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Key Questions, Pitfalls, and Examples of Effective (Filmic) Counterstrategies: The Case of Antigypsyism

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The Magnitude of the Emancipatory Challenge

On September 30, 1980, the German public-service television station ZDF broadcast Hannes Karnick and Wolfgang Richter’s documentary film *Lustig wär’ das Zigeunerleben*, which for its time and by today’s standards still remains one of a kind. Just some months earlier, on Good Friday, twelve Sinti had held a week-long hunger strike at the former Dachau concentration camp, and their protest action would prove a turning point in the civil rights struggle for recognition of the Holocaust against Sinti and Roma. Karnick and Richter responded to the hunger strike. They named their film after a popular German folk song, conjugating its title in the subjunctive mood to expose the bitterly ironic discrepancy between the lived and the imagined life: “If only Gypsy life were fun” reads the title in English. Their film is extraordinary not only because of its timely and empathic response to the grievances of German Sinti but also because of its rare ambition to confront head-on antigypsyist racism on the big screen; and countering antigypsyism in film but also in its sister arts—theater, painting, and photography—is also the central issue around which the papers in this edited collection orbit. The way Karnick and Richter organize their material, the contrapuntal structure they give to *Lustig wär’*, cuts to the core of the problem and emphasizes the magnitude of the challenge involved in rupturing the normality of antigypsyism on and off the big screen. This is also what makes their film a particularly good entry point to the topic this collection is dedicated to. The duo work with two types of film material, placing statements and witness testimonies of the Sinti activists side by side with excerpts from renowned or

recently released fictional films.¹ Thus, they are able to draw attention to the baffling chasm that gapes between the disparaging fictions produced by the dominant culture(s) and the lived trauma experiences of the minoritized people, to reveal the disturbing discrepancy between the ‘gypsy’ phantasm² on the big screen and flesh-and-blood Sinti and Roma engaged in their everyday lives and political struggle for justice. In Karnick and Richter’s remarkable documentary, we can see the faces and hear the voices of four of the participants in the Dachau hunger strike, men who were unknown at the time but who would later become iconic figures in the civil rights movement in Germany: Romani Rose, a year and a half later the first chair of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma; the Holocaust survivors Hans Braun and Jakob Bamberger, and Wallani Georg, chair of the Association of German Sinti in Hessen. The authoritative center stage also goes to Oskar Birkenfelder, chair of the Sinti Union Germany; Rudko Kawczynski, chair of Rom und Cinti Union in Hamburg; Wilhelm Spindler from Sindh Union Germany; the musician Kirschman Rose; Bodo Steinbach; Kristian Lehmann; Georg Seeger; and Ramona Blum. The Sinti are invited to comment on the film excerpts that intersperse Karnick and Richter’s film, and the chorus of their insightful voices gives an accurate description of the paradoxical situation which people stigmatized as ‘gypsies’/‘Zigeuner’—back then but also nowadays—are forced to navigate. Wilhelm Spindler encapsulates this paradox by recounting how “Zigeunermusic” is enthusiastically applauded on stage, whereas off stage, the Sinto musician is excluded from society and rejected as a human being.

- 1 Karnick and Richter incorporate film quotes from German and foreign fictional films that German audiences were familiar with in the 1980s; the excerpts point not only to the transnational dimension of filmic antigypsyism but also to its long cinematic tradition: *Das Mädchen vom Hof* (dir. Ernst Ritter von Theumer, BRD, 1979), *Die große Flatter* (dir. Marianne Lüdcke, BRD, 1978/1979), *The Gypsy* [*Der Zigeuner*] (dir. José Giovanni, France/Italy, 1975), *And Hope to Die* [*Treibjagd*] (dir. René Clément, France, 1972), *Der Zigeunerbaron* (dir. Kurt Wilhelm, BRD, 1962), *The Gypsy and the Gentlemen* [*Dämon Weib*] (dir. Joseph Losey, GB, 1957), *The Csardas Princess* [*Die Czardasfürstin*] (dir. Georg Jacoby, BRD, 1934), *A Romany Spy* [*Das Mädchen ohne Vaterland*] (dir. Urban Gad, BRD, 1912). The translations of the film titles also point to the shared antigypsyist imaginary.
- 2 In my analyses, I deploy the term ‘gypsy’ in small letters and in scare quotes to refer to stereotypy and racist constructs, to designate fictional figures in literary or visual narratives; in turn, I use the self-appellations Roma or Sinti and Roma to denote individuals or collectives.

The Alternative Picture Painted by Ramona Blum

At this point, it is useful to zoom in on one interview in *Lustig wär'*, again a very rare dialogic exchange and possibly one of the very few instances in the history of filmmaking when a representative of the Sinti and Roma community—in this case, the German Sinteza Ramona Blum—is invited to share her thoughts before the camera about the role of a 'gypsy' she was given in a fictional film. She has a part in *Das Mädchen vom Hof*,³ one of the films quoted by Karnick and Richter; her role is that of a maid who gets strangled by a mentally handicapped man. Ramona Blum's reply, given in transcription below, is a straightforward example of a counterstrategy to antigypsyism; in fact, it is the most widespread strategy that Roma (are forced to) take recourse to, and that is to seek to attest their humanness:

Bloss, im Film war ein Fehler drin. Man hat die Zigeuner-Familie, also unsere Familie, nicht gezeigt, wie man sich unterhält oder wie man ein bisschen ist, dass man ... dass die Besucher im Kino mehr Sympathie für die Familie empfinden. [...] Man hätte ein bisschen zeigen, dass die Besucher mehr Sympathie empfinden, dass sie sagen, wenn z. B. ich gestorben bin: Ach, gerade die! Die hat mir leidgetan da, zumal sie hat sich so gut mit ihrem Kind verstanden. [...] Hätte man ein bisschen zeigen können, wie wir uns unterhalten, frühstücken, dass man sympathischer ein bisschen wirkt. Das hat man halt nicht gezeigt.

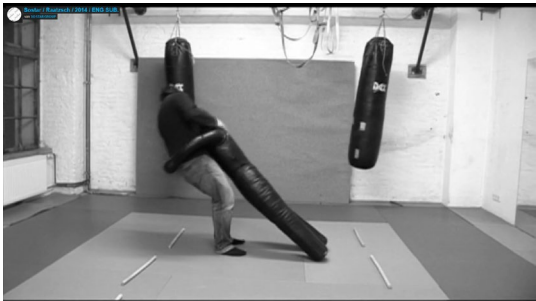
But there was a mistake in the film. They didn't show the Gypsy family, our family, talking to each other or a little bit how we are, so that ... so that the visitors in the cinema can feel more sympathy for the family. [...] They could have shown a little bit, so that the visitors feel more sympathy, so that they would say, for example, when I died: Oh, why her! What a pity it had to be her, especially since she got along so well with her child. [...] One could have shown a little bit how we talk to each other, have breakfast, so that one appears more likeable. That just wasn't shown. [My translation, R. M.]

3 This scurrilous alpine thriller has also been marketed under the titles *Die Totenschmecker*, *Das Tal der Gesetzlosen*, *Blutrausch*, and *Der Irre vom Zombiehof*.

The reader may notice that Ramona Blum falters in her answer as she looks for alternatives convincing enough to redress the unsympathetic portrayal of the minor ‘gypsy’ character she impersonates in the film. The alternative she comes up with is very endearing, courageous, and precise; clearly, it is something that Ramona Blum draws from her own experience, offering the image of a family breakfast, of a strong mother-and-child bond, of love in the family. In fact—and this shows how spot-on her counterstory is—when filmmakers seek to defy antigypsyist figments, they make a point of emphasizing the strong friendship and familial bonds between/among their protagonists; love is shown to be the main driving force behind the characters’ actions. Some good examples of such feature-length fictional films are Tony Gatlif’s *Tom Medina* (2021), *Korkoro* (2010), *The Crazy Stranger* (1997), and *Corre, gitano* (1982); also, Jonas Selberg Augustsén’s *The Garbage Helicopter* (2015) and Alexander Ramati’s *And the Violins Stopped Playing* (1988). As to short fictions, a mention should go to Alina Serban’s *Letter of Forgiveness* (2020) and Sejad Ademaj’s *Fünfzehn Minuten* (2022). Let us, however, be reminded here that the above-mentioned filmmakers, mostly Roma, are few and far between in the filmmaking landscape of Europe and the USA. So, if we zoom out to the big picture and consider Ramona Blum, a nameless one-time actress, timidly vouching for love in a television documentary juxtaposed next to, say, internationally famous Melina Mercouri with her dashing impersonation of a demonic ‘gypsy’ in Joseph Losey’s big-screen classics *The Gypsy and the Gentleman*, also a film quoted by Karnick and Richter, we can recognize the scale of the challenge that this particular woman, but in essence any Sinti or Roma, is confronted with.

To underscore the magnitude of the emancipatory challenge facing Roma as individuals and a group, we should mention here two experimental short films: *Batrachian’s Ballad* (2016) by the Portuguese director Leonor Teles and *Sostar, Sostar, Why Are You Sostar?* (2014) by the Hungarian artist André Raatzsch, in which the burden of the anti-gypsyist stigma is given a concrete physical form (**Fig. 1–4**). In *Sostar*, to cite one example, André Raatzsch comes up with a forceful visual metaphor: he shows himself confronting a big punching bag made of black leather, so heavy and unwieldy that it brings the artist down to the ground. The conflict with the inanimate yet man-made foe appears to require inordinate strength and offers no hopes of success; yet the artist manages with a self-assertive gesture to extricate himself from the entanglement by way of throwing the bulky punching bag to the side.

Key Questions, Pitfalls, and Examples of Effective (Filmic) Counterstrategies



Figs. 1–4. Screenshots from the experimental short film *Sostar, Sostar, Why Are You Sostar?* (2014) directed by the Hungarian artist André Raatzsch for the Budapest exhibition “{roma} The contract to sell the ethnicity”.

His experimental film, which stresses artistic reflexivity, is part of the Budapest exhibition “{roma} The contract to sell the ethnicity” (2014), which set itself the goal of critically examining and deconstructing the concepts “Rom-Cigány-Gipsy” with visual and communicational tools.

The Demands and Pitfalls of Artistic Self-consciousness

For the scholarly community but also for filmmakers, the challenge posed by the phenomenon of antigypsyism can be summarily rephrased in the following way. It means to be able to take a step back and out of Europe’s cultural realm and raise this one question: why is the sense of worth and belonging of the members of the majority ethno-national groups in Europe made contingent on the disparagement and rejection of Roma? This central question inevitably spurs further questions: why have all national cultures in Europe harnessed their arts and sciences since the Age of Enlightenment to ridicule, diminish, or even negate the humanity of these minoritized groups? Why are Roma chronically denied their subjectivity as human beings? What is it that makes Romaphobia “the last acceptable form of racism,” to refer to Aidan McGarry’s pithy formulation? How to approach, how to handle and dismantle this dark cultural heritage? And what is the role of filmmaking and film studies in this context? How to account for the largely ignored fact that, in the twentieth century, film became one of the central media for the dissemination of antigypsyist stereotypes? (cf. Hund 2, 5).

If the first step is to formulate the problem, which is what we just did, then the next logical step offers two possible venues of action. The one is to subject Europe’s dark heritage to a critical reappraisal; the other is to seek ways of asserting the dignity and humanity of Roma, as a group and as unique individuals. In *Lustig wär’*, we can see that the filmmakers Hannes Karnick and Wolfgang Richter have chosen to follow these two paths simultaneously, firstly by critically revising the antigypsyist legacy of European film and secondly by restoring authority to the Sinti activists. However, it needs to be stressed early enough that these two main venues of countering antigypsyism bring with them some serious risks. To elucidate the pitfalls related to the critical reappraisal approach, it is helpful to think of antigypsyism as a monolithic accrument of cultural developments and discourses that stretch back to the sixteenth century. Breaking the frames of antigypsyist discourse, therefore, means taking a critical stance towards European modernity

and some of its proud achievements: 1) the modern nation-state with its national(ist) mythology and racial ideology; 2) modern science as the highest instance of truth and validity (esp. eugenics and traditional ethnology/ethnography); and 3) the photographic/filmic image as an emblem of mechanical objectivity and documentary empiricism (see Daston). The precarious point in the critical re-evaluation here is not to discard the attainments of modern thought but, rather, to recognize the amount of violence that has brought them into being—to learn to love the child of rape, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak puts it (279). Following the second path of action, the one involving the recuperation of the (self-)worth of Roma communities, there is the risk of falling into the tempting rut of ethnocentric national myths which, sooner or later, lead to ‘ethno-racial’ essentialism.

There is one further complication related to the term antigypsyism, serviceable as the word is for giving a name to this specific, age-old form of racism: the concept is used by scholars to designate a plethora of antigypsyisms across Europe which significantly differ in form, quality, and socio-historic manifestations. To give one concrete example: the exterminatory antigypsyism of Nazi Germany can hardly be equated with the discriminatory antigypsyism in post-war Europe. It is important that readers bear this complication at the back of their minds, as it can help explain why scholars, both elsewhere and in this volume, arrive at very different conclusions in their critical film analyses. The verdict on whether a film or elements in it should be considered antigypsyist depends very much on the benchmarks by which the authors have (implicitly) chosen to judge the film material. In other words, there is still work to be done in the field of film studies reflecting on what is, on the one hand, to be perceived as an antigypsyist representation and what, on the other hand, should be the rectified (desired, ideal) (re)presentation. What is more, being the most popular and impactful medium, film has contributed significantly to the normalization of antigypsyism, not just in Europe but on a global scale. The film industry has not only commodified this form of racism but has also established films on the ‘gypsy’ theme as a genre of their own and a particularly lucrative form of entertainment. Obviously, film studies need to do a lot of catch-up work and should especially consider the question of what made it possible for antigypsyism, with its signature visual aesthetics, to stay until today a blind spot for film scholarship.

The Role and Contribution of Academic Scholarship

So far, I have outlined the contours of the problem field which this edited volume intends to inaugurate and map out, starting with the very basic question: are there any effective counterstrategies to anti-gypsyism, especially in the domain of film(making), and if so, what are they? By taking the perspective of the cordial German Sinteza, I have also prepared the readers that they can expect our leading question to be answered in the positive, i.e. that effective counterstrategies to antigypsyism in film and visual arts *do* exist. It is rather useful to start with the concrete universality of Ramona Blum's counterimage of family love. This image should serve as a beacon of light for all of us involved in the ensuing discussions because, as already pointed out—from a scholarly point of view—the subject matter of antigypsyism in film is excruciatingly complex and slippery, in addition to being novel, awkwardly underexplored, and full of all kinds of nasty pitfalls.

Therefore, what this opening text will strive at, in the first place, is storyboard clarity and impact; in fact, the commitment to intelligibility and practicability in itself is already one counterstrategy to antigypsyism in the domain of academic style (in reverence for Stephen Pinker's brilliantly lucid article "Why Academics Stink at Writing"; see also Rothman). By opting for clear prose, by distilling research findings and insights to their core, and by spelling out the logic that binds them together, the present text should provide the reader with a panoramic survey of the many facets of the subject matter and thus render its complex terrain more navigable. I am also led by the wish to spotlight the link, when it is there, between scholarship and praxis. Making an inventory of isolatable counterstrategies, I want to foreground the applicability of research findings and provide a broad range of concrete examples, so that this collection of articles, essays, and reports may be useful and stimulating to filmmakers and professionals from the film industry, curators and cultural practitioners, critical media literacy educators, and simply everyone who looks for novel ways of curating, showcasing, and memorializing art produced by/about individuals who, alongside their many attributes as citizens, professionals, and artists, also happen to identify as Roma.

Mapping Out the Field in a Direct Address to Filmmakers

Having established that antigypsyism in film is marked by high complexity, at this point, I invite the reader to adopt a multiaspectual perspective to film works, a leap of imagination comparable to getting into the shoes of a filmmaker. The multiaspectual perspective sketched out here is deduced from the creative process of filmmaking and accounts for the various levels of decision-making; it can help one better comprehend the antigypsyist elements in a film, to develop an intellectual and emotional immunity to this form of racism and its totalizing (visual) aesthetics. Entering the perspective of a many-eyed filmmaker is useful for non-filmmakers, because they can gain greater awareness of the sheer number of active choices that go into the creation of a film (cf. Breazu 43), whereas for filmmakers, this section is a direct invitation to reflexivity. In the following pages, I recap and expand on the main questions, pitfalls, filmic examples, and counterstrategies which were brought to discussion during the workshop “Artistic Alternatives to the Antigypsy Gaze” held in November 2021 in Heidelberg.⁴ There are at least five important aspects to be considered in relation to a film project: 1) one’s own positionality and worldview as a filmmaker, 2) the distribution of roles at the stage of film production, 3) film content, which can be further subdivided into a) storyline, b) character portrayal, c) recurrent themes and motives, and d) broader arc of interpretation, 4) film form, and finally, 5) the role of institutions. Certainly, this section does not make claims of exhaustiveness, nor does it have a didactic aim: academics are in no position to offer ready-made solutions to filmmakers, for there are no foolproof counterstrategies that can work in all contexts. What scholars can do is share the fruits of their intellectual labor and thus, hopefully, put a finger on the pertinent media-specific questions; spot and describe problems, perils, and cultural automatisms; and isolate effective counterstrategies that can be adopted by practitioners.

1) Artistic Reflexivity and Ethics

Without doubt, the most important prerequisite for rupturing filmic antigypsyism, or for that matter any form of filmic racism, is artistic

4 See the workshop report by Verena Meier in H-Soz-Kult (in German); the workshop program and poster are available at RCA’s website, in the rubrics “Drittmittelprojekte.”

reflexivity—that capacity for self-reflection which subverts the “assumption that art can be a transparent medium of communication, a window on the world” (Stam 114). Filmmakers control the camera and have power over the storytelling that others do not, so it makes sense to formulate some of the questions each and every one of them should ask him/herself before shooting a film which (re)presents a minoritized group of people: why do I want to make a film about Roma/with Roma characters? Am I interested in them as unique individuals with a name and a surname, or do I look at my protagonists as interchangeable representatives of a low-ranking ethno-social group? How do I see myself in relation to the people who stand in front of my camera? Do I see myself as a savior looking down on them, or do I see these people as my equals, as deserving just as much respect? What knowledge do I carry with me? What kind of texts and other artistic works have shaped my internal image of the group? Is it possible that I am reproducing elements of the dominant antigypsyist discourse⁵ (a question which is just as relevant for Roma filmmakers)? Is it possible that I have chosen to shoot a film with Roma protagonists because I can take advantage of their vulnerability—the fact that they are illiterate, live in abject poverty, and are flattered by my interest, so that I can get easy and low-cost access to the intimate dramas of their life? Am I aware that the *mise-en-scènes* I stage on the big screen reflect contents of my inner world? Am I motivated by the prospect of selling well the authenticity of these private lives? Do I use Roma lay actors in order to legitimize and market my film *qua* authenticity? Do I plan to “give back” by using my film as an activist instrument?⁶

Since it is strategies of artistic reflexivity that are in the center of our interest here, it is crucial to highlight the paradox of one particularly volatile problem that comes with the ‘gypsy’/Roma theme. In the vocabulary of the dominant culture, the ‘gypsy’ persona (mask) is a

- 5 For a critical reappraisal of antigypsyism in European national literatures, see Bogdal (*Europe, Europa*), Brittnacher (*Gypsygrotesken, Leben*), Charnon-Deutsch, Solms; for a critical reappraisal of antigypsyism in European arts and photography, see Bell, Brown, Mladenova (*Patterns*), Reuter (*Bann, Dimensionen*); for a critical reappraisal of antigypsyism in European national cinemas, see Colmeiro, Dacović, Dobreva, Gustafsson, Hadziavdic, Iordanova, Mladenova (*Mask, Antigypsyism*), Peiró, Rucker-Chang.
- 6 For further reading on the issue of ethics, see the articles by Peter Nestler “Ohne moralische Haltung ist das Filmemachen wertlos” (127–132) and by André Raatzch: “Eine Ethik des Sehens und Zeigens: Wie demokratisch ist unsere Medienpolitik?” (133–140).

key figure of the anti-canonical aesthetics; by convention, it is used to express and represent the outlawed or even tabooed aspects of human nature, such as freedom and spontaneity, that resurface in carnivalesque reversals. The fascinatingly shadowy underworld of ‘gypsies’ so often and meticulously recreated in fictional films is just one variation of the upside-down world of the carnivalesque. Moreover, the ‘gypsy’ figure itself results from carnival’s oxymoronic aesthetics, which impregnate everything with its opposite. Thus, in many cases, to challenge antigypsyism in artistic works involves questioning aesthetic choices and devices that, by convention, are installed for the expression of rebellious countercurrents. What is more—and here artistic reflexivity comes to play its indispensable role—in the symbolic order of European culture(s), the radically rebellious artist, the bohemian, is assigned the same outsider slot as that of the imagined ‘gypsy’; the spatial position of the ‘gypsy’ as the lowest ranking socio-ethno-‘racial’ Other is synonymous with that of the artist-rebel. As Marilyn Brown perceptively observes in *Gypsies and Other Bohemians. The Myth of the Artist in Nineteenth-Century France*: “The two myths, that of the artistic bohemian and that of the ‘real’ ones, shared components of a similar binary structure as they merged” (17).⁷ In other words, artistic reflexivity in the context of antigypsyism critique requires that one should take one further step backwards and out of the black-and-white dyadic world model of the antigypsyist/Eurocentric myth and realize the trap, the fact that antigypsyist tropes are set up to provide the expressive means of cultural protest. The failure to understand this deceptive mechanism of the Western hegemonic order led to many misdirected debates and hurt feelings (see also Stahl), but more importantly, it has made both filmmakers and scholars vouch for dubious aesthetic counterstrategies, such as romanticizing ethnicization, ethnographic isolation, or idolization of outsiders; see here HANS RICHARD BRITTNACHER’S contribution in this volume.

As to filmic examples, we should mention here Roz Mortimor’s hybrid documentary *The Deathless Woman* (2019), a paragon of artistic reflexivity, which seeks to redress the marginalized and under-historicized genocide of Roma during the Second World War. The film offers a rich resource of experimental techniques and goes hand in hand with

7 One could think here of the scene in Emil Loteanu’s cult film *Queen of the Gypsies* (1975), in which a troupe of travelling artists and performers is paralleled to the nomadic ‘gypsy’ caravan.

the filmmaker's dissertation thesis *Ghosts, Imagination and Theatre: Re-Enacting the Futural Past through Documentary Film*. Mortimor's practice-led research is written in the first person, because "a self-reflexive methodology is at its core" (30). Further, equally radically innovative films which follow the Brechtian tenets of reflexive realism include Radu Jude's fictional films *Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn* (2021) and *Aferim!* (2015); Philip Scheffner's documentaries *And-Ek Ghes...* (2016) directed in tandem with Coloradu Velcu, and *Revision* (2012).⁸ Artistic reflexivity is certainly not reserved for filmmakers from the mainstream cultures, so here is the place to highlight three powerful documentaries with an autobiographical approach: Vera Lacková's *How I Became a Partisan: Cinematic Resistance against Oblivion* (2021), Lyudmila Zhivkova's *Merry is the Gypsy Life* (2017), and Laura Halilovic's *Me, My Gipsy Family and Woody Allen* (2009).⁹ Maximilian Feldmann's documentary *Valentina* (2016), for all its flaws, which include a lack of critical social analysis and poverty aestheticization, presents a rare instance of financial reflexivity in one of its scenes.

One final and visually condensed example comes from Philip Scheffner's documentary *And-Ek Ghes...* (2016).¹⁰ In the opening scene, in the first couple of seconds, it shows the face of the protagonist and co-director Coloradu Velcu overlapping with the reflected face of the director from behind the camera (**Fig. 5**). With this image, Philip Scheffner makes a tacit acknowledgment of his awareness, palpable throughout the entire film, that his filmic hero is inevitably a creation in his own image; that the documentary portrait of Coloradu Velcu is literally and unavoidably a reflection of the artist's personality.

8 See also Priyanka Basu's article "Anthropological Histories and Techniques in Philip Scheffner's Films," in which the scholar discusses the broad range of reflexive experimental techniques in *Revision* in relation to the concerns and methods of contemporary ethnography. As the title states, *Revision* revises a case of Romanian Roma migrants killed upon crossing the German-Polish border in the early 1990s, which was then also the EU border (243–257).

9 See also William Hope's article "The Roma in Italian Documentary Films," in which the scholar discusses Laura Halilovic's counterstrategies in the context of feminism and Romani self-representation (216–219).

10 The film is available in the digital media library of the Federal Agency for Civic Education: <https://www.bpb.de/mediathek/video/239928/and-ek-ghes-eines-tages/>.



Fig. 5. Screenshot from the German documentary film *And-Ek Ghes...* (2016) by Philip Scheffner and Coloradu Velcu. The image with overlapping faces can be read as the director's visual statement that he sees himself on equal terms with his protagonist and a tacit acknowledgement that the portrayal of Coloradu Velcu is literally a reflection of the filmmaker's personality.

2) The Distribution of Roles

At the level of film conception and realization, it is mandatory to consider the distribution of roles and the way it impacts the final outcome, to ask: to what extent are Roma involved in the film production and in what capacity? The counterstrategy here obviously is to have more Roma, trained professionals, as directors, script writers, camera-women, film editors, etc., and to instigate a shift from representation to self-representation; see here SABINE GIRG's case study in this volume. Another effective counterstrategy which helps avoid the trap of the appropriation of speech is to pursue hybrid authorship, as in Philip Scheffner's and Coloradu Velcu's film *And-Ek Ghes...*, that is, in Foucauldian terms, to create a situation of "speaking together" rather than of "speaking for." In this section, I want to call attention to the specific problems that surround the casting of parts. One problem concerns the repertoire of roles available to professional Roma actors and actresses. In the field of performing arts, the antigypsyist gaze—which is a supraindividual rather than an individual gaze¹¹—tends to make no

11 This important feature of the antigypsyist gaze was highlighted during the panel discussions by the sociologist Mihai Surdu, in reference to Pierre Bourdieu; see

conceptual distinction between fictive characters and real performers, as the American anthropologist Alaina Lemon's field research poignantly demonstrates (cf. 125); the fact that Roma performers are held to a dramatic unity of character both on and off the big screen/theater stage is responsible for the widespread practice of hiring professional Roma actors predominantly, if not exclusively, to play 'gypsy'/Roma characters or for hiring Roma lay actors as the so-called 'naturals' (see Mladenova, *Mask* 133–142). Strangely enough, the same effect of ethnic ghettoization within the acting profession results from the present-day identity politics movement whose proponents insist that actors should not cross imagined 'ethno-racial' divides (cf. Donaldson; Newland). Still, why should it not be possible to cast a Roma actor as Hamlet? Why insist on realist casting at all costs? Indeed, as Robert Stam points out, all films are political, and yet we should add that films cannot and should not be reduced to mere politics (cf. 13). Because would it not be empowering to see Alina Serban, an exceptionally talented Romanian Roma actress, in the role of Margaret from Tennessee William's play "A Cat on a Hot Tin Roof"? Alina Serban is cast as a Romni—as one might expect—in two recent fictional films discussed in this volume; see here MARINA ORTRUD HERTRAMPF's case study. And is it not actually the mission of art, film being one of its particularly popular forms, to sustain the belief that one has the capacity to enter the perspective of a complete stranger, regardless of their social and economic status, body shape, or colour; that one *can* and *should* get into the shoes of a fellow human being and empathize with her story?

One good filmic example here is Willi Kubica's short fiction *The Casting* (2022), possibly the first film to shed a critical light on another problem surrounding the topic of casting, namely, the entrenched practice in the filmmaking industry to produce 'ethno-racial' masquerades on the 'gypsy'-theme, the type of fictional films which sell 'gypsy' authenticity by staging a para-ethnographic tableau of customs and rites coupled with a story that sends the hero in a downward direction. The main problem here, importantly, is not so much that directors cast celebrity actors like Melina Mercouri, Gina Lollobrigida, or Bekim Femi in the leading 'gypsy' role but, rather, that films with such a biased set up and storyline claim truth-knowledge and ethnographic authenticity with all the means available to the medium, exploiting image indexicality, the conventions

also Surdu's publication *Those Who Count: Expert Practices of Roma Classification* (229).

of ethnographic film, lay actors from the community, paratexts, and so on. A different type of example is Tony Gatlif's remarkable film *Tom Medina* (2021). To elucidate the achievement of his latest work, we should first remind the reader that Tony Gatlif is the only film director who publicly identifies as Roma and has attained international recognition. His long filmography is a quarry of subversive artistic techniques and a record of the various stages the artist has gone through in his fierce confrontation with unsavoury clichés, with stigmatizing images and motifs; see here KIRSTEN VON HAGEN'S case study in this volume.¹² In *Tom Medina*, however, Gatlif exits the battle. Just like André Raatzsch in *Sostar* (Fig. 4), he abandons his adversary and removes himself from his battle with film language. The result is a partly autobiographical story, in which the plight of Roma is movingly present, yet there is no longer subversive deployment of stereotypes, nor are there direct references to the characters' ethnic background or to that of the actors starring in the film. And if Gatlif's work marks a peak in the artistic endeavor to reinvent film language and transcend ethnic markers, there is another, equally powerful trend at work which concerns in a more general way the participation of Roma in cultural production. It can be summed up in the term strategic essentialism, introduced in 1985 by the Indian post-colonial feminist and philosopher Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Grosz). The Romani feminist activist Nicoleta Bitu, one of the originators of ERIAC and *RomArchive*,¹³ employs this term to describe her work over the years (cf. Selling viii). Bitu reflects on her conscious use of strategic essentializing in her short introductory text to Jan Selling's book *Romani Liberation*. Selling, in turn, places in perspective the utility and limitations of this practice, maintaining that it is an effective political tool which "creates a sense of cohesion within the group and identifies the group to the outside world as a force with the right to self-determination" (5). So in this context, it is relevant to mention the Berlin-based, Roma-led international festival *Ake Dikhea?*, the first platform to place at center stage both the problematics of Romani (self-)representation and the achievements of this emerging minor cinema.

12 See also Kirsten von Hagen's article "Das Bild vom ‚Zigeuner‘: Alterität im Film – Inszenierungs- und Subversierungsstrategien" (181–192).

13 The abbreviation ERIAC stands for the Berlin-based European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture, while *RomArchive* refers to the Digital Archive of the Roma at <https://www.romarchive.eu> hosted by the Documentation and Cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg; the mandate of both entities is the recognition and visibility of Roma arts and cultures.

3) Film Content

At the level of film content, we have identified at least four important aspects that come with specific problems and thus call for a critical examination; as mentioned earlier, these aspects cover the storyline, the portrayal of characters, the recurrent themes and motifs, and the broader arc of interpretation. For the sake of clarity and compactness, all the questions have been bundled together in a somewhat longer list, for which I beg the reader to make allowances. Yet it is crucial to ask: why are there hardly any fictional films in which the protagonist, marked as 'gypsy'/Roma, is able to complete the hero's journey, to transcend his/her limited circumstances and end up victorious? Why are there hardly any fictional films which end happily with or revolve around a successful marriage between a Roma and non-Roma character, considering that such unions are a common occurrence? Why are there hardly any films focusing on that which unites, rather than on that which separates? How to acknowledge and celebrate differences and not degrade them to a form of Othering? To what extent should the Roma ethnic marker be significant for the story? What is the broader arc of interpretation, the explanatory model that film implicitly or explicitly advances? How are the viewers to account for the behavior and destiny of the Roma protagonists, especially when the film frames them as exceptions or when it dwells on the recurrent and sensitive issues of sexuality, poverty, or criminality? Why are filmmakers so focused on the poor of the poorest among the Roma, and why are the people invariably presented as the typical representatives of the group? If poverty is the main issue a filmmaker wants to explore, why not show poverty-stricken individuals across 'ethno-racial' divides?

Needless to say, it is not possible to tackle all these questions here, so we shall consider one signature problem which throws light from another angle onto the magnitude of the challenge involved in defying the supraindividual antigypsyist regime of seeing. It is not only prominent filmmakers who have made their contribution to the 'gypsy' mask¹⁴ but—importantly—generations of acclaimed European and US American writers. Sculpting and re-sculpting the 'gypsy' figure as a universal signifier of pre-modernity, these literary giants have

14 The list of renowned European and US American filmmakers, scriptwriters, and celebrity actors who have contributed to the elaboration of the 'gypsy' mask in film is more than daunting; see Mladenova, *Mask* 366–370.

established a long aesthetic tradition in which the 'gypsy' figures as the constitutive Other of the national hero; see here MARIANA SABINO SALAZAR's contribution in this volume. Among these world-famous men of letters, some of whom are also Nobel Prize winners, are Miguel de Cervantes, Alexander Pushkin, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Victor Hugo, Prosper Mérimée, Heinrich Heine, Ernest Hemingway,¹⁵ and Ivo Andrić, to mention just a few. It is not a novelty that European national writers are key fabricators and purveyors of antigypsyism, nor that they are a main source of inspiration for filmmakers, yet it is seldom considered that this formidable literary and filmic legacy poses a disheartening challenge to self-representation. For Roma artists are faced with the prodigious task of developing alternative narratives and visual idioms that should confront, disrupt, subvert, and compete with the works of some of Europe's and the USA's most celebrated artists.

Otherwise, it is crystal clear: if colonialist thinking assigns people to pre-modernity, denying their subjectivity and monopolizing agency, then the counterstrategy to it entails foregrounding the subjectivity and agency of Roma as modern citizens. There are still not enough filmic stories about Roma luminaries, human rights fighters like Katarina Taikon or Romani Rose who have actively contributed to the democratic order and prosperity of their societies, or artists like Ceija Stojka and Django Reinhardt, or just ordinary heroes, people

15 Here, I shall give just one example of the widespread deployment of 'gypsy' figures as a contrastive foil to the model hero. That the 'gypsy' character fulfils the function of the constitute Other and is thus reduced to a textual effect is plain to see in Ernest Hemingway's war novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. A notorious champion of machismo, Hemingway circumstantiates his ideal of manhood by placing side by side two antithetical characters: the American Robert Jordan, who fights as a volunteer on the side of the partisans, and the 'gypsy' Rafael. Jordan possesses the characteristic virtues of the Western hero: he is tight-lipped, physically strong, and efficient as a soldier, while Rafael is a good-for-nothing who talks a lot and kills little. In spite of his strict orders, the 'gypsy' leaves his sentry post because he cannot resist slaying two copulating hares. For the American hero, such irresponsible behavior is unthinkable, so he laconically remarks that if Rafael were a hare, he would have shot him. Rafael proves to be of a highly treacherous nature: he advises Jordan to stab a traitor in the back, justifying the murder with the diminished risk. Hemingway constructs the life of his main hero like a meaningful sentence with a beginning and an end: Richard Jordan is allowed to die a heroic death after saving the life of his beloved. Rafael, in opposition, is an inconstant companion and disappears into thin air just like the hares he likes to hunt. For Hemingway, the 'gypsy' is a pathetic animal-like creature that can be compared to a rabbit, a horse, or in the best case, a boar. The civilized form of manliness, however, remains reserved for the American hero (cf. Brittnacher, *Leben* 138–140).

who are proud of their profession and craftsmanship; see here DÁVID SZŐKE's contribution in this volume. Some of the filmic examples in this context are the documentaries *Taikon* (2015, dir. Lawen Mohtadi and Tamasz Gellert; see here HILDE HOFFMANN's case study in this volume), *Injustice and Resistance* (2022, dir. Peter Nestler), *An Open Mind* (2022, dir. Peter Nestler), *Pongo Calling* (2022, dir. Tomáš Kratochvíl), *The Green Green Grass Beneath* (2005, dir. Karin Berger), *Inherited Crafts* (2021, dir. Osman Yuseinov), *Der lange Weg der Sinti und Roma* (2022, dir. Adrian Oeser).

Another important counterstrategy involves a shift of focus from the unceasing query as to who the Roma are and where they come from, a topic which a hundred years of cinema has *not* managed to exhaust (cf. Mladenova, *Mask* 259–318),¹⁶ to a critical examination of social structures of power and of antigypsyism as an ideology which condones violence in all its forms, from genocidal brutality to symbolic tyranny. Speaking of the violence against Roma, there are several topics that resurface in exemplary films: the enslavement of Roma in Romania in *Aferim!* and *Letter of Forgiveness* (2020, dir. Alina Serban); the serial murders in Hungary from 2008–2009 in *Just the Wind* (2012, dir. Benedek Fliegau), *A Judgement in Hungary* (2013, dir. Eszter Hajdú) and *The Deathless Woman*; the deportations to the former Yugoslav Republic of Kosovo in *Kenedi Goes Back Home* (2003, dir. Želimir Žilnik), *Willkommen zuhause!* (2011, dir. Eliza Petkova), *Trapped by Law* (2015, dir. Sami Mustafa), and *Fünfzehn Minuten*. Certainly, the persecution of Roma during the Second World War is the most frequent topic,¹⁷ and it is a present in most of the films already mentioned; the list can be expanded here with the following exemplary titles: *Zigeuner sein* (1970, dir. Peter and Zsóka Nestler)—this is also the only positive filmic example given in Karnick and Richter's film¹⁸—*Das Falsche Wort* (1987,

16 Consider also the results from the 2021 study *Vielfalt im Film* (diversity in film) conducted by Citizen for Europe among filmmakers in Germany, according to which Sinti and Roma rank, with 80.8 percent, as the third group subject to clichéd portrayals in film; Jews, by comparison, are thirteenth and last in the ranking, with 55.9% (Citizens 25).

17 To commemorate August 2, the European Holocaust Memorial Day for Sinti and Roma, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma organizes a film festival every year at <https://www.roma-sinti-holocaust-memorial-day.eu>.

18 See also Matthias Bauer's article "Peter Nestler's Depiction of the Everyday Life of Sinti and Roma" (203–208).

dir. Katrin Seybold),¹⁹ *Sidonie* (1990, dir. Karin Brandauer), *Train of Life* (1998, dir. Radu Mihăileanu), *Dui Roma—Zwei Lebenskünstler* (2013, dir. Iovanka Gaspar), *Contemporary Past* (2019, dir. Kamil Majchrzak).

The call to bear witness to the violence inflicted on Roma comes with one predictable hindrance. On the one hand, avant-garde films that make a critical dissection of social hierarchies and address the crimes against Roma seldom appeal to the popular taste. On the other hand, the spectacle of ‘gypsy’ authenticity is highly lucrative, holding the promise of a box-office hit or an Oscar nomination for a foreign film; consider here the anti-examples of *Los Tarantos* by Francisco Rovira Beleta (Oscar nomination in 1963), *I Even Met Happy Gypsies* by Aleksandar Petrović (Oscar nomination in 1968),²⁰ *Gipsy Magic* by Stole Popov (North Macedonia’s candidate for an Oscar in 1997) or the more recent Netflix series *Suburra: Blood on Rome* (2017–2020) (see, for instance, “Dreharbeiten”).

4) Film Form

The formal aspect of films about Roma comes with some important questions: is it really necessary to deploy a black-and-white color scheme to organize the film’s storyworld? The German literary scholar Hans Richard Brittnacher makes the pertinent observation that the ‘blackness’ of ‘gypsy’ skin is factually as false as it is aesthetically obligatory (cf. *Leben* 230). So, our question can also be rephrased like this: is it really obligatory to replicate the entrenched racializing aesthetics that draws a line of separation between the ‘white’ national majority and the ‘non-white’ minority? Are minor differences in skin pigmentation that relevant? Why is it so unthinkable to cast a natural-blond Romni as a main character? It is just as crucial to question the cultural automatism which demands ‘gypsy’ authenticity in films: how to move away from the lure of the lucrative true-to-life ‘gypsy’ spectacle? How to avoid poverty voyeurism and aestheticization, a widespread mode of visual representation which claims authority by exploiting the indexical quality of the image and legitimizing itself as a slice-of-life film?

19 See also Daniela Gress’s article “Visualisierte Emanzipation. Strategien medialer (Selbst-)Darstellung von Sinti und Roma in dokumentarischen Filmen” (339–384).

20 See also Radmila Mladenova’s article “The Figure of the Imaginary Gypsy in Film: *I Even Met Happy Gypsies* (1967)” (1–30).

The main counterstrategy on the plane of film form is, firstly, to show the diversity of individuals within the Roma community, as in the short campaign film *Yo no soy trapacero* (2015, dir. Sebastián Ántico) or its sequel *Telebasura no es realidad* (Trash TV is not reality); see here JOHANNES VALENTIN KORFF'S case study in this volume. The other counterstrategy, also formulated as the latter film's title, is to move away from the representational regime of illusionist realism and to explore and experiment with the modernist forms of reflexive realism, which is what many of the filmmakers mentioned so far have done; see here ALEXANDRA VINZEN'S case study, which provides a contrastive counterpoint. As Robert Stam explains in reference to the Brechtian intellectual legacy, reflexive realism can be defined as "the critical exposure of the casual network of events, that is, the fundamental social mechanism, the algorithms, as it were, of social power, all presented within a self-aware anti-illusionist style"; or formulated negatively, reflexive realism is *not* "a faithful mimicry of the phenomenal appearances" (111).

5) The Role of Institutions

By the fifth and final aspect, the questions address not only filmmakers but also the larger audience of practitioners who work in the field of culture: how to proceed with the ubiquitous legacy of films and works of art which purvey, in one form or another, antigypsyism? How to archive, catalog, and display such works? How to approach the restoration, digitization, and presentation of an old silent film, such as *Lola Montez, Tänzerin des Königs* (1922, dir. Willi Wolff), which contains an antigypsyist subplot? It is high time to revise national literary and film canons from the perspective of antigypsyism, but how to do it? How to nurture reflexivity on the level of cultural institutions, such as film institutes and archives, film festivals, film funding bodies, art museums, and so on? How to educate critically minded media consumers who can handle complex, multi-track media like film that convey their message through the combined use of sound/music, text and moving image (see here MICHAEL HAUS' contribution in this volume)?

The problem is that antigypsyist tropes are omnipresent; they are to be found in all art forms—from literature and painting, through opera and theater to film—and represent an integral part of the aesthetics of European arts, and of film language, too. This is further complicated by the dangerous superimposition of the national(ist)/antigypsyist black-and-white narrative onto the universal monomyth, the hero's journey

as described by Joseph Campbell; see here RADMILA MLADENOVA'S case study in this volume. So, the challenge for the cultural and educational institutions in Europe's nation-states is just as formidable as that for the members of the Roma groups. Many of them respond in a piecemeal fashion, finding partial solutions for individual works. One novel and problematic tendency is to remove the term "Gypsy" from official paratexts, such as literary synopses, titles of paintings or film subtitles, which refer to historical antigypsyist novels, operas, paintings, or (silent) films and to replace this term with the politically correct self-designation "Roma," thus practically disavowing the racist content/aesthetics of the works. This practice also leads to the contamination of the self-denomination Roma with the old deprecatory/stigmatizing and romanticizing stereotypes (see, for instance, Grigore).

The main effective counterstrategy that cultural and educational institutions can adopt is to re-contextualize, re-frame, and re-interpret artistic works; see here MATTHIAS BAUER'S contribution in this volume. Another possible and less widespread counterstrategy—open especially to activists and self-organizations—is to revalorize by inversion what has been seen as negative, to recode stigmatizing attributes and terms with a new, positively loaded meaning; see here SARAH HEINZ'S case study in this volume. As the papers in this volume evidence, art museum curators, authors and designers of historical exhibitions, filmmakers and scholars consciously search for and develop new ways of regarding the legacy of antigypsyism. Particularly productive is the organization of the material following a contrapuntal perspective, that is, a perspective which results from a well-thought-out juxtaposition of individual Romani perspectives with the antigypsyist gaze of the dominant collective. The disparity between these two ways of regarding people has a certain stereoscopic quality, as it brings into relief the violence of projective stigmatization, and it also restores the authority of Romani views and voices. Several of this volume's contributions discuss such designs, or the texts themselves are designed after this model.

As DANIELA GRESS discusses in her paper, the female filmmaking duo of Katrin Seybold and Melanie Spitta juxtapose two very different conventions of representation in *Das falsche Wort* with the aim of infusing their film with poetic lyricism. Seybold and Spitta edit together private material consisting of photos and filmic portraits of Sinti and Roma, still lifes from their homes, and atmospheric images with documents produced by the Nazi perpetrators. The intended function of the self-portrayals is that of a counterweight to the photographs made


during National Socialism. The same organizational principle is adopted for the first permanent exhibition on the genocide in the Documentation and Cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg, as FRANK REUTER elaborates in his paper; in the exhibition, historical private and family photos of Sinti and Roma are used as counterimages to the stigmatizing gaze of the Nazi perpetrators. A very recent example of this contrapuntal strategy is JULIA FRIEDRICH's curatorial intervention "Bild und Gegenbild. Zur Revision einer Sammlung" (Image and Counterimage. On the Revision of a Collection) in Museum Ludwig in Cologne, which was on display from November 2019 to March 2020. The installation stages the conflict between two gazes, placing Otto Mueller's painting "Two Gypsy Girls with a Cat" (1927) opposite Peter and Zsóka Nestler's documentary film *Zigeuner sein* (1970). The curator's self-conscious first-person report about the installation is undoubtedly an incitement to reflexivity also for the readers of this volume. Another serviceable and widespread contrast strategy is to draw a parallel to the critical examination of antisemitic tropes or to the counterstrategies developed in relation to filmic antisemitism, as discussed in TIRZA SEENE and LEA WOHL VON HASELBERG's text; such parallels can produce an alienation effect to antigypsyist tropes, especially to those that seem unproblematic or just normal (see, for instance, Dell). The final example in this compressed overview comes from Spain: in his article, ISMAEL CORTÉS adopts the strategy of juxtaposition to organize his research findings and thereby to interrogate the popularity of *cine quinquí* or "delinquency cinema," a Spanish exploitation film genre which constructs a de-ideologized image of *gitanos* and reduces their agency to criminality. As a counterweight, referring to a constellation of archival documents, the scholar reconstructs the history of the struggles for democratization which *gitanos* initiated during the Spanish Transition.²¹ His perspective is similar to the contrapuntal perspective which Karnick and Richter devise in *Lustig wär' das Zigeunerleben*, the documentary film we took as a point of departure for this opening text.

The succinct conclusion that can be drawn at this point is that the most effective antidote to antigypsyism is reflexivity, both on an individual and a collective level. The latter, in turn, requires the joint effort of artists, researchers, and cultural and educational institutions who should aim at praxis, in the Brechtian sense, that urges spectators to

21 See also Ismael Cortés' article "Con el viento solano: The Figure of the Criminal 'Gitano' in the New Spanish Cinema" (195–202).

not just contemplate the world but to criticize it and actively work towards changing it. Certainly, the present overview of the main questions, problems, traps, and tried-out solutions has made it clear that the ideology of antigypsyism and its aesthetic correlative in film need to be examined with an understanding of their specificity. It is praiseworthy that the number of scholars who take the topic earnestly has grown in the past several years, yet it is just as visible that this field of study is heavily underresearched and in want of adequate attention. Undeniably, there is a gaping need for critical studies that bring into focus the way realist casting is entangled with antigypsyist discourse, for instance, to shine a light on cases like the German children's film *Nelly's Adventure* (2016, dir. Dominik Wessely), in which the professional Romanian Roma actor Marcel Costea is not only engaged to impersonate a 'gypsy' child-kidnapper, but also later, when the film was critiqued for its antigypsyism,²² to defend the production.²³ There is just as urgent a necessity for studies that critically examine the socio-economic and psychological impact of filmmaking intrusions in poverty-stricken neighborhoods. And certainly, there is a need for analytical studies which isolate approaches, methods, and design concepts that can be of service to cultural and educational institutions when dealing with the challenges posed by the ubiquity of antigypsyism in films and artistic works.

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22 See Pavel Brunssen's article "When Good Intentions Go Bad: The Stereotypical Portrayal of Roma Characters in the German Children and Youth Film 'Nellys Abenteuer'" (111–124).

23 In a video statement, published on the SWR website and later removed, the Roma actor gave a short statement in defence of the film. The producer of *Nelly's Adventure* is the German company INDI Films; two of the co-producers are public television channels—Südwestrundfunk (SWR) and Saarländischer Rundfunk (SR). Over 930,000 euros from public funds were allocated for the film's production; the official funders include MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, Deutscher Filmförderfonds, Filmförderungsanstalt, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, and BKM (for the script).

Image Credits

Figs. 1–4 *Sostar, Sostar, Why Are You Sostar?* (2014).

Fig. 5 *And-Ek Ghes...* (2016).

Films

- And-Ek Ghes...* Screenplay by Colorado Velcu, Merle Kröger, and Philip Scheffner. Dir. Philip Scheffner, and Colorado Velcu. Prod. Pong Film, 2016. Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung.
- And Hope to Die [La course du lièvre à travers les champs]*. Screenplay by Sébastien Japrisot. Dir. René Clément. Perf. Jean-Louis Trintignant, Aldo Ray, and Robert Ryan. Prod. Greenwich Film Productions, 1972.
- And the Violins Stopped Playing*. Screenplay by Alexander Ramati. Dir. Alexander Ramati. Perf. Horst Buchholz, Didi Ramati, and Piotr Polk. 1988. Orion Television Distribution, 2003. DVD.
- Bad Luck Banging or Loony Porn [Babardeală cu bucluc sau porno balamuc]*. Screenplay by Radu Jude. Dir. Radu Jude. Perf. Katia Pascariu, Claudia Ieremia, Nicodim Ungureanu. micro-FILM, 2021.
- Batrachian's Ballad [Balada de um batráquio]*. Screenplay by Leonor Teles. Dir. Leonor Teles. Prod. Uma Pedra no Sapato, 2016.
- Contemporary Past—Die Gegenwart der Vergangenheit*. Screenplay by Kamil Majchrzak. Dir. Kamil Majchrzak. Prod. Les Funambules Film Production, 2019. Film.
- Corre gitano*. Screenplay by Tony Gatlif, and Roberto López-Peláez. Dir. Nicolás Astiarraga, and Tony Gatlif. Perf. Carmen Cortés, Manuel de Paula, Mario Maya. Prod. Nicolás Astiarraga P. C., and Oronova Films, 1982.
- The Crazy Stranger [Gadjo dilo]*. Screenplay by Tony Gatlif, Jacques Maigre, and Kits Hilaire. Dir. Tony Gatlif. Lions Gate Films, 1997.
- The Csardas Princess [Die Czardasfürstin]*. Screenplay by Georg Jacoby, Bobby E. Lüthge, and Hans H. Zerlett. Dir. Georg Jacoby. Perf. Mártha Eggerth, Hans Söhnker, and Paul Kemp. Prod. UFA, 1934.
- The Deathless Woman*. Screenplay by Roz Mortimor. Dir. Roz Mortimor. Perf. Iveta Kokyová, Loren O'Dair, and Oliver Malik. Prod. Wonderdog Films, 2019.

- Dui Roma—Zwei Lebenskünstler*. Dir. Iovanka Gaspar. Perf. Hugo Höllenreiner, Adrian Coriolan Gaspar. 2013.
- Das Falsche Wort: Wiedergutmachung an Zigeunern (Sinti) in Deutschland?* Screenplay by Melanie Spitta. Dir. Katrin Seybold. Prod. Katrin Seybold Film GmbH, 1987.
- The Fugitive [Dr. Kimble—Auf der Flucht]*. Created by Roy Huggins. Perf. David Janssen, William Conrad, and Barry Morse. Prod. QM Productions and United Artists Television, 1963–1967.
- Fünfzehn Minuten*. Screenplay by Sejad Ademaj. Dir. Sejad Ademaj. Perf. Samirah Breuer, Simone Laurentino dos Santos, Anna-Maria Zeilhofer. Prod. Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg (Ludwigsburg), 2022.
- Gipsy Magic [Циганска Магуја]*. Screenplay by Vladimir Blazhevski, and Stole Popov. Dir. Stole Popov. Perf. Miki Manojlovic, Antony Zaki, Katina Ivanova, Bajram Severdžan, Toni Mihajlovski, Goran Dodevski, Jordanco Cevrevski, Saban Bajramovic, and Bekir Adnan. Prod. Vardar Film/Triangle, 1997.
- The Green Green Grass Beneath [Unter Den Brettern Hellgrünes Gras]*. Screenplay by Karin Berger. Dir. Karin Berger. Prod. Navigator Film Produktion, 2005.
- Die große Flatter*. Screenplay by Marianne Lüdcke. Dir. Marianne Lüdcke. Perf. Richy Müller, Jochen Schroeder and Adriane Rimscha. Prod. Ziegler Film, and WDR, 1978/1979.
- The Gypsy [Le gitan]*. Screenplay by José Giovanni. Dir. José Giovanni. Perf. Alain Delon, Paul Meurisse, and Annie Girardot. Prod. Adel Productions, Lira Films, 1975. Film.
- The Gypsy and the Gentlemen*. Screenplay by Janet Green. Dir. Joseph Losey. Perf. Melina Mercouri, Keith Michell, and Flora Robson. Rank, 1957. Martim Pictures, 2013. DVD.
- Gypsy Woman*. Screenplay by Steven Knight. Dir. Sheree Folkson. Perf. Jack Davenport, Jack Warren, and Neve McIntosh. Prod. Sky Pictures, 2001. Universal, 2004. DVD.
- How I Became a Partisan: Cinematic Resistance against Oblivion. [Ako som sa stala partizánkou: Filmový odboj proti zabudnutiu]*. Screenplay by Jan Gogola. Dir. Vera Lacková. Prod. Media Voice, 2021.
- I Even Met Happy Gypsies [Skupljači perja]*. Screenplay by Aleksandar Petrović. Dir. Aleksandar Petrović. Perf. Bekim Fehmiu, Olivera Vučo, Bata Živojinović, Gordana Jovanović, and Mija Aleksić. Avala Film, 1967.

- Inherited Crafts* [*Занаяти по наследство*]. Dir. Osman Yuseinov. Duvarkolektiv, 2021.
- Injustice and Resistance* [*Unrecht und Widerstand—Romani Rose und die Bürgerrechtsbewegung*]. Dir. Peter Nestler. Prod. Strandfilm, 2022.
- A Judgement in Hungary*. Screenplay by Eszter Hajdú. Dir. Eszter Hajdú. Prod. Britdoc Foundation, 2013.
- Kenedi Goes Back Home* [*Kenedi Se Vraća Kući*]. Screenplay by Želimir Žilnik. Dir. Želimir Žilnik. Prod. Terra Film, 2003.
- Korkoro* [*Liberté*]. Screenplay by Tony Gatlif. Dir. Tony Gatlif. Perf. Marc Lavoine, Marie-Josée Croze, and James Thierrée. 2009. Lorber Films, 2011. DVD.
- Der lange Weg der Sinti und Roma*. Dir. Adrian Oeser. 2022.
- Letter of Forgiveness*. Screenplay by Alina Serban. Dir. Alina Serban. Perf. Alina Serban, Ionut Habet, and Oana Stefanescu. Prod. Untold Stories, 2020.
- Lola Montez, Tänzerin des Königs*. Screenplay by Willi Wolff, and Paul Merzbach. Dir. Willi Wolff. Perf. Ellen Richter, Arthur Bergen, and Hugo Döblin. Prod. Ellen Richter Film, 1922.
- Lustig wär' das Zigeunerleben*. Dir. Hannes Karnick, and Wolfgang Richter. Prod. docfilm/ZDF, 1981.
- Das Mädchen vom Hof/Die Totenschmecker*. Screenplay by Ernst Ritter von Theumer. Dir. Ernst Ritter von Theumer. Perf. William Berger, Herb Andress, and Peter Jacob. Prod. Alfa Film, CineTele-Team, 1979.
- Me, My Gypsy Family and Woody Allen* [*Io, la mia famiglia rom e Woody Allen*]. Screenplay by Laura Halilovic, Davide Tosco, Nicola Rondolino. Dir. Laura Halilovic. Prod. Zenit Arti Audiovisive, 2009.
- Merry Is the Gypsy Life/Lustig ist das Zigeuner Leben* [*Весел е циганският живот*]. Screenplay by Lyudmila Zhivkova. Dir. Ljudmila Zhivkova. Прод. Cvetna Kompania, 2017.
- Nelly's Adventure* [*Nellys Abenteuer*]. Screenplay by Uta Kolano, and Jens Becker. Dir. Dominik Wessely. Perf. Flora Li Thiemann, Kai Lentrodt, Julia Richter, Hagi Lăcătuș, Raisa Mihai, and Marcel Costea. Prod. INDI Film, 2016. farbfilm home entertainment, 2017. DVD.
- An Open Mind* [*Der offene Blick*]. Screenplay by Peter Nestler. Dir. Peter Nestler. Prod. Strandfilm, 2022.

- Pongo Calling*. Screenplay by Tomáš Kratochvíl. Dir. Tomáš Kratochvíl. Prod. Hitchhiker Cinema, Kuli Film, 2022.
- Queen of the Gypsies/The Gypsy Camp Vanishes into the Blue/The Gypsy Queen* [*Табор уходит в небо*]. Screenplay by Emil Loteanu. Dir. Emil Loteanu. Perf. Grigore Grigoriu, Svetlana Tomá, and Barasbi Mulayev. Prod. Mosfilm, 1975.
- A Romany Spy* [*Das Mädchen ohne Vaterland*]. Screenplay by Urban Gad. Dir. Urban Gad. Perf. Asta Nielsen, Paul Meffert, and Max Wogritsch. 1912.
- Roma Quixote* [*Ром Кухом*]. Screenplay by Petya Nakova. Dir. Nina Pehlivanova, and Petya Nakova. 2013. DVD.
- Sidonie*. Screenplay by Erich Hackl. Dir. Karin Brandauer. Perf. Arghavan Sadeghi-Seragi, Kitty Speiser, and Georg Marin. ORF/Bayerischer Rundfunk, 1990. Hoanzl, 2011. DVD.
- Sostar, Sostar, Why Are You Sostar?* Screenplay by André Raatzsch. Dir. André Raatzsch. Prod. Sostar Group, 2014. Web. 2 Feb 2023 <<http://raatzsch.com/>>.
- Suburra: Blood on Rome* [*Suburra—La serie*]. Screenplay by Ezio Abbate, etc. Dir. Andrea Molaioli, Andrea Molaioli, and Michele Placido. Perf. Alessandro Borghi, Giacomo Ferrara, and Filippo Nigro. Prod. Cattleya, Rai Fiction, Netflix. Netflix, 2017–2020. TV Series.
- Taikon*. Screenplay by Lawen Mohtadi, and Gellert Tamas. Dir. Gellert Tamas, and Lawen Mohtadi. 2015. TriArtFilm, 2016. DVD.
- Los Tarantos*. Screenplay by Alfredo Mañas, Francisco Rovira Beleta. Dir. Francisco Rovira Beleta. Perf. Carmen Amaya, Sara Lezana, Daniel Martín. Prod. Films Rovira Beleta, 1963.
- Tom Medina*. Screenplay by Tony Gatlif. Dir. Tony Gatlif. Perf. David Murgia, Slimane Dazi, and Karoline Rose. Prod. Princes Films, 2021.
- Train of Life* [*Train de vie*]. Screenplay by Radu Mihăileanu. Dir. Radu Mihăileanu. Perf. Lionel Abelanski, Rufus, and Agathe de la Fontaine. 1998. Sunfilm, 2003. DVD.
- Trapped by Law*. Screenplay by Sami Mustafa. Dir. Sami Mustafa. Prod. Hupe Film, 2015.
- Valentina*. Screenplay by Maximilian Feldmann, and Luise Schröder. Dir. Maximilian Feldmann. Prod. Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg, 2016.
- Willkommen zuhause!* Screenplay by Eliza Petkova. Dir. Eliza Petkova. Prod. Chun+Derksen, 2011.

- Yo no soy trapacero*. Screenplay by Adena Ser. Dir. Sebastián Ántico. Prod. La Fundación Secretariado Gitano.
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