PATTERNS OF SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

The Motif of 'Gypsy' Child-theft across Visual Media

Radmila Mladenova

HEIDELBERG
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Patterns of Symbolic Violence

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Film still courtesy of the Danish Film Institute

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Foreword by the Series Editors

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The book series initiated by the Research Centre on Antigypsyism (RCA) and entitled *Interdisciplinary Studies on Antigypsyism* will offer insights into a young and dynamic research field that calls for different methodological approaches. Both acclaimed scholars and junior researchers will have the opportunity to publish new research findings in English or German. The spectrum is broad: monograph titles will alternate with anthologies and source editions. The aim of the series is to firmly anchor Antigypsyism Studies in the academic discourse and to establish a network of institutions and scholars. In short, it will serve as a source of impetus for further foundation work.

As the first specialised institution of its kind, the RCA has been based at Heidelberg University's Department of History since July 2017, with long-term funding provided by the State of Baden-Württemberg. The researchers working at the Centre examine the diverse manifestations of antigypsyism, which is understood as a specific form of racism against Sinti, Roma and other groups or individuals stigmatised as 'gypsies'. The focus of our research interest is directed towards the mechanisms of antigypsy stereotyping and its different functions in European societies from the early modern period to the present day.

Given the virulence of antigypsy attitudes in the increasingly polarised public space in Europe, the series is intended not only for scholars but for all interested in the topic. It is to be hoped that the published results will also feed into the ongoing anti-discrimination work. We are therefore delighted that we could win Heidelberg University Publishing (heiUP) as a publisher where the book series will be freely accessible

online. We would like to thank the heiUP team for the trusting and fruitful cooperation.

Rooted in European history, antigypsyism still shapes public perceptions of the largest and probably most marginalised minority groups in Europe, the Sinti and Roma. This not only underscores the need for an intensified scientific debate, but also points to the high socio-political relevance of the book series, and we wish it many interested readers.

Heidelberg, May 2019

Prof. Dr. Edgar Wolfrum
Dr. Frank Reuter
Daniela Gress

Vorwort der Reihenherausgeber

— ※ —

Die Schriftenreihe der Forschungsstelle Antiziganismus (FSA) „Antiziganismusforschung interdisziplinär“ gibt Einblicke in ein noch junges, aber dynamisches Forschungsfeld, das unterschiedliche methodische Zugänge erfordert. Sowohl bereits etablierte Forscherinnen und Forscher wie Nachwuchswissenschaftlerinnen und -wissenschaftler erhalten die Möglichkeit, neue Forschungsergebnisse in englischer oder deutscher Sprache zu publizieren. Das Spektrum ist weit gefasst: Abwechselnd sollen monografisch ausgerichtete Titel, Sammelbände oder Quelleneditionen erscheinen. Die Reihe zielt darauf ab, die Antiziganismusforschung stärker im akademischen Diskurs zu verankern und Institutionen wie Forschende zusammenzuführen, kurz: sie will Impulsgeber für die weitere Grundlagenarbeit sein.

Als erste Fachinstitution ihrer Art ist die FSA seit Juli 2017 am Historischen Seminar der Universität Heidelberg angesiedelt; sie wird dauerhaft vom Land Baden-Württemberg gefördert. Die dort tätigen Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler setzen sich mit den vielfältigen Erscheinungsformen des Antiziganismus – verstanden als eine spezifische Form des Rassismus gegen Sinti, Roma und andere als „Zigeuner“ stigmatisierte Gruppen oder Individuen – auseinander. Das Erkenntnisinteresse gilt insbesondere den Mechanismen der antiziganistischen Vorurteilsbildung und deren unterschiedlichen Funktionen in den europäischen Gesellschaften von der Frühen Neuzeit bis in die Gegenwart.

Angesichts der Virulenz antiziganistischer Einstellungen in einer europaweit zunehmend polarisierten Öffentlichkeit richtet sich die

Reihe nicht nur an Wissenschaftlerinnen und Wissenschaftler, sondern an alle Interessierte. Zu wünschen ist, dass die Ergebnisse auch in die praktische Antidiskriminierungsarbeit einfließen. Wir freuen uns deshalb, dass wir mit Heidelberg University Publishing (heiUP) einen Verlag gewinnen konnten, in dem die Bände der Schriftenreihe online frei zugänglich sind. Unser Dank geht an die Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter von heiUP für die vertrauensvolle und stets verlässliche Zusammenarbeit.

Der in der europäischen Geschichte verwurzelte Antiziganismus hat bis heute wesentlichen Einfluss auf die Wahrnehmung der größten und am stärksten marginalisierten Minderheitengruppen Europas, der Sinti und Roma. Dies unterstreicht nicht nur die Notwendigkeit einer intensivierten wissenschaftlichen Auseinandersetzung, sondern verweist auch auf die hohe gesellschaftspolitische Relevanz der Schriftenreihe, der wir viele interessierte Leserinnen und Leser wünschen.

Heidelberg, im Mai 2019

Prof. Dr. Edgar Wolfrum
Dr. Frank Reuter
Daniela Gress

Author's Note

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The current book presents the findings of a case study that I carried out over the course of twelve months as part of the pilot research project *The Stigma 'Gypsy'. Visual Dimensions of Antigypsyism*. The project was implemented in the year 2018 by the Research Centre on Antigypsyism at Heidelberg University's Department of History, and it was funded by Research Council Field of Focus 3: Cultural Dynamics in Globalised Worlds. Given the short time-span of the project, it is inevitable that the resulting case study should be marked by a certain incompleteness – the last two chapters provide primarily listings of images and films that remain unstudied. The book itself is complete, though, in fulfilling my main goal – namely, to open up new and uncharted territories in Antigypsyism Studies, to emphasise interdisciplinary ways of viewing diverse visual works of art, and thus give an impulse for further research in the field. A comprehensive study of Antigypsyism in the medium of film is offered in my forthcoming dissertation *The White Mask and the Gypsy Mask in Film*.

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As to the illustrations, I am thankful to the following persons and institutions for allowing me to use the visual material, and also for providing the high-resolution image files. I owe special thanks to Dr. David de Witt, Senior Curator at Museum Het Rembrandthuis in Amsterdam, who scoured through his personal archive to find an ektachrome with an excellent colour rendition of Jan van Noordt's painting *Pretioze and Don Jan* (1660).

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My heartfelt thank you goes out to the heiUP team – Dr. Maria Effinger, Anja Konopka, David Westley, Benjamin Schnepp and Daniela Jakob – who cared for the book at the various stages of its conception, production and distribution.

Illustrations

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1

Introduction

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I was stolen by the gypsies. My parents stole me right back. Then the gypsies stole me again. This went on for some time. One minute I was in the caravan suckling the dark teat of my new mother, the next I sat at the long dining room table eating my breakfast with a silver spoon. It was the first day of spring. One of my fathers was singing in the bathtub; the other one was painting a live sparrow the colors of a tropical bird.

Charles Simic, *The World Doesn't End*, 1989

On September 8th, 2016, the children's film *Nellys Abenteuer* (*Nelly's Adventure*) was released in Germany, receiving, in the months to come, an appreciative welcome in professional film circles. The fact that it revives the age-old scare story of 'gypsies'[1] who steal children seems to have slipped under almost everybody's racism-awareness radar during all the stages of the film production process – from its conception,

1 The designation 'gypsy' is used here to refer to the cultural construct as elaborated by Klaus-Michael Bogdal and Hans Richard Brittnacher (*Leben*), hence the omitted initial capital letter in 'gypsy'. Subsequently, when it appears in the titles of artworks, such as *Gipsey's Stealing a Child*, I have adhered to the original spelling of the word. The term 'Roma', conversely, is used here on the occasions when I refer to real people.

through the fundraising campaign and up to its distribution.[2] This is all the more remarkable when we consider that the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft was extraordinarily popular in European literature during the nineteenth century; it counted as one of the stock plots in the silent film period, i.e. in the first three decades of the twentieth century, but its commercial success in the sound period was short-lived. There are few sound films in which the story of 'gypsies' who kidnap children is treated seriously in a realistic mode. In the light of these developments, *Nellys Abenteuer* presents a symptomatic case and warrants attention. Not only does the film revive a story pattern that has long been obsolete in sound cinema, but it also blends the story with hard-hitting realism, in so far as the genre of children's film allows.

In the film, blond, blue-eyed and sweet-looking Nelly (**Fig. 1**), a German teenager, is kidnapped by the shady criminal Hokus, a Romanian Roma, stylised as a typical 'gypsy' figure. Sporting a black felt hat over his long curly black hair, Hokus has a dark-skinned face overgrown with a black, bristly beard, flashing now and again his one golden tooth.[3] In fact, throughout the film, the 'gypsy'-looking thug kidnaps Nelly not once but twice: the first time, he lures her into his car when she is in the company of two Roma kids from his gang, and, using the cover of the night, takes her to a 'real' Roma settlement.[4] The second time, in the midst of a forest, Hokus places a handkerchief soaked in chloroform on

2 Producer of the film 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 have been allocated for the film production; the official funders include MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, Deutscher Filmförderfonds, Filmförderungsanstalt, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, BKM (for the script). According to the film's official website, *Nellys Abenteuer* has received four festival awards and has been nominated for eight other festival awards (*Nellys*).

3 Compare his screen image with the illustration of the 'gypsy' child-thief in the nineteenth-century German children's book entitled *Anna, das geraubte Kind* [*Anna, the Stolen Child*] (**Fig. 28** in Section 6.4.1.).

4 In a video statement, published on the SWR website and later removed, the director Dominik Wessely explains his choice of setting and cast: "Es war uns immer klar, dass es ein echtes Romadorf sein muss"; "Mir war elementar wichtig, dass diese beiden Kinder auch von Roma gespielt werden. Da ging es mir einfach auch um das Maß an Authentizität, das sehr wichtig war für die Gestaltung dieser Figuren." [It was always clear to us that it had to be a real Roma village. It was important for me that these two children should be also performed by Roma. I was concerned about the degree of authenticity, which was very important for the construction of these figures; my translation, R.M.] (Wessely 2017).

Fig. 1. Screenshots from the film *Nellys Abenteuer* (2016, Dir. Dominik Wessely): The thirteen-year-old Nelly Klabund (Flora Li Thiemann) and her kidnapper Hokus (Marcel Costea)

Nelly's mouth, and when the girl collapses unconscious in his hands, he throws her over his shoulder and carries her away.

The film provoked a heated public discussion in the autumn of 2017, and since then, a series of official statements have been released by organisations and scholars on both sides of the debate.[5] I shall not engage here in the exchange of arguments. A lot has been written already on the antigypsy content of the film that, in addition to the child-theft motif, exploits a whole series of 'gypsy' stereotypes. However, I wish to point to *Nellys Abenteuer* as the most recent example of a racialised representation of protagonists framed by the 'gypsy' child-theft narrative. The colour coding of bodies in black and white in the film follows a representational pattern that goes all the way back to seventeenth-century European arts and even much earlier.

The main object of my inquiry here, as the title suggests, is the age-old motif of 'gypsies' who steal children. In the following chapters, together with the reader, we shall consider the motif's literary origins, its metamorphoses across time and space in a number of different visual media – from history paintings, through prints and book illustrations to

5 For statements and other publications written in defence of the film, see Becker; INDI Film; and Götz. For statements criticising the film, see Brunßen; Heftrich; and Josting.

silent films – trying to throw light on the disparate layers of meaning and the multiple functions that the motif has acquired over the course of time. But in doing so, we shall keep a vigilant eye on one specific feature that is generally brushed aside, regarded as self-evident or too banal to be worth even mentioning, and that is the colour coding of human bodies, both in texts and images. Under colour coding, we should understand not only verbal or pictorial references to skin colour and/or other phenotypical features (such as hair colour and shape or eye colour) but also the additional emphasis on colour in relation to bodies, achieved through the use of light and shadow, through styling and costumes or by the choice of setting in which bodies are placed.

In *Nellys Abenteuer*, for instance, it is not only that the casting director has chosen the blond and blue-eyed Flora Li Thiemann to play the role of Nelly Klabund, the identification figure in the film, representing a typical German teenager. The film also shows us that Nelly has fair-skinned and fair-haired parents who live in a house with a blindingly white interior located in a sunny and impressively tidy neighbourhood, where white and its adjacent colours ostensibly predominate. In sharp contrast, Hokus and his people are associated with dark skin, with dark objects, with the time of night, and with the space of unlit, poverty-stricken settlements. The screen images of Nelly and Hokus, victim and perpetrator of child-theft, are thus stylised to create a clear line of separation between 'white' Europeans (in this case Germans) and 'non-white' 'gypsy' figures. The same considerations hold for the poem by Charles Simic, quoted in the epigraph. In just a few lines, it succeeds in evoking a dyadic world that is defined and divided along colour lines: the "dark teat" of the 'gypsy' mother is set against the "silver spoon" of the 'non-gypsy', a direct reference to the noble, blue-blooded descent of the lyrical "I"; the bathtub of one father, a space connoting whiteness and cleanliness, is opposed to the tropically colourful canvas of the other father. It is not even necessary to specify who is the 'gypsy' and who is the birth parent.

Against the backdrop of these two artworks – a full-length children's film, a short poem, and the images they conjure up – I can formulate the driving questions of my research as follows: why are 'gypsies' almost universally perceived as 'non-white'? In his significant work *Leben auf der Grenze*, the German literary scholar Hans Brittnacher pertinently observes that the 'blackness' of 'gypsy' skin is factually as false as it is aesthetically obligatory (cf. 230). Why is a minority group whose members range from blond to darker brunettes perceived only in the following ways: as bronzed, swarthy, "tawny as Havana cigars"

to quote the nineteenth-century French poet and art critic Théophile Gautier (Brown 1); as "dark brown, or olive coloured" in the words of the eighteenth-century German scholar Grellmann (8); or as black and "of the devil's body colour" if we refer to the seventeenth-century German writer Grimmelshausen (143) – i.e. perceptions spanning the whole gamut of 'non-white' tones, and why are Roma never or hardly ever perceived as 'white'? This question hinges on a major and again seemingly redundant question that concerns the representation of national majorities in Europe, namely: why are present-day Europeans (i.e. representatives of the ethnic majorities in European nation-states) universally perceived and self-perceived, regardless of their social status, as 'white' when in the times of feudalism 'white' skin, this highly cherished attribute, was a monopoly of the royals and the aristocrats?

In the following chapters, I shall demonstrate the need for a critical approach to antigypsy texts and images that takes into consideration and articulates, no matter how banal and self-evident the descriptions may seem, the colour coding of bodies simply because colour coding lays the basis for racialised representations. Racialisation is one of the key concepts employed in the ensuing analysis, drawing on the definition elaborated by the British sociologist Robert Miles. He posits that 'racialisation' (and its synonymous term 'racial categorisation') is "a process of delineation of group boundaries and of allocation of persons within those boundaries by primary reference to (supposedly) inherent and/or biological (usually phenotypical) characteristics. It is therefore an ideological process" (74–75). Adopting Miles' understanding of racialisation is fruitful for my undertaking because, in his definition, the application of the term is not limited to historical contexts where the idea of biological 'race' is already present; for, as Miles demonstrates, from the fifteenth century onwards, skin colour was signified as a means of collective representation. There is one further point to be made here. According to Miles, it is important that racialisation should be understood as a dialectical process of signification: by defining Africans as 'black', Europeans have implicitly defined themselves as occupying the opposite end of a common continuum of skin colour, that is, as being 'white' (74–75).

Focusing on the opposition of Europeans versus Africans, Miles reconstructs the black-and-white matrix of European racism in his book, outlining its historical development, inner dynamics, and modern forms of expression. The thought pattern he describes in the following quote, though, is just as applicable to the black-and-white mind-set that underpins antigypsyism:

> (…) various human physical features (some imaginary) were signified as monstrous, one of which was skin colour. Western Christianity associated certain colours with a range of additional meanings, with the result that it embodied a colour symbolism mirroring that of the preceding classical world. A white/black contrast expressed a complex of additional meanings, similarly dichotomous, such as good/evil, pure/diabolical, spiritual/carnal, and Christ/Satan … Thus colour expressed a hierarchical religious evaluation which attained a more widespread secular content within Western culture…, parallels with which can be drawn with the Islamic world… Where distinctions between human beings were designate by reference to skin colour, this colour symbolism had a powerful evaluative implication. Monstrousness, sin and blackness therefore constituted a rather different form of Trinity in European Christian culture in this period. (16–17)

> (…) the scientific discourse of 'race' did not replace earlier conceptions of the Other. Ideas as savagery, barbarism, and civilisation both predetermined the space that the idea of 'race' occupied but were then themselves reconstituted by it. (33)

In the artworks under discussion here, it is often the case that the aesthetic juxtaposition of 'white' Europeans versus 'gypsies' is complemented and enhanced by a parallel juxtaposition with 'black' Africans. Such contrastive oppositions should be viewed as aesthetic tools developed for the purpose of producing and instituting 'white' European identity; their practical purpose is to calibrate the eyesight, metaphorically speaking, informing the perception of white and non-white colour in relation to human skin. In this context, antigypsy aesthetics represents one of the many tools for conferring or disavowing 'whiteness', each tool having a different social and geographic scope.

Also, a few words need to be said about the phrases commonly used to designate the motif in question: the motif of children-stealing 'gypsies' or the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft[6] refers to a recurrent story pattern that rests on two pivotal events: a child is first stolen and then rescued or, years later, recognised and recovered. Thus, the motif of

6 Other common formulations in English include "child/baby-snatching gypsies", "Gypsies as child stealers", or "the stereotype of the Gypsy baby thief" while in German, there are only two widespread formulations: "Kindesraubmotiv" or "Kinderraubmotiv".

child-theft comprises both events – the theft and the rescue/recognition,[7] even though it is named after the first event. Bearing in mind this two-event structure, I can already shed light, albeit in very broad terms, on three major developments in the history of the motif's visualisations that will become a focal point of my analysis. To begin with, during the seventeenth century, the story of the child that was stolen at birth by 'gypsies' enjoyed great popularity among Dutch history painters who were drawn almost without exception to the climactic moment of recognition. These artists, who catered for the tastes of the Dutch high nobility, showed interest exclusively in the second event of the story, the moment when the stolen child's true identity is revealed. To my knowledge, there are only two images of the period that depict the scene of child-abduction.[8] So, one is bound to ask, why? Why this marked preference for the scene of anagnorisis? This is an important question with far-reaching implications and we shall delve into it by engaging with Cervantes' tale "La gitanilla", written in 1613, to highlight the profound impact this text has exerted on the European imaginary. Also, it has to be added here that the chapters dedicated to Cervantes' *novela* and its influence on Dutch history painting form the main part of my exegesis: being fairly comprehensive, they lay out the framework that should provide the reader with interpretive coordinates for the bulk of material presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

If the vogue during the Dutch Golden Age counts as the first stage in the motif's development, the second major stage could be assigned to a period that stretches from the late eighteenth century, through the entire nineteenth century and up to the early twentieth century. With the rise of popular culture and the printed mass media, the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft regained its virulence, but it was accompanied by

7 See, for example, the paired prints *Gipsey's Stealing a Child* and *The Child Restored* (1801) (**Fig. 21 and 22**); or consider Mrs. Carl Rother's novel for British juveniles entitled *Lost and Found, or, Twelve Years with Bulgarian Gypsies* (1887); or examine Theodor Dietsch's puppet play called *Der Kinderraub zu Oederan oder: Die wunderbare Entdeckung zu Frankenberg* (*The Kidnapping in Oederan or: The Wonderful Discovery in Frankenberg*), a paper poster of which can be found in SKD online collection (Sachsen, ca. 1891/92, 34.2 × 23 cm, Inventory No. C7660). Already the titles of these works reflect the two-event structure of the motif.

8 They include one history painting by the Haarlem master Leendert van der Cooghen: *Constance (Preciosa) abducted by the gypsies (J. Cats, Het Spaans heidinnetje)*, 1652–1681 (**Fig. 4**); and one etching/engraving by Pieter Nolpe *Roma vrouw Majombe met Konstance*, 1643, based on a drawing of Simon de Vlieger's, which, as we shall see later, subjects the scene of abduction to a rather unusual treatment (**Fig. 9**).

a total reversal of emphasis. The sample of prints here evidences that during this period, it was the first event – the moment of child-theft – that grew in importance and came to the foreground. This is yet another point where one needs to ask why? The widely-circulated images – engravings, etchings, lithographs, broadsheets, children's book illustrations, magic lantern slides and later silent films – were, notably, targeted at and consumed by representatives of the lower-ranking social strata, not the aristocracy. There is also a third development I wish to draw scholarly attention to: during the silent film era, the story of 'gypsy' child-theft counted as one of the lucrative stock plots. Being an overly familiar motif that provided excellent material for melodrama, it was exploited with broad variations in dozens of films produced in the USA, England, France, Denmark, Italy, and Spain. With the introduction of sound, however, the motif disappeared almost entirely from the silver screen. Again, we need to ask why and I shall present a plausible explanation.

Outlining the trajectory of the child-theft motif (its textual and pictorial forms and their semantic transformations across space-time and media) allows us to trace antigypsyism/European racism back to its archetypal origin and primary literary sources, to gain understanding of its evolving black-and-white aesthetics in its materiality and signification, and to untangle the multiple layers of meaning that have coagulated over time, infusing the colours black and white with astonishing complexity – the two most crucial colours when it comes to the hierarchical categorisation of human bodies. The selection of images and texts represents, so to say, an excavation of the earlier material expressions of antigypsyism, a chronology of proto-racist artworks that have paved the way for modern racism, instituting its modes of seeing and acting as a shared norm and an everyday normality. In the context of my research topic, i.e. not in all contexts but in visualisations of the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft, the colour white has established itself as the colour of invisible privilege and this is one of the main theses presented here. White operates simultaneously as the colour of unmarked normality (the neutral background colour) as well as the colour of privilege (the colour of light, of social/biological superiority and of realist visibility). To understand what the implications and consequences of white as the tacitly privileged colour are, we need to account for it simultaneously in a number of different dimensions: in relation to the respective medium, in relation to light and its visual rendition,

in relation to realist visibility of human bodies and faces, and last but not least, in relation to the cultural models that code female sexuality.

Firstly, white is the colour of the medium. Not one medium but a series of media that are pivotal in the development of European culture and arts: the white sheet of paper in sketching, drawing, print-making and photography; the white page in books or other printed publications, in Word documents; the white canvas in painting; the white screen onto which magic lantern shows and films are projected. As the colour of the medium, white has the status of a non-colour (together with black, it is also generally excluded from colour charts) and is commonly perceived as a neutral (pure) background. This supposedly neutral background carries an inherent binarity that comes to the fore in the case of black-and-white pictorial techniques: when bodies and human skin (faces) are represented, they can either be identical with the white backdrop or have a colour that differs from it. There is always a choice to be made when visualising bodies, and many artists use the binarity of the medium to juxtapose and thus racialise their subjects. One direct consequence is that black as well as the rest of the spectrum colours, when contrasted to white, are almost automatically perceived as an addition to a neutral background, as a deviation from a pure white surface. Consider, for instance, the Dutch broadsheet *The Gypsies* (*De Zigeuners*) (1894–1959) (**Fig. 25**) in which the mother, whose face shares the background colour of the white paper, is set against the 'gypsy' child-abductors whose faces have an added brown tone.

Secondly, white is the colour used to depict light and so, if we go back through the history of Western art, we shall see that it is the colour traditionally employed to associate human bodies with light: with the divine light as the highest spiritual attainment; with the enlightened nobility as the dominant position in feudal classist societies, and with the superior 'white' 'ethno-racial' identity of European nationalist (colonialist) societies. In religious contexts, white/light is a sign for the sacred deity; in feudal classist contexts, white/light is the colour of the ruling elite and of its civilised Europeanness, whereas in secular modern contexts, white/light signifies not only enlightenment and rationality but also biological 'ethno-racial' purity. It is also interesting to consider how bodies are associated with the colour of light, and I shall do so by closely examining some works of the seventeenth-century Dutch masters. If I were to venture a generalisation here, I could say that whiteness is ascribed to bodies not only on the level of skin colour but also with recourse to clothes, accessories, and settings. Bodies, and especially the

female body, are often adorned or entirely wrapped in white. Dutch painters, for instance, demonstrate their dexterity by producing strikingly realistic depictions of fine and very expensive materials – white silk, satin, linen, and lace. Thus, light/white has also become a visual signifier for wealth, both spiritual and material, in direct opposition to the shadow/non-white colours that stand, by implication, for absence and poverty, spiritual and material. Moreover, the shadow/non-white spectrum of colours, that is colourfulness and blackness, are, again in the contexts under scrutiny here, relegated to an inferior position, exoticised, orientalised, Balkanised, etc., and commonly given the status of non-Europeanness.

Thirdly, white, being the colour of light, naturally ensures the highest visibility to human faces and bodies. A face that deviates from the white background through addition of colour is both less visible from a distance and marked in comparison to a face that shares the whiteness of the medium, and is thus both luminous and unmarked. Also, a face depicted in a diminished light is harder to distinguish, whereas the colour of human skin rendered in a shadow inevitably appears 'non-white'. I must note here that the aesthetic colour boundary erected between the nobility/national majority and 'gypsy' figures is permiable only in one direction. The self-appointed 'whites' can easily claim the aesthetic realm of the shadow for themselves: there is a long tradition of artists who identify with 'gypsies' or even declare themselves to be ones.[9] Yet for the Roma, it is hardly possible to claim 'whiteness' (read: visibility, normality, and affiliation to the 'white' body of the nation) for themselves. Symbolically, by the power of the 'gypsy' image projected onto them, they stay bannished in the realm of the shadow, reduced to ghostly silhouettes of human beings.

Fourthly, the image of the 'white' woman and her body wrapped from head to toe in white fabric does not present simply an aspirational beauty ideal but is, in effect, an aesthetic codification of female sexuality. As we shall see in the chapters to come, in seventeenth-century literary texts, whiteness refers in the first place to virginity; it is an asset, a cultural capital that Cervantes' literary heroines pledge to value more than their own lives. As the research material evidences, the fair-skinned female, preferably a blonde, in a full-length white dress is a recurrent visual trope across time-space and media, the 'white' woman being an epitome

9 See Brown's insightful and well-researched book *Gypsies and Other Bohemians. The Myth of the Artist in Nineteenth-century France* (1985).

of the imagined collective. It is worth noting here that the ideology of classism and the ideology of racism – the intrinsic aim of both being to naturalise social hierarchies – are poised on a physiological state as questionable and vague as female virginity.[10] Both ideologies spawn social systems whose reproduction in time requires a vigilant control over female sexuality, practically proclaiming asexuality for its ideal. In the light of this, it is necessary to regard the artworks under scrutiny here not simply and not only as historical documents that carry the imprint of a bygone social reality but also as ideational products outside of time, as fruits of human imagination, as forms of mental software whose power manifests itself – today as well – in the ability to chart life paths and life plots, to propose worse or better-fitting roles for human beings within society. The impact of classism and racism on the dominant models of femininity deserves a study of its own, but it suffices to emphasise here the pernicious effect that these ideologies have both on the oppressors and the oppressed, and the specific burden they place on women.

I shall end my introduction to the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft and its journey through visual media with a few words about the theoretical framework of the study. The findings presented here are grounded in the theoretical considerations and research insights advanced by scholars working in the fields of Antigypsyism Studies (Bogdal 2011; Brittncher 2012, 2017; Patrut 2014; Reuter 2011, 2014), Critical 'Race' Studies and Critical Whiteness Studies (Miles 1989; Dyer 1997), Postcolonial Studies (Shohat 1994), Narratology (Lotman 1990; Doležel 1998; Campbell 2008), Art History (Gaskell 1982; Brown 1985; David de Witt 1999, 2007; Belting 2013; Bell 2008, 2015) as well as Film and Media Studies (Nichols 1991; Elsaesser 2015; Vogl-Bienek 2016). With the case study about the age-old motif of 'gypsy' child-theft, it has been my specific intention to open a space of dialogue between and among academic disciplines in order to enable a better understanding of the omniscient yet highly elusive nature of the 'gypsy' phantasm. As such, the adopted methodological approach runs a certain risk: it makes itself vulnerable to criticism coming from scholars, well-versed and conversant with the intricacies of their respective field of study. At the same time, by bringing together diverse perspectives, this case study puts forward novel insights and ideas that are only possible at the precarious intersection of established disciplines.

10 See, for example, the article "Hymen: Facts and Conceptions" by Hegazy and Al-Rukban (2012).

2

Humanæ – Work in Progress

Objectively about Human Skin Colour

— ※ —

Blackness –
the black of it,
the rust-red of it,
the milk and cream of it,
the tan and yellow-tan of it,
the deep-brown middle-brown high-brown of it,
the 'olive' and ochre of it –
Blackness
marches on
the full chromatic spectrum of complexions

Gwendolyn Brooks, *Primers for blacks*, 1980

Our discussion begins with two contemporary art projects – the photographic exhibition *Humanæ* (**Fig. 2**) and the short campaign video *Yo no soy trapacero* (**Fig. 3**), and only then it moves on to Cervantes' tale "La gitanilla" generally considered to be the original source that has breathed life into the undying 'gypsy' child-theft motif. I start by focusing first on two contemporary art projects for a reason. Their purpose is to provide the readers with a critical frame of reference, to help them develop a certain distance to the overly familiar masterpieces, painterly styles and representational patterns, and thus to prompt them to take a moment to re-adjust their perception. Or, to put it in other words, these very fresh artworks should serve as a touchstone for the readers to keep at the back of their mind while engaging with my critical assessment of the 'gypsy' child-theft motif and its metamorphoses across visual media.

Fig. 2. © Angélica Dass | *Humanae Work in Progress* (Courtesy of the artist). Artist Angélica Dass rethinks the concept of race by showing the diversity of human skin colours in her global photographic mosaic.


PANTONE® 331-8 C
PANTONE® 54-6 C
PANTONE 35-11 C
PANTONE® 44-2 C
PANTONE® 58-6 C
PANTONE® 92-9 C
PANTONE® 53-7 C
PANTONE® 62-6 C
PANTONE® 58-7 C
PANTONE® 54-9 C
PANTONE® 57-7 C
PANTONE® 321-6 C

The photographic project *Humanæ* is, in many ways, a ground-breaking work of art. It brings a paradigmatic shift in the manner in which human skin colour is perceived and depicted. Simply put, *Humanæ* represents a gallery of photographic portraits of individual subjects with a backdrop of the Pantone colour corresponding to their skin tone. Its author, the Brazilian artist Angélica Dass, started the project in 2012 and has now photographed more than 4,000 people in eighteen countries spanning five continents (Strochlic 14). Called "work in progress", her project continues to grow. Before taking a closer look at the unique collection of human faces in *Humanæ* and the numerous implications this work has for the representation of humans in general, it is worth considering the concept behind the project as well as some aspects of its technical realisation.

Although an artistic project, *Humanæ* is designed in a manner that can enable anyone to explore and document the diversity of human skin colour with the rigour of a natural scientist. As Angélica Dass explains in her interview for *Der Spiegel*, the process is very simple. The artist always photographs her subjects in the same setting, with the same distance from the camera, with the same lighting set-up and with the same white background. After taking the photo, she selects a square of eleven pixels from the subject's nose, and uses it to colour the background of the portrait. With the help of Photoshop, she matches the strip of pixels to a colour card from Pantone and indicates its alphanumerical code at the bottom of the photograph. The very first portrait in *Humanæ* is a self-portrait of the artist bearing the Pantone code 7522C. (Schulz; see also angelicadass.com). The resulting photo series, as its title *Humanæ* suggests, displays the colour of human skin and facial features in its vast spectrum of tones.

The process is simple, yet it allows Angélica Dass, among other things, to capture and render visible – in a verifiable way – the sheer richness, variety, and individuality but also instability of human skin colour. Indeed, her project can justifiably claim scientific objectivity: it rests on empirical data, working with indexical images of human flesh tones that, thanks to the Pantone colour standardisation system, can be identified by designers and printing devices anywhere in the world. But at the same time, *Humanæ* contains an element of self-subversion and playful fluidity that is more characteristic of art. As the photographer jokingly explains, she has chosen the nose for her reference point because it is the body part with the least stable colour: "it changes when we take in too much sun, when we get the flu, when we've had too

much to drink. I want to focus on colour that changes. If I took your portrait, everything else equal, in the summer versus in the winter, your Pantone colour would be different. There is no intrinsic colour. The colour itself has no importance." ("True Colors").

Along these lines, there are a number of important statements that the portrait gallery of *Humanæ* implicitly advances. The project provides tangible visual evidence that the common classification of humans into four 'races', associated with the white, black, yellow or red colour, is more than inadequate. There is much to be said on how the concept of 'race' is further dismantled through the multitudinous combinations of facial features, hair types and skin tones presented in *Humanæ*. But let us focus here on one important visual statement that is of great significance to understanding the traditional racialised representations of Roma (or, indeed, of any other ambivalently 'white' group). The portraits in *Humanæ* evidence that every single human being has some skin pigmentation and a resulting skin hue. To put it in reverse, no human being is colourless. No one has a skin tone that is identical with the white background, commonly used in drawing, print making and painting (white paper or white canvas), in photography (white paper) or in magic lantern shows and films (white screen); no one is white. The portrayal of humans as white or as colourless, i.e. identical with the white backdrop used in the respective art, is an artistic convention. More importantly, it is an artistic convention that ensures marked visibility – let us not forget that white is also the colour of light – and thus it privileges the represented subjects. The effect of facial visibility is especially noticeable in art forms that rely on black-and-white colour contrasts for the illusion of three-dimensional realism, such as chiaroscuro or tenebrism in Renaissance painting, or in black-and-white printmaking, photography, and film. At the same time, as we shall see in the following sections, this convention has only rarely been employed for representations of the Roma minority in any of the traditional or modern fine arts. Hardly ever have Roma individuals been represented in the modus of whiteness and, in that sense, visually privileged.

3

Yo no soy trapacero

On the Variety of Human Types among the Roma

— ※ —

> *No author and no reader changes the meaning of words. The struggle of discourses changes their meaning, and so the combinations in which we put words together matters, and the order of propositions matters: through these whatever our intentions, words take on meaning.*
>
> Diane Macdonell, *Theories of Discourse* (51)

Before focusing on the racialisation of 'gypsy' figures in classical works of art, we need to consider the Spanish video clip *Yo no soy trapacero* (2015, Dir. Sebastián Ántico) designed in a similar way to *Humanae*. To my knowledge, this is the only film of documentary value that testifies to the diversity of individuals within the Roma community. It has been commissioned by the Spanish State Council of the Roma People and is part of their campaign aimed at changing the discriminatory definition of the word 'gitano' in the Spanish dictionary[11] (Melchor). In the film, ten Roma children, nine of whom are to be seen on **Fig. 3**, introduce themselves by name, sharing some of their personal interests and thoughts. I will leave the topic of the campaign aside to examine instead the camera work and the casting. It is notable that the children are filmed in the same setting and with the same lighting set-up: one after the other, they take a seat in an armchair placed against a grey background. The camera shows each child in a close-up and in a medium

11 In 2016, a follow-up video called *Telebasura no es realidad* (*Trash TV is not reality*) came out, featuring the same protagonists and campaigning for a dignified treatment of Roma in the media. Both videos are available on *Youtube*.

Fig. 3. Assembled screenshots from the campaign video *Yo no soy trapacero* (2015, Dir. Sebastián Ántico): nine of the ten children featured in the short film.

shot. Similar to *Humanae*, the film creates through the montage an overall portrait of the Roma, a gallery of individuals with very different combinations of hair type, eye colour and skin tone. There are darker and fairer types, there is also one light-blond girl with pale blue eyes. With its choice of cast, the film is a true exception. There are hardly any other cinematic works of art that place such an emphasis on the variety of human types already in the casting phase, nor are there many films that portray Roma as unique individuals in the modus of normality. By keeping this one collective portrait of the Roma in mind, in the following sections, I shall try to answer the question: Why are 'gypsy' figures, in spite of the variety of human types among the Roma, imagined and characterised as a rule as 'non-white' or 'black'?

4

"La gitanilla" ("The Gypsy Girl") by Miguel de Cervantes

A Proto-racist Narrative from Today's Point of View

— ※ —

It is well known that literature will miss
no opportunity to subvert its own foundations.

Lubomír Doležel, *Heterocosmica* (160)

The literary motif of the child-stealing 'gypsy' has been traced down to Cervantes' *novela* "La gitanilla", first published in 1613 after it was approved by the censor in 1612 (Charnon-Deutsch 18n7). Cervantes was not the first writer to make use of this motif as it had already been in circulation among his literary predecessors.[12] But it was Cervantes' exemplary tale that turned into a source of major influence across Europe, inspiring an astonishingly large number of European writers,[13]

12 The classic 'gypsy' motifs of Golden-Age Spanish Literature – baby snatching being one of them – were already employed by Cervantes' sixteenth-century Spanish and Portuguese predecessors (Charnon-Deutsch 18). Lope de Rueda, one of these authors, used the motif of child-abduction for his plays *Comedia ilamada medora* (*A Comedy Called Medora*) (1567) and *La gitana ladrona,* having in turn borrowed the device from Luigi Artemio Giancarli's *La Zingara* (*The Gypsy Woman*), written in 1545. The myth of baby-snatching by 'gypsies', according to Charnon-Deutsch, was first propagated by German historians in the fifteenth century (56). Already in the sixteenth century, stories about paupers who turn out to be aristocrats and other tales of mistaken identity constituted the literary stock in trade (35). Iulia-Karin Patrut, in turn, suggests that the story of 'gypsy' child-theft most probably emerged in the early modern period as a result of a phantasmal transfer of knowledge and narratives from the terrain of the Christian-Jewish conflict onto the newly arrived internal strangers (72; see also Meyers 44; Hille 27–28; Gilsenbach 223).

13 In a chapter called "Die schöne Zigeunerin: Cervantes' *La gitanilla* und ihre Doubles in Europa", Bogdal anchors the *novela* in its historical context, referring briefly

playwrights, poets, painters, musicians and filmmakers. "La gitanilla" has been the object of countless scholarly studies,[14] so I will refrain from a detailed analysis of the text and provide first a short summary.

The story is as follows: Preciosa is an extraordinary young woman, a fair-skinned 'gypsy' with golden hair. Admired by everyone for her wit and beauty, she earns her living by selling her prodigious talents on the streets of Madrid: singing, dancing, reciting poetry, and fortune-telling. A young nobleman, Don Juan, falls in love with her. He is ready to give up his name and social status to be with Preciosa. She agrees to become his 'gypsy' wife but sets one condition: Don Juan has to spend the first two years living as a 'gypsy' among her people. The nobleman agrees. During the test period Don Juan, now dressed as a 'gypsy' and renamed Andrés, is falsely accused of theft and sent to prison. To save him from death, Preciosa's grandmother confesses to the magistrate and his wife that Preciosa is their long-lost daughter whom she stole as a baby. Many proofs are brought out to confirm Preciosa's true identity, her Christian name being Doña Constanza de Azevedo y de Meneses. Andrés, in turn, steps forth as Don Juan de Cárcamo. The parents, astonished by the miraculous nature of these revelations and overwhelmed with happiness, consent to the marriage of the two high-born youths, allowing Preciosa to keep her 'gypsy' name.

Some explanation is in order from the outset about the context of the *novela's* emergence. Cervantes penned his "La gitanilla" in what Ryan Prendergast aptly describes as an "inquisitorial culture" (2). Spanish Golden Age literature was written in the oppressive environment generated by the Spanish Inquisition and the Spanish Crown in their joint effort to shape the nascent nation-state, to construct a unifying citizen identity, and to ensure general support for the empire-building project. Royal and ecclesiastical policies extended beyond mere censorship aiming at the elimination and punishment of cultural, intellectual and religious difference. In order to appraise literary works of this period,

to its stage adaptations in Spanish as well as to its first translations in French, German, English, and Dutch (87–104). On the European literary tradition established by "La gitanilla", see also Brittnacher; Solms; Charnon-Deutsch; Niemandt; Wurzbach; and Schneider. The literary motif of 'gypsy' child-theft, its functions and/or its social ramifications have been discussed by Jago; Patrut; Kugler; Saul; Nord; Hille; Schäffer; Macijewski; Brüggermann; and Meyers.

14 See, for example, the English anthology of articles on Cervantes' *Novelas ejemplares* edited by Stephen Boyd or the German anthology edited by Ehrlicher and Poppenberg.

it is necessary to "read between the lines" or "against the grain" as Prendergast demonstrates with his close text analyses (2). So, bearing in mind the cultural climate in which "La gitanilla" emerged, I will highlight in the following paragraphs some important features of the narrative that are of relevance to the subsequent interpretations and representations of the child-abduction motif in the various visual media.

Cervantes' exemplary *novela* is, in the first place, a very unstable text. The story of the 'gypsy'-turned-aristocrat is told by an omniscient narrator (*Er*-form), whose invisible but all-knowing presence creates, at least on the surface, an illusion of a reliable reality. To better understand how the fictional world of "La gitanilla" is constructed, it is useful to employ the terminology from Doležel's possible-worlds semantics of fictionality, paying special attention to the text's procedure of authentication. Under authentication, we shall understand the text's performative force to construct fictional worlds. In "La gitanilla", there are two opposing forces at work: one of authentication, which is dominant and takes up almost the entire text, and one of disauthentication, which is subtle and generally remains unnoticed.[15] The bulk of the *novela* has the form of an authoritative narrative (*Er*-form). Yet, at three different instances, the text's authentication force is undermined hinting at the behind-the-scenes presence of an author-narrator, at his unreliability and also at his ulterior motives for spinning the story. In the first instance, with a series of questions and imperatives (you-narrative) placed in brackets, the text addresses the main heroine Preciosa, giving her advice what to do (53), and in the next scene she acts as instructed. In the second instance, again in a paragraph enclosed in brackets, a first-person narrator (*Ich*-form) comments that he does not know if Preciosa is improvising or not (91). While in the third instance, and this is the *novela's* closing sentence, the omniscient narration switches to a first-person narrator who confesses to having forgotten to tell the story of Carducha, one of the peripheral characters. One sentence earlier, the text gives a name to this author-narrator, calling him Pozo[16] (115).

15 On the authentication force of the fictional text and its counterforces, see Doležel, 145–168.

16 Jacob Cats, a Dutch poet, who transposed Cervantes' tale in verse, producing his popular exemplary poem *Het Spaense Heydinnetje* (1637), was, for example, unaware of Cervantes' authorship of the story. In a letter to Van Baerle from November 1633, Cats ascribed the authorship to Pozo. Presumably, he had read the story in a version in which the name of Cervantes was not mentioned; perhaps it was De Rosset's French translation (Gaskell 268n52). In a scholarly article of 1933, Hep-

Gradually and almost imperceptibly, the author's persona emerges from the anonymous void of omniscient narration, gets a name, and then speaks in his own voice admitting to his limited knowledge and forgetfulness. Thus, a good part of the assertions that the text makes with regard to its characters are, in some way or another, destabilised and shown to be personally subjective and market-oriented rather than reliably and verifiably truthful. The notorious opening statement of the *novela*, which appears to frame 'gypsy' men and women as thieves,[17] is subverted not only by the words *parece que* "it would seem", as a number of scholars[18] have pointed out, but also by a later remark in the text aired by the omniscient narrator: "because a thief thinks everyone is of the same nature as himself" (75). (The remark is dropped when Andrés, overcome with jealousy, interprets the actions of another character, ascribing to him his own feelings towards Preciosa.) Discreetly, the text asserts that 'gypsies' are used as a screen onto which one projects one's own vices. There are a number of indications that allow us to surmise that "La gitanilla" was written in defence of perceived 'gypsies', the author giving expression to his sympathy towards the people in a roundabout way.

Interestingly enough, Cervantes uses the same trope of rascals-appearing-to-be-'gypsies' in *Don Quixote*, in one short but telling scene. In Chapter 30, Part I, Don Quixote, Sancho Panza, Cardenio, Dorothea, the barber and the priest see a man who, upon approaching them, "seemed to be a gipsy" (261). Sancho, though, spots his stolen ass Dapple under the man, and then recognises the rider to be Gines de Pasamonte, a famous villain whom Don Quixote, with Sancho's help, had earlier freed from the commissary. Hoping to sell the ass for a good price, Gines de Pasamonte, also called "Thief-above-measure" by the commissary (169), "had put himself into the garb of a gipsy, whose language, as well

pner refers to "Pozzo" as the author of the story (79). Such anecdotal examples illustrate the literal reading to which Cervantes' text has been subjected.

17 "It would seem that Gypsy men and women were only born into the world to be thieves: they are born to parents who are thieves, they grow up among thieves, they study to be thieves, and finally succeed in being thoroughgoing thieves on every occasion; and the desire for stealing, and the act of stealing, are like inalienable traits in them, not extinguished except by death." (Cervantes 3).

18 In "Inszenierte Alterität: Spiel der Identitäten in Cervantes' *La gitanilla*", Kirsten von Hagen argues that the ludic instability of the *novela's* text is indicatory of Cervantes' opposition to the antigypsy tendencies in his day and of his search for a novel discursive articulation of established stereotypes (162–177).

as several others, he could speak as readily, as if they were his own native tongues." (262).

A second historical note is called for here. During the Golden Age, contrary to what its name suggests, Spain was in economic decline. The country roads were filled with vagabonds and bands of roving outlaws whom Cervantes was well familiar with. Peripatetic Roma in those days travelled in small close-knit family groups, they rarely associated with the *bandoleros* (a mixed group of returning soldiers, displaced foreigners, underemployed peasants, career bandits, etc.) and were distinguishable from ordinary vagabonds. Yet, in the public imaginary, the perceived 'gypsy' identity was coalesced into that of the other disaffected groups, turning the minority into a symbol for the recalcitrant Other and a handy scapegoat (cf. Charnon-Deutsch 20). In all likelihood, Cervantes had this form of antigypsyism in mind when he asserted indirectly in his *novela* that none other but the hardened villains projected their vices upon 'gypsies' and/or disguised themselves as 'gypsies'. We should also consider the fact that the often-impecunious writer was not indifferent to the revenues coming from his published works. He must have been well aware that he could have passed neither the censorship of the Church, nor that of public taste if he tried to sell a text that was openly favourable towards 'gypsies', so he pulled a clever sleight of hand by penning a two-faced tale, one that – while mimicking the dominant discourses circulated by the Church and the Spanish Crown[19] – delivered a blistering social critique.

If we are to describe "La gitanilla" in a nutshell with regard to its authentication procedure, we can say – again referring to Doležel's terminology – that it is both a self-voiding and a self-disclosing text. It ruptures the convention of omniscient narration, undermines the credentials of its first-person narrator, and employs irony alluding to its fiction-making procedures. To put it in another way, the text's instability derives from its affinity to a masquerade: "La gitanilla" bears many similarities to a theatrical exchange of masks or a play of identities in which characters act like ventriloquist puppets, guided by a mostly invisible narrator and his partly undisclosed, partly overtly pecuniary motives. There are many textual clues exposing the figures as figments of imagination, their identity fully dependent on the narrator's decision to give them a name and a costume, or to swap the latter. What is more,

19 In *Phantasma Nation*, Patrut asserts that Cervantes' tale is a poetic work on the discourse of 'limpieza de sangre' (70).

the three main characters in the story have double identities or two faces, one of a 'gypsy' and one of an aristocrat, that are paired with a name and a set of clothes. In one scene heavily loaded with irony, Juan's/Andrés' father praises Preciosa's trustworthy face and promises her a golden doubloon with two faces, the latter faces belonging to two monarchs.[20] Later, he gives her the doubloon in exchange for a dance (cf. 51, 55). This parallelism – the two-faced characters and the two-faced golden coin – could be subjected to various interpretations. For the sake of brevity, I shall only suggest that Cervantes either identified the image of nobility and the image of 'gypsyness' as the two poles of symbolic, hence economic power, or that he viewed his protagonists, i.e. the fruits of his imagination, as a highly valuable currency – or both.

It is equally significant to point out that Cervantes' *novela* has the structure of an initiation rite.[21] In this rite of initiation, the dimension of time is of crucial importance: the story unfolds over many years and contains two key events that, being significantly removed in time from each other, furnish it with its complication and climax. "La gitanilla" is a story of loss and recovery. Beautiful, green-eyed and golden-haired Preciosa is first lost and then found. As an infant, she is stolen by a 'gypsy' woman and raised among sun-tanned 'gypsies'; then, years later, when she is already an adolescent woman, she is found, recognised as Doña Constanza de Azevedo y de Meneses and restored to her rightful place in society. In schematic terms, her movement in space-time can be represented as a disappearance and re-appearance: an entry into the shady world of 'gypsies' and a return to her own world, that of 'white' Spanish nobility. It should be noted that Cervantes' story takes little interest in the act of child-theft. The incident is just a plot device used to generate the necessary tension that arises from the heroine's dramatic decline in social status (Fallhöhe), but it itself remains in the background and is brought to the reader's attention only in retrospect. The *novela* foregrounds the climactic moment of recognition, the anagnorisis, which takes place on two separate occasions. The first moment

20 As Robert ter Horst points out, the doubloon is the largest and finest gold coin ever struck in Spain (118).

21 For a discussion on the initiation rite structure of "La gitanilla", see also Brittnacher ("Das Märchen") and Wiltrout. For a discussion of rites of passage from an anthropological point of view, see Gennep. Even though I disagree with Gennep's essentialist notions, I find his description of the structure of initiation rites useful. According to him, rites of passage have three distinct phases: a phase of separation, a phase of transition or liminality, and a phase of incorporation (21).

of recognition is instant and as if confirming the miraculous nature of love: guided by his heart, Don Juan recognises Preciosa's true identity – her immutable noble nature (hence her baptismal name Constanza), and succumbs his entire being to her. The Spanish aristocrat needs no proof of his beloved's noble descent and is ready to sacrifice everything in her name. The second moment of recognition is staged with the ceremoniousness of a court hearing.[22] Preciosa's parents ascertain her true identity based on a number of tangible pieces of evidence: a small coffer containing Preciosa's trinkets from when she was a baby; a folded note with the old 'gypsy's hand-written confession stipulating the full names and the titles of the stolen child and its parents as well as the exact time: "Accession Day, at eight in the morning, in the year fifteen ninety-five"; a white mole below the girl's left breast and her two toes on her right foot joined together by a small membrane (103). It is worth noting that the physical marks are to be found in the 'hidden' parts of the body: not only the bared breasts but also the naked feet[23] were erotically loaded taboo zones in Spanish culture.

22 In his article "Cervantes, Heliodorus, and the Novelty of 'La gitanilla'", Mayer persuasively argues that the scene of anagnorisis in "La gitanilla" is influenced at formal level by *Aethiopica*, a model tale of recognition in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. The scholar discusses the inconsistencies and ironic inversions in Cervantes' text, noting, for example, that the old 'gypsy' provides evidence against herself acting as a messenger of truth. His interpretation, however, falls flat when he advances the essentialist claim that the mercenary nature of the old 'gypsy' and of 'gypsies' in general provides the key to the final scene. One more remark is pertinent here: Mayer points out that, in the context of the tale, Preciosa's birthmarks fall under the shadow of doubt since the 'gypsies' have demonstrated their ability, in an earlier scene, by altering the appearance of Don Juan's mule. "The Gypsy mastery of manipulating appearance", to borrow Mayer's words, takes on a new meaning when we consider that the 'gypsies' only propose to transform Don Juan's mule in order to save its life, because they consider it a sin "to take the life of an innocent creature" (57). Don Juan, though, is not to be mollified: "I absolutely refuse … to let the mule live, no matter how different you assure me she'll look" and then one of the 'gypsies' acquiesces with the words "Since Senor Andres Caballero wishes it so, … let the blameless one die." (59). It is really revealing how the scene with the mule has dubbed 'gypsies' as con artists while hardly anyone notices the actual critique directed at aristocrats and their murderous acts.

23 In his satirical *Persian Letters* of 1721, Montesquieu writes that Spanish men "are more aware of women's weakness than are other men: they cannot allow anyone a glimpse of a woman's heel, and they fear the worst from the exposure of a toe" (106). It is as if Cervantes designed the scene for Dutch history painters who, as we are about to see, had a penchant for female nudity and, generally, for subject matter in which the didactic was combined with the erotic.

In addition to the physical evidence, the noble parents also offer evidence of a spiritual nature, insisting that their souls recognised Preciosa as their long-lost daughter. At the start of the *novela*, the omniscient narrator drops an enigmatic remark that "there are poets who get along with Gypsies and sell them their works, just as there are poets for blind beggars who make up miracles for them and share in their proceeds" (5); close to the end of the *novela*, the topic of miracles[24] is taken up again, this time by the governor, who – overjoyed by the recovery of his lost daughter and her indisputable identity – exclaims: "how could there be so many coincidences together without a miracle?" (105). The governor's exclamation is clearly an ironic remark put in the character's mouth by the author-poet who obliquely points to his dominion over the fictional world of the story, i.e. to his performative force to call into existence fictional facts, or as he calls them "miracles" but also to his dependence on the literary market and the commodity status of his work of art. In other words, the text discloses that Preciosa's identity, together with all the evidence that the same text brings to ascertain its truth, should be read as a malleable fictional construct entirely contingent on the author-narrator's goals: at any point, they can undergo a change, if that suits him and his story.

The tension in the story arises from the stark asymmetry between the two worlds Preciosa travels through during her passage into adulthood. The world of 'white' Spanish aristocrats is juxtaposed to the world of sun-tanned 'gypsy' outcasts, the two worlds representing the two ends of the social hierarchy. Something more, the 'gypsy' world is constructed as a mirror inversion of the Spanish nobility. The dramatic tension between these two polar opposites is coded simultaneously along social, proto-ethnic, and symbolic lines. Stories of paupers-turned-princes are a common literary fare in the Golden Age of Spanish literature where, notably, only the social disparity is foregrounded. Cervantes' text adds what we would call today an ethnic marker to the opposition; 'gypsies' are introduced not only as individuals of lower social standing but as a sovereign

24 Patrut also ponders on the question what exactly constitutes a miracle in the *novela*. Focusing exclusively on the second recognition scene – the ascertainment of Preciosa's true origin on the basis of tangible pieces of evidence – the literary scholar offers textual clues that the story of the abduction could be a figment of the old 'gypsy's imagination, one that resonates with the parents' wishful thinking. Preciosa's identity, Patrut concludes, is but a pure fiction, "an arbitrarily fillable empty space" ["beliebig ausfüllbare Leerstelle"] in a story about the social ascent of a female 'gypsy' which brings the fifteenth-century Spanish law of 'blood purity' and its concomitant virtue *ad absurdum* (68).

group with specific customs and ways of life. The proto-ethnographic description[25] in the text (see 59–63) plays an important role in constructing 'gypsies' as a separate people against whom the sovereignty of Spaniards as a people (an ethnic majority, or a modern 'white' nation nowadays) gains a clear outline. Strongly influenced by Cervantes, Prosper Mérimée also describes 'gypsies' in his story "Carmen" in pseudo-ethnographic terms. As we are about to see, the device of pseudo-ethnographicity has since then become a staple feature of 'gypsy' representations not only in literature but across all arts.

Moreover, the opposition between the two groups is colour coded. There is, on the one hand, one oblique mention at the start that the 'gypsies' are sun-tanned (3). On the other hand, there are several descriptions presenting Preciosa as an embodiment of the ideal of whiteness. Her beauty is explicitly equated with light: "Preciosa shone forth among all the rest like the light of a torch among other, fainter lights." (23). We are told that her face and hands are untarnished by the sun (3), that she has "golden hair", "emerald eyes" (23), "a foot of snow and ivory" (103). She is also called "golden girl, silver girl, pearl girl, garnet girl, heavenly girl" (25). Not only is Preciosa fair,[26] but her beauty is presented

25 In the form of a first-person narrative, the old 'gypsy' man introduces the aristocrat Juan/Andrés to the ways of his people. According to Bogdal, his elaborate speech is unparalleled in literature until 1800. Providing a seeming panegyric of 'gypsy' customs and laws, it was used as a source of reliable information by numerous writers and scholars, including Goethe and Heinrich Grellmann. No one doubted the truthfulness of Cervantes' description (97). Actually, the speech of the old 'gypsy' is much more complex, and as Thompson persuasively argues, it requires an alert reader who mistrusts rhetoric. For what appears, at first, a eulogy of 'gypsy' friendship, freedom and lack of jealousy, turns out, at a closer look, to be a commendation of theft, adultery, murder, and incest. Thompson concludes that Cervantes condemns "a male society which devotes itself with bestial ferocity to the oppression of women" (268). In my opinion, Thompson's view is couched in rather vague terms for Cervantes' critique is unequivocally, albeit indirectly, aimed at the Spanish nobility. The opening paragraph to "La gitanilla" is also discussed by William Clamurro and Walter Starkie. Clamurro's stance towards the clichéd 'gypsy' portrayal is only halfway critical, yet the author asserts that the world of the 'gypsies' serves in the *novela* "as the backdrop for a more sly and subtle commentary of society's often hypocritical inconsistencies" (73). Starkie's vivid narrative in "Cervantes and the Gypsies", however, is racist through and through and, if anything, testifies to the scholar's purely literary ambitions.

26 Similalry, the personae of Dorothea in *Don Quixote* is constructed along the aspirational ideal of whiteness. Dorothea moves around disguised as a male peasant, so not only her concealed onlookers in Chapter 28, Part I (the priest, the barber, and Cardenio) but also the readers are overcome with astonishment at the scene of undressing in which the young man turns out to be a girl: "his feet … seemed

as a manifestation of her spiritual virtue: the young woman's greatest merit lies in having succeeded to preserve her virginity while growing up among 'gypsies', who do not recognise the sacrament of marriage. It appears that Preciosa's heroism concurs with and naturalises the existing social disparity: aristocrats *seem* to be superior to 'gypsies' by birth. All the while, equating social identity with costume, the story makes a point that noblemen can commit murder and be pardoned on account of their noble origins, while 'gypsies' are punished with the utmost severity only on the grounds of the rumours that surround them. As Thompson points out, through the witty techniques of the creator, the *novelas* constantly draw attention to the gap between what the characters say and what they actually do (cf. 280).

Still, from today's vantage point, the colour symbolism woven into the narrative furnishes a proto-racist layer of signification. The text can be read as an initiation rite *out* of 'gypsyness' and *into* 'whiteness' where 'white' and 'gypsy' can simultaneously denote a social, an 'ethno-racial', and a symbolic attribute. One can hardly fail to recognise that the abduction of a blond girl of aristocratic descent by supposedly 'non-white' 'gypsies' poses a threat to the idea of noble lineage, i.e. to the legitimacy of aristocratic rule in feudal societies and its ideology of classism, in the same manner as it poses a threat to the 'white' nation in European societies underpinned by the ideology of racism (see also Nord; Matthews 2010). Patrut expresses the same idea pointing to the initial religious layer of signification in the narrative:

> Für die europäishe Literatur wurde Cervantes' Erzählung jedenfalls zu einem Referenz-Text, zu literarische ‚Urszene' ‚zigeunerischer' Intervention in christliche, ‚nicht-zigeunerische' Familien-Genealogien. Die Brisanz des Kindsraubs besteht darin, dass ‚Zigeuner' in die ‚Reinheit' der Generationenfolge und eines Selbstentwurfs eingreifen, des sich kostituiert, indem es sie ausschliesst. (71)

In any case, Cervantes' tale has become a reference text for European literature, a literary 'primal scene' of 'Gypsy' intervention

to be two pieces of pure crystal growing among the other pebbles in the brook"; "the whiteness and the beauty of the feet"; "[h]er long golden tresses not only fall on her shoulders, but covered her whole body, excepting her feet"; "her feet in the water seemed to be of crystal, her hands and her hair were like driven snow" (231). Both Dorothea's and Preciosa's whiteness comes across as an eroticised and fetishised fiction, artificial and exaggerated.

> in Christian, 'non-Gypsy' family genealogies. The brisance of the child-theft is that 'Gypsies' intervene in the 'purity' of successive generations and in a self-image, that constitutes itself by excluding them. [my translation, R.M.]

Since they are derived from figurative language, the colour-coded categories of 'whiteness' and 'gypsyness' are highly unstable, not to say unpredictable. In their shifting matrix, different social strata within a majority society, as well as different 'ethno-racial' groups, can be imagined along dividing skin colour lines. Needless to say, such a reading of Cervantes' text, which expounds on its proto-racist fabric, is informed by posterior intellectual developments in Western culture: the secularisation of culture, the growth and increasing hegemony of modern science (and especially of racial anthropology), the emergence of ethnocentric nationalism, etc. As Charnon-Deutsch rightly observes:

> The discourse of Gypsy difference that evolved in the wake of Cervantes' novella would feed the ethnocentric and scientific racisms of later centuries. … Gypsies played a role in the conceptualisation of contending ideological matrices. … It was during Spain's Golden Age that Gypsies became an important symbolic pretext, a ground-zero platform on which to raise question of difference and to rehearse sacrificial rites of purgation and ostracism. (43–44)

Finally, I need to highlight one more aspect of Cervantes' text that is simply remarkable and that testifies to the genius of his imagination and the perceptiveness of his humanism. My explicit aim here is not only to acquit "La gitanilla" of its subsequent misuses but also of the charges voiced by contemporary scholars who indict both the author and his work for maintaining an antigypsy stance.[27] Cervantes' Preciosa is precious in one very significant way. In her figure, the story reconciles two extremes, merging together two mutually exclusive identities: an aristocrat and a 'gypsy', the aspirational ideal of whiteness and its lowly dark shadow, the social norm and the resulting residual anti-norm.

27 Charnon-Deutsch, for example, imputes the negative characterisation of 'gypsies' in the *novela* to events in Cervantes' life (34). The Irish scholar and renowned Hispanist Walter Starkie recounts the same events, albeit with a racist gusto. Both scholars quote as their source the first volume of Luis Astrana Marín's monumental biography: *Vida ejemplar y heroica de Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra*, Madrid: Instituto Editorial Reus, 1948–58.

The text creates a unity out of these two poles during the years Preciosa lives under a 'gypsy' guise, producing something new and, in my view, here lies its true exemplarity. Cervantes' extraordinary heroine embodies, albeit for a limited stretch of time, a new model of femininity: sharp-witted, worldly-wise, artistically creative, free to move, in charge of her own life and subsistence, i.e. financially independent, and most importantly, in control of her sexuality, for Preciosa is the one who imposes conditions on her potential partner. As Clamurro pertinently observes, Preciosa has the power to "lay down the law" (75). In creating the matrix of what we can recognise today to be the emancipated modern woman, Cervantes imagined the unimaginable, greatly expanding the repertoire of possible roles for women. Little wonder that hardly any of his male contemporaries had eyes for this bold invention. It is rather the clichéd climax of recognition, when Preciosa submits her will to that of her parents, which is celebrated in the literary, theatrical or pictorial spinoffs of "La gitanilla" – a rather boring and disappointing happy end.

In conclusion, the brief survey of "La gitanilla" reveals that Cervantes employs the archetypal structure of an initiation rite to frame his story, furnishing it with a proto-ethnic dimension. The narrative is colour coded and characterised by temporal dynamics: a female child of noble birth ('white') is first stolen by a 'gypsy' outcast ('non-white') and then restored to her due place in the social order where the entire focus falls on the second incident – the recognition of her true ('white') identity. When we point to Cervantes' exemplary *novela* as the origin of the child-stealing motif, "the most menacing facet of the European Gypsy stereotype" (Landon 58), we have to bear in mind that the complexity, subversiveness and self-reflexive irony of the text[28] are lost on the majority of its readers. The misreading of the *novela*, or rather its crude instrumentalisation for the needs of the various nation building projects in Europe, is the prevailing tendency in its otherwise widely enthusiastic reception. In the following sections, holding our focus steady on the motif of the child-snatching 'gypsy', we shall trace the transformations, adaptions and re-interpretations of the story across several visual media.

28 In his perceptive article "Enchantment and Irony: Reading *La gitanilla*", Clamurro remarks that Cervantes chose "La gitanilla" to open his entire collection (69). Discussing the ironies and 'loose ends' of "this quintessentially Cervantine text", Clamurro concludes that one should approach it "as a story that is constantly recreating experience, a challenge to our own acts of reading" (83).

5

The Motif of 'Gypsy' Child-theft in Dutch History Painting

The Fetish of Whiteness and Dutch Realism

— ※ —

After its publication, the fame of the extraordinary Spanish *gitanilla* quickly spread across Europe through translations, stage adaptations or various re-workings, and caught and held the imagination of several generations of Dutch artists for almost a century. Without a claim to exhaustiveness, it can be argued that between 1630 and the first decade of eighteenth century, the literary drama of the noble girl-child stolen and raised by 'gypsies' was interpreted on canvas by Jan Lievens (1607–1674), Paulus Bor (1605–1669), Jan van Noordt (1623–1681) in two almost identical paintings, Leendert van der Cooghen (1632–1681), Abraham van den Tempel (1662–1672), Johannes Voohout (1647–1723), Godfried Schalcken (1643–1706), Willem van Mieris (1662–1747) in possibly four paintings, David Rijckaert III (1636–1661), and Philips Wouwerman (1619–1668) in three paintings. It also features in drawings by Simon de Vlieger (1601–1653), Isaac Isaacsz (1599–1649), Pieter Jansz Quast (1605/06–1647), Leonaert Bramer (1596–1674) and Willem van Mieris; as well as in engravings/etchings by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), Adriaen van de Venne (1589–1662), Pieter Nolpe (1613–1652), Jacob Folkema (1692–1767), Rienk Keyert (1719–1775) and Pierre-François Basan (1723–1797) (cf. Gaskell; de Witt 1999).

Taking an overall look at the works of these artists, I can highlight two recurrent patterns that require further attention. Firstly, all Dutch painters, except for Leendert van der Cooghen (**Fig. 4),** have chosen as the main subject of their history paintings the twofold moment of recognition – the climax in Cervantes' tale, depicting either Don Juan's first encounter with Preciosa and the acumen of true love, or the governor and his wife finding out about Preciosa's true identity

and reuniting with their lost daughter. In line with the original story, the moment of child-theft presents little interest and is ignored. Secondly, in almost all of the paintings, the moment of anagnorisis, i.e. the revelation and ascertainment of Preciosa's high birth and nobility, is rendered in strong colour/light contrasts, placing an emphasis on skin colour, where Preciosa's whiteness appears to be not only the work's central message but also the artist's chief artistic achievement.

In the following sections, I focus on three oeuvres by Jan Lievens, Paulus Bor, and Jan van Noordt, based respectively on Cervantes' *novela* and two of its spinoffs – Jacob Cats' poem *Het Spaense Heydinnetje,* and Mattheus Tengnagel's theatre play. Comparing and contrasting them with the other paintings, I consider how colour symbolism works in conjunction with face visibility and realism, on the one hand, and with racialisation, on the other. It should be noted that the process of racialisation, in Robert Miles' definition, takes place on two overlapping levels: a social level, which expresses itself in classism or class racism, and an 'ethno-racial' level. It is hardly surprising that Preciosa's high birth,

Fig. 4. Leendert van der Cooghen, *Constance (Preciosa) Abducted by the Gypsies (J. Cats, Het Spaans heidinnetje)*, 1652–1681, oil on canvas, 131 × 167.5 cm.

noble self and unsullied body are consistently coded in white that – let us be reminded again – is also the colour of light, while 'gypsy' figures are rendered as a dark, contrastive and sullying background. All these paintings feature deft compositions where figures of varying skin colours are organised within a broader framework of black/shadow-and-white/light contrast, an artistic technique that has hardly been discussed by scholars[29] with regard to 'gypsy' figures so far, if at all.

5.1 *Preciosa and Doña Clara* (1631) by Jan Lievens

> *An object represented in white and black*
> *will display stronger relief than in any other way;*
> *hence, I would remind you, O Painter!*
> *to dress your figures in the lightest colours you can,*
> *since, if you put them in dark colours,*
> *they will be in too slight relief*
> *and inconspicuous from a distance.*
>
> Leonardo da Vinci, *Leonardo's Notebooks* (98)

Variously identified in catalogues as *The Soothsayer* or *The Gypsy Fortune-Teller*, the painting in **Fig. 5** is the most ambitious *portrait historié*[30] made by Jan Lievens for the courts in The Hague. Probably commissioned by Amalia van Solms, the painting catered for the specific interests of Frederick Hendrik, the Prince of Orange; it is documented that already in 1632 the work hung over a fireplace in the Stadhouder's quarters in The Hague (Lloyd de Witt 110). The titles given to it derive from a description in the inventory of the princely collection at Noordeinde,

29 For further reading on the intersection between Art History and Postcolonial Studies or Critical Whiteness Studies, see Schmidt-Linsenhoff; Greve; Peter Bell.

30 This French term refers to portraits featuring the depiction of eminent individuals in the guise of biblical, mythological or literary personages. A synthesis of history painting and portraiture, *portrait historié* originated in the Netherlands in the later sixteenth century. Lloyd de Witt remarks that the face of the seated woman, dressed in black velvet silk trimmed with gold aglets, bears resemblance to that of Amalia van Solms in her portrait by Hornthorn of 1631, and in her Rembrandt's portrait of 1632 (112). David de Witt disputes this resemblance and suggests that the lady's portrait should be interpreted as a celebration of a young woman of talent. It may refer to one of the female luminaries that Constantijn Huygens (Frederik Hendrik's secretary) was in contact with while organizing the commission of the painting under the patronage of the Prince of Orange (2007: 132).

Fig. 5. Jan Lievens, *Preciosa und Doña Clara*, c. 1631, oil on canvas, 161.2 × 142.3 cm. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.

which reads: "A painting of a soothsayer or a gypsy fortune-telling by palm-reading, by Jan Lievensz of Leiden." (de Witt 1999).

For a long time, Lievens' work posed an iconographical puzzle to art historians, who assigned it to the category of 'gypsy' genre depictions. The latter are standard genre compositions created with the purpose of warning against superstition and gullibility (de Witt 1999: 183). Renaming the painting to *Preciosa and Doña Clara*, David de Witt, however, demonstrates in an article of 1999 that Lievens' work is not a genre-scene of fortune-telling but a history painting[31] visualizing a scene from Cervantes' tale "La gitanilla". In fact, it is possibly the first and the only preserved painting[32] of the period that is based directly on Cervantes' text,[33] and not on the moralizing transformations the story suffered at the hands of the Dutch men of letters – Jacob Cats and Matheus Tengnagel – some years later. Depicting Jan Lievens' first-hand interpretation of Cervantes' story, *Preciosa and Doña Clara* presents a theme "that remains unique in Dutch Baroque painting" (181).

The singularity of the theme lies in the following: unlike most of his contemporaries, Lievens did not go in for the climactic scene of recognition but chose an episode of lesser importance. This is one of the introductory, irony-laden scenes in which Preciosa accepts the magistrate's invitation and visits his family to find out that no one in the household, not even the magistrate and his wife Doña Clara, have even the smallest coin to give her for the ritual of fortune-telling. Eventually, one maid finds a silver thimble, and Preciosa uses it as a lucky coin. Lievens chose to visualise the act of fortune-telling but, taking a departure from the text, depicted the old 'gypsy' as the palm-reader.

31 History painting, a type of narrative painting, was theorised as the most elevated form of art in seventeenth-century Holland and the rest of Europe. A true history painting, in Albert Blankert's definition, is "a picture with large figures in which an episode from a story is depicted" (111). Painters and their public had a preference for biblical stories, mythological fiction, episodes from antique history as well as scenes from Italian literature and the works of contemporary Dutch writers, including Cats' *Spaan Heydinnetje*. All these stories – coming from books – were perceived as true and represented in the same realist manner. Characteristically, a taste for the erotic was paired with moralising content (109–113).

32 Lievens probably produced another depiction of the same theme, copied by Leonaert Bramer; the black-chalk drawing of the latter is now in the Kupeferstichkabinet in Berlin (de Witt 1999: 185–6).

33 The language favoured by the court in The Hague was French. In 1614, one year after Cervantes published his *Novelas ejemplares*, the first French translation appeared in Paris, followed by six reprints (de Witt 2007: 132; see also Heinsworth 58–74).

Dutch artists were cautious to dissociate Preciosa from palmistry, a point at which Lievens was also compliant (Gaskell 267). Moreover, Lievens culled two standard elements from the genre tradition that are missing in the text, and this is the second distinguishing feature of his work. He placed a golden coin in Doña Clara's hand and a baby child on the back of the old 'gypsy' with his face gazing out at the viewers. By incorporating the coin and the child into the scene, Lievens combined the moralising message of the genre tradition with the particularity of history painting (cf. de Witt 1999: 184).

It is, however, more interesting to consider why Lievens focused on this particular scene. In my view, he was gripped by Doña Clara's description of Preciosa's luminous beauty, a memorable highlight in the text, which would present itself as a challenge to any painter interested both in portraiture and in rendition of light. It is obvious that Lievens subjected Cervantes' *novela* to a careful reading. In his day, there was a new approach to history painting that Rudi Fuchs explains with a new orientation towards texts and the emergence of the Dutch school of realism. Painters of history paintings were expected to have carefully studied and contemplated their source texts and were openly commended for doing so (65–72). "[P]ainting a history meant reading the text scrupulously, but with imagination, providing the moment with the richest significance, and constructing the picture around that moment" (70). Therefore, it is worth quoting the passage that Lievens must have mused over:

> As soon as the Gypsies entered, Preciosa shone forth among all the rest like the light of a torch among other, fainter lights. And so, all the women reached up to her: some embraced her, others looked at her, one group blessed her, another group praised her. Doña Clara said:
> "Yes, this can really be called golden hair. These really are emerald eyes! (…) Do you tell fortunes, my child?"
> "In three or four ways," Preciosa replied.
> "That, too?" said Doña Clara. "On the life of my husband the constable, you must tell mine, golden girl, silver girl, pearl girl, garnet girl, heavenly girl [niña del cielo], which is the most I can say. (Cervantes 25)

With his brush, Lievens materialised a fictional ideal of female beauty and the colour symbolism it goes with, turning it into the central subject

of his monumental history painting. In his rendition, broad colour/light contrasts become the main compositional principle as well as a demonstration of his virtuosity. It is not Don Juan who, chancing a glance of Preciosa's whiteness, is invited to recognise her true identity but the viewer. The white colour is a sign of Preciosa's virginity and thus a proof of her virtuous self and noble origin. The illegible note on the forehead of the old 'gypsy', which has occasioned a lot of speculation among art historians,[34] is also on display for the viewer to see, being nothing else but the hand-written confession presented by Preciosa's putative grandmother. Along with the many other proofs, it ascertains that *la gitanilla* is the governor's stolen daughter and a noblewoman.

Much more persuasive than the written evidence and truly miraculous is Preciosa's glowing and soaring visual presence. Occupying the upper centre of the painting and emitting a white glow with golden undertones, she is the primary source of light in the dark setting. It is as if this golden light emanates from within her being, illuminating the space, the other figures, and her own body of which we can see only her radiant head and an outstretched left arm covered with drapes of white silk satin with a golden pattern. The impression is of a translucent, almost transparent celestial creature that is more spirit than flesh. To slightly tone down that ghostly effect and assert Preciosa's humanness, Lievens has given some non-white colour to her cheeks, a touch of pink. The evidence of whiteness, which the painting displays for the viewers' discernment, is the outcome of a successfully completed series of trials. Preciosa's purity is verified, growing in value, for she has passed the test of sullying 'gypsyness'. Her white glow is an important result that the painting publicly celebrates, inviting the viewer to also acknowledge it, for the colour of Preciosa's skin has no other purpose than that of legitimating and naturalising social hierarchies. In effect, the rite of passage – a sort of genetics experiment launched in the virtual space of seventeenth-century public imagination, if we rephrase it in modern terms – concludes that aristocrats, by

34 Wurfbain is the first to suggest, in his article of 1997, that Lievens' work is more than a genre painting, grounding his interpretation in an attempt to decipher the inscription on the said note. David de Witt argues in an article of 1999, that the inscription is illegible and it is rather the "radiant, young blond woman, wearing a glowing white robe", "a light form standing out against dark surroundings" that offers the key to the meaning of the scene (181). Lloyd de Witt, in turn, briefly concludes that the note cannot be explained by Cervantes' text (111). As I demonstrate, a piece of paper is a recurrent element in the paintings under scrutiny here, appearing in at least four of them, and pointing directly to the *novela*.

virtue of their blood, are predestined to occupy a superior position in society. Even if they happen to mix with the lowliest of the low, both females and males have the necessary self-control and know how to preserve their purity – in its spiritual (virtue) and corporeal (virginity/continence) dimension – and thus prove their inborn superiority. De Witt draws the same conclusion, albeit in an acquiescent manner: "In the end, the story confirms the power of blood that sparked a love between these two children of nobility, in the face of an apparent gulf between their social class and religion" (1999: 182). Translated into the practical terms of daily conduct, the fetish of whiteness disavows the corporeality of female existence, and Lievens' painting is a good point of illustration; the beauty ideal of whiteness is the aestheticised form of representing the social imposition of female asexuality.

Indeed, Cervantes deploys the fetish of whiteness in his tale but not without an ironic twist. On a closer inspection, the colour coding woven into the text proves dubious and contradictory. There is only one single mention in the entire *novela*, alluding to the bronzed skin of 'gypsies', and it comes up in the middle of a description appraising the reader of Preciosa's beauty:

> Ni los soles, ni los aires, ni toda la inclemencia del cielo, a quien más que otras gentes están sujetos los gitanos, pudieron deslustrar su rostro ni curtir las manos; (2)

> Neither the sunshine, nor the wind, nor any inclemency of the weather, to which the Gypsies are exposed more than other peoples, were able to tarnish her face or tan her hands; (3)

While underlining *la gitanilla*'s extraordinary whiteness, the omniscient narrator drops in the comment that 'gypsies', unlike most peoples, are exposed for much longer stretches of time to sunlight, leaving the reader to infer that, as a result, they have sun-tanned *faces* and *hands*. Bronzing is conceived as the skin's natural reaction to sun radiation, a mutable social marker rather than an immutable 'racial' marker, and is thus normalised. (It is instructive here to refer back to Angélica Dass' photographic project and her artistic take on the instability of skin colour). Following this logic, Preciosa's pallor should raise concern rather than admiration because her unchangeable white skin speaks more of a medical condition. The Spanish verb '*des*lustrar' used in the original text deserves attention, too. In this context, its morphological

motivation 'quitar el lustre a', that is 'to remove the light of', which is lost in the English or German translations ('tarnish', 'verderben'), comes to the fore. If we are to rephrase the litany of Preciosa's beauty, we would end up with the rather questionable assertion that the light radiated by the sun could not diminish the light radiated by her face. One is bound to wonder what kind of light a noblewoman possesses, having avoided the sun, and how one should think of and hierarchise these two sources of light. In other words, typical of a Cervantes' text, a lofty literary fiction – in this case the fetishised beauty ideal of whiteness – is brought into collision with the reality and common sense of everyday life. Yet, in spite of its pernicious artificiality, the beauty ideal of whiteness underpins a representational regime that dominates the arts till today.[35] Lievens' embraced this aesthetic invention and employed it in his next work, *Bathsheba Receiving King David's Letter* (1631). As de Witt points out, "not hitherto drawn to idealized female figures, Lievens was clearly sparked by the image of the young blonde woman he conjured for Preciosa, and he adapted it in quite a number of paintings of this period" (Wheelock 132–133).

As already mentioned, another recurring element in these compositions is the deployment of 'gypsy' figures in the shadowy background or as a shadowy background. In Lievens' work, the two 'gypsy' figures occupy a more prominent position, but they are rendered in the brownish tones of the unlit room interior, their faces reflecting the golden light radiated by Preciosa. The colour coding suggests that there is no inner light (or Christian spirit) to illuminate the presence of the old 'gypsy', so her flesh appears dense, rough, ugly and dark brown. Her roughhewn garment, too, is coarse, dirty and tattered; covered with hay, it has an uneven earthy tone. If Preciosa's soaring whiteness is laced with shining gold and can be decoded simultaneously as a physical, spiritual, and social attribute of superiority, the dull, earthy colour of the 'gypsy' figures placed beneath her is but a signifier of absence. By inference, 'gypsies' are conceived and perceived as lacking physical and spiritual virtue, a circumstance that should also justify and naturalise their lowly social status.

35 On the representation of whiteness in the medium of film, see Dyer.

5.2 *The Spanish Gypsy Girl* (1641) by Paulus Bor

Fig. 6. Paulus Bor, *The Spanish Gypsy Girl / Voorstelling uit het "Spaens Heydinnetje,"* 1641, oil on canvas, 123.8 × 147.8 cm.

The second work in my chronological review of Dutch history paintings which draw directly or indirectly upon Cervantes' text belongs to the Utrecht master Paulus Bor (**Fig. 6**). Dated 1641, his oeuvre has been discussed under various titles,[36] and nowadays there is a general consensus among art historians[37] that Paulus Bor based his work on

36 *Deseuse de bonne aventure* (Bloch 25), *Pretiose, Don Jan and Majombe* (Gaskell 50), *The Spanish Gypsy Girl* (de Witt 1999: 185) and *Don Jan and Mojombe* (de Witt 2006: 111n307).

37 The first scholar who pointed the connection to Cat's poem is Remmet van Luttervelt. Even if it cannot be established with complete certainty that Bor was influenced by Cat's poem, the reception of his painting nowadays is refracted through the poem. See, for example, the note that accompanies Bor's painting on the website of Centraal Museum Utrecht.

the extremely popular exemplary poem *Het Spaens Heydinnetje*[38] (*The Spanish Gypsy Girl*) penned by the Dordrecht poet Jacob Cats (1577–1660). Cats, "the arch-moralist of his age", reworked Cervantes' tale, casting it in verses and removing many elements that he considered to be morally dubious, such as Preciosa practicing palmistry (de Witt 1999: 184). He included the poem in his eclectic collection of edifying marriage stories *Trou-ringh*,[39] which was published in 1637. In Cats' version, Don Juan meets the 'gypsies' while out hunting (hunting was one of the privileges accorded to Dutch nobility). As de Witt observes, the quiver and the arrows in Bor's painting, which are absent in the *novela*, are an indication that Bor was led by *Het Spaens Heydinnetje*[40] and not by "La gitanilla" (1999: 185).

Similar to Lievens' work, Bor's composition features a condensation of motifs: the child-abduction motif is complemented with the motif of palm-reading.[41] Again, it is the old 'gypsy' who is associated with palmistry, not Preciosa,[42] but this time it is Preciosa's palm that is presented for examination. In comparison with the child-theft motif, the palm-reading motif has an earlier history and enjoyed distinctly greater popularity among visual artists, so I should highlight in passing some of the reasons for this marked preference. The palm-reading motif, to start with, is static, which – pictorially – makes it very economical. It boils down to a single hand gesture and is a universally recognisable marker of 'gypsyness' (= paganism). Secondly, this motif offers a fruitful ground of stark contrasts for artists to explore; most of them use it, as Bor does, to organise their figures in a dyadic-world structure, usually juxtaposing aristocrats vs. 'gypsies'.[43] Two worlds which are

38 Cats' poem was published with print illustrations by Adriaen Pietersz van de Venne, one of them showing the scene of the first meeting. The etching apparently served as a basis for a painting attributed by Johan Lagoor (Gaskell 264).

39 Offering a codification of female behaviour, *Trou-ringh* is Cats' most popular work with at least 23 editions in the seventeeth century (Gaskell 263n3).

40 In the Netherlands, Gypsies were called *heiden*, which is related to the English "heathen" (Charnon-Deutsch 39n72).

41 For an insightful study of the palm-reading motif in European art from the late Middle Ages till early modern era, see Bell ("Lebenslinien").

42 In Dutch texts, the names of Preciosa and Don Juan are changed to Pretioze and Don Jan. To avoid unnecessary complications, since some of the paintings have multiple titles and it is not always clear which painting is based on which text, the current exposition sticks to the original names of Preciosa and Don Juan.

43 Consider, for example, the stark colour and light contrasts in Willem van Mieris' work *Die Wahrsagerin* (1706), Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gal. Nr.

perceived as mutually exclusive, or as negating each other, are brought together within a single scene. For example, if we draw a vertical line at Preciosa's opened palm in Bor's painting, we can see that the figure of the old 'gypsy', crouching to the left, occupies less than a third of the canvas, with her back to the main source of light in the composition. A part of her dark-skinned neck and back is on display while her face is overcast by a shadow, devoid of individual features. Opposite the old 'gypsy' is youthful Preciosa sitting with her legs leisurely outstretched, a winged Cupid and Don Juan at her side, behind them, the body of a white horse that dominates the composition. Gazing out towards the viewer, the four white faces (that of the horse, too!) are shown in three-quarters, beautifully illuminated and painstakingly individualised. It is notable that the two worlds are brought together through the gesture of palm-reading, but there is no point of contact – the hands of the two women do not touch.

Again, it is the luminosity of Preciosa's face and bared chest that contains the main message of Bor's painting, while attesting to the artist's virtuosity. The girl's breasts are uncovered to reveal the white mole under her left breast, which is yet another piece of evidence confirming her noble origin. Preciosa's white skin rhymes with the white, lit-up body of the horse behind her; the animal is, notably, adorned with blue reins and a blue blanket. The combination of the white and blue colour in this context is a straightforward reference to aristocratic pallor and "blue blood".[44] In his article on Bor, Bloch evaluates the artist's contribution to the rise of Dutch tone-painting, claiming that the "helle Fleischton/Inkarnat" [light flesh tone] is distinctive of his style (26). According to Bloch, the composition of the painting, which involves

1773; or in *The Fortune Teller* (ca. 1626) by the Flemish painter Nicolas Régnier (1591–1667), oil on canvas, 127 × 150 cm, Musée du Louvre, Inv. Nr. 366; or in *Wahrsagende Zigeunerin* (ca. 1720), a work by the French-born court painter of Prussia Antoine Pesne (1683–1757), oil on canvas, 166 × 134 cm, Breslau, Muzeum Narodowe, Inv. Nr. VIII–2302.

44 As Montagu explains, "the term "blue-blood", which refers to a presumed special kind of blood supposed to flow in the veins of ancient and aristocratic families, actually represents a translation from the Spanish *sangre azul*, the "blue blood" attributed to some of the oldest and proudest families of Castile, who claimed never to have been contaminated by "foreign blood". Many of these families were of fair complexion, hence in members of these families the veins would, in comparison with those of the members of the predominatingly dark-complexioned population, appear strikingly blue. Hence, the difference between an aristocrat and a commoner could easily be recognised as a difference in "blood"; one was a "blue-blood", and the other was not." (183).

a group of figures placed in front of a white horse, is, in all likelihood, unique for seventeenth-century Dutch painting (25).

The palette of tones used by the Utrecht master indeed warrants closer examination. Let us consider a few elements that hark back to literature. To stress the brilliance of the white colour in a given description, writers usually devise visual tropes – such as metaphors or similes – that should prompt the reader's imagination by way of evocative comparisons. One of Cervantes' characters, for example, gives a full lecture on female purity in *Don Quixote*, providing an insight into the then-employed imagery codifying female sexuality. During his speech, Anselmo, the character in question, compares the chaste and virtuous woman to "an exquisitely fine diamond", a valuable jewel, a shining and bright mirror of crystal "liable to be sullied and dimmed by every breath that comes near it", "a fine garden full of roses and other flowers" whose fragrance is to be enjoyed "only at a distance, and through iron rails" (287). The most suggestive is Anselmo's description of the ermine, a white creature with fine fur that would not come close to dirt and would not suffer to destroy and sully "its whiteness, which it values more than liberty or life". "The virtuous and modest woman" – Anselmo concludes – "is an ermine and the virtue of chastity is whiter and cleaner than snow" (287). Clearly, all the images conjured up in Anselmo's speech are symbols referring to the abstract/concrete notion of female chastity/virginity.[45] Artists, as well as writers, employ visual analogies in their works, incorporating elements that provide the viewer with a positive and a negative point of reference, a touchstone for 'whiteness' and its opposite value, 'blackness'. In Bor's painting, the figure of the winged Cupid and the white horse with its blue decorations set the standard by which to measure Preciosa's noble skin colour. At the same time, her luminous face and skin are juxtaposed to the dark skin and unlit face of the old 'gypsy'. Even the garments of the two women speak of unbridgeable differences – Preciosa's lemon-yellow garment is set against the dirty grey-yellow ("smutziggraue Gelb" in Bloch's description) of the 'gypsy' figure (25). The opposition between the two worlds is clearly coded along the light/colour line: pure colours, white and the illusion of light vs. reduced colours, black and the illusion of

45 The aspirational ideal of whiteness and its symbols, undoubtedly, derive from religious visual symbolism and the cult of the Virgin Mary. As Fuchs notes, a painting representing Mary always contains symbolic references to her purity and virginity, such as a ewer of water, fire, strong light coming in through a window, or a vase of white lilies (16).

Fig. 7. Charles Steuben, *La Esméralda*, 1839, oil on canvas, 195.3 × 145 × 3 cm. Musée d'Art de Nantes.

shadow. The painting of the Utrecht colourist is a glaring instance of visual Othering grounded in class difference and coupled with the racialisation of the 'ethnic' Other. The images of the aristocrat and the 'gypsy' undergird 'white' and 'non-white' 'ethno-racial' identities, constructed in this work as the two polar ends of the social hierarchy.

I will conclude this section by drawing a parallel with another depiction of a 'gypsy'-turned-aristocrat, rendered in highly exaggerated white tones, to highlight the ubiquitous preoccupation with 'white' skin as well as the dexterity of representing it on canvas. *La Esméralda* (1839) by the French artist Charles Auguste Steuben (1788–1856) was painted two hundred years after Bor's work (**Fig. 7**). It features a portrait of a woman of noble blood (being the illicit child of a nobleman) who was stolen and raised by 'gypsies'. Steuben chooses to explore his idea of Esméralda in a classical French boudoir setting. Reclining on the edge of a bed, the semi-clad young woman looks down at a white kid goat curled in her lap, while "a remarkably undeformed Quasimodo" – the hideously deformed 'gypsy' child swapped for Esmeralda – "crouches like a surrogate voyeur in the shadows to the left" (Brown 42). Actually, the figure in the shadow could also be interpreted as Pierre Gringoire or even as Claude Frollo, but let us leave this detail aside and focus on the female figure. Steuben's work was celebrated as the major attraction of the Paris Salon of 1839. The critic Barbier, for example, praised each of the girl's features, one by one, and "especially the feet which, revealed by the removal of the pointed boots in the right foreground, were found to be particularly titillating" (Brown 42). It is important to note that Esméralda's face, bare shoulders, breasts, arms and legs are depicted in white colour that correlates to that of her white gown, the bed sheets, and the goat's fur. Light coming from above illuminates the figure, adding brilliance to her white skin and overall appearance: she is the hyperbolised version of a dazzling 'white' class/'ethno-racial' identity. It is only logical, as we are about to see, that the artistic obsession with female whiteness (read: virginity and restrained sexuality) would spur a counter obsession with authentic 'gypsyness' (read: promiscuity and unrestrained sexuality), that unceasing search for the real 'gypsy' and her fatally attractive 'non-white' body.

5.3 Proofs of Nobility: How White Can Human Skin Become on Canvas?

As already mentioned, all Dutch history paintings, with one exception, dramatise the miraculous moment of recognition. In literature, writers can employ the device of omniscient narration to offer direct access to the protagonists' inner world and describe their thoughts and feelings. For visual artists, though, it presents a special challenge to communicate inner emotional states, and Dutch figure-painters placed "great value … on the depiction of a person at the instant in which he is moved by powerful, conflicting feelings" (Blankert 121). Paulus Bor, Jan van Noordt, and Abraham van den Tempel grapple with the challenge of seemingly incompatible love, depicting in their works the first meeting of Don Juan and Preciosa. It is that auspicious and baffling moment when a noble soul recognises his kindred in a 'gypsy' and is stricken with love. Lievens makes an exception here with his fortune-telling scene, but for him as well as for the others, it is Preciosa's identity, her exemplary nobility, that sums up the work's chief message.

It is necessary to spell out once again the various facets of meaning transported via Preciosa's extraordinary and edifying whiteness. It is the Christian spirit residing in her that illuminates the pure vessel of her body, giving it its brilliant white colour (with blue undertones) and safeguarding her moral virtue and virginity. These supreme qualities testify to Preciosa's nobility and can be recognised only by a soul of the same moral eminence and social status in a revelatory moment of love. She has earned her place in the social hierarchy, which she also deserves by virtue of her high birth. The visual message represents a self-congratulatory equation and condensation of highly disparate qualities: Christian spirit (religious) = virtue (moral) = virginity (physical) = nobility (social) = white skin (social/'ethno-racial') = true love. The moment of recognition resurfaces again in the works of two late seventeenth-century Leiden artists: Godfried Schalcken and Willem van Mieris. While Schalcken chooses to depict Preciosa's reunion with her parents interpreting the scene in a highly theatrical manner, Willem van Mieris stages the double moment of recognition in his paintings. He achieves this merger of climactic moments by including Don Juan and Preciosa's parents in the composition.

The works of the Dutch masters are literally cluttered – just as the climactic scene in Cervantes' tale – with pieces of evidence pointing to Preciosa's noble birth. The most visible proof is undoubtedly

Preciosa's white skin, which painters emphasise through light and colour contrasts, by adorning her with luxurious white gowns or by contriving evocative visual comparisons with other noblewomen and conspicuously white objects, such as white linen lace or the fine white fabric of shirts, sleeves or headgear; the white-winged Cupid; feathers or animals with white fur; the extraordinarily rare white freshwater pearls; white marble; and finally, white paper. Don Juan's love and the emotional response of the astounded parents present, too, crucial pieces of evidence, similar to a number of other symbolic and/or solid proofs of nobility that I point at in each of the following paintings.

In *Preciosa und Doña Clara* (ca. 1630) by Jan Lievens: the note on the forehead of the old 'gypsy' in which she confesses to having stolen Preciosa as a small child; Preciosa's superiority to occult practices: she is in the scene of fortune-telling but not part of it.

In *The Spanish Gypsy Girl* (1640) by Paulus Bor: Preciosa's bared breast revealing her white mole; her bared foot revealing her webbed toes; the winged figure of Cupid, a symbol of true love, peering from behind her.

In *Pretioze and Don Jan/De Spaensche Heidin* (1660) by Jan van Noordt: the allusion to the goddess Diana via her lavish white dress; the fresh rose – a coded reference to virginity – crowning Preciosa's head, another rose at her feet; the unrolled scroll of paper on the ground to her left containing the confession of the child-theft committed by the old 'gypsy'.

In *Don Juan and Preciosa* by Abraham van den Tempel[46]: the roses scattered around Preciosa and the figure of Cupid peering from behind her.

Johannes Voorhout also belongs to this list even though I have not been able to see his work; he also painted the meeting scene inspired, just like Abraham van den Tempel, by Noortd's *Pretioze and Don Jan* (de Witt 1999: 184).

David Ryckaert III represents a later moment in the scene, as Gaskell reports. "Pretiose in a Gypsy turban stands holding a rose garland and

46 A reproduction of the work is cited in Gaskell's article, identifying it as "Dutch School. *Pretiose and Don Jan* Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, bequest of Charles Turner" (46). De Witt refers to the same work, identifying its author as Abraham van den Tempel, while giving it the title *Don Juan and Preciosa*; the other details include: 71 × 60 cm, signed and unclearly dated, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Inv. Nr. 74.9 (1999: 186n17). The painting is unclearly dated, but it has been established that Abraham van den Tempel follows the basic layout of Jan van Noordt's work, only placing the figures in an interior setting (de Witt 1999: 184).

facing the viewer. Just behind her to the right are Majombe and an elderly male Gypsy. Don Jan kneels, offering Pretiose a diamond ring." (264).

In *Preciosa Recognised* (c. 1675) by Godfried Schalcken[47] (**Fig. 8**): the marble vessel with fresh pink roses, the snail (another symbol of love), the note of the theft, a gold chain and a jewel on the floor in the foreground; Preciosa's opening her décolleté to show the white mole under her left breast; her bared feet revealing her joined toes; the old 'gypsy' – an unsightly creature emerging from the dark background – who points with a finger at the girl's birthmark, her gesture clearly addressing the viewers, urging them take a look and convince themselves. The auction catalogue of 1818, as Anja Ševčík notes, praised the painting as "the very celebrated cabinet chef d'oeuvre" and "an exquisite bijou", apparently referring to Schalcken's exquisite rending of the fine fabric and valuable accessories worn by the nobility. In depicting the old 'gypsy', he was influenced by a drawing of Simon de Vlieger's (**Fig. 9**) (which was used as an etching template by Peter Nolpe[48]); 'quoting' the facial features of the old 'gypsy' and the jewellery lying on the floor (128).

Vlieger's drawing (**Fig. 9**) is one of the very few images of the time that depicts the scene of child-theft and yet, remarkably, the focus is not, as one would expect, on the horror of abduction but on Preciosa's power and wealth, underscored by her regal attire, jewellery, and posture. She is depicted like a miniature adult or a grown-up doll seated on the arm of the masculine-looking, old 'gypsy' woman.[49] Her portrait, very reminiscent of a society portrait, clearly lays the emphasis on her social standing and on her place of significance in the family line of descent, not on her being a child. A similar interpretation of the child-theft scene can be seen in an illustration in the nineteenth-century German children's book *Anna, das geraubte Kind* (*Anna, the Stolen*

47 In Gaskell's article, the work is referred to as *Pretiose revealed as Constance* (50).

48 Pieter Nolpe produced six etchings to illustrate M.G. Tengnagel's play *Het Leven van Konstance: waer af volgt het tooneelspel "De Spaensche Heidin"*, published in Amsterdam in 1643. The prints were made after drawings by Simon de Vlieger, Isaac Isaacsz, and Pieter Quast. Simon de Vlieger designed the title print featuring a medallion portrait of Majombe (the name of the old 'gypsy' in Tengnagel's text) holding the infant Preciosa (Stanton-Hirst 229).

49 The image is accompanied by the following text in the online collection catalogue of Rijksmuseum: "The Roma woman [sic!] Majombe with the little Konstance on the arm, standing in front of a tree. Konstance wears a crown, necklaces and a rich robe. Print from an edition of the play *The Life of Konstance*, a story about the noble Spanish Konstance who was kidnapped as a child by Roma because of her clothing and jewelry." ("Roma vrouw").

Fig. 8. Godfried Schalcken, *Preciosa Recognised*, c. 1675, oil on wood panel, 44.2 × 31.2 cm. Courtesy of the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.

Fig. 9. Simon de Vlieger, Pieter Nolpe (print maker), *Roma vrouw Majombe met Konstance*, 1643, etching / engraving, 129 × 106 mm.

Child) by Alexander Löwen (**Fig. 28**) where the abducted girl looks like a grown-up doll while her abductor is a 'gypsy' male with a black beard and a dark-brown hat. In the section on prints, we shall discuss in greater detail the rendition of the moment of the child-theft and the depiction of abducted girls as white dolls.

Homecoming of Preciosa (Cervantes)/Die wiedergefundene Tochter (nach Jacob Cats: Het Spaens heydinnetye) (ca. 1677–1685) by Willem van Mieris (**Fig. 10**). This work of Mieris, unlike his next one, strays from the tradition as it only hints at the extra proofs. Preciosa looks as if she has just covered her left breast and only the toes of her left foot show at her skirt's edge.

Fig. 10. Willem van Mieris, *Homecoming of Preciosa (Cervantes) / Die wiedergefundene Tochter (nach Jacob Cats: Het Spaens heydinnetye*), c. 1677–1685, oil on wood, 51.9 × 45.1 × 1 cm.

Preziosa (1709) by Willem van Mieris[50] (**Fig. 11**): Preciosa's bared leg and feet, her undone leather sandal lying in the foreground; her fully bared breasts; the coffer with her baby trinkets on the table next to the scroll of paper containing the old 'gypsy's' confession of child-theft.

This section will end with one example in counterpoint. There are three more works featuring the first encounter that slightly differ from the pictorial tradition outlined so far. Authored by Philips Wouwerman, all three may be dated to the 1640s.[51] Wouwerman appears to be the only artist of his time who visualises the moment of true love by elaborating a dramatic nature landscape. In the painting shown here (**Fig. 12**), he does not fail to place fresh roses in Preciosa's hands or to show her semi-bared breasts and bared feet as a reminder of her virginity. Neither are his renditions of the stolen aristocratic girl and the old 'gypsy' spared the contrastive black/dark and white/light tones – yet, their figures are not the main focus. His two other paintings suggest even more clearly that the artist took little interest in proving noble origin or depicting the glowing whiteness of female skin. Wouwerman's works express instead the dramatic encounter through movement and elements of nature: riding his horse, Don Juan lays his eyes on Preciosa who is sitting in the company of the old 'gypsy' under a gnarled, leafless tree. The figures are small and viewed from a distance. The sense of inner turmoil is conveyed through Don Juan's body reclining towards the girl, through the contorted shape of the tree but above all through the vast expanse of misty sky: two-thirds of the canvas is taken up by a spectacularly

50 An earlier version of this work is to be found in the online collection of Palazzo Bianco, Musei di Genova: *Riconoscimento di Preziosa*, oil on canvas, 34 × 42 cm. Palazzo Bianco, Musei di Genova Inv. PB 193; about other variations on the theme by Mieris, see Gaskell (270).

51 Gaskell reports of two paintings by Wouwerman – a larger and a smaller one, showing the same scene viewed from two points of view (Gaskell 47, 264). With the kind assistance of Drs. Huub Breuer from The Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), I have been able to identify three paintings on this topic by the artist as well as their whereabouts. The first painting is *Don Jan begroet Pretiose, het "Spaens Heydinnetje", die naast de zigeunervrouw Majombe langs de weg zit* also called *The Flirtation* (1640–1643), oil on canvas, 40 × 45.5 cm, Maastricht/London/Hulsberg, art dealer Robert Noortman. The second one is *De ontmoeting van Don Jan en Preciosa (J. Cats, Spaens Heydinnetje)* (1640–1643), oil on panel, 35.5 × 34.5 cm, Lochem/The Hague, art dealer S. Nijstad; and the third one is *Ruiter begroet een zigeunerin ("Spaans Heidinnetje"?)*, panel 30 × 40 cm, Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City (Missouri), William Rockhill Nelson College, Inv. Nr. 31–92. There is also one painting after Wouwerman: *De ontmoeting van Don Jan en Preciosa (J. Cats, Spaens Heydinnetje)*, (1650–1699), oil on canvas, 40 × 34.6 cm, Christie's (London, England) 2003-04-09, Nr. 46. See also RKD Online Collection.

Fig. 11. Willem van Mieris, *Preziosa*, 1709, oil on oak panel, 41 × 51.5 cm. Gemäldegalerie Dresden, Gal.-Nr. 1775.

Fig. 12. Philips Wouwerman. *De ontmoeting van Don Jan en Preciosa (J. Cats, Spaens Heydinnetje)*, ca. 1640–1643, oil on panel.

illuminated overcast sky. In Wouwerman's interpretation, the seizure of love is shown to be a mystery of nature, unknowable, baffling, even a bit disheartening, and yet a universal human experience that could transcend class divisions. The artist adopts the form of a non-narrative landscape painting to produce a story, and his choice of form in itself introduces an alternative to the discourse of racialisation that we have seen in history painting and points to the possibility for another, more universalist perspective on the topic.

5.4 *Pretioze and Don Jan* (1660) by Jan Van Noordt
Dark-Skinned on Canvas: Is It the Suntan, the Shadow Effect or the 'Race'?

The third and last history painting I apply my scholarly lens to is *Pretioze and Don Jan* by Jan van Noordt (**Fig. 13**).[52] Its source of inspiration is a popular theatre play published by Mattheus Tengnagel in 1643. Tengnagel organised his text in two parts: a moralising account of the story in prose and a stage adaptation. In the prose text, he specified that Pretioze wears a splendid white dress with blue reflections and that her skin is blue-veined (cf. de Witt 2007: 148n3); the aim clearly being to establish a parallel between the luxurious material and the most highly prized colour of human skin. As Gaskell observes, "the force with which Pretiose's beauty strikes Don Jan is conveyed by his suffering the delusion that she is his hunting goddess, Diana, captured by devils. (…) These he quickly recognises as Gypsies" (263–264). By introducing Pretioze's full-length white satin dress and the allusion to the goddess Diana, Tengnagel heightens even further the colour contrast to 'gypsies' who, in turn, are associated with black devils. It is notable that the white dress becomes a focal point of communication in Noordt's painting, expressing both the power of Pretioze's noble beauty and the power of Don Jan's noble love. Tengnagel's play was a source for a number of depictions by Dutch painters and Noordt's *Pretioze and Don Jan* is the best-known example on the theme (de Witt 1999: 184).

Jan van Noordt's work also stands out with its nuanced rendition of skin colour between the extreme poles of 'whiteness' and 'blackness'. Art historians have invariably focused on the two main figures in the composition but, in my view, the background of human figures – which ensures the visibility of Pretioze and Don Jan, and is marked by an intriguing complexity – deserves equal attention and scrutiny of detail. To begin with, the old 'gypsy' woman here is granted an unusual conspicuousness. Draped in a coarse hooded-cloak, her body looms like a shadow from behind and above Pretioze's seated figure. Against her brown, shrivelled and unsightly face, the viewer is prompted to appreciate the fine features of the girl, her luminous whiteness in skin and

52 There are two versions of *Pretioze and Don Jan*, "the only known example of an exact repetition in the oeuvre of Jan van Noordt" as de Witt comments. Painted at almost the same time, they show no significant differences (2007: 150). Noordt's work is also cited as *Pretiose and Don Jan* (Gaskell 46), *Preciosa and Don Juan* (de Witt 1999: 184).

Fig. 13. Jan van Noordt, *Pretioze and Don Jan* / *De Spaensche Heidin*, ca. 1660, canvas, 132 × 170 cm.

dress. Yet, and this is rather remarkable, a part of the old hag's body is set against a light sky gaining a clearer outline, while another part merges with the knotty-brown tree trunk behind her and with the ground. This double contrast is deployed to ascertain that her dark complexion is not a shadow effect, as is the case with the blond Cupid figure behind her, but represents a genuine skin colour. Thus, the old 'gypsy' is granted visibility and used as Pretioze's contrastive background. Undoubtedly, the dark earthy tones associate her with nature, dirt, and animal existence, communicating to the viewer that, unlike Pretioze, she is more of a body than an illuminated soul. (The blond child behind her, in the logic of the painting, is perhaps Cupid overcast by shadows or a stolen aristocrat but definitely not a 'gypsy' child.)

Both Lievens and Noordt complement their figure compositions with a Moorish slave,[53] appearing like a shadow in the background, and both artists add visual touchstones of 'blackness'. The wealthy lady

53 The two artists reproduce the widespread Dutch view that Spanish nobility were slave owners (Wheelock 132n9).

in Lievens' painting is dressed in fine black fur, while Noordt chooses black clothes for Don Jan, linking him to a 'black' slave with a black falcon perched on his arm. Within the framework of colour references, the dark brown complexion of the old 'gypsy' and that of the other 'gypsies' in the distance (identifiable through the gesture of palm-reading) is firmly assigned to the 'non-white' section on the skin colour spectrum. As a result, 'gypsies' are racialised, i.e. constructed as 'non-white' (= non-European, sharing similarities with Africans), and thus de-Europeanised. In most of the history paintings considered here, the 'gypsy' figure merges entirely with the dark background, performing the function of a negative visual reference without which the message of Preciosa's nobility (whiteness) would lose its immediacy and clarity.

Finally, a few words are in order about the literary and pictorial tradition that influenced Jan van Noordt's choice of subject matter. In his wonderfully written monograph on the Dutch master, David de Witt comments that Noordt did not venture to experiment with novel themes but generally kept to the standard repertoire of topics that dominated the market of history paintings in the mid-seventeeth century. There was a demand for exemplars of virtue and love in the circles of the Amsterdam social élite, and painters responded with various depictions showing the moment of true love, usually in a pastoral setting. The main function of these paintings was to present morally exemplary behaviour, but also, notably, one that upheld "a doctrine of class and blood at it applie[d] to breeding and marriage" (de Witt 2007: 57). Among the favourite subjects was the meeting of Granida and Daifilo: their rural romance was interpreted on canvas by Abraham Bloemaert, Gerrit von Hornthorst and Jan van Noordt, and was based on Pieter C. Hooft's popular pastoral play *Granida* (1605). By choosing the story about the Spanish *gitanilla*, Dutch artists could, in turn, expand on their repertoire of idyllic love scenes.

Other literary and painted works also fed into the fashion for pastoral idyll, but – more significantly – all these, basically variations on the theme of true love, fall within a tradition established by Heliodorus' romance *Aethiopica*. In fact, Jacob Cats considered *Aethiopica* to be the prototype of Cervantes' story (Gaskell 268). Written in the first half of the third century A.D., the ancient Greek romance also warrants a mention. As Wolfgang Stechow underlines in his article "Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* in Art", the ancient text – "a colossus in the history of literature with boundless influence" to borrow his words – experienced an astonishing revival during the age of Mannerism and

Fig. 14. Karel van Mander III, *Persina and the Picture of Andromeda / Hydaspes und Persina vor dem Bild der Andromeda*, ca. 1640, 110 × 220 cm.

Baroque (144–5). Paintings presenting scenes from *Aethiopica* were produced by Ambroise Dubois, Jean Mosnier, Abraham Bloemaert, Gerard Honthorst, and Nicolas Knupfer. Pondering what contributed to this revival, Stechow lists six different reasons but fails, in my opinion, to identify the most pertinent one, and that is the binary coding of skin colour in the text. The entire drama revolves around the Ethiopian princess Chariclea who was born 'white' because her 'black' mother gazed upon a painting of the naked Andromeda. At the same time, Stechow does not fail to notice that "the explanation of the complexion of Chariclea (…) has been rendered great gusto" by Karel van Mander III (1606–1670) in his *Persina and the Picture of Andromeda* (ca. 1640) (**Fig.14**) (152).

Clearly, Heliodorus' text provided suitable material for representations that espouse black-and-white morals, and what we would call today 'racial' antinomies, allowing Dutch royalties to self-style themselves against a background that would make them appear undeniably noble and 'white'. As Miles points out, until the end of the eighteenth century,

> … although the predominant view was that the African was a human being, part of God's creation, and exhibited characteristics subject to environmental influence, the African was nevertheless defined as an inferior human being. The representation of the African as Other signified phenotypical and cultural characteristics as evidence of this inferiority and the

> attributed condition of Africans therefore constituted a measure of European progress and civilization. The sense of Otherness was increasingly, although not exclusively, grounded in skin colour (…) and sustained by the attribution of other negatively evaluated characteristics. (30)

If we consider the attitude towards Africans, outlined by Miles, it is perhaps easier to explain why, and this is a question Stechow puzzles over irresolutely, almost all of the Dutch paintings deriving from *Aethiopica,* form cycles that were commissioned either as decorations for royal residences or as decorations for royal weddings.

5.5 The Effects of Racialisation

Of several patches of colour, all equally white,
that patch will look whitest which is
against the darkest background.
And black will look most intense against the whitest background.

Leonardo da Vinci, *Leonardo's Notebooks* (128)

In Cervantes' text, as we have seen, the colour opposition between aristocrats and 'gypsies' is unstable, symbolic and fraught with paradoxes; yet, in this archetypal story of initiation, human identity is conceived fluid enough to undergo cardinal changes. As a true heroine, Preciosa plunges from the world of light (nobility) into the world of darkness/lack of light ('gypsies') to re-emerge renewed into her original world, bringing a new, brighter light. Psychologically, light and darkness can be read as metaphors for the conscious and unconscious state of mind, while the cycle of initiation traces the process by which human consciousness is expanded. The story structure encodes a universal phenomenon.

However, the sternly moralist Dutch literary and pictorial interpretations of "La gitanilla" do not sustain this playful and contradictory conception of human identity. In fact, Dutch writers shorten the period of time that the aristocrats spend among 'gypsies', making sure to impress on their readers that the former were not morally contaminated by the latter. Seventeenth-century artists added to the stabilisation of human identity by aestheticising and racialising it. Preciosa is firmly entrenched in realist (racialised) whiteness, while 'gypsies' are represented as her negating opposite. As a result, a dividing line of colour is constructed and a whole pictorial tradition is established in the framework of which nobility/national majority are imagined along the lines of European 'white' identity, while 'gypsies' are seen as its 'non-white' and non-European complementary Other. This division has three consequences. Firstly, the constellation in which aristocrats are opposed to 'gypsies' and not to sun-tanned peasants, for example, allows the ruling classes/national majorities to export social tensions outside of their realm, explaining such tensions with the Roma minority, i.e. re-formulating social disparities in 'ethno-racial' terms. Secondly, this polarised and racialising pattern of thought precludes the possibility of blond, fair-skinned and fair-haired individuals – although

there are a great many Roma who fall within this segment of the skin tone spectrum – to be perceived and visualised, i.e. described, painted, photographed or filmed as 'gypsies' or as representative of the Roma. They are deemed non-existent; the individuals are taken for stolen children (of noble origin or of the national majority), or they are treated as curiosities. The phrase "blond gypsy", for example, is ubiquitously used as a laughter-inducing oxymoron. Finally, since the colour line of difference is artificial, having its roots in metaphoric language, it is highly mutable and can easily be adapted to serve the interests of those in power. In practical terms, this means that almost any member of a national majority in Europe, or even entire nations,[54] can be labelled and represented as 'gypsy', and thus ostracised or otherwise punished in an exemplary manner.

The aesthetic polarisation of human skin colour into 'white' and 'non-white'/'gypsy' was expressed with zeal in another pictorial manner. In the nineteenth century, the artistic fixation on female 'whiteness' and celestial virginity flipped over into its opposite, turning into an obsession with 'non-whiteness'/'gypsyness' and promiscuity. As Lou Charnon-Deutsch explains, "Cervantes' Preciosa was transformed into a born Gypsy, which made it easier to justify her passion, impulsiveness and tragic allure" (64). The play with fluid identities in Cervantes' text was brought to halt, coded in immutable 'racial' colours and fragmented, which gave rise, on the one hand, to idealised portraits of our stolen 'white' vestals and, on the other hand, to ethnographised and sexualised portraits of real 'gypsies'. Examples of the first trend, taken up by Romantic artists and already tapering off in the second half of the nineteenth century, are Wilhelm von Schadow's work *Mignon* (1828); Narcisse Díaz de la Peña's *Frollo and Esméralda* (1845) and the artist's life's oeuvre; or Ary Scheffer's *Mignon Expressing Her Regret for Her Native Land* (1851) – "one of the most unlikely candidates for a gypsy ever painted" (Brown 43).

Assuming the form of naturalism, realism, and avant-gardism, the second trend gained the upper hand. In a chapter, aptly called "Canvassing the *real* Spanish Gypsy", Charnon-Deutsch gives an insightful account of the bohemian craze that swept literature, theatre and the

54 A prime example here are the so-called Balkan nations which are de-Europeanised in various ways but also with recourse to 'gypsy' figures, as Maria Todorova persuasively demonstrates in her seminal work *Imagining the Balkans* (1997). Another pertinent example comes from Bulgarian social media where the non-empathic attitude towards Syrian refuges is commonly justified by positing that the latter are no different to 'gypsies'.

fine arts in Paris, spurring a steady stream of images from the 1830s till the end of the century. In the rendition of 'gypsy' subjects, it was authenticity, the true-to-nature realism that established itself as the leading aesthetic principle. Charnon-Deutsch examines this development by zooming in on the life work of Alfred Dehodencq (1822–1882), a French artist vigorously praised for his "ethnographic aptitude". In her conclusion, the scholar posits that the ethnicised portraits of Gypsies showed the female subjects as sexually available (71–77). Other examples, profusely discussed by Brown, include Lois Knaus who stereotyped 'gypsies' as outlaws in his *Bohemians* (1855) and *The Foragers* (1857) (63–64); Théodore Valério "ethnographic" watercolours of gypsies and other nomads from 1855 (65); Achille Zo's *Family of Voyaging Bohemians (Andalusia)* (1861), a picture that merged the "ethnographic" tradition of Dehodencq's Spanish "local color" with the prettification of Léopold Robert's Italian peasants" (78); and Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger who "perpetuated Knaus' stereotype of the gypsy brigand" in his painting[55] *The Stolen Child/L'Enfant volé* (1861) (**Fig. 15**). Schlesinger's critics, as Brown points out, did not "address the specious subject matter, but noted the pleasure bourgeois audiences took in the painting's easily legible sensationalism" (78). In the twentieth century, the fervent pursuit of the real 'gypsy' continued, even more convincingly, with recourse to the novel tools of photography[56] and film. It is important to stress that the voyeuristic demand for 'gypsy' reality is often motivated by an ethnographic and a pornographic interest,[57] the former serving as a legitimation of the latter; a potent mix that has secured the staying power of these images in European culture.

This radical shift of pictorial taste can be attributed to none other than the French writer Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870), and his undyingly popular tale "Carmen" (cf. Hille 38). Since its first publication in 1845, the text has not ceased to incite the imagination of male artists across Europe and beyond. Mérimée was, undoubtedly, fascinated by the image of the emancipated woman presented in the figure of Preciosa, but he remodelled Cervantes' creation with an acutely misogynous twist. In his text, Carmen, a woman who owns her life and body, is point-black

55 Schlesinger's painting is known nowadays only from a black-and-white engraving, also included here, but it was praised by his contemporaries for "its lively colour effects" (Tinterow 213).

56 For further reading, see Frank Reuter.

57 See, for example, the chapter on "Pornography, Ethnography and the Discourses of Power" in Bill Nichols' book.

Fig. 15. Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger, *The Stolen Child / L'Enfant volé*, 1861, black-and-white engraving. National Library of France.

racialised (her skin "the colour of copper" (14)) and demonised, providing the prototype of another equally fascinating European figure, the *femme fatale*. The narrative is dominated by a male gaze that exudes the twofold quality of learnedness and lewdness, whereby the former warrants the gratification of the latter. Here is the place to mention that Mérimée had a certain opinion of Gypsy women and mocked George Brown, the author of *The Bible in Spain* and *The Zincali*, for failing to appreciate their passion and promiscuity. In a letter to his friend Manuela Motijo, he wrote: "in Seville, Cadiz and Granada, I came across in my time Gypsy women whose virtue did not resist a *duro*." (Charnon-Deutsch 61). The gypsification of Preciosa at his hands concurred and could at least partially be explained by broader cultural and historical developments: the renewed interest in stories of origin, the rise of nationalism as well as the growing importance of human and natural sciences (cf. 64). Charnon-Deutsch also reports that Mérimée wrote reviews about the works of his contemporaries admiring, not surprisingly, Dehodencq for his authenticity, while objecting to Steuben's *La Esméralda;* the latter, he claimed, "resembled a Paris grisette more than his passionate muse Carmen" (72).

The writings of the French Romantic Mérimée helped shape both literary and pictorial tastes for generations to come and, for that reason, it is necessary to give a brief account of his tale. Our attention shall be directed – again, as with "La gitanilla" – to the role of the narrator as well as to the strategies the text deploys for the authentication of its fictional world. Carmen's fatal charm and destiny are universally known, yet it is hardly ever mentioned that everything we learn about this treacherous woman with wolf's eyes is mediated to us by two male narrators, both of whom are furnished with the best possible credentials Mérimée could devise. The first first-person narrator, presumably the author, stylises himself as a well-read and well-travelled French scholar of great distinction while the second, Don José, portrays himself as a Basque hidalgo and a dragoon with a promising career in the military. Their two stories of Carmen, filled with male braggadocio and deplorable slander, conveniently – even miraculously if we are to adopt Cervantes' ironic stance – overlap, corroborate and validate each other. The object of their artfully coordinated verbal attack is an illiterate woman of foreign origin and of a low social position. The gaping power asymmetry, which defines the position of the accusers and the accused, is underscored by the fact that Carmen never gets a chance to tell her side of the story.

Unlike Cervantes' tale, which discreetly undermines its own fictions, Mérimée's text deploys the full arsenal of authentication procedures available to verify its tales of Carmen, not only within the tale's fictional world, but also beyond, in the author's socio-historical world. It is precisely this claim for ethnographic veracity, merging the fictional with the scientific, where the harmfulness of the text resides. Its core is formed by Don José's confessionary tale on his last day in which the Basque hidalgo, apparently unable to take responsibility for his own actions, lays the blame on Carmen, explaining his wrongdoings and villainous life with her. His story is then 'wrapped-up' by several authenticating narratives of ever-growing authority. The tale opens with the scholar's first-person account, adorned with an epigraph and several footnotes, and ends up with an impersonal pseudo-ethnographic treatise on the customs and traditions of 'gypsies', placed separately in the fourth and final chapter. And as if these 'insignia of truth' were not enough, Mérimée published his tale[58] in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, a magazine popular at his time for its scholarly articles and first-hand travelogues.

58 Mérimée's inspiration for Carmen was a waitress he met and sketched in Valencia in 1830, merging the story of this encounter with a story related to him by

The pivotal role of Mérimée's *nouvelle* in reversing aesthetic preferences points to the centrality of literature, of text, in steering human perception, in shaping that inner "lens" that helps one structure the visual information coming through the eye. It is texts rather than images that lie at the core of cultural (re-)codings: stories (fictions) provide the cognitive frames of reference within which certain attributes, such as human skin tone, for example, can gain meaning and thus salience; only then can they be seen, recognised and possibly re-coded.

There are countless depictions of Mérimée's Carmen. Here, we shall consider only *Gypsy with a Cigarette* by Édouard Manet (1832–1883), a French artist and contemporary both of Prosper Mérimée and Charles Steuben (**Fig. 16**). I have chosen to direct the spotlight on this particular work of Manet's because it allows for fruitful comparisons, being an aesthetic antithesis to Steuben's *La Esméralda*: the latter was criticised for "lack of fidelity to the chaste characterisation of Hugo" (Brown 43), whereas the former was also criticised, in this case for daring perhaps the first depiction of a woman smoking a cigarette (Leonard Bell 203n54). As Brown explains, the female portrait was probably painted in the artist's studio where Manet had his model don a 'gypsy' costume, and then added the horses in the background. Brown quotes one of the animalising metaphors from Mérimée's "Carmen", using it as a point of entry to her analysis of the painting: in the story, Carmen is compared to "a thoroughbred filly from a Cordova stud" (76). In Brown's interpretation, the horses make a contrived allusion both to the nomadic lifestyle of 'gypsies' and to the woman's "sexy sleekness" (76). Embodying the artist's aesthetic and sexual ideals, she is rendered in contrastive colour primaries: reds, yellows, blues, which are meant to convey her "primitivism", a message supported also by the "improvisational" brush strokes. The gesture of hand on hip and the cigarette emphasise her "natural compose, assuredness, independence, and casually seductive attraction" (76); the cigarette gives her a mannish appearance. Just like Mérimée, Manet was fascinated by bold, assertive women, Brown continues, but since he could not conceive them as his creative equals, he regretted that they were not men. This is the light in which, according to Brown, we should interpret the more passive and

Manuela Montijo, Countess of Teba, about a man from Malagueña who killed his lover in a fit of jealousy. During his travels in Spain, to his great disappointment, Mérimée never crossed paths with highway robbers, but that did not stop him from passing on second-hand stories of thrilling adventure to his readers in the *Revue de Paris* and *L'Artiste* (Charnon-Deutsch 60).

Fig. 16. Édouard Manet (1832–1883), *Gypsy with a Cigarette* / *Gitane avec une Cigarette*, c. 1862, oil on canvas, 92 × 73.5 cm.

contemplative gesture of the other arm on which the woman rests her head and "the dreamy indolence of her limpid gaze" (76).

However, it is also necessary to account for the whites and blacks used in the painting. Manet has placed his subject against a background of a white and a black horse; the choice of setting is clearly meant to convey an impression of 'non-whiteness', enhanced by the white cigarette in the woman's mouth and the white stipe on her blouse. Without this frame of reference (white animal fur, white paper, and white textile), the message that she is 'non-white' would have been lost on the viewer. The effect of the white horse in Manet's avant-garde painting urges a comparison to Bor's *The Spanish Gypsy Girl* (**Fig. 6**) where, as we have already seen, the girl's complexion is identical to the colour of the white horse behind her. Let us remember that matching a model's skin colour to a legible touchstone of whiteness in no way represents strict adherence to epidermal facts but is a form of privilege; a privilege that is in the power of the artist to grant or to withhold. Pursuing this theme, if we take the racialisation of Manet's subject and regard

it in the context of Brown's analysis (presented in a summary form in the previous paragraph), we can point to two distinct ways in which womanhood is depreciated in this greatly eulogised masterpiece. First, the appeal of female sexual independence is "exported" into the realm of 'ethno-racial' Otherness, positing that sexually liberated women are 'non-white'; and secondly, creativity is entirely proscribed from the domain of femininity, the implication being that, 'white' or 'non-white', women cannot participate on equal terms in artistic activities with men.

Let us now return to our main topic under discussion – the motif of child-stealing 'gypsies' – and try to conclude the findings in this chapter. Unlike the static palm-reading motif, the story of child-theft has a dynamic dénouement along the axis of time and is imbued with emotional drama. Colourwise, it involves the interplay of two archetypal extremes: of day and night or of light and darkness, but embodied in human form, staged as an opposition between 'white' aristocrats and 'black' 'gypsies'. In the story, a noble infant girl (a nascent source of pure light) is first engulfed by the underworld of 'gypsies' and then found anew, recognised thanks to the spark of true love she ignites in the heart of a distinguished nobleman. From of the 'gypsy' shadow, an adolescent woman steps out who, unaware of her noble origin, has had the wisdom to preserve intact the purity of her spirit and the virginity of her body, both reflected in her 'white' skin. She has thus proven the power of her noble nature (blood) demonstrating the inborn superiority of her kind. The miraculous moment of Preciosa's recovery and recognition, the re-appearance of her luminous being out of the 'gypsy' darkness is celebrated in numerous history paintings, in etchings and engravings during the Dutch Golden Age. Cervantes' story has thus been transformed into an aesthetic tool, one of the many which European aristocracy invested in to set themselves apart from and above other social strata, and to offer matchless evidence in support of their claim to domination. The image of the 'white' European aristocrat is not a self-evident truth, nor does it rest on epidermal facts but is a long-term aesthetic project, a powerful symbolic tool, a highly sophisticated and expensive form of seventeenth-century public relations and image making, for the sake of which much money and artistic talent has been spent. More often than not the works of the Dutch masters stage the young, fine, luminous noblewoman in sharp contrast to her old, ugly, brownish 'gypsy' thief-mother: aristocrats are set against the lowliest of the low, linking skin colour to social status, criminality, and poverty. Epitomising entire social strata, the two figures stand on the two

sides of a decisive colour divide: noble Preciosa (and by extension the high nobility) has the colour of broad daylight, while the old 'gypsy' is portrayed in the colours of the falling night. In two of the paintings, the artists include 'black' African figures, which adds another layer of signification to the shadowy 'gypsy' skin colour: it is no longer only a mutable 'social' marker but could also be interpreted as an immutable geographical marker, one pointing to the non-European origin of the figure. The opposition is no longer only social but socio-'ethno-racial'. Thus, an unbridgeable colour rift is created between social strata which later will be refracted in the representation of imagined 'ethno-racial' groups, between those privileged to have their image depicted in the colour of daylight and the rest whose image deviates from pure white.

6

A Child Stolen by 'Gypsies' Must Be a 'White' One

The Child-theft Motif in Nineteenth-century Print Media

— ※ —

My mother said, I never should
Play with the Gypsies in the wood;
If I did, she would say,
Naughty little girl to disobey.
Your hair shan't curl,
Your shoes shan't shine,
You gypsy girl, you shan't be mine.
And my father said if I did,
He'd rap my head with the teapot lid.

English song for children[59]

I'll trade you to the gypsies for a trackhammer.

American proverbial saying (Meyers 81)

59 In an article for *The New York Times* entitled "The Poetry of Rope-skipping," published in 1973, Francelia Butler reports of a rope-skipping rhyme based on this English song for children. She notes that the rhyme she heard in Belfast had two versions: one from a girl's and one from a boy's point of view: "My mother said I never should Play with gypsies in the wood. If I should She would say, "Naughty girl to disobey "Disobey disobey, "Naughty girl to disobey." I wish my mother would Hold her tongue. She had a boy When she was young. I wish my father would Do the same. He had a girl with awful name." And here is the boy's variant of the rope-skipping rhyme: "My mother said I never should Play with gypsies in the wood. The wood was dark, The grass was green, In came Sally With a tambourine. I went to the sea—No ship to get across. I paid 10 shillings For a blind white horse, I was up on his back And was off in a crack, Sally told my mother I would never come back."

Throughout the seventeeth and in the first decades of the eighteenth century, the myth of the 'gypsy' child-theft – especially the inherent moment of anagnorisis – was a common theme for Dutch history painting. Deemed the pinnacle of pictorial art, history painting was patronised by the Dutch royalty and high nobility, with the result that all the persuasive powers of this art form were summoned to ascertain the noble origin and the social whiteness of the stolen girl-child Preciosa. With the rise of urban mass culture in the nineteenth century, the child-theft motif gained striking popularity among lower-ranking social strata and was inexpensively mass (re-)produced in various printed forms: decorative prints, broadsheets, book illustrations, magic lantern slides, and later in films. The narrative broke away from Cervantes's *novela*, gaining more general contours while, importantly, the focus shifted from the moment of anagnorisis to incorporate and emphasise the moment of abduction. Here, I advance one possible explanation as to why this shift of emphasis took place. European feudal elites used the story of child-theft to produce, maintain and enhance the self-aggrandising image of themselves: for the members of this social strata, it was important to prove that, after a series of trials, a high-born individual remained unchanged (or constant as Preciosa's Christian name Constanza infers), i.e. virtuous, virgin, noble, enlightened, of blue blood; all qualities that are visualised on canvas with recourse to the colour white.

A century later, the child-theft narrative – already an established tool for the production and conferral of white identity among the aristocrats – was appropriated by other social groups who could simply adopt a reverse line of reasoning: if a child has been stolen by 'gypsies', it must be a 'white' one; no further proofs are needed. By highlighting the moment of abduction in the narrative structure of theft and recuperation, the rest of society – from the aspiring nobility through the bourgeoisie, to the factory workers and the peasantry – could in different historial periods, and still can, participate in a symbolic rite of initiation whose primary effect is to ascribe whiteness by implication. The motif should be viewed as one of the important tools in the aesthetic arsenal of the nation-building projects under way in nineteenth-century Europe. The consolidating effect of whiteness as the lowest common denominator for the various and otherwise conflict-ridden social strata within the bourgeoning European nations is, in my view, one of the reasons why the tale of 'gypsy' child-theft experienced such a crescendo of popularity over the entire nineteenth century in a plethora of visual forms.

A brief historical note is needed here. The nineteenth century saw an immense expansion of the printing industry, and a proliferation of printing techniques as part of the emergence of a markedly pictorial mass culture. "[I]n a time when literacy was not universal, the printed image was the single most widely shared form of cultural experience" (Anderson, ii). In his history of graphic design, Stephen Eskilson describes how the byways of London were covered with broadsheets, playbills, posters and various printed ephemera, a situation which other Western metropolises witnessed, too, especially in France, Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the United States (28–29). The rise of cities and their demand for popular print media translated into new technologies that made the exposure to images affordable and widely available to multitudinous audiences. Taking a look at the transformations in the timespan between history painting and silent film, we can observe a development in the sphere of image-production technologies towards increasing the impact of a single image, and reducing the role of its material carrier. While an oil painting was, as a rule, commissioned and owned by one patron, the techniques of engraving and etching enabled wider circles of people to relish one image. Still, decorative prints had a limited print run and acquiring them was only within the means of the wealthy. With the advent of the magic lantern and later films, new forms of image consumption arrived, allowing for even larger audiences to see and be entertained by images without having to possess them in a physical form. Thus, the size of the audiences that were exposed to a single image grew in an exponential manner. This development has had far-reaching implications when it comes to the mass production, distribution and consumption of racist and, in our case, antigypsy images.

Unlike the previous chapter, where I attempted to trace every history painting on the topic of 'gypsy' child-theft produced during the Dutch Golden Age, in this chapter, I consider only a fraction of the countless and still largely unexplored images of child-theft circulated in the nineteenth century. I will limit myself to highlighting the variety of printed images, paying attention to their physical form (format and artistic technique); to the content structure (number of scenes) that reflects the narrative potential of the story, and its visual structuring in scenes along the axis of time as well as to some of its basic functions. The images in my selection come from five main sources: the online archives of the British Museum (UK), the Rijksmuseum (the Netherlands), the Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature

(USA), the Berlin State Library (Germany) and the Magic Lantern Web Resource Lucerna (Germany). The chapter ends with an additional listing of images, all of which have been meticulously referenced and can be viewed online. It is necessary to say at this point that the examples of the motif's visualisations provided for consideration here form a non-representative sample of printed images. The selection mainly reflects the state of archival research in the UK, the Netherlands, the USA, and Germany as well as online availability. For that reason, it would be presumptuous to draw anything but broad conclusions as to how the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft transformed with the flourishing of print media in the nineteenth century or what its specific functions were in given historical time-spaces. Each and every image raises many questions: who produced this image and for what purpose? In what context(s) was the image embedded? Who purchased the image and what prompted their interest in it? How many copies of the image were (re-)produced and what was the size and the structure of the audience that it reached? What narratives was the image accompanied by? What aesthetic traditions and technological innovations did it reflect? These are all questions that remain beyond the scope of my investigation. By presenting a selection of printed images in this section and a selection of films (or of moving images) in the next section, my aim has been to foreground the need for further, context-sensitive and interdisciplinary research – research that simultaneously accounts for the manufacture of social and/or national 'white' identity, with recourse to 'gypsy' figures in concrete historical time-spaces; that considers the social and material conditions in which the images are produced, disseminated and received as well as the narrative, aesthetic and technological developments that account for the journey of this age-old myth through various media.

Let me outline, first, some salient typological features of the motif's visualisations. Looking at the decorative prints, one can hardly fail to observe the consistent colour coding of human bodies: 'whiteness' and 'gypsyness' are more often than not marked on the level of clothes and skin or hair colour. The most recurrent contrast – as in Dutch history paintings – is that of a female (representing a social group the viewer is supposed to identify with) in a full-length white dress juxtaposed with a 'gypsy' female (representing a social group the viewer is supposed to distance him/herself from), who is clad in anything but white: in simple dark clothes, in elaborate colourful or black clothes, in circus costumes, in shapeless dark rags, etc. Constructed as the obverse image of the socially desirable individual, the 'gypsy' figure serves as a plastic tool

for negotiating 'whiteness' (i.e. belonging to the European realm of civilisation, to the national project, to the notion of universal humanity[60]) used by the different social strata and later by the emerging nations on the territory of Europe.

In terms of physical format, the sample of nineteenth-century printed images presented for close scrutiny here contains eight decorative prints, including engravings, etchings, mezzotints and lithographs, most of which were published in London; two broadsheets from Holland; a dozen illustrated children's books from England, the USA and Germany, and one set with magic lantern slides, again from Victorian England. In terms of narrative content and structure, the motif of the child-stealing 'gypsy' is visualised in a number of distinct ways: in one scene; in paired scenes; in multiple scenes that are presented at a glance as in broadsheets, or spread over the length of a book or over the duration of a magic lantern slideshow. The visual narratives become more complex, reflecting the growing capacity of the print media to (re-)tell the story with greater pictorial detail and with greater realism, while reducing production and distribution costs. If in the English decorative prints, the child-theft motif is compressed to a single scene or to a pair of scenes, which reflects the narrative's basic structure, the two Dutch broadsheets elaborate the story in a dozen scenes, expanding them with captions. In children's books, too, the series of illustrations that accompany the text is spread across the entire length of the book, while in the magic lantern slide set *The Gipsy's Revenge,* one can follow the drama of child-theft in as many as 34 scenes. Obviously, in time not only does the number of depicted scenes grow but also the variants of the story.

It is the temporal dynamics of the child-theft motif that makes it rich in possibilities (as compared to the static palm-reading motif, which is limited to a single event) and, as we shall see in the section on early films, it allows for countless modifications along gender, age, class, and plot lines. To summarise, genderwise, the stolen child could be a girl or a boy; agewise, it could be a baby, a young child or an adolescent of marriageable age. In terms of social class, the stolen person could belong not only to the aristocracy but also to other social strata of the majority society, and this one variable represents a major innovation in the motif structure. Finally, timewise, the interval between the theft

60 I have in mind Richard Dyer's pertinent observation that as long 'race' is applied only to 'non-white' peoples, 'whiteness' functions as a human norm that claims universality. Or as he succinctly puts it: "Other people are raced, we are just people" (1).

and the rescue/recognition could vary from a couple of hours to several years, while the trials during the 'gypsy' phase prove to be an inexhaustible source of variation.

It is also instructive to note that during the nineteenth century the motif of the 'gypsy' child-theft seeped from the highest forms of art all the way down to children's stories, nursery rhymes, proverbs and even lullabies (cf. Nord 11; Meyers 55–56, 76–85). During the silent film era, it was embraced by filmmakers as one of the markedly lucrative stock plots. In addition to its basic function of implicitly ascribing 'whiteness' to social classes (classism), or to national majorities across Europe (racism), and thus negotiating class and/or national 'ethno-racial' belonging (identity), it can be overlaid with further, more nuanced meanings – thus it can perform multiple functions[61] of which the disciplining function is probably the most widespread. Some research has already been conducted in this direction. Jodie Matthews notes, for instance, that the eighteenth-century German scholar Heinrich Grellmann looked upon "the childish fear of Gypsies as universal, obvious and long-established" (137); in his dissertation, written in 1787, he asks: "as children, have we not, at some time or other, run affrighted from a Gipsey?" (8). Taking this question as a starting point for her inquiry, Matthews examines the recycling of the 'gypsy' child-stealing myth in Victorian juvenile literature. She regards the common features of the stories as an indicator of the narratives' cultural function, concluding that the narratives "perform the same ostensible task: demonstrating the subject's proper place in a social order" while at the same time betraying "anxieties about the legitimacy and naturalness of that social order" (137; see also Matthews 2008).

Nord comments that the child-stealing stories associated with 'gypsies' "express the anxiety created by adhering to an absolute and inherently fallacious separation between peoples and offer reassuring

61 In psychoanalytical terms, the fantasy of being stolen by 'gypsies' is considered to have a compensatory character, as the French-Swiss psychoanalyst Charles Baudouin discusses in his book *The Mind of the Child*, first published in 1931: "A child, for example, will imagine that it is not the offspring of those who give themselves out to be its parents, but that it had been stolen by gypsies, and subsequently adopted into its present home. Obviously, this idea shades into or combines with the myth of heroic birth. The child dreams that it is of royal origin, or at least of noble lineage. Victor Hugo's *L'Homme qui rit* is a fine elaboration of this theme, and like all variations of the same motif brings us back in a few steps to classical and mythological tales." (165–6). Nord subjects the motif to a Freudian reading and considers it in reference to Freud's theory of the family romance (11–12).

explanation for differences within grups that exist universally" (11). Charnon-Deutsch puts forth the same argument, though in more abstract terms, claiming that "[i]n each culture where it surfaces, the stereotype of the Gypsy baby thief responded to particular configuration of power and stages of national development" (38; see also Fass). Anat Elisabeth Meyers formulates a high number of valuable ideas in her Master's thesis entitled *The Gypsy as Child-Stealer: Stereotype in American Folklore* (1987) in an attempt to account for the motif's origin, forms and functions and also highlights, like no other scholar before, the cross-border dimension of its popularity. During several years of fieldwork Meyers collected accounts of the child-stealing story from native-born Americans of diverse backgrounds (Swedish, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Afro-American, Jewish, Mexican, Japanese, German and Italian) as well as from informants coming from Poland, France, Spain, Marocco, Tunisia, Iran, Iraq, India and Mexico (56–64).

If we go back to Grellmann's influential dissertation, a second and more vigilant look at the text shows that the renowned German scholar poses his rhetorical question in the middle of a paragraph, where he describes the dark skin colour of 'gypsies' as opposed to that of Europeans who are 'white' by assumption, hence the fear: "Their dark brown or olive coloured skin, with their white teeth appearing between their red lips, may be a disgusting sight to an European, unaccustomed to face such pictures. Let me only ask if, as children, we have not at some time or other run affrighted from a Gipsey?" (8). Historical circumstances may vary, but the black-and-white skin colour dualism remains at the very core of the 'gypsy' child-theft narrative and its pictorial interpretations, supplying it with its meaning-production mechanism. In his book *Zigeuner, Wilde und Exoten*, for instance, Karl Hölz calls attention to the parallelism of opposing attributes in Grellmann's text: 'white' Europeans vs. 'black' 'gypsies', dressed vs. half naked, to point out that these descriptions follow a colonial technique of contrasts whose aim is not to describe the unfamiliar but to create evaluating patterns of identification (cf. 54). Invariably, the motif serves as a plastic platform for (re-)definition of group social and/or national 'white' identity and for (re-)negotiating the crucial issue of belonging that each individual inevitably and repeatedly faces in the course of his/her life.

6.1 The Story of 'Gypsy' Child-theft and the Visualisations of Its Temporality

This section briefly outlines the motif's visualisations with regard to the axis of time. It is easy to observe that throughout the nineteenth century the story of 'gypsy' child-theft was represented in three distinct ways: in one single scene, in paired scenes or in multiple scenes. The growing number of scenes lends a realistic feel to the narrative, making it particularly suitable for pedagogical use. The images from section 6.2. to section 6.4.2. are presented in an uninterrupted sequence to provide the reader with an overview of the developments in question, and thus to allow him/her to consider and compare the elaboration of the narrative into multiple scenes.

Distilled into one scene (**Fig. 17** to **Fig. 20**), the story of 'gypsy' child-stealing is commonly represented as an old woman – one, who is visibly beyond child-bearing age, carrying a small child on her back. This figure composition is particularly well-suited for art techniques with a limited colour palette. In these depictions, it is the advanced age of the 'gypsy' woman which signals to the viewer that she cannot be the child's birth parent and that, by inference, the child must have been stolen by her. Often the figure of the old 'gypsy' with a baby on her back is coupled with the palm-reading motif.[62] Interestingly enough, in our first example of nineteenth-century prints – *Group Portrait of Three Ladies and a Child* (1801), based on a drawing by John James Masquerier (**Fig. 17**) – the child-theft is suggested through hair colour: the young woman in 'gypsy' apparel carries a blond child. It is the boy's fair hair that should alert the viewer to his being stolen. Thus, the difference between the English ladies and the 'gypsy' woman in this printed image with a dyadic-world structure is marked only on the level of clothes; all three women are dark-haired and faired-skinned. The English ladies, though, glow in their full-length, white dresses, the pristine whiteness of the fabric matching the colour of their semi-bared breasts, while the 'gypsy' female is prudently covered in brownish shapeless gowns. (Surely, it is also possible to decode Masquerier's image as a rendition of a masquerade in which high-born ladies reenact the story of a 'gypsy' stealing a child, hence their identical skin tone.) Another print of that period in which the child-theft is hinted at only via hair colour

62 See, for example, the illustration *Zigeunerin* (last plate) in *Das allergrösster Bilder-ABC* (1828) by Theodor Hosemann.

is the black-and-white lithograph *Gipsy Girls* (1832–1868) (**Fig. 19**); it presents a somewhat unusual visualisation of the motif. Here, the theme of child-theft is secondary to the figure composition: the fair-haired boy, with a forlorn expression on his face, sits slightly behind two dark-haired 'gypsy' girls who crouch under a gnarled tree trunk, looking directly and somewhat mischievously at the viewer with their chins resting on their hands.

The second common figure composition that sums up the child-theft motif into one scene is exemplified by the English engraving *The Stolen Child* (1840), after a drawing by F. P. Stephanoff's (**Fig. 18**), as well as by two noteworthy paintings: *Constance (Preciosa) Abducted by the Gypsies (J. Cats, Het Spaans heidinnetje)* (1652–1681) by the Dutch master Leendert van der Cooghen (**Fig. 4**), and *The Stolen Child/L'Enfant volé* (1861) by the French artist Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger (**Fig. 15**), his colourful painting is known today only through the black-and-white engraving. All three works are dominated by the figure of a small child placed as a focal point in the lower centre of the composition, surrounded by dark 'gypsy' men, women, and children – the latter wear dark clothes and inhabit dark time-spaces and/or have a dark skin colour. The sense that the child is pulled down into the dubious (under) world of 'gypsies' is central to these images, and it is very strongly conveyed in Cooghen's work. At the same time, the artists make sure to mark the social or/and 'ethno-racial' difference of the kidnapped child: Cooghen depicts young Preciosa in an expensive copper-gold velvet dress with a fine white undershirt and a white collar; in Stephanoff's drawing the small girl resembles a white doll dressed up in white, whereas in Schlesinger's painting/engraving the difference is coded exclusively with reference to skin colour. The naked baby has 'white' skin that glows in the sunlight unlike that of his 'gypsy' admirers. Considered in the chronology of their creation, the re-focus from fine clothes to bare skin in these images clearly evidences that during the nineteenth century 'whiteness' underwent a shift in meaning, transforming from a 'social' to an 'ethno-racial' attribute.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Cooghen's choice of theme marks an exception for his time. His work is the only preserved history painting from the Dutch Golden Age known to me that takes interest in the moment of child abduction and not in the moment of anagnorisis. It strikes the attention that in his interpretation the stolen Preciosa is not dressed in white but in colours that match her 'gypsy' abductors and their night-time forest surroundings. One cannot help but wonder why.

One probable reason for this aesthetic choice is the specific meaning associated with whiteness: in Cooghen's time, white colour was used as one of the coded references for Preciosa's virginity, for the virtuous, pure inner nature of the noble female that remained constant regardless of circumstances, and so it would have been a less expedient choice of colour when portraying the infant girl at the moment of her abduction. Cooghen's mastery is displayed in transporting the feeling of ineffable horror aroused by the act of child theft: small, fine and richly dressed Preciosa has fallen into the hands of unscrupulous forest inhabitants, young and old, all bathed in the approaching darkness of the night. Not very different is the atmosphere created in another nineteenth-century English print: *Stolen by Gipsies. The Rescue*, (ca. 1875) based on a drawing by John Burgess (**Fig. 20**). In a dim underground interior, a small girl holding a tambourine is surrounded by adult 'gypsy' males and apparently urged against her wishes to perform a dance. In this image, the moment of rescue is already announced by the presence of soldiers who observe the scene from the top of the stairs in the upper left.

The third salient feature of images that highlight the moment of child abduction is the doll-like appearance of the stolen girl. I have already noted this with regard to Vlieger's drawing *Roma vrouw Majombe met Konstance*, (1643) (**Fig. 9**); his work bears many resemblances to an 1872 illustration published in the children's book *Anna, das geraubte Kind* (*Anna, the Stolen Child*) (**Fig. 28**). Similarly, in Cooghen's painting, and even more so in the English print *The Stolen Child* (1840) (**Fig. 18**), the depictions of the kidnapped girl come across as doll-like. All these images underscore, in a self-congratulatory manner, the desirability of the stolen 'white' child. Stylised as a doll, it offers a model of beauty worthy of imitation, being both an aspirational ideal and an object of desire, and in some of the works presented here the 'gypsies' are shown to marvel at the child from all sides in envious astonishment. [63] If we evaluate the situation from a more practical perspective, it is difficult

63 Another, rather recent example is an emblematic scene from the Polish film *Papusza* (2013) in which Papusza's mother stares at a white doll in a window shop some hours before giving birth. It is a cold winter day and the nine-month pregnant girl, wrapped in dark, rough clothes, is all alone in a muddy street. Her face reflection in the window shop contrasts sharply to the fancy lady doll wearing a full-length white dress and a wide-brimmed white hat. Later, the girl would call her daughter Papusza ("doll" in Polish) in emulation of the white lady doll. One can hardly oversee here the parallel to the black-and-white story pattern at the core of *Aethiopica*: a pregnant 'black' mother who falls for an idealised and highly desirable image of a 'white' woman.

to offer a convincing explanation as to what would motivate perceived 'gypsies', an outcast and persecuted minority group, to commit such a grave criminal act against powerful members of the majority. Often, it is the child's fine clothes, expensive jewels and/or its skin that are cited as a plausible reason. Indeed, such regalia represent valuable objects and theoretically could bring some monetary profit to the presumptive thieves. (Another question is whether aristocratic infants walk around decorated with heaps of precious jewellery, or in the case of the clothes, whether 'gypsies' could find so easily a reliable buyer of fine children's outfits.) These body embellishments, but also 'white' skin, make more sense if regarded as visual symbols of social status, for they communicate to the viewer that the infant stands at the top of the social ladder. We can go a step further and say that the real object of desire staged in these images is not the child itself but the social standing it has and represents. In a rather flattering manner, the viewer is thus invited to identify with a small defenceless girl (or boy) of supposedly superior breed, surrounded on all sides by ruthless 'gypsies', all inferior creatures following the logic of the juxtaposition, a gut-wrenching image that is bound to arouse strong feelings of anger and indignation and that can easily legitimise outbursts of violence.

In the second grouping of printed imagery, the story is presented in two separate scenes. The paired prints (**Fig. 21** to **Fig. 24**) foreground the two central moments in the child-theft narrative: the moment of separation and the moment of recuperation. In each pair, the two images mirror each other bringing to light a series of significant oppositions: white vs. colour/black, nature vs. culture, inside vs. outside, primitivism vs. sophistication, poverty vs. wealth, etc. In the first pair, for example, the 'gypsies' are gathered with their livestock at the brow of a hill under the open sky while the child's birth family, apparently a wealthy one, lives in an exquisitely furnished mansion. It is hardly a surprise that in both pairs, the child is reunited with a mother figure clad in a voluminous white dress.

In the third and final grouping of printed images that includes broadsheets, children's book illustrations, and magic lantern slide sets (**Fig. 25** to **Fig. 30**), the story of the 'gypsy' child-abduction and recovery is fleshed out with increasingly more realistic detail, and its temporality is expanded in a growing number of scenes. It is notable that in the broadsheets, a precursor of comics, the story is presented at a glance, and thus characterised by a compressed sense of time: the scenes are arranged next to each other, all of them contained on a single sheet

of paper. Children's picture-books, in turn, foreground the temporal dénouement of the story simply by giving it more space: the scene illustrations are arranged at greater spatial intervals from each other taking up the lenght of an entire book. Another way of communicating temporality is offered by the magic lantern slide sets, illustrated here with one overview screenshot. In these slide sets, it is already possible to recreate the unfolding of the story in real time. During the projection performance, the intervals between the static images are no longer spatial but temporal, which makes the magic lantern show closer to a real-life experience furnishing it with an even stronger persuasive effect. In addition, the reception of the broadsheets and book illustrations or magic lantern slides is not left to the viewer alone but is mediated by elaborate texts: captions, autonomous stories and, in the case of magic lantern shows, by readings and musical scores.

The collection of images here indicates that the illustrated stories were mainly targeted at youngsters at the impressionable age of five-six years. In these stories, a child who strays from his/her parents or disobeys their instructions is punished by a stint in the merciless underworld of 'gypsies', where he or she may suffer various hardships, such as beatings, torture and neglect. The most frequent fare, as it appears though, is being forced to work as a street entertainer. The motif is reused in a very different socio-historical context shaped by new notions of childhood as well as by new pedagogical approaches to child's upbringing. Apparently, it was deemed fit to guide a child's socialisation through scare stories and threats of physical punishment and public humiliation. It is also illuminating to note that the equation of 'gypsies' with members of the various ambulant *métiers*, for example, in the Dutch broadsheets (**Fig. 25** and **26**) or in the children's books (**Fig. 27** and **29**), directly echoes the myth of the bohemian, perpetuated by the avant-garde artists in nineteenth-century France. As Brown demonstrates in her comprehensive study, the mythical figure of the "real bohemian" is filled with multiple and often contradictory significations, while having a complex relationship to a mix of diverse social/ethnic groups. Next to the Roma minority, these groups included "*saltimbanques* (mountebannks), vagrants, ragpickers, street musicians and various related urban *flâneurs*" (20). Brown explains that the bohemian subcategory of *saltimbanques,* often indistinguishable from the Roma, referred to a host of ambulant entertainers, exercising an astounding plethora of occupations: they could be *bateleur*s, jugglers, organ grinders, equestrians, exhibitors of wise animals, conjurers, and

fortune tellers, to name but a few (cf. 28–29). During the nineteenth century, the bohemians were the object of numerous prohibitive legal measures imposed by the French authorities; laws were put in place to control the alleged child-stealing perpetrated by *saltimbanques* who, after the Revolution of 1848, were even accused of being "the natural auxiliaries of the Socialist establishment" (25). Brown concludes that the *saltimbanques* "were often the object of a hatred bordering on racial prejudice and of a fear that was political" (29).

To sum up, the story of 'gypsy' child-theft is one of the aesthetic tools elaborated in the context of seventeenth-century history painting with the purpose of ascribing 'whiteness' to the feudal ruling elites in Europe. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though, the motif was appropriated by the newly emerging popular print media (and by extension, by the social groups they catered for) and reinterpreted so as to instigate one important cultural switch: a conferral of 'whiteness', commonly associated with the aristocracy, to other social strata so that the attribute expanded its scope, offering a shared and highly covetable identity to the various groups of people within the imagined nations in Europe. As such, the 'gypsy' figure has proven to be instrumental in the transformation of 'whiteness' from an aristocratic (classist) attribute to an 'ethno-racial' (racist) attribute. The remaining subsections in this chapter offer a cursory glimpse into the period, offering a selection of exemplary works to call attention to the need for further interdisciplinary and context-sensitive research.

6.2 Prints: The Motif in One Scene

In the following four prints (**Fig. 17 to Fig. 20**), the story of 'gypsy' child-theft is condensed down to one scene. The last image also contains a premonition of the rescue scene.

Fig. 17. John James Masquerier, Anthony Cardon (print maker), *Group Portrait of Three Ladies and a Child;* the lady on the right dressed as a gypsy with the child (the young Earl) on her back, 1801, paper, stipple, printed in colour, 535 × 498 mm.

Fig. 18. F. P. Stephanoff, W & E Hott (engraver), *The Stolen Child*, 1840, print engraving, 192 × 160 mm.

Fig. 19. Thomas Barker of Bath, John Robert Dicksee (print-maker), *Gipsy Girls*, 1832–1868, paper, lithograph, 305 × 243 mm.

Fig. 20. John Bagnold Burgess, Charles Henry Jeens (print-maker), *Stolen by Gipsies. The Rescue*, ca. 1875, paper, etching and engraving on chine collé, 558 × 732 mm.

6.3 Prints: The Motif in Two Scenes

The paired images in this subsection (**Fig. 21 and 22; Fig. 23 and 24**) visualise the two pivotal moments in the story: the child’s abduction and its recovery.

Fig. 21. Henry Singleton, F Green (print maker), *Gipsey’s Stealing a Child*, 1801, paper, colour mezzotint, 448 × 573 mm.
Curator’s note: Pair to *The Child Restored*

Fig. 22. Henry Singleton, F Green (print maker), *The Child Restored*, 1801, paper, colour mezzotint, 448 × 573 mm.
Curator's note: Pair to *Gipsey's Stealing a Child*

Fig. 23. Maria Spilsbury, M. Place (print maker), *The Stolen Child Discovered amid the Crew of Gypsies*, 1805, paper, stipple, 510 × 484 mm.
Curator’s note: Pair with *The Lost Child Found, and the Felicity of the Nursey Restored*

Fig. 24. Maria Spilsbury, M. Place (print maker), *The Lost Child Found, and the Felicity of the Nursey Restored*, 1805, paper, stipple, 503 × 485 mm.
Curator's note: Pair with *The Stolen Child Discovered amid the Crew of Gypsies*

6.4 The Motif in Multiple Scenes

In the broadsheets (**Fig. 25** and **26**), children's picture books (**Fig. 27, 28** and **29**) and magic lantern slides (**Fig. 30**) that follow, the story of 'gypsy' child-theft is expanded in numerous scenes around the main structure of loss and recovery. The elaboration of a greater number of scenes instills the narrative with greater vividness and versimilitude and makes it particularly fit for pedagogical use. The captions to the two Dutch broadsheets are relatively short, so I have incorporated in this section both the original language version and the respective English translation. These verbal and visual texts exemplify the disciplining function of the 'gypsy' child-theft story, which as Nord shows "became a useful admonition to wayward and recalcitrant children" in the eighteenteth and nineteenth century (11).

Text in captions:

The Gypsies

Little Louis asked his mom to go to play with his friends. "Go, darling," she said, "but do not walk far away, especially do not leave the garden." The cheerful child walked out.

Seeing a beautiful butterfly, he followed it. Thinking only of the butterfly, he did not see the garden fence and got lost in a neighbouring forest.

At last, he had caught the butterfly. Louis wanted to go home now but could not find a path in the dense forest. Weeping, the poor little one walks from one side to the other and finally drops down exhausted under a tree where he sleeps.

Suddenly he wakes up; an ugly old woman is standing before him. "Get up!" she shouts, and grasping him by the arm, she pulls him through the forest. Little Louis cries hot tears of fear but the old one always walks on. They arrive at an open place in the forest where three gypsies and two children in rags are sitting around a big fire. One of the gypsies tackles the child and threatens him with the whip should he continue crying. Now, they pull off the poor one's beautiful clothes to change them for some torn rags.

Fig. 25. *The Gypsies / De Zigeuners*, Monogrammist G.J., 1894–1959, paper, broadsheet with 8 performances, 400 × 268 mm.

These gypsies are fairground travellers. After many hours of walking, they arrive in a city where a fair is taking place. There, they make Little Louis collect the money while one of the gypsies makes a huge bear dance and another one plays on a barrel organ.

One of the spectators recognises the child. He immediately gets the gendarmes. The gypsies are now brought handcuffed to the prison.

The good man brings the child back to his parents. He reproaches his disobedience on the way.

Upon coming home, Louis throws himself crying in his mother's arms and tells about his unfortunate adventure. He promises to never be disobedient again. [my translation, R.M.]

De zigeuners

De kleine Louis vroeg aan zijne mama verlof om met zijne kameraadjes te gaan spelen. «Ga, lieveling,» zei ze, «maar loop niet ver weg; ga vooral niet uit den tuin.»

Het vroolijke kind liep naar buiten. Een mooien vlinder ziende, liep hij dien na. Alleen denkend aan den vlinder zag hij het hek van den tuin niet en verdwaalde in een naburig woud.

Eindelijk had hij den vlinder gevangen. Louis wilde nu naar huis gaan, maar kon in het dichte woud geen weg vinden. Weenende loopt de arme kleine van den eenen kant naar den anderen en valt eindelijk uitgeput onder een boom neer, waar hij inslaapt.

Eensklaps wordt hij wakker; een leelijk oud wijf staat voor hem. «Sta op!» roept ze, en hem bij den arm vattend, trekt ze hem mee door het bosch. De kleine Louis huilt heete tranen van vrees, maar de oude loopt altijd door. Ze komen op eene open plaats in het bosch aan, waar drie zigeuners en twee in lompen gehulde kinderen om een groot vuur zitten. Een der zigeuners pakt het kind aan en bedreigt hem met de zweep, als hij nog huilt. Nu trekken ze den armen kleine zijne mooie kleeren uit, om ze te verwisselen met eenige gescheurde vodden.

Deze zigeuners waren kermisreizigers. Na vele uren geloopen te hebben komen zij in eene stad, waar kermis was. Daar doen ze den kleinen Louis geld ophalen, terwijl een der zigeuners een reusachtigen beer laat dansen en een ander op een draaiorgel speelt.

Een der toeschouwers herkent het kind. Dadelijk haalt hij de gendarmen. De zigeuners worden nu geboeid naar de gevangenis gebracht.

De goede mijnheer brengt het kind naar zijne ouders terug. Onder weg verwijt hij hem zijne ongehoorzaamheid.

Thuis gekomen werpt Louis zich weenende in de armen zijner moeder en vertelt haar zijn ongelukkig avontuur. Hij belooft nooit meer ongehoorzaam te zijn.

Text in captions:

Marie, the Disobedient Girl

Although her parents had forbidden her, Marie walked out of the garden quietly and went to the forest to collect wood.

After she had walked a long time, she became tired and fell asleep on the forest side.

Gypsies who just passed by took her up and brought her into their cart.

Then, one of them took off her beautiful clothes and, undisturbed by her crying, she dressed Marie in rags so that she looked like a poor child.

The first thing she was taught was cooking food for the gypsies.

Then, she had to learn to dance on a tightrope and all the while risked breaking her neck.

Then, she had to learn how to make arts and got lashes if she did not do well.

Fig. 26. *Marie the Disobedient Girl / Marie het ongehoorzame meisje*, Gordinne, 1894–1959, broadsheet with 12 performances, paper, 399 × 270 mm.

When she knew everything, she had to take part in the performances and was put on display in front of the tent next to the other artists.

She danced beautifully on the rope to the great entertainment of the many spectators.

But one day she lost her balance and fell. When she was picked up, she was unconscious and while someone carried her away through the crowd, her father and mother, who were also present at the show, recognised their lost little daughter.

They pulled her out of the hands of the gypsy and when Marie came to herself, she recognised her parents whom she never left again.

The policemen arrested the gypsies and brought them to prison as a punishment for their crime. [my translation, R.M.]

Marie het ongehoorzame meisje

Niettegenstaande hare ouders het verboden hebben is Marie stilletjes uit de tuin geloopen en den weg naar het bosch opgegaan om kapelletjes te vangen.

Nadat ze lang geloopen heeft word ze moe en valt aan den boschkant in slaap.

Zigeuners die daar juist voorbij kwamen namen haar op en brachten haar in hun wagen.

Men trek haar toen haar mooie kleederen uit en zich niet aan haar gehuil storende trok men haar lompen aan zoodat zij er als een arm kind uitzag.
Het eerste wat men haar leerde was het eten voor de zigeuners te koken.

Vervolgens moest zij leeren koorddansen en liep elk oogenblik gevaar den hals te breken.

Daarna moest zij kunsten leeren maken en kreeg zweepslagen als zij het niet goed deed.

Toen zij nu alles kende, moest zij op de voorstellingen mee werken en werd voor aan de tent naast de andere kunstenmakers ten toon gesteld.

Zij danste prachtig op het koord tot groot vermaak van de vele toeschouwers.

Maar op een dag verloor zij het evenwicht en viel. Toen men haar op nam was zij bewusteloos en terwijl men haar weg droeg door het volk, herkende haar vader en moeder, die ook op de voorsteling waren, hun verloren dochtertie.

Zij trokken het uit de handen van den zigeuner en toen Marie tot zich zelve kwam, herkende zij hare ouders, die ze nooit meer verliet.

De agenten pakten de zigeuners op en brachten ze naar de gevangenis als straf voor hunne misdaad.

6.4.1 Illustrated Books for Children and Juveniles

Denn sie rauben sehr geschwind –
Jedes böse Gassen Kind.

Georg Dennlers, "Zigeunerfrieda", 1890

The Gypsies are coming
The old people say
To buy little children and take them away.
Fifty cents for the fat ones
Twenty cents for the lean ones

Shel Silverstein, "The Gypsies Are Coming", 1974

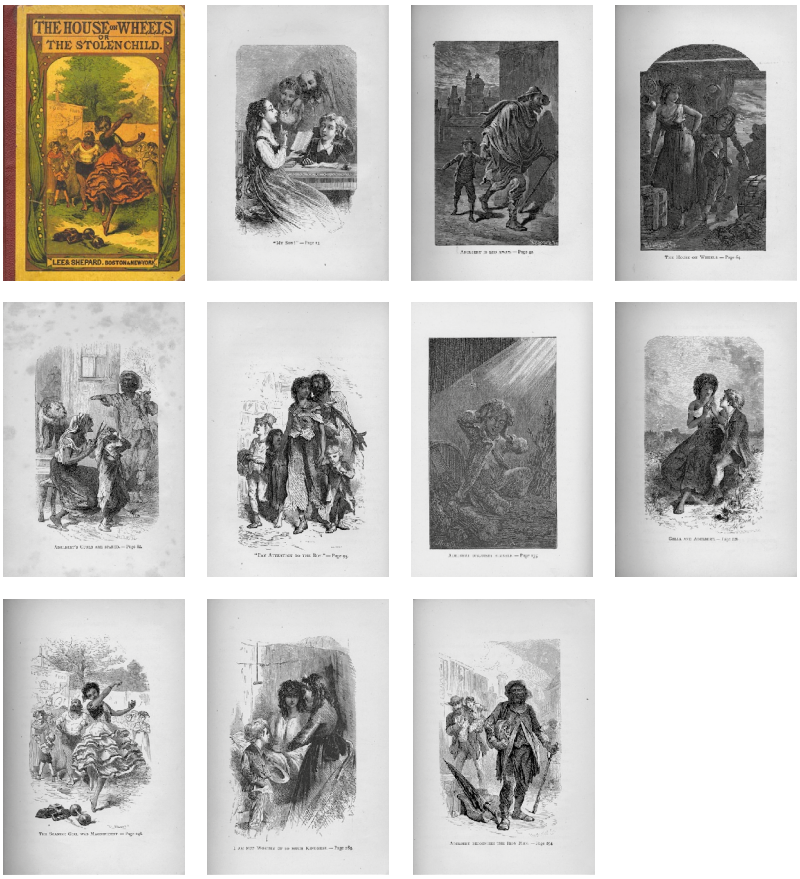

Fig. 27. Émile Antoine Bayard, Illustrations to the book *The House on Wheels, or, The Stolen Child* written by Stolz, 1871.

Fig. 28. Illustration to the book *Anna, das geraubte Kind* written by Alexander Löwen, 1872.

Fig. 29. Karl Pommerhanz, Illustrations to the poem "Die Zigeunerfrieda" written by Georg Dennler, 1890.

6.4.2 Magic Lantern Slideshows: *The Gipsy's Revenge* (1886)

The magic lantern slide set presented here (**Fig. 30**) tells the story of child abduction and recovery in 34 scenes. Each scene is recreated on a separate glass slide (square, 83 mm). The slides were produced by the British photographer and entrepreneur James Bamford who shot the scenes with life models using both his studio set and exterior locations. Ludwig Vogl-Bienek reports in his article "Sentiment to Order: The production of Life Model Slides by Bamforth" that Bamford began shooting and manufacturing life models series in the early 1880s; *The Gipsy's Revenge* is the first set with life model slides with a reliable publication date. The photographs from the series were entered into the copyright register at Stationer's Hall in London on September 18th, 1886 (11; see also Volg-Bienek 2016: 244, 250–251). Notably, James Bamforth modelled in the set both as the Count (on slides 6–10, 20–21, 23–24, 27) and as Black Bertram the 'gipsy' (on slides 29–32).

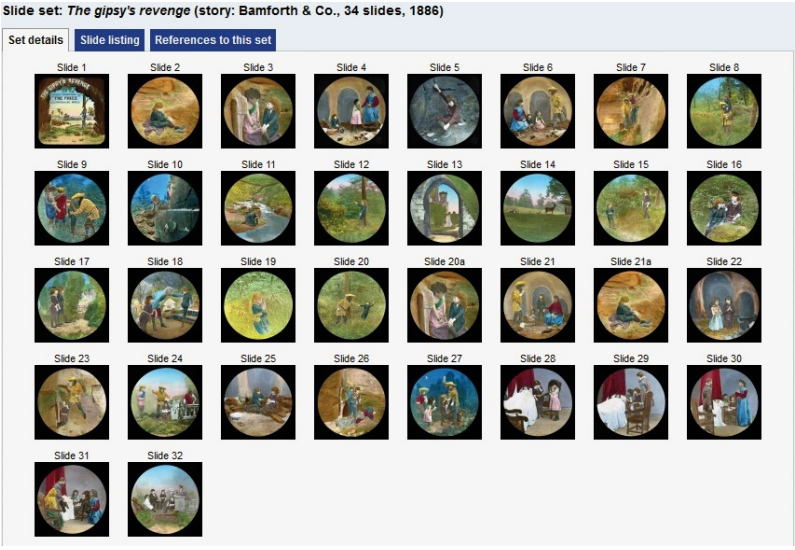

Fig. 30. Slide set: *The Gipsy's Revenge*, story: Bamforth & Co., 34 slides, 1886.

6.5 Further Visual Works Related to the 'Gypsy' Child-theft Motif

Paintings

Cäsar, Willich. *Zigeunerin*, 1846–1886, oil on canvas, 104 × 81 cm, Kaiserslautern, ArteMIS, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Kunsthistorisches Institut.

Eckersberg, Christoffer Wilhelm. *Den tyske sangerinde Emilie Pohlmann som Preciosa/Die deutsche Sängerin Mademoiselle Emilie Pohlmann als Preciosa*, 1825, oil on canvas, 45.5 × 35 cm, Aabenraa, besitz Christian Panbo, Diathek online, Technische Universität Dresden, Institut für Kunstgeschichte.

Hausmann, Friedrich Karl. *Pariser Strassenkinder*, 1825, oil on canvas, 163.5 × 205.5 cm. Bez. R.o.: F.C. Hausmann Paris 52. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Inv. Nr. 1333.

Printed Images

de Bayalos, Aimé, and Lemercier & Cie (printmaker). *La Esméralda*. 1838, paper, lithograph, 236 × 178 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1900,1231.1365. *Description*: "A portrait of the character Esméralda, a gypsy girl, half-length, seen from the front; her hand is raised in response to her dog at left; her head is slightly lowered to the left; she stands outside the facade of a church with mullioned windows and floral motif, seen at right; beyond at left, the exterior of a building."

Burgess, John Bagnold. *Stolen by Gipsies*, 1875, paper, etching/engraving, 553 × 732 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1912,1217.490. *Description*: "A little girl stands holding a tambourine, with a sullen expression as a gipsy musician speaks to her, his companion jumping enthusiastically as if to encourage the child to play; a group of men sitting around a table watch from the right; in the foreground a mother cradles her baby, a young boy sits on the ground at her feet eating an apple; two large urns in the open-fronted."

Cole, R. (printmaker). *The True Pictures of Elizabeth Canning and Mary Squires*, ca. 1753–1760, paper, sipple, etching/engraving, 188 × 270 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1929,0208.8. *Description*: "Double portrait of the perjurer Elizabeth Canning and Mary Squires, the gypsy woman she accused of assisting in her supposed abduction in 1753; design in two compartments, within each an almost half-length portrait within ornate frames, both sitters looking to right; cartouche below; illustration to the 'New Universal Magazine.'"

Cole, R. (printmaker). *The True Pictures of Elizabeth Canning and Mary Squires*. 1754, paper, etching/engraving, 186 × 260 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1851,0308.164.

The Committee of 6 Aldermen, 1753, paper, etching, 207 × 314 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1868,0808.3940.

Description: "Satire on the Jewish Naturalization Act and the Canning Affair; six aldermen at a table discussing bribery and circumcision; one of them is Sir Crisp Gascoyne who refers to his support of Mary Squires, "the gypsy", against the accusations of Elizabeth Canning who stands behind him."

The Conjurors 1753, 1753, paper, etching/engraving, 248 × 350 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1868,0808.3935. *Description*: "Satire related to the Canning affair."

David, Jules. *Phoebus et la Esméralda*, 1841–1843, paper, 567 × 396 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-P-1905-3436.

Dorn, Edouard. *Preciosa de Weber. Fantasie pour Piano*. Offenbach: Jean André, ca. 1990.

Edgcumbe, Richard, and Thomas Worlidge (printmaker), *Mary Squires the Gypsy,* 1754, paper, etching and drypoint, 209 × 170 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1859,0806.16. *Description*: "Portrait of Mary Squires, whole length, standing to right, leaning on a short stick, wearing hat, cape, apron."

Elizabeth Canning. Mary Squires the Gypsy, ca. 1753–1760, paper, engraving, 120 × 202 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1851,0308.165.
Description: "Double portrait of the perjurer Elizabeth Canning and Mary Squires, the gypsy woman she accused of assisting in her supposed abduction in 1753; design in two compartments, within each an almost half-length portrait within a roundel, the women's names in banners beneath; illustration to the 'London Magazine.'"

Folkema, Jacob. *De Spaanse heidin Preciosa*, 1702–1767, 16.2 × 10.8 cm. Rijksmuseum, Object No RP-P-1903-A-23927. (**Fig. 31**)

The Gypsy's Triumph, 1754, paper, etching, 326 × 258 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1868,0808.3931.
Description: "Satire on the Canning Affair; Crisp Gascoyne and Mary Squires, 'the old gypsy', carried in triumph by four old gypsies carrying broomsticks and wearing pointed hats."

Hosemann, Theodor. *Zigeunerin*, In: *Das allergrösster Bilder-ABC*. Berlin, 1828: [22] last plate.

Isaacsz, Isaac, and Pieter Nolpe (print maker). *Don Jan en Konstance in de rechtbank*, 1643, paper, etching/engraving, 146 × 129 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-P-1883-A-6911.

Keyert, Rienk. *Ontwerp voor een behangselschildering of schilderij met het Spaanse Heidin Preciosa en Don Juan*, 1719–1775, paper, watercolour (paint), design for wallpaper painting, 204 × 153 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-T-1996-98.

Mary Squires in Conversation with Sir John Hill, 1753, paper, etching, 248 × 188 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1868,0808.3934.

Nolpe, Pieter (print maker). *Don Philippo en Eleonora*, 1643, paper, etching/engraving, 136 × 115 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-P-1883-A-6912.

Preciosa, oder: Abenteuer eines Mädchens unter den Zigeunern, ca. 1882, Oehmigke & Riemschneider (Publishers), coloured lithograph, landscape format, 33.5 × 42 cm, Museum Europäischer Kulturen, Ident. Nr. D (33 C 3714) 33/1984.
Caption: "Camp of Roma in the forest, the girl cooks over the open fire, the others lie, dance or stand around. Text overleaf: A romantic story from Spain. In almost all European countries, not even excluding England, one encounters the strange migrant population of the Gypsies …"

Quast, Pieter Jansz, and Pieter Nolpe (print maker). *Majombe spreekt Pretioze moed in*, 1643, paper, etching/engraving, 134 × 110 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-P-1883-A-6909.

———. *Konstance in gesprek met Don Jan*, 1643, paper, etching/engraving, 135 × 115 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-P-1883-A-6910.

———. *Majombe en Konstance en rustende figuren*, 1643, paper, etching/engraving, 128 × 108 mm, Rijksmuseum, Object Nr. RP-P-1883-A-6908.

Fig. 31. Jacob Folkema, *De Spaanse heidin Preciosa*, 1702–1767, 16.2 × 10.8 cm.

Rembrandt van Rijn. *The Spanish Gipsy "Preciosa"*, ca. 1642, etching, 14.6 × 12.8 cm; Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession Nr. 23.51.3.

———. *A True Draught of Eliz Canning, with the House She was Confined in, also the Gypsies Flight, and Conversing with the Inspector General of Great Britain*, ca. 1753, paper, etching with stipple, 473 × 390 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1851,0308.168.
Description: "Five scenes relating to the affair of Elizabeth Canning: the house in Enfield, Mary Squires flying on a broomstick and conversing with Sir John Hill, and a portrait of Canning."

———. *Voleurs D'Enfants [Child Thieves]. Les Faits-Divers Illustrés*, Nr. 199, Paris, 12 Aug 1909, title page. akg-images, Media Nr. 84063333.
Description: "Clashes in the posrt of Brooklyn in July 1909 during the expulsion of a group of twenty-four Roma with the steamboat SS Verdi to Buenos Aires."

Whitby, William, and John Young (printmaker). *The Gipsy*, 1788, paper, mezzotint, 342 × 251 mm, British Museum, Museum Nr. 1919,0121.5.
Description: "A woman wearing a large bonnet over curly hair and a loose gown with a sash around the waist, looking back over her shoulder towards the viewer, with her left arm around the neck of a child and a little boy standing beside her, all facing away from the viewer in a landscape with a wooden palisade outlined against the night sky to left."

Yrondy. *Entführung der Antoinette M.* [*Enfant enlevee par des nomads/Child Kidnapped by Gypsies*]. Illustration published in Le Petit Journal, Supplement Illustre, 13. Jg. (Paris) 2 Feb 1902, 30.0 × 41.7 cm, Sammlung Archiv für Kunst und Geschichte, akg-images, Image Nr. AKG87166, and Image Nr. AKG4915677.
Description: "Pont-a-Mousson; on her way to school, ten-year-old Antoinette Mirguet is kidnapped by travelling basket weavers."

Illustrated Books for Children and Juveniles

The eight nineteenth-century English titles that follow here, mostly novels for juveniles, come from the digitised collection of the University of Florida's Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, and are also available online (Baldwin). As the Baldwin Library's presentation text succinctly puts it, "[t]heir digitized collection currently holds over 6,000 books free to read online from cover to cover, allowing you to get a sense of what adults in Britain and the U.S. wanted children to know and believe." The picture book with poems for children by Shel Silverstein from 1974 is discussed by Meyers (54). The six German titles have been identified through various sources.[64] The poem "Die Zigeunerfrieda" by Georg Dennler and his picture book with poems for children is discussed by Mattenklott (219–220). The last book, published in several different editions, presents a complementary example to our topic, namely depictions of Jews as child-snatchers.

Books in English

Byrne, Charles Alfred. "The Remarkable Adventure of Tin Tin Rog." *Dream Land*. New York: Mook Brothers and Co. 14–20.

Capes, M., and Harriet M. *The Little Runaways*. Illustrator John Gülich. London: Sunday School Union, 1899?

Cassell, Petter, and Galpin. *Hid in a Cave, and, The Selfish Little Girl*. London: Cassell, Petter and Galpin, 1859.

Freddy and His Bible Text, or, The Little Runaway. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1872.

Lowrie, R.W. "Playing Gypsies." In: Sophie May, et. *Nursery and Kindergarten Stories*. New York: Saalfield Pub. Co. 69–70.

Miller, Thomas. *Little Blue Hood*. Illustrator Henry Walker. New York: James Gregory, M DCCC LXIV.

Rother, Carl Mrs. *Lost and Found, or, Twelve Years with Bulgarian Gypsies*. London: Blackie & Son, 1887.

Silverstein, Shel. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. "The Gypsies are Coming." New York: Harper & Row, 1974:50.

64 A comprehensive bibliography on 'gypsy' figures/representaions of Sinti and Roma in German literature for children and juveniles has been compiled by Projektgruppe "Zigeunerbilder" der AG Jugendliteratur und Medien (AJuM der GEW), also available online (Pommerening).

Stolz. *The House on Wheels, or, The Stolen Child*. Illustrator Émile Antoine Bayard. New York: Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, 1871.

Books in German

Dennler, Georg. "Die Zigeunerfrieda." *Onkel Knolle, Ein Bilderbuch mit lustigen Reimen*. Illustrator Karl Pommerhanz. Donauwörth: Verlag Mager, 1890: 64–74.

Goldschmitt, François. *Zwei Jahre bei Zigeunern: Volks- und Jugenderzählung*. Hamm in Westfalen: Breer & Thiemann, [1912].
Note: copy available in the Berlin State Library.

Hermann, Paul. *Die Zigeunerin oder der entführte Knabe*. Mainz: Kupferberg, 1880.

Linsmeyer, Adalbert. *Der gute Schutzman. Ein Leehreiches Bilderbuch zur Verhütung des Verkehrsgefahren*, Illustrator Wolfgang Wagner. München: Braun und Schneider, [1926]: 11.

von Löwen, Alexander. *Anna, das geraubte Kind: zur Erinnerung an Anna Böckler, das von Zigeunern frechgeraubte Töchterchen des Domainenpächters Böckler aus Treuen für Jung und Alt als warnendes Beispiel*. Deutsche Mährchen, Nr. 3, 1872.
Note: with 6 coloured lithographs as plates; electronically available on the website of the Berlin State Library.

Reichner, Klara. *Preciosa. Eine Zigeunergeschichte*. Illustrator Th. V. Pichler. Stuttgart: Verlag von Gustav Weise, 1882.

Schicksale eines Fürstenkindes. Parchim: J.H.L. Hoffmann, [1890?].
Note: with illustrations; copy available in the Berlin State Library.

Jews as Child-Thieves in Children's Books

Haase, Paul. *Der kleine Stapelmatz. Lehrreiche Geschichten für Kinder mit bunten und lustigen Bildern*. Leipzig: Verlag von Franz Ohme, 1910.
Note: Under the authorship of Gustav Theodor Drobisch, the 9th edition of this title appeared in 1875 also in Leipzig by a publisher called Germann; available on the website of the Berlin State Library.

The 6th edition of 1871 is also available on the website of Digital Library Braunschweig.
In these older editions, all under the authorship of Gustav Theodor Drobisch, the episode bears the title "The Bad Jew, or: The Ride to the Windmill" (Der böse Jude, oder: Die Fahrt auf der Windmühle). The illustrations, though, are very different from those in the edition of 1910. The Karlsruhe Virtual Catalog lists a 5th edition of 1870; obviously, the book was very popular in the German Empire.

7

The Child-theft Motif in the Silent Film Era and Afterwards

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During the silent film era (1894–1927), the story of children who are stolen by 'gypsies' and then rescued/restored to their families resurfaces as one of the popular stock plots. I refrain here from analysing individual films and offer, instead, two points for further consideration: firstly, a listing of works that stage the motif under discussion, and secondly, an expanded annotated filmography.

The Films

1. *Rescued by Rover* (1905, UK)
2. *Two Little Waifs* (1905, UK)
3. *Ein Jugendabenteuer* (1905, UK)
4. *Rescued by Carlo* (1906, USA)
5. *The Horse That Ate the Baby* (1906, UK)
6. *The Gypsies; or, The Abduction* (1907, France/UK)
7. *The Adventures of Dollie* (1908, USA)
8. *Le Médaillon* (1908, France)
9. *A Gallant Scout* (1909, UK)
10. *Ein treuer Beschützer* (1909, France)
11. *Scouts to the Rescue* (1909, UK)
12. *Il trovatore* (1910, Italy/France)
13. *Billy's Bulldog* (1910, UK)
14. *The Little Blue Cap* (1910, UK)
15. *The Squire's Romance* (1910, UK)
16. *L'Enfant volé* (1910, France)

17. *L'Evasion d'un truand* (1910, France)
18. *L'Enfant des matelots* (1910, France)
19. *Le Serment d'un Prince* (1910, France)
20. *L'Oiseau s'envole* (1911, France)
21. *Children of the Forest* (1912, UK)
22. *Ildfluen* (1913, Denmark)
23. *La gitanilla* (1914, Spain)
24. *La Rançon de Rigadin* (1914, France)
25. *Zigeuneren Raphael* (1914, Denmark)
26. *Hearts of Men* (1915, USA)
27. *Mignon* (1915, USA)
28. *A Vagabond's Revenge* (1915, UK)
29. *The Twin Triangle* (1916, USA)
30. *L'Héritage convoité* (1916, France)
31. *Sunshine and Gold* (1917, USA)
32. *Love's Law* (1917, USA)
33. *The Gypsy Trail* (1918, USA)
34. *La Contessa Miseria* (1919, Italy)
35. *It Happened in Paris* (1919, USA)
36. *Los arlequines de seda y oro* (1919, Spain)
37. *Notti rosse* (1921, Italy)
38. *The Bohemian Girl* (1922, UK)
39. *La gitanilla* (1923, France) — the last silent film
40. *Revenge* (1928, USA)
41. *Stolen by Gypsies or Beer and Bicycles* (1933, USA)
42. *Melody Trail* (1935, USA)
43. *The Bohemian Girl* (1936, USA)
44. *Rascals* (1938, USA)
45. *Martingala* (1940, Spain)
46. *La gitanilla* (1940, Spain)
47. *The Gypsy and the Gentleman* (1958, UK)
48. *Kater Mikesch* (1964, West Germany), S. 1, Ep. 4: "Maunzerle"
49. *Nellys Abenteuer* (2016, Germany)

The films are arranged in a chronological order according to the year of production, so the listing makes it clear that the bulk of works exploiting the notorious motif were produced during the silent period (1894–1927): **39 titles** are short or full-length silent films, mostly black-and-white. In other words, with the introduction of sound, the motif almost instantly and entirely disappeared from the silver screen. What is more, from

Fig. 32. *Zigeuneren Raphael* (1914, Dir. unknown).

a classificatory point of view, nearly all of **10 titles** from the sound period (1928 – present) present borderline cases. They either stage the motif of child-abduction in a burlesque manner, as in *Stolen by Gypsies or Beer Bicycles* (1933, USA), and *The Bohemian Girl* (1936, USA), or subject it to a very broad interpretation as in *Revenge* (1936, USA), *Rascals* (1938, USA), and *The Gypsy and the Gentlemen* (1958, UK). In light of this tendency, the revival of the motif of 'gypsy' child-abduction – in a decidedly realist manner – in the recent German children's film *Nellys Abenteuer* (2016) is a surprising, if not symptomatic occurrence.

Before considering the sudden disappearance of the motif in the sound period, it is necessary to expound on some aspects of the filmography. Firstly, it needs to be stressed that the overview of the 39 silent films, exploiting the motif of 'gypsy' kidnappers, throws a skewed light on their country of origin. The listing includes twelve films produced in the UK, ten in France, nine in the USA, two in Italy, two in Spain, two in Denmark (**Fig. 32**); one film is a French-Italian co-production, and one film has an unclear origin, possibly either French or British. Looking at these figures, one is bound to wonder why, for example, there are no German silent films in the filmography, bearing in mind the fact that the source databases were compiled in Germany, predominantly

by German scholars (see the next section). Or one may erroneously assume that the child-theft motif was unpopular in German silent film. This last conjecture is quickly refuted by the fact that part of the information about the films in the source databases derives from Herbert Birret's *Verzeichnis in Deutschland gelaufener Filme: Entscheidungen der Filmzensur 1911–1920* (*Directory of Films Shown in Germany: Film Censorship Decisions 1911–1920*). That is why, for example, the British film *Ein Jugendabenteuer* (1905) is given in the listing here only with its German title; I have been unable to identify its original English title.

The answer to the puzzling fact as to why there are no German-produced films centred around the motif under discussion is hidden elsewhere: in my view, these figures say little about the actual number of films produced in a given culture but reflect rather the current state of silent film research conducted in each country. Here, I will put forward the hypothesis that the greater the number of silent films produced in Germany, or indeed in other European countries, that are inventoried and annotated, the higher the number of 'gypsy' child-theft stories that will be recorded. Secondly, drawing on the filmography, it is difficult to account for the frequency with which the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft surfaces during the silent period. Again, it has to be borne in mind that the filmography lists only films in which the motif is a central theme, but it does not account for films in which the motif is staged in a secondary plot or is just alluded to. Similar to the chapter on printed images, the aim of this chapter is to throw light on the popularity of the motif in early cinema, to create understanding of the scale of the phenomenon as well as the need of further, context specific research.

In conclusion, I offer some deliberation in an attempt to account for the sudden disappearance of the motif in sound film. All the artworks in the previous chapters point to the highly fictional nature of the 'gypsy' figure. This literary creation, however, has had a vital role in upholding the shared sense of reality radiated by the dominant narratives (myths or ideologies) of the majority society. As Yuri Lotman posits, the world-picture generated by the centre of the semiosphere[65] "will be perceived by its

65 "Semiosphere" is the name that Lotman gives to his model of culture. The basic structure of the semiosphere can be described in terms of a legislative or norm-setting centre and a boundary. To develop his theoretical paradigm, Lotman takes the isolated fact of human consciousness and uses it as a template. He explains that human consciousness is suitable to perform the function of a template because it can model all the qualities of the phenomenon that it intends to study – in this case, the phenomenon of culture. Lotman's model of culture is abstract and highly schematic (centre vs. boundary), yet simultaneously all-encompassing –

contemporaries as reality" (129). The 'gypsy' figure is a fantasy creation, yet vital in asserting the shared fantasy (=world-picture) by the norms of which the majority structures its life. It is easier to see through the fictional character of such shared realities in retrospect, when analysing past forms of social organisation and their worldviews (for instance, feudalism or communism/fascism). The 'gypsy' figure is one of the tools within the European imaginary used to validate what is perceived as real, and as such, this figure has remained for quite a while a blind spot in academic research. Here, I can refer again to Lotman who says that "whole layers of cultural phenomena, which from the point of view of the given metalanguage are marginal, will have no relation to the idealised portrait of that culture. They will be declared to be 'non-existent'" (129). He gives an example of writers who were classified as 'non-existent' and "who were ignored by scholarship as long as its point of view coincided with a normative view of the period" (129). If we accept the premise that the 'gypsy' figure is a marginal phenomenon in nation-building discourses, but one that simultaneously serves as a reality prop within the European imaginary, then we can consider the following working hypothesis as to why the child-stealing 'gypsy' disappears from the silver screen at the end of silent film era.

The introduction of sound, hence of film dialogue, brings with itself a new quality of (psychological) realism to film. The scenes in the story have to be expanded with spoken lines that transport in a believable manner the motives and the emotional states of the protagonists in their own voices. Thus, a metaphoric story of child-theft and recovery is difficult to reconcile with the sense of plausibility commensurate with sound film, so that the fictional world of the film would resonate with that which the majority society agrees is 'real'. In the narrative of 'gypsy' child-theft, there are two moments of transition from two diametrically opposed worlds and both these moments are hard to render in psychologically viable terms. It is hardy plausible that a high-born child would gladly embrace its life among 'gypsies' as it is naively and jokingly suggested in *The Bohemian Girl*, for instance. Nor is it plausible that an aristocratic child raised by social outcasts would easily resume its due place in society and seamlessly fit there through a love marriage. An individual who

comparable to a museum that contains exhibits from different periods of time, in different languages and with various instructions for decoding them (cf. 1990: 127). His model is valuable for my study because it opens up ample space for scientific investigation that deals with the underlying patterns of cultural processes without eclipsing their historic and interdisciplinary complexity.

has grown among uneducated 'gypsies' (often ridiculed for having a bad command of the dominant language) cannot, upon discovery of his/her true noble identity, suddenly switch to a more appropriate language register. Not in a story that claims to be a 'real' one. That is why the few sound films present the motif in a burlesque manner.

7.1 On the Film Selection Process

The films listed here have been identified with recourse to the more comprehensive ***Filmography of 'Gypsy' Films: 1897–2007*** (*Filmografie des 'Zigeunerfilms': 1897–2007*), compiled by the film team of the Cologne-based organisation Rom e.V.: Branka Pazin, Regina Schwarz, and Kurt Holl. In their work, the authors have relied, in turn, on the databases compiled by Heiner Ludwig Ross and Kinemathek e.V. Hamburg, Prof. Dr. Joachim S. Hohmann (University of Gießen), and Alain Antonietti (Paris). The resulting *Filmography of 'Gypsy' Films: 1897–2007* encompasses 2,500 film titles and as such can be considered to be a representative corpus of cinematic works on the 'gypsy' theme.

To identify the target films, I have used the key words "Kindesentführung" (child kidnapping) and "Entführung" (kidnapping) and I have taken in account the film synopses provided in the filmography. In addition to that, I have verified and expanded the available data with reference to IMDb, AFI, BFI, Filmographie Pathé, German Early Silent Film Database, Giornate del Cinema Muto, Silent Era, and Youtube. In the process, I have been able to identify some additional titles which are not included in the *Filmography of 'Gypsy' Films: 1897–2007*. Consequently, the here presented filmography includes a total of **49 titles** featuring the 'gypsy' child-theft motif.

The information for each film, where available, includes:

- the original title of the film, year of production and country of origin
- whether it is black and white or colour
- genre: whether it is a fictional film, a documentary or an animation
- the original length of the film, in feet or meters [66] for silent films, and in minutes for sound films

66 Silent films had an average frame rate from 16 to 22 frames per second (fps). So only if we know at what speed a film was shown (which we often do not), we could stipulate its running time. However, to assist readers who are not familiar with this

- the film location in archives
- the credits, in the following order: production company, director, cinematographer, script writer and/or source text, music, cast
- the alternative titles of the film
- the sources of information
- the film synopsis
- additional bibliographical material on the film or other type of information.

In the frequent cases, when several synopses are given in the *Filmography of 'Gypsy' Films: 1897–2007*, I have selected the more compact and the more relevant one, and, if necessary, I have translated it into English. In two cases – *Los arlequines de seda y oro* (1919, Spain) and *Stolen by Gypsies or Beer and Bicycles* (1933, USA), the synopsis has been written by me [R.M]. In two other cases – *Rascals* (1936, USA) and *Melody Trail* (1938, USA), I have opted for the longer synopsis to illustrate the convoluted plotting in stories about supposed 'gypsy' child-abduction and recovery. Whenever possible in the film synopses, I have placed the various references to 'gypsies' in inverted commas to highlight, as elsewhere in the text, the fictional nature of these figures.

Abbreviations

AFI	American Film Institute: catalog.afi.com
b&w	black and white
BFI	British Film Institute: bfi.org.uk
dir	director
DFI	Danish Film Institute: www.dfi.dk
FP	Filmographie Pathé: filmographie.fondation-jeromeseydoux-pathe.com
fps	frames per second
ft	feet
FZ	Filmografie des 'Zigeunerfilms': 1897–2007 (electronic database)
GCM	Giornate del Cinema Muto: www.cinetecadelfriuli.org

technological aspect of early films, I shall give one example of a film's length in feet and its approximate duration: Film No.1 *Rescued by Rover* – 400 ft/6 mins.

GEFD	German Early Film Database: www.earlycinema.uni-koeln.de
IMDb	Internet Movie Database: www.imdb.com
lgth	length
loc	location
m	meter
mins	minutes
mm	millimeter
prod	producer
SE	Silent Era: silentera.com

The authors of the *Filmography of 'Gypsy' Films: 1897–2007* have used varying abbreviations, such as "Herbert Birett", "Gifford" or "AFI Catalogue", when citing their filmographic or other sources, sometimes specifying the catalogue volumes, sometimes not. I have attempted, to the best of my knowledge, to provide the full bibliographical references, citing the first edition of the respective publication. Only in the case of the American film scholar John E. Stone, have I been unable to identify the source publication.

AFI Catalog	*The 1911–1920: American Film Institute Catalog of Motion Pictures Produced in the United States: Feature Films*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. *The 1921–1930: American Film Institute Catalog of Motion Pictures Produced in the United States: Feature Films*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989. *The 1931–1940: American Film Institute Catalog of Motion Pictures Produced in the United States: Feature Films*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. [online] *AFI Catalogue of Feature Films, The First Hundred Years 1893–1993*: catalog.afi.com.
Henderson	Henderson, Robert. *M. D.W. Griffith: The Years at Biograph*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970.

Herbert Birett	Birret, Herbert (Ed). *Verzeichnis in Deutschland gelaufener Filme: Entscheidungen der Filmzensur 1911–1920*. München: Saur, 1980.
Hervé Dumont	Dumont, Hervé. *Geschichte des Schweizer Films. Spielfiilme 1896–1965*. Schweizer Filmarchiv: Lausanne, 1987.
Raymond Chirat	Chirat, Raymond. *Catalogue des films français de long métrage, films de fiction, 1919–1929*. Cinémathèque de Toulouse, 1984.
Gifford	Gifford, Denis. *The British Film Catalogue 1895–1985*. London: Routledge, 1986.
V. Martinelli	Martinelli, V. *Il cinema muto italiano: i film della grande guerra: 1919*. Torino: Nuova Eri, 1995. Martinelli, V. *Il cinema muto italiano: i film degli anni venti: 1921*. Torino: Nuova Eri, 1996.
Registrant 1896–1914	Engberg, Marguerite. *Registrant over danke film 1896–1914* [Registration of Danish Films 1896–1914]. Copenhagen: Institut for Filmvidenskab, 1977. Vol 1–3.
G. Spagnoletti	Spagnoletti, G. (Ed). *Schermi germanici. Ufa 1917–1933, Mostra Internazionale del Nuovo Cinema*. Venezia: Marsilio, 1993.

7.2 Annotated Filmography

1. *Rescued by Rover* (1905, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 400 ft
prod: Hepworth Film Manufacturing Company
dir: Lewin Fitzhamon, Cecil M. Hepworth

camera: Cecil M. Hepworth
script: Mrs. Hepworth
cast: Cecil M. Hepworth, Mrs. Hepworth, Barbara Hepworth, Mrs. Smith, Blair (Rover)
aka: *Gerettet von Rover*
source: John E. Stone; AFI Catalogue; SE
synopsis: A 'gypsy' woman takes revenge for a denied charity by kidnapping the baby of a family. Fortunately, Rover, the dog of the family, leads the father to the 'gypsy's hideout. The main roles are performed by the family of the film pioneer Hepworth himself: father, mother, baby, and dog. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)
extra info: In 1906, the film was re-shot with the same crew. Length: 425 ft. Copies are available at Library of Congress Film Archive (paper print collection); BFI's National Film and Television Archive; Deutsches Filmmuseum, Frankfurt; Fundacion cinemateca, Argentina.

2. *Two Little Waifs* (1905, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
loc: Deutsche Kinemathek, Berlin
lgth: 500 ft
prod: Williamson Kinematograph Company
dir: James Williamson
aka: *Zwei kleine Wesen*
source: IMDb; Gifford No. 01206
synopsis: Children stolen by 'gypsies' flee. But they are returned to the alleged parents. Only when the house of the 'gypsies' burns, the children are given a new home. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

3. *Ein Jugendabenteuer* (1905, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film, partially coloured
lgth: 160 m
prod: Charles Urban Trading Company
source: Herbert Birett No. 648, 1912
synopsis: A 'gypsy' girl brings back a kidnapped child and is rescued from the fire. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)
extra info: *Komet* No. 1084; *Kostüme, Kulissen* No. 1084, 1905; Landeszensur Hamburg

4. *Rescued by Carlo* (1906, USA)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 500 ft
prod: S. Lubin
aka: *Gerettet durch Carlo*
source: AFI Catalog
synopsis: An almost identical remake of *Rescued by Rover* (1905, UK).

5. *The Horse That Ate the Baby* (1906, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 83.8 m
prod: Clarendon Film Company
dir: Percy Stow
aka: *Das vom Pferd verschluckte Baby*
source: IMDb
synopsis: A 'gypsy' steals a baby and the butcher sets it free. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.) "A horse eats a baby and is cut open by a vet who finds the baby alive inside." (IMDb)
extra info: *Komet* No. 1133; *Kostüme, Kulissen* No. 1133, 1906; Gifford No. 1464

6. *The Gypsies; or, The Abduction* (1907, France/UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 447 ft
prod: Urban-Eclipse
aka: *Die Entführung*
source: AFI Catalogue

7. *The Adventures of Dollie* (1908, USA)

b&w silent short fiction film
loc: Kinemathek, Hamburg
lgth: 713 ft
prod: Biograph
dir: D.W. Griffith
camera: Arthur Marvin
script: Stanner E.V. Taylor
cast: Charles Inslee (Evil Gypsy), Arthur V. Johnson (Father), Linda Arvidson (Mother), Mrs. George Gebhardt, Madeline West (Gypsy's Wife), Gladys Egan (Dollie)
aka: *Die Abenteuer von Dollie*
source: IMDb; AFI; Henderson*: The Years at Biograph*, Youtube
synopsis: "During a leisurely afternoon in the woods with his wife and little daughter Dollie, a man briefly steps away, and when he returns he finds a gypsy molesting his wife. He beats the gypsy, who swears vengeance as he runs away. The gypsy returns to his wife and wagon, and plots the abduction of the little girl. He kidnaps Dollie, hides her in a barrel, and makes his getaway, but as he fords a stream in his wagon, the rushing water carries away the barrel. It floats downstream and over a small waterfall. Farther downstream, two small boys who are fishing pull the barrel out of the water and extricate Dollie. She is reunited with her father." (AFI)

8. *Le Médaillon* (1908, France)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 185 m
prod: Pathé Frères
aka: *The Medal; Das Medaillon*
source: FP
synopsis: A small boy is kidnapped by 'gypsies' who mistreat him and beat him to make him learn all kinds of acrobatics. Six years later, the path of the little troop leads them to the city where the boy's mother lives. An old woman who has always been very good to him allows him to escape. He shows up at the home of his parents without knowing it. There, a servant gives him food and some money. But he is caught again by his torturers. On the way to the camp, the boy sees the young woman and runs towards her for protection. She notices the locket around his neck and recognises her son. She then goes to the police who arrest the band. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)

9. *A Gallant Scout* (1909, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 430 ft
prod: Manufacturer's Film Agency
aka: *Ein galanter Helfer*
source: IMDb, Gifford No. 02368
synopsis: "'Gypsies' kidnap a girl whose dog fetches a scout to rescue." (IMDb)

10. *Ein treuer Beschützer* (1909, France)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 225 m
prod: Films und Kinematographen Lux, Paris
source: GEFD; Herbert Birett

synopsis: A man takes care of a child kidnapped by 'gypsies' and brings it home. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)
extra info: *Komet* No. 1268 and no. 1270; *Kostüme, Kulissen* No. 1268, 1909; *Kostüme, Kulissen* No. 270, 1909; VUP, 17.07.1909. Photos can be found in *Erste Internationale Kinematographenzeitschrift*, No. 29, 1909.

11. *Scouts to the Rescue* (1909, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 550 ft
prod: Williamson Kinematograph Company
dir: Dave Aylott
script: Dave Aylott
cast: Frank Sutherland (The Gypsy), Mrs. Sutherland (Gypsy Woman), Dave Aylo
(Farmer Giles), Anita March (Mrs. Giles)
aka *Pfadfinder bei der Rettung, The Boy Scouts*
source: IMDb, Gifford No. 02322;
synopsis: "Scouts track gypsies and save a farmer's kidnapped child." (IMDb)

12. *Il trovatore* (1910, Italy/France)

b&w (hand-coloured) silent short fiction film
lgth: 435 m of which 370 in colour
prod: Il Film d'Arte Italiana/Série d'Art Pathé Frères (SAPF)
dir: Louis Gasnier
script: based on the drama of the same name by Antonia Garcia Gutierrez
cast: Francesca Bertini, Gemma Farina, Achille Vitti, Alberto Vestri
aka: *Der Minnesänger, Le Trouvère*
source: IMDb; Herbert Birett; SE; FP

synopsis: The count kills his own brother who was once stolen by 'gypsies' and then he learns the truth. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)
extra info: *Komet* Nr. 1314; *Pathé Woche*; *The Pordenone Silent Festival Catalogue* under catalogue No. 2269. Other film versions: *Iltrovatore*, (1910 UK), (1911), (1914 USA).

13. *Billy's Bulldog* (1910, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 152.4 m
prod: Cricks & Martin Films, London
dir: A. E. Coleby
aka: *Wilhelms Bulldogge*
source: IMDb; Herbert Birett; Gifford Nr. 2648
synopsis: "Drama. A bulldog leads police to gipsies who kidnapped its owner." (IMDb)
extra info: *Komet* Nr. 1323

14. *The Little Blue Cap* (1910, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 600 ft
prod: Hepworth
dir: Lewis Fitzhamon
source: IMDb; Gifford No. 02580
synopsis: "Crime. Boys save a small girl from gipsy kidnappers." (IMDb)

15. *The Squire's Romance* (1910, UK)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 700 ft
prod: Cricks and Martin
dir: A.E. Coleby
cast: Dave Aylott
aka: *Die Romanze des Gutsherrn*

source: IMDb; Gifford No. 02517
synopsis: "A squire saves a gypsy girl from a poacher, and weds her." (IMDb)

16. *L'Enfant volé* (1910, France)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 200 m of which 179 in colour
prod: Pathé Frères
aka: *Das gestohlene Kind*
source: Herbert Birett; FP
synopsis: Jacques, a four-year-old boy, stolen by 'gypsies', is enlisted in a travelling troupe. The child, accustomed to maternal caresses and tenderness, is now ill-treated, his delicate little hands and feet hurt from the daily flexibility exercises and long hours of torture. Meanwhile, in their castle, the parents despair after the disappearance of their boy and search in vain the surrounding areas. Fortunately, a girl from the band, perhaps also a stolen child, takes little Jacques under her protection and decides to organise an escape with her little fellow in misfortune. Guided by him, she finds the path to the castle. Then, leaving Jacques at the gate, she sadly continues down the road alone. But Jacques' parents, having learned about the brave little girl's conduct, start to look for her wishing to reward her. They find her when the drunken 'gypsies' have set her hut on fire and if it were not for the parents' providential help, the unfortunate girl would have fallen the prey of the flames. Adopted, she will be pampered and raised together with her little friend in suffering. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)
extra info: According to a report by the police censorship in Berlin and Dusseldorf, the film was banned for juveniles. Information about the film can be found in *Lichtbildtheaterbesitzer* (owners of motion picture theatres) and in the *Polizeizensurkarte* (police censorhisp card).

17. *L'Evasion d'un truand* (1910, France)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 200 m of which 171 in colour
prod: Pathé Frères
dir: Michel Carré
script: Michel Carré
cast: Harry Baur (Rob Rokers), André Bisson (Count of Suzeraire), Laura Lukas (Gypsy Sperata)
aka: *Banditten Robert Rokers Flugt*, *Die Flucht eines Gefangenen*
source: GEFD; IMDb; Herbert Birett; FP
synopsis: Drama. The scene takes place during the reign of Louis XI. The rascal Rob Rokers is in jail. An arrow flies into his cell, with an attached file and a letter. The letter says that the price for his freedom is to capture the 'gypsy' Sperata who is the mistress of the police chief, the Count of Suzeraire. But as Rob Rokers kidnaps Sperata, her brothers see him. They warn the police chief who seizes the rascal, frees Sperata and hands the prisoner to a fictive court that sentences him to death. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)
extra info: *Kinematographische Rundschau* No. 102, 1910; *Kostüme, Kulissen* No. 1302, 1910; *Pathe-Woche* No. 4, March 1910; CP No. 275; VUP, 26.03.1910

18. *L'Enfant des matelots* (1910, France)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 180 m
prod: Société Cinématographique des Auteurs et Gens de Lettres (SCAGL)
source: FP
synopsis: A little boy is stolen by a gang of 'gypsies' who teach him all the tricks and skill of their wandering life. A brave sailor, however, rescues him, takes him home to his wife and tells him that he can now follow his own path in life. The sailor is about to

go on a trip and entrusts the boy to another old sea wolf. The 'gypsies', though, have been looking for a way to take revenge and upon learning that the sailor is leaving, they lure him into a trap. After attacking him, many against one, they put him in a small boat and abandon him helplessly tied up in the open ocean. But the boy, having seen through his binoculars the boat adrift and having distinguished the man's head, quickly calls for help. A boat is put to sea and the sailor is soon rescued. Shortly after, the 'gypsies' are arrested and thrown into prison. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)

19. *Le Serment d'un Prince* (1910, France)

b&w silent fiction film

loc:	Svenska Filminstitutet/Swedish Film Archive, Stockholm
lgth:	175 m, 16 fps, Desmet colour, duplicating original tinting
prod:	Pathé
dir:	Max Linder
script:	Max Linder
cast:	Max Linder (Prince Jacques de Lacerda)
source:	GCM
synopsis:	"Discovered by the Swedish Film Institute, this print of the film, long believed lost, appears to lack only the opening, which might better have explained how we come to find Max, as Prince of Lacerda, in a liaison with a beautiful gypsy (?) lady, living in a caravan and blessed with a little daughter. After this, the story is told with admirable clarity and a minimum of intertitles. The first surviving title, "Un riche banquier vient proposer au Prince de Lacerda l'union de leurs enfants," introduces the Prince's aristocratic home, where the returning Prince learns that his father, the old Prince, has arranged a marriage with the daughter of a rich banker. The Prince (with very naturalistic and touching acting)

explains his situation and is spurned by his father. In the next scene, introduced with the title "Pour gagner sa vie," the Prince, in a clown uniform, is working as a street entertainer. This scene is particularly attractive, since Linder evidently shot it on location with real passers-by, who show the same mixture of puzzlement and amusement as the public at Kid Auto Races in Venice four years later. They are also required to act, turning their backs and scurrying away when the clown brings round his collecting bag. The final scene is introduced as "Trois ans après. Grande vedette au music hall". While the Prince, on stage, is performing some very nicely tricked acrobatics on a trapeze, the old Prince passes by the theatre and sees the billboards with his son. He enters the theatre, prepared to be enraged; but after the show, meeting his son and his family on the steps of the theatre, he is enchanted by his little granddaughter (suitably matured from the opening scene), and reconciled to his son in a big concluding embrace." (GCM, David Robinson)

20. *L'Oiseau s'envole* (1911, France)

b&w silent short fiction film

lgth:	285 m
prod:	Société Cinématographique des Auteurs et Gens de Lettres (SCAGL)
dir:	Albert Capellani
script:	Marcel Manchez
cast:	Henry Krauss (the gypsy), Suzanne Goldstein (Jeannette), Maurice Luguet, Eugénie Nau
source:	FP
synopsis:	Jeannette, the daughter of the Benoit farmers, tempted by the adventurous life of 'gypsies', decides to follow them. Hardly has she crossed the threshold of the trailer when her dream turns into the cruelest disillusionment. The spoiled and happy child, suddenly transplanted into the milieu of bandits,

is condemned to steal and to be an accomplice of her sad companions. One night, forced to watch out while they rob a farm, she is discovered by Dr. Lorieux, who comes to make a night visit. The unconscious Jeannette, saved thanks to the doctor's intervention, is brought back to her family and, having grown more serious after this hard ordeal, she will accept to become her savior's wife. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)

21. *Children of the Forest* (1912, UK)

b&w silent short fiction film
lgth: 425 ft
prod: Fitz Films (WI)
dir: Lewin Fitzhamon
script: Lewin Fitzhamon
cast: Roy Royston, Marie Royston
aka: *Kinder des Waldes*
source: Gifford No. 03422; IMDb
synopsis: "Boy and dog trail a gipsy who kidnapped his sister." (IMDb)

22. *Ildfluen* (1913, Denmark)

b&w, tinted silent fiction film
loc: Det Danske Filminstitut, København
lgth: 47 mins
prod: Kinografen
dir: Einar Zangenberg
cast: Einar Zangenberg (Rudi), Alfi Zangenberg (the Countess), Johanne Fritz-Petersen (Lilian, her daughter), Sophus Erhardt (Baron Silber), William Bewer (Michael, the gypsy)
aka: *The Firefly*, *La lucciola*
source: GCM
synopsis: "When a gypsy couple lose their child, they abduct the girl Lilian, who has sneaked into their caravan

to play with their performing monkeys. Lilian's playmate Ralph (named Rudi in the original Danish program booklet) swears to get her back. He finds the gypsies, but he cannot liberate Lilian. Instead, he convinces the gypsy Michael to let him come with them. Twelve years pass. Ralph and Lilian have grown to adulthood. An agent arranges for Lilian and Michael to travel to the big city to perform there. Ralph heads off on his own and gets a job as a chauffeur for Baron Silber. At the circus, Lilian gives a sensational performance as "The Firefly": a sort of butterfly dance, only performed while suspended from the circus dome. Silber is smitten, and Michael, a bastardly drunkard and gambler, suggests that she would willingly accept his entreaties. Silber takes her out motoring and tries to force himself on her, but Ralph intervenes and leaves the Baron cursing in the dust. Ralph brings Lilian home to be reunited with her mother after a separation of twelve years. Later, the three of them visit an old ruined tower nearby. The vengeful Michael traps them at the top of the tower and lights the fuse of a bomb below them, but the fearless Ralph saves the day."
(GCM, Casper Tybjerg)

extra info: Première on 18.08.1913; restored 2014

23. *La gitanilla* (1914, Spain)

b&w short fiction film

prod:	Barcinógrafo
dir:	Adrià Gual
camera:	Alfredo Fontanals, Juan Solá Mestres
script:	Rafael Marquina; based on Cervantes' tale of the same name
cast:	Elisa Beltrán, Joaquín Carrasco, Jaime Devesa, Gerardo Peña
source:	IMDb

24. *La Rançon de Rigadin* (1914, France)

b&w short fiction film
lgth: 365 m
prod: Pathé Frères
dir: Georges Monca
script: Prince
cast: Prince, Herman Grégoire, Charles Lorrain, Yvonne Harnold
source: FP
synopsis: The goddess of a hundred voices has made Rigadin famous even in the travelling caravans. This is how the young 'gypsy' Carmen Gaspardo falls in love with the great artist whom she has seen on the cinema screen. The beautiful girl's father and brother, having discovered her secret, decide to make use of it by attracting the illustrious comedian into an infamous trap. This is how Rigadin, thinking he is going on a love rendezvous, falls into the trap of the 'gypsies'. The latter claim a formidable ransom from the big company that stands behind the famous artist: ten francs for each one of his hairs! Even after the two accomplices notice that their prisoner has little hair on the top of the head, they double their price and apply a regenerative lotion on his skull. Fortunately, Carmen catches sight of him. At first amazed and delighted to find her beloved, she then tries to be useful and replaces the regenerative lotion with a depilatory. The two Gaspardos, deceived by the superb wig that she puts on Rigadin's head, lead their prisoner to Pathé Frères who accept the draconian conditions. But when they prepare to count his hairs, Carmen victoriously removes the wig, while our two thieves, disappointed and furious, flee. As for Carmen, she is hired at very advantageous conditions to play in a series of films with Rigadin and this will be the reward for her good deed. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)

25. *Zigeuneren Raphael* (1914, Denmark)

b&w silent fiction film
loc: Deutsche Kinemathek, Berlin
lgth: 1.103 m
prod: Filmfabrikken Danmark
dir: unknown
script: Richard Lund
cast: Emilie Sannom, Valdemar Moller, Zanny Petersen, Emanuel Greers, Else Weng, Rasmus Ottesen, Thorleif Lund, V. Vennerwald
aka: *Wildblud*
source: Registrant 1896–1914; DFI
synopsis: 'Gypsies' kidnap the newly baptised son of Baron Wilhelm. On the run, the baby is bitten by a snake, the wound burned out. This is reported to the Baroness. The child grows up with the 'gypsies'. He cannot reciprocate the love of the 'gypsy' girl Zelma. When he is twenty, the 'gypsies' encamp at the castle of the now widowed Baroness. Raphael falls in love with the Count's daughter. Only when his mother recognises him by the brand and he dismisses Zelma, nothing stands in the way of love. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

26. *Hearts of Men* (1915, USA)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 4 reels
prod: Charles K. Harris Feature Film Company
dir: Perry N. Vekroff
script: Charles K. Harris
camera: Harold Louis Miller
cast: Arthur Donaldson (Fritz Wagner), Beulah Poynter (Hilda Wagner), Frank Longacre (Hans Wagner), Ehtelmary Oakland (Amy Rapp), Nicholas Long, Jr. (bad little boy), Robert Fisher (Adolph Rapp), Jack McCauley (school child)
aka: *Männerherzen, School Bells*

source: IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1911–1920
synopsis: "Fritz Wagner develops a formula for a new scent in the German perfume factory where he and his best friend work. Slipping into the factory one night, the friend steals the formula and then disappears from the area. Years later, Fritz takes his family to America and sends his young son to a local school. Unable to speak proper English, Hans is aided in class by Amy, and the two children soon become close companions. By chance, Fritz meets up with his false friend, now a prominent figure in the American perfume business, and accuses him of the theft. During the ensuing argument, Fritz discovers that Amy is his rival's daughter and upon her next visit, he sends her away from his gate. On her way home, she is kidnapped by gypsies, but, disobeying his father's orders, Hans takes off to find his friend and rescues her from her captors. The innocent bravery of the children finally reconciles the two fathers, restoring harmony in the hearts of men." (AFI)

27. *Mignon* (1915, USA)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 5 reels
prod: California Motion Picture Corporation
dir: William Nigh
camera: Arthur Pawelson
script: Charles Kenyon
cast: Beatriz Michelena (Mignon), Clara Beyers (Filina), William Pike (Frederick), House Peters (Wilhelm Meister), Belle Bennett (Musette), Ernest Joy (Laertes), Andrew Robson (Lothario), Emil Krushe (Giarno), Harold B. Meade, Frank Hollins
source: SE; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1911–1920
synopsis: "The nobleman Lothario seduces Musette, the daughter of Giarno, the leader of the nearby gypsy camp. When Musette learns that Lothario

is married and has a baby, Mignon, she jumps off a cliff. For revenge, Giarno kidnaps Mignon. After Lothario's wife dies of grief, Lothario becomes a mad, wandering minstrel. When Mignon is sixteen, the young nobleman Wilhelm Meister, seeing her mistreatment, buys Mignon from Giarno. Mignon falls in love with Wilhelm, but she believes that he loves the actress Filina. At a fête, Filina locks Mignon, whom Lothario has befriended, into her room. Filina traps Wilhelm into proposing but as he announces their engagement, Lothario, acting on Mignon's earlier suggestions, sets the castle on fire. Wilhelm rescues Mignon, but because she still believes that he loves Filina, she leaves with Lothario. When an innkeeper recognizes Lothario and shows him a piece of the baby Mignon's belt, Lothario's memory returns. As Mignon has the other piece, she is revealed to be his daughter. Wilhelm finds them, and he and Mignon vow to marry." (AFI)

28. *A Vagabond's Reveng* (1915, UK)

b&w silent fiction film

lgth:	4.770 ft
prod:	Cunard
dir:	Wallett Waller
script:	Florence Britton
cast:	Agnes Glynne (Enid), Jack Morrison (Clive Emmett), Lyston Lyle (Lord Hayhurst), Alice de Winton (Sarah), Sydney Paxton (Doctor)
aka:	*Die Rache eines Vagabunden*
source:	IMDb; Gifford No. 05849
synopsis:	"A Lord's blind daughter is kidnapped by a gypsy but later her portrait is recognized by her father." (IMDb)

29. *The Twin Triangle* (1916, USA)

b&w silent fiction film

lgth:	5 reels
prod:	Balboa Amusement Producing Company
dir:	Harry Harvey
camera:	Joseph Brotherton
script:	Bess Meredyth
cast:	Jackie Saunders (Czerta/Madeline), Mollie McConnell (Mrs. Van Schuyler), Ruth Lackaye (Marco's mother), Edward J. Brady (Marco), William Conklin (MacCanley Byrnes), Robert Grey (Lord Fitz Henry), Joyce Moore
aka:	*Das doppelte Dreieck*
source:	IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1911–1920
synopsis:	"Czerta, a gypsy waif, lives with Marco and his old mother. After Marco's mother dies, Czerta discovers that as a baby she was stolen. When Marco tries to force his attentions upon her, she stabs him; then, leaving Marco for dead, she meets MacCanley Byrnes, a distinguished artist, visiting the area on a camping trip. She asks Byrnes to take her away with him, and he takes her to New York City where she receives an education. Byrnes is commissioned to paint Madeline van Schuyler's portrait, and finds himself very attracted to her because she resembles Czerta. Czerta becomes jealous when she sees them together and flees. Many years later, Madeline, her mother, and Byrnes attend a theatre dance performance starring Czerta. Mrs. Van Schuyler recognizes Czerta as her long-lost daughter and welcomes her into the family. Marco, who survived the stabbing incident years earlier, is also at the theatre seeking revenge. Byrnes realizes that he truly loves Czerta, and thus when Marco attempts to fulfil his vengeance Byrnes kills him and saves Czerta." (AFI)

30. *L'Héritage convoité* (1916, France)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 765 m
prod: Balboa Films (1914)
cast: Henri King, Jackie Saunders, Fred Whitman, Mollie McDonald, Madeleine Pardee
aka: *The Coveted Heritage*
source: FP
synopsis: On his dying bed, an old man remembers and tells a confidant that he had a little girl and that she was kidnapped when she was a child. The man dies. His presumptive heirs do everything to get the inheritance that should go to this little girl. In the meantime, she has become a beautiful woman, but she is a prisoner of a 'gypsy'. Fortunately, she is protected by a young 'gypsy'. She meets an old lady when she escapes and enters in a temple. She becomes the old lady's protégé, and an idyll forms between the young woman and the young pastor. But the presumptive heirs learn of her existence and hire bandits to lock her in a trunk and throw her in the water. The pastor starts looking for her and by chance overhears a conversation and calls the police who begin to follow the dishonest heirs. The girl is rescued by sailors and brought back to her protectress which gives enough time to capture the heirs and arrest them. (FP, translated into English by me, R.M.)

31. *Sunshine and Gold* (1917, USA)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 850 m/5 reels
prod: Balboa Films, (Pathé Exchange)
dir: Henry King
camera: Joseph Brotherton
script: Henry King; based on a story by Will M. Ritchey

cast: Baby Marie Osborne (Little Marx), Henry King (the driver), Daniel Gilfether (James Andrews), Neil Hardin (Dr. Andrews, his son)
aka: *Sonnenschein und Gold*, *Petite Cendrillon*
source: IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1911–1920; FP
synopsis: "Wandering away from the excitement of a party and stage play given at her house in honour of her fifth birthday, Little Mary falls into the hands of gypsies. When she overhears their chief discuss a ransom demand for her, Mary escapes into the woods during the still of the night. The next morning, she discovers an old cabin where she meets elderly James Andrews who, years earlier, hid himself and all his wealth in this uninhabited woodland after a quarrel with his son. The next day, when the distraught chauffeur whose negligence has been responsible for Mary's disappearance arrives, Andrews realizes that Mary is his son's daughter and decides to accompany her home. Thus, the old man and child return to the Andrews home where the whole family is reunited." (AFI)

32. *Love's Law* (1917, USA)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 5 reels
prod: Fox Film Corporation
dir: Tefft Johnson
camera: Maxwell Held
script: Mary Murillo
cast: Joan Sawyer (Innocence, later known as Moner Moyer), Stuart Holmes (Andre), Olga Grey (Jealousy), Leo Delaney, Richard Neill, Frank Goldsmith
aka: *Das Gesetz der Liebe*
source: IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1911–1920
synopsis: "When a young girl, known as Innocence, is sent away by her wealthy uncle, she wanders into the forest until she is found by Andre, the head of a

gypsy band. She is taken prisoner, but soon Rosella, who is in love with Andre herself, sets the girl free. The young Innocent then meets Standish Driscoll, her uncle's son who falls in love with her. Andre recaptures her, however, after which she again escapes and goes to the city. Taking the name of Moner Moyer, the girl becomes a famous dancer. She encounters Driscoll again who still wants to marry her, but she finally realizes that she is in love with Andre. She then forsakes her career and returns to him in the forest." (AFI)

33. *The Gypsy Trail* (1918, USA)

b&w silent fiction film

lgth: 5 reels

prod: Famous Players-Lasky Corporation

dir: Walter Edwards

camera: James Van Trees

script: Julia Crawford Ivers; based on Robert Housum's play *The Gipsy Trail* (New York, 4 Dec 1917)

cast: Bryant Washburn, Wanda Hawley Casson Ferguson

source: AFI Catalogue

synopsis: "Edward Andrews, a generous but faint-hearted young man, loves Frances Raymond who fancies herself an incurable romantic. Edward realizes that Frances would love to be whisked off and romanced, but because he is too timid to abduct her himself, he hires Michael Rudder, a breezy young Irish reporter, to do the deed. Michael's dashing manner entrances Frances, but the Irishman prefers the unencumbered life of a rover to that of a husband, and after he delivers her to the home of Edward's grandmother, he wanders away to a gypsy camp. Frances is so downhearted from losing Michael that the kindly Edward finds the reporter and convinces him to propose to the girl. Frances, however, moved by Edward's goodness, decides that he is the man she really loves and returns to him." (AFI)

34. *La Contessa Miseria* (1919, Italy)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 1.534 m
prod: Rodolfifilm
dir: Eleuterio Rodolfi
script: Guido Brignone, following a plot by Arrigo Frusta
cast: Henriette Bonarda (Etta, la "Contessa Miseria"), Rino Melis (Kruiff), Lola Visconti Brignone, Armand Pouget, Giuseppe Brignone, Domenico Marverti
aka: *Die Komtess Miseria*
source: IMDb; V. Martinelli, G. Spagnoletti
synopsis: Etta, the daughter of a count, is kidnapped by nomads. They give her the name Contessa Miseria (Countess Misery). The crime is revealed years later in prison. Kruiff wants to bring back Etta and the stolen jewels to her father but a gangster wants to stop him. Etta has listened to the conversation, bringing the jewels to safety and, against the voice of her heart, returns to her father and her life as 'Contessa della Torre'. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

35. *It Happened in Paris* (1919, USA)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 5 reels
prod: Tyrad Pictures Inc.
dir: David Hartford
camera: Madeline Matzen
script: Jack Cunningham
cast: Madame Yorska (Juliette/Yvonne Dupré), W. Lawson Butt (Romildo, the gypsy), Madame Dione (Creota), Charles Gunn (Dick Gray), Hayward Mack (Leon Naisson), Madame Sarah Bernhardt (Herself), David Hartford (Himself)
aka: *Es passierte in Paris*
source: IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1911–1920
synopsis: "Yvonne Dupré, the sole survivor of a once-noble French family, makes a modest living selling her

paintings to Leon Naisson who, unknown to Yvonne, resells them for exorbitant prices as the work of a famous artist. When Naisson confides to Yvonne's gypsy model Romildo that he sexually desires Yvonne who repulsed him, Romildo drugs his lover Juliette, a fiery Apache dancer who looks just like Yvonne and for one thousand francs delivers her to Naisson, who rapes her as she sleeps. When Naisson discovers that she is not Yvonne, he has Yvonne's American sweetheart Dick Gray see them together, causing Gray to upbraid the baffled Yvonne. Naisson then plants forgeries in Yvonne's studio and tips off the police who are closing in on his operation. After Yvonne's arrest, Juliette is told by her foster sister that she was stolen by gypsies as a child and is really Yvonne's twin sister. After Juliette exposes Naisson, Yvonne and Dick are reunited." (AFI)

36. *Los arlequines de seda y oro* (1919, Spain)

b&w silent fiction film

loc:	EYE Filmmuseum
lgth:	242 mins
prod:	Royal Films
dir:	Ricardo de Baños
camera:	Ramón de Baños
script:	Josep Amich i Bert
cast:	Raquel Meller, Asunción Casal, Lucien Aristy, Luisa Oliván, Juana Sanz, Francisco Aguiló
aka:	*La gitana blanca* (rerun in 1923, 74 mins)
source:	IMDb; Youtube
synopsis:	Drama. Count Rosicler discovers that his wife Elvira is unfaithful to him. To avenge himself, he leaves the countess and takes their two children away, abandoning them to a 'gypsy' couple. The boy and the girl are separated and reunite as adults; he is a famed bullfighter while she is a singer raised by 'gypsies'. (R.M.)

37. *Notti rosse* (1920, Italy)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 4.692 m
prod: Monaldi Film
dir: Gastone Monaldi, Riccardo Cassano
camera: Alfredo Donelli, Giuseppe Zavoli
script: Carlo Dell'Ongaro
cast: Gastone Monaldi (Lolly), Remo Cesaroni (Wenier), Fernanda Battiferri, Gisella Monaldi
source: IMDb; V. Martinelli, G. Spagnoletti;
Episode 1: Lo zigarno / Il sosia, 1. 405 m
Episode 2: Patto d´odio, 1. 250 m
Episode 3: 1. 082 m
Episode 4: 955 m
synopsis: Lord Risner's son dies in an Indian raid on the prairie. Jimm, outwardly like him, wants to take on his inheritance. Little Lolly stands in his way, he kidnaps her and entrusts her to a 'gypsy' caravan. Lolly escapes and Jimm, overcome by remorse, rushes from the battlements of the castle trying to escape, ending his criminal life. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

38. *The Bohemian Girl* (1922, UK)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 7.700 ft
prod: Alliance Film Corporation
dir: Harley Knoles
camera: René Guissart
script: Harley Knoles, Rosina Henley (adaptation), Alfred Bunn (libretto)
cast: Gladys Cooper (Arlene Arnheim), Ivor Novello (Thaddeus), C. Aubrey Smith (Devilshoof), Ellen Terry, Constance Collier (Queen of the Gypsies), Henry Vibart, Gibb McLaughlin
aka: *Das Bohème-Mädchen, La ragazza di Boemia, Flor da Boémia*

source: IMDb; BFI; Gifford No. 07450; New York Times: film review, 5 Feb 1923
synopsis: "Drama. Arlene is stolen by a band of gypsies. After fifteen years, she falls in love with Thaddeus who is also loved by the gypsy queen. Finally, the noble descent is revealed." (FZ)

39. *La gitanilla* (1923, France)

b&w silent fiction film
lgth: 1.650 m
prod: Films André Hugon
dir: André Hugon
camera: Alphonse Gibory, Julien Ringel
script: André Hugon; based on Cervantes' tale of the same name
cast: Ginette Madie (la gitanilla), Jeanne Bérangère (Dolorès), Marie-Louise Voisin
aka: *Die kleine Zigeunerin*
source: IMDb; Hervé Dumont: page 81; Chirat 1919–1929
synopsis: Gitanilla is a young girl, a daughter of rich townsmen, who was stolen by 'gypsies'. She became the mascot of these nomads. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

40. *Revenge* (1928, USA)

b&w fiction film, mono
lgth: 6.541 ft/7 reels/70 mins
prod: Edwin Carewe Productions, Art Cinema Corporation
dir: Edwin Carewe
camera: Al Green, Robert Kurrle
script: Finis Fox; based on Konrad Bercovici's story "The Bear Tamer's Daughter"
music: Hugo Riesenfeld
cast: Dolores Del Rio (Rascha), James Marcus (Costa), Sophia Ortiga, LeRoy Mason (Jorga), Rita Carewe, José Crespo, Sam Appel, Marta Golden, Jess Cavin

aka: *Zigeunerrache*, *Vergeltung*, *Dolores – Bjørnetæmmerens Datter*, *Kosto*
source: IMDb; New York Times: film review, 10 Dec 1928; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1921–1930; CineGraph
synopsis: "Rascha, the wild daughter of Costa, the Gypsy bear-tamer, swears revenge on Jorga, her father's enemy, when he cuts off her braids (a sign of disgrace among the Gypsies). Jorga later repents of his cruel act and cuts off the braids of all the other Gypsy women, returning Rascha's braids to her while she is sleeping. Rascha awakens and beats Jorga with a whip, exciting him to stifle her cries with his hot, passionate lips. Jorga later kidnaps Rascha and takes her to a mountain cave, where he sets out to tame her. Rascha comes to love Jorga and later helps him to elude the vengeance of her irate father." (AFI)

41. *Stolen by Gypsies or Beer and Bicycle*s (1933, USA)

b&w short fiction film, mono
lgth: 2 reels/21 mins
prod: Masquers Club of Hollywood, RKO Radio Pictures
dir: Albert Ray
camera: J. Roy Hunt, Jack MacKenzie
script: Walter Weems
cast: Charles Ray, Sam Hardy, William Farnum
source: IMDb; Youtube
synopsis: Burlesque. A 'gypsy' camp is pitched near the town of Hoecake, New Hampshire. Two gentlemen, Elmer Updike and Sinclair Sable, engage in rivalry over Benecia Beamish, the daughter of the Squire Beamish. Benecia falls for Elmer. Sinclair Sable pays Gypsy Joe, the king of the 'gypsies', to bring him Benecia. Two of Joe's men, in black face, kidnap the young woman. Running away in a horse-drawn carriage, Sinclair Sable and Benecia are followed by a group of cyclists. The chase moves across the map of the USA passing by an Indian and a tribal

settlement. In the end, the cyclists save the girl and bring her to her fiancée. (R.M.)

42. *Melody Trail* (1935, USA)

b&w fiction film, mono
lgth: 6 reels/1,667.25 m/60 mins
prod: Republic Pictures Corporation
dir: Joseph Kane
camera: Ernest Miller
script: Sherman Lowe, Betty Burbridge (original story)
cast: Gene Autry (Gene Autry, also known as Arizona), Ann Rutherford (Millicent Thomas), Smiley Burnette (Frog Millhouse), Wade Boteler (Timothy Thomas), Champion (Gene's horse), Buck (Souvenir), Willy Costello (Gypsy Frantz), Al Bridge (Matt Kirby)
aka: *Melodia Sertaneja, O Cigano Ladrão, Spur der Melodie*
source: IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1931–1940
synopsis: "Gene Autry, radio and phonograph star, and his friend, comedian Frog Millhouse, attend a rodeo where Gene falls for a spectator, Millicent Thomas. Millicent, who is being harassed by her father's former ranch hand, Matt Kirby, is delighted when Gene sings for the crowd, then beats Matt in a bucking bronco competition. That night, however, as Gene dreams of Millicent, his 1000 dollars in rodeo winnings are stolen by the gypsy Frantz, the husband of Perdita, a fortune-teller. The next day, while Millicent goes into town with her father, rancher Timothy Thomas, her dog, Souvenir, a compulsive thief, takes a detour into the gypsy camp and steals a basket containing Fratz and Perdita's baby daughter Rica. Millicent later discovers the infant and takes her in, not knowing who her parents are, and Frog and Gene, who end up going to work as cooks on the Thomas ranch, assume the baby to be hers. Gene, using the moniker 'Arizona', captures two wild stallions to impress Millicent and the cowgirls she has hired to replace Matt and his

men who have defected. However, after Souvenir steals Gene's cookbook, his efforts in the kitchen are far less successful, and the meal that he and Frog prepare for the cowgirls makes them all ill. In the meantime, Matt plots to rustle the Thomas' cattle, and while the cowgirls bathe in a pond, he steals their clothes in order to prevent them from protecting the herd. Frantz, searching for Baby Rica, recovers her from Millicent, but Gene pursues him, believing him to be a kidnapper. Gene captures and ties up Frantz, and Frantz returns the money he earlier stole from Gene, after explaining that Rica is his daughter. Gene then sees Matt and his men stealing the cattle and apprehends all eight of them, including Matt, single-handedly. After Gene saves the ranch, he and Millicent, and Frog and Cuddles, one of the cowgirls, are wed in a large, musical ceremony along with the other cowboys and girls, but the wedding is interrupted by the realization that Souvenir has stolen all their wedding rings." (AFI)

43. *The Bohemian Girl* (1936, USA)

b&w fiction film, mono

lgth:	6.489 ft/8 reels/71 mins
prod:	Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation
dir:	James W. Horne, Charley Rogers
camera:	Francis Corby, Art Lloyd, Walter Lundin
script:	based on the operetta by Michael W. Balfe
cast:	Stan Laurel, Oliver Hardy, Thelma Todd (Gypsy queen's daughter), Antonio Moreno (Devilshoof), Darla Hood, Jacqueline Wells, Mae Busch, William P. Carleton, Felix Knight (Gypsy singer)
aka:	*Dick und Doof werden Papa, La ragazza di Boemia, Helan og Halvan i zigøynerleiren, Cyganskie dziewcze, Zigenarflickan, Kaksi mustalaista, etc.*
source:	IMDb; AFI Catalogue of Feature Films 1931–1940

synopsis: "A band of Gypsies are camped outside the walls of Count Arnheim's palace. Oliver's wife kidnaps the Count's daughter Arline, then leaves the child and runs off with her lover, Devilshoof. Not knowing her true identity, Oliver, with the help of "Uncle" Stanley, raises the girl as his own. Years later, Arline, still unaware of her noble birth, is caught trespassing on the Count's grounds and is thrown into the dungeon. Meanwhile, Stanley and Oliver pass the time playing "fingers" and fumblingly ply their trade picking pockets. Finally, just when Oliver needs his help to rescue Arline, Stanley gets drunk while siphoning wine into bottles." (IMDb, Paul Penna)

44. *Rascals* (1938, USA)

b&w fiction film, mono

lgth: 8 reels/2.100 m/77 mins
prod: Twentieth Century Fox
dir: Bruce H. Humberstone
camera: Edward Cronjager
script: Robert Ellis, Helen Logan
cast: Jane Withers, Rochelle Hudson, Robert Wilcox, Borrah Minevitch, Steffi Duna
aka: *Little Dynamite, Little Gypsy, Gypsy, A Cigana, Ciganče, A Canção dos Ciganos*
source: IMDb; AFI Catalogue
synopsis: "After a gypsy caravan is chased out of a town, they pitch camp on the road and prepare "Mulligan stew" with the vegetables that were thrown at them as they left. When Gypsy, a rambunctious adolescent, whines that she wants meat, Gino, her thieving pal, and his gang capture a goose. During the meal, Tony, an ex-Yale football player, who has traveled with the gypsies since his marriage broke up because of his wife's unfaithfulness, rebuffs the flirtations of Stella, the fortune-teller. Just then, a woman in a fur coat at the top of a hill faints and falls. When the police arrive and order the gypsies

off private property, Tony hides the woman in his wagon. As they travel on, the woman revives and says that she cannot remember anything except that she was running away. Although Tony is skeptical of her story and cynical of her "type", Gypsy welcomes the woman, whom she calls her "Rawnie", which means "lady" in the Gypsy language, and teaches her how to tell fortunes. Meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Adams, a wealthy couple, learn that police have found the wrecked car belonging to their daughter, who vanished just before her wedding was to take place. The police think that the daughter ran away to avoid marrying fortune-hunting Baron von Brun. After Gypsy introduces Rawnie to patrons as the world's greatest gypsy fortune-teller, Stella, jealous, starts a fight. When Tony pulls Rawnie off Stella, she bites him. That night, when Rawnie goes to Tony's tent to apologize, Gypsy encourages the others to play romantic music. Tony insults Rawnie and she slaps him. He pushes her out of the tent; however, when he sees Stella throw a knife at her, he rushes to Rawnie and kisses her passionately. After the gypsy camp is put into quarantine because of an outbreak of mumps, Gypsy and Rawnie sneak out to make money in town to buy food. When a man accuses Rawnie of taking his tie pin and calls the police, Gypsy and Rawnie run, and Rawnie is hit by a laundry truck. After the doctor suggests that a previous blow at the back of her head may have been the cause of her amnesia, Tony finally believes that Rawnie has been telling the truth and has not just been using them to avoid another situation. The doctor states that an operation might restore Rawnie's memory, but that afterward, she might have no memory of the period during her amnesia. Despite Gypsy's plea that they not risk this, Tony makes plans to raise the money. After Gypsy convinces a specialist to do the operation, Rawnie at first does not want it because she has been happy with the gypsies and knows that there must

have been something frightening in her past from which she ran away. Tony convinces her; however, when Gypsy goes to see her after the operation, she does not recognize her. Soon Tony reads in the newspaper that Rawnie, identified as Margaret Adams, is going to marry Baron von Brun. Although Gypsy tries to encourage Tony to steal her away, he refuses. Gypsy then goes to the Adams house and tells Mrs. Adams that her daughter has a gypsy husband, who is irate and skilled at throwing knives. Gypsy is then locked into a room, as is Gino, who has tried to impersonate the husband. They send a pigeon back to their camp with a message, and Tony leads the gypsies to the house, where they disrupt the wedding. Gypsy has Gino play romantic gypsy music, and Margaret, recognizing Tony, says his name and kisses him. Gypsy then arranges for them to be married." (AFI)

45. *Martingala* (1940, Spain)

b&w fiction film, mono

lgth:	88 mins
prod:	España Films
dir:	Fernando Mignoni
camera:	Ricardo Torres
script:	Fernando Mignoni; based on a book by Antonio Quintero
cast:	Lola Flores, Manuel Arbó, Rafael Arcos, Dolores Cortés, María del Carmen Merino
aka:	*Excuse, La copla andaluza*
source:	IMDb
synopsis:	An Englishwoman would like to buy a 'gypsy' boy who comes from a poor 'gypsy' family from Andalusia. The foreigner is cheated, however. She gets a stolen boy whose skin is artificially coloured. Later, he will be returned to his parents. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

46. *La gitanilla* (1940, Spain)

b&w fiction film

loc:	Filmoteca Espagnola
lgth:	2.359 m/85 mins
prod:	C.I.F.E.S.A.
dir:	Fernando Delgado
camera:	Heinrich Gärtner
script:	Rafael Gil, Antonio Guzmuán Merino, Juan de Orduña; based on Cervantes' tale of the same name
music:	Rafael Martinez, José Ruiz de Azagra, Juan Quintero
cast:	Estrellita Castro (Preciosa), Concha Catala, Rafaela Satorres, Soler Leal, Juan de Orduña, Antonio Vico, Manel González, Manuel Arbó, Pablo Hidalgo
aka:	*Die kleine Zigeunerin, La gitana, Cigana*
source:	IMDb, Filmoteca Espagnola
synopsis:	The film is about the love of the noble knight Don Juan de Cárcamo for the 'gypsy' Preciosa. Instead of marching to Flanders, he moves to the 'gypsy' camp for her, changes his name, and goes through the ups and downs of life with the 'gypsies'. Ultimately, it is discovered that Preciosa is also of noble origin and that the 'gypsies' had abducted her years ago. Both get their old names again and decide to marry. (FZ, translated into English by me, R.M.)

47. *The Gypsy and the Gentleman* (1958, UK)

colour fiction film, mono

lgth:	107 mins
prod:	Maurice Cowan Productions, The Rank Organisation
dir:	Joseph Losey
camera:	Jack Hildyard
script:	Janet Green; based on Nina Warner Hooke's novel *Darkness I Leave You*
music:	Hans May
cast:	Melina Mercouri (Belle), Keith Michell (Sir Paul Deverill), F. Robson, P. McGoohan, J. Laverick, L. Brook, C. Austin

aka: *La zingara rossa*, *Dämon Weib*
source: IMDb; Gifford No. 12459
synopsis: "Belle (Melina Mercouri) is a tempestuous gypsy girl who is after Sir Paul Deverill (Keith Michell). Her plan is to marry him and take him for every cent he has before moving on to other lovers." (IMDb). "The poor nobleman's gypsy wife claims his sister is insane to obtain her legacy." (FZ)

48. *Kater Mikesch* (1964, West Germany), *S. 1, Ep. 4: "Maunzerle"*

b&w children's TV puppet play
lgth: 30 mins
prod: Hessischer Rundfunk, Augsburger Puppenkiste
dir: Harald Schäfer
camera: Horst Thürling
script: Manfred Jenning; based on Josef Lada's book in Otfried Preußler's translation
music: *Hermann Amann*
cast: Max Bößl, Manfred Jenning, Herbert Meyer
source: IMDb; stars-an-faeden.de
synopsis: Tomcat Mikesch is on his way to the big, wide world which, for him, is only twenty kilometers away from Holleschit. He has weathered an adventure with the robbers, another with the 'Gypsies' proves to be much more dangerous. Mikesch is held a prisoner. Paschik the Pig and Bobesch the Goat, who are left behind, are very sad about Mikesch's excursions. But in the meantime, they have discovered a new playmate in the small kitten Maunzerle. They teach it to talk and are surprised when Maunzerle, with a new suit, is allowed to go to school. (hr, www.fernsehserien.de, translated into English by me, R.M.)

49. *Nellys Abenteuer* (2016, Germany)

colour children's fiction film, Dolby Digital

lgth:	98 mins
prod:	INDI Film
dir:	Domink Wessely
camera:	Knut Schmitz
script:	Uta Kolano, Jens Becker
cast:	Flora Li Thiemann, Kai Lentrodt, Julia Richter, Hagi Lăcătuş, Raisa Mihai
aka:	*Nelly's Adventure*
source:	IMDb
synopsis:	"Thirteen-year-old Nelly's holiday in Romania takes a very dramatic turn when she accidentally discovers her family's secret plan to relocate to beautiful Transylvania. Running away to avoid the reality of her fate, she walks straight into the hands of ['gypsy', my insertion, R.M.] kidnappers! Their leader is an unscrupulous German engineer, plotting to destroy her father's energy project by forcing the family to leave the country. Together with the help of the mysterious Mr. Holzinger, Nelly's parents mount a desperate search for their daughter. Nelly, in turn, befriends two young Roma siblings, Tibi and Roxana, who aide her in her adventurous escape. Together, they cross mountains and rivers, flee from a dungeon, board a moving train, 'borrow' a car and become the heroes of the day!" (german-films.de)

8

Concluding Words

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In the present case study, I have explored the media journey of the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft, drawing a huge arc between seventeenth-century literature and twenty-first century film. By focusing on a number of paradigmatic works of art, the research throws light on the motif's literary origins, on its archetypal narrative structure as well as on its visual forms. A special point has been made to analyse the colour coding of bodies in texts and images and to highlight the racialised/antigypsy and nationalist uses the latter have been put to. Also, as far as possible, I have made a comprehensive survey of the motif's visualisations, (re-) interpretations and adaptations to different visual media, elaborating on its multiple layers of meaning and functions.

The current exploration and collection of artworks has started with a review of Cervantes' tale "La gitanilla" (1613), moving through seventeenth-century Dutch history painting, then taking a cursory look at nineteenth-century printed images – mostly from England and Germany – to end up with an annotated filmography of 49 cinematic works, produced in Western Europe. Against this backdrop, it is easy to observe that in the time span between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft migrated from history painting, deemed to be the highest form of art, and spread into popular culture, making its way to nursery rhymes. The central argument put forward in the book is that the persistent and influential story of children-stealing 'gypsies' has been used by European societies, for some centuries now, as a malleable tool for identity construction, negotiation and consolidation on two distinct but intertwined levels: social and

'ethno-racial'. The staying power of the motif has been identified as lying in its initiatory power to confer 'whiteness' both on different social strata – from the high nobility to the working classes – and on different national majorities across Europe.

9

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Antiziganismusforschung interdisziplinär
Interdisciplinary Studies in Antigypsyism

Drawing on a number of paradigmatic works of art, the book explores the motif of 'gypsy' child-theft and its visualisations. The analytical focus is on the colour coding of bodies in texts and images and their racialised/antigypsy uses. Offering a comprehensive survey of the motif's adaptations to different visual media, the author elaborates on its multiple layers of meaning and its functions. The analysis starts with a critical review of Cervantes' tale "La gitanilla", moving through seventeenth-century Dutch history painting to take a cursory look at nineteenth-century printed images, and concludes with an annotated filmography of 49 cinematic works.

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