'Little Men: Literary Representations of Barbers from Cervantes via Sweeney Todd to Chaplin, Hilsenrath and Germanetto'

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To begin with some truths which I hope will be self-evident: medical historians rightly feel the need to avoid present-centredness, and also to construct a history of health, disease and medicine (because health and disease precede medicine) which is fully integrated with other historical or cultural narratives, and is intelligible and meaningful to generalists. It is widely agreed that the best way of doing this is to focus on a limited period and to rethink oneself into the mindset of those acting at the time, and I have previously followed this approach. However, I hope to show that it can also be worth looking forward in time, and making connections with later periods. Possible justifications for doing so are that the great majority of historians of medicine still work on periods after 1800, but also that most people's preconceptions about disease and medicine in history are the product of nineteenth- and twentieth-century developments and ideology, particularly in relation to the rise of the professions and medicine's own account of its past. In this paper and others to follow, I will allow myself to range freely from the sixteenth century to the twentieth, with the cultural history of barbers as the central theme.

Why barbers?[1] What is striking about barbers is how consistently they show themselves over time, and how clearly this is reflected in literary representations of them, notably at the more popular level. This in turn leads to considerations to do with the history of the body, the nature of intimate personal services, and the apparent constancies of these regardless of time and space. This, I realise, is somewhat against the current trend, which prefers to see everything about the body as period-specific, in order to justify it as a subject at all. I don't see this as a necessary defensive stance in every case. At the same time, since literary representation is not literal, we need to consider whether the attributes of the barber in literature are in fact part of the history of stereotypes. One set of stereotypes, the subject of this first paper, clusters around the theme of 'little men'. By this I intend to signify not only the usual meaning of the cultures of small tradesmen.

craftsmen, and clerks, but also the barber's share of problems in terms of gender identity, which I would maintain existed for all kinds of medical practitioner, although for physicians more than all the rest.[2]

In early modern England, whatever the attempts to separate them officially, barber's craft and the art of surgery were inextricably linked. This is not the view taken by the medical profession's view of itself. In the conventional historical record, the barber and the surgeon are the couple who should never have married. The inferior partner is of course the barber, who clung on to the surgeon, lowering the surgeon's status and holding him back from his true place in the professional hierarchy, until the pair finally reached the divorce court, in several European countries including England, from the late seventeenth century onwards.[3] Once separated, it appears, the surgeons achieved their full, strong, male identity as bold operators, wielders of increasingly sophisticated instruments, and dominant figures in the operating theatre and the hospital. As such, the surgeons were able to compete, successfully, with the physicians for metropolitan status and rewards.[4] The barbers, on the other hand, fell back into the separate and increasingly feminised sphere of fashionability, parochial shop-keeping, cosmetic body care, and trivial pursuits generally. While it may be fairly argued that their trade benefited from advances in technology, barbers have gained little from the rise of professional society.[5] Paradoxically, the technological changes broadened their occupational scope but did this mainly by increasing the services they could offer to women, which did nothing for their status in a value system still dominated by masculinity.[6]

Barbers appear, indeed, as little men who talk a lot but who are also obliged to listen a lot to other men – an often-resented aspect of the job which looms large in twentieth-century barbers' autobiographies – and who are subject to the whims, pretensions, and dishonesties of their male contemporaries. Sexually speaking, barbers sold sexual aids or services for other men to use. A barber acting as a pimp, or even 'fiddling' with or 'tickling' a woman lacks a certain dimension of masculinity.[7] Although barbers have long been sources of advice on sexual matters, this related to the appurtenances of sex, or sex at one remove, rather than the sexual act itself, and a macho barber seems like a contradiction in terms. One of the most telling modern

representations along these lines was the Coen brothers' film, *The Man Who Wasn't There* (2001), in which the barber protagonist, neat, clean, conventional, and overlooked even by his wife, tries to break out of his negated identity, with disastrous results. He suspects his wife of having an affair with her boss, significantly known as Big Dave, and tries to blackmail him for the money to start, also significantly, a dry-cleaning business. This barber, incidentally, is not chatty: he has given up hope of communicating and says very little. He is obliged to listen but is not listened to. The Coen brothers' film is interesting also because the Coens are Jewish, a point to which I will return, and because the film is American. Although there is a retrospective quality to the film, American society seems to have preserved the barber in nineteenth-century guise for longer than elsewhere, with attributes harking back over an even longer period, including barber-shop quartets. I hope to return to this dimension in a later paper.

As little men, minor ancillaries, barbers seem, in effect, to be losers. The Coen brothers' barber is quintessential rather than exceptional. While barbers have attracted the attention of historians of continental Europe, especially as body-servants and artisans at court, few Anglophone historians have taken them seriously.[8] D'Arcy Power and the antiquarian Sidney Young in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Don Herzog and Simon Rottenberg in the late twentieth, and Alun Withey most recently, are exceptions showing a wide variety of approaches.[9] Young evidenced a respect for the corporate and civic life of the London barbers, which, though enduring in terms of the history of the guilds or companies, had faded by the period of many of the sources I will be discussing. Herzog, writing about the early nineteenth century, is interested in the ambiguous political role of groups just above the level of the emergent working class.[10] His politicised hairdressers have, arguably, ancestors in the barber-shops of the early modern period, which came under official scrutiny, and were the subject of literary comment, as foci of news-gathering and potentially of sedition.[11] This wariness can be seen as an extension of antipathy towards the barber's alleged habit of passing on gossip about his betters, a charge also stereotypically levelled at women and servants.[12] No doubt the serious interest being taken in fashion history will give barbers some further attention, but without, I suspect, changing their historical status significantly. Fashion history has already been masculinised to some degree, as well as benefiting from the rise

of feminist history, but barbers seem too far removed from the creative process in fashion to gain very much from this.[13] The act of shaving, on the other hand, has for some time attracted historians of consumerism, material culture and masculinity, especially for the period after 1700.[14]

I will not be contending here on empirical grounds for the interest of barbers based on their ubiquity in time and place, or their importance in daily life and material culture. For the early modern period, I have tried to do this elsewhere, though the subject is far from exhausted. For now, I want to explore the cultural functions of barbers by looking at a range of literary sources, which seem to be rich well into the twentieth century. I found this extended chronology somewhat surprising, and therefore worth considering. After all, in a diversified economy, which England's arguably was from at least the early modern period, there are a great many other minor occupations for a writer to choose from. So why choose barbers, culturally speaking? I should stress that I am dealing primarily with sources of English origin, but it is equally important to note that many of these involve a process of acculturation, in which influences from outside were incorporated into the English-speaking world.

We can start with the fact that a barber features in one of the most successful early modern European novels, *Don Quixote*.[15]Although Cervantes's barber is apparently literate, and a good friend of his master Don Quixote, he already seems to have that negated identity mentioned earlier. Unlike Quixote's 'squire', Sancho Panza, he has very little individuality, being paired with the local priest as commentators on Quixote's eccentric conduct, along with Quixote's niece and his housekeeper. Together these make up a feminised quartet, being of the household or just outside it. This does not mean that these characters carry no weight in the story. It is evident that they have Quixote's best interests at heart, but part of the point is that Quixote has cut himself off so far from society that it is only the household voices that can reach him and reassert quotidian normality.[16]

At about the same time that Cervantes appeared in English translation, barbers appear in a wide range of Jacobean plays and satires, notably those of Ben Jonson, but also even in Shakespeare, who by comparison had only a token interest in citizen characters. [17] This ubiquity is not surprising given that barbers and barbering provided a

rich and accessible source of metaphor as a result of virtually universal experience among the male half of the population. The most prominent of Jonson's barbers appears in his play *Epicoene or the Silent Woman*.[18] Although very concrete and very material in his attributes and functions, Jonson's Cutberd is arguably not a barber precisely defined by time and place.[19] Rather, he is more universal.[20] As such he is an integral part of Jonson's intention of exploring the cultural meanings of eloquence, silence, and mere talk.[21]

Similar points can be made about a later source, the *Arabian Nights*, which became famous in the English-speaking world in the form of Sir Richard Burton's translation in the 1880s, but which appeared in English in popular formats from the early eighteenth century.[22] One short story from the *Nights,* which is still available as a children's picture book, features, like the Coen brothers' film, a barber who is silent, even when his life depends upon his speaking up, the joke being that this was totally out of character for barbers.[23] In another, longish story from the *Nights*, translated separately by Burton, a virtuous little barber of Alexandria is paired with his supposed friend, a wicked dyer.[24] This is a folkloric and relatively timeless story involving travel to a far country, betrayal and retribution, but it is worth noting that there is empirical historical evidence for long-term close associations between barbers and dyers, including membership of the Barber-Surgeons' Company of early modern London. The two occupations used some of the same substances, including bleaches and dyes.[25] This pair, the barber and the dyer, are appropriate representatives of the little men found in all urban societies, who might be poor and even itinerant but who are distinguished from the very poor or the vagrant poor by their small but necessary skills. The attraction of such stories lies in the little man triumphing over his circumstances and against the odds.[26] On the face of it, it was the magic and exoticism of the *Arabian Nights*, imbibed from childhood, that inspired the Victorian novelist George Meredith to write, as his first novel, a fantasy called *The Shaving of Shagpat*.[27] However, Meredith's barber is, true to form, one of the humble, who proved, even in a world of magic, to have a small but necessary skill.

There is a degree of contrast with my next barber, one of the most famous barbers of all, also of the eighteenth century: Beaumarchais's barber of Seville, later the protagonist in operas by Mozart (1786) and Rossini (1816).[28] It is worth noting that Beaumarchais began life apprenticed to his father, a master watchmaker, and had

therefore some proximity to artisan culture, albeit at a higher level than most barbers. Later, initially as a watchmaker, he acquired an intimate knowledge of court circles. Beaumarchais's barber appeared just before the French Revolution, in the 1770s and 1780s, each of the plays being translated into English within a year and spawning imitations featuring 'Spanish barbers'.[29] Figaro is an example of what I like to call the henchman barber, a clever fixer close to his master but knowing so much about his master's secrets that he is also cynical. No man was a hero to his barber, just as no man was a hero to his valet, according to the apothegm of the seventeenth-century Frenchwoman Madame Cornuel.[30] Figaro's master exercises a kind of monopoly of sexual activity, while Figaro has to fight to defend his own faithful and essentially domestic relations with the opposite sex. In his plotting with women against the arrogance of his aristocratic master, Beaumarchais's barber carries into the eighteenth century a version of the politically subversive traits attributed to real barbers and barber-shops in the early modern period. The 'Spanish barbers' who appeared in English ballads and popular plays after Figaro, however, usually reflected little of this complexity and were coloured by English stereotypes of Spain, with whom England was intermittently at war.[31] Nonetheless, one could say that Figaro was part of a 'little tradition' that perpetuated certain aspects of the master-servant relationship which can be discerned in essentially retrospective versions such as Jeeves and Wooster in the much-loved humorous novels of P. G. Wodehouse.[32]

It might be suggested that the incidence of barbers in some of these sources proves only that they bear yet another resemblance to women, in that they are present simply because of their physical proximity to the male protagonist. That is, they are there to serve as a foil to, a reflection of, or at most a minor challenge to, the protagonist's greater power and status. (Other occupations, a carpenter or a butcher, for example, would not serve this purpose nearly so well.) This is generally but not invariably true, because there are, in literature but also historically, essentially two types of barber, the henchman barber and the shop or civic barber, who shared many characteristics but who belonged to very different contexts and social dynamics. The popular songs and ballads of the early nineteenth century about barbers indicate the emergence of the shop barber as a stock character, akin to Jack Tar or Farmer Giles but without the same national and

political importance as these iconic figures. 'Bob the barber' was a minor urbanite, an aspirant to lower middle-class status of the Pooterish type, who did not need to be taken too seriously, but who might still have his own little tragedies or social role.[33] The littleness of Bob the barber did not require sexual ambiguity – he was more likely to be associated, rather like Figaro, with small-scale respectability, including devotion to a sweetheart, or wife and children. Variations on this theme showed innocent barbers being unlucky or deceived in love.[34] Alternatively, this kind of barber could be portrayed as impertinent, or sexually enterprising, in the style of accounts of apprentices marrying their master's widow. The alleged knowingness as well as amorous pretensions of barbers, their sense that they were 'in the know' and therefore cleverer than their peers and able to deceive them, was also subject to literary put-downs. As with other medical occupations, this type of commentary in part reflected suspicions about the barber's privileged access to bodies, semi-private spaces and, increasingly, women.[35]

So far, the barbers we have looked at have been either harmless, especially in lower-middling terms, or clever, on the same scale of values. There is also, however, quite a florid vein of wicked barbers, which amounts to another small literary tradition. As with depictions of women, shock value is achieved when an effete or modest figure behaves out of character or violates contemporary norms. In the context of fin de siècle decadence, in the late-nineteenth century, there is little that is empirical, or specific in terms of time and place, in Aubrey Beardsley's 'Ballad of a Barber', which features a barber named Carrousel.[36] Albeit with satirical and sexualised twists for adult consumption, Beardsley's idiom is that of a fairy tale. Figures in the accompanying image are given the vaguely eighteenth-century appearance still found in fairy-tale illustration. Carrousel nonetheless epitomises much about the barber's skills and status:

All powders, paints, and subtle dyes,
And costliest scents that men distil,
And rare pomades, forgot their price
And marvelled at his splendid skill.

The curling irons in his hand

Almost grew quick enough to speak,

The razor was a magic wand

That understood the softest cheek.

Yet with no pride his heart was moved;

He was so modest in his ways!

His daily task was all he loved,

And now and then a little praise.

An equal care he would bestow

On problems simple or complex;

And nobody had seen him show

A preference for either sex.

Much of this, though not all, could be a description of Victorian female virtue and domestic virtuosity. Beardsley's barber, in spite of being a fantasy, illustrates both the barber's ambiguous sexual identity, as well as the concrete historical fact that, as already mentioned, by the nineteenth century many barbers had sought improved status and an enlarged clientele by becoming hairdressers and by serving female customers as well as male. Carrousel's name was possibly chosen simply to indicate the element of fantasy, being unspecific in terms of time and place. On the other hand, it could reflect the barber's inability to fix a definition of himself sexually or to break out of his daily round of skilled but minor tasks. A third possibility is simply Beardsley's satirical intention, which included mockery of court culture. A carousel, or carrousel, was originally a form of knightly tournament or circus, a kind of entertainment; from the late seventeenth century, by a process of trivialisation, it had come to mean a roundabout of horses, essentially a toy version.

Carrousel counts as a wicked barber because he is sexually excited by the king's 13-year old daughter, rapes her, and is hanged.[37] He becomes a villain by daring to express his submerged sexual desires, but even then he cannot become manly, because his desires are not normal but heterodox. Most wicked barbers are however more robust

and less decadent. Depictions of them tend to reflect the sense of vulnerability experienced by a customer under the hands of a man in close proximity and armed with a cut-throat razor.[38] One example occurs in a historical melodrama by the prolific pot-boiling French writer, Charles-Paul de Kock (1793-1871), translated in 1839 as *The Barber of Paris, or, Moral Retribution*, and set in the early seventeenth century. De Kock's barber is clearly wicked, playing fixer and pander to his aristocratic master and betraying in the process the young girl who had become his ward. In so doing he compromises his masculine identity and abandons his responsibilities as a male head of household. Like Sweeney Todd was to be, this barber, Touquet, is middle-aged, dark and gloomy, with a shock of black hair. He works out of a shop, but in other respects he is a throwback to the henchman barber.[39] Although allowing Touquet to be well-looking and relatively prosperous, De Kock designs him as barbarous, archaic and destined for extinction, reflecting the pretensions of contemporary coiffeurs, the 'artificers of hair' who sought to displace the barbers.[40]

Sweeney Todd, the well-known demon barber of Fleet Street, is of course of particular interest.[41] From his first appearance Sweeney appears to be an English, indeed a London, product, one candidate as his creator being James Malcolm Rymer, a prolific popular writer influenced not only by other 'penny dreadfuls' but also by the early success of Charles Dickens.[42] A work by Rymer's father, Malcolm Rymer, possibly influenced by Beaumarchais, featured a humble Spanish barber threatened by the Inquisition.[43] Sweeney at first is very much from the Newgate calendar set of characters, beginning serially in a penny dreadful in the late 1840s and then appearing as a novel of over 700 pages, entitled *The String of Pearls,* in 1850.[44] The earliest versions of Sweeney placed stress on verisimilitude, citing real events in the 1780s, in particular a murder of 1784 carried out by a journeyman barber jealous of his wife.[45] As befits a second-rank Victorian novel looking back at the events of the previous, unregenerate age, the Sweeney of *Pearls* is a deep-dyed villain from the outset, killing for gain, who is finally brought to book by a stereotypical good magistrate.

This Sweeney is no mincing hypocrite, but a tall, morose man from the north of England, seen by neighbours and clients as odd but harmless.[46] He is dangerous not as an ancillary in the household of his betters, but on his own territory, namely his shop.

Barber's shops were supposed to be anodyne and reassuring, including even sources of entertainment, partly to retain customers and partly to cancel out the presence of the razor and the seemingly decapitated heads used in later periods for displays and renovating wigs.[47] However, Sweeney does not obviously slit the throats of his many victims with his razor. The devilish device he uses is not the razor but the barber's chair, which in this case swivels so that the victim drops into the cellar beneath, while the chair is replaced by an identical empty chair from below. In the cellar, the bodies are carved up and turned into meat for human consumption, so that the threat of the razor is made real at one remove and the results are concealed. The constant features of the Sweeney Todd story are the barber's chair, the pies that are made from the flesh of the victims, and the female accomplice, Mrs Lovett, who makes and sells the pies. The later Sweeney is not a cannibal himself, nor is there an overtly sexual dimension to his crimes.

Of course, the woman who uses poison, who kills, or who pollutes unsuspecting males by feeding them human flesh, is a classic figure in drama representing the utmost betrayal of female roles within the household.[48] In the original, mid-nineteenth-century version of Sweeney, the female character is given full weight as being indeed more deadly than the male; in later versions, the woman becomes a kind of cosy Punch and Judy grotesque, unable to realise the enormity of what she is doing.[49] Sweeney, with respect to his clients and victims, perhaps betrays a lesser trust than does his female accomplice, as his fellow men confide themselves to his chair and allow him to swathe them in towels, in imitation of the helplessness of infancy. In terms of retribution, however, he is always treated as the protagonist, primarily because he is male. In this situation, the woman accomplice and the demon barber are partners in a kind of perverted marriage of convenience. In some versions, Mrs Lovett has hopes of the barber, though it is usually clear that Sweeney has no possible interest in this and indeed is prepared to eliminate her if she loses her usefulness.[50] That the early Sweeney lacks wife and children is a further way in which he differs from the usual barber stereotype and, indeed, from his supposed real-life prototypes. A more consistent feature of the English Sweeneys, attesting to a degree of maleness, is that they do not make pies, unlike reputed French and Italian cognates.[51] They can also mimic, while distorting, the traditional role of the male householder by employing, and mistreating, a young boy assistant who

reflects the nineteenth-century rejection of the old relationship between master and apprentice.[52] As we shall see, 'barber's boys' crop up in twentieth-century contexts as they do in early modern literature.[53]

The Sweeney Todd story illustrates another feature of barber literature, fictional and non-fictional, in that he is in contact with, and even serves, a very wide social range of people, so that some suspicion attaches to him as an agent of social contamination. This aspect is explicitly represented in the empirical history of barbers. They were seen as liable to spread infection from at least the sixteenth century, when this was cited as one reason why barbery should be practised separately from surgery. These fears were connected with plague – human hair, like the hair of dogs and cats, was seen as a vehicle of infection – but also with venereal disease, which was treated by barbers and barber-surgeons, rather than physicians.[54]

So far, so seemingly English. However, it was interesting to discover, given the various foreign influences mentioned already in this paper, that Sweeney's Englishness is somewhat deceptive. The murder of 1784 was a prosaic affair, which certainly includes a barber, his razor, and the theme of dishonour through the actions of his womenfolk, but which lacks other essential elements, notably the pies. Later Sweeney enthusiasts lighted upon a prototype from as early as the sixteenth century, in the person of the cannibal Sawney Bean(e), not a barber but a clannish and incestuous Scottish outlaw, who lived in a cave and preyed on travellers. However, Sawney Bean seems never to have existed, even in literary form, before the eighteenth century, and it has been argued that the originator of the story was English.[55] If so, this places Bean in the category of the literary, and more or less negative, national stereotypes we have already encountered.

Perhaps more useful for present purposes are other prototypes, not English but French.[56] One of the French prototypes passing into English is an account in 1823 of a Parisian barber who had his victim's body turned into pies by his next-door neighbour, a patissier.[57] This was reprinted in 1841, and seems recognisable both as an expression of anti-French feeling after the Napoleonic wars, and as an inspiration for Rymer (and/or other authors) writing for publication in 1846. British anti-French prejudice has long harped on the subject of what the French are prepared to eat, including horses and ponies if not people.[58] Another story, about a murderous French-Irish barber in London, but with

no mention of pies, appears in sensationalist literature in 1844. However, it is pleasing to early modernists to find that there is also a French ballad from as early as the fourteenth century, which likewise featured a barber who killed people and had them turned into pies.[59] The *OxfordDNB* entry for Sweeney, in considering these stories, draws attention to insecurities of urban life, including concerns over the sourcing of foodstuffs, especially meat.[60] This is reasonable and can be documented both in early modern satire and in urban controls of equivalent date concerned with adulteration and cheating practices by victuallers, especially butchers, who tended to be enviably prosperous and well nourished.[61] Nonetheless, the persistent presence of the barber in these stories or urban myths is equally worthy of note. Probably few below the level of the elite owned razors, apart from barbers and barber-surgeons, but any number of trades involved sharp implements, and most early modern people carried small sharp knives as a matter of course, for eating and other purposes, so the repeated motif of the barber does have significance.

Sweeney Todd is surpassed as a serial killer in the nineteenth-century public mind only by Jack the Ripper. But Sweeney's story is arguably more complicated than that of the Ripper, who was, as is well known, a case or cases from real life which, in the absence of both contextual information and the identification of the culprit, became the subject of a great amount of speculation and unconstrained reconstruction.[62] The Ripper story does of course include the sexual dimension, in terms of the victims allegedly being prostitutes, and the supposed perverted motivation of the murderer. Interestingly, although it is possibly an expression of prejudice against East End aliens in general and Jews in particular, one of the favoured candidates in the Ripper case is Aaron Kosminski, a Polish Jewish hairdresser, and another is Severin Klosowski, also a Pole, a hairdresser and student of surgery who, though Roman Catholic, pretended to be Jewish.[63] The Ripper becomes of interest, even morbid interest, not just because of the horrific methods he used but also because of what is projected onto his crimes. The imagination is caught by the mystery of the Ripper's identity, the dark locations, deep in the city, where he found his victims, and the fact that his victims were all women.[64] Some of the same feeling, reminiscent of the gothic, can be discerned even in paintings of anatomists or surgeons, where the body being dissected by the male surgeons is that of a young and

beautiful girl.[65] It could perhaps be contended that the incorporation of Sweeney into the genre of gothic melodrama in the format of the penny dreadful, does something to explain his deviations from the norms of the harmless and domestic barber.

It may be because of the additional dimensions intrinsic to the Sweeney story, which of course feature cannibalism, an element of *grand guignol* (including the pies), and the sense of closure and confirmation following upon retribution, that Sweeney, unlike Jack the Ripper, has been reincarnated in a ballet, in modern plays, in a graphic novel, and in a successful musical by Steven Sondheim, as well as recent TV versions.[66] The plays even include one for children.[67] In mid-twentieth-century literature for boys, Sweeney appears to have earned a place alongside such milder figures as Dick Barton, Deadwood Dick, and Billy Bunter.[68] This seems incongruous but presumably puts him in the same subversive vein of children's literature as Struwwelpeter (1845) and the stories of the brothers Grimm, albeit with a quasi-realist thriller dimension aimed at older children.[69] In the modern plays, Sweeney is made more sympathetic in that his first murder is in revenge for the destruction of female members of his own family, in the face of wickedness and corruption in those in authority, ranging from constables to judges. This sympathetic, even sentimental Sweeney still goes on killing, and is condemned accordingly, but he is in essence a little man forced to adopt crude masculine values by taking the law into his own hands.[70] It is notable that even twentieth-century writers revert to so many of the recurrent motifs in the older barber literature. These motifs are sufficiently enduring that the good barber and the wicked barber can overlap. The barber as a small man striving to defend his womenfolk and his domestic respectability against powerful seducers set in authority above him is a recurrent motif from Beaumarchais through De Kock to the later Sweeney, and even has an echo in the Coen brothers' film of 2001.

Sweeney's afterlife has therefore been quite substantial, a little tradition lasting into the present day.[71] There were two, apparently contradictory, developments in his image in the later nineteenth century. One was that popular opinion came to believe, as in the case of Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, that Sweeney was a real person. The other was that he became the 'demon' barber, a dimension lacking in the original versions but current from the late 1870s.[72] As we have seen, Sweeney continued to spawn versions of

himself, but there were other wicked barbers subsequently. One worth mentioning, especially in the context of demonisation, appears in *Devlin the Barber* (1888), a novel by Benjamin Farjeon, the Jewish father of the better-known children's author, Eleanor Farjeon.[73] Benjamin, a well-travelled journalist, was a disciple of Dickens and became the author of over 60 novels, being most successful with an early tale called *Grif: A Story of Colonial Life* (1866). *Devlin the Barber* was one of his last works. His main protagonist is not in fact the barber but a respectable, intelligent man of the lower middle class, whose nurse marries a widowed barber and hairdresser, Ephraim Lemon, with whom Devlin lodges. Lemon is another barber who annoys his new wife by his attentions to female customers in private settings and whose favourite prop was a pretty wax model of a dressed female head, which rotated by machinery.[74] The eponymous Devlin by contrast is a mysterious and sinister figure, a polyglot, conjuring card-player able to talk by the hour without tiring, who could even paint portraits of his female customers as well as dressing their hair in new and wonderful ways. His seductive but frightening attractions are further increased by his offer of tonics (for nerves) and his claim to have second sight.[75] But in spite of appearances Devlin turns out not to be the villain but rather a Mephistophelian cross between Sherlock Holmes and the devil himself, in disguise. Crucially, Devlin is able to read other people's thoughts by fingering their hair, a folk belief connected with barbers that crops up in more prosaic contexts.[76] By this means he is able to identify the murderer. Like other fictional barbers we have considered, Devlin is a figure violating a harmless category of person by a sinister appearance and especially by knowing too much, a theme taken by Farjeon to a fantastical extreme. Retribution is again a major feature of this novel, in which Devlin disappears for good when the guilty party is vanquished.

Real demons do not seem to have lasted in this context beyond the *fin de siècle.* There is a twentieth-century-style wicked barber in the rather feeble interwar novel by Marcus Drewe, entitled *The Barber of Littlewick*.[77] Like Devlin this barber is also unexpectedly cultured and sinister, an urban figure translated incongruously to the rural scene, who turns out to be a double-agent and kills for reasons of state. As with many earlier literary barbers, including De Kock's and indeed the later Sweeneys, he has a pretty daughter, who acts as a kind of lure.[78] The barber of Littlewick, small and crafty,

also has red hair and other satanic attributes, including a black cat, but is a reflection not of original sin but of human conflict. He is effectively a dead man walking, having lost his identity as a deserter in the First World War. Like Farjeon's barber, this barber is neither masculine nor feminine, but rather a combination of both. Behind their modest and even domestic aliases these figures prove to be set apart from humanity as a whole. For Drewe, this represented a desire to distance society from the corrosive effects of the First World War, just as in some crime novels of the twentieth century the murderer turns out to be someone who has learned lethal skills in combat and has also broken out of the social order by gaining promotion in the armed forces.[79]

Farjeon's and Drewe's barbers both pose as harmless little men while being something very different. Two further twentieth-century literary examples are in truth little men, but little men brought up against the capacity of any man for good or evil. Like Drewe's barber but far more effectively, they epitomise the horrors of twentieth–century conflict, providing versions of the good barber and the wicked barber which had meaning for contemporaries but which also carried echoes of the past. In the first example, as in a range of similar literature, the reader is invited to respect rather than disdain the neglected virtues of the little man, his suburban traits and employments.[80] The novel entitled *The Barber of Putney*, by John Morton, is about a good little man's experience of trench warfare in the First World War.[81] This barber, as Morton stated in the preface, fought because it was his duty and because he was too sane to sneer at the word honour. In social terms, Morton located him in the lower middling ranks, like Bob the barber and his cognates. While he is at the front Morton's young barber is painstakingly placed between the working-class veteran, called Curly, who befriends the quiet little man and helps him survive, and the upper-middle-class poet, who insists on remaining in the ranks rather than becoming an officer and not surprisingly dies. The novel, intended to be taken seriously, was based on Morton's own experience in the trenches, which included shellshock, and has claims to being one of the first fictionalised accounts of its kind. Morton himself, a kind of radical conservative out of love with the twentieth century, is better known as the journalist and humourist Beachcomber, who featured in the Tory newspaper the *Daily Express,* and who was also the creator of comic characters including

the mad scientist Dr Strabismus, and Mr Justice Cocklecarrot, who found his way into the satirical magazine *Private Eye*.[82]

My second example is a powerful novel by the controversial German-Jewish author and holocaust survivor, Edgar Hilsenrath, who died in 2018.[83] It was translated in 1975 as *The Nazi and the Barber,* and is also known under the alternative title of *The Nazi who Lived as a Jew*.[84] In it, two boys, one German, one German-Jewish, are brought up close together in the households of barbers of very different levels of respectability. The German boy, Max Schulz, is the illegitimate son of a maid in the house of a Jewish fur-dealer and is never sure of the identity of his father. The mother subsequently lives with an inferior Polish barber called Slavitzki and both of them become supporters of Hitler. Ironically the Jewish boy looks Aryan, while the German boy looks stereotypically Jewish. The Jewish boy helps the German boy to get an education in his father's prosperous household, the family barbering business being not a mere shop but a gentlemen's hairdressing salon, a 'gold mine' known as The Man of the World.[85] As economic conditions deteriorate, both boys become barber's apprentices, barbering being a small but necessary trade which the Nazis at first allowed to continue. But when war breaks out the German boy joins in the murder of the Jewish family and, in order to avoid the Russians, steals the identity of his erstwhile friend and ultimately travels to Palestine as a Jew. There, with the help of a smuggled bag of gold teeth, he sets up an upmarket barber's shop which exactly mirrors the one once owned by the Jewish family which he had helped to destroy.[86]

Barbering is not incidental to the novel: Hilsenrath dwells on the skills and purposes involved, in tandem with his ruthless approach to the more repellent habits and appearances of the human body.[87] His protagonist Max Schulz, the German boy, defends barbering on the basis of both the nobility of the human cranium and the temptation barbering offers to smash this noble creation to bits: 'That's a head! Completely at the mercy of your own hands!'.[88] Later, he justifies his appalling actions on the basis of his vulnerability as being but a 'small fish'.[89] Both on board the ship *Exitus* and in Palestine, Max returns to his `honourable' trade, establishing his stolen identity and his relationships in terms of his barbering skills and their accoutrements. Concrete details of what a barber does and what he uses are essential to Hilsenrath's particular form of

grotesque realism.[90] The barbershop and its customers become a microcosm of Israel's troubled early development. In a typically hyperbolic style, for example, Max becomes a locally celebrated demagogue and attraction, as an extension of barbershop chat.[91] In general, Hilsenrath is able to present barbering as a reliable trade, either clean or dirty according to those that follow it, and as a trade that is eminently portable, so that it can offer, as it did for the little barber in the *Arabian Nights*, a means of living in any country and even under the most disruptive conditions.

The novel is written in the physically crude, laconic, and heartlessly cheerful style of the folklore of the brothers Grimm. I do not know if Hilsenrath read the Grimm stories, but I would guess that he had, even though barbers do not feature much in the Grimm canon as I know it.[92] As in many depictions of peasants, including the Grimms', Hilsenrath's women are as crude and as ugly as the men. The wife of the transplanted German barber is Jewish but becomes something like a complacent accomplice. The novel is essentially a fantasy, but one as full of human horrors as a painting by Hieronymus Bosch.[93] Like Bosch, and as in other stories of wicked barbers we have been considering, it does include retribution, not by human agents but in a fantastical conclusion staged in the mundane setting of the barber's shop, by a combination of a mysterious spiritual force and the German barber's own moral decay.[94]

Although rooted in personal experience, Morton's and Hilsenrath's works are both fictional, albeit in very different genres. I did not really expect to find non-fictional twentieth-century works relating to barbers, but there are in fact several worth mentioning. There are at least three mid-twentieth-century autobiographies by British barbers, two of them minor works constructed mainly out of anecdotes of strange behaviour by barber-shop clients, but including assertions of status and skill. That by Ian Macrae, written in the wake of the Depression, gives graphic details of the working conditions suffered by poorer barbers, what they were obliged to accept as a result of unemployment, and their uneasy position in class terms as 'neither one thing nor the other'.[95] Deceits practised on customers are also revealed. Macrae's 'Governor', a London Jewish barber named Hieberg, gives him the fruit of his long experience in the trade: 'Barbers are intimate with people. They're inferiors who accept tips, an' no one need take any notice of `em'.[96] Hieberg's brothers made it in banking and retail

ownership: as the least able of the sons, he became a barber. He adds that his own family is run by women.[97] Macrae seeks to convey a political message in his reportage: the occupational diseases, long hours, and low wages experienced by barbers are because barbering was no longer recognised as an art, craft, or profession. As another sign of loss of status, his 'Governor', Hieberg, speculates that women entering the trade as hairdressers to the plutocracy might improve the position of proletarian barbers.[98]

Another first-hand account, by W. H. Hale, is relevant here because the barber in question emerges as such after his experience in the lower ranks of the armed forces. In the present context this is not so much a contrast between war and peace, as a set of continuities in forms of personal service which men offer to, or in the case of the army, enforce upon, other men. According to Hale, the RAF's barbers were self-appointed in cases where no civilian 'operator' was brought in, but they were also called upon to deal with prisoners. Like Macrae, Hale would see himself as 'little' primarily in terms of his position of (unfair) social disadvantage. His declared persona tends towards the tough and the masculine, as a claim to resilience in the face of adversity.[99] Also like Macrae, Hale travels because he cannot afford to set up his own salon. A third autobiography is that of Ralph Glasser, of a poor Jewish family in the Glasgow Gorbals, who worked first as a barber's soap boy and later went to Oxford, making a painful transition from working-class to middle-class. Glasser's father, like others we have encountered, insisted on his son's having a trade on his hands: with a trade you could go anywhere.[100]

Of greater significance than these is the autobiography of the Italian communist Giovanni Germanetto, written in exile in Russia, first published in 1930, and translated into English in 1934 under the title *Memoirs of a Barber*.[101] Germanetto was brought up in a still-traditional society, definitely in the little man category, but his life is an epitome of the potentialities and dangers of twentieth-century mass politics.[102] His experiences resemble those of Macrae, but on a much larger political stage. Like Glasser, Germanetto was deprived of a better education because of his father's poverty and improvidence. He went to work as a barber in pre-war Italy, but became increasingly scornful of the subservient attitudes he detected all around him, and of the petit-bourgeois artisan classes idealised by the Fascists.[103] Like Macrae and Hale, Germanetto is keen to convey the oddities and prejudices on display in the relationship between barber and client, as well

as the poor working conditions in barbershops. He tried to form a barbers' union, but found that the barbers' dependence on their clients, especially for tips, got in the way of any kind of workers' solidarity. He states flatly that 'I have always lived among the working class and I do not know any other category of workers so grovelling and servile as the barbers'.[104] Nonetheless, the barber's shop, in its traditional role as a collector and purveyor of opinions and news, provided part of his political education: 'while lathering the customers' chins, I listened to the talk. I was in a shop where arguments went on from morning till night. It was visited by customers of all colours of the political rainbow'. In the long run, the disputes brought in the customers, although they also attracted the notice of the authorities.[105]

As an activist, Germanetto also found barbering a skill with which he could move from one place to another. He became an associate of Palmiro Togliatti, one of the founders of the Italian communist party. During the purges by Mussolini in which the philosopher Gramsci, then the leader of the party, was imprisoned, Germanetto and Togliatti fled to Moscow, where they lived at, or were more or less confined to, the famous Lux hotel. In his autobiography, Germanetto deliberately and consistently adopts the persona of the little man, writing with great simplicity and with the minimum of ideological commentary. During the 1920s, while undercover, he wrote in communist periodicals under the pseudonym `Barbadirame' or Copperbeard. With its candid bravado and ingenuous air of self-congratulation, Germanetto's life story is not without its reminders of such earlier accounts as the Renaissance autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, and it is possible that Germanetto was as simple as his book makes him seem (and I am of course talking about a translation). However, when reading it I did find myself wondering if it might be in fact wholly or partly fictional; and, if it was as artfully written as this implies, Germanetto's autobiography can take its place alongside the fictionalised accounts of barbers which serve contemporary purposes but which draw upon long-standing stereotypes.

Germanetto and Hilsenrath's characters can be seen as examples of a wider phenomenon. Especially in the first half of the twentieth century, we can see 'the little man' take on considerable political as well as literary salience. In Britain he also became known as 'the man in the street', the epitome of so-called common sense. This is

associated with the growth of national newspapers and the influence of certain cartoonists. Sidney Strube, of the *Daily Express*, created the image of the bespectacled little man wearing a bowler hat and carrying an umbrella, consistently quiet, patriotic and respectable, who became a stereotype of Englishness.[106] Strube's little man closely resembles the 'barber of Putney' imagined by John Morton, but differs greatly in terms of radicalism from either Germanetto or the Max Schulz of Hilsenrath. Nonetheless, the political opinions ascribed to Strube's little man became a staple of political polemic and discourse in the interwar period.[107] He is even said to have displaced John Bull as the British national stereotype.[108] For America, a similar effect was later achieved by the exceptionally long-lived comic strip *Peanuts*, whose creator, Charles Schulz, was the son of a barber and who gave his main character, the inoffensive and put-upon Charlie Brown, a father who was also a barber.

Of international significance was, of course, the definitive 'little man' created by Charlie Chaplin.[109] Chaplin's films portrayed in comedic terms the little man at the mercy of, but unbowed by, major forces in society. Most pertinent here is *The Great Dictator* (1940), in which Chaplin plays a Jewish barber who has a shop in the ghetto of a country called Tomania and who serves in the First World War.[110] The barber's insignificance is underlined by his never being given a name. In an accident the barber saves the life of a German pilot, Schulz, but loses his memory in the process, a state that persists for many years. At the end of this amnesiac period, the barber finds that his country has greatly changed politically. It is dominated by Dictator Hynkel (also played by Chaplin) who happens to look very like the barber, and who is pursuing a programme of persecution of the Jews. Schulz, now a commander in the army, and the barber encounter each other again and Schulz is accused of being too protective of Jews. He and the barber involve themselves in a conspiracy to assassinate Hynkel, which is discovered, and both are sent to a concentration camp. During the invasion the barber, with Schulz, flees the country, disguised in military uniform, but is picked up by stormtroopers and mistaken for the Dictator. By this accident the barber, now revealed as Chaplin himself, is given the opportunity of making a speech to the world, and proceeds to denounce all that the Dictator stands for. The little man thus rises to the occasion, takes to the national stage, and gives full expression to humane values, speaking especially for the 'little people'.

Certain features of *The Great Dictator* suggest that it might have influenced Hilsenrath's *The Nazi and the Barber*, not least the choice of a barber as protagonist, but also the swapping of identities and the unexpected involvement in major political events.[111] Chaplin's barber is of course a good barber, whereas Hilsenrath's good barbers live on only in the mind of Max Schulz, the wicked barber. If Hilsenrath was reacting to *The Great Dictator*, his intention was primarily subversive. Meanwhile, Chaplin's barber, along with his archetypal tramp, became representatives of the 'little man' for most of the twentieth century.[112]

In conclusion, one could say that the figure of the barber had a greater cultural usefulness over a longer period and in a wider range of settings than one might have predicted. Literary commentary on figures such as Hilsenrath and Chaplin is sophisticated but I have yet to find discussion of why barbers were chosen as protagonists, which possibly confirms their taken-for-granted universality. For me the interest of depictions of barbers lies in the interplay of gender and status, epitomised in the notion of barbers as little men, and the social distance, great or small, between the barber and his customers. In literary terms, there is also the distance, exploited in a variety of genres, between the little man's expectations in life as determined by societal attitudes, and what the story allows him to achieve. This is partly what allows the transformation of barber stories into stories written for children, or for adults remembering their childhood, or, as in the case of Germanetto, for the working class.

There are however other significant features. One is the connection between person and place, as in the barber of Seville, or Putney, or Littlewick. This is an aspect of the social definition of the character which includes comparative insignificance as an individual. To put it simply, every place needs its barber, and that there should be an easily located barber is more important than who the barber is. A barber might charge higher prices simply by being situated in a particular locality, a development which could be scorned by 'the old school'.[113] Location, as in Seville or Putney, does also lead the reader to expect certain features in terms of a story. If we refer to the historical record, we can establish that the barber was ubiquitous, not only in cities and towns but even in villages. The barber may have been humble, but he was necessary – and, as with other low-status trades, he was humble partly because he was a necessary part of ordinary life.

In the sources we have been discussing, this involves the barber being able to make his way in such diverse environments as ships, army barracks, and prison camps. This means, paradoxically, that as well as the barber defined by place we have the barber as dislocated, a wanderer who is able to survive because his trade is one needed by all men on a regular basis. A subsidiary aspect of this is that barbering becomes a viable option for the alien or the ethnic outsider, who can hope to hide himself in the performance of menial but necessary tasks, and in the semi-domestic and apparently harmless environment of the barber's shop. Both these features can be substantiated historically, but are also valuable for literary purposes. We have seen that the local barber makes a small but significant contribution to nationalism and nationalistic stereotyping. It could even be suggested that the 'little Englishman' who is said to emerge in the interwar period – domestic, timid, lacking individuality – bears many resemblances to the harmless kind of barber, implying that the interwar figure had a significant set of predecessors. A major difference is that this new stereotype is never feminized.[114]

With many other trades, social mobility might be a problematic, or it might be possible to make a mistake about how wealthy an individual actually was. With barbers, it seems, the reader expected to be fairly certain of both social status and social location. This was reinforced by ballads and other popular literature which mocked barbers who sought to rise above their station, or pointed to the incongruity of a barber doing something out of character.[115] In real life as well as in some literary sources, we find poor barbers and better-off barbers, but this does not seriously alter the social niche barbers were expected to occupy.[116] From the sixteenth century and very likely before, the act of shaving and being shaved proved to be a rich source of metaphor, including for political or satirical commentary but also for endless variations on sexual themes, and for this purpose too, a consistency in the social associations of barbers and barbering was necessary.[117]

That, culturally speaking, there are good barbers and wicked barbers should remind us of the long-standing literary genres about good and evil women. The good barber is a model of domestic virtue, and provides the stereotype which gives the wicked barber his shock value. The wicked barber, like the woman poisoner, creates a frisson because he represents a betrayal of essential and personal trust. In a number of the

sources we have looked at, the timelessness of the barber's occupation and skills is matched by the timelessness of the arc of innocence, evil and retribution. In between the extremes lies Bob the barber, the archetypal small craftsman living his life on the small scale deemed appropriate to him. So are barbers losers, as we posited at the beginning? Historically, in the early modern period, barbers can be classed among the dishonourable trades because of their connections with blood, bathhouses, bodily products, prostitution, and disease, especially venereal disease. In later periods, many of these connections are weakened, which could be seen as a gain, but at the same time, the barber's functions become more cosmetic, and also more feminised. Moreover, post-industrial barbers lose the fraternal links and institutional backing of barbers' companies and have to make their way as, in many cases, struggling individual members of the upper working classes. As Germanetto found, twentieth-century barbers did not or would not unionise. The alternative was a kind of submergence, or anonymity, which is fully represented in both literary and autobiographical sources. For the barber of the later period, the loss of his link with the surgeon is more or less irrelevant. If he is still a loser, he is one for reasons similar to those whereby women lost out to men, reasons which are intrinsic to the nature and necessity of the work he did and its status in society.

Losers or not, it seems clear that there were many reasons why a wide range of authors chose barbers as characters. Most if not all of their readership was likely to have used one or more barbers and this shared experience could be drawn upon for many purposes, satirical and otherwise. Barbers could be condescended to, or mocked, or made to know their place, especially with respect to what they knew, or thought they knew, as a result of their intimate contact with clients. Their increasing contact with women aroused literary suspicion, disparagement, and ridicule, something with which male readers could identify. On the other hand, what the barber knew and what he did and what he had in his shop was, as already noted, an endlessly fruitful source of puns, metaphor, and *double entendre*, a lot of it sexual, which could be deployed against any set of men the author wished to undermine. More seriously, the barber could epitomise, in a way that many other crafts and trades could not, the small man at the mercy of events and forces outside his control. Whether he won or lost, there was an appeal to the sympathies of the reader. Again unlike other occupations, a barber could, as we have seen, be represented both as

part of a locality, or as a wanderer from place to place. As a literary figure he was versatile while being at the same time universal. As suggested, there is a remarkable consistency in the character of actual barbers and barbershops and the nature of their core tasks over time. Everybody knows, or thinks he knows, what a barber does, which was not much affected either by industrial developments or technological change. To that extent, the literary barber is also literal.

That the characteristics of barbers are an understated and long-standing aspect of social consensus means in addition that authors could hope to achieve an effect by undermining conventional expectations. Like Chaplin's character, a good barber, against all the odds, could be a hero. However, wicked barbers seem to feature in the canon much more often than heroic ones. As with women, this comes down to the clash between intimacy and danger. Barbershops deliberately offered distractions as well as pampering and servility; at the same time, the male client had to allow himself to be made helpless in wrappings and to expose his throat to the razor. It is not surprising that the gothic horrors of the wicked barber tended to be located in a past age, or another country, or to involve a barber who is in some way 'other'. In that way, the male reader could enjoy the frisson without having to think that his own barber might not be as harmless and inconsiderable as he appeared.

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[1] By barbers I mean those, almost invariably male, who provided other men with the basic services of shaving, hair-cutting, and other kinds of grooming. This does not preclude other services which were health-related or surgical, such as blood-letting, ear-picking, and teeth-pulling, which continue in a fragmentary way into the modern period.

[2] See my 'Compromised by gender: the role of the male medical practitioner in early modern England', in Hilary Marland and Margaret Pelling (eds), *The Task of Healing: Medicine, Religion and Gender in England and the Netherlands 1450-1800* (Erasmus, Rotterdam, 1996), pp. 101-33, esp. pp. 115-17. On masculinity, see esp. Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford UP, Oxford, 2003). On the earlier history of craftsmen and tradesmen in literature, see Laura C. Stevenson, *Praise and Paradox: Merchants and Craftsmen in Elizabethan Popular Literature* (Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1984). Stevenson pays particular attention to politics.

[3] Cf. for example the more judicious account by Clarendon H. Creswell, 'The surgeons and barbers of Edinburgh: their separation in 1722', *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, 3rd ser., 11 (1913), 44-55.

[4] See my 'Corporatism or individualism: parliament, the navy, and the splitting of the London Barber-Surgeons' Company in 1745', in Ian A. Gadd and Patrick Wallis (eds), *Guilds and Association in Europe, 900-1900* (Centre for Metropolitan History, IHR, London, 2006), pp. 57-82, esp. pp. 60-7.

[5] See Alun Withey, *Technology, Self-fashioning and Politeness in Eighteenth-century Britain: Refined Bodies* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2016); Jessica P. Clark, 'Grooming men: the material world of the nineteenth-century barbershop', in Hannah Greig, Jane Hamlett and Leonie Hannan (eds), *Gender and Material Culture in Britain since 1600* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2016), pp. 104-19.

[6] For a ballad suggesting that barbers first attended to women who wore wigs, see *The Barber's Black Patch* (printed by J. P. Ritts, [London], n.d.), a cautionary tale in which the barber has his nose bitten off by a monster lurking in a woman's infested wig. For a barber with 'large black curls' whose jealous girlfriend, a servant, makes him promise not to cut women's hair, see *Ye Blighted Barber, Or Fee Fi Fo Fum*, composed by R. Coote and written by Franck Wainwright Green ([London], n.d.).

[7] Pelling, 'Appearance and reality: barber-surgeons, the body and disease', in A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay (eds), *London 1500-1700: the Making of the Metropolis* (Longman, Harlow, 1986), pp. 87-8, 95. Mark A. Johnston, '"By tricks they shave a kingdom round": early modern English barbers as panders', in Peter Kanelos and Matt Kosusko (eds), *Thunder at a Playhouse: Essaying Shakespeare and the Early Modern Stage* (Susquehanna UP, Selinsgrove, PA, 2010), pp. 97-115, provides a wealth of literary references but I would disagree with some of his central interpretations.

[8] See for example the work of Sandra Cavallo, Fayçal Falaky, Carmel Ferragud, and Gianna Pomata.

[9] D'Arcy Power, *Some Notes on Edmund Harman: King's Barber, 1509 (?) to 1576* (Bale, London, 1916); Sidney Young, *Annals of the Barber-Surgeons of London* (1890, repr. AMS Press, New York, 1978); Simon Rottenberg, 'The economics of occupational licensing', in Universities – National Bureau, *Aspects of Labor Economics* (Princeton UP, Princeton, NJ, 1962); Don Herzog, *Poisoning the Minds of the Lower Orders* (Princeton UP, Princeton, NJ, 1998); Withey, *Technology, Self-fashioning and Politeness*. I owe the Rottenberg reference to Patrick Wallis.

[10] Herzog, *Poisoning the Minds*; see also his 'The trouble with hairdressers', *Representations*, 53 (1996), 21-43.

[11] 'Occupational diversity: barber-surgeons and other trades, 1550-1640', repr. in my *The Common Lot: Sickness, Medical Occupations and the Urban Poor in Early Modern England* (Longman, Harlow, 1998), p. 224; see also for example John Parrish, 'The democratic barber; or, country gentleman's surprise', in Parrish, *Three Short Political Poems, addressed to the Society for Preserving Liberty and Property against Levellers and Republicans* (London, 1793); Theologis [pseud.], *Shaving: A Breach of the Sabbath and a Hindrance to the Spread of the Gospel* (Saunders, Otley, London, 1860), esp. p. 6; Charles Dibdin, *The Barber's Shop* [ballad] (W. Pratt, Birmingham, [c. 1850]). I owe the Parrish reference to Michael Bevan.

[12] See Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern London* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1996). Anecdotes about barbers being in possession of damaging information go back to antiquity. See for example Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding (Penguin, London, 2002), xi, ll. 185ff (p. 327). For an example of a barber wheedling gossip out of a customer and passing it on, see Theophilus Lucas, *Memoirs of the Lives, Intrigues, and Comical Adventures of the Most Famous Gamesters and Celebrated Sharpers* (London, 1714), pp. 59-67.

[13] See the interesting example of France, which seems to have invented the male coiffeur: Fayçal Falaky, 'From barber to coiffeur: art and economic liberalisation in eighteenth century France', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 36, 1 (2013), 35-48. Culturally at least, Falaky's coiffeur defined himself by overtaking the barber in terms of feminised identity and privileged access. See also below, note 56.

[14] Neil McKendrick, 'George Packwood and the commercialization of shaving: the art of eighteenth-century advertising, or "the way to get money and be happy"', in idem, John Brewer, and John Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: the Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Hutchinson, London, 1983), pp. 146-94; G. Bruce Retallack, 'Razors, shaving and gender construction : an inquiry into the material culture of shaving', *Material Culture Review/Revue de la Culture Matérielle*, 49, 3 (1999), 4-19; Alun Withey, 'Shaving and masculinity in eighteenth-century Britain', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 36, 1 (2013), 225-43; chapters by Susan Vincent and Jessica Clark in Greig, Hamlett and Hannan (eds), *Gender and Material Culture*; Mark Anderson, 'Making facial hair modern: shaving and hirsuteness in post-war Britain', in Jennifer Evans and Alun Withey (eds), *New Perspectives on the History of Facial Hair: Framing the Face* (Palgrave Macmillan/Springer, 2018), pp. 109-29.

[15] Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, trans. Edith Grossman (Vintage, London, 2005). The first part of the novel was published in Spanish in 1605, the second part in 1615. Its first translation was into English in 1620, by Thomas Shelton. See Dale B. J. Randall and Jackson C. Boswell, *Cervantes in Seventeenth-Century England: The Tapestry Turned* (Oxford UP, Oxford, 2009).

[16] For a later reflection of this, see Henry Fielding, *Don Quixote in England: A Comedy* (London, 1734), p. 15.

[17] Barber metaphors occur, for example, in *Titus Andronicus*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Antony and Cleopatra.* See Laurie E. Maguire, 'Petruccio and the barber's shop', *Studies in Bibliography*, 51 (1998), 117-26. In general see Johnston, '"By tricks they shave"'; Eleanor Decamp, *Civic and Medical Worlds in Early Modern England: Performing Barbary and Surgery* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2016); Patricia

Parker, 'Barbers and Barbary: early modern cultural semantics', *Renaissance Drama*, 33 (2004), 201-44. Parker's discussion is valuable in pointing to linguistic conflations which go beyond the literal and show the fertility of contemporary word-smithing.

[18] 'Appearance and reality', p. 94. For a convincing elaboration with respect to sounds and hearing, see Eleanor Decamp, '"Thou art like a punie-Barber (new come to the trade) thou pick'st our eares too deepe": barbery, ear-wax and snip-snaps', in Simon Smith, Jacqueline Watson and Amy Kenny (eds), *The Senses in Early Modern England, 1558-1660* (Manchester UP, Manchester, 2015), pp. 74-90.

[19] On the distribution of barbers and barber-surgeons in London, Norwich and East Anglia, see Pelling and Charles Webster, 'Medical practitioners', in Webster (ed.), *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1979), pp. 165-235; on London see also 'Appearance and reality', pp. 84-8. Unlike some other occupations, barbers did not cluster, though some districts could have a higher concentration than others.

[20] This chimes with the argument in Adam Zucker, 'The social logic of Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*', *Renaissance Drama*, 33 (2004), 37-62.

[21] See Huston D. Hallahan, 'Silence, eloquence, and chatter in Jonson's *Epicoene*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 40, 2 (1977), 117-27, esp. for connections between chatter and impotence.

[22] *The Arabian Nights* has medieval origins but became known in Europe through the twelve-volume compilation and translation (1704-17) by Antoine Galland. English translations in Grub Street formats probably began as early as 1708. Burton's translation, subsequently much criticised, was published 1885-8. See Robert Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (1994; Tauris Parke, London, 2005), pp. 296, 298 and Introduction; C. Knipp, '*The Arabian Nights* in England: Galland's translation and its successors', *Journal of Arabic Literature*, 5 (1974), 44-54.

[23] *The Silent Barber*, Sheherazade Children's Stories 10 (Garnet, Reading, 1993).

[24] *Abu Kir the Dyer and Abu Sir the Barber. From the Arabian Nights 1885 Translation by Sir Richard F. Burton* (Crannog Press, Belfast, 1975).

[25] 'Appearance and reality', p. 64; *The Common Lot*, p. 56.

[26] Not all versions were so positive, while retaining familiar characteristics. The barber in Peter Cornelius's comic opera, *Der Barbier von Bagdad* (1858), revived as *The Barber of Baghdad* in 2010, is a fussy go-between whose meddling has to be put right by his superiors.

[27] George Meredith, *The Shaving of Shagpat: An Arabian Entertainment* (1855; new edn, London, [c. 1870]). See Irwin, *The Arabian Nights*, pp. 272-4. There were many more editions of the *Nights* for children than there were for adults: Knipp, `*The Arabian Nights* in England', p. 51. On Meredith and his contemporaries, see Philip Waller, *Writers, Readers, and Reputations: Literary Life in Britain 1870-1918* (Oxford UP, Oxford, 2008).

[28] Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais, *The Barber of Seville; and The Marriage of Figaro*, trans. and intro. John Wood (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1964); John Warrack and Ewan West (eds), *The Oxford Dictionary of Opera* (Oxford UP, Oxford, 1992).

[29] For example, Samuel Arnold, *The Spanish Barber: A Comic Opera. As Performed at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket* (London, 1799). For Arnold, but not this opera, see

the entry by Eva Zoellner in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*OxfordDNB*). Arnold also composed *Don Quixote*, a burletta he designed for the Marylebone pleasure garden.

[30] As recorded in a letter of 1728: *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations.*

[31] See for example P. G., *The Barber of Seville. Extracted from The Monthly Mirror* (Laurie and Whittle, London, 1808), which implies that Spanish women were hairy. For an earlier comedy based on nationalistic stereotypes, see Fielding, *Don Quixote*.

[32] For the earlier period see Mark T. Burnett, *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture: Authority and Obedience* (Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1997), esp. chap. 3, although Burnett does not deal with barbers or valets.

[33] 'Bob the barber' may have originated with the actor, composer and writer Charles Dibdin, author of a great many patriotic songs of the Jack Tar variety. In his song *Miss Muz the Milliner and Bob the Barber* (London, [1791?]), both the milliner and the barber disrupt 'our little town' with new urban fashions and expense. For Dibdin, see the entry by Jon A. Gillaspie in *Oxford DNB*. See in general Gregory Dart, *Metropolitan Art and Literature, 1810-1840: Cockney Adventures* (Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 2012), esp, chap. 8. Ballads and songs about barbers of this period include echoes of the older themes noted in Stevenson, *Praise and Paradox*.

[34] See the ballad *Jonathan Brown* (W. Pickes, Devonport, n.d.), about a barber whose intended two-times him with a tailor. In the ballad *Wooden Leg'd Parson* (n. pl., n.d.) the barber and wigmaker Timothy Briggs is cuckolded by Parson Sly whom he naively asked for help with his shrewish wife.

[35] 'Compromised by gender'; *The Sailor's Wife's Policy, or the Knowing Barber Taken In* [ballad] ([London, 1790?]). In the latter case, the barber was deploying the pretext of offering to dress the young sailor's wife's hair.

[36] Aubrey Beardsley, 'The ballad of a barber', in Stephen Calloway and David Colvin (eds), *In Black and White: the Literary Remains of Aubrey Beardsley* (Cypher, London, 1998), pp. 147-51. Even in this case, Carrousel was given the attribute of a location, as 'the barber of Meridian Street'.

[37] Beardsley, 'The ballad of a barber', pp. 150-1. The princess had come to Carrousel for 'coiffing'.

[38] For examples, especially from American society and culture, see Christopher Benfey, 'A close shave', *The New Republic*, 238, 3 (27 Feb. 2008), pp. 27-30. I owe this reference to Sarah Dry. The first true safety razor was produced by Gillette in 1903. In Britain at least, the potentially lethal 'cut-throat' razor, like being shaved in a barbershop, seems to have survived well into the twentieth century: see as deployed, along with three different barbers, in Dorothy L. Sayers, *Have His Carcase* (Victor Gollancz, 1932; NEL p/b edn, 1987). See also John Dickson Carr, *The Blind Barber* (Harper Bros., NY and London, 1934).

[39] We first meet Touquet in his shop, with 'a mademoiselle protected upstairs' (an adopted orphan named Blanche), and with the shop kept by an old woman servant. Charles-Paul de Kock, *The Barber of Paris; or, Moral Retribution* (Whittaker & Co., London, 1839), pp. 1-2, 7, 12, 18. When all is revealed, retribution sets in and Touquet is shot dead.

[40] Ibid., p. 5. See above, note 13.

[41] On Sweeney, his context and afterlife see the exhaustive account by Robert L. Mack, *The Wonderful and Surprising History of Sweeney Todd: the Life and Times of an Urban Legend* (Continuum, London, 2007), which came to hand after this paper was first written.

[42] For James Malcom Rymer, who never published under his own name but under eight known pseudonyms, see the entry by Louis James in *Oxford DNB*. Claims to authorship are also made for Thomas Peckett Prest: see ibid., entry by James and Helen R. Smith. On Dickens and Sweeney, see Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History*, pp. 95-6, 148ff. Unsurprisingly, Dickens's cast of London characters includes at least one barber, Paul or 'Poll' Sweedlepipe, listed as a bird fancier and hairdresser, and plainly, being little, meek, and very curious, in the dominant rather than the Sweeney tradition of barbers: see *Martin Chuzzlewit*, ed. P. N. Furbank (Penguin Classics, London, 1986), esp. chaps 19, 29.

[43] M[alcolm] Rymer, *The Spaniard, or the Pride of Birth* (London, 1806), as identified by Rebecca Nesvet, 'Blood relations: Sweeney Todd and the Rymers of London', *Notes & Queries*, 44, 1 (2017), 112-16. Although London-based, the Rymers had their origins in Scotland.

[44] *The String of Pearls; or, the Barber of Fleet Street* (London, 1850; reissued as Anon., *Sweeney Todd or the String of Pearls* by Wordsworth Edns Ltd, 2005 & 2007, with an introduction by Dick Collins). Collins argues for multiple authorship and points to other complications including changes of title, format, and length, and versions pirated for the stage. Subtitles included *A Sailor's Gift* and *A Domestic Romance*.

[45] See entry 'Todd, Sweeney', by Matthew Kilburn, *Oxford DNB*. A similar real-life case in 1821 of a barber killing out of jealousy inspired the play *Woyzeck* by Georg Büchner (1813-1837), seen by some as the first modern play, being a small man's tragedy affected by socio-economic and military hierarchies. The eponymous Woyzeck is a soldier-barber exploited and experimented on by his superiors. See Georg Büchner, *Complete Plays, Lenz and Other Writings*, trans. John Reddick (Penguin, London, 1993).

[46] *String of Pearls*, pp. 2-3.

[47] 'Appearance and reality', p. 95; 'Occupational diversity', pp. 222-4. The 'barber's block' became another well-used metaphor. See for example 'Pasquin Shavelock', *The Barking Barber, or, the New Bow Wow. A New Comi-Satyri-Po[l]itical Lecture on Blockheads* [n.d., n. pl.].

[48] One archetype is the sorceress and healer Medea, best known from the play by Euripides and later French adaptations, though Medea does not make pies. In Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* the tables are turned and it is Tamora, the barbarian queen, who is deceived into eating pies made of her sons' flesh. In general see Barbara Hanawalt, 'The female felon in fourteenth-century England', *Viator*, 5, 5 (1974), 253-68; Frances E. Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England 1550-1700* (Cornell UP, Ithaca and London, 1994). On female poisoners, see Randall Martin, *Women, Murder and Equity in Early Modern England* (Routledge, London, 2008), esp. chap. 4.

[49] Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History,* pp. 278-9. Mack offers a possibly controversial defence of both Sweeney (including puppet versions) and Punch and Judy (pp. 247ff.).

[50] Ibid., pp. 205, 217, 234, 243-4, 265.

[51] For the cognates, see ibid., pp. 337, 339-40.

[52] Ernest S. Turner, *Boys will be Boys: the Story of Sweeney Todd, Deadwood Dick, Sexton Blake, Billy Bunter, Dick Barton et al.* (Michael Joseph, London, 1948), pp. 36, 39, 41. On apprenticeship, see Pelling, 'Managing uncertainty and privatising apprenticeship: status and relationships in English medicine, 1500-1900', *Social History of Medicine*, 32, 1 (2019), 34-56, and references there cited.

[53] See for example 'Appearance and reality', p. 102.

[54] Ibid., p. 96; Mark Jenner, 'The great dog massacre', in William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (eds), *Fear in Early Modern Society* (Manchester UP, Manchester, 1997), pp. 44-61. In Thomas Middleton's comedy, *Anything for a Quiet Life* (1621/2), the barber, Sweetball, is shown as offering even the most drastic surgical treatments for venereal disease.

[55] Sandy Hobbs and David Cornwell, 'Sawney Bean, the Scottish cannibal', *Folklore*, 108 (1997), 49-54; Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History*, pp. 174 -80, 345. Cannibalism is the dominant feature of versions of Sawney Bean, though his female associates are worth noting.

[56] Falaky, 'From barber to coiffeur', p. 40, suggests that French coiffeurs sought to define themselves against a negative image of the barber as lecherous, dangerous, and unsavoury, a tactic which was not ultimately successful.

[57] Kilburn, 'Todd, Sweeney'. On possible or alleged French influences, see Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History*, pp. 156ff.

[58] See my 'Food, status and knowledge: attitudes to diet in early modern England', in *The Common Lot,* esp. pp. 46-7. In general the English glorified themselves as (selective) meat-eaters and despised the French taste for what we would now call rabbit-food.

[59] Kilburn, 'Todd, Sweeney'.

[60] Cf. Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History*, who gives preference to cultural fears about urban cannibalism.

[61] 'Food, status and knowledge', pp. 43-4.

[62] See Richard Davenport-Hines, 'Jack the Ripper', *OxfordDNB.*

[63] Ibid.

[64] See for example John Paul Green, 'Ripping yards: capturing (not catching) and constructing the myth of Jack the Ripper in nineteenth-century London', in John Storey (ed.), *The Making of English Popular Culture* (Routledge, London, 2016), pp. 213-24. Medical, anatomical and locational clues are stressed by Elizabeth Hurren, 'Dissecting Jack-the-Ripper: an anatomy of murder in the metropolis', *Crime, Histoire et Sociétés*, 20, 2 (2016), 5-30.

[65] For a French example of 1887, and a satirical response to it, see Ira M. Rutkow, *Surgery: An Illustrated History* (Mosby, New York, 1993), pp. 424-5.

[66] See the invaluable appendix, 'Sweeney Todd: A genealogy, history and chronology', in Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History*.

[67] Hollis Elliott, *The Demon Barber (A Play for Children)* (Pocket Prints, London, 1998). Elliott's Sweeney, tall, with flaming red hair (p. 20), kills his client, Lord Fitzsimmon,

who is attempting to seduce his daughter Elsie. The class difference between Sweeney and Lord Fitzsimmon is underlined.

[68] Turner, *Boys will be Boys*.

[69] One of the more benign Grimm stories features a barber competing with two other trades: 'The three brothers', *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1959), pp. 567-8.

[70] The play by Christopher Bond (*Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street, A Melodrama*, 1973), draws on Jacobean revenge tragedy. Bond's Sweeney begins as a sensitive man who degenerates following the rape of his wife by a corrupt judge.

[71] For full details, see Mack, *Wonderful and Surprising History*.

[72] Kilburn, 'Todd, Sweeney'.

[73] Benjamin Farjeon, *Devlin the Barber* (Ward and Downey, London, 1888). See Lewis Melville, rev. William Baker, 'Farjeon, Benjamin Leopold', *OxfordDNB*; Bryan Cheyette, 'From apology to revolt: Benjamin Farjeon, Amy Levy, and the post-emancipation Anglo-Jewish novel, 1880-1900', *Jewish Historical Studies*, 29 (1982-6), 253-65.

[74] Even in retirement Lemon would play at being a barber, with his wife as the pretend customer, during which he would 'speak about the weather and the news in a manner quite professional'. Farjeon, *Devlin the Barber*, pp. 52, 54.

[75] Ibid., chap. XI. Devlin thereby combines standard features of the quack as well as of the barber. Mrs Lemon is unnerved by Devlin's uncanny abilities but her husband is fascinated, mainly by Devlin's commercial potential.

[76] Ibid., pp. 62, 97, 131; James Herriot, *The Lord God Made Them All* (Pan Books, London, 1982), chap. 13.

[77] Marcus Drewe, *The Barber of Littlewick* (Herbert Jenkins Ltd, London, 1930). So far, Drewe remains obscure and the name may be a pseudonym. The only identifiable Littlewick is Littlewick Green in Berkshire, near Maidenhead.

[78] The daughter motif occurs as early as a play of c. 1603 by George Chapman in which the barber, Snipper Snapper, tries to marry off his daughter, who has inherited money, to the highest bidder: Charles J. Sisson, *Lost Plays of Shakespeare's Age* (Cambridge UP, Cambridge, 1936), pp. 12-72. This, based on a real case, can also be seen as another example of a rebuke to social pretensions. In *I'll Throw Myself Off London Bridge!* (T. Pearson, Manchester, [after 1850]), a young man laments the loss of a barber's daughter. The daughter theme is of course not confined to barbers: ballads and songs including this theme feature other public-facing occupations of similar social standing.

[79] See for example Ngaio Marsh, *Off With His Head* (The Crime Club, London, 1957).

[80] See Jonathan Wild, '"A merciful heaven-sent release"? The clerk and the First World War in British literary culture', *Cultural and Social History*, 4, 1 (2007), 73-94; Sonya O. Rose, 'Temperate heroes: masculinity in Second World War Britain', in Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann and John Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester UP, Manchester, 2004), pp. 177-95.

[81] John Morton, *The Barber of Putney* (Philip Allan & Co., London, 1934).

[82] Richard Ingrams, rev. Clare L. Taylor, 'Morton, John Cameron Andrieu Bingham Michael', *OxfordDNB*.

[83] Hilsenrath is much better known in the US than in the UK, and, more recently, among students of German-Jewish and Holocaust literature. See Andreas Kilcher, 'Hilsenrath, Edgar', *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 9 (2007), 119; Peter Stenberg, 'Memories of the Holocaust: Edgar Hilsenrath and the fiction of genocide', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft*, 56, 2 (1982), 277-89.

[84] Edgar Hilsenrath, *The Nazi and the Barber: A Tale of Vengeance*, trans. from the German MS (W. H. Allen, London, 1975). First publ. in translation in the US, 1971. Not publ. in Germany until 1977.

[85] Hilsenrath, *The Nazi and the Barber*, pp. 26-9. Hilsenrath's apparently naïve descriptions have significance in terms of anti-Semitism and Jewish stereotyping.

[86] Ibid., p. 84.

[87] For some discussion of Hilsenrath's depiction of the human body, Jewish and non-Jewish, see Robert Lawson, 'Carnivalism in post-war Austrian- and German-Jewish literature – Edgar Hilsenrath, Irene Dische, and Doron Rabinovici', *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, 45, 1 (2007), 38-48. Lawson makes particular reference to Bakhtin.

[88] For some reflections on heads, see 'Appearance and reality', pp. 92ff; Regina Janes, 'Beheadings', *Representations*, 35 (1991), 21-51; Frances Larson, *Severed: A History of Heads Lost and Heads Found* (Granta, London, 2014).

[89] *The Nazi and the Barber*, pp. 29, 50, 53, 287.

[90] See for example prejudice among Israelis of different origins as revealed by the hierarchical numbering of the barbershop chairs (ordered by the barber's widow): *The Nazi and the Barber*, pp. 267-8, 270. Cf. the numbered chairs of a London barbershop in the short story by Andrew O'Hagan, 'Four chairs', *Guardian (Weekend)*, 14 September 1996.

[91] *The Nazi and the Barber*, pp. 237-9.

[92] See above, note 69. Peter Arnds argues for the centrality in Hilsenrath's novel of two Grimm stories, 'Mother Holle' and 'Hansel and Gretel' and for German fairy tales generally, before and after the Second World War: 'On the awful German fairy tale: breaking taboos in representations of euthanasia and the Holocaust in Günter Grass's "Die Blechtrommel", Edgar Hilsenrath's "Der Nazi & der Friseur", and Anselm Kiefer's visual art', *The German Quarterly*, 75, 4 (2002), 422-39. To what extent Hilsenrath read the Grimm stories is not established, but with characteristic irony he cites them as the favourite reading of Schulz's Jewish boyhood friend: *The Nazi and the Barber*, p. 91.

[93] On one occasion the abusive Polish barber, Slavitzki, is deterred from having sex with Max's mother because she is menstruating, and so out of frustration he rapes the infant Max instead, which he goes on to do repeatedly during Max's childhood. Later, as an assistant in a concentration camp, Max kills thousands of Jewish prisoners and gives fatal injections to children: ibid., pp. 17-18, 55-7, 81-3, 180-1, 283ff.

[94] Hilsenrath altered the ending of the American edition when it came to publication in Germany. In the English edition, a heart transplant fails to save Max and he is condemned by 'The One and Only', whom Max condemns in his turn: ibid., pp. 301-2.

[95] Ian Macrae, *Next Please! Autobiography of a Barber* (Jarrolds, London, [1941]), p. 78. On unemployed barbers travelling to find work, see also Sayers, *Have His Carcase*.

[96] Macrae, *Next Please!*, p. 50. Macrae being a Scot, Hieberg also makes comparisons between Scots and Jews as oppressed peoples (p. 41).

[97] *Next Please!*, p. 28.

[98] *Next Please!*, pp. 50-1. This was optimistic on several counts, but it is worth considering the effect of celebrity hairdressers such as Vidal Sassoon and his associate Trevor Sorbie, however exceptional (and male) these were. Sorbie came from a Scottish dynasty of barbers (see his obituary, *Guardian*, 11 November 2024). But see also the East End Jewish refugee hairdresser Rose Evansky, who introduced blow-drying having observed a barber using it on male clients (obituary, *Daily Telegraph*, 12 December 2016, p. 25).

[99] W. H. Hale, *A Snip: the Life of a Barber* (Arthur H. Stockwell Ltd, Ilfracombe, [1965]). Hale appends a plaintive doggerel, 'My ode to a barber' (pp. 87-8) which glances at the barber's traditional need to please his customers, regardless of their attitudes or behaviour.

[100] Ralph Glasser, *Growing up in the Gorbals* (House of Stratus, London, 1986), esp. chap. 3, p. 35; idem, *Gorbals Boy at Oxford* (Chatto & Windus, London, 1988). See David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (eds), *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Vol. 4: Professionalism and Diversity 1880-2000* (Edinburgh UP, Edinburgh, 2007), pp. 429-41 (by Linda Fleming). Soap or lather boys prepared the customers and were at the bottom of the barbershop hierarchy: Michael Chapman, *I Remember, I Remember: Chaplin in Brick Lane* (Janus Publishing, London, 1996), p. 35.

[101] Giovanni Germanetto, *Memoirs of a Barber*, trans. E. Stevens (Martin Lawrence, London, [1934]). The book was widely translated and sold over a million copies. See G. Sircana, 'Germanetto, Giovanni', *Dizionario Biografico Degli Italiani* (Rome, 1999), pp. 441-3. I am grateful to Maria Conforti for providing a translation of this entry.

[102] A British comparator might be the Glasgow barber and Trotskyist, Harry Selby, who later became the MP for Glasgow Govan (1974-9). I owe this information to John Stewart.

[103] Germanetto lived and worked in the province of Cuneo, in Piedmont, which was seen as epitomising Fascist ideals.

[104] Germanetto, *Memoirs*, p. 33.

[105] Germanetto, *Memoirs*, pp. 24, 34, 39-42, 75, 91. Cf. the mild social critique, 'noise and vacant mirth' of a Saturday-night barbershop as depicted in Dibdin's ballad, *The Barber's Shop*. For a modern American comparison see Melissa Harris-Perry, *Barbershops, Bibles and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought* (Princeton UP, Princeton, 2004), esp. chap. 5.

[106] For Strube (1892-1956), who was of German extraction, see the entry by John Jensen in *OxfordDNB*; Mark Bryant and Simon Heneage, *Dictionary of British Cartoonists and Caricaturists 1730-1980* (Scolar Press, Aldershot, 1994), p. 211, and the articles by Rod Brookes cited below. See also the British Cartoon Archive, University of Kent.

[107] Rod Brookes, 'The little man and the slump: Sidney Strube's cartoons and the politics of unemployment 1929-1931', *Oxford Art Journal*, 8, 1 (1985), 49-61.

[108] See Rod Brookes, '"Everything in the garden is lovely": the representation of national identity in Sidney Strube's *Daily Express* cartoons in the 1930s', *Oxford Art Journal*, 13, 2 (1980), 31-43.

[109] Much has been written about Chaplin, autobiographically and otherwise, but as a summary see the entry by Frank M. Scheide in *OxfordDNB*.

[110] See for example Richard Carr, *Charlie Chaplin: A Political Biography from Victorian Britain to Modern America* (Routledge, London, 2017), esp. chap. 7, 'The Tramp and the dictators'; Robert Cole, 'Anglo-American anti-fascist film propaganda in a time of neutrality: *The Great Dictator*, 1940', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, 21, 2 (2001), 137-52.

[111] This is taken further on textual and cinematic grounds in Astrid Klocke, 'Subverting satire: Edgar Hilsenrath's novel *Der Nazi und der Friseur* and Charlie Chaplin's film *The Great Dictator*', *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 22, 3 (2008), 497-513. It does not emerge whether Hilsenrath saw Chaplin's film.

[112] For a tour of the East End as Chaplin might have known it, including barbers, see Chapman, *I Remember*.

[113] *String of Pearls*, p. 2.

[114] Peter Mandler, *The English National Character: the History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (Yale UP, New Haven, Conn., 2006), pp. 163-76.

[115] See for example Thomas Thackeray, *The Barber Baron*, a farce of 1828 about a Strasbourg barber who wins a chateau in a lottery. For Thackeray, the son of a prosperous Bath surgeon, see the entry by John Russell Stephens in *OxfordDNB*. For a later reflection of alleged social incongruity, in this case within the Jewish community, see Gerry Black, *Lord Rothschild and the Barber: the Struggle to Establish the London Jewish Hospital* (Tymsder Publishing, London, 2000).

[116] For the range of barbers to be found in an early modern city second only to London, see 'Occupational diversity'.

[117] Although violent shaving, including circumcision and castration, literal or metaphorical, could be alleged and denounced without reference to actual barbers: Parker, 'Barbers and Barbary'.