, irresponsible lifestyle associated with the cosmopolitan single man reaching its apex by 1900. The twin poles of his existence, around which all other characteristics circulated, was political persuasion, visual appearance and interior decoration, food, drink and the brash culture of the modern man's journal. Thus the apotheosis of the bon viveur was the man who spent his days either 'researching

²⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 332

²⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 129

²⁶⁶ Breward, Christopher, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life 1860-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999, p. 173

articles' for the popular press or reading them in the comfort of a West End restaurant or café, and his evenings at the theatre.

Therefore to ascertain how masculine consumption patterns could be reflected in the West End and mapped against the feminisation of the shopping space, a contemporary article from 1908 entitled 'Fitting up a den' by C.M Wesson advised its male readers on the highlights of setting up a space of their own:

'Study, smoking room, snuggerly or den: the terms are but variants for the same thing – a place where a man can take his friends for a smoke or a chat. In such a room there can be a merry bachelor party, a function that loses its flavour when held in the dining room or parlour with the inevitable restraint of the presence of the lady members of the family'.²⁶⁷

Breward's observations of published advice in the columns of *The Modern Man* journal, illustrated the thriving interest amongst young men for fashion and in matters of gender and sexuality. Writers were adept at presenting the pleasures of masculine consumption in a language suggestive of decorative advice for ones room or the acquiring of a cuff-link. Offering opportunities for the display of manliness and national pride, the tone set by bachelors was exactly what made clubs so appealing to the married man. Club premises were often described in quasi-domestic terms. The *Leeds Mercury* emphasised that the Union Club had 'an air of domestic comfort', with its 'handsome coffee rooms and dining rooms ... excellent kitchen, lavatory, bedrooms, bathrooms etc. The seclusion, the service, the cuisine and the fireside society offered by a good club might be seen as a tribute to domesticity. In fact, all male drinking and dining, cards, billiards and 'man talk' could be pursued in the club without distraction or interruption. Victorian clubs valued privacy and seclusion above ease of access and open sociability. In this respect the club bore some resemblance to the home: both can be seen as private spaces offering men a refuge from the marketplace. But fundamentally the club's rationale was as an *alternative* to home life, where an ethos of fraternalism replaced the ties of the family'.²⁶⁸

The Smoking Room

Widening the commercial potential of their establishments, hotel entrepreneurs including those of the Hyde Park Hotel, designed by Archer and Green, built gentlemen's residential chambers. Including 200 private rooms for 'club' use and

²⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 181

²⁶⁸ Tosh, John, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*, (London: Yale University Press) 1999, p. 129

equipped with drawing, dining, smoking and billiards rooms together with its own theatre club. Conversion to hotel use did not require much alteration and took place under the Hyde Park Hotel Company Ltd, which belonged to the Bennett family of hoteliers. The building style was French chateau in origin, executed in brick with stone dressings, but a fire took place at the turn of the century and new interior work was carried out by Charles Mewés and Arthur Davis while advice on detail and management was obtained from the Ritz.²⁶⁹

In fig. 5:8, the interior illustrates the smoking room in the frame of imperialistic oriental wood panelling, palms, plasterwork and Eastern far away scenes that decorated the walls. Luxury atmosphere was created in a French neo-renaissance style, with baroque leanings. The smoking room seems to have had an intermediate style and marked the cultural exchange among Europeans, Americans and Ottomans in the nineteenth century. In the Victorian era, at a time when Western furniture makers formed larger companies, embracing mechanized production that began to reach a mass market, one of their most popular products was an overstuffed 'Turkish Chair', whose lush padding completely hid its wooden base and frame. This new style of furniture, which lacked elaborate woodwork, helped to overcome certain issues related to stylistic unity and at the same time emphasized bodily comfort as a key design element. Turkish traditions of comfort and furniture can be traced in the adoption of furniture terminology. The first of these is *sofa*, which was used in the early seventeenth century by Europeans and later by North Americans to mean a single piece of furniture and Ottomans actually used this word to designate a hall with built-in seating along the walls in traditional houses. Located at the core of the house, this room opened to all the rooms and was used for gatherings and entertaining guests.²⁷⁰

Moreover, the Piccadilly Hotel in Regent Street (and examined earlier) near Piccadilly Circus had a major section inhabiting a Tea Terrace at second floor level. This was becoming quite commonplace as Selfridges department store followed suit. The internal decorations represented various styles and periods in this new luxury hotel. In the grill room the style was derived, but was not slavishly copied, from the galleries of the Palace of Versailles. The wall space was broken up by pilasters having an artistically moulded entablature, surmounted by cavetto moulding, beyond which the deeply panelled ceiling is painted with clouds and sky. In the billiard rooms, Norman arcading, pillars with cushion capitals, and trophies of ancient arms, give an effect that

²⁶⁹ Denby, Elaine, *Grand Hotels: Reality and Illusion*, (London: Reaktion) 1998, p. 151

²⁷⁰ Cevik, Gulen, 'American Style or Turkish Chair: The Triumph of Bodily Comfort' in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 23, No. 4, 2010, p.367

(Fig. 5:8) Hyde Park Hotel, Smoking Room, Mewès and Davis. (Source: Denby) 1908

is at least quaint, if somewhat out of keeping with the essentially modern tables, cues and shaded lamps. The smoking room, in an all white cladding, with lightly padded furniture and classic Louis XVI style indicates the contrasting interior rooms and the changes apparent in the adoption of neo-classical tastes at the start of the twentieth century (See fig. 5:9). In fact, I would argue that the influence of nearby establishments in adopting white classical rather than masculine interior styles, merely suggests that the rooms followed a lineage of popular Parisian tastes in the West End.

The discussion of styles in the Piccadilly Hotel provides an explanation for a grander hotel interior in Regent Street, and one can only assume (without published evidence or further primary material) that compared with the Regent Palace Hotel at Piccadilly Circus, interior design was particular to the establishment. Although the smoking room in the Hyde Park Hotel visualises a dark interior with oriental, Turkish influence leather chairs and murals, the smoking room in the Piccadilly Hotel stays light and refrained from an overt masculinity. In space and decoration the smoking room disconnects with bodily movement, the arrangement of furniture and excess of ornament indicates that the masculine room is approached and enters into a private meaning as static and confined, by which point also the interior design becomes independent of adjacent spaces of public movement. J. Lyons & Co managed to combine the light and dark decoration in their first venture, the Strand Palace Hotel, as seen in fig. 5:10 Velvet upholstered arm chairs sit on a fitted patterned carpet, with two tables, Chippendale style revival furniture and a version of the Windsor chair.²⁷¹ In terms of surface and decoration, the room itself presents an ostentatious ceiling arrangement, picture rail and silk wallpaper. I am speculating that this was a combination of the new transatlantic style, designed within a hypothesis of public interior space to be found in the lounge bar. Intimate, yet public, and allowing for the scheme to be continued in the consecutive semi-public rooms.

The Billiards Room

Billiards was popular with the aristocracy throughout the 18th century and in White's standard book on billiards in 1807 describes a game with equipment such as the slate bed to ensure that the balls rolled truly, inset on a large table, with maximised space and little furniture. At a time when people had to make their own amusements in the evening, the billiards room was very popular and often very lavish.²⁷²

²⁷¹ See Massey, Anne, *Chair*. (London: Reaktion) 2011, p.27 & p.145

²⁷² Bush, David & Taylor, Derek, *The Golden Age of British Hotels*, (London: Northwood Publications) 1974

(Fig. 5:9) Smoking Room at the Piccadilly Hotel
(Source: Architectural Review) 1908

(Fig 5:10) Smoking Room, Strand Palace Hotel,
(Source: BL20712 National Monuments Record) 1915

Another masculine hotel tycoon in the late Victorian age was Frederick Gordon, a solicitor by profession, his father was a decorator and his brother-in-law owned a well-established City restaurant, Pimm's. Gordon's first substantial venture was a dining room occupying the historic Crosby Hall in Bishopsgate: perhaps the earliest example in this country of turning an ancient building, disused for its original purpose, into a restaurant. It was opened in 1868 and continued there until 1907. Gordon was evidently pleased, formed a company, and went on to build the ambitious Holborn Casino (later Restaurant), a suite of dining rooms of different sizes. He then turned his interest to hotels. In 1881 his company opened the Grand on the corner of Trafalgar Square and Northumberland Avenue; two years later the First Avenue Hotel in High Holborn and two years after that a second hotel in Northumberland Avenue, the Metropole, followed in 1887 by yet a third in the same street, offloaded cheap by the developer Jabez Balfour. In the 1890's the interests of the company began to extend outside London, with the establishment of other Metropoles, at Brighton and Folkestone, at Cannes and Monte Carlo.²⁷³ Gordon's Metropole hotels were designed in the grandest style and on a large scale, situated on large sites, they were resort hotels on the seaside overlooking piers. This type of grand hotel had the space for open plan rooms for leisure and recreation.

In Fig. 5:11, the Folkestone Metropole Hotel illustrates an ornate Billiards Room of 1897, with intricately woven carpet and gilded walls flattered by the metalwork and lighting of the huge table lamps suspended above. The scale of the building imitated a continental resort hotel, the interior rooms revealed imperial characteristics by using classical details. Typically Victorian taste prevailed in many Billiards Rooms, especially on the coasts of Britain, contrasting to the Billiards Room in fig. 5:12, at the Strand Palace Hotel. A smaller room resembles the popular Billiards Hall attached to the restaurant or theatre in the West End. Given that Lyons hotels were opened in the final years of the luxury hotel boom in London, they characterised their purpose in furnishing and interior decoration. Part of the gendered cultural meanings of public rooms in the Edwardian West End, company literature would specify this as an Edwardian Grand Hotel.

Policies further affected the similarities of these establishments, as the law on gaming was designed to keep the pubs from deteriorating into gambling dens. The problem also affected the management of hotels and resulted in a hotel manager being liable to a fine if he played cards with his own guests in his own apartment. The definition of

²⁷³ Simmons, Jack *The Victorian Hotel* (Leicester: Victorian studies Centre) 1984, p. 16

(Fig. 5:11) Metropole Hotel, Folkestone, Kent. Billiard Room
(Source: National Monuments Record) 1897

(Fig. 5:12) Billiards Room, Strand Palace Hotel
(Source: BL20701 National Monuments Record) 1909

The Gaming Act also prohibited the playing of billiards outside licensing hours in a hotel, even by resident guests, although it was legal to play in a licensed Billiard Hall. Also, the billiards room could not be opened in the hotel: on Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday and the public act of thanksgiving days. The first half of the 20th century would see a number of bills introduced into parliament to get hotels a separate and different licence from pubs.²⁷⁴ However, this enlightens the view that whilst public houses and hotels remained separate types of buildings, they were considered regulatory establishments, in terms of the licensing acts and bar opening hours.

Male Consumption in Piccadilly

For the West End, Clement Scott credited the commercial prowess of colonial entrepreneurs, alongside the increasing presence of respectable women, for transforming and sanitising the social scene. Noting that back in London he saw no greater change in its old conservative habits of eating and drinking than when Spiers and Pond arrived from Australia. Setting up in various parts of London their gilded saloons and drinking bars, he recommended haunts such as the Café de L'Europe in Leicester Square, which boasted 'an enormous room, with mural decorations of German gnomes ... filled with tobacco smoke' where waiters ... all German carried amazing quantities of beer mugs'; the Queen's hotel was favoured by jockeys 'because it was near the Turkish baths by the Alhambra and in Jermyn Street'. Romano's in the Strand, was another gay place where money flowed with the champagne, where good food could be enjoyed, and Gaiety girls went too. You would meet all Bohemia there at "the romans."²⁷⁵ Many West End entrepreneurs were of European origin and came to London early in the twentieth century, alongside those people who serviced and worked in the entertainment sector including restaurants and the new hotels.

As hotels were expanding, further businesses followed the same consumption practices and attracted a broader clientele to the West End. The sumptuous and often ostentatious interiors of the Grill Room or Hotel Bar, presented the transatlantic style of the new luxury hotels, evidently through this primary investigation, stretching gendered identities in the framework of the cultural and social transition from late Victorian to Edwardian tastes in London.

²⁷⁴ Taylor, Derek, *Ritz: British Hotels 1837-1987*, (London: The Milman Press) 2003, p. 158

²⁷⁵ Breward, Christopher, *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion and City Life 1860-1914*, (Manchester: MUP) 1999, p. 178

The hotel industry was a male dominated profession in management and ownership, famous names of the grand London hotels were synonymous with their owners in these masculine establishments. Represented by the Smoking and Billiards Rooms, male tastes were established upon the private men's club. In the years that followed, the transatlantic style emerged with the introduction of the "bar" and the "grill room" - a room set aside for informal dining, yet still within the luxury ethos of the first class restaurant, this was a place for men also. Situated in the close mapping of male consumption routes in the West End, a hotels discreet side entrance directly off the street, allowed men to avoid the public ground floor and main entrance of the building. Non-hotel guests could enter without making the grand entrance into the hotel lobby. Reinforcing the freedom to roam and enter into an establishment as one might do in a café or independent restaurant. This relationship and evocative modernity between the restaurant and grill room were closely associated and had been since the mid 1860's in London. The hotel business existed only to enhance the availability of places to go in the West End, by opening their additional rooms to the general public, albeit in some cases 'male only'. My view is supported by Edwards, who claims:

The West End needs to be read as a web of streets, and as multiple and fragmented in character. Even the tight cluster of streets in the centre of the West End, around Oxford Street, Regent Street and Piccadilly, actually comprised a series of overlapping shopping routes, subtly differentiated from each other in terms of the gender and status of the intended customer, meeting each other at particular points.²⁷⁶

While male and female spaces were geographically close, it has been indicated in this thesis that females were admitted to some Lyons establishments unescorted. The Trocadero retained this policy and the lower ground floor of the Regent Palace Hotel allowed the employment of waitresses in the Grill Room. The only evidence uncovered on this matter suggests that it was not until the 1920's that it would seem quite normal for a modern environment to emerge. Lady Angela Forbes, writing in the Daily Mail of 5th October 1921, observed:

To-day the Lyons teashop is everywhere. For the business girl, not only in the city but in every part of London, the nearest teashop is not far away. The girls who crowd into the teashops at midday no longer need the protection of a room reserved for their sex alone. They share a table with men as naturally as they take a seat – or a strap – in tram and tube.

²⁷⁶ Edwards, Bronwen, 'A Man's World? 'Masculinity and Metropolitan Identity at Simpson Piccadilly', Gilbert, David, Matless, David & Short, Brian (ed.) *Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century*, (Oxford: Blackwell) 2003, p.153

Nothing, perhaps, has had a greater influence towards the sensible and natural intermingling of the sexes than the management – the revolutionary management, as it was once regarded – of the Lyons teashop.

Men have formed the habit of sharing the teashop with the women for whom it was originated. They have broken away from the bad old tradition that a man's restaurant must of necessity be a public-house into the bargain, and the change has done them good. From every point of view, and most emphatically from a woman's, London has changed for the better during the past 25 years; in that metamorphosis the teashops have played a meritorious part.²⁷⁷

The democratization of luxury provided by Lyons contributed to the socio-cultural meanings of the West End. An in-house publication outlined the company ethos:

Lyons means different things to different people. If you live in a big city, it probably means a Lyons teashop. If you live in London, it will mean Corner Houses too, and the Trocadero Restaurant in Shaftesbury Avenue. If you are a visitor from overseas, Lyons will certainly mean one of the three great London Hotels associated with the company – the Cumberland, the Regent Palace and the Strand Palace. But as true a picture of Lyons is gained by someone who lives in a tiny country village with a single village shop, here they will find Lyons Tea and Coffee, Lyons Cakes and Swiss Rolls.²⁷⁸

Characteristic of the house style for the use of the Lyons teashops from 1900 was the adoption of the neo-classical, white baroque plasterwork. Such an attractive exterior attracted many people across the classes and provided efficient service in a clean and stylish interior setting.

Grill Rooms in Hotels and Restaurants

In organising the hotel business a military sensibility was involved, it was hierarchical: this scale marked the managers, architects, engineers and then other employees. The French Adam style was popular and the grillroom was typical of all grand restaurants that Lyons sought in their dining rooms in the West End. Lyons conducted all contracting themselves, initiating an in-house practice, in fig. 5:13 this ethos is illustrated by an image of the Grand Restaurant, of J. Lyons & Co Ltd, at the Japan-British Exhibition, London, 1910. A band of men stand in line, each poised and heads up in their starched white collars. The management sits in the first row, identified by full black attire, with the chef central to this view of company, service and quality in catering. A multitude of black dress jackets placed against the imperial all-white backdrop of the exhibition pavilion shows how the male dominated this representation of the company. The profession of waiter was particular to the grand pavilion at

²⁷⁷ Bird, Peter, *The First Food Empire: A History of J. Lyons and Co*, (Chichester: Phillimore) 2000, p. 42

²⁷⁸ What is Lyons? Company Publication, Circa 1950's (London Metropolitan Archives)

(Fig 5:13) Grand Restaurant, Japan British Exhibition, London
(Source: LMA ACC/3527/483 - 656) 1910

exhibitions while waitresses became the faces of the cafes. French transatlantic style in the Regent Palace Hotel interior was reflected in the public spaces including the grill-room. (Fig. 5:14) A very clear perspective of the ceiling emphasises the decorative interior and plasterwork. Gold painted columns with neo classical motifs are included to accentuate the marble cladding. An ornate ceiling reflects the light, contrasting to the opposing space below, it appears that all the underground spaces (including the Strand Palace Hotel as an example) used this dark masculine style of decoration, composed on the French transatlantic style. Polished wood panels and patterned wallpaper aligned with lower white ceilings that gave a sense of comfort displaying a continental luxury.

In fig.5:15 the furniture was lightweight and hygienic in its design including woven cane backed chairs, and a newly complete interior room, showing decorative ceiling plasterwork, in a refined French style, small chandelier lights and marble clad steel columns. In fig. 5:16, the room is prepared for dinner service, occasional chairs and tables are arranged for a special event as the waitress applies final touches to a fully serviceable dining table, while overseen by a superior male colleague. For Lyons restaurants and hotels, the waitress ensured the public face of the company. As opposed to the earlier exhibitions, waitresses rather than waiters were employed in the hotels, although the male colleague would overlook the functioning of these spaces. A case for the employment of women will be evaluated further in chapter six. The space and movement in the lower ground floor, allowed for less of a lobby experience. However, the route in and out of the space allowed for a discreet entrance and exit on to the street above and one could avoid the activity in the lobby on the ground floor.

Piccadilly Circus was an important nexus in the West End, at the junction of several major thoroughfares: Shaftesbury Avenue, Haymarket, Regent Street and Piccadilly. It was also the start of the West End's main shopping artery: a plush trail of famously showy department stores running from Piccadilly Circus, up Regent Street and along Oxford Street – a route that was well established as site for feminist consumption and leisure.²⁷⁹ Jermyn Street, a traditional part of the West End route of masculine consumption, including Savile Row and the Burlington Arcade, mapped a route in the

²⁷⁹ Edwards, Bronwen, 'A Man's World? 'Masculinity and Metropolitan Identity at Simpson Piccadilly' in Gilbert, David, Matless, David & Short, Brian (ed.) *Geographies of British Modernity: Space and Society in the Twentieth Century*, (Oxford: Blackwell) 2003, p.155

(Fig. 5:14) Grill Room, Regent Palace Hotel (Source: LMA ACC/3527) 1915

(Fig. 5:15) Grill Room, Photographed by Bedford Lemere
(Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive) 1915

(Fig. 5:16) Postcard, Grill Room, 1915 (Source: LMA ACC/3527)

(Fig. 5:17) Trocadero Lobby (Source: LMA ACC/3527/232) 1920's

smaller side streets, therefore in the quadrant itself, competition was ripe in attracting potential custom.

The masculine space in the Trocadero incorporated interiors decorated in the style of the Flemish Renaissance and the entrance hall (fig. 5:17) featured a mural of Arthurian legend. From the ground floor a grand marble staircase led to the Empire Room, where banqueting and several other rooms and private suites were situated. Adjacent to the Grill Room were billiards, smoking, and reading rooms and the grand staircase gave an air of elegance, luxury and respectability. An atmosphere that Lyons strove to create in many of their subsequent restaurants and buildings the company designed and erected, a concert tea was introduced, welcoming women escorted by a male companion. During the First World War the banqueting rooms were under-utilised, and in 1916 tea was served for the first time in the Empire Hall along with a full concert programme. It was not long before fashionable London realised that with its music, its delightful teas, and the pleasant atmosphere of the Empire Hall, the Trocadero became a famous attraction.

Lyons began to open a range of independent restaurants following the success of their Popular Café in Piccadilly (See Fig. 5:18) opening their State Restaurant in Liverpool in January 1905 and another Popular Café in Manchester one year later. These restaurants attracted not only middle-class customers who were beginning to have more disposable income but those who previously had frequented many other contemporary restaurants. There was Gatti's Adelaide Gallery at Charing Cross, the St James' Restaurant in Piccadilly, the Café Monaco in Shaftesbury Avenue and Spier and Pond's Gaiety Theatre Restaurant in the Strand. Most notable was the Holborn Restaurant, comprised of a large space with an ornate terracotta Empire Grill and Grand Restaurant with cabaret and dancing. It boasted three Masonic temples, fourteen smaller restaurants and a number of private dining rooms. At this time, J. Lyons & Co were about to unleash their most ambitious restaurant project ever, the building of the super-restaurants which became known as the Lyons Corner Houses. The first of these was erected in Coventry Street between London's Leicester Square and Piccadilly Circus²⁸⁰ proving to be at the height of popular consumer desires, Lyons would gain the edge on the mass marketing catering enterprise. Evidently this was relevant for tracking the commercial changes in the West End, learning from this,

²⁸⁰ Bird, Peter, *The First Food Empire: A History of J. Lyons and Co*, (Chichester: Phillimore) 2000, p.99

(Fig. 5:18) Lyons Popular Café, Piccadilly, London, designed by C. W. Oakley
. (Source: National Monuments Record) 1904

Lyons establishments encompassed all modern amenities in luxury, affordable accommodation.

Private to Public Spaces: Modernisation in the West End

The Café Monaco and the Criterion were the most well known establishments in the West End at the turn of the century. Spiers and Pond opened the Holborn Viaduct Hotel in 1874, providing catering services in the refreshment rooms at other stations. The Criterion Restaurant, a huge complex of rooms opened in 1873, and the Gaiety Theatre and Restaurant was also within their remit. (See fig. 5:19 & 20) Felix Spiers and Christopher Pond had established cafes in Melbourne, taking also a railway refreshment contract there. Early in the 1860's they moved to London, contracting similarly with the new underground railways. They set up the Silver Grill – their first independent restaurant – under the railway arches of Ludgate in 1866, Simmons explains:

Restaurants lie outside my subject except in so far as they influenced hotels. Even the hotels' critics allowed that some of them were satisfactory in London. A number of those they commended are still happily with us: Rule's and Simpson's, for example. The railway hotels provided both food and drink; largely from necessity, arising from the special nature of their business. Spiers and Pond, by now experienced caterers, perceived the capabilities of linking restaurants with other kinds of provision for the enjoyment and comfort of Londoners. They began with their Criterion at Piccadilly Circus, which united a group of restaurants with a theatre, and then did the same at the Gaiety in the Strand. Next they took the lease of the new hotel at Holborn Viaduct station (See fig. 5:21), which they opened in 1877, after Pond's death in 1881, Spiers continued and acquired new hotels, unconnected with railways, such as Bailey's in Gloucester Road in 1890.²⁸¹

Throughout the 1880's and 1890's it was usual for restaurants to include musical entertainment and to have decorated rooms in different styles, these included the Café Monaco, Romano's and the Trocadero. Both hotels and restaurants in the 1880's were often more ornate than stylish as quality and comfort were to some extent still missing. It was in the early 1900's that quality and luxury became an apparent reason for establishments to pervade high quality. Competition in the sector was rising and new influences were introduced by those who travelled and came to expect a certain amount of convenience and comfort. Lyons experience and understanding of the newly emergent consumer expectations enabled them to identify the West End as a specific space for their businesses. Therefore London, the imperialist metropolis, was undergoing some change as modernity flowered in the dining spaces of the West End.

²⁸¹ Simmons, Jack *The Victorian Hotel* (Leicester: Victorian studies Centre) 1984

(Fig. 5:19) Criterion Restaurant, Victoria Hall, Piccadilly Circus, 1913
(Source: National Monuments Record)

(Fig. 5.20) The Grand Hall, Criterion Complex (Source: V&A Images) 1913

(Fig. 5.21) Holborn Viaduct Hotel, London. Isaacs and Florence - Spiers and Pond, Dining Room,
(Source: National Monuments Record) 1901

The scale of the public rooms in most restaurants revealed high ceilings of ornate Victorian style, were less spacious and defined in name by the type of food on offer. In the twentieth century the steel-frame structure enabled far more floor space and widespread surfaces on a large-scale. The construction of these rooms illustrated how the latest tastes were incorporated in the detailed marble cladding, plasterwork and fittings. For example this is clear in fig. 5:22 and 5:23, showing the grill-room at the Cafe Monaco, compared to the same room in the Strand Palace Hotel. Further smaller rooms contained a more dignified and traditional manner of decoration, however the transatlantic interior appeared in the new luxury hotel abundantly and for J. Lyons & Co this identified with the West End.

Latterly American influences reflected the changing tastes for smoking and billiards rooms. At the Trocadero the Long Bar had become a popular destination for the masculine city-goer and retained a certain male identity until the bar closed in 1937 (See fig. 5:24). J. Lyons & Co's large theatre enterprise was built in 1896 and perfectly illustrates a transition from the imperialistic to the transatlantic via the beaux arts style.

Similarly to Mewés and Davis, a number of individuals including Spiers and Pond became interior designers at an early stage of the profession. Not merely architects or craftsmen, they introduced a type of luxury, as Selfridge had to Oxford Street. Consequently, Adolf Loos' American bar in Vienna was built in the twilight years of the empire also, and sat oddly with the image of the central European drinking culture, with its cafés, beer halls and wine bars. Visually, the Long bar carried a modern ideal in its interior design. It had mahogany panelled walls, with intricate sculptural details with figurines and lights. Importantly for such visual rhetoric, the long marble bar was positioned along the length of the interior wall, with stools lined for comfort allowing conversation at the bar. Loos' *American Bar* alludes to the modernistic aesthetic due to its simple clean lines, wood panelled ceiling and lounge area with built in leather couches, chequered floor tiles and low-slung bar stools. Charles Rennie Mackintosh, discussed earlier, transformed Mrs Cranston's tea room into an avant-garde space for the people of Glasgow on the back of empire based signifiers of trade and industry. A bar whose name alluded to the United States and which served 'American drinks' would certainly have been a novelty in 1908. (See fig. 5:25) Characterising elements of masculine style for a growing urban public, in contrast to the English pub with lounge, snug and saloon areas, central bar spaces became directly accessible from the street. Transatlantic influences had appeared slowly throughout Europe and the Viennese had their first taste of mixed drinks in the American pavilion at the World's Fair in Prater in 1873. The phenomenon of the American bar had already been

(Fig. 5:22) Cafe Monaco, Grill Room
(Source: BL23066 National Monuments Record) 1915

(Fig. 5:23) Strand Palace Hotel, Grill Room
(Source: BL20701_011 National Monuments Record) 1915

(Fig. 5:24) The Long Bar, Trocadero (Source: LMA ACC/3527) 1896

(Fig. 5:25) Adolf Loos, American Bar
(Source: Grafe and Bollerey) 1908

(Figure 5:26) American Bar, Maison Lyons
(Source: BL23647 National Monuments Records) 1916

mentioned in an 1894 architectural handbook, although apparently cocktails only started to come into their own after World War I.²⁸² Clearly the democratizing affects of department store, bar, restaurant and hotel marked a transition for the separate spheres. In 1916 when J. Lyons & Co opened their Maison Lyons restaurant, complete with an American Bar (see fig. 5:26). Transatlantic style had come to dominate the commercial interior, with an influence of European decorative arts, the mass leisure interiors began to have some aesthetic and moral credibility.

J. Lyons & Co updated the Regent Palace Hotel by employing the interior architect Oliver P. Bernard, in 1934 he transformed the billiard room into a cocktail bar called the 'Chez Cup' (See fig. 5:27). The basement reached from Glasshouse Street, changed from a masculine space to a feminised one. Previously men had moved freely into their smoking and billiards rooms, or walked across Piccadilly Circus to dine at the Criterion. The challenge of masculine territory discussed in chapter one had diminished due to the commodity culture that had sparked the Regent Street debate. The making of the modern West End was founded on the development of retail culture and the professionalization of interior design.

Described as classic art deco, Oliver Bernard's interiors were designed upon a theatrical American influence. As Anne Massey has written in her chapter on *Art Deco and the Moderne* 'classical inspiration, the use of smooth surfaces to envelop the three-dimensional form, love of the exotic, sumptuous materials and repeated geometric motifs characterize the Art Deco style'.²⁸³ Oliver Bernard was at the forefront of British Art Deco taste. His smoking room illustrated in fig. 5:28, was a democratized environment enticed by the changing establishments in Piccadilly and the West End. Restaurants, grills, bars and other spaces for leisure shaped the socio-cultural space and welcomed the female consumer by the 1930's. Transforming the old masculine spaces of the hotel into non gender specific interior spaces, a final stage of the redevelopment of the Regent Palace Hotel would adjust to suit the social geography of the West End.

In conclusion, this chapter has explored how the Lyons establishments had become well-known spaces of leisure in the West End. By expanding on some of the issues examined in chapter one, this chapter has addressed how the redevelopment of the Regent Palace Hotel's rooms welcomed the male and female public. The Lyons

²⁸² Bollerey, Franziska & Grafe, Christoph, *Café's and Bars: The Architecture of Public Display*, (New York: Routledge) 2007, p.153

²⁸³ Massey, Anne, *Interior Design Since 1900*, (London: Thames and Hudson) p. 91

(Fig. 5:27) Cocktail Bar, Regent Palace Hotel (Source: Regent Palace Hotel Archive) 1934

(Fig. 5:28) Smoking Room, Regent Palace Hotel
(Source: LMA ACC/3527) 1934

teashops emerging in 1893 and the centrally located Trocadero of 1896, contributed to the formation of gendered environments. Built as public/private interior rooms, the spaces allotted to masculine rituals and habits, including smoking and billiards rooms, had become commonplace in hotels. Decorated in exotic oriental styles, the imperial masculine space of the West End was mapped in the network of men's rooms in discreet private spaces in Piccadilly. Advancements in design and transatlantic tastes were to further affect the underground rooms of the Regent Palace Hotel. As the West End changed and welcomed the influx of proprietors who saw the potential of modern interiors for their businesses, the Regent Palace Hotel and Lyons Restaurants updated also. In the following chapter the upper floor space of the hotel is analysed, considering the employment of women and the accommodation of hotel guests. It further explores the functioning of J. Lyons & Co as a paternalistic company adopting American standards of production.

Chapter 6

Accommodating Employees and Guests

This thesis began as an investigation of the new luxury hotel in the West End with a specific view on the Regent Palace Hotel. In the previous chapters each room was examined for its decorative, spatial and gendered space, with some emphasis on the forms, structures and authority influencing hotel building. Moving into the territory of representation, this chapter explores how the hotel bedrooms were advertised by J. Lyons & Co. As a concluding chapter it further deals with the upper floor spaces of the hotel to consider how the private rooms were designed and used by guests and employees. Furthermore, the chapter explores the paternalistic culture that the company wished to implement, with a focus on the waitress and female guest in the hotel. The contrast between paid employment and women's roles during and after the Great War show evidence of women as valued by hotel proprietors. In a moment when the West End welcomed females, some women found themselves finding new identities and social positions in London.

How the west end was symbolised for guests can only be understood through the newspaper coverage and the advertising produced when the Regent Palace Hotel opened. In figure 6:1, the hotel is illustrated as a central attraction for visitors to London with many central tourist sites mapped in close proximity. Famous places included railway networks, museums, theatres, monuments and important buildings. Comparable to other West End attractions close by, the print states that the hotel is 'Accessible from all parts of London.' The journalist and politician T.P O'Connor was invited to the opening ceremony on 26th May 1915, he reported:

The Regent Palace Hotel does truly answer to my description of a gigantic enterprise. It is in that heart of London where life throbs most feverishly; that is to say in the district in and around Regent Street. Here, then, is the opening of a great new centre in the life of London. It is just at the point where those who have but a short time for their trip to London, can best utilise that time. They are in the heart of the world of shopping; they are within a few minutes of all the other centres – the political, the theatrical, the financial; they can get thus the most for their money and for their time as well. And so I bid it good fortune; London will give it a hearty and prompt welcome. I venture to prophecy that the first hour it opens, it will already have established its position as one of London's most popular rendezvous; as a permanent centre in London's life.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ O'Connor, T. P, 'My Visit to the Regent Palace Hotel', 26th May 1915

Further noted in guidebooks of the period, the image of the West End was illustrated by its physical proximity of space as approached from a tourist lens. Piccadilly and Oxford Street were bound by Regent Street and had become the destination for the shopper and visitor to London. The re-development of the Regent Street quadrant discussed in chapter one, allowed the space to be completely opened out to create a cross network of traffic. With the statue of Eros pointing towards Glasshouse Street and the Regent Palace Hotel, this central area was ideal for expansion. Mapping a framework for the geographical, pleasurable route of consumption identified by Rappaport in 2000²⁸⁵ and Edwards later in 2006, it has been claimed that:

The precise nature of the west end was as a fluid place, whose character changed during the course of the day. It was for many the destination of a journey, the site for 'a day in town' for the suburban and provincial populations, as well as for tourists. It was also a network of routes ... the development of the transport system of tube, buses, trains and taxi's was key to the functioning of the west end.²⁸⁶

Women's Work and J. Lyons & Co

Increased travel networks brought people into London at a time when the Lyons tearooms had become an increasingly popular venue. The waitresses employed by the company had become a symbol of service for J. Lyons & Co. With their first tearoom opening in Piccadilly, they were instantly associated with the West End. Lyons Corner Houses and the Louis XVI restaurant (discussed in chapter four) were advertised to promote a new kind of luxury for guests. Coverage in the popular press helped Lyons engagement with potential employees and informed consumers of their latest achievements. The Daily Mirror, a national weekly publication, reported on the opening ceremony and the changes for women during the Great War. In 1915, the newspaper wrote:

Women Waiters To Be Employed at the Regent Palace Opening Next Week. London can now boast a gigantic hotel which is certainly the largest in the whole of Europe – if not in the world. It is the Regent Palace Hotel, which is to open its doors to the public a week to-day. Rising several stories above surrounding buildings, the new hotel stands on an island site behind the eastern side of Regent Street.

²⁸⁵ See Rappaport, Chapter Four: 'Metropolitan Journeys: Shopping, Travelling, and Reading the West End' in *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press) p.108

²⁸⁶ Edwards, Bronwen, 'Masculinity and Metropolitan Modernity at Simpson Piccadilly' in *Making the West End Modern: Space, Architecture and Shopping in 1930's London*, PhD Thesis, University of the Arts, London, 2004

(Fig 6:1) Regent Palace Hotel Advertising (Source: LMA ACC/3527) 1915

It has ample accommodation for 1,500 and more resident visitors. The staff required numbers no fewer than 1000. The Regent Palace Hotel is the latest and greatest enterprise of Sir Joseph Lyons and his co-directors, Messrs I. and M. Gluckstein and Mr. A. Salmon, to whose organising genius Mr. T. P. O'Connor, MP., Sir Thomas Dewar and many other prominent people yesterday paid tribute at an inaugural reception held at the hotel." The Strand Palace Hotel has been such a huge success," Sir Joseph Lyons told *The Daily Mirror*, "that we have been practically compelled by force of public demand to open this new hotel on similar lines."

There are to be "no tips" "courtesy free of charge" is the ruling principle, and an innovation for a first class hotel is the employment of women waiters almost exclusively.²⁸⁷

This testimony indicates the effects of the First World War on the service industries in 1914-18. While Lyons had employed women in their various teashops since the 1890's, previously many hotels used waiters only, capitalising on this situation they employed many more women. Most prominently, the company's employment of waitresses was a selling point for J. Lyons & Co evident in published literature. Indeed to summarise the period between 1915 and 1935. As the service industries allowed young working class women to find employment away from domestic service, the First World War also helped them to attain a sense of freedom. This study also examines the results of the democratization of luxury, in producing new identities for employees and guests. Changes to the interior and spatial designs of the Regent Street Quadrant, examined in the previous chapters have come to a climax here. Profiling relationships that employee's had with the company, and identities that formed from women's work in a large-scale establishment in the West End. This study has addressed gender in terms of space, interiors and architecture. Importantly for this chapter, interior updates and modern design were extended to luxury staff accommodation in the inter-war period, indicating that modernisation and cultural meanings of commerce were a consequence of urban modernity.

Lyons popularity in the hotel trade depended on a notion of paternalistic culture of selling, staff morale and a mechanised system of organisation in general. The Salmon and Gluckstein families retained management of the business and each newly appointed member earned their status through the notion of 'working their way up' through the ranks. Utilising new technologies the company installed a state of the art modernized telegram system. A dictograph communicated with a keyboard in the basement providing operators with up-to-the minute information, such as the names and addresses of the guests. Enforcing a system of efficiency, loyalty and trust for all employees, the managers of the J. Lyons & Co enterprise formed only a small fraction of this vast business empire. The Lyons Mail journal reported club activities, sports,

²⁸⁷ Daily Mirror, May 19, 1915

competitions and rewards, as the opening of the Club House and Grounds in Sudbury Hill, Middlesex was displayed on the first page of a new volume in 1919. Entitled 'Our President Opens the New Grounds', Mr Montague Gluckstein, President, in his address on declaring the Grounds open said:

"It gives me much pleasure to be entrusted by my colleagues with the duty of expressing to members of the Lyons Club a hearty welcome on their entry into possession of this delightful centre for recreation and amusements." The club is intended to serve as a memorial to those noble fellows who, at the bidding of their country left our service and went forth to the great war and laid down their precious lives in the defence of the freedom of the world and of our hearths and homes.²⁸⁸

A sense of family-like kinship propelled in the workings of such companies, as J. Lyons & Co had founded the business thirty years before, they were extremely forthright in practicing paternalistic relations within the catering and manufacturing industries. Fundamental to the Lyons Club and magazine was to present a healthy culture of the body as an employment benefit with further added bonuses. For example the cover of the company journal (see fig. 6:2) illustrates a number of activities and communal recreation for workers, including various sports, reading, billiards and a clubhouse for socialising outside of work. Although family size fell among all occupational groups between the wars, by 1933 in the depths of unemployment in Britain the birth rate had reached its lowest levels. Doubts as to whether the population would reproduce itself were

fuelled by the death of men in the Great War and high levels of male unemployment throughout the 1920's.²⁸⁹ However soon after opening in 1918, the Regent Palace Hotel employed a staff of 1,500, including 350 waitresses, 36 head waiters, 150 chambermaids, 30 housekeepers, 40 superior staff (superintendents and the like), 120 chefs, 150 laundry hands, 60 uniformed staff (cloakroom, door and hall attendants, page boys etc), 25 luggage porters, 50 night staff and a large clerical staff.²⁹⁰

This indicates that the company managed to employ men and women between the wars, although women held the largest numbers of a public service team of staff, also mirrored in other Lyons restaurants and establishments. Women's cultural, as opposed to social and political lives were influenced as much by experiences within the home as

²⁸⁸ The Lyons Mail: A record devoted to the activities of the Lyons Club and the members thereof, Vol. IV – No. 1, September 1919, p.1

²⁸⁹ Alexander, Sally, 'The Mysteries and Secrets of Women's Bodies: Sexual knowledge in the first half of the twentieth century' in Nava, Mica & O'Shea, Alan (ed.) *Modern Times: Reflections on a Century of English Modernity* (London: Routledge) 1996, p.161

²⁹⁰ A report written by a management trainee of J. Lyons and Co – 1978-80, p.2

(Fig. 6:2) Front Page, The Lyons Mail (Source: LMA ACC/3527/268) Sept. 1919

they were by the exterior world of work. The social and cultural changes which characterised modernity between the wars, offered both working class and middle class women new opportunities as producers and consumers of an array of new products for the home and personal use.²⁹¹

The desire of ordinary women for 'finery' in the late Victorian period was perceived not only as an indication of sexual immorality, but also as an attempt to rise above their station. The decomposition of the visible signs of class distinction that the department store offered and the continuous incitement of desire to possess commodities meant that aspirations for a better life, did indeed represent a threat to the social order. In this instance, the increasing and disturbing disintegration of social boundaries was produced by a contradictory alliance between modern capitalist methods of retailing and women consumers.²⁹²

The cinema and fashion were aspects of this 'feminised' mass culture, and women's consumption of these remained problematic for the left and for feminists throughout the period. To the pre war generation of feminists including Rebecca West, Cicely Hamilton, Vera Brittain and Winifred Holtby, it appeared that the public display of fashionable clothes, cosmetics, dancing and the cinema encouraged the pursuit of marriage. The intense interest in heterosexual sex marked a return to forms of femininity they had fought against in their political and private lives. As the 1930's progressed, they were to be increasingly worried by the Fascist vision for womanhood, articulated by Oswald Mosley 'as different but equal'. Within this context, the older generation of middle-class feminists saw the fashion changes of the 1920's and 1930's as one of a number of reactionary forces which aimed to differentiate men from women along conventional gender lines. 'However, for many young working-class women, feminism was hardly the issue. Instead, making choices about how to spend their money and choosing which glamorous styles they should buy or make was symbolic of their hard-won economic independence.'²⁹³

In fig. 6:3, the waitress known as 'Nippy' illustrates the cover of the Lyons Mail journal in 1928, a young woman employed by Lyons was a role model for many girls living in London and the regions. These women engaged in a number of rules and a strict

²⁹¹ Buckley, Cheryl & Fawcett, Hilary, *Fashioning the Feminine: Representation and Women's Fashion From the Fin De Siecle to the Present*, (London: I. B Tauris) 2002, p. 86

²⁹² Nava, Mica, 'Modernity's Disavowal: Women, The City and the Department Store' in Nava, Mica & O'Shea, Alan (ed.) *Modern Times: Reflections on a Century of English Modernity* (London: Routledge) 1996, p. 62

²⁹³ Buckley, Cheryl & Fawcett, Hilary, *Fashioning the Feminine: Representation and Women's Fashion From the Fin De Siècle to the Present*, (London: I. B Tauris) 2002, p. 95

(Fig. 6:3) Lyons Mail (Source: Peter Bird Archive) September 1928

regime administered by J. Lyons & Co, Nippy could be sent to work at a Royal Garden party, large exhibition, one of the hotels, restaurants or tea shops. The Lyons *Nippy* waitress was so popular and well known a figure, that the role of the young free and independent woman meant something for the space in which she could reinvent herself in the city. Although femininity came under intense scrutiny between the wars, women's employment signified a peaceful, alternative way forward following the ultimate masculine force of the war. On the other hand, discussions around femininity raised anxieties about women's roles as wives and mothers, and the price to be paid for their economic and personal independence. It also foregrounded a host of issues about women's sexual identity and their relationships with men and with each other.²⁹⁴

Helping to promote the notion of family, women were employed to attract other females into the hotel. Democratizing effects encouraged a broader customer base, each employee was in a position to represent the notion of the Lyons family and to invite guests into the hotel on this premise. The force of popular culture was strong in this period and clearly took on the attributes of the (feminised) masses, that is to say it was frequently depicted as engulfing, irrational, sentimental and so forth. Thus it is contrasted not only with masculinity but also with cultural modernism, which is hard, rigorous and rational, and which has always been concerned to distance itself from the popular.²⁹⁵

Further evident in fig. 6:4, the Lyons waitress represented the widespread culture of the company as a popular force in the interwar leisure services. Influenced by transatlantic style, fashion moved into an all round commodity culture situated on entertainment, such as the occasion of the "nippy's" Olympia dance, or the vast shopping space of the West End. Access to highly designed spaces for public consumption, allowed young women who visited the cinema, to idolise the role of waitress and shopgirl played by the famous actresses. Hollywood as a significant influence on young women in the inter-war period became more experienced in popular public environments such as the cinema and in the updated new luxury hotels. For example magazines promoted the engagement with glamour propelled through celluloid and into spaces of modern art deco design, of which were now in reach of the working class girls employed in the new service industries.

²⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 84

²⁹⁵ Nava, Mica, 'Modernity's Disavowal: Women, The City and the Department Store' in Nava, Mica & O'Shea, Alan (ed.) *Modern Times: Reflections on a Century of English Modernity* (London: Routledge) 1996, p. 63

(Fig. 6:4) The Lyons Mail (Source: LMA ACC/3527/268) 1927

With critics of such endeavours, the cinema was perceived as part of the same processes of standardisation and Americanisation of culture that George Orwell and J.B Priestley's writings identified in their texts *Coming Up For Air* and *An English Journey*. Aspirational individuals were likened in these writings as socially conformist and influenced by the American methods of mass production and consumption encroaching on a shifting meaning of a lost England. Such views surfaced upon the re-readings of the Frankfurt School, particularly Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, whose essays in the inter-war years and after, attacked the new 'culture industries', which included the cinema and other aspects of popular culture such as music and dancing.²⁹⁶

Mica Nava has discussed the idea of the ordinary and everyday experience outside of the elite, or how masculine culture has been touched upon, commenting that the Frankfurt Theorists represented a virulent denigration of ordinary audiences, as she suggests:

Ironically one way of seeing these views is to see them as evidence of men's passivity as they witness the reorientation of women's desires away from the home to the seductive environment of the cinema and the stores... mass culture emerges then as the despised yet alluring rival of the displaced man. The insistence of the cultural critics on the passivity of the consumer can be re-read a denial, as a disavowal of the profound anxiety about loss and displacement that mass culture seems to engender.²⁹⁷

Indeed, in fig. 6:5 the anxieties that hundreds of women working the production line represented, clarifies the arrival of displaced man for modern women, in the J. Lyons & Co, Greenford Factory, Ealing. Such divisions of labour and Marxist underpinnings related these ventures back to the commodity culture embedded in the cultural meanings of the company. As illustrated, the numbers of women filling up chocolate boxes on the production line meant that such beautiful things could be displayed in the West End restaurants. Chocolate boxes were a main feature in the window arrangements of the Lyons Corner Houses and the glass enclosures or kiosks within the lobbies of Maison Lyons and the Regent Palace Hotel. The waitress was also portrayed in the light of this popularity and glamorously illustrated on Nippy's own brand of confectionary. At such points in the modernisation of the Lyons catering ethos, many new departments were introduced to determine the in-house priorities of the owners.

²⁹⁶ Buckley, Cheryl & Fawcett, Hilary, *Fashioning the Feminine: Representation and Women's Fashion From the Fin De Siècle to the Present*, (London: I. B Tauris) 2002, p. 94

²⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p.95

(Fig. 6:5) Greenford Factory, Ealing, London
(Source: London and Middlesex Archaeological Society) 1920's

The fashionable female body became an interface where different values and ideologies overlapped and competed, and definitions of the female body were firmly located in the gender uncertainties that accelerated and intensified. Often living away from home, young, single women in particular began to imagine themselves differently.²⁹⁸ There was a great deal of concern at the time that war was making women more 'masculine', as they took on modes of behaviour more typical of men. Becoming independent and self-reliant, working outside the home, and managing their own finances. During the 1920's and 1930's, the fashionable female body was the focus for a range of contradictory ideas about the nature of feminine identity.

As was illustrated in further published material, in fig. 6:6 an article entitled 'The Willowy Sex' illustrates the 'Regent Palace Hotel Girls at Practice' in a game of cricket. Fashionably attired in white tennis garments and headscarves, this image of women portrayed them as active, strong and confident, although the editorial strap line suggests otherwise. It seems that this broader context framed women's shifting social and cultural roles, particularly their experience of modernity and their relative positions within interwar patriarchy. Images of the sexually and socially emancipated lifestyles of specific groups of women were to be found in a number of popular culture arenas.²⁹⁹ Although most female historians focus on the consumer, as opposed to, the female employee, acting as consumers required substantial levels of skill and expertise. Negotiating the West End remained the one sector of the modern production-retailing cycle that was non-taylorist and self-regulated. Moreover, this loose, undisciplined activity, although essential in terms of its economic productivity, took place in the luxurious and resonant environment of the shopping space, Nava points out:

The imagined freedoms and pleasures that these unsupervised excursions to the department stores offered, the ambiguous position of shopping as an activity which was neither clearly work nor leisure, and the financial control and social powers accruing to shoppers, together combined to generate a range of anxieties not only among the 'public' but also among intellectuals whose ideas contributed to the formation of ideas about modernity and mass culture.³⁰⁰

New Metropolitan Guests

The modern leisure industry was by this point recognising the commercial viability of entertainment spaces and the influence that modern design might have for the

²⁹⁸ Buckley and Fawcett, p.63

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 83

³⁰⁰ Nava, Mica, 'Modernity's Disavowal: Women, The City and the Department Store' in Nava, Mica & O'Shea, Alan (ed.) *Modern Times: Reflections on a Century of English Modernity* (London: Routledge) 1996, p.57

(Fig. 6:6) Lyons Mail (Source: LMA ACC/3527/268) 1927

engagement between guests and hotel interiors. Shops were also a main influence for women to visit the West End and many services, products and comforts were offered.

A visit to Piccadilly and a stay at the Regent Palace Hotel were planned events becoming destinations for leisure and employment for women. In some cases identities were marred by the modernity of the city and the darker elements of the adjoining spaces in the West End geography. Changing attitudes to the societal norms of the period, meant that women were vulnerable to the anxiety of the city probably because they had not long been able to walk out after dark without 'getting a reputation'. Modern lifestyles of the leisure industries gave work and pleasure to women, enhanced by Americanised symbols surrounding them. Films illustrated how a chance meeting in a hotel lobby, or a glamorous cocktail bar might be aligned to a film set. This new environment resulted in a loosening of attitudes as the modern woman was represented in popular culture either in public 'out in the town' or privately 'at home'. In contrast to 'shopping' and 'housekeeping' women could stage events in the hotel bedroom as spaces of symbolism and ritual, whether they were newly married and on honeymoon or otherwise.

Historians have previously focused their attentions to the relationships between texts and the city as virtual or imagined architectural spaces, without addressing the humane contribution and everyday experiences of socialised bodies. The spaces of commodity fetishism shaped personal geographies as networks of age, gender and identity in the urban metropolis. Modernity became a word for the new meanings and understandings of contemporary changes in technology, the arts and sciences, and the impact this had on the modern human existence. By employing a term to describe the urban spectator, the flaneur would move voyeuristically throughout the city streets observing the human activity of the masses within the urban environment. As illusionist, the flaneur transformed the city into a landscape of strangers and secrets. At the centre of his art, was the capacity to present things in fortuitous juxtapositions, in "mysterious and mystical connection."³⁰¹ Linear time became, as Walter Benjamin noted, "a dream web where the most ancient occurrences are attached to those of today."³⁰²

The rise of cosmopolitanism, "the experience of diversity in the city as opposed to a relatively confined localism," was a bourgeois male pleasure. It established a right to the city – a right not traditionally available to, often not even part of, the imaginative

³⁰¹ Susan Buck-Morss, "The Flaneur, the Sandwichman, and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering," *New German Critique* 13, no. 39 (1986): 106

³⁰² *Ibid*: 106

repertoire of the less advantaged.”³⁰³ In literary and visual terms, Griselda Pollock observed, being ‘at home in the city’ was represented as a privileged gaze, betokening possession and distance.³⁰⁴ Urban spectatorship proposed by historian Richard Sennett was an oasis of personal freedom, a place of floating possibilities as well as dangers, acting in Baudelaire’s phrase, as *flâneur*. Strolling across the divided spaces of the metropolis, whether it was London, Paris, or New York, to experience the city as a whole was a fact and fantasy of urban exploration that had long been an informing feature of nineteenth century bourgeois male subjectivity. The city became a contested terrain, where new commercial spaces, new journalistic practices, and a range of public spectacles and reform activities inspired a different set of social actors. Walkowitz saw this as a consequence of modernity in the late Victorian age, by stating:

Thanks to the material changes and cultural contests of the late Victorian city, protesting workers and “gents” of marginal class position, female philanthropists and “platform women,” Salvation Army lasses and match girls, as well as glamorised “girls in business,” made their public appearances and established places and viewpoints in relation to the urban panorama. These new entrants to the urban scene produced new stories of the city that competed, intersected with, appropriated, and revised the dominant imaginative mappings of London.³⁰⁵

For shopping historians, women’s access to the city streets had been cited as an important indicator of the modernity of emergent cultures from the nineteenth century. By the interwar period, women’s presence in the street during the day was no longer a contested issue, the street was central to how the West End was thought about, providing the framework for the all important construction of shopping trips, and constituting its iconic landmarks: Bond Street, Oxford Street and so on³⁰⁶. Even more crucially, it was the space where shops were encountered, window-shopping took place, and being ‘in town’ was performed. Retailers certainly understood the importance of the liminal layer of the building: they threw the full force of their architectural and display strategies onto the facade, in order to engage the passing world and to attract some widespread press attention.

³⁰³ Sennett, Richard, *The Fall of Public Man*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973. P. 135-137

³⁰⁴ Griselda Pollock, “Vicarious Excitements: London: A Pilgrimage by Gustave Doré and Blanchard Jerrold, 1872,” *New Formations* 2 (Spring: 1988): 28

³⁰⁵ Walkowitz, Judith, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London*, (London: Virago) 1992, p.18

³⁰⁶ Edwards, Bronwen, ‘West End Shopping with Vogue: 1930’s Geographies of Metropolitan Consumption’ in Benson, John & Ugolini, Laura, *Cultures of Selling: Perspectives on Consumption and Society Since 1700*, (Farnham: Ashgate) 2006, p.40

New Luxury Rooms

Staying in the West End meant that consumers had an array of choices amongst London's new luxury hotels. However in many cases en-suite rooms remained a minority. Often accommodation in hotels was rather less extravagant than the many public rooms on the main floors and many were considerably more expensive than the new economy hotels. Monitored in respect of domestic comforts and considered for its modern technological assets, the Regent Palace Hotel evoked the height of convenience. Reviewed by a respected hoteliers publication the *Hotel Review* in 1915, they state:

From the first floor upwards the whole hotel is given up to bedroom accommodation, and here the visitor is catered for in a manner rarely met with in the most expensive hotels. Each bedroom is light – even the inner ones which face a large well – providing ample room, tastefully decorated and choicely furnished. Everywhere there is a subtle suggestion of homeliness, which spontaneously induces a feeling of comfort. Of most interest to the visitor is the provision of a lavatory basin in each room, with hot and cold water laid direct on. This is an important innovation, and one which should be universally appreciated. In other ways the convenience of the visitor has been made an especial study – for example, the control of either of the two lights in the room from the bedside. A handsome electric heater is also provided in each bedroom, so that, for a very moderate charge, the visitor may enjoy just that degree of warmth which he or she finds most desirable, with no more trouble than is entailed in the turning on of a switch. On every floor there is ample bathroom accommodation; and it is hardly necessary to remark that in a hotel of this kind one finds a hairdresser's establishment for both ladies and gentlemen.³⁰⁷

Building an extension to house an extra floor freed more space on inside the hotel (See fig. 6:7). Upper floor plans illustrated the height and depth of the building, following the parameters of the hotel's structural elements and a plan of standardized units. Room numbers 101 to 192 were identical in size whilst at the apex above the Vestibule and Billiards Room the space was wider and shorter, with a mix of double and single rooms. Each floor serviced nearly 200 rooms with 13 Baths and 17 Lavatories and the forthcoming floors followed the same format of corridors above the first floor.

With comfortable sitting rooms communicating with a guest suite at a low rate, family parties could be accommodated with bedrooms *en suite*. The Regent Palace Hotel was able to offer its visitors a luxury equal to middle-class status on board an ocean liner and they provided a new style of hotel for their guests. A photograph of a J. Lyons & Co guest room is shown in fig. 6:8, illustrating a small spacious room, with a picture-rail and wallpaper, two beds, a washbasin, wardrobe and a hearth. These private

³⁰⁷ The Hotel Review. June 1915, p. 263

(Fig. 6:7) First Floor Plan, Regent Palace Hotel (Source: LMA ACC/3527) 1915

(Fig. 6:8) Twin Room, Strand Palace Hotel (Source: National Monuments Record) 1909

suites were considerably domestic and in no way comparable to the decoration and ornate plasterwork of the public rooms on the ground floor.

Later proven by the statutory listing of the building, the guest accommodation was considered for a lack of grandeur, stating that the hotel retained "two main floors of public rooms, on the ground floor and basement levels; bedrooms above not of special interest." "All the windows originally had mullions, and there remains small-paned glazing to the public rooms and sash windows to the bedrooms. It is a practical design in which every bedroom enjoyed natural light, and it is a composition best enjoyed at close quarters, for in its backstreet site it can never be seen as a whole. Raised rooftop rooms were constructed over the entrance of 1934-6, to create two more storeys of bedrooms, and a new lift tower." Furthermore, "On the upper floors the bedrooms were always modest and have been extensively modified; they are not of special interest, but the bridge over Sherwood Street is a stirring composition of terracotta and green Roman tile roof that closes the vista, with ornamental grilles and mouldings."³⁰⁸

Compared to residential rooms in the Ritz hotel, (see fig. 6:9) the Strand Palace Hotel bedroom is practical, less ornate and absent of the Louis XVI style. The planning of corridors, thoroughfares and upper floor spaces of the new luxury hotels related to the theories of domestic building of the mid nineteenth century. In the Ritz Hotel, suites of rooms overlooking Piccadilly opened from the main corridor. Between each two bedrooms was a sitting room assigned to one or other bedroom, each bedroom having its own lobby and door into the sitting room. Alternatively, the two could be combined to form a grand suite with sitting room and two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Further sets of doors allowed guests to have a pair of bedrooms opening in to one another if they wished. The bedrooms along the opposite side of the corridor, for example, those overlooking the rear court and intended for the use of couriers, personal maids or valets, did not have private bathrooms, but were equipped with fireplaces.

Robert Kerr reminded readers in *The Gentleman's House* (1864) of the wretched inconvenience of 'thoroughfare rooms', which made domesticity and retirement unobtainable. 'Thoroughfares' could be regarded as the backbone of a plan not only because corridors looked like spines, but because they differentiated functions by joining them via a separate distributor, in much the same way as the vertebral column structures the body. This is explained by Robin Evans:

³⁰⁸ Statutory list description, Regent Palace Hotel (main building and bridge) May 2004

(Fig. 6.9) Twin Room, Ritz Hotel (Source: Binney) 1905

The relation of rooms to each other being the relationship of their doors, the sole purpose of the thoroughfares is to bring these doors into a proper system of communication. Thoroughfares were able to draw distant rooms closer, but only by disengaging those near at hand. And in this there is another glaring paradox: in facilitating communication, the corridor reduced contact. What this meant was that purposeful or necessary communication was facilitated while incidental communication was reduced, and contact, according to the lights of reason and the dictates of morality, was at best incidental and distracting, at worst corrupting and malignant.³⁰⁹ The favoured alternative was the terminal room, with only one strategically placed door into the rest of the house.

The introduction of the through-passage into a domestic architecture first inscribed a deeper division between the upper and lower ranks of society by maintaining direct sequential access for the privileged family circle while consigning servants to a limited territory always adjacent to, but never within the house proper; where they were always on hand, but never present unless required.³¹⁰ A terminal room approach is adopted in the planning of metropolitan hotels in the twentieth century, designed to reduce the contact that guests might have in otherwise traditional or smaller hotel types. Such approaches to the design of adjacent room spaces were relevant in the design of hotel plans, as residential areas were made private by using the terminal system. After the First World War, a further two floors were added to the Regent Palace Hotel, giving a total of 9 floors and 1,033 rooms. Alongside the hotel was an annexe (to be examined later in this chapter). With the first two floors used as offices for J. Lyons & Co Ltd, the remainder provided quarters for the staff who lived in.³¹¹

Sinister Events Inside Rooms

The Regent Palace Hotel was a building that interrupted the quadrant, with a dark side to the physical space of Piccadilly, next to Soho, on one side, yet paradoxically turning away from Regent Street on the other. The hotel came to represent the highs and lows of Piccadilly Circus and the surrounding area. Modern women frequented the hotel as guests or employees and in some cases they entered an urban environment of social tension, nervosa and a sense of interiority.

The newspaper headlines between 1929 and 1933 revealed how crime underpinned a subterranean side of the building in terms of interiorization and social space. Within the urban plethora of entertainment space outside there was also a sinister side located in the hotel interior. A number of press headlines followed in the manner of humane

³⁰⁹ Robin Evans, *Figures, Doors and Passages* (1978) in 'Translations From Drawing To Building and Other Essays', (London: Architectural Association) 1997, p.79

³¹⁰ Ibid, p. 71

³¹¹ Preliminary notes: Management Trainee 1978-80

actions and heightened heroism and modernity, reports including: *Woman's Masquerade as a Man*, *Man found shot in a London Hotel*, *Couple Shot in London Hotel*, *Engineer Charged with Murder* and *Woman's Death in Hotel* ³¹² illustrated that identities in the urban space had become more public and nonetheless private. The notion of privacy in the public realms of the new luxury hotel challenged by such reports, revealed how modernity and interiority affected individuals. Hotels represented a chance meeting or planned event, a space for random actions and emotions to take place, all being part of the microcosm of modernity.

People contemplating acts of violence calmed their nerves and made ready their plans in the privacy of their rooms. Hotelkeepers thus faced something of a dilemma. Their businesses depended upon attracting a paying clientele, and they were legally obligated to offer accommodations to anyone who could afford them. The very openness of hotels, however, endangered their smooth operation. The hotel business was an extremely competitive one, and it was thus essential that an establishment maintain its reputation by avoiding undesirable publicity or unflattering rumours. Writing on unruly guests and anxious hosts, Sandoval Straus maintains:

The tense and unruly environment of the hotel was a microcosm of a broader problem of social control that accompanied the advent of modernity in the Atlantic world. By the early nineteenth century, the penetration of capitalistic logic into human relationships was well under way, dissolving traditional bonds between people and places. Transience became an everyday fact of life, with people coming into contact with unknown individuals as never before. This presented a problem because strangers were difficult to discipline.³¹³

As a dominant form of public hospitality, the architectural form of the hotel provoked questions of human behaviour and locality. A primary difficulty consisted not in the way people interacted with hotels themselves, but rather in how the space of the hotel, itself a product of human creativity and responsiveness to change, allowed people to interact with one another. Recognizing this fact makes it easier to understand the nature of discipline in modernity. Among the key innovations of the hotel was the way it depersonalized the provision of hospitality, replacing the patriarchal figure of the innkeeper and his subordinate family with a salaried hotel manager and a vast amount of employees.

³¹² Scrapbook, compiled by J. Lyons and Co of newspaper cuttings, 1927-50, (London Metropolitan Archives) uncatalogued.

³¹³ Sandoval-Strausz, A. K., *Hotel: An American History*, (London: Yale University Press) 2007, p.204

Men and women may have shared the privatisation of personality, the careful anonymity and withdrawal in public life; but the line drawn increasingly sharply between the public and private also confined women to the private. The many authors of modernity were unaware of the different experiences of women in the modern city.³¹⁴ In Baudelaire's essays and poems, women appear very often, as modernity breeds, or makes visible, a number of categories of female city-dwellers. Among those most prominent in these texts are: the prostitute, the widow, the old lady, the lesbian, the murder victim, and the passing unknown woman.³¹⁵ In the 1930's, women visiting the West End found these experiences representing the darker side of the urban city. For example in fig. 6:10, the Daily Mirror reports on 'An officer and woman shot dead' the newspaper claimed: 'The woman who was found dead in a room at the Regent Palace Hotel, London, yesterday, with Captain John Frank Grosvenor Blockley, of the Indian Army Transport Corps is believed to be Helen Diamond, of Glasgow. Both of them had been shot, and a Service revolver was lying on the floor.'³¹⁶

Photographs of women were placed on the front pages of the national newspapers through such circumspect encounters in hotel rooms. Something of the liminal in hotel space allowed for a privacy in the public atmosphere of the hotel and an interiority of the space, privately encountered above ground floor level. Again, a further hotel report states: West End Hotel Suicide – Miss Eileen Aubert outside the Westminster Coroner's Court, where she gave evidence at the inquest on her sister's husband, Mr. Benjamin Baker, a company director, who cut his throat at the Regent Palace Hotel.³¹⁷ This sensationalism and publicity was paramount in the popular press and shocking for its readers as the modernity of city was translated like a film noir or imitation of a fictitious novel on real terms.

Gender and identity manifested itself in the West End's establishments and the hotel gave the democratizing effects needed in for urban privacy. This was also characterised through sexuality, staff seeking to uphold their establishments' respectability focused overwhelmingly on excluding unmarried heterosexual couples. This, and the established practice of sharing rooms to save money, meant two men attracted little, if any, attention. They could often rent rooms in the most prestigious of venues, including Claridge's and the Savoy, near Soho the Regent Palace Hotel was a

³¹⁴ Wolff, Janet, *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture*, (Cambridge: Polity Press) 1990, p. 40

³¹⁵ Ibid, p. 41

³¹⁶ Daily Mirror, June 25, 1932

³¹⁷ Daily Mirror, Saturday, January 24, 1920

(Fig. 6:10) Daily Mirror, Saturday, June 25, 1932

place to stay when Piccadilly Circus became the focus for queer commercial sociability until the 1950's.

Baedeker's *London and its environs* (1923) described the Circus as:

For the pleasure seeker, the centre of London, the point at which the vibrant commercial networks explored converged. To the southeast was the Lilypond; on the south side, the Criterion. To the north, on Glasshouse Street, was the Regent Palace Hotel – where the bar was popular for four decades. The Trocodero was to the northeast on Shaftsbury Avenue. And the pubs around the Circus – places like the White Bear and Ward's Irish House – were known queer venues. In Piccadilly Circus, queer commercial sociability existed in all its diversity, as working men socialized alongside flamboyant queans, discreet middle-class men, and servicemen.³¹⁸

Sexual knowledge of a very different kind was on offer in the pages of the popular and middle-market press, as well as in the cinema and paperback fiction. Images of London loomed large in this coverage, where urban melodrama and the human interest story competed with more contemporary documentary features. Very often they drew on the world view of the elites and the experts, reworking establishment obsessions to the demands of mass audiences. Elaborate stories of West End perversion and tales of sexual deviants in high places circulated information and entertainment to a culturally sophisticated reading public nationwide, following media patterns of production and consumption that had been established by the late Victorian popular press.³¹⁹

Entering public space placed women of all classes, whether shopgirls or shopping ladies, in a vulnerable position. Being out in public was for a woman to enter an immoral domain "where one risked losing virtue, dirtying oneself, being swept into a 'disorderly and heady swirl'"³²⁰ Interiors played important roles for attracting these women. Like cinemas the department stores were regularly remodelled with marbled lining, exotic wood veneering, and gilt detailing to create stylish departments and leisure spaces. The kinetic nature of the street infused representations of West End shopping in the 1930's: constant pedestrian and vehicular traffic, marked the uneasy relationship between the modernity of urban movement and rational transport systems, and the backward chaos of the city streets. Inside the efficiency in organised space

³¹⁸ Houlbrook, Matt, *Queer London: Perils and Pleasures in the Sexual Metropolis*, (London: University of Chicago Press), p. 187, The *Lilypond* became the nickname for the Coventry Street *Lyons Corner House*, where many could go late at night and be welcome to stay for hours without the need to book a table.

³¹⁹ Walkowitz, Judith, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late Victorian London*, (London: Virago) 1992, p. 15

³²⁰ Sennett, Richard, *The Fall of Public Man*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973, p. 135

provided a window from the hotel bedroom on to the panoptic view, shop windows and people bustling outside. An inevitable tension lay upon the West End street, the threshold of the ground floor and public zone of the Regent Palace Hotel. Capitalising on this, J. Lyons & Co initiated a system of rationalised chaos, reinforced by the consumer to employee relationship. Above ground floor the private room protected and alluded to the tensions of urban modernity, the *flâneur*, who became replaced by a meaningful visitor, non observer or merely a participator of the scene.

New Extensions: Luxury Staff Rooms

In 1934 the director's of the Regent Palace Hotel announced their new scheme for the private Staff Luxury Quarters, the Daily Mirror headline explained that a seven-story annexe was to be built for the Regent Palace Hotel (See fig. 6:11):

Luxury quarters for the Regent Palace Hotel staff are a feature of improvements now being carried out. An annexe, seven stories high, unconnected with the present building by a two decker bridge, is to be built. The accommodation for guests will be extended by nearly 150 bedrooms. Every girl on the staff is to have a well furnished room, containing a pile carpet, built-in wardrobe, central heating, running hot and cold water, full length mirror, bed with box-spring mattress and bedside light switch – supplemented by a series of ingenious labour saving devices which include painted walls and jointless floors. An innovation in the planning of these staff quarters is the elimination of "obscured" glass. Privacy will be assured by a more modern device, which consists of two thicknesses of glass between which lace curtaining is inserted. This is a modern invention, which has provided a new market for the Lancashire glass manufacturers, and is expected shortly to lead to a break in that industry. One result of the extension will be the widening of Sherwood Street by means of a colonnade running under the frontage of the annexe.³²¹

The feminisation of the West End and the Regent Street quadrant came about as a consequence of the masculine proprietors of commercial catering establishments in the West End. Modernisation programmes for the Regent Palace Hotel included such luxuries as dustless spaces for efficiently useful room space and the inclusion of sink units and mirrored glass. When the staff annexe and bridge was built across Sherwood Street to the adjacent buildings on Brewer Street, it was an innovation for interior architects such as Oliver P. Bernard, who commissioned the new interiors. Within such a spatial socio-cultural mapped route of fashionable consumption, no comparably dramatic shifts of territory had taken place. There were no new thoroughfares cutting through the historic street layout of the West End, and there was no large-scale re-

³²¹The Daily Mirror, Tuesday February 20, 1934

(Fig. 6:11) The Daily Mirror, Tuesday February 20, 1934

building of existing streets.³²² Further indicating that the outlets merely adapted their exterior surroundings in terms of ephemeral advertising and window display. The pre war imperialist facades of the Piccadilly quadrant became submerged into emblems of British patronage and casings for modern interiors that stores, restaurants and hotels sought to update.

Edwards unpacked the central territory further to reveal its most prominent places, where Piccadilly constituted an important pivot. 'It was the junction of several major thoroughfares: Shaftesbury Avenue, Haymarket, Regent Street and Piccadilly. But it also functioned as the focus of a broader cultural network.' As expressed by the guidebook *London: The World's Largest City*, 'Piccadilly Circus can be said to be the axle pin of the metropolis ... It is the place that all exiled English men and women abroad think of in their homesick reveries, and so one may justly describe it as London's throbbing heart', the statue of Eros the emblem for the West End as a whole.³²³

On August 30, 1934, the Regent Palace Hotel is advertised in a new format emphasising the bargain elements of a visit. '150 MORE BEDROOMS' all double (or two bedded) rooms become the selling point of the hotel. Private, yet easily accessible rooms or accommodation are the main reasons why the management decide upon an expansion. 'The additional bedrooms have been provided in the hope that in future the accommodation will be in proportion to the demand.' They state 'Reservations can be made now.' The costs for a double room or single room have risen by 30% since the opening of the hotel and remain affordable with Bed, Bath and Breakfast as the main context and customer approach - a quick and easy way to visit London and to enjoy the surrounding area and entertainments.³²⁴

To conclude, in the heart of London and in the centre of the West End, in Piccadilly, the Regent Palace Hotel provided luxury accommodation for staff and gave new meanings to commerce and leisure in London. Further to this was the sense of a gender equality that prevailed as a universal idea and philosophy. The Lyons club and associated magazine, consolidated for participants of the J. Lyons & Co culture, an identity borne out of kinship, equality and belonging. The feminised masses were identified as role

³²²Edwards, Bronwen, 'West End Shopping with Vogue: 1930's Geographies of Metropolitan Consumption' in Benson, John & Ugolini, Laura, *Cultures of Selling: Perspectives on Consumption and Society Since 1700*, (Farnham: Ashgate) 2006, p.42

³²³ Ibid, p.43

³²⁴ Daily Express, August 30, 1934.

models of shop girl or waitress that young women sought to emulate. Furthermore, the geography of the West End shopping space and views of windows and spatial networks, were reflected in modernised styles of objects to be bought, used and worn. The interiors of the luxury staff quarters represented the interest and desire for modern identities, realised in new modern things and the interiors of public and private spaces within the hotel. This chapter has emphasised that people took on new identities in visiting the West End. Location meanings in the advertising of the Regent Palace Hotel, were part of a representation of the modern leisure industry and its commercial viability. Entertainment spaces and the modern design of the hotel rooms united guests with spaces of leisure, just as the terminal system of room planning separated them from others. Semi-public, private hotel space would provoke isolation and personal intention, by emphasising how human relations could be mapped to the modern West End. The destination of Piccadilly was identified through the hotel and a construction of place images for spaces and buildings for visitors to complete a narrative that was situated on public life.

Conclusion

This thesis has explored one building as a way of evaluating the developments of urban hotel expansion between 1888 and 1935. Using the West End and the Regent Palace Hotel, a location and building type previously unexplored in design history or the history of the interior. Architecture has been evaluated from the view of gender specific spaces. Situating the West End of London and mapping the expansion of new luxury hotels, through urban reconstruction and an evaluation of the Edwardian city. J. Lyons & Co as a force in the production of leisure spaces in Piccadilly, enabled this thesis to examine new routes and sites for the evaluation of luxury spaces. The study has proven that through traditional principles that were further visualised as conformist and masculine. Imperialist symbols of Empire represented in the facades of the Regent Street thoroughfare. Importantly represented by the land owned by the crown as landlord, would provoke tensions between patriotism and commerce. A feminisation of the spatial network became fused on to the West End and expanded in parallel to Edwardian urban renewal. Witnessed by the strengths of commerce and capital enterprise, the quadrant transformed and modernised.

The thesis has assessed the viewpoint of contemporary observers and evidenced that the facades and streets leading up to the Regent Palace Hotel, impacted on its architectural symbolism. Intentionally indicating how such commercial buildings revealed the new methods in concrete steel-frame construction. The ideals of the architectural elite sought to reduce urban renewal. New capitalist enterprise was embraced by J. Lyons & Co and has been illustrated throughout the thesis, as the commercial strength of Piccadilly and the West End. Attracting a range of entrepreneurs including European and American patrons of London, their international tastes afforded new techniques and ways of employing them. This research indicates how such new establishments responded to the needs of a growing national and international, metropolitan customer base.

The new luxury hotels provided an appeal for fine dining and the luxurious interior surroundings that the public spectacle of dining out endorsed. In doing so, women were specific contributors to the socio-cultural environments of Louis XVI style restaurants. The pace and emergence of French dining in the West End, resulted in highly efficient and overly decorated surroundings that attracted couples into the resort of Piccadilly. Indicating that the previous masculine dominated establishments would evolve into more democratic environments. The French style of luxury interior and cuisine disseminated in the new luxury hotels, informed the London public of the

international styles and tastes for public interiors and locations for spaces of leisure. Further proven in the many theatres and restaurants opened in the West End from 1900 onwards. Such new establishments followed a pattern of providing small or large rooms, intricately decorated in white plasterwork. Whereas furnishing was simple, yet unique enough to dress a table in crisp white cloths, this pervaded a sense of refinement aligned to the Parisian tastes of the fin de siècle.

Modernisation and the service of the new luxury hotel as a whole, has further indicated that whether visiting the West End for the day, or in travelling to and from the hotel for a short or long stay. Electricity would enable the space of Piccadilly to light up and attract a popular clientele to the central space of the area. The Regent Palace Hotel built as a newly decorated and highly mechanised machine, presented the transatlantic style most notably seen on a voyage and journey aboard the twentieth century ocean liners. Such an important point to be made at the end of this thesis, has proven that by 1912, the combination of high style interior, modern technology and the advent of the First World War, would combine to influence the move away from previous Victorian restraints and connotations of judgements in good taste. The grand exhibitions and J. Lyons & Co's involvement in the refreshment of these venues, provided an explanation for pavilions and temporary structures and sites of consumption. Moreover, these spaces and their popular influences became prevalent for the expansion of the geography of London in bringing people to the West End in the 1890's and into the new century.

Foremost in this examination, is the apparent gender specificity that underlies transitional cultural meanings for places of pleasure. The feminisation of the hotel is a new and un-entered territory within social and design historical studies. Importantly, by using the prism of the large-scale Lyons establishment, I have been able to acutely position the gendered points of site location, floor levels and areas of specific social interaction, through the public and private interior rooms. This is further proven, by evaluating the last version of the Edwardian model of a modern hotel building. Yet, it must be proclaimed that by this stage in development, Lyons had invented the most economy based luxury building in 1915. Furthermore, during the inter-war developments of interior design, rather than re-build, the hotel was required to update and modernise. In keeping with the visual framework of a new and modern West End, a design department was introduced by J. Lyons & Co for all building, interior and window display commissions.

Whilst the architectural press was generous with their descriptions of the interior designs for new hotels, many restaurants suffered the denigration of ostentatious description. It seems that the lower end establishment was unrecognised as a reforming model for the working classes, although J. Lyons & Co counteracted this. Such new places of employment diminished these beliefs, only serving to provide a narrative for the effects of social democratic reconstructions and associated politics. Within this was a framework of shifting gender professions and individual or collective beliefs in national identity.

Indeed, with the contribution of the international elite and Veblen's emulation theories of consumption. The movement of bodies and influences of travelling tastes provided the ultimate reasons for tourism in general. Having shown that modernity was produced on the spaces and patterns of efficiently organised luxury rooms and consistent forms of representation. The idea of mass leisure became paramount in the urban forms of public spectacle in London from the late nineteenth century, until the later inter-war years. This period evoked the pinnacle of modern urban expansion in exhibition spaces, as ideal platforms for the mass public to become familiarised with public displays of etiquette. Revealingly, grand Victorian exhibitions would diversify and educate, especially in the formation of national unity, ideas of leisure, and a movement from domestic space, into the larger span of the city.

In selecting the Regent Palace Hotel, I have been able to identify the reasons for large-scale hotel building in the West End. During a period of complexity, any previous or obvious transparent study of modern, stylistic interior design in Edwardian public urban places of leisure has until now, failed to be written. It has been my intention to tackle these many hybrid formations and indicators of mixed opinion. In response to commercial interior design appearing as everyday environments. Importantly this study intended to situate British and American translations of urban interiors before the advent of European modernism and the professionalization of the applied arts for industry.

A final point to conclude this thesis, is to suggest that whilst the industriousness of Europe and the United States appealed to British designers. The scope and skills of traditional English crafts industries, characterised the beauty and detail of new luxury hotel interiors. For here it seems most appropriate to exclaim that whilst popular establishments employed skilled craftsmen, these spaces remained unrecognised as detailed examples of French high style until recently. Mass leisure and the luxury interior, was not necessarily an example of a lack of taste. Yet formulates in character

from a range of factors and therefore highlights the importance of the twentieth century hotel for illustrating this. The transition of skilled work across a range of spaces for public enjoyment and leisure in the early twentieth century, evolved with the commercialisation and democratization of luxury. This was most evident in the production of leisure spaces and the new luxury hotels and further public buildings in the West End.

The professionalization of the interior design industry would correspond with associations of modernism and the machine age from 1925. In Britain, a small number of stage set designers and architects would contribute to the versatile use of technologically driven materials. J. Lyons & Co continued by employing the latest styles in the modernisation of their hotels. Employing Oliver P. Bernard, J. Lyons & Co became known for giving the general public a luxury experience. In a more current context, it should be explained that the Regent Palace Hotel retained its 1930's interiors until 2006. Three months before these rooms closed, I was able to experience them first hand. No longer a hotel in 2013, the building renamed 'Quadrant 3' is a modern high tech steel-frame structure. Edwardian struts and girders, architectural detailing, and Burmantofts Marmo remain intact as the neo-classical, beaux arts facade that was built a century before. As masculinity prevailed in the architectural facades, the Grill Room below ground floor is restored to its original polished marble pillars and decorative details. Whilst the cocktail bar serves as a modern update on the retrospective turn towards luxury spaces of the gilded and decorative years. This thesis has shown how interiors, gender and luxury manifested at a hotel and site in the centre of London, in the urban space of entertainment and leisure that was designed on the location of Regent Street, Piccadilly and the West End.

Appendix 1: Article in Avermaete, Tom & Massey, Anne, (ed.) *Hotel Lobbies and Lounges: The Architecture of Professional Hospitality*, (London: Routledge, 2013)

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