

JEWISH AND GYPSY CHARACTERS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY THEATRICAL PIECES.
A REDISCOVERED ANTHOLOGY OF PRINTS

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1. *Gypsies and Jews: a common stigma*

The arrival of Gypsies at the end of the Middle Ages aroused a great fear in the European populations, who started to feel threatened by those nomadic people with customs very different from theirs. The social stigmatization of Gypsies soon became widespread but, alongside the explicit desire to persecute them, there was a need to investigate their origins. Since then, therefore, theories of ethnic proximity between Gypsies and Jews began to circulate, even though the Jewish communities in Europe were older than the presence of Gypsies.

Some seventeenth-century scholars speculated that Gypsies and Jews were descended from biblical patriarchs and, specifically, from Adam and his first wife Lilith, who was later demonized and described as a nocturnal creature. For this reason, the Gypsies were considered exempt from the original sin and they were not required to work in order to live.¹ According to another theory, Gypsies were descended from the line of Cain through his sons Jubal, the first harp player, and Tubalcain, the first craftsman of copper and iron: music and metalworking were, in fact, the main activities for Gypsies.² Martìn del Rìo, a Jesuit theologian, wrote about this topic in the *Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex* (1599-1660) and, a few years later, Sancho de Moncada wrote about the same in the *Restauración política de España* (1619), wherein he also claimed the ‘Expulsión de los gitanos’ from Spain.³ According to both scholars, the origin of the Gypsies could be traced back to Noah, through the line of Cus, son of Cam.⁴ Some believed, instead, that Gypsies descended from the fortune tellers of Syria and Chaldea, such as the famous biblical character Simon Magus, in order to explain their knowledge of magic and their witchcraft abilities.⁵

Other scholars have tried to trace the common origin of Gypsies and Jews to more recent times. Hans Christoph Wagenseil (1633-1705), for example, believed that Gypsies were actually German-born Jews coming out of hiding from caves after the mediaeval pogroms.⁶ His considerations started from the unfounded identification of the Gypsy language as a mixture of Hebrew, Yiddish and German. Pierre Joseph de Haitze, an eighteenth-century historian, claimed that Gypsies were the union of Jews and Hussite Christians, Bohemian Christians followers of the reforming theologian Jan Hus. Eventually, in Spain there was a widespread opinion that Gypsies were the union of Jews and Moorish people from Andalusia, both persecuted during the Reconquista.⁷ Theories of a biblical origin of Gypsies continued to circulate until the nineteenth century: Samuel Roberts, an evangelist manufacturer from Yorkshire, could not accept claims for the Indian origin of Gypsies. After a period of biblical studies, he was

¹ F. DE VAUX DE FOLETIER, *Mille anni di storia degli zingari*, Jaca Book, Milano 1978, p. 26.

² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³ L. CHARNON-DEUTSCH, *The Spanish Gypsy. The History of a European Obsession*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA 2004.

⁴ DE FOLETIER, *Mille anni di storia degli zingari*, p. 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁶ I. HANCOCK, *The “Gypsy” stereotype and the sexualization of romani women*, in V. GLAJAR, and D. RADULESCU (eds) *“Gypsies” in European Literature and Culture: Studies in European Culture and History*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2008, pp. 181-191: 182.

⁷ DE FOLETIER, *Mille anni di storia degli zingari*, p. 29.

persuaded that they were descendants of the ancient Egyptians; particularly, the verse from *Ezekiel* 29:12 («I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries») was enlightening to him. From Roberts' perspective, Gypsies had to be converted as a prelude to the conversion of the Jews.⁸

Alongside the erudite efforts to demonstrate the common origin of Gypsies and Jews, both categories have been stigmatized and considered cursed. Their wandering life and perpetual exile were interpreted as the divine punishment of a serious fault, while their supposed inclination to delinquency was read as a reflection of their evil and sinful inner nature. The attitude to theft and deception was the main stereotype afflicting both Gypsies and Jews; in addition to the theft of goods, both Jews and Gypsies were accused of stealing children, a stereotype about Jews with origins in the Middle Ages.⁹ According to such anti-Semitic canard, Jews used to murder Christian children in order to use their blood as part of religious rituals, especially, for the baking of the *matzos* eaten at Passover.¹⁰

In people's minds, the kidnapping of children by Jews was thus closely linked to cannibalism. Since the seventeenth century, the literary *topos* of the Christian girl kidnapped by the old Gypsy became popular in short novels and in theatrical pieces and it was often followed by a final *anagnorisis*.¹¹ Just as it happened with the Jews, the accusation of cannibalism was also raised against the Gypsies, who were thought to murder Christians in order to eat them and to use their bones as fuel to light the fire.¹² These beliefs helped to create the image of Gypsies and Jews as sorcerers and necromancers. Especially after the Council of Trent (1542-1563) and during the Early Modern age, in fact, the Jewish necromancer became a long-living stereotype and it inspired many characters of comedies.¹³

In the same period, the figure of the Gypsy enchantress was consolidated in the popular and literary imaginary. Gypsy women were identified with fortune-tellers and experienced astrologers, and they were thought capable of finding hidden treasures or lost property. Even the art of healing and the ability to prepare magic potions were skills associated both with Gypsies and Jews;¹⁴ the proficiency of Jewish doctors became, indeed, another stereotype challenging the passing of time.¹⁵ Another common feature between Gypsies and Jews was their exotic origin: in many seventeenth-century plays the Gypsy enchantress claims to come from Egypt (as the etymology of the word 'gypsy' suggests):¹⁶ during the Middle Ages that region was identified with Babylon, which was also another name for the Egyptian city of Cairo, and it was often associated with the land of Canaan, the Israelites' promised land.

⁸ D. CRESSY, *Gypsies: An English History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018, p. 168.

⁹ For the paradigm of the blood libel see in the present volume A. VERONESE, *Cultural Paradigms in the Accusations of Ritual Murder*.

¹⁰ M. GOLDISH, *Jewish Questions: Responsa on Sephardic Life in the Early Modern Period*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2008, p. 8.

¹¹ DE FOLETIER, *Mille anni di storia degli zingari*, pp. 76-78: Cervantes's *Gitanilla* (1613) is the oldest example of a short story about a young girl kidnapped by a Gypsy. She, eventually, turns out to be a noble girl who can thus marry the young gentleman in love with her. The Italian comedy *La signorina zingaretta* (1646) by Florido de Silvestris has a very similar plot and this genre also became popular in France, where two comedies titled *La Belle Égyptienne* (the first by Alexandre Hardy, the other by Sallebray) were published during the seventeenth century. The more recent Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) fits within the same literary tradition.

¹² DE FOLETIER, *Mille anni di storia degli zingari*, p. 81.

¹³ M. CAFFIERO, *Legami pericolosi. Ebrei e cristiani tra eresia, libri proibiti e stregoneria*, Einaudi, Torino 2012, pp. 78-117; F. FRANCESCHINI, *Giudeo-romanesco a Livorno. L'ebreo stregone e il teatro delle lingue nelle «Nozze in sogno» (1665)*, «Nuova Rivista di Letteratura Italiana» 21 1 (2018), pp. 47-68.

¹⁴ DE FOLETIER, *Mille anni di storia degli zingari*, pp. 155-174.

¹⁵ D.B. RUDERMAN, *Jewish thought and scientific discovery in early modern Europe*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit 2001.

¹⁶ See, for example, the *Online Etymology Dictionary*: <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=gypsy>, last accessed July 2020.

In the comedy *Il vanto della Zingara* (1613) by Giovanni Briccio, for instance, the Gypsy character appoints as her forebears Lia and Mordechai and claims to be an expert in the Hebrew language and Babylonian horoscopes.¹⁷

The last point of contact between Gypsies and Jews was their wandering lifestyle: the so-called Wandering Gypsy and the Wandering Jew were very popular stereotypes and common literary *topoi* during the Modern Age, albeit with inevitably negative connotations.¹⁸ If the Jewish Diaspora and the lack of a homeland were considered consequences of a fault to be atoned for, also the nomadic life of Gypsies was seen not as the consequence of a free choice but as a punishment. According to an ancient legend, the Gypsies were cursed for not having given hospitality to the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt in order to escape the persecution of Herod. To this is added the belief that it was a Gypsy blacksmith who made the nails with which Jesus was crucified.¹⁹

The legends about Gypsies and Jews inspired the plots of many seventeenth-century plays and the features of the *Zingara* and the *Giudio*, very popular characters of the Roman theatrical tradition.

2. *Giudiate and zingaresche: a look at the seventeenth-century Roman theatre*

Rome, in fact, played an important role during the seventeenth century, not only as the heart of Christendom but also as a place of economic and cultural exchanges. The *Universitas Hebreorum* of Rome was the oldest and the most important of Europe, so relations between the Jewish community and the Christian majority of the population were numerous, even after the establishment of the Ghetto in 1555, according to the papal bull *Cum nimis absurdum*.²⁰

In that period, peculiar theatrical genres, called *zingaresche* and *giudiate*, became very popular. Such plays were performed in noblemen's private residences and, mostly, during public celebrations such as Carnival. There were staged clearly recognizable characters with specific costumes, who spoke different linguistic varieties. The most common characters were: *Norcino*, a funny and quite foolish peasant from the Roman countryside; *Zanni*, a humble worker from the northern city of Bergamo; *Zingara*, a powerful gypsy enchantress, and *Giudio*, the emblematic Jewish character from Rome, who speaks in a peculiar dialect known as *giudeo-romanesco*.

Zingaresche and *giudiate* employ characters which will become famous with the eighteenth-century Comedy of Art but they have different formal features and different contents. *Zingaresche* were written in stanzas of three seven-syllables and a pentasyllable, with the rhyme pattern *abbc cdde*;²¹ they were divided into *zingaresche liriche* and *zingaresche in forma di commedia*. The former were the oldest: Ireneo Affò, an eighteenth-century scholar, describes them as ancient sirventes which prophesied the future and which were staged during the New Year celebrations. Since the arrival of gypsies in Italy, around the fifteenth century, the prophetic sirventes had been called *zingaresca* because gypsies were considered very familiar with astrology and divinatory art.²² In the seventeenth century many *zingaresche* were performed not only by *Zingara*: other characters, such as *Norcino* and *Giudio*,

¹⁷ *Il vanto della zingara* di Giovanni Briccio Romano. Opera dotta, piacevole & bella; degna da recitarsi avanti qual si voglia giuditosa persona. In Viterbo. Con licenza de Superiori. 1613 (Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Capponi V 682⁴⁸).

¹⁸ See the Research Project of the University of Pisa (PRA 2020-2021) *L'ebreo errante: temi, idee e persone in movimento nello spazio e nel tempo*. Scientific Director: prof. Fabrizio Franceschini.

¹⁹ P. TOSCHI, *Le origini del teatro italiano*, Boringhieri, Torino 1976, p. 590.

²⁰ S. DI NEPI, *Sopravvivere al ghetto: per una storia sociale della comunità ebraica nella Roma del Cinquecento*, Viella, Roma 2013, p. 7.

²¹ See for instance *Dizionario di metrica e retorica*, Garzanti, Milano 2013, s. v.

²² I. AFFÒ, *Dizionario precettivo, critico, ed istorico della poesia volgare del p. Ireneo Affò di Busseto*, Filippo Carmignani, Parma 1777.

were involved and they amused the audience arguing with one another in so-called *zingaresche in forma di commedia*.

Giudiate, on the other hand, were often written in the meter of *zingaresca* but also in different popular meters such as *saltarello*, an octosyllable verse with the rhyme pattern *aba bcc cdc dcd ee* followed by a dance. They were also called *La Cassaccia* (“the coffin”) or *La recita del carro* (“the play of the chariot”) because they were performed on Carnival wagons especially by the corporation of fishmongers, which was connected to the parish of Sant’Angelo in Pescheria in the Monti district, near the Ghetto. Crescimbeni thus described *giudiate* in 1702:

Molto più delle Zingaresche s’assomigliano alle farse quelle popolari rappresentazioni, che sogliono fare nel Carnevale i Rioni di Roma sopra carri tirati da buoi, le quali si chiamano Giudiate, perciocché in esse non si tratta d’altro che di contraffare e schernire gli Ebrei in istranissime guise, ora impiccandone per la gola, ora strangolandone, ed ora scempiandone, e facendone ogn’altro più miserabil gioco. Queste faccende, delle quali ben sei volumi si veggono appo il Moraldi, sono composte di ogni sorta di linguaggi corrotti e storpiati e mescolati insieme; nè hanno altro ordine che di condursi con lunghissima cantilena di molti sciocchi personaggi allo spettacolo della burla che si fa al supposto Ebreo; né altro ornamento che di rami di lauri e d’altra fronde disposti per lo carro. Elleno si cantano anch’esse e in varie maniere, tutte particolari del volgo, e con l’accompagnamento di tali suoni che non sono sconvenevoli a tutto il resto; eppure, allorché si fanno, o giorno o notte che sia, infinito popolo si tirano appresso e con estremo godimento e riso s’ascoltano.²³

[Much more than *zingaresche* resemble the farces those popular representations, which are performed by Roman districts during the Carnival, on chariots pulled by oxen. They are called *giudiate* because in them nothing is done but mock the Jews in many ways, now hanging them by the throat, now strangling them, now slaughtering them and making fun of them in every miserable way. These theatrical pieces, six volumes of which belong to Moraldi’s collection, are composed of all sorts of corrupt languages mixed together. They are characterized by lengthy singsongs of many silly characters at the sight of the prank that is made to the supposed Jew. The stage has no adornment but laurel leaves and other branches. Such farces are accompanied by songs and music, which are specific to common people and not inconvenient; they are performed both night and day and attract a wide audience that watch them with excessive enjoyment and laughs.]²⁴

The main character of those satirical and anti-Semitic plays was a Jew, who was mocked and reviled with the applause of the audience. Every *giudiate* ended with the death of *Giudio* or with a fanciful corporal punishment, similar to Dante’s *contrapasso*.

The anthropological figure of the scapegoat²⁵ is a fitting enough explanation for the meaning and the success of those plays: a minority is offended in order to strengthen social ties among the majority of the Roman population. Despite this, the Jewish community enjoyed the protection of the Pope: comedians were often fined for their outrageous performances, considered blasphemous since they mocked not only Jewish customs but also the Mosaic law, and various Christian precepts as well. Exemplars of *giudiate* have become very rare, although they were very popular in the seventeenth century: their inconvenient contents, along with their offensive irony against Roman Jews, could be the cause of the loss of the majority of those prints.

3. A rediscovered anthology of prints

Most *zingaresche* and *giudiate* are known to scholars thanks to archival documents, the so-called *Avvisi di Roma*, which contain complaints of the Jewish community addressed to the Pontifical authori-

²³ G.M. CRESCIMBENI, *Commentarii di Gio. Mario de Crescimbeni, intorno alla sua istoria della volgar poesia*, I-VI, Antonio De Rossi, Roma 1702, I, pp. 198-199.

²⁴ Unless otherwise specified, all translations are mine.

²⁵ R. GIRARD, *La violence et le sacré*, Grasset, Paris 1972 (English tr. *Violence and the Sacred*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD 1977).

ties.²⁶ The only seventeenth-century *giudiata* known so far was *L'ebreo finto conte, ovvero Tognino impazzito* (Rome National Central Library c69.9.B.42.8).²⁷ Nevertheless, it is likely that archives and libraries may contain either handwritten or even printed materials which have been ignored by scholars. Evidence of that is the fact that Martina Mampieri has newly discovered at the Vatican Library a handwritten *Canzone contro gli ebrei* i.e. “Song against the Jews” (1647-1648), which is called *giudiata* and has not the dialogic structure of a comedy.²⁸

In addition to this, during my research I discovered two anonymous printed *giudiate* in the digital archive of the Rome National Central Library. They are both printed in Todi: the first one is called *Lo catanne di due accallà* which means “the husband of two wives” in Judeo-Roman (Rome National Central Library 35.8.C.23.3). The second is titled *Il giudizio frustato* i.e. “The whipped Jew” (Rome National Central Library 35.8.C.23.5). *Lo catanne di due accallà* was printed in 1697 to be sold in Rome at the bookshop run by the heir of the printer-bookseller Francesco Leone (1639-1696), in Piazza Madama. *Il giudizio frustato*, on the other hand, can be dated back approximately to 1700 because of the print conditions, although it does not report either the specific date or the name of the typographer. These plays, unknown to scholars to date, have the following information on the frontispiece:

Lo catanne di due accallà, overo Ceccone aquilano, e Pedrolino milanese compagni fedeli e istoriari spiantati. Giudiate ridicolosa e onesta recitata dalla Conversazione dell'Armata l'anno 1697. In Todi. 1697. Si vendano in piazza Madama dall'erede di Francesco Leone (Figs. 21 and 22)

Il giudizio frustato. Giudiate nuova e ridicolosa. In Todi, con licenza de' Superiori.²⁹

In the past few centuries, some bibliophiles collected anthologies of *giudiate* and *zingaresche*; we have notice of such collections thanks to ancient and modern catalogues.

One of these collections was Giovanni Antonio Moraldi's (1637-1709), a lawyer and bibliophile from Rome. Crescimbeni in the *Istoria della volgar poesia* mentions the existence of six volumes of *giudiate* preserved in the Moraldi private collection,³⁰ which were sold by Moraldi's heirs and since become unavailable. Also Prospero Mandosio (1643-1724), a Roman poet, writes about this collection of *giudiate* in his repertoire called *Bibliotheca Romana*.³¹

In recent times, Giorgio Morelli discovered a catalogue of Moraldi's library preserved in the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (Vat. Ottoboniano 3061). Unfortunately, the six volumes of *giudiate*

²⁶ M. CAFFIERO, *Legami pericolosi*, p. 112: «Molte proteste degli ebrei romani contro gli eccessi delle *giudiate*, indirizzate al Sant'Uffizio, si trovano in ACDF, S.O., St. (Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede, Sant'Ufficio, Stanza Storica) AA_{2-b} e AA_{2-c} ricorsi degli ebrei al Sant'Uffizio del 1710, 1711, 1714 e 1715».

²⁷ “*L'ebreo finto conte ovvero Tognino impazzito.* Contrasto di Giudiate ridicoloso, recitato dalla Conversazione di Trastevere alla Botticella, Todi 1697. Con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendano in Piazza Madama dall'erede di Francesco Leone”. This *giudiata* is mentioned by C. BERNARDI, “Il carnevale delle buone maniere”, in R. ALONGE, G. DAVICO BONINO (ed.), *Storia del Teatro moderno e contemporaneo*, Einaudi, Torino, 2000, p. 979; A. G. BRAGAGLIA, *Le maschere romane*, Colombo editore, Roma, 1947, p. 222; R. CIANCARELLI, *Sistemi teatrali nel Seicento: strategie di comici e dilettanti nel teatro italiano del XVII secolo*, Bulzoni, Roma, 2008, pp. 65-68; U. FORTIS, *La vita quotidiana nel ghetto. Storia e società nella rappresentazione letteraria (sec. XIII-XX)*, Salomone Belforte, Livorno, 2012, p. 200; P. TOSCHI, *Le origini del teatro italiano*, p. 337.

²⁸ M. MAMPIERI, *When the Rabbi's Soul Entered a Pig: Melchiorre Palontrotti and His Giudiate against the Jews of Rome*, «Jewish History», 33, 2020, 351-375. See Franceschini's essay in this volume, § 6.2.

²⁹ I have investigated both *Lo catanne due accallà* and *Il giudizio frustato* in A. GRAZZINI, *Erranze di fede e conflitti tra comunità ebraiche in un gruppo di giudiate romane seicentesche*, online workshop March 3th-4th 2021 of the Research Project of the University of Pisa (PRA 2020-2021) *L'ebreo errante*. For *Lo catanne due accallà* see also Franceschini's essay in this volume, § 6.3.

³⁰ CRESCIMBENI, *Istoria della volgar poesia*, vol. I p. 198; vol. IV p. 172.

³¹ P. MANDOSIO, *Bibliotheca Romana seu Romanorum scriptorum Centuria*, De Lazaris, Roma 1682-1692, Centuria tertia, p.185.

do not appear in it.³² More recently, Roberto Ciancarelli discovered in a Jesuit Roman archive (the *Archivium Romanum societatis Iesu*) seven manuscript volumes, formerly belonging to the Moraldi collection, entitled *Opere Sceniche Diverse in Prosa*. Also these anthologies, whose modern catalogue has been published by Ciancarelli,³³ do not contain *giudiate*.

About a century after the loss of Moraldi's collection of *giudiate*, Paul Lacroix published a catalogue of the library of Monsieur de Soleinne,³⁴ providing important information about *zingaresche* and *giudiate*. Alexandre Martineau de Soleinne (1784-1842) was a French bibliophile with a passion for European drama tradition.³⁵ During his lifetime, he had collected more than five thousand books which included more than fifty thousand plays: his dream was, in fact, to create a dramatic universal collection. Before the sale of the library by Soleinne's heirs in 1845, as a result of which many volumes were lost, Paul Lacroix had drawn up its catalogue: his work has made many theatrical titles known to critics, especially those of Italian *zingaresche* and *giudiate* from the seventeenth century.

Scholars have long praised the historical value of this library and have complained about its loss. In 1912, for example, Emilio Re regrets not being able to read Soleinne's dramatic collection, because the titles of the plays contained therein recall those of the *giudiate* («sono o arieggiano certo quelli delle giudiate»)³⁶ In the mid-twentieth century Anton Giulio Bragaglia referred to the famous Soleinne's *zingaresche* anthology («raccolta di zingarette»)³⁷ describing it as a very popular collection of plays, hopelessly lost («collezione di "commedie popolari rarissime" non più reperibili»)³⁸ The list of comedy titles is preceded by the following description, also quoted by Bragaglia:

Recueil précieux de 29 petites comédies imprimées à Rome, Viterbo, Todi, Ronciglione, etc., dans la seconde moitié du dix-septième siècle. Toutes sont en vers, mêlée de chants, et toujours une zingara en est le principal personnage. Dialectes napolitain, transtévérin, rusticale, et autres idiomes populaires. Polichinelle paraît dans plusieurs de ces *comédie da recitare il Carnevale*; elles se ressentent, en effet, de l'enjouement autorisé en pareille saison. Dans une de ces pièces, la Zingara arrive sur la scène apportant *due pesci, un orinale, un poco di farina*. Voici les titres de ces pièces rares et singulières: pareille collection serait impossible à refaire.³⁹

[Precious collection of twenty-nine small comedies printed in Rome, Viterbo, Todi, Ronciglione, etc., in the second half of the seventeenth century, all in verse, mixed with songs and always a gypsy is the main character. Neapolitan dialects, *transteverino*, *rusticale* and other popular idioms. The character of Pulcinella appears in many of these comedies 'to be recited during the Carnival'; they are affected, in fact, by the authorized playfulness of such a season. In one of these pieces, the Gypsy arrives on the scene carrying two fish, a urinal, a little flour. Here are the titles of these rare and singular pieces: such a collection would be impossible to gather again.]

³² G. MORELLI, *La biblioteca di Giovanni Antonio Moraldi (1637-1709)*, «Strenna dei romanisti» XXXVII (1976), pp. 193-199. The Cod. Vat. Ottoboniano 3061 contains the catalogue of Moraldi's library, redacted in 1695 by Folco Maria Portinari: *Bibliotheca Moralda seu Manuscriptorum Catalogue us que exomnigena rei litterariae materia Joannes Antonius Moraldus sibi et amicis congesserat. D. Fulci Mariae Portinari Equitis Sancti Stephani digesta alphabetico ordine Anno 1695*.

³³ R. CIANCARELLI, *Drammaturgia dei principianti. Notizie su una raccolta manoscritta di opere sceniche romane del Seicento*, «Teatro e Storia» 9 (1994), pp. 389-405.

³⁴ P. LACROIX, *Bibliothèque dramatique de Monsieur de Soleinne. Catalogue rédigé par P.-L. Jacob, bibliophile* [pseud. of Paul Lacroix], Administration de l'Alliance des arts, Paris 1843-44, IV, pp. 104-105.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ E. RE, *Qualche nota sul tipo dell'Ebreo nel teatro popolare*, «Giornale storico della letteratura italiana», LX (1912), pp. 383-398: 394.

³⁷ A.G. BRAGAGLIA, *Le maschere romane*, Colombo editore, Roma 1947, pp. 93-95: pp. 219-222.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ LACROIX, *Bibliothèque dramatique*, p. 104.

Another important catalogue of seventeenth-century Italian plays is the one privately printed by Charles Fairfax Murray (1849-1919), an important Pre-Raphaelite painter.⁴⁰ Murray, pupil of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and much appreciated by the art critic John Ruskin, was also a bibliophile.⁴¹ He loved Italian literature and in 1870 he travelled around Italy in order to visit art cities and to buy old artefacts and books. From that journey, Murray began to gather Italian and Latin books for his library. According to his library catalogue, most of the place of printing of his collection of Italian books were Venice, Rome, Florence, Lucca and Bologna. Murray collected works of art and both handwritten and printed materials throughout his life, then, after the painter's death, his whole collection of books was sold and dispersed all over Europe and America.

If we compare titles from the two library catalogues mentioned, it turns out that Murray's collection of printed *zingaresche* coincides almost exactly with that once belonging to the famous library owned by the French bibliophile Soleinne.

I believe that the collection of *zingaresche* and *giudiate* mentioned in Murray's library catalogue is identifiable with the anthology of theatrical prints I found in a miscellany in the Houghton Library, at Harvard University. The still unnoticed miscellany has the library classification: Houghton Library, *IC6 A100 B670z.⁴²

In the inner part of the book's front cover there is the writing in capital letters «From the library of Ch. Fairfax Murray». Moreover, the sheet of the guard at the front contains the notes "*Gipsy Ballads. 27 Zingari Ballads extremely rare*" and a label with the date 1562 between two circles (Plate 17). In the first circle there is a lion and the writing "LVG DVN". In the second there is the writing "E ΘNMYIZ" which has the letters M and Y bigger than the others and in the foreground. The abbreviation "LVG DVN" means "*Lugdunum*", the Latin name of the city of Lyon, whose coat of arms exhibits a lion and three lilies. Despite the missing of the lilies, the first circle could represent the city of Lyon where perhaps the anthology was acquired. As we can read in the list of printed books owned by Murray, Lyon is the place of printing of eighty-seven volumes which is a consistent number in comparison with the whole collection. The city of Lyon is often cited both with the Latin name *Lugduni* and the abbreviation *Lugd*, which reminds to the indication of the first circle "LVG DVN". Furthermore, a lot of sixteenth-century editions from Murray's collection were printed in Lyon: this fact could explain the presence of the date 1562 in the sheet of the guard of the miscellany of Harvard, which is incorrect since the older *zingaresca* is dated back to 1653.⁴³ The date and the place of printing are not connected with the contents of the miscellany, all of which were printed in the Papal State during the seventeenth century, but they suggest the belonging to the art market of Lyon. Even the cover of the miscellany complies with the covers of the volumes bought by Murray in Lyon, which are often blue morocco gilt.

The writing "E ΘNMYIZ", on the other hand, shows a stronger connection with Murray: the two emphasized letters M and Y are the first and the last letter of Fairfax's surname. The second circle, thus, could be an *ex libris* used by Murray to label his private library. The over mentioned indications allow us to establish with certainty the belonging of the theatrical anthology to the painter Murray. What follows is the full description of the contents of the miscellany:

⁴⁰ C. F. MURRAY, *A list of printed books, in the library of Charles Fairfax Murray*, privately printed, 35 copies only printed, 1907, pp. 243-244.

⁴¹ See, for example, the *Dictionary of Art Historians*. Archived from the original on 25 May 2013. Retrieved 16 March 2013. <https://web.archive.org/web/20130525085522/http://www.dictionaryofarthistorians.org/murrayc.htm#> last accessed June 2020.

⁴² HOLLIS digital catalogue, a platform by Harvard University: https://hollis.harvard.edu/primo-explore/search?vid=HVD2&sortby=rank&lang=en_US; <https://hollis.harvard.edu/primoexplore/browse?vid=HVD2&browseQuery=IC6%20A100%20B670z&browseScope=callnumber.V2&innerPnxIndex=-1&numOfUsedTerms=-1&fn=BrowseSearch> last accessed October 2019. I obtained the digitalization of the volume thanks to the precious help of Dr John Ulrich.

⁴³ *Zingaresca nuova nel quale si contiene una laude e un contrasto di un Norcino con Pulcinella* (1653).

Nuova scelta di zingaresche vaghe. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La zingara astrolaga dell'Asia. Zingaresca nuova e curiosa. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Lo scudo d'oro, ovvero li dui arricchiti, zingaresca nuova ridicolosa e bella. Capriccio di Andrea della Grazia Romano. In Ronciglione, per il Menichelli, 1671. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Li accecati, zingaresca nuova data in luce da Iacomo Bronzini Romano. Viterbo, per il Martinelli, 1672. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama.

La pazzia di Monsu Giannetto, zingaresca nuova dove si contiene una laude e contrasti con gratiose burle. Opera honesta e ridicolosa. Capriccio di Domenico Balderacchi Romano. In Orvieto per il Giannotti, 1672. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Passaggio bellissimo di una zingara, con un contrasto ed una gratiosa burla fatta dalla Zingara ad un Norcino. Opera di Gio. Briccio Romano. In Ronciglione, per il Toselli, 1676. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La Zingara amorosa del'Egitto, zingaresca nuova. In Ronciglione, 1676. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La Zingara Tiburtina, zingaresca nuova da recitare a una donna alla finestra. In Ronciglione, 1676. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La Zingara Altamora, ovvero la Borsa volante, con Giangurgolo Guardiano de'Morti. Operetta nuova e ridicolosa da recitare in tempo carnevalesco. In Ronciglione, 1676. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Zingaresca nuova con una laude bellissima e contrasto d'un Norcino impazzito. Nuovamente data in luce per Domenico Baldracco Romano. In Ronciglione, 1676. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Il vero amor difeso, ovvero contrasto fra due Zingare. La prima delle quali habia una scatola con dentro un'ampolla di sangue, un serpe morto, e alcune armi in un libro overo ritratti, li quali cavi dalla scatola a suo tempo e li mostri all'altra Zingara. In Ronciglione, 1679. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Chi la dura la vince, ovvero Altabella la Maga, zingarata curiosa recitata dalla Conversatione di Trastevere. In Ronciglione, per il Menichelli. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori, 1696.

La Maga Falarina, ovvero il finto tesoro, zingarata nuova e curiosa. In Ronciglione, per il Menichelli, 1699. Si vendono in Roma da Antonio Godi vicino la Pace. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Le nozze di Monsù Baglietto con Palombina Ferrarese, con un ridicoloso inventario del Francese. Zingaresca nuova. In Ronciglione. Si vendono in Roma in piazza Madama all'insegna del Leone. Con licenza de' Superiori.

I dui villani sfacciati, ovvero il gioco delle pagliuche. Zingaresca nuova. In Ronciglione. Si vendono in Roma in piazza Madama all'insegna del Leone. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Jewish and Gypsy Characters in Seventeenth-Century Theatrical Pieces

Li frustati, zingaresca nuova in forma di Commedia da recitare il Carnevale. Opera honesta e ridicolosa. Capriccio di Domenico Balderachi Romano. In Ronciglione. Si vendono in Roma in piazza Madama all'insegna del Leone. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La Zingara di Mongibello con Ciampichitto Norcino innamorato. Operetta nuova, honesta e ridicolosa. Con una gratiosa burla che fa la Zingara a detto Norcino. Composta dall'Accademico Intruso. In Viterbo, per il Martinelli, 1660. Con licenza de' Superiori.

Le virtuose vaganti, ovvero le ritrovate sorelle. Zingaresca nuova. Nella quale due Zingare con discorsi curiosi davanti a Bella Donna formano una dilettevole contesa. Capriccio di Andrea della Grazia Romano. In Viterbo per il Diotallevi, 1657. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La fortuna di Taddeo Norcino. Zingaresca nuova. In Viterbo con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama.

Zingaresca nuova data in luce da Agostino Battaglioni. In Viterbo con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama.

La Zingara giudia con un Norcino che la beffeggia, zingarata nuova, piacevole e bella di Giovanni Briccio Romano. In Viterbo con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama.

L'Aquilano finto ebreo, contrasto ridicoloso recitato dalla conversatione della Rotonda. In Todi, con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama.

La sorella della Maga Arpia, zingaresca nuova in forma di commedia. Nella quale per l'astutia del Facchino e di un Norcino viene burlato il Napolitano e dopo dalla Zingara vengono castigati per le mani dell'istesso Napolitano, conforme al lor mal fare, cosa honesta e ridicolosa. In Terni, con licenza de' Superiori.

Scherzo carnevalesco, ovvero le due Rosette simili, con Raguetto schernito et il Giudio frustato, zingaresca nuova, curiosa et bella, in Todi, appresso il Ciccolini, 1669.

Zingaresca nuova con tre personaggi, data in luce da Iacomo Cordelli Pittore Viterbese. In Todi, per Vincenzo Galassi, con licenza de' Superiori, 1685.

Zingaresca nuova nel quale si contiene una laude e un contrasto di un Norcino con Pulcinella. Nuovamente composta da me, Domenico Balderacco Romano. In Spoleti, 1653, con licenza de' Superiori.

La Persiana indovina. Zingaresca nuova di Iannoto Topili da Piancana. In Viterbo, con licenza de' Superiori.

If we make a comparison between plays from Murray's anthology and those from Soleinne's Italian dramatic collection⁴⁴ it turns out that they are almost the same. The difference is their number: Soleinne's collection comprised twenty-nine plays, whereas Murray's counts twenty-seven prints. These two missing plays are, actually, three: Soleinne's collection also included a previous edition, dating back to 1648, of *Lo scudo d'oro, ovvero li dui arricchiti*,⁴⁵ while the Harvard miscellany contains just a later edition dated to 1671. The two missing prints are respectively the eleventh and twenty-second of the Soleinne collection, and they are:

⁴⁴ LACROIX, *Bibliothèque dramatique*, pp. 104-105.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.105: "*Lo scudo d'oro, ovvero li dui arricchiti*. Zingaresca nuova ridicolosa e bella. Capriccio di Andrea della Grazia Romano. Genova, Gio. Maria Faroni, 1648".

11. *La Zingara vagante, ovvero il testamento di Ciecco Norcino*, con il pianto fatto da Ciampicone suo padre. Opera honesta, e ridicolosa (v.) di Domenico Balderacco, Romano. Viterbo, Francesco Leone, 1677.

22. *Mascherata et capriccio* (pr.) del confuso academico Sprezzato. Con alcune passate da Zingara (v.), Ibid., Lodovico Grignani, 1624.

Bearing this difference in mind, we can say the discovery of the Harvard anthology is not important just because it coincides almost exactly with that once belonging to Soleinne's library and considered lost to this day, but it has also a great value *per se*. Murray's collection, in fact, contains two *giudiate* extremely rare and, due to their lexical richness, very significant to the study of *giudeo-romanesco* dialect; they are:

L'Aquilano finto ebreo, contrasto ridicoloso recitato dalla conversazione della Rotonda. In Todi, con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama (Fig. 23).

Scherzo carnevalesco, ovvero le due Rosette simili, con Raguetto schernito et il Giudio frustato, zingaresca nuova, curiosa et bella, in Todi, appresso il Ciccolini, 1669.

Jewish characters are also present in three *zingaresche in forma di commedia* entitled:

Lo scudo d'oro, ovvero li dui arricchiti, zingaresca nuova ridicolosa e bella. Capriccio di Andrea della Grazia Romano. In Ronciglione, per il Menichelli, 1671. Si vendono in Roma in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro, in piazza Madama. Con licenza de' Superiori.

La fortuna di Taddeo Norcino. Zingaresca nuova. In Viterbo con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama.

La Zingara giudia con un Norcino che la beffeggia, zingarata nuova, piacevole e bella di Giovanni Briccio Romano. In Viterbo con licenza de' Superiori. Si vendono in bottega di Francesco Leone Libraro in piazza Madama.

I identified two previous editions of *La Zingara giudia* which are preserved at Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, in Rome. Such prints are contained in two volumes of Capponi's fund (library classification: Vat. Capp. V 681-688), bequeathed by Marquis Alessandro Gregorio Capponi (1683-1746).⁴⁶ Volumes Vat. Capp. V 682 and 684, labelled on the spine *Istorie varie*, contain the following prints:

La p[r]ima prima zingaresca giudiata con un Norcino che la beffeggia, frottola piacevole e bella di Giovanni Briccio Romano. In Orvi[e]to, 1611. Roma Vat. Capp. V 682 (Fig. 24).

La giudiata in aria da zingarate, con un Norcino che la beffeggia. Frottola piacevole e bella di Giovanni Briccio Romano Pittore. Con altre Rime del medesimo novamente date in luce. In Ronciglione per Lodovico Grignani & Lorenzo Lupis. 1620. Con licenza de Superiori. Roma Vat. Capp. V 684.

Although the titles are different, *La Zingara giudia*, *La prima prima zingaresca giudiata* and *La giudiata in aria da zingarate* are three identical editions of the same play.

The discovery of the play *La Zingara giudia* ("the Jewish Gypsy") by Giovanni Briccio is very significant: the character unites features both from the Gypsy and the Jewish stereotypes, such as the

⁴⁶ A.P. BERTI, A.G. CAPPONI, *Catalogo della libreria Capponi, o sia de' libri italiani del fu marchese Alessandro Gregorio Capponi, patrizio romano e furiere maggiore pontificio, con annotazioni in diversi luoghi e coll'appendice dei libri latini, delle miscellanee e dei manoscritti in fine*, in Roma, appresso il Bernabò e Lazzarini, 1747, con licenza de' Superiori; G. MORELLI, *Le stampe popolari della Biblioteca Vaticana*, «Lares» 35, 3/4 (1969), pp. 137-146.

exotic origin, the nomadic lifestyle, the knowledge of the Hebrew language and of horoscope but, above all, the familiarity with magic and witchcraft. The *Zingara giudia*, thus, is described as a powerful enchantress who speaks to demons and controls them and is the only Jewish character who wins in contrast with others, especially with the *Norcini*. She is fearsome and respected, while the humble Jewish dealer is cruelly mocked and is the perfect protagonist of the *giudiata*, which always ends with a punishment for the *Giudio*.

Thanks to the discovery of Murray's anthology, to which *La Zingara giudia* belongs, a consistent number of theatrical pieces have become available to a critical edition, which is still missing to date. In the light of this, a full study about *giudiate* and *zingaresche* is now possible, which will provide new information about *giudeo-romanesco* vocabulary and about Jewish and Gypsy characters in the Roman theatre of the seventeenth century.

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SUMMARY

Seventeenth-century Roman theatre is characterized by the performance of peculiar multilingual comedies called *zingaresche* and *giudiate*, which are very significant to the study of the Christian prejudices against Jews and Gypsies. I have discovered a new anthology of comedies from the library of Charles Fairfax Murray (1849-1919), a Pre-Raphaelite painter. This collection of plays, which coincides almost exactly with the one that once belonged to the French bibliophile Marquis de Soleinne, was thought by scholars to have been irremediably lost.

KEYWORDS: Jewish and gypsy characters; *giudiate*; *zingaresche*.



Fig. 21 - *Lo catanne di due accallà, ovvero Ceccone aquilano, e Pedrolino milanese compagni fedeli e istoriari spiantati*. Giudata redicolosa e honesta recitata dalla Conversazione dell'Armata l'anno 1697, Todi 1697.



Fig. 22 - *Lo catanne di due accallà cc. 1v-2r*: Lustrò between Stella and Perla, each holding their respective little child.



Fig. 23 - *La prima [sic] prima zingaresca giudiata con un Norcino che la beffeggia*. Frottola piacevole e bella di Giovanni Briccio Romano, Orvito [instead of Orvieto] 1611.

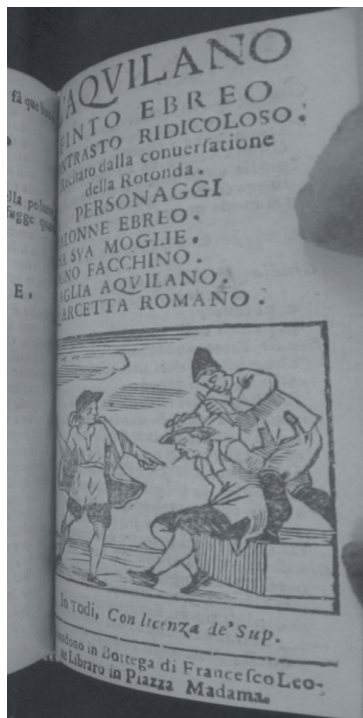


Fig. 24 - *L'Aquilano finto ebreo*, contrasto ridicoloso recitato dalla conversazione della Rotonda. In Todi. Harvard University, Houghton Library *IC6 A100 B670z.

