

0.1 Chapter 1: capitalism: Utopia

0.2 Utopia

1 The Future of the Hotel Industry

The competition among resort hotels is fierce and, in order to secure our loyalty, establishments have to show us that they are trying hard in a range of areas. They therefore strive to demonstrate that they will:

- do everything to make sure we will sleep well
- help us reconnect with our families
- provide a forum in which we can rekindle romantic feelings
- give us a sense of well-being



It is worth paying close attention to how our hotels go about achieving these four properly important aims because of the light it casts on our societies in general; this is about a lot more than just hotels. We live in highly material times. This is often understood to mean that we love money as opposed to higher things; that we are, in other words, materialistic. But such a definition threatens to throw the emphasis on greed, whereas the real issue is broader and more intriguing. It is rather the case that we overwhelmingly treat human beings as creatures whose only pleasures and sorrows are those that occur in the body. The lions share of the economy is devoted to satisfying physical, as opposed to psychological needs. We see this issue in its most acute form in the arena of modern medicine, which with its dazzling

technologies insists on seeing the human animal as a machine made up of interconnected organs and pays scant attention to what used to be called the soul.

An identical approach is present, in a more covert form, in the realm of hotels. Here too the idea of pleasure is interpreted solely as if it were a bodily experience.

The ambitious hotels of today implicitly ask themselves a variety of questions about happiness and answer them in ways we should find distinctive:

- Why cant people sleep?

Because the bed is not springy enough, the quilt is not made with duck feathers and the cotton in the sheets is not from the Nile Delta.



- Why do families disconnect emotionally?

Because there is no water slide, no pool with a wave machine and no waterskiing instructor.

- Why has romance died?

Because there is no restaurant overlooking the bay and no French cuisine with a northern Italian twist.

- Why are people not feeling well?

Because their feet have not been rubbed sufficiently thoroughly and no one has yet poured jasmine oil on their backs.



The modern resort hotel is a machine for happiness that overwhelmingly insists that the roots of unhappiness reside at the physical level.

Some undoubtedly do (one should not quibble with the pleasures of a water slide) but a great many of the more stubborn obstacles to contentment appear to be firmly rooted in our minds.

In a competitive marketplace, an important future resides with hotels that can remember just how many difficulties exist outside of our bodies. These ingenious establishments will, alongside the fine restaurants and sheets, also have the imagination to provide hospitality and care for our turbulent and skittish minds.