The Historical Journal, 59, 1 (2016), pp. 45–70
doi:10.1017/S0018246X15000278

TROUBLE WITH GYPSIES IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND*

DAVID CRESSY
The Ohio State University

ABSTRACT. *This article explores the social, legal, and administrative response in Tudor and early Stuart England to people known in law as 'Egyptians' or 'counterfeit Egyptians' but commonly called 'Gypsies'. It argues that such people differed from ordinary poor vagrants in their heritage, their language, and such activities as horse dealing and fortune-telling. Elizabethan and Jacobean publications placed Gypsies on the fringes of fecklessness, criminality, and the picaresque, and established a stereotype of deceit and imposture that has not yet disappeared. Acts of Parliament in 1531, 1554, and 1563 criminalized 'Egyptians', forbidding their entry, ordering their expulsion, and eventually making them liable to the death penalty. Enforcement, however, was haphazard, and repression co-existed uneasily with growing registers of tolerance. This is a neglected topic in early modern social history, with links to international and interdisciplinary Romani studies as well as work on itinerancy, ethnicity, and marginality.*

Gypsies confused the categories and offended the sensibilities of the leaders of early modern England. They did not know what to make of them, or what to do with them, though they were sure they were undesirable. Belonging to no church or parish, and not identified by status, occupation, or address, the Gypsies defied all efforts of reformation, correction, removal, or analysis. Understanding them, in the world in which they lived, poses challenges that continue today. This article is an attempt to bring Gypsies out of the shadows, and to illuminate their doings and dealings. It is part of an examination of marginality, itinerancy, exclusion, and prejudice that seeks to understand how public authority and popular culture responded to troubling anomalies in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England. It will not be possible to answer questions about Gypsy cultural practices, beliefs, or self-awareness, given the limitations of the sources, but new knowledge can be gained about their interaction with the state and society under the Tudors and early Stuarts.

231 West 6th Street, Claremont, CA 91711, USA davidcressy@hotmail.com

* Earlier versions of this article were presented at the American Historical Association in January 2013, at the Huntington Library British History Seminar in November 2013, and at the Tudor-Stuart Seminar at the Institute of Historical Research in March 2015.

The historical marginality of Gypsies is matched by their marginality in modern scholarship. They are almost entirely absent from works of social history. Historians and literary scholars have explored the margins of poverty and mobility, and related problems of vagrancy, deviance, and petty crime, with little reference to Gypsies. Recent work has illuminated the cultural registers of roguery and the micro-politics of poor relief, with similar exclusions.[1] The historiographical conversation now encompasses indigents and itinerants, as well as the authorities who attempted to govern them, but few historians have attended to people known as Gypsies or 'counterfeit Egyptians'.

Early modern historians have said almost nothing about Gypsies since Lee Beier devoted five pages to them in his 1985 study *Masterless men*. Beier's Gypsies appear as 'a shadowy group' who nonetheless formed 'a genuine alternative society', distinct from the ordinary vagrant poor. With their dark skin, 'fantastic' dress, and exotic language, they 'remained alien in many respects' from the host community, maintaining trans-national and trans-historical ethnic connections. Beier recognized them to be 'Romanies' with Indian origins, but that was unknown in the early modern era. Gypsy distinctiveness faded by the seventeenth century, according to Beier's influentuial study, as 'Gypsies and English vagrants merged' in legal, official, and popular perception.[2]

Apart from Beier, there is mostly silence. As David Smith notes, in his work on the forest economy, 'there is no substantial work on the history of Gypsies in England, and the investigator finds himself working at the margins of other

[1] John Pound, *Poverty and vagrancy in Tudor England* (London, 1971); John L. McMullan, *The canting crew: London's criminal underworld, 1550–1700* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1984); A. L. Beier, *Masterless men: the vagrancy problem in England, 1560–1640* (London, 1985); Paul Slack, *Poverty and policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, 1988); Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, homelessness, and English Renaissance literature* (Urbana, IL, and Chicago, IL, 2001); Bryan Reynolds, *Becoming criminal: transverse performance and cultural dissidence in early modern England* (Baltimore, MD, and London, 2002); Pascale Drouet, *Le vagabond dans l'Angleterre de Shakespeare: ou l'art de contrefaire à la ville at à la scène* (Paris, 2003); Craig Dionne and Steve Mentz, eds., *Rogues and early modern English culture* (Ann Arbor, MI, 2004); Steve Hindle, *On the parish?: the micro-politics of poor relief in rural England, c. 1550–1750* (Oxford, 2004); Patricia Fumerton, *Unsettled: the culture of mobility and the working poor in early modern England* (Chicago, IL, and London, 2006). Early work on 'the wayfaring community' made no mention of Gypsies: Alan Everitt, *Change in the provinces: the seventeenth century* (Leicester, 1972), pp. 38–43; Anthony Fletcher, *A county community in peace and war: Sussex, 1600–1669* (London, 1975), pp. 165–70.

[2] Beier, *Masterless men*, pp. 10, 31, 58–62, 104, 125. Beier draws on the work of the 'Gypsy lore' antiquarians, to whom all subsequent scholarship is indebted: Henry T. Crofton, 'Early annals of the Gypsies in England', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 1 (1888), pp. 5–25; Eric Otto Winstedt, 'Early British Gypsies', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, n.s., 7 (1913–14), pp. 5–36; T. W. Thompson, 'Gleanings from constables' accounts and other sources', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3rd ser., 7 (1928), pp. 30–48; Henry T. Crofton, 'Supplementary annals of the Gypsies in England, before 1700', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, n.s., 1 (1907/8), pp. 31–4; T. W. Thompson, 'Consorting with and counterfeiting Egyptians', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3rd ser., 2 (1923), pp. 81–92; and E. O. Winstedt, 'Records of Gypsies in the eastern counties of England', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3rd ser., 40 (1961), pp. 25–35.

people's subjects'.[3] David Mayall, one of the few historians concerned with Gypsies, observes that 'the history of the group has mostly been written from an alarmingly ahistorical perspective'.[4] International surveys by Angus Fraser, Becky Taylor, and Yaron Matras provide useful openings,[5] but much of the popular material on Gypsies is slight, repetitive, or harnessed to a partisan agenda. Driven by the scholarship of commitment, activist accounts tend to dwell on victimhood and persecution, or advance the goals of Roma/Gypsy/Traveller empowerment.[6] Work by literary scholars is often ingenious, but is primarily concerned with cony-catching pamphlets and such fantasies as Ben Jonson's 'Masque of the Gypsies' (performed 1621).[7]

Sources for a history of Gypsies in England are surprisingly plentiful, though often opaque, fragmented, problematic, and neglected. They include pamphlets, chronicles, plays, and sermons; records of parliament and state papers; quarter sessions, assizes, and Star Chamber; town books, constables' and overseers' accounts, and other parish records. None, however, captures Gypsy voices or speaks from a Romani point of view. Like other maligned and marginal people, the Gypsies were invariably remarked on by authors and authorities external or hostile to their experience. In many cases, the records reveal more about the rhetorical and administrative responses of the state than the elusive Gypsies themselves. We are forced to rely on representations by their neighbours, and opponents, but this is not necessarily disabling since historians have developed strategies for 'reading against the grain'. The following account begins to construct a narrative of the Gypsy experience in Tudor and early Stuart England, and discusses understandings and misunderstandings of Gypsy identity.

[3] David Smith, 'Gypsies, tinkers, travellers and the forest economy', in John Langton and Graham Jones, eds., *Forests and chases of England and Wales, c. 1500 to c. 1850* (Oxford, 2005), p. 61.

[4] David Mayall, *Gypsy identities, 1500–2000: from Egipcyans and moon-men to the ethnic Romany* (Abingdon and New York, NY, 2004), p. 26.

[5] Angus Fraser, *The Gypsies* (Oxford, 1992); Becky Taylor, *Another darkness, another dawn: a history of Gypsies, Roma and travellers* (London, 2014); Yaron Matras, *I met lucky people: the story of the Romani Gypsies* (London, 2014).

[6] Ian Hancock, *The Pariah syndrome: an account of Gypsy slavery and persecution* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1987); Donald Kenrick and Colin Clark, *Moving on: the Gypsies and travellers of Britain* (Hatfield, 1995); Thomas Acton, ed., *Gypsy politics and traveller identity* (Hatfield, 1997); Thomas Acton, ed., *Scholarship and the Gypsy struggle: commitment in Romani studies* (Hatfield, 2000); Angus Fraser, 'The present and future of the Gypsy past', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 13 (2000), pp. 17–31.

[7] Dale B. J. Randall, *Jonson's Gypsies unmasked: background and theme of the Gypsies metamorphos'd* (Durham, NC, 1975); Mark Netzloff, '"Counterfeit Egyptians" and imagined borders: Jonson's *The Gypsies metamorphosed*', *ELH*, 68 (2001), pp. 763–93; Paola Pugliatti, 'A lost lore: the activity of Gypsies as performers on the stage of Elizabethan–Jacobean street theatre', in Paola Pugliatti and Alessandro Serpieri, eds., *English Renaissance scenes: from canon to margins* (Oxford, Bern, and Berlin, 2008), pp. 259–310.

I

Gypsies arrived in England at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the tail end of a Romani diaspora that reached Western Europe in the century following the Black Death. Some, quite likely, were escaping continental regimes that ordered Gypsies excluded, branded, or sent to the galleys. Their early history in England parallels the experience of neighbouring countries, where curiosity and hospitality soon gave way to repression.[8] The people described by Latin chroniclers as 'Aegiptii' were variously rendered as Zigueners, Tsiganes, Cingari, Gitanos, Bohemians, Saracens, and even 'Babilonii'. Some of the earliest groups announced themselves as 'Egyptians', giving rise to the corruption 'Gypsies'. Tudor sources refer to 'Gypsions', or 'Gypcyans', as well as Gypsies and Egyptians, suggesting that the words could be used interchangeably.[9] The label 'Egyptian' became embedded in English law, while popular parlance preferred to speak of 'Gypsies'. One seventeenth-century English author helpfully reported that they 'are called by the Italian and German writers of politics Cingari, and by the Spanish Hittani, and by the French Egyptii, and by our people Gypsies'.[10] The use of a capital 'G' acknowledges their identity as a group or people.

One of the earliest indicators of Gypsies in England appears in Thomas More's *Dialogue concerning heresies*, published in 1529. More refers back to the notorious scandal fifteen years earlier when the anti-clericalist Richard Hunne was found dead in the Lollards' Tower in London. Amid much speculation about how Hunne came to die, More introduces the character of a gentleman who claimed to know a neighbour who in turn knew a remarkable woman who was able to 'tell many marvelous things…and therefore I think she could as well tell who killed Hunne as stole a horse'. The wise woman's insights evidently came from palmistry – the Gypsy style of fortune-telling – though one party to the dialogue suggests that her powers came from the devil. Though never identified by name, the fortune-teller was said to be 'an Egyptian', lodged at Lambeth, who had recently 'gone over sea'.[11] Most accounts of Gypsies in

[8] The European history of Gypsies may be traced in François de Vaux de Foletier, *Les Tsiganes dans l'ancienne France* (Paris, 1961); O. Van Kappen, *Geschiedenis der Zigeuners in Nederland (1420–1750)* (Assen, 1965); Reimer Gronemeyer, *Zigeuner im Speigel Früher Chroniken und Abhandlungen* (Giessen, 1987); Henriette Asséo, *Les Tsiganes, une destinée européenne* (Paris, 1994); David M. Crowe, *A history of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York, NY, 1996); Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov, *Gypsies in the Ottoman empire* (Hatfield, 2001); Elisa Novi Chavarria, *Sulle tracce degli zingari: il popolo rom nel Regno di Napoli (secoli XV–XVIII)* (Naples, 2007); Richard J. Pym, *The Gypsies of early modern Spain, 1425–1783* (Basingstoke, 2007); Benedetto Fassanelli, *Vite al bando: storie di cingari nella terraferma veneta alle fine del Cinquecento* (Rome, 2011).

[9] Crofton, 'Early annals', pp. 7, 8; Henry Ellis, ed., *Original letters illustrative of English history* (3 vols., London, 1825), II, p. 101; *Oxford English Dictionary*, sub 'gipsy/gypsy'.

[10] Peter Pett, *The happy future state of England* (London, 1688), 235.

[11] [Thomas More], *A dyaloge of Syr Thomas More* (London, 1529), book 3, fo. 91, otherwise known as *A dialogue concerning heresies*.

England cite this dialogue to mark 1514 as the foundational year of their presence.

But More is not a trustworthy witness, and the reliability of his tale is uncertain. More's intention was to combat heresy, not to document Gypsies, and he may have been throwing dust at his readers. It was, perhaps, a ploy to discredit critics to suggest that 'only ludicrous evidence…presented by foolish people' might implicate the church in the murder of Richard Hunne.[12] If speculators in 1514 had consulted a Lambeth 'Egyptian' – and there might well have been one – it could suggest an even earlier Gypsy presence, since she apparently spoke sufficient English to consult with her clients, and presumably had been around for some time.

No reliable evidence survives of the Gypsies' first coming to England, but it seems to have been in the reign of Henry VII. The earliest traces appear in gentry account books, such as those of Sir John Arundell of Lanhere, Cornwall, who paid 20*d* in 1504 'to the Egyptians when they danced afore me'.[13] These Gypsies travelled as entertainers, capitalizing on their novelty, as they had earlier in Europe. Similar entries from the 1510s and 1520s show payments to 'Gypsions' at aristocratic establishments at Tendring Hall, Suffolk, and Thornbury, Gloucestershire.[14] An entry in the Cambridge treasurer's book for 1515 records 6*s* 8*d* paid 'for leading up the Egyptians to London to the king's Council', though whether to be rewarded or punished is unclear.[15]

By 1530, the Gypsies had outstayed their welcome. The novelty had become a menace. Gypsies who arrived as entertainers or fortune-tellers – or perhaps as early modern asylum-seekers – acquired reputations as pick-pockets and thieves. At Hereford, for example, the mayor detained a group of nineteen Gypsies, 'men, women and children…with bag and baggage', after a gentleman of Ludlow claimed they had robbed him of £4 7*s* 6*d*.[16] No longer well received, the Gypsies were charged with idleness, immorality, falsehood, and crime – a reputation that continues internationally today.

Henry VIII's parliament attempted to deal with the problem in 1531 by banishing the 'outlandish people calling themselves Egyptians'. All Gypsies were to be expelled from England. The problem they posed was said to be threefold. First, by 'using no craft nor fact of merchandize', and by moving from 'place to place in great company', they fell outside the moral order, the economic hierarchy, and the social chain of being. Second, by claiming 'that they by palmistry

[12] Arthur Ogle, *The tragedy of the Lollards' Tower: the case of Richard Hunne, with its aftermath in the Reformation parliament* (Oxford, 1949), pp. 94–9; Richard Marius, *Thomas More: a biography* (New York, NY, 1984), pp. 135–41.

[13] Cornwall Record Office, Truro, AR/26/2; Sally L. Joyce and Evelyn S. Newlyn, eds., *Records of early English drama: Cornwall* (Toronto, 1999), p. 530.

[14] Crofton, 'Early annals', pp. 7, 8.

[15] C. H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge* (5 vols., Cambridge, 1842–52), I, p. 298.

[16] Taylor, *Another darkness*, pp. 49–50, citing Herefordshire Archives, BG/11/28, Misc. Papers, 6/18.

could tell men's and women's fortunes', they 'by craft and subtlety have deceived the people of their money'. And third, in the course of these activities, they 'committed many and heinous felonies and robberies, to the great hurt and deceit of the people that they have come among'. As a people without roots and without honesty, the Gypsies were a danger to society, an affront to the state, and offensive to God. Parliament's remedy was to remove them as quickly as possible by shipping them overseas. No more 'Egyptians' would be permitted to enter the realm, and those already in England would be rounded up and deported. If they did not leave within sixteen days they faced imprisonment and forcible expulsion, with their goods and chattels forfeit to the state. Victims of Gypsy crimes could then sue for return of items 'craftily or feloniously taken or stolen' from them.[17]

Parliament also associated 'Egyptians' with larger social problems involving vagabonds and beggars. 'Idleness', the lawmakers noted, was the 'mother and root of all vices', from which sprang 'heinous offences and great enormities, to the high displeasure of God' and 'the marvelous disturbance of the common weale of this realm'. A companion piece of legislation provided for such offenders to be whipped and placed in the stocks, then sent to their place of birth or last residence. Though not specifically directed against Gypsies, the Vagrancy Act of 1531 included as malefactors those travellers

> using divers and subtle crafty and unlawful games and plays, and some of them feigning themselves to have knowledge in physic, physiognomy, palmistry, or other crafty sciences, whereby they bear the people in hand, that they can tell their destinies, deceases and fortunes, and such other like fantastical imaginations, to the great deceit of the king's subjects.

Fortune-tellers of this sort were liable to be scourged by whipping, and repeat offenders could have their ears cut off at the pillory.[18] Further legislation in 1536 against 'valiant beggars and sturdy vagabonds' provided for repeat offenders 'to suffer pains and execution of death as a felon and as enemies of the commonwealth'.[19] Gypsies were therefore subject to two sets of laws, one that treated them as vagrants to be punished, the other as aliens to be removed. The state conceived of Gypsies as 'outlandish' immigrants, with no business being in the king's dominions; but their social offence was to engage in deceitful disorders and to have no lawful calling. There was already a blurring of lines between the law's 'Egyptians', the community's 'Gypsies', and other kinds of disreputable wanderers.

Tudor authorities expected the law to be enforced. Thomas Cromwell wanted 'Egyptians' shipped abroad by the first available wind. But the Gypsies were uncooperative, and hard to pin down. One group of travellers, led by Paul Faa, 'a

[17] 22 Henry VIII c. 10.
[18] 22 Henry VIII, c. 12.
[19] 27 Henry VIII, c. 25.

native of Egypt in parts beyond seas', caused complications in 1537 when a murder was committed in their company. Faa was arrested, but instead of being tried he was pardoned, conditional on departing the realm. He and 'his wandering associates called Egyptians' were given fifteen days to leave England.[20]

State policy was to export the problem, but ordering did not mean accomplishment. The Gypsies still awaited deportation half a year later, and in the meantime committed more enormities.[21] A letter to Rowland Lee, president of the Council of the Marches, sheds light on the matter. The king, Cromwell said, had given 'pardon to a company of lewd persons within this realm, calling themselves Gipcyons, for a most shameful and detestable murder committed among them'. All had agreed

> that unless they should all avoid this his grace's realm by a certain day long since expired, it should be lawful to all his grace's officers to hang them, in all places of his realm where they might be apprehended, without any further examination or trial after form of law.

In other words, all remaining 'persons calling themselves Egyptians' risked summary execution. Unfortunately, Cromwell continued, the king had learned 'that they do yet linger here within his realm, not avoiding the same according to his commandment and their own promise, and that his poor subjects be daily spoiled, robbed, and deceived by them'. Local authorities, 'little regarding their duties towards his majesty, do permit them to linger and loiter in all parts, and to exercise all their falsehoods, felonies, and treasons unpunished'. There must be no further delay, Cromwell insisted, and any magistrate, knowing of any Gypsies, should 'compel them to depart to the next port of the sea to the place where they shall be taken; and…upon the first wind that may convey them into any part beyond the seas, to take shipping'. Any Gypsies who 'shall in any wise break that commandment' should be 'executed according to the king's highness's letters patent'.[22]

Despite these strictures, travellers 'naming themselves Egyptians' continued to cause trouble. Some wandered with impunity, and if they were shipped overseas might just as easily slip back. One group was traced from the Cotswolds through the Thames Valley, from Cirencester to Henley, where they tried to dispose of a parcel-gilt salt cellar, valued at £6 13*s* 4*d*, apparently acquired 'by subtle and crafty means'. By the time they were apprehended, the silver had changed hands several times, and the Gypsies had no traceable assets.[23] Another group arrested in Staffordshire in 1539, 'Egyptians as they say', boasted little more than 'an old cushion of crimson velvet, an old gown of

[20] *Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII* (*LP*), XII, part 2, p. 79.
[21] Ibid., p. 349.
[22] Ellis, ed., *Original letters illustrative of English history*, II, pp. 100–3.
[23] The National Archives (TNA), REQ 2/5/322.

black velvet, an old torn gown of tawny satin', a grey horse worth 6*s* 8*d*, and 'a little black horse called a nag', also worth 6*s* 8*d*. When the sheriff examined them for being in the king's realm, potentially a capital offence, the Gypsy leaders produced a box of writings and testimonials that seemingly gave them safe passage. These included authorizations from the mayor of London, the sheriffs of Yorkshire and Worcestershire, the commissioners in the Marches, the king of Scotland, and the abbot of Holyrood, none convincingly authentic.[24]

A few months later, Kentish authorities stayed another group of 'Egyptians' in Romney Marsh. They too displayed a kind of passport, supposedly a patent under the Great Seal 'in behalf of John Nany, knight of Little Egypt, and his company', which officials decided to refer to Cromwell.[25] Cromwell's 'Remembrances' for 1539 include the note, 'to advertise of the sayings of the Egyptians, and special letters to be written for their apprehension and punishment'. Government expenditure for the year included £6 13*s* 4*d* 'for the apprehension of certain lewd persons calling themselves Egyptians'.[26] The travellers played a cat and mouse game with the authorities, which the Gypsies usually won.

Inventories of confiscations display Gypsy resources as well as Gypsy enterprise. When constables at Boston, Lincolnshire, searched a contingent of some eighty Gypsies in 1540, they found 'not so much as would pay for their meat and drink, nor none other baggage but one horse not worth four shillings'. Unless they had hidden their wealth, these Gypsies had little to show for their efforts. They claimed that they were trying to leave the country, had tried the port of King's Lynn, and had come to Boston in search of shipping. Town officials sent four of their leaders to London for examination, and herded the rest toward the northern ports of Newcastle and Hull, to look for passage to Norway.[27] Another group of Gypsies needed charitable relief to move them towards Dover in June 1540, after officials at Canterbury confiscated their goods worth £3 11*s* and 13*s* 9*d* 'in money'.[28]

Other wanderers 'calling themselves Egyptians' were comparatively wealthy. One company of Gypsies caught at Bishop's Lydeard, Somerset, in October 1542 possessed six yards of black camlet (a luxury fabric), two ells of black worsted, and seventy-two ounces of silver plate and parcel-gilt, valued at more

[24] *LP*, XIV, part 1, p. 84; TNA, SP1/142, fo. 220; TNA, E 199/41/46. Gypsies had travelled in Scotland since the beginning of the sixteenth century, paying scant attention to national borders. Certain 'Egyptians' who danced before James V at Holyrood House in 1529 may have secured letters of protection: Fraser, *Gypsies*, p. 117; David MacRitchie, *Scottish Gypsies under the Stewarts* (Edinburgh, 1894), pp. 29–39.

[25] *LP*, XIV, part 1, p. 21; TNA, SP1/153, fo. 40.

[26] Ibid., part 2, pp. 109, 303.

[27] *LP*, XV, p. 325; TNA, SP 1/160, fo. 49.

[28] John Sampson, 'Early records of the Gypsies in England', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3rd ser., 3 (1927), p. 34.

than £18, besides five good-quality horses worth 10*s* each. Their haul also included 'a piece of silver plate weighing thirty two ounces at 3s. 6d. the ounce', presumed stolen, that was taken from them and entrusted to the bishop of Bath and Wells.[29]

Officials in Huntingdonshire stayed another large band of Gypsies with seventeen horses in 1544, and sought to know the king's pleasure regarding these 'lewd persons naming themselves Egyptians, who have long wandered in this realm'.[30] On the king's behalf, Lord Chancellor Wriotheseley instructed that 'such of them as could be proved felons' should be arraigned according to the statute, and any others 'reported to be Englishmen' to be 'well whipped like vagabonds and so remitted to their countries'. The Gypsies evidently constituted a composite band, native-born and foreign, and their demography was changing. Two of the leaders were sentenced to hang, but the Gypsies surprised everyone by offering £300 to save them from the gallows. This was a huge sum of money, which suggests that some Gypsies, at least, had wealthy friends or deep pockets. The cash-strapped Council acknowledged 'it would be hard to attain this money otherwise'.[31]

Writing from Boulogne, in the midst of his war with France, Henry VIII instructed his Council that 'the Egyptians you wrote for are to be pardoned and the rest banished'. The Council recorded that 'we have taken such order that all the lewd people of this sort shall be dispatched out of the realm with all diligence, and doubt not but this example will make that neither they nor any other like will much covet hereafter to come hither'. And lest any Gypsies attempted to root themselves in the English enclave on the continent, they sent instructions to Calais 'for the ridding them out of the king's majesty's pale there'.[32] Parliament considered a new bill in 1545 for the punishment and expulsion of Gypsies, but the legislation came to nothing.[33]

Fragmentary as it is, the evidence leaves the impression that Gypsies could travel around England with little risk of molestation, despite the intent of the law. Interceptions and arrests were rare. Notably distinct from ordinary vagrants and beggars, the Gypsies moved on foot, or with small strings of horses, following the geography and calendar of markets and fairs. Banded in groups of a dozen or so members, and occasionally gathering in companies of a hundred or more, they must have seemed intimidating as well as strange. Though most likely themselves illiterate, some of them recognized the power of writing, and were sophisticated enough to amass papers that seemingly gave them protection. Some, at least, spoke a distinctive Gypsy language, an inflected Romani,

[29] TNA, E 101/518/28; Sampson, 'Early records', pp. 32–4, citing TNA, Exchequer K. R. Accounts Misc. 524/5.

[30] Crofton, 'Early annals', p. 11, derived from the *Book of receipts and payments* of 25 Henry VIII.

[31] *LP*, XIX, part 2, p. 112; TNA, SP 1/192, fo. 51r–51v.

[32] *LP*, XIX, part 2, pp. 112, 159.

[33] *Lords journal*, I, p. 273 (10 Dec. 1545).

with sufficient English to tell fortunes and outwit the authorities. Andrew Boorde's *Fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge*, first published in 1542, includes one of the earliest known transcriptions of Romani anywhere in Europe. These 'Egyptians', wrote Boorde, 'be swarte [i.e. dark] and doth go disguised in their apparel…they be light fingered and use piking [i.e. theft]…and yet they be pleasant dancers'.[34] Their total population is impossible to calculate, but setting aside fanciful estimates, there could not have been 1,000 Gypsies in mid-Tudor England.[35] State policy was deportation, but the problem grew complicated as Gypsies reproduced themselves, and ordinary English vagrants apparently attached themselves to Gypsy bands.

II

A quarter of a century after Henry VIII's legislation, the parliament of Philip and Mary returned to the Gypsy problem. Notwithstanding past attempts to rid England of 'certain outlandish people calling themselves Egyptians', such people had 'enterprised to come over again into this realm, using their old accustomed devilish and naughty practices and devices, with such abominable living as is not in any Christian realm to be permitted'. The legislation of 1554 raised the rhetorical temperature – the Gypsies are now 'devilish' as well as 'outlandish' – and added punitive weight. The new law called again for their forced removal, imposed fines on facilitators of Gypsy immigration, and death for any Gypsy lingering after a month. Henceforth, it was a felony to be a Gypsy in England, but a proviso offered an exception to 'any of the said persons commonly called Egyptians' who 'shall leave that naughty, idle and ungodly life and company, and be placed in the service of some honest and able inhabitant…or that shall honestly exercise himself in some lawful work or occupation' – in other words, to cease living as Gypsies. The choice was expulsion, the gallows, or assimilation, providing the law could bring them within reach.[36]

Enforcement, as ever, was piecemeal and half-hearted. One of the first implementations of the law was in October 1555, when the sheriffs of Norfolk and Suffolk imprisoned people 'such as name themselves Egyptians', and confiscated their 'passports and licences'. The Council instructed local officials 'to

[34] Andrew Boorde, *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge* (London, 1542; 1562 edn), ch. 38, sig. Niir–Niiv. On the linguistic significance of Boorde's word list, see Ian Hancock, 'Romani and Angloromani', in Peter Trudgill, ed., *Language in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 368, 378–9; Yaron Matras, *Romani in Britain: the afterlife of a language* (Edinburgh, 2010), p. 58.

[35] Claims of 10,000 Tudor Gypsies are often repeated in popular surveys. They derive from William Harrison's description of Elizabethan England, where he includes Gypsies with vagrant beggars 'to amount unto above 10,000 persons as I have heard reported', Georges Edelen, ed., *The description of England by William Harrison* (Ithaca, NY, 1968), 184. Hancock, *Pariah syndrome*, p. 89, renders this as 'ten thousand Gypsies in the British Isles' in 1528.

[36] 1 & 2 Philip and Mary, c. 4.

examine the truth of their pretended licences', to see the offenders punished 'according to the statutes', and to hasten 'their transportation out of the realm'.[37] A few years later, another group of 'Egyptians' held in Southwark sought release on the grounds that they would perish for lack of sustenance, and would lose the use of their limbs if their misery continued. Whoever drafted their petition knew that it would help if they acknowledged their 'transgression', agreed to amend their lives, and showed willingness to depart 'home into our country' under penalty of death.[38] Perhaps more compelling was the argument that keeping the Gypsies in gaol cost money, and the community was better served by letting them leave.

As before, the Gypsies proved slippery and elusive. Laws against them were no more effective than the laws against sumptuous apparel, although potentially more lethal. Gypsies continued to arrive, to proliferate, and to travel around England, living, it was said, 'upon the spoil of the simple people'. The exotic was becoming domesticated, as Gypsies established themselves in the wayfaring culture of early modern England.

Responding in 1559 to the arrest in Dorset of 'a great number of vagrants having the manner of Egyptians', the privy council instructed the lieutenant, Lord Mountjoy, how to proceed against these people of 'horrible and shameful life'. The government thought it

> very convenient that some sharp example and execution should be made according to the order of our laws upon a good number of them…that no favour otherwise than the law permitteth may be moved to any such as may be proved felons or such like malefactors, or that have been before time apprehended…or set at liberty upon compassion, or put out of the realm at any time for the like offence heretofore, nor to such as have from their youth of long time ha[u]nted this lewd life, nor to such as be the principal captains and ringleaders of the company.

The worst offenders were to be charged as felons, while the rest would be speedily 'conveyed out of the realm'. Compassionate treatment, however, was recommended for nursing mothers, children under sixteen, and 'such as very lately have come to this trade of life'.[39]

When the Gypsies appeared before Dorchester assizes in September 1559, a technicality cast a cloud on their indictment. The justices discovered that 'touching their coming into this realm…they…came out of Scotland into England by Carlisle, which is all by land, and were not transported or conveyed hither by any according to the statute'. The law of Philip and Mary assumed that Gypsies arrived from overseas, whereas this group had migrated overland within Britain. The assize court 'proceeded to their deliverance', while asking London

[37] *Acts of the privy council* (*APC*), v, p. 185.
[38] Folger Shakespeare Library, MS L.b.210.
[39] TNA, SP 12/6, fo. 63r–63v, SP 12/51, fo. 27.

for advice 'touching punishment for their idle and naughty life and dispatch out of this realm'.[40]

Free again, the Gypsies drifted slowly northward and reached Gloucestershire by late October. Mountjoy was unwilling to see 'that idle and ill kind of people' unpunished, and sent the bailiff of Blandford to his counterpart at Longhope, Gloucestershire, to harass them further. Eight individuals 'naming themselves Egyptians' were taken to Gloucester, where their treatment can be inferred from records of payment 'for birch to make rods to beat the Egyptians naked about the castle', and for the rent of the cart 'whereat the said Egyptians were tied and so brought about the city and scourged' before being released.[41]

Similar complications arose when another group of Gypsies was arrested in Oxfordshire in 1562. The sheriff gaoled various 'vagabonds naming themselves Egyptians' at Oxford and Wallingford, but could not decide what to do about 'their children, whose years may make declaration that they were innocent of their parents' lewdness'. The Council kicked the problem back to the locality, instructing the justices 'to do as they shall think requisite', without clear guidance from the centre.[42]

Elizabeth I's parliament addressed the problem in 1563, in the same panicked session that outlawed perjury, witchcraft, and buggery. (Parliament met from 12 January to 10 April 1563, but writers on Gypsies commonly misdate this legislation to 1562, apparently not realizing that the calendar year changed on 25 March.) The regime was rattled by religious and dynastic uncertainties, and sought to bring discipline to the margins. New law was needed regarding Gypsies because growing numbers of 'that false and subtle company of vagabonds' known as 'Egyptians' were found to be English-born, not 'strangers', so could not be deported under existing law. The solution was to make it a felony for anyone to be 'seen or found…in any company or fellowship of vagabonds commonly called or calling themselves Egyptians, or counterfeiting, transforming or disguising themselves by their apparel, speech or behaviour like unto such vagabonds', and continuing so for one month. It became punishable by death to be a Gypsy, to look like a Gypsy, or to consort with Gypsies – a crime of status rather than activity. Children under the age of fourteen were exempt, as were Gypsies already in prison awaiting expulsion.[43]

Once again, the law offered Gypsies the choice of entering 'some honest service' or taking up 'some lawful work', so long as they 'utterly forsake the said idle and false trade, conversation and behaviour of the said counterfeit

[40] TNA, SP 12/6, fos. 82, 109.

[41] TNA, SP 12/6, fo. 108, SP 12/7, fo. 37; Historical Manuscripts Commission (HMC), *Twelfth report*, appendix, part 9 (London, 1891), p. 468; Crofton, 'Early annals', p. 16.

[42] *APC*, VII, pp. 112, 124.

[43] 5 Elizabeth I, c. 20. This Elizabethan law was repealed in 1783 by 23 Geo. III, c. 51. Later reformers described it as 'the most barbarous…that ever disgraced our criminal code', Sir Samuel Romilly, *Observations on the criminal law of England* (London, 1810), p. 5.

or disguised vagabonds, commonly called or calling themselves Egyptians'. To emphasize this point, the statute stressed that is was not intended 'to compel any person or persons born within any of the queen's majesty's dominions to depart out of this realm of England or Wales, but only to constrain and bind them…to exercise themselves…honestly in some lawful work, trade or occupation'.

The word 'counterfeit' in the statute of 1563 has caused endless problems in discussions of Gypsy identity, persuading some people that 'counterfeit Egyptians' were not really Gypsies at all. Rather, it is suggested, they were volunteer vagabonds who mimicked, acquired, or otherwise inhabited the manner of 'authentic' Gypsies. 'Gypsies', by this argument, were a constructed category rather than a trouble people.[44] This is an important topic in Romani politics and scholarship, where Gypsy ethnicity is hotly contested. The leaders of Elizabethan England may have been anxious lest some of the queen's subjects should be seduced into a pernicious way of life, but the state's main concern was with Gypsies known as Egyptians, not vagrants who pretended to be Gypsies. The word 'counterfeit' meant forged, imitated, or sham, but in sixteenth-century usage it could also mean false and deceptive, the opposite of 'honest', as in 'counterfeit rogues', 'counterfeit witches', and the 'counterfeit' priests of the 'fond, fained, and counterfeit' Roman church. Such people were no less rogues, witches, or priests for being 'counterfeit'.[45]

Applied to Gypsies or 'Egyptians', the word intensified rather than questioned their identity as practitioners of deceit. They were 'counterfeit' because of their fraudulent practices, and because they passed themselves as 'Egyptians'. Few people believed that Gypsies actually came from Egypt, though some speculated that they may have inherited some of the wisdom of that ancient people.[46] When constables and magistrates subsequently cited 'counterfeit Egyptians' it was to secure prosecution in accord with the statutes, not just to allude to ne'er-do-wells who became Gypsies by association. The law

[44] Judith Okely, *The Traveller-Gypsies* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 3–5; Angus Fraser, 'Counterfeit Egyptians', *Tsiganologische Studien*, 2 (1990), pp. 43–69; Wim Willems, *In search of the true Gypsy: from enlightenment to final solution* (London, 1998), pp. 3, 293, 301; Mayall, *Gypsy identities*, pp. 61–3. See also Tobias B. Hug, *Impostures in early modern England: representations and perceptions of fraudulent identities* (Manchester and New York, NY, 2009), pp. 112–15.

[45] Walter Haddon, *A dialogue agaynst the tyrannye of the Papists* (London, 1562), sig. Cv; Thomas Middleton, *A mad world, my masters* (London, 1608), act 5; John Benbrigge, *Usura accomodata, or a ready way to rectifie usury* (London, 1646), p. 13; Reginald Scot, *The discouerie of witchcraft* (London, 1584), p. 464; John Gaule, *Select cases of conscience touching witches and witchcrafts* (London, 1646), p. 177.

[46] Discussing the 'abstruse and mystical sciences' of ancient Egypt, Thomas Brown wondered if 'those vagabond and counterfeit Egyptians do yet…retain a few corrupted principles which sometimes may verify their prognostics', Thomas Browne, *Religio medici* (London, 1642), p. 117. The savant Joseph Glanvill was also willing to consider that Gypsies 'were not such imposters as they were taken for, but that they had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination', Joseph Glanvill, *The vanity of dogmatizing: or confidence in opinions* (London, 1661), p. 197.

preserved and perpetuated the terms 'Egyptian' and 'counterfeit Egyptian' for people commonly described as Gypsies. Echoing the statute of 1531, the 1598 law 'for punishment of rogues, vagabonds and sturdy beggars' also encompassed 'persons…wandering and pretending themselves to be Egyptians, or wandering in the habit, form or attire of counterfeit Egyptians', as well as tellers of 'destinies, fortunes or such other like fantastical imaginations'. Especially dangerous offenders risked imprisonment, banishment, or consignment 'perpetually to the galleys of this realm' (even though the late Elizabethan navy had no galleys).[47]

III

Tudor statutes vilified the Gypsies as crafty and subtle, thievish and deceitful, devilish, naughty, and 'counterfeit'. They were rootless and unchurched, their 'difference' a matter of 'trade of life' as well as cultural heritage. Popular pamphleteers amplified this conceit in texts that were plagiarized and recycled for several centuries. A deeply entrenched stereotype – still present in some quarters – denounced the Gypsies as idle, dirty, deceitful, and promiscuous practitioners of fraudulent fortune-telling and petty theft. Commentators decried the Gypsies as 'a pestiferous people', 'wretched, wily, wandering vagabonds', and 'the idle drones of a country, the caterpillars of a commonwealth, the Egyptian lice of a kingdom'.[48]

Writing in 1567, the Kentish administrator Thomas Harman charged 'vagabonds calling and naming themselves Egyptians' with 'deep, deceitful practices, feeding the rude common people…with the strangeness of the attire of their heads, and practicing palmistry to such as would know their fortunes'. They were among the 'rowsey, ragged rabblement of rakehells' plaguing the kingdom, 'and, to be short, all thieves and whores'. Harman hoped that the recent statute would cause the Gypsies to be 'dispersed, vanished, and the memory of them clean extinguished', but despite the Elizabethan legislation they flourished and proliferated.[49]

Echoing Harman, other commentators added to the battery of denigration, using the words Gypsy and Egyptian indiscriminately. Sir Thomas Smith remarked in 1568 on 'that mob of rascals, prostitutes and thieves whom they

[47] 39 Elizabeth I, c. 4.

[48] Samuel Rid, *The art of iugling or legerdemaine* (London, 1612), sig. B; Thomas Harman, *A caveat or warening for commen cursetors vulgarely called vagabones* (London, 1567), sig. Aiiiv; Thomas Dekker, *The belman of London: bringing to light the most notorious villanies that are now practiced in the kingdome* (London, 1608), sig. Cv.

[49] Harman, *Caveat or warening for commen cursetors*, sigs. Br–Bv. The 1573 edition has 'banished' instead of 'vanished'. See also A. L. Beier, 'New historicism, historical context, and the literature of rogues: the case of Thomas Harman reopened', in Dionne and Mentz, eds., *Rogues and early modern English culture*, pp. 98–119.

call Gypsies'.[50] William Harrison a few years later placed 'Egyptian rogues' among the 'thriftless poor' who deserved the 'whip of justice'.[51] Reginald Scot, in his *Discouerie of witchcraft* of 1584, exposed Gypsies as 'counterfeit Egyptians' and 'cozening vagabonds' who won 'credit among the multitude' for their false divinations.[52] John Harvey in 1588 denounced 'the wizardly fortune-tellings of the runagate counterfeit Egyptians, commonly termed Gypsies', whose fraudulent practices were a cover for pilferage and pocket-picking.[53]

'By a name they are called Gypsies, they call themselves Egyptians', explained Thomas Dekker in 1608. 'Strange' and 'dangerous', he described them as 'a people more scattered than Jews, and more hated; beggarly in apparel, barbarous in condition, beastly in behaviour, and bloody if they meet advantage'. Engaged in 'incests, whoredoms, adulteries, and…other black and deadly damned impieties', they were 'counterfeit' imposters, joined by ne'r-do-wells, 'priggers, anglers, cheaters, morts, yeomen's daughters that have taken some by-blows… and other servants both men and maids that have been pilferers…who running away from their own colours, which are bad enough, serve under these, being the worst'. In Dekker's view, the exotic costume, dark skin, and strange speech of these 'counterfeit Egyptians' were mere devices to deceive 'the simple country people' while they picked their pockets and stole their possessions. Gypsies, by this account, were a disorderly assembly practising a wilfully deviant lifestyle. They were not what they claimed to be, therefore doubly counterfeit, dealing in deceitful practices and only pretending to be exotic.[54]

Views like these would outlast the Stuart period, perpetuating the most hostile misrepresentation.[55] They underlie the use of 'Gypsies' as a term of abuse, signifying dissembling and deceit. Among dozens of early modern examples, the earl of Surrey warned friends in 1583, 'beware the Gypsy', meaning the deceitful earl of Leicester.[56] A Jacobean gentleman described an acquaintance as 'a very Gypsy' because of similar characteristics.[57] The Somerset minister

[50] Thomas Smith, *De recta & emendata linguae Anglicae scriptione, dialogus* (Lutetiae, i.e. Paris, 1568), p. 6.

[51] Edelen, ed., *Description of England by William Harrison*, pp. 180–6.

[52] Scot, *Discouerie of witchcraft*, p. 197.

[53] John Harvey, *A discoursive problem concerning prophesies* (London, 1588), pp. 63–4.

[54] Dekker, *Belman of London*, sig. Cv; Thomas Dekker, *Lanthorne and candle-light: or the bellmans second nights walke* (London, 1608), sigs. G4v–G6v.

[55] See, for example, *A new dictionary of the terms ancient and modern of the canting crew* (London, 1699), which described Gypsies as 'a counterfeit brood of wandering rogues and wenches, herding together and living promiscuously, or in common, under hedges and in barns, disguising themselves with blacking their faces and bodies, and wearing an antic dress, as well as devising a particular cant, strolling up and down, and under colour of fortune-telling, palmistry, physiognomy, and cure of diseases, impose always upon the unthinking vulgar, and often steal from them, whatever is not too hot for their fingers, or too heavy to carry off'.

[56] Robert Naunton, *Fragmenta regalia, or observations on the late Queen Elizabeth, her times and favorits* (London, 1641), p. 17.

[57] Somerset Archives, DD/PH/219, no. 42.

Roderick Snellin 'publicly railed at his parishioners and called them Gypsies and cheating knaves'.[58] Jesuits, Puritans, Presbyterians, Independents, Quakers, and Republicans all endured the epithet 'Gypsies'.[59] The Restoration controversialist Edmund Hickering smeared religious dissenters as 'unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, spiritual Gypsies, cheats and jugglers'. Like Gypsy fortune-tellers, they beguiled and deceived, 'All the while, looking in your face,/And telling news of acts of grace,/Telling fortunes, predestinations,/ Decrees, elections, reprobations:/Of which, he can no more truth can tell ye/ Than Gypsies can, of William Lilly./When spiritual Gypsy thus is at it,/ Take my advice, look to thy pocket.'[60]

IV

Gypsies were subject to law as well as popular prejudice. Commending the legislation of 1563, the Speaker of the House of Commons reminded members that 'laws without execution be as a torch unlighted or a body without a soul. Therefore look well to the execution.'[61] The law gave magistrates a powerful weapon, to be used *in terrorum*, but local records reveal their reluctance to exact the maximum penalty. Enforcement was discretionary and haphazard, and most authorities preferred to ignore Gypsies, or treat them as vagrants, rather than prosecute them as felons. In this regard the state spoke loudly, but carried a little stick.

Early in August 1566, the constables of Great Chesterford, Essex, apprehended fourteen 'vagabonds otherwise called Egyptians', with a dozen or so children travelling with them. But rather than dealing with them according to the 1563 statute, they handed them over to their counterparts at Ickleton, Cambridgeshire. For the next few weeks the Gypsies were shuttled from parish to parish, even county to county, while the authorities decided what to do with them.[62] Six men were charged with feloniously consorting with so-called 'Egyptians', but the Chelmsford Assize jury found them 'not guilty'. The Gypsies were then passed from constable to constable, across the Thames from Tilbury to Gravesend, then southward through Kent into

[58] Somerset Archives, D/D/Cd. 66, fo. 173.

[59] Thomas Bell, *The Catholique triumph, conteyning a reply to the pretended answer of B. C. (a masked Iesuite)* (London, 1610), pp. 123, 237; Thomas Thompson, *Antichrist arraigned in a sermon at Pauls Crosse* (London, 1618), p. 182; Henry Burton, *Vindiciae veritatis: truth vindicated against calumny* (London, 1645), p. 19; Stephen Proudlove, *Truths triumph over errour: or, the routing of the seven false prophets* (London, 1653), title page; Richard Brathwait, *The honest ghost, or a voice from the vault* (London, 1658), p. 320; Fabian Phillips, *King Charles the first, no man of blood: but a martyr for his people* (London, 1649), p. 65.

[60] Edmund Hockeringill, *Gregory, Father-Greybeard, with his vizard off; or, news from the cabal* (London, 1673), pp. 251, 258.

[61] T. E. Hartley, ed., *Proceedings in the parliaments of Elizabeth I*, I: *1558–1581* (Leicester, 1981), pp. 111–12; British Library, Lansdowne MS 102, fo. 25.

[62] Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, Q/SR 19A/ 24, 30, 34, 61.

Sussex.[63] Local authorities apparently preferred removal to prosecution, essentially nullifying the statute that made Gypsies felons.

Less fortunate were David and Nicholas Fawe, perhaps descendants of the Faa family that had troubled Thomas Cromwell, who were convicted of consorting with Egyptians at the Kent assizes in July 1569 and were sentenced to hang. But other so-called 'Egyptians' in their company were acquitted.[64] Thirteen more counterfeit 'Egyptians' indicted at the Essex summer assizes in 1570 were found guilty but secured pardons, a reminder that sentencing was a stage, not an end, with multiple opportunities for alternative outcomes.[65]

Wandering Gypsies found a friend, or at least an accomplice, in Richard Massey, a Cheshire schoolmaster, who used his literacy to forge licences and passports that purportedly authorized their travel. Massey's fake licences showed up among Gypsies as far south as the Thames Valley. When 'certain lewd vagabonds, men and women, naming themselves Egyptians', were apprehended in Berkshire in March 1577 they displayed 'a counterfeit licence', allegedly granted by the Council at York. Under examination, they confessed that the paper was the work of 'one Massey, a schoolmaster dwelling…within a mile of Whitchurch' on the border of Shropshire and Cheshire.[66] There was evidently a black market in documents and seals, that some Gypsies exploited to fool gullible officials.

Massey was quickly arrested and imprisoned. Under examination in April 1577, he confessed to forging a grant from the Council at York 'unto certain rogues naming themselves Egyptians'. The privy council instructed the sheriff of Chester to transport the schoolmaster to the Marshalsea prison in London, 'under safe guard, and to be kept from conference by the way'. Counterfeiting licences under the Great Seal was a capital offence, and Massey spent a miserable few months in prison while his wife became 'an humble suitor unto their lordships for him'. He was eventually released and bound over in the sum of £40 (more than a year's income for a schoolmaster) to appear at the next Gaol Delivery in Shropshire, where he had allegedly committed his crime.[67] What befell him is unknown.

Meanwhile, the Gypsies taken in Berkshire with the schoolmaster's forged papers faced a special commission of Oyer and Terminer. Some of the 'rogues' of their company were traced to the adjacent counties of

[63] J. S. Cockburn, ed., *Calendar of assize records: Essex indictments Elizabeth I* (London, 1978), p. 47.

[64] J. S. Cockburn, ed., *Calendar of assize records: Kent indictments Elizabeth I* (London, 1979), p. 88.

[65] Cockburn, ed., *Calendar…Essex*, pp. 81, 83; Philip Jenkins, 'From gallows to prison? The execution rate in early modern England', *Criminal Justice History*, 7 (1986), pp. 51–71. See also Cynthia B. Herrup, *The common peace: participation and the criminal law in seventeenth-century England* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 165–6.

[66] Frederick G. Blair, 'Forged passports of British Gypsies in the sixteenth century', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3rd ser., 28 (1950), pp. 131–7; *APC*, IX, p. 304.

[67] *APC*, X, p. 6.

Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire where they were charged with 'naming themselves Egyptians' and 'deceiving her majesty's subjects under colour of a counterfeit licence' – a double dissembling of identity and documents. The leaders were tried at Aylesbury for high treason, for falsifying the Great Seal, though one received a stay 'because he may give evidence against others'.[68] Seven men and one woman were found guilty of 'counterfeiting, transferring, and altering themselves in dress, language, and behaviour to such vagabonds called Egyptians, contrary to statute', and all were sentenced to hang, though whether all went to the gallows is uncertain.[69]

On several occasions, when Gypsies were brought to their attention, local justices appealed to the privy council for guidance on how to proceed. The answers were not always helpful. When magistrates in Herefordshire informed the Council about 'certain assemblies and companies of lewd persons calling themselves Egyptians' in 1573, the Council instructed them to 'try and execute according to law the principal heads and ringleaders for terror and example; and for the rest, proceed against them as rogues and send them home into their countries, or use such moderation as they shall think good'.[70] When they reported the arrest in 1589 of 'certain lewd and bad persons terming themselves Egyptians, that lived by deceitful shifts, pilfering and abusing of the people, going from place to place…with a counterfeit passport, thereby increasing their offence and lewdness', the Council advised them to do everything 'meet for their correction, and to rid and ease the country of those bad and lewd kind of people'.[71]

More so-called 'Egyptians' fell foul of Elizabethan authorities as far apart as Yorkshire and Sussex, Radnorshire and Kent, sometimes accused of petty pilferage.[72] Their meagre possessions are suggested by an inventory of Gypsy goods and chattels taken in Lincolnshire, which included two horses, a mare of divers colours, and a few small eyelets of gold, worth 32*s* 6*d* in all. Another party boasted no more than two old mares, one lame nag, and 'certain old silver', totalling £2 3*s* 4*d*.[73] A similarly sad collection of scrawny beasts was all that remained with the sheriff of Cambridgeshire in 1588, after certain 'Egyptians' had left his custody. Their equipage included 'a dark sorrel nag, a grey mare, two old jade mares, one white old jade, one blind curtail, one sorrel dun lame jade, two white jades being lame geldings, one little stone nag, one brown mare, [and] a brown spavined gelding'. These were horses indeed, but poor ones, long past their best. The entire equine inventory was

[68] *APC*, IX, pp. 304, 311, 313.
[69] TNA, KB 8/44, fos. 6–11; Thompson, 'Consorting with and counterfeiting Egyptians'.
[70] *APC*, VIII, p. 113.
[71] *APC*, XVII, p. 278.
[72] J. S. Cockburn, ed., *Calendar of assize records: Sussex indictments Elizabeth I* (London, 1975), 168; Cockburn, ed., *Calendar…Essex*, 175; *APC*, XI, p. 361; TNA, E 199/24/38, E 199/24/40, E 199/4/50; Essex Record Office, Q/SR/113/40.
[73] TNA, E 199/24/38 and 40.

valued at £4, at a time when more favoured horses cost £2 apiece or more.[74] The Gypsies were not destitute, until their goods were confiscated, and their activities provided means of repairing their fortunes.

A complex episode from Nottinghamshire in 1591 shows Gypsies in collision with the law, and magistrates in conflict with each other, as they tried to decide how to handle them. As often happens in such cases, the documents shed more light on the authorities themselves than on the subjects of their attention. The difficulties began in April 1591 when justices William Cardinal and Anthony Neville arrested large numbers of transients, 'called of some Egyptians', who were suspected of local crimes. Gypsy bands more than a hundred strong had gathered around Nottinghamshire villages as they travelled on the Great North Road towards Gainsborough Fair. Villagers accused the Gypsies of pilferage, so the magistrates set them in stir. The Gypsy leader Thomas Jackson stood out with his distinctive blue coat.[75]

Before the Gypsies could come to trial, however, both leaders and followers were released on bail. Peter Roos and two fellow justices set the Gypsies free and allowed them to continue their journey. Cardinal and Neville complained that they were crossed and disgraced, and referred the matter to higher authorities. The dispute was no longer only about Gypsies, but about gentry honour, legality, and magisterial power. It may even have been a surrogate struggle for aristocratic factions competing for regional ascendancy.[76]

Justices Cardinal and Neville recited 'the lewd behaviour of those vagrant persons terming themselves Egyptians, that have committed sundry outrages on her majesty's good subjects', and complained to the privy council that the other justices 'did set at liberty such malefactors and seditious people'. The Council responded by recommending 'the apprehension and committing to prison of so many of those disordered and tumultuous people as shall be yet found in those parts, to the end such punishment may be inflicted upon them as shall be fit for their deserts'.[77] They also summoned Roos to explain himself in London.

Elizabeth's attorney general, Sir John Popham, grilled Peter Roos in Star Chamber. As an experienced lawyer, surely Roos knew better than to set free 'such a loose and lewd band of vagrant and idle rogues'. As 'a man learned in the law', he should 'have first conferred with his fellow justices, that committed the said Egyptians, to have known the cause', rather than yielding to 'humours and persuasions' to set them at liberty. The Gypsies, as everyone knew, were 'lewd…vagrant…idle…seditious…disordered…tumultuous…and

[74] TNA, E 199/4/50; Peter Edwards, *Horse and man in early modern England* (London and New York, NY, 2007), pp. 194–8.

[75] The following account is based on TNA, STAC 7/10/20 and STAC 10/1/132, supplemented by Acts of the Privy Council.

[76] W. T. MacCaffery, 'Talbot and Stanhope: an episode in Elizabethan politics', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 33 (1960), pp. 73–85.

[77] *APC*, xi, pp. 62–3.

notorious', and were felons under the terms of the statute. State authority and popular culture concurred in vilifying Gypsies. What could lawyer Roos have been thinking by allowing them to depart unpunished?

Peter Roos offered several explanations for his actions. He said he took account of local freeholders, who did not want responsibility for holding a hundred or more Gypsies in custody. In particular, he was pressed by 'one James Bellamy' (whom Popham characterized as 'a very mean and simple man'), who 'had the charge to carry the said Egyptians to prison, which he was loath to do because the prison was about seventeen or eighteen miles from him'. The logistics of moving a hundred Gypsies to Nottingham castle, and then caring for them while they awaited trial, were simply overpowering. In any case, Roos continued, the county gaol was already overcrowded, and he feared 'that if any more should come thither it were very like to breed an infection of sickness in the town of Nottingham'. To this, Popham responded that the justice should have bailed lesser offenders to make room for 'such great and dangerous thieves, not fit to go at liberty, as the said Egyptians are notoriously known to be'.

The main reason for releasing the Gypsies, so Roos told the court, was 'for the good of the country, to avoid such a great company of the Egyptians then at liberty out of that part of the country, who otherwise would still there remain, to the great annoyance and disquietness of her majesty's good subjects'. It was evidently a strategy used elsewhere, to hasten the departure of Gypsy bands who might otherwise cause cost and complications, while waiting for their leaders to be tried or released. In this case, Roos ordered 'the whole company of the said Egyptians to be transported on the other side of the Trent', into the next county, to be rid of them.

Attorney General Popham castigated Roos for his poor judgement, 'in that he conceiveth of no other ways so fit to rid the country of other Egyptians, then being at liberty, as to set at liberty all the ringleaders and captains of them'. The effect, he continued, was 'to reunite them all to their full strength again, to make them able to rob and spoil again her majesty's good subjects, as after their said bailment they did'. Reason and experience should have taught Roos

> that a people weakened by having their ringleaders and leaders taken from them might sooner be dispersed into small companies, and with less danger to the country, than when they were all united to their full strength again; for they being so dispersed, if after they had committed any theft or outrage, any poor village had been able to have resisted them; whereas now, they being restored by the said Peter Roos's bail to their full strength again, three or four of the best towns in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, whither they were sent, were scarce able to resist or suppress them.

Popham, for the crown, was indignant 'that such strong and notorious thieves, coming together in such great troops, and committing such notorious robberies and outrages', should be free to leave on bail. And because they had left no

'good and sufficient sureties for her majesty's use' the crown was now 'utterly defrauded'. There was little to be done besides wringing of hands and issuing of rebukes, for the people led by the man in blue had gone.

The last decade of Queen Elizabeth's reign saw several collisions between Gypsies and justices, but little appetite for executing 'Egyptians'. Magistrates conducted occasional sweeps of 'rogues, beggars, Egyptians' and other 'lazy and unprofitable members of the commonwealth', but rarely put them to death. The few Gypsies executed for 'counterfeiting themselves to be Egyptians', or being 'found in the consort or society of vagabonds commonly called Egyptians', had usually committed more serious offences.[78]

Yorkshire justices apprehended a large travelling company in the spring of 1596, 'being one hundred, four score and sixteen persons of men, women and children…some of them feigning themselves to have knowledge in palmistry, physiognomy, and other abused sciences, using certain disguised apparel and forged speech, contrary to the laws and statutes of this realm'. Most were described as 'idle persons, the queen's natural born subjects, and some of them descended of good parentage', but at least nine were 'strangers, aliens born in foreign parts beyond the seas', who may have been immigrant Gypsies. The justices committed the entire 'lewd' crew to gaol, and the adults among them were arraigned as felons. An exceptionally detailed report tells how some were executed but most were reprieved. The nine 'most valiant' immigrant strangers, apparently the leaders, went to the gallows, and the rest were set to follow. But such 'doleful' and 'piteous' cries went up from the infants and young children that the court 'reprieved the residue of their condemned parents' and sent them back to gaol. There they stayed for two months, at county expense, until the Council of the North obtained their pardon. They would be free to depart, so long as they promised 'to reform their lives' and 'to demean themselves in some honest faculty'. Not surprisingly, the Gypsies accepted this offer, and the court arranged for a conductor to escort them back to their parishes of origin, if such could be found.[79]

While this drama was unfolding in the north, magistrates in Somerset faced a similar problem, they said, of 'infinite numbers of the wicked wandering idle people of the land', both Gypsies and sturdy beggars. The problem, Edward Hext told Burghley in September 1596, was that 'in truth, work they will not…they will rather hazard their lives than work'. Foremost among the 'rogues and vagrant suspicious persons', thieves, tinkers, and wandering soldiers, who plagued south-west England, was 'that wicked sect of rogues, the

[78] Crofton, 'Early annals', p. 20; *Calendar of state papers, domestic* (*CSPD*) *1581–1590*, p. 672; *CSPD 1591–1594*, p. 146; John Cordy Jeaffreson, ed., *Middlesex county records…to the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth* (Clerkenwell, 1886), p. 221, also pp, 253, 267.

[79] R. O. Jones, 'The mode of disposing of Gipsies and vagrants in the reign of Elizabeth', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 4th ser., 13 (1882), pp. 226–9.

Egyptians', whose numbers were again increasing. There were, Hext guessed, 'three or four hundred in a shire', who wandered in bands too strong to be apprehended. The Gypsies, he claimed, 'laugh in themselves at the lenity of the law, and the timorousness of the executioners of it'.[80] As in Nottinghamshire, so in Somerset, Gypsies became adept at manipulating the system, though some justices took a harder line than others.

V

There was no new legislation on Gypsies in the seventeenth century, and diminishing inclination to enforce the Tudor statutes. Travelling in smaller groups, and providing a variety of itinerant services, the Gypsies learned to avoid officialdom or became less troublesome to local authorities. Villagers often welcomed them as fortune-tellers, pot menders, horse doctors, and entertainers, provided they did not linger. The few who came to judicial attention were typically described as 'counterfeiting themselves to be Egyptians', lewd persons 'going after the manner of roguish Egyptians', and 'miserable poor people of the quality of runagate Gypsies…travelling about and telling fortunes'. The markers of Gypsy identity remained indeterminate, though people seemed to know them when they saw them. Jacobean interactions resulted in several interceptions of 'runagate' and 'counterfeit' Gypsies, though few were referred to the assizes. Constables and overseers were more likely to move the Gypsies along than to cause them to be arrested, and were sometimes cited themselves for their slackness or tolerance.[81]

The most remarkable record of Gypsies in the early Stuart era comes from Hampshire in 1616, when magistrates cracked down on 'counterfeits and false writers of the king's majesty's letters patent and broad seal', and imprisoned several dozen offenders at Winchester. The detainees included a mixture of vagabonds, rogues, and Gypsies, including Walter Hindes, who was found in 'the company of counterfeit Egyptians'. Singing to deflect punishment under the 1563 statute, he testified about his recent travels. Most interesting of all, Hindes helped to compile 'a note of such canting words as the counterfeit Egyptians use amongst themselves as their language', with English translations. His list of over a hundred words and phrases reveals a vocabulary that linguists identify as Anglo-Romani, derived from Hindi, with elements different from underworld cant. The Winchester word-list supports claims for the Gypsies'

[80] British Library, Lansdowne MS 81, fos. 161–2; John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation* (4 vols., London, 1738), IV, pp. 290–5.

[81] J. C. Atkinson, ed., *North Riding of the county of York: quarter sessions records*, I (London. 1884), pp. 11, 21; J. C. Atkinson, ed., *North riding of the county of York: quarter sessions records*, II (London, 1885), pp. 119–20; H. Hampton Copnall, *Nottinghamshire county records: notes and extracts from the Nottinghamshire county records of the seventeenth century* (Nottingham, 1915), pp. 50, 116; J. S. Cockburn, ed., *Calendar of assize records. Essex…James I* (London, 1982), p. 46.

distinctiveness, and explains why witnesses sometimes reported them to use a language that nobody else could understand.[82]

> Being demanded how long he had continued in their company, [Hindes said] that it is a month since or thereabouts, and he being travelling to London met with one Henry Mannering of that company, who told him if he would carry certain pillage for him he would bear his charges for him till he came to London, which he consented unto and kept them company until they were apprehended at Farnham and sent to the gaol aforesaid…Being demanded what the names of the said Egyptians were, he sayeth that the captains of their company are these, viz: William Poynes, the aforesaid Mannering, and one William Clifford.
>
> Being demanded what the women were that were in their company, he sayeth that three of them were wives to the forenamed men, and the rest of the company were their children and servants. Being demanded whether he had been formerly acquainted with them, he sayeth that he had, and that their course of life is to travel the country all the summertime, telling fortunes and deceiving the country, and in the wintertime they repair to London, and there they spend their time till the spring.
>
> Being demanded in what part of London their chief place of report was, he sayeth in Kent Street, at one William Lacy's, near unto the sign of the White Horse; the which Lacy is one that sells diaper and damask, and in times past was one of their company, but now he lieth still in London and receiveth such commodities as they either bring or send him; for he sayeth that if he had not been apprehended when they were the next day, they had sent up both money and gold with other pillage to London to the forenamed Lacy, who is uncle to this examinate.

Hindes's words, if reliable, add considerably to our knowledge of early modern Gypsies. The band he travelled with seems to have been a dozen or so strong, following a circuit through south-west England to London. His report of seasonal wanderings, fortune-telling, criminal transactions, and the accumulation of gold and money, is unparalleled. The London fence, William Lacy, was apparently, once 'of the company', and was Hindes's and the Gypsies' kinsman. His detailed knowledge of Anglo-Romani suggests a deep immersion in their culture. Gypsies were different from ordinary itinerants, but the evidence points to porous borders between their world and more settled communities.

Nor should this be especially surprising. Popular commentary had long claimed that Gypsy bands incorporated vagrants and runaways, even if it exaggerated the degree to which 'counterfeit Egyptians' were imposters. Early Tudor legislation had treated Gypsies as immigrants with antisocial propensities, but by 1563, it seems, they had expanded to include men and women

[82] Alan McGowan, ed., *The Winchester confessions, 1615–1616: depositions of travellers, Gypsies, fraudsters, and makers of counterfeit documents, including a vocabulary of the Romany language* (Romany and Traveller Family History Society, South Chailey, Sussex, 1996), transcribed from Hampshire Record Office, Jervoise of Herriard Collection, 44M69/G3/159; Peter Bakker, 'An early vocabulary of British Romani (1616): a linguistic analysis', *Romani Studies*, 5 (2002), pp. 75–101; Matras, *Romani in Britain*, pp. 58, 91, 131.

'counterfeiting, transforming or disguising themselves by their apparel, speech or other behaviour like unto such vagabonds'. Half a century later their community had grown, with large numbers of children who followed their 'trade of life'. Seventeenth-century records continued to refer to them indiscriminately as 'counterfeit Gypsies', 'counterfeit Egyptians', and 'Egyptians'.[83]

The government of Charles I took a hard line against disorderly travellers, but was not especially concerned with Gypsies. In 1626 and 1627, the privy council remarked on 'the great number of rogues and vagabonds and sturdy beggars wandering and lurking in the country', and ordered justices 'to search for and apprehend all such misliving people'. Sessions orders sometimes mention 'palmisters, fortune-tellers, Egyptians, and the like', but Caroline authorities were more worried by Irish beggars, with which the realm was said to be newly infested.[84]

Nonetheless, seven Gypsies were gaoled in Essex in 1627 as 'lewd persons… cozening the country of their money'. Four of them succumbed to gaol fever before they could appear at quarter sessions, but the rest were remanded to the assizes because 'of long time they wandered and cheated his majesty's people'. Nicholas Clifton, arrested at Stanford Mountfitchet 'for wandering as a counterfeit Egyptian', in company with others who 'disguised themselves as Gypsies', was found guilty and hanged, while his confederates remained 'at large'.[85] This was a rare application of the Elizabethan law, and one of the last executions under the 1563 statute.

Histories of Gypsies that dwell on victimhood sometimes assert that 'very great numbers were executed for no other crime but being Gypsies'. They commonly date the last burst of judicial savagery to 'Cromwell's time' or the 1650s.[86] But this is based on a misreading of *The history of the pleas of the crown*

[83] J. P. Earwaker, ed., *The constables' accounts of the manor of Manchester from the year 1612 to the year 1647* (2 vols., Manchester, 1891), I, p. 57; Ernest Axon, ed., *Manchester sessions: notes of proceedings…*, I: *1616– 1622–1623* (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, vol. 42, 1901), p. 70; Judith Ford, '"Egyptians" in early-modern Dorset', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*, 130 (2009), p. 3.

[84] Cheshire Record Office, QJB 1/6, fo. 46; J. W. Willis Bund, ed., *Worcestershire county records… calendar of the quarter sessions papers… 1591–1643* (Worcester, 1900), p. 577; HMC, *Salisbury*, XXII (1971), p. 213; J. Charles Cox, ed., *Three centuries of Derbyshire annals: as illustrated by the records of the quarter sessions* (2 vols., London, 1890), I, pp. 152–3; *APC, 1626, June–December*, 288; *APC 1627, January–August*, pp. 158, 185; John M. Wasson, ed., *Records of early English drama: Devon* (Toronto, 1986), p. 299; Paul Slack, 'Vagrants and vagrancy in England, 1594–1664', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., 27 (1974), p. 364. For Irish beggars, see TNA, SP 16/141/75, SP 16/123/5, SP 16/131/1, SP 16/139/1, SP 16/181/123, SP 16/234/57; Patrick Fitzgerald, '"Like crickets to the crevice of a brew-house": poor Irish migrants in England, 1560–1640', in Patrick Fitzgerald, ed., *Patterns of migration* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 13–35. In Scotland too in the 1630s, where Gypsies were subject to attack, 'the Council's bark was much more severe than its bite': Rosalind Mitchison, *The old poor law in Scotland: the experience of poverty, 1574–1845* (Edinburgh, 2000), p. 14.

[85] Essex Record Office, Q/SR 256/49, T/A 418/101/113, T/A 418/102/ 34 and 88.

[86] Hancock, *Pariah syndrome*, p. 90; Fraser, *Gypsies*, p. 133.

by Sir Matthew Hale, written around the time of the Regicide but not published until 1736. Discussing the punitive Tudor statutes, Hale recalled that 'about thirteen Gypsies were condemned and executed' at the assizes at Bury St Edmunds 'about twenty years since'.[87] Suffolk assize records do not survive for this period, but the episode can confidently be dated to 1628. Local sources report that John Agglinton, a runaway apprentice, was caught that year 'in the company of certain counterfeit Egyptians that were tried and executed at the last assizes in Suffolk'. Rather than being condemned as a felon, or otherwise punished under the still-extant statute, Agglinton was sent back to his master, a Colchester say-weaver, then re-apprenticed to a shipwright. His brief sojourn with the Gypsies, and his forced return to settled society, indicates once again the porosity of the boundaries between migrant and mainstream populations.[88]

VI

The early modern evidence suggests that Gypsy culture was distinctive yet malleable. It encompassed 'Egyptians', 'counterfeit Egyptians', 'runagate Gypsies', and the people who travelled in their company. There had always been blending and mixing, but Gypsies continued to be recognized as Gypsies. Their ethnicity was fluid and self-replicating, to be inherited and inhabited by those described as 'Gypsy people', including stray newcomers to their mobile 'trade of life'. All were offensive to early modern authorities, who wanted them punished or gone.

Unlike the general swarm of vagrants, who included victims of hardship and poverty who travelled in search of work, the Gypsies were mostly perpetual itinerants. Despite accusations of idleness and fecklessness, they were mostly busy. Far from being mindless wanderers, they were purposeful travellers who filled a niche in the economy of itinerancy. The men handled logistics, and dealt in animals and games of chance, while Gypsy women earned pennies from fortune-telling. Common folk were said to have flocked to them, when they arrived in their midst, though local authorities disapproved of their predations. Even in gaol, one Jacobean writer reported, certain Gypsies contrived to exploit 'the simplicity of many of the townsmen's wives, daughters and servants' with fraudulent divinations. People allegedly 'wondered at them, and gave them money, sent them meat every day to dinner and supper, saying it was pity such skillful people as they should not be provided for' – a generosity not extended to common vagrants.[89] Unlike other itinerants and the ordinary

[87] Sir Matthew Hale, *Historia placitorum coronae: the history of the pleas of the crown* (2 vols., London, 1736), I, p. 671; John Hoyland, *A historical survey of the customs, habits, & present state of the Gypsies* (London, 1816), p. 87.

[88] Essex Record Office, D/Y 2/9 (film of Morant MS, vol. 9, CXLVIII, p. 253).

[89] John Melton, *Astrologaster, or, the figure-caster: rather the arraignment of artelesse astrologers, and fortune-tellers, that cheat many ignorant people* (London, 1620), pp. 48–51.

roving poor, the Gypsies owned horses, baggage, and supplies of goods and money, and were rarely associated with begging. If it is true that Gypsies sometimes picked pockets, then that was work too, as some modern Roma attest.

Gypsies remained a fascination to popular authors, and a mystery to public authorities. Vulgar cultural construction shaped their image, and legal administrative processes sought their suppression, but Gypsies remained elusive and unknowable. They touched a nerve, revealing areas of anxiety and stress. The Tudor state made them criminals, and seventeenth-century authorities still found Gypsies offensive, though no longer a people to be hounded or eliminated. In this regard, Stuart England differed from continental Europe, where prejudice hardened and Gypsies became subject to ever sharper attacks.[90] Further comparative study may expose both commonalities and distinctiveness in the English response to social anomalies, and changes over time.

Though sharing a lifestyle with vagrant travellers, the Gypsies seem to have been a people apart, distinctive in appearance, organization, activity, and voice. Despite pressures of assimilation, English Gypsies preserved elements of a Romani heritage well into the modern era. Hostile writers vilified them for their lack of lawful callings, their avoidance of social obligations, and their deceitful practices of divination and legerdemain, while a few authors idealized them as exemplars of merriment and liberty.[91] Only in the nineteenth century, with its fascination with 'Gypsy blood', would Gypsy identity be racialized.[92]

In our own day, we are bombarded by contradictory impressions, cultural imaginings, and the competitive advocacy of Roma, Gypsy-Travellers, and popular culture. Social scientists tend to argue that Gypsy identity was entirely constructed, a matter of representation rather than heritage. But evidence of cultural construction does not mean that the Gypsies had no presence, purpose, or ethnicity of their own. Historians who enter this debate can do more than correct misperceptions. The challenge of social history is to connect the most marginal people to the 'political nation', and to ground that discussion in the widest range of evidence. We can advance this by recognizing Gypsies as figures in the landscape, and neglected participants in English history.

[90] R. A. Scott MacFie, 'Gypsy persecutions: a survey of a black chapter in European history', *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 3rd ser., 22 (1943), pp. 69–77; Van Kappen, *Geschiedenis der Zigeuners in Nederland*, pp. 463–73, 551–2; Henriette Asséo, 'Marginalité et exclusion: le traitement adminstratif des Bohémiens dans la societé Française du XVIIe siècle', in Henriette Asséo and Jean-Paul Vittu, eds., *Problèmes socio-culturels au XVIIe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1974), pp. 9–87; Joachim S. Hohmann, *Geschichte der Zigeuner Verfolgung in Deutschland* (Frankfurt and New York, NY, 1988), pp. 27–43; Antonio Gomez Alfaro, *The great Gypsy round-up: Spain, the general imprisonment of the Gypsies in 1749* (Madrid, 1993); Pym, *Gypsies of early modern Spain*, pp. 152–64.

[91] Thomas Middleton, *More dissembling besides women* (performed 1614, published 1657), act 3, scene 2, act 4, scene 2; *The brave English Jipsie* (broadside ballad, date uncertain); Christopher Hill, *Liberty against the law: some seventeenth-century controversies* (London, 1996), pp. 131–41.

[92] David Mayall, *Gypsy-Travellers in nineteenth-century society* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 73–80.