

# Introduction: On the Normalcy of Antigypsyism in Film

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Antigypsyism<sup>1</sup> is a state of normality, both on and off the big screen.

Antigypsyism is so normal to the European eye that hardly anyone has thought of asking why ‘gypsies’ in film should always be portrayed, metaphorically or not so metaphorically, as ‘black.’ No filmmaker has ever considered casting a blonde Roma beauty to impersonate the main ‘gypsy’ figure in a fiction film. One exception is Charlie Chaplin’s silent comedy *A Burlesque on Carmen* (1915), which presents, tongue in cheek, the most popular *femme fatale* in cinema<sup>2</sup> as a blonde. When filmmakers cast for ‘gypsy’ characters, especially among Roma professional and non-professional actors, they seem

- 1 For a working definition of antigypsyism, consult the Reference Paper drafted by the Alliance against Antigypsyism: Antigypsyism – A Reference Paper, accessible at: [Antigypysim.eu](http://Antigypysim.eu). [Accessed: 19.9.2019]. For an extensive discussion of the concept, see End, Markus: Antiziganismus. Zur Verteidigung eines wissenschaftlichen Begriffes in kritischer Absicht, in: Antiziganismus. Soziale und historische Dimensionen von „Zigeuner“-Stereotypen, Heidelberg 2015, pp. 54–72.

A note on the terms used here is in order: In this introductory text, a principle distinction is made between the stigmatising phantasm ‘gypsy’ and the self-designation Roma, where the latter is used to refer to actual individuals and/or groups of people. This conceptual distinction between the fictional construct and actual people is at the core of Antigypsyism Studies and runs through the entire volume. However, as the reader may observe, many of the volume’s authors have devised their own sets of discursive categories in an attempt to account for the fictional construct ‘gypsy,’ on the one hand, and for filmic representations of Roma, on the other hand, as well as for phenomena on the blurry borderline between fiction and socio-historic reality. These varying analytical terms are, as a rule, accompanied by short definitions or explanatory notes. In a similar way, the volume editors have preserved the variety of gender categories that the authors have chosen to use in their papers, led by the understanding that the preference for one term over another reflects each author’s position on gender language politics.

- 2 Prosper Merimee’s tale “Carmen” is the most frequently filmed narrative in the history of cinema, as Ann Davies and Phil Powrie demonstrate in their annotated filmography *Carmen on Screen*; Davies, Ann/Powrie, Phil: *Carmen on Screen. An Annotated Filmography and Bibliography*, Woodbridge 2006, p. ix.

pre-programmed to select the darker individuals. Anyone who would take the time to look around though, would quickly find out that fair Roma are far from being a rarity and that the members of this minority are, in fact, phenotypically as diverse as most other ethnic groups in Europe.

Antigypsyism is so ubiquitous that feature films from the four corners of Europe stylise and foreground, in a self-congratulatory manner, national majorities as ‘white’ as opposed to the ‘black’ minority. This black-and-white lens of perception is so deep-seated that in 2013, when Greek police officers saw a four-year-old blonde girl in the home of a swarthy Roma couple, they automatically assumed that this is a case of child kidnapping. The news and the photographs of the allegedly stolen blonde Maria travelled with the speed of light reaching in no time the front page of *The New York Times*. Later, when it turned out that Maria was a Bulgarian Roma being fostered by the family of Greek acquaintances, unsurprisingly, the media lost interest in the story<sup>3</sup> as well as in the destiny of its ill-treated and publicly humiliated protagonists.

Antigypsyism is so natural for the silver screen that filmmakers do not hesitate to justify their choices with arguments of dramaturgical nature. Films thrive on stark contrasts and, naturally, the motif of child-theft provides the greatest possible rift for the hero’s fall: a dramatic descent from the world of European ‘whites’ into the world of European ‘blacks,’ where the colours black and white conveniently designate a conflation of social and ‘ethno-racial’ disparities. For that reason, it is probably not surprising that D. W. Griffith, the Father of Film and the author of the ‘white’ supremacist drama *The Birth of a Nation*, was ushered into the filmmaking business by a story about the kidnapping of a ‘white’ girl-child, where the perpetrator is, unsurprisingly, an adult ‘gypsy’ male. Griffith’s debut film *The Adventures of Dollie* (1908) is just one of the many silent films<sup>4</sup> that lucratively exploited the notorious motif. Even Charlie Chaplin tried his hand at this story in his otherwise charming romance *The Vagabond* (1916).

Antigypsyism is so run-of-the-mill, so widely accepted that in 2014, the film project *Nelly’s Adventure* – its main theme and title wearily redolent

3 See Jara Kehl’s article “The Case of ‘Maria’ – the Worldwide Stigmatization of Roma,” which sums up the biased media coverage, the story’s domino effect in other countries, as well as the response of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma; Kehl, Jara: The Case of “Maria” – the Worldwide Stigmatization of Roma, accessible at: <https://www.romarchive.eu/en/politics-photography/politics-photography/case-maria-worldwide-stigmatization-roma/>. [Accessed: 19.9.2019].

4 As to the motif’s virulence during the silent film era, see the annotated filmography in Mladenova’s book *Patterns of Symbolic Violence*; Mladenova, Radmila: *Patterns of Symbolic Violence. The Motif of ‘Gypsy’ Child-theft across Visual Media*, Heidelberg 2019, pp. 129–172, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17885/heiup.483>.

of *The Adventures of Dollie* – received financial backing from a number of German state-funded institutions,<sup>5</sup> their joint contribution amounting to over 935.000 Euro taxpayer’s money. In this film, children and youth are invited to empathise with the dramatic descent of blond and blue-eyed Nelly Klabunt who sets off from her sun-lit, affluent, middle-class neighbourhood in Schwäbisch-Hall to find herself abducted by ‘gypsy’-looking thugs and brought into the shady, painfully impoverished settlement of Roma underclass, located in the middle of nowhere in Romania. There, Nelly befriends two Roma children, Tibi and Roxana, who assist her on her hero’s journey. Interestingly enough, none of the Roma characters in the film are endowed with a surname.

Here, I would leave it to the reader to decide if many German filmmakers would ever consider and, more importantly, secure funding for a well-intentioned narrative in reverse: an edifying story about auburn-haired Nelly (without a surname) whose discordant German working-class family has lived for decades on social welfare in a run-down area and who suddenly experiences a dramatic ascent by befriending fair-haired Roma kids (with surnames) from a closely-knit, well-to-do family and whose home is located in a friendly, upbeat neighbourhood in the capital of Bucharest. Certainly, finding character prototypes in the pro-filmic reality would pose the least problem for the filmmakers, considering the readiness of Dominik Wessely and Jens Becker, the director and the scriptwriter of *Nelly’s Adventure*, to embark on research trips to Romania. As emphasised in their official statements, the filmmakers’ team made several visits to Sibiu and its surroundings in search of ‘authentic’ faces and shooting locations. Yet, one cannot fail to notice that the filmmakers’ interest in Roma ‘authenticity’ and culture is unswervingly fixated on the poor of the poor.<sup>6</sup>

5 The funders of the film include MFG Filmförderung Baden-Württemberg, Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung, Deutscher Filmförderfonds, Filmförderungsanstalt, Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg, BKM (for the script).

6 “Yes, the inhabitants of the Roma village that we show live below the poverty line, just as over 25% of all Romanian Roma – a 6× higher percentage than in the entire Romanian population (according to a 2009 study published by the Romanian government). (...) At the time of our research, the social assistance rate per person in the villages that we visited was 25 euros per month”; in: Statement by Prof. Jens Becker to Pavel Brunssen’s Assessment of the Film *Nelly’s Adventure*, Berlin, 10.9.2017, p. 3. [My translation into English, R.M.]. (“Ja, die Bewohner des von uns gezeigten Romadorfes leben unter der Armutsgrenze, so wie über 25% aller rumänischen Roma – ein 6× höherer Prozentsatz als in der rumänischen Gesamtbevölkerung (Angaben nach einer Studie der rumänischen Regierung von 2009). (...) Zum Zeitpunkt unserer Recherchen betrug der Sozialhilfesatz pro Person in den von uns besuchten Dörfern umgerechnet 25 Euro im Monat”; in: Statement von Prof. Jens Becker zum Gutachten von Pavel Brunssen zum Film „Nellys Abenteuer“, Berlin, den 10.9.2017, S. 3).

After *Nelly's Adventure* (2016) was aired in 2017 on public TV in Germany, it aroused indignation in many people, in Roma self-organisations and various other institutions, and rightly so. In the present volume, Pavel Brunssen's contribution offers a critical overview of the public debate that surrounded the film broadcast. Stressing the age-old antigypsy tropes that the brainchild of Dominik Wessely and Jens Becker re-produces, Brunssen argues that well-intended films can, also, wittingly or unwittingly, breathe life into discriminatory stereotypes (in reference to Jörg Schweinitz). One main reason why stock characters are so readily employed by filmmakers and for that matter so easily decoded by audiences is the fact that they form part of the collective visual memory. According to the scholar, the emphasis in the film analysis should fall on latent meanings and subconscious biases, approaching the fictional figures in *Nelly's Adventure* as symptoms of society's mentality. Brunssen also takes a critical stance on the impact study conducted by Maja Götz and Andrea Holler from the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television, highlighting shortcomings in its methodology and basic assumptions.

I could not agree more with his critical points: the evaluation of the film's impact was nothing but a rash and defensive reaction in the guise of a scientific study. It had the diplomatic aim of supporting the filmmakers' position in the eyes of the public by scaling down the harsh criticism that was voiced against the film's antigypsy ingredients. In the long run, though, the survey does little service to the German filmmaking industry or to the general public. It only makes clear that its authors have little understanding of racism – antigypsyism being one of its particularly complex forms – and of the perfidious ways racism manifests itself in artworks. One of the authors' main conclusions, namely that children spectators are not affected by the racist stereotypes, because they do not see a difference between Roma – who are triple branded in *Nelly's Adventure* as criminal, beggarly and 'black' – and Romanians, has a smack of the similarly racist discourse of balkanism (in reference to Maria Todorova<sup>7</sup>).

What is more, the exchange of arguments and official statements pro and contra *Nelly's Adventure* has exposed certain blind spots in public discussions in Germany as well as the gaping research gap on the intersection of antigypsyism and film studies. So, in February 2018, academics from various fields, but also filmmakers and minority representatives gathered in Berlin to discuss their research outputs, personal testimonies and examples at the international conference "Antigypsyism and Film," and the current bilingual volume is a

7 Todorova, Maria: *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford 1997. An insightful complementary reading here is the essay "It must come from Europe.' The Racisms of Immanuel Kant" by Wulf D. Hund, in: Hund, Wulf D. / Koller, Christian / Zimmermann, Moshe (eds.): *Racisms Made in Germany*, Berlin 2011, pp. 68–98.

documentation of the conference proceedings. Organisers of the conference are the Central Council and the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, the two bodies that initiated the public debate around *Nelly's Adventure*, as well as the Society for the Research of Antigypsyism (GfA). Two important partners of the conference are the Research Centre on Antigypsyism at Heidelberg University, and goEast Festival of Central and Eastern European Film, Wiesbaden.

While planning this very first academic gathering around the topic of "Antigypsyism and Film," it has been our specific goal of bringing together acclaimed scholars and junior researchers, filmmakers and human rights activists, both Roma and non-Roma, both experts from Germany and abroad as a way of highlighting the urgency and the scope of the topic, but also in an attempt to raise the level of public deliberations in Europe, and more importantly, of film production. The conference has been conceived as a platform to address a number of unmet needs, and for the sake of emphasis and clarity these needs are summarised here, with a reference to the relevant volume sections:

There is a need to shine a light on the normalcy of antigypsyism, pinpointing its omniscience in national cinemas across Europe, and beyond.

There is a need to deepen the scholarly understanding of the workings of antigypsyism in the medium of film and to closely examine its semantic structures, its visual forms as well as its political, social, psychological and aesthetic functions both on a national and supranational level. See Section One: Antigypsyism in the Medium Film.

There is a need to create a common language and a shared understanding among academics across disciplines, among film funders, film festival curators and filmmakers, human rights activists and the general public as to what constitutes cinematic antigypsyism. See Section Two: The Question of Ethics.

There is a need to bring to the foreground alternative films, ones that display a self-reflective awareness of antigypsy motifs and conventions, and that come up with successful artistic solutions to counter the latter. See Section Three: Strategies of Subversion.

Finally, there is a need to examine the phenomenon of antigypsyism in a contrastive comparison to other forms of radical Othering, again specifically in the medium of film, in order to make its manifestations strange and thus less normal, exposing antigypsyism for its pathology, for its dehumanising violence and for the crippling effect it has on minorities and national majorities alike. Both on and off the silver screen. See Section Four: Antigypsyism in Comparison.

ROMANI ROSE, chair of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, opened up the conference with a welcoming speech, which is published here in a re-worked form under the title "The Power of Antigypsy Images" (in German).

He underlines the need for ethical categories and reflections in filmmaking at all levels and by all institutions involved.

The contributions in the volume are organised in four thematic sections. The papers in SECTION ONE examine the workings of antigypsyism in the medium of film and they do so from various vantage points.

The opening article in SECTION ONE, “Questioning ‘Gypsy’-themed Films and Their Technology of Truth Production” (in German) by RADMILA MLADENOVA provides a rough sketch, a freehand map of cinematic antigypsyism that aims at revealing the true scale of this phenomenon in global culture. Drawing on a comprehensive film corpus, the paper locates antigypsy films – along the temporal axis – from the dawn of cinema to present day; in terms of cultural space, it cites concrete film examples from a range of national cinemas: American, British, Bulgarian, Czechoslovak, Danish, Finish, French, German, Macedonian, Polish, Russian, Serbian, etc. The assessment of antigypsy films requires a made-to-measure analytical approach that takes into consideration the complex interplay of film production politics but also the film’s narrative content, visual aesthetics, self-marketing strategies as well as socio-political functions. When subjected to such an analysis – outlined in the paper as an algorithm of questions – it becomes evident that antigypsy films stage an ‘ethno-racial’ masquerade, one that is akin to blackface minstrel shows in its production matrix and functions.

HABIBA HADZIAVDIC and HILDE HOFFMANN apply their critical lens to one particular element of the *mise-en-scène* in antigypsy films – the setting. In their volume contribution “Filmic Antigypsyism: On the Trope of Placelessness” (in German), the scholars review groups of works produced at the two temporal poles of cinematic art – early films from the period between 1890 and 1925 like *Two Little Waifs*, *Zigeunerblut*, or *Das Mädchen ohne Vaterland* and current film production from the years 2005 to 2018, works like *The Forest is Like the Mountain*, *Nellys Abenteuer* or *À bras ouverts*. As the title of their paper betrays, ‘gypsy’ figures in film are persistently associated with tropes of placelessness. The numerous examples provided by the authors are organised around three thematic areas: “on the road,” “in the open” and “non-places” where the ‘gypsy’ camp stands out as the dominant image. According to the authors, the spatial trope of the ‘gypsy’ camp facilitates narratives driven by binary oppositions, where one’s own homogenised culture is juxtaposed to the homogenised culture of the Other. By focusing attention on the central cinematic tropes of space and their functions for the majority society, Hadziavdic und Hoffmann want to highlight the need for alternative (re-)presentations of Roma that move beyond antigypsy stereotypes.

To Hadziavdic und Hoffmann’s collection of non-places HANS RICHARD BRITTNACHER adds another particularly memorable image of homelessness:

a house hanging up in the sky. In his paper “The Gypsy Grotesques of Emir Kusturica: Balkan, Pop and Mafia” (in German), Brittnacher engages in a critical close reading of *Time of the Gypsies* (1989), worldwide one of the best known ‘gypsy’-themed films, in which, as the scholar makes a point of stressing, Roma are unabashedly used to impersonate the director’s lurid fantasy of ‘gypsies.’ The film’s original title *Dom za vešanje*, literally meaning ‘a home to hang up,’ not only gives a key to the film’s fictional universe but is also re-created in one of its scenes, presenting a condensed visual metaphor of the eternal ‘gypsy’ uprootedness. As Brittnacher convincingly argues, the central aesthetic principle of Kusturica’s works is the grotesque (in reference to Michail Bachtin), and he goes on to uncover the countless intertextual references that make Kusturica’s films so irresistibly fascinating. Among the directors whose visions and ideas resurface in *Time of the Gypsies* or later in *Black Cat, White Cat* (1998), one can recognise Federico Fellini, Alfred Hitchcock, and Andrei Tarkovsky, to name but a few.

FRANK REUTER’S article “Constructions of the ‘Gypsy’ in NS Films: a Comparative Analysis” (in German) is an exploratory study in the under-researched field at the interface of antigypsyism and film production during the Third Reich. The scholar begins by observing that the role of ‘gypsy’ stereotypes in the countless entertainment films produced between 1933 and 1945 is still a neglected topic. He examines in minute detail two films of that period whose histories of origin and focus could not be more different. The first is the little-known Hungarian entertainment film *Zwischen Strom und Steppe* (Géza von Bolváry, 1938); the second is Leni Riefenstahl’s last fiction film *Tief-land/Lowlands* (1954) shot between 1940 and 1944. Riefenstahl’s film has been an object of academic and public debates over many years, after it was uncovered that the filmmaker recruited Sinti and Roma from internment camps to perform as film extras and that they were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau after the film was shot. Frank Reuter analyses the iconography in the two film productions, focusing on the female ‘gypsy’ figures and the instrumental use made of them at various levels – dramaturgy, figure constellations, visual language, political and ideological context.

Leni Riefenstahl’s film *Lowlands* (1954) is used as an advantageous ground for comparison in the next volume contribution “Passings to the Margin: Berlin, 1932” by ANDREA PÓCSIK. The scholar foregoes a close reading of the three films she discusses in her text, namely *Blue Light* (1932), *Lowlands* (1940–1954) and *Urban Gypsies* (1932); instead, the attention is focused on the affectedness of their makers – Leni Riefenstahl and the Hungarian filmmaker László Moholy-Nagy. Central point of interests is the socio-psychological phenomenon of passing or, reformulated as an inquiry, the question what attracted these two influential artists to the subject matter of Sinti and Roma and how they approached their subjects. In Pócsik’s theoretical framework,

a differentiation is made between representations of Roma that function as a *motif*, as a *model* and as a *theme* (in reference to Arthur C. Danto); so, among other things, Roma are discussed in the paper as a subject of allegorical reference, a poetic tool that expresses the artist's sense of marginality. Set against the figure of Leni Riefenstahl, László Moholy-Nagy's life and work inevitably appear in a strong, positive light. We should still ask, though, how his film *Urban Gypsies* would fare if subjected to a text-immanent reading informed by antigypsyism critique.

SECTION ONE closes with PAVEL BRUNSSSEN's contribution "When Good Intentions Go Bad: The Stereotypical Portrayal of Roma Characters in the German Children and Youth Film *Nellys Abenteuer*," which has been recapped earlier in the introduction. SECTION TWO introduces a caesura in the academic discourse in order to bring to the fore distinct voices from the filmmaking industry and the Sinti and Roma community. First comes PETER NESTLER's essay "Without a Moral Stance, Filmmaking is Worthless" (in German), with which the German filmmaker opened the expert discussion on "The Ethics of Filmmaking: by, with or about Sinti and Roma" that took place on February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 and was hosted by the Bavarian Representation in Berlin. Relating to the words and the works of Jean-Marie Straub, Sidney Bernstein, Ernst Lubitsch and Charlie Chaplin, Peter Nestler underlines the importance of historical memory; in his understanding, knowledge of the past equips filmmakers with a special awareness that impacts their filmmaking style and choice of cinematic devices, safeguarding them from *faux pas* on the well-worn tracks of prejudice.

In the essay "An Ethics of Seeing and Showing: How Democratic is Our Media Policy?" (in German), ANDRÉ RAATZSCH, a visual artist committed to the politics of Roma self-representation, pleads for a socially engaged media culture that upholds democracy, the rule of law and universal human rights. Just like Peter Nestler, he places ethics at the centre of filmmaking, photography and journalism because ethics, as the artist points out, is the safeguard of humanism in the media. Entering into a dialogue with the writings of Susan Sontag and Ariella Azoulay, André Raatzsch calls for a greater self-reflexivity on the side of those who produce images of reality but also for an active resistance on the side of those who consume images of reality.

Ethics, again, is centre stage in REBECCA HEILER's volume contribution, which consists of two elements. First comes a short essay under the title of "OPPOSE OTHERING! or On the Attempt to Teach Filmmaking with Ethos" (in German), in which Rebecca Heiler sketches out her work as a coordinator of goEast project OPPOSE OTHERING! Radical humanity is what this project aims at and it does so by providing cinematic space to groups marked as Other, allowing the audience to embrace them in a common 'we.' The essay is followed by three interviews with the filmmakers Eszter Hajdú, Insa Onken



(in German) und Tayo Awosusi-Onutor (in German), who were invited to the conference to show their exemplary works and to discuss with the other participants the practical side of filmmaking, elaborating on the alternative artistic strategies they have devised to counter the various forms of Othering. In the interviews, Eszter Hajdú talks about her documentary film *Judgment in Hungary* (2013), Insa Onken answers questions about *Safet tanzt* (2015), her film portrait of the dancer Safet Misteles, while Tayo Awosusi-Onutor presents her debut work *Phral Mende – wir über uns* (2018).

The Roma activist WILLIAM BILA takes the recent film *With Open Arms/À bras ouverts* (2017) as a starting point for his dissection of antigypsyism, specifically in French cinema and public discourse. His associative essay “Antigypsyism in French Cinema: Why We Need Gadžology, and What Led to *À bras ouverts*?” considers the broader cultural, legal and political context in the country: the laudable fact that the French constitution has abandoned the concept of race, but also how this progressive decision has been used to block debates about institutional racism. In a fit of irony, William Bila adopts a gadžological, i.e. a Romani pseudo-anthropological perspective, in order to better explain the complexities of French society to outsiders.

SECTION TWO closes with the conference commentary delivered by Jacques Delfeld – “We Don’t Recognise Ourselves in These Films, We See Strangers” (in German). The Sinto activist makes a review of the media images of ‘gypsies’ that he has been confronted with since early childhood linking his personal experience to his long-term commitment to the civils rights movement of German Sinti and Roma. Already in the 1990s, the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma demanded that the minority self-organisations be represented in the bodies responsible for overseeing the media, as Jacques Delfeld reminds us. Over the years, he has witnessed many media do as they please when it comes to the topic of Sinti and Roma and the conference presentations provide further confirmation of his critique.

In SECTION THREE, the floor goes back to the academics; the focal point here is on cinematic works that take up the Romani perspective and pursue the task of subverting and deconstructing antigypsy stereotypes. The opening paper “The Image of the ‘Gypsy’: Alterity in Film – Strategies of Staging and Subversion” (in German) by KIRSTEN VON HAGEN draws a wide arc from early nineteenth century to the present day to underscore the excessive popularity of the ‘Gypsy’ figure in Western culture, taking the myth of Carmen as one particularly salient example. The scholar first subjects an anthropomorphic letter from 1828 to a close analysis to spell out the hybrid conglomerate of significations condensed in the mythic ‘Gypsy,’ and then shows in a next step that the same gender and racial stereotypes are revived in the numerous Carmen adaptations during the silent film era. Using an intertextual and intercultural approach to antigypsy manifestations in art works, the analysis

also highlights the interplay of literature, opera, anthropology, ethnography, linguistics and film. Against this background, Kirsten von Hagen is able to single out and assess subversive approaches to filmmaking. She considers the cinematic re-workings of the Carmen myth by Charlie Chaplin, Jean-Luc Godard, Carlos Saura, and Peter Brook as well as the alternative strategies to myths and their deconstruction in Tony Gatliff's *oeuvre*, offering a scrutiny of his film *Gadjo Dilo* (1997).

ISMAEL CORTÉS' volume contribution "Con el viento solano: The Figure of the Criminal 'Gitano' in the New Spanish Cinema" narrows down the focus on *Nuevo Cine Español*, a 1960s movement during the Spanish Francoist regime (1939–75), influenced by the spirit of Italian Neorealism. The film movement worked on forging a new film language in an attempt to break away from the ideologically distorted folkloric films of the 1950s. The main question that Ismael Cortés raises in his paper is whether the New Spanish Cinema has succeeded in bringing up a shift in the aesthetics of *gitano* representations. The scholar acquaints us with the literary voices that influenced the film movement as well as with its main intellectual platforms – the journals *Nuestro Cine* and *Nuestro Cinema*, to provide an answer to his central query by commenting both on the artistic achievements and shortcomings (in reference to Jacques Derrida) in Mario Camus' work *With the East Wind/Con el viento solano* (1965).

MATTHIAS BAUER'S article "Peter Nestler's Depiction of the Everyday Life of Sinti and Roma" is a wholehearted tribute to Peter Nestler's documentary film *Zigeuner sein/ The Stigma Gypsy* (1970). Making us aware of the highly sensitive eye behind the camera, Matthias Bauer explains how the filmmaker succeeds in creating an intimate space of resonance for the traumatic recollections of seven Holocaust survivors. As such, Nestler's work is one of the very first cinematic documents to both acknowledge and record the lived experience of Sinti and Roma during the Second World War and the 1970s, pointing at the causal link between the suffering of the past and the suffering of the present. Shot twelve years before the Nazi genocide of the Sinti and Roma was officially recognised by the German state, *The Stigma Gypsy* was never shown in Germany at the time of its release. As Matthias Bauer rightfully laments, Nestler's act of poetic bravery has not yet received the appreciation it deserves. In order to rectify this negligence, the scholar elaborates on the pioneering uniqueness of Nestler's work, showing how it establishes a connection between narrating voice, authorship and humanity (in reference to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak).

SECTION THREE closes with WILLIAM HOPE'S volume contribution "The Roma in Italian Documentary Films," which examines a plethora of twenty-first-century Italian documentaries made by non-Roma and Roma filmmakers. The scholar compares the approaches adopted by filmmakers who have an

outsider's perspective to those of filmmakers with an insider's perspective, weighing up the strengths and weaknesses. The leading question in his analysis concerns the extent to which these new Italian documentaries are successful in creating counter-hegemonic depictions of the Roma (in reference to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Graziella Parati). The paper gives a valuable outline of alternative filmmaking techniques, such as qualitative interviews used as research tools to offer insight into community values, revelatory formats that privilege emotional connection between filmmaker and subject, on-screen interviews that elicit personal testimonies, etc. The socio-symbolic position of women in Roma communities is also discussed in the paper, singling out Laura Halilovic, author of *Me, My Romani Family and Woody Allen* (2009), as the only female director brave enough to tackle issues related to patriarchy and male domination. Overall, William Hope concludes that this new wave of documentaries has generated some progressive impetus in altering the subaltern positions of many Italian and European Roma.

The final SECTION FOUR sets the stage for comparison between antigypsyism and other forms of racial Othering in film. SUNNIE RUCKER-CHANG's paper "Double Coding' in Roma and African-American Filmic Representation: A Diachronic Comparison" considers two films made by African-American artists with large African-American casts from the 1970s, in juxtaposition to two Southern-European films made by Roma filmmakers with large numbers of Romani people in the cast from the period following the post-EU expansion (2004–present). The selected four films represent their filmmakers' response to the failures of the Civil Rights movement and the Romani Rights movement(s), and they are, namely *The Spook Who Sat Next to the Door* (Ivan Dixon, 1973), *Black Girl* (J. E. Franklin, 1972), *Trapped by Law* (Sami Mustafa, 2015), and *Genesis* (Árpád Bogdán, 2018). The scholar uses the frame of double coding to explore the dialogue about the relationship of the respective racialised minority to the nation, pointing out that the inflected positions of whiteness and blackness continue to hold true both in American and European contexts (in reference to Franz Fanon and Fatima El-Tayeb). Analysing the dual messages embedded in the films, their paradoxical ability to accommodate at least two audiences, Sunnie Rucker-Chang arrives at the conclusion that in spite of the prominence of Roma or Afro-Americans in the productions, the representations of the minority continues to be articulated through the discourse of the majority.

SARAH HEINZ's volume contribution "Black Irish, Wild Irish, and Irish Calibans: Ambivalent Whiteness and Racialisation in Cultural Stereotypes of Irishness" provides a valuable insight into critical whiteness studies and demonstrates the relevance of this interdisciplinary area of research for discussions of the racialisation of specific populations within Europe. The scholar presents a case study of stereotypes of Irishness, arguing that the ambivalent whiteness of the Irish, their positionality in-between existing racial

boundaries in nineteenth-century British and American colonial discourses, is particularly instructive for understanding the often-underestimated role of whiteness in European contexts nowadays. Whiteness is defined here as a powerful system of knowledge, a socially and discursively structured process of becoming white that underlies every aspect of daily life and shapes contemporary European's sense of self through representations in the media, the arts, literature, and film (in reference to Steve Garner). Finally, taking a brief look at contemporary cultural production, the author concludes that stereotypes of Irishness are not outdated but resurface not only in American television series like *The Black Donnellys* (2007), or blockbusters like *The Departed* (2006) and *Gangs of New York* (2002), but also in British and Irish films like *The General* (1998), *P.S. I love You* (2007), or *The Crying Game* (1992).

LEA WOHL VON HASELBERG's paper "Between Stereotype and Antisemitism: Jewish Figures in West German Film and Television" (in German) examines the relationship of antisemitism to stereotypes and the (im)possibility of drawing a clear line of distinction between problematic and unproblematic stereotypes. The scholar considers the forms and functions of stereotypes in film, expounding in detail the understanding behind the term "stereotype" in film theory and the way this term differs from the notion of stereotype in the social sciences (in reference to Jörg Schweinitz). Further differentiation is made between "character," "type" and "stereotypical figure," between stable antisemitic stereotypes, stereotypes with mutable contents and stereotypes that appear unproblematic. The paper advances a rough methodological approach to antisemitism in film, outlining three levels of analysis: the semantic level of plot, the formal level of images and the discursive level of paratexts. In conclusion, Lea Wohl von Haselberg discusses the openness of filmic texts and the way their semiotic polyvalence affects the reception and influence of antisemitic and stereotypical representations in films.

The closing contribution in SECTION FOUR is ANTONIA SCHMID's conference commentary entitled "Film is a Commodity of Great Influence" (in German), which brings forward recurrent themes, key questions as well as points of contention in an analytical overview. Being an expert on filmic antisemitism, Antonia Schmid approaches the presented research findings and personal testimonies from a specific and very fruitful position: she has an in-depth understanding of filmic racism and yet is able to assess the debates on filmic antigypsyism at a certain distance. The commentary was delivered during the conference, at the end of its second day, and was later published at the website of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma. Perusing it, the reader may notice that not all of the event participants are represented in the volume with a paper, so here is the place to mention the scholars IULIA-KARIN PATRUT, LAURA JACOBS, MARTIN HOLLER, KARINA GRIFFITH and MARIA BOGDAN who also gave stimulating talks in Berlin.

I hope that the volume conveys some of the excitement and intellectual joy that we had during the three-day conference in Berlin. It is also to be hoped that the volume – having endowed the topic with its sense of urgency – will pave the way for further interdisciplinary and comparative research in the hitherto underexplored field of antigypsyism and film.

In a final note, on behalf of the editors' team, I would like to say how thankful we are to all conference participants, to all the authors who have contributed to this volume as well as to all individuals and institutions who supported the realisation of the Berlin event. We are particularly indebted to ROLF-DIETER JUNGK and the Bavarian Representation in Berlin for hosting the expert discussion on the first day of the conference. The three-day international gathering would not have been possible without the so very generous support of the German Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM), the Federal Programme "Live Democracy!," Amadeu Antonio Foundation, Freudenberg Foundation, and Open Society Foundations.

We are grateful to our partners from the Research Centre on Antigypsyism at the University of Heidelberg – EDGAR WOLFRUM, FRANK REUTER and DANIELA GRESS who supported the event in so many ways.

We would like to thank HELEEN GERRITSEN, director of goEast – Festival of Central and Eastern European Film, who chaired the expert discussion, and GABY BABIĆ, former director of goEast Festival, for the manifold support that goes beyond this one event and for their long-term commitment to the cause of the Sinti and Roma.

We thank YASEMIN SHOOMAN from the Jewish Museum in Berlin, JAQUELINE ROUSSEY from Humboldt University of Berlin, ANNA MIRGA-KRUSELNICKA from the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC), DANIELA GRESS from Heidelberg University, and ISMAEL CORTÉS from Central European University, for chairing the four conference panels. To REBECCA HEILER, ESZTER HAJDÚ, SANDOR MESTER and INSA ONKEN we are thankful for enriching the academic discussion with the filmmakers' workshop.

A special mention goes to JONATHAN MACK from the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma who shouldered a great deal of the invisible organisational work before, during and after the Berlin event. It is difficult to acknowledge all the task areas and outcomes of his tireless involvement: conference design; fundraising, budgeting and financial reporting; internal, external communication and publicity materials; even simultaneous translation in aid to the two amazing conference interpreters, ANNETTE RAMERSHOVEN and MARTINA WEITENDORF. Thank you all!