

EXTRACT FROM THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA
ELEVENTH EDITION

Published in twenty-nine volumes 1910-1911.

Article on Gipsies.

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GIPSIES [Page 37]

GIPSIES, or gypsies, a wandering folk scattered through every European land, over the greater part of western Asia and Siberia; found also in Egypt and the northern coast of Africa, in America and even in Australia. No correct estimate of their numbers outside of Europe can be given, and even in Europe the information derived from official statistics is often contradictory and unreliable. The only country in which the figures have been given correctly is Hungary. In 1893 there were 274,940 in Transleithania, of whom 243,432 were settled, 20,406 only partly settled and 8938 nomads. Of these 91,603 spoke the Gipsy language in 1890, but the rest had already been assimilated. Next in numbers stands Rumania, the number varying between 250,000 and 200,000 (1895). Turkey in Europe counted 117,000 (1903), of whom 51,000 were in Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia, 22,000 in the vilayet of Adrianople and 2500 in the vilayet of Kossovo. In Asiatic Turkey the estimates vary between 67,000 and 200,000. Servia has 41,000; Bosnia and Herzegovina, 18,000; Greece, 10,000; Austria (Cisleithania), 16,000, of whom 13,500 are in Bohemia and Moravia; Germany, 2000; France, 2000 (5000?); Basque Provinces, 500 to 700; Italy, 32,000; Spain, 40,000; Russia, 58,000; Poland, 15,000; Sweden and Norway, 1500; Denmark and Holland, 5000; Persia, 15,000; Transcaucasia, 3000. The rest is mere guesswork. For Africa, America and Australia the numbers are estimated between 135,000 and 166,000. The estimate given by Miklosich (1878) of 700,000 fairly agrees with the above statistics. No statistics are forthcoming for the number in the British Isles. Some estimate their number at 12,000.

The Gipsies are known principally by two names, which have been modified by the nations with whom they came in contact, but which can easily be traced to either the one or the other of these two distinct stems. The one group, embracing the majority of Gipsies in Europe, the compact masses living in the Balkan Peninsula, Rumania and Transylvania and extending also as far as Germany and Italy, are known by the name *Atzigan* or *Atsigan*, which becomes in time Tshingian (Turkey and Greece), Tsigan (Bulgarian, Servian, Rumanian), Czigany (Hungarian), Zigeuner (Germany), Zingari (Italian), and it is not unlikely that the English word Tinker or Tinkler (the latter no doubt due to a popular etymology connecting the gaudy gipsy with the tinkling coins or the metal wares which he carried on his back as a smith and tinker) may be a local

transformation of the German *Zigeuner*. The second name, partly known in the East, where the word, however, is used as an expression of contempt, whilst Zigan is not felt by the gipsies as an insult, is *Egyptian*; in England, Gipsy; in some German documents of the 16th century *Aegypter*; Spanish *Gitano*; modern Greek *Gyphtos*. They are also known by the parallel expressions *Faraon* (Rumanian) and *Phárao Nephka* (Hungarian) or Pharaoh's people, which are only variations connected with the Egyptian origin. In France they are known as *Bohémiens*, a word the importance of which will appear later. To the same category belong other names bestowed upon them, such as Walachi, Saraceni, Agareni, Nubiani, &c. They were also known by the name of Tartars, given to them in Germany, or as "Heathen," *Heydens*. All these latter must be considered as nicknames without thereby denoting their probable origin. The same may have now been the case with the first name with which they appear in history, *Atzigan*. Much ingenuity has been displayed in attempts to explain the name, for it was felt that a true explanation might help to settle the question of their origin and the date of their arrival in Europe. Here again two extreme theories have been propounded, the one supported by Bataillard, who connected them with the Sigynnoi of Herodotus and identified them with the Komodromoi of the later Byzantine writers, known already in the 6th century. Others bring them to Europe as late as the 14th century; and the name has also been explained by de Goeje from the Persian *Chang*, a kind of harp or zither, or the Persian *Zang*, black, swarthy. Rienzi (1832) and Trumpp (1872) have connected the name with the Changars of North-East India, but all have omitted to notice that the real form was Atzigan or (more correct) Atzingan and not Tsigan. The best explanation remains that suggested by Miklosich, who derives the word from the Athinganoi, a name originally belonging to a peculiar heretical sect living in Asia Minor near Phrygia and Lycaonia, known also as the Melki-Zedekites. The members of this sect observed very strict rules of purity, as they were afraid to be defiled by the touch of other people whom they considered unclean. They therefore acquired the name of Athinganoi (*i.e.* "Touch-me-nots").

Miklosich has collected seven passages where the Byzantine historians of the 9th century describe the Athinganoi as soothsayers, magicians and serpent-charmers. From these descriptions nothing definite can be proved as to the identity of the Athinganoi with the Gipsies, or the reason why this name was given to soothsayers, charmers, &c. But the inner history of the Byzantine empire of that period may easily give a clue to it and explain how it came about that such a nickname was given to a new sect or to a new race which suddenly appeared in the Greek Empire at that period. In the history of the Church we find them mentioned in one breath with the Paulicians and other heretical sects which were transplanted in their tens of thousands from Asia Minor to the Greek empire and settled especially in Rumelia, near Adrianople and Philippopolis. The Greeks called these heretical sects by all kinds of names, derived from ancient Church traditions, and gave to each sect such names as first struck them, on the scantiest of imaginary similarities. One sect was called Paulician, another Melki-Zedekite; so also these were called Athinganoi, probably being considered the descendants of the outcast Samer, who, according to ancient tradition, was a goldsmith and the maker of the Golden Calf in the desert. For this sin Samer was banished and compelled to live apart from human beings and even to avoid their touch (Athinganos: "Touch-me-not"). Travelling from East to West these heretical sects obtained different names in different countries, in accordance with the local traditions or to imaginary origins. The Bogomils and Patarenes became Bulgarians in France, and so the gypsies Bohémiens, a name which was also connected with the heretical sect of the Bohemian brothers (*Böhmische Brüder*). Curiously enough the Kutzo-Vlachs living in Macedonia (*q.v.*) and Rumelia are also known by the nickname Tsintsari, a word that has not yet been

explained. Very likely it stands in close connexion with Zingari, the name having been transferred from one people to the other without the justification of any common ethnical origin, except that the Kutzo-Vlachs, like the Zingari, differed from their Greek neighbours in race, as in language, habits and customs; while they probably followed similar pursuits to those of the Zingari, as smiths, &c. As to the other name, Egyptians, this is derived from a peculiar tale which the gipsies spread when appearing in the west of Europe. They alleged that they had come from a country of their own called Little Egypt, either a confusion between Little Armenia and Egypt or the Peloponnesus.

Attention may be drawn to a remarkable passage in the Syriac version of the apocryphal Book of Adam, known as the *Cave of Treasures* and compiled probably in the 6th century: "And [38] of the seed of Canaan were as I said the Aegyptians; and, lo, they were scattered all over the earth and served as slaves of slaves" (ed. Bezold, German translation, p. 25). No reference to such a scattering and serfdom of the Egyptians is mentioned anywhere else. This must have been a legend, current in Asia Minor, and hence probably transferred to the swarthy Gipsies.

A new explanation may now be ventured upon as to the name which the Gipsies of Europe give to themselves, which, it must be emphasized, is not known to the Gipsies outside of Europe. Only those who starting from the ancient Byzantine empire have travelled westwards and spread over Europe, America and Australia call themselves by the name of Rom, the woman being Romni and a stranger Gaži. Many etymologies have been suggested for the word Rom. Paspatis derived it from the word Droma (Indian), and Miklosich had identified it with Dōma or Dōmba, a "low caste musician," rather an extraordinary name for a nation to call itself by. Having no home and no country of their own and no political traditions and no literature, they would naturally try to identify themselves with the people in whose midst they lived, and would call themselves by the same name as other inhabitants of the Greek empire, known also as the Empire of New Rom, or of the Romaioi, Romelioti, Romanoι, as the Byzantines used to call themselves before they assumed the prouder name of Hellenes. The Gipsies would therefore call themselves also Rom, a much more natural name, more flattering to their vanity, and geographically and politically more correct than if they called themselves "low caste musicians." This Greek origin of the name would explain why it is limited to the European Gipsies, and why it is not found among that stock of Gipsies which has migrated from Asia Minor southwards and taken a different route to reach Egypt and North Africa.

Appearance in Europe.—Leaving aside the doubtful passages in the Byzantine writers where the Athinganoi are mentioned, the first appearance of Gipsies in Europe cannot be traced positively further back than the beginning of the 14th century. Some have hitherto believed that a passage in what was erroneously called the Rhymed Version of Genesis of Vienna, but which turns out to be the work of a writer before the year 1122, and found only in the Klagenfurt manuscript (edited by Ditmar, 1862), referred to the Gipsies. It runs as follows: Gen. xiii. 15— "Hagar had a son from whom were born the Chaltsmide. When Hagar had that child, she named it Ismael, from whom the Ismaelites descend who journey through the land, and we call them Chaltsmide, may evil befall them! They sell only things with blemishes, and for whatever they sell they always ask more than its real value. They cheat the people to whom they sell. They have no home, no country, they are satisfied to live in tents, they wander over the country, they deceive the people, they cheat men but rob no one noisily."

This reference to the Chaltsmide (not goldsmiths, but very likely ironworkers, smiths) has wrongly been applied to the Gipsies. For it is important to note that at least three centuries before historical evidence proves the immigration of the genuine Gipsy, there had been wayfaring smiths, travelling from country to country, and practically paving the way for their successors, the Gipsies, who not only took up their crafts but who probably have also assimilated a good proportion of these vagrants of the west of Europe. The name given to the former, who probably were Oriental or Greek smiths and pedlars, was then transferred to the new-comers. The Komodromoi mentioned by Theophanes (758-818), who speaks under the date 554 of one hailing from Italy, and by other Byzantine writers, are no doubt the same as the Chaltsmide of the German writer of the 12th century translated by Ducange as *Chaudroneurs*. We are on surer ground in the 14th century. Hopf has proved the existence of Gipsies in Corfu before 1326. Before 1346 the empress Catherine de Valois granted to the governor of Corfu authority to reduce to vassalage certain vagrants who came from the mainland; and in 1386, under the Venetians, they formed the Feudum Acindanorum, which lasted for many centuries. About 1378 the Venetian governor of Nauplia confirmed to the "Acingani" of that colony the privileges granted by his predecessor to their leader John. It is even possible to identify the people described by Friar Simon in his *Itinerarium*, who, speaking of his stay in Crete in 1322, says: "We saw there a people outside the city who declare themselves to be of the race of Ham and who worship according to the Greek rite. They wander like a cursed people from place to place, not stopping at all or rarely in one place longer than thirty days; they live in tents like the Arabs, a little oblong black tent." But their name is not mentioned, and although the similarity is great between these "children of Ham" and the Gipsies, the identification has only the value of an hypothesis. By the end of the 15th century they must have been settled for a sufficiently long time in the Balkan Peninsula and the countries north of the Danube, such as Transylvania and Walachia, to have been reduced to the same state of serfdom as they evidently occupied in Corfu in the second half of the 14th century. The voivode Mircea I. of Walachia confirms the grant made by his uncle Vladislav Voivode to the monastery of St Anthony of Voditsa as to forty families of "Atsigane," for whom no taxes should be paid to the prince. They were considered crown property. The same gift is renewed in the year 1424 by the voivode Dan, who repeats the very same words (i Acigăne, m, čeliudi. da su slobodni ot vstkih rabot i dankov) (Hăjdău, *Arhiva*, i. 20). At that time there must already have been in Walachia settled Gipsies treated as serfs, and migrating Gipsies plying their trade as smiths, musicians, dancers, soothsayers, horse-dealers, &c., for we find the voivode Alexander of Moldavia granting these Gipsies in the year 1478 "freedom of air and soil to wander about and free fire and iron for their smithy." But a certain portion, probably the largest, became serfs, who could be sold, exchanged, bartered and inherited. It may be mentioned here that in the 17th century a family when sold fetched forty Hungarian florins, and in the 18th century the price was sometimes as high as 700 Rumanian piastres, about £8, 10s. As late as 1845 an auction of 200 families of Gipsies took place in Bucharest, where they were sold in batches of no less than 5 families and offered at a "ducat" cheaper per head than elsewhere. The Gipsies followed at least four distinct pursuits in Rumania and Transylvania, where they lived in large masses. A goodly proportion of them were tied to the soil; in consequence their position was different from that of the Gipsies who had started westwards and who are nowhere found to have obtained a permanent abode for any length of time, or to have been treated, except for a very short period, with any consideration of humanity.

Their appearance in the West is first noted by chroniclers early in the 15th century. In 1414 they are said to have already arrived in Hesse. This date is contested, but for 1417 the reports are

unanimous of their appearance in Germany. Some count their number to have been as high as 1400, which of course is exaggeration. In 1418 they reached Hamburg, 1419 Augsburg, 1428 Switzerland. In 1427 they had already entered France (Provence). A troupe is said to have reached Bologna in 1422, whence they are said to have gone to Rome, on a pilgrimage alleged to have been undertaken for some act of apostasy. After this first immigration a second and larger one seems to have followed in its wake, led by Zumbel. The Gipsies spread over Germany, Italy and France between the years 1438 and 1512. About 1500 they must have reached England. On the 5th of July 1505 James IV. of Scotland gave to "Antonius Gaginae," count of Little Egypt, letters of recommendation to the king of Denmark; and special privileges were granted by James V. on the 15th of February 1540 to "oure lout johnne Faw Lord and Erle of Litill Egypt," to whose son and successor he granted authority to hang and punish all Egyptians within the realm (May 26, 1540).

It is interesting to hear what the first writers who witnessed their appearance have to tell us; for ever since the Gipsies have remained the same. Albert Krantz (Krantz), in his *Saxonia* (xi. 2), was the first to give a full description, which was afterwards repeated by Munster in his *Cosmographia* (iii. 5). [39]

He says that in the year 1417 there appeared for the first time in Germany a people uncouth, black, dirty, barbarous, called in Italian "Ciani," who indulge specially in thieving and cheating. They had among them a count and a few knights well dressed, others followed afoot. The women and children travelled in carts. They also carried with them letters of safe-conduct from the emperor Sigismund and other princes, and they professed that they were engaged on a pilgrimage of expiation for some act of apostasy.

The guilt of the Gipsies varies in the different versions of the story, but all agree that the Gipsies asserted that they came from their own country called "Litill Egypt," and they had to go to Rome, to obtain pardon for that alleged sin of their forefathers. According to one account it was because they had not shown mercy to Joseph and Mary when they had sought refuge in Egypt from the persecution of Herod (*Basel Chronicle*). According to another, because they had forsaken the Christian faith for a while (*Rhaetia*, 1656), &c. But these were fables, no doubt connected with the legend of Cartaphylus or the Wandering Jew.

Krantz's narrative continues as follows: This people have no country and travel through the land. They live like dogs and have no religion although they allow themselves to be baptized in the Christian faith. They live without care and gather unto themselves also other vagrants, men and women. Their old women practise fortune-telling, and whilst they are telling men of their future they pick their pockets. Thus far Krantz. It is curious that he should use the name by which these people were called in Italy, "Ciani." Similarly Crusius, the author of the *Annales Suevici*, knows their Italian name *Zigani* and the French *Bohémiens*. Not one of these oldest writers mentions them as coppersmiths or farriers or musicians. The immunity which they enjoyed during their first appearance in western Europe is due to the letter of safe-conduct of the emperor. As it is of extreme importance for the history of civilization as well as the history of the Gipsies, it may find a place here. It is taken from the compilation of Felix Oefelius, *Rerum Boicarum scriptores* (Augsburg, 1763), ii. 15, who reproduces the "Diarium sexennale" of "Andreas Presbyter," the contemporary of the first appearance of the Gipsies in Germany.

"Sigismundus Dei gratia Romanorum Rex semper Augustus, ac Hungariae, Bohemiae, Dalmatiae, Croatiae, &c. Rex Fidelibus nostris universis Nobilibus, Militibus, Castellanis, Officialibus, Tributariis, civitatibus liberis, opidis et eorum iudicibus in Regno et sub domino nostro constitutis ex existentibus salutem cum dilectione. Fideles nostri adierunt in praesentiam personaliter Ladislaus Wayuoda Ciganorum cum aliis ad ipsum spectantibus, nobis humilimas porrexerunt supplicationes, huc in sepos in nostra praesentia supplicationum precum cum instantiâ, ut ipsis gratiâ, nostra uberiori providere dignaremur. Unde nos illorum supplicatione illecti eisdem hanc libertatem duximus concedendam, qua re quandocunque idem Ladislaus Wayuoda et sua gens ad dicta nostra dominia videlicet civitates vel oppida pervenerint, ex tunc vestris fidelitatibus praesentibus firmiter committimus et mandamus ut eosdem Ladislaum Wayuodam et Ciganos sibi subiectos omni sine impedimento ac perturbatione aliquali fovere ac conservare debeatis, immo ab omnibus impetitionibus seu offensionibus tueri velitis: Si autem inter ipsos aliqua Zizania seu perturbatio evenerit ex parte, quorumcunque ex tunc non vos nec aliquis alter vestrum, sed idem Ladislaus Wayuoda iudicandi et liberandi habeat facultatem. Praesentes autem post earum lecturam semper reddi iubemus praesentanti.

"Datum in Sepus Dominica die ante festum St Georgii Martyris Anno Domini MCCCCXXIII., Regnorum nostrorum anno Hungar. XXXVI., Romanorum vero XII., Bohemiae tertio."

Freely translated this reads: " We Sigismund by the grace of God emperor of Rome, king of Hungary, Bohemia, &c. unto all true and loyal subjects, noble soldiers, commanders, castellans, open districts, free towns and their judges in our kingdom established and under our sovereignty, kind greetings. Our faithful voivode of the Tsigani with others belonging to him has humbly requested us that we might graciously grant them our abundant favour. We grant them their supplication, we have vouchsafed unto them this liberty. Whenever therefore this voivode Ladislaus and his people should come to any part of our realm in any town, village or place, we commit them by these presents, strongly to your loyalty and we command you to protect in every way the same voivode Ladislaus and the Tsigani his subjects without hindrance, and you should show kindness unto them and you should protect them from every trouble and persecution. But should any trouble or discord happen among them from whichever side it may be, then none of you nor anyone else belonging to you should interfere, but this voivode Ladislaus alone should have the right of punishing and pardoning. And we moreover command you to return these presents always after having read them. Given in our court on Sunday the day before the Feast of St George in the year of our Lord 1423. The 36th year of our kingdom of Hungary, the 12th of our being emperor of Rome and the 3rd of our being king of Bohemia."

There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of this document, which is in no way remarkable considering that at that time the Gipsies must have formed a very considerable portion of the inhabitants of Hungary, whose king Sigismund was. They may have presented the emperor's grant of favours to Alexander prince of Moldavia in 1472, and obtained from him safe-conduct and protection, as mentioned above.

No one has yet attempted to explain the reason why the Gipsies should have started in the 14th and especially in the first half of the 15th century on their march westwards. But if, as has been assumed above, the Gipsies had lived for some length of time in Rumelia, and afterwards spread thence across the Danube and the plains of Transylvania, the incursion of the Turks into Europe,

their successive occupation of those very provinces, the overthrow of the Servian and Bulgarian kingdoms and the dislocation of the native population, would account to a remarkable degree for the movement of the Gipsies: and this movement increases in volume with the greater successes of the Turks and with the peopling of the country by immigrants from Asia Minor. The first to be driven from their homes would no doubt be the nomadic element, which felt itself ill at ease in its new surroundings, and found it more profitable first to settle in larger numbers in Walachia and Transylvania and thence to spread to the western countries of Europe. But their immunity from persecution did not last long.

Later History.—Less than fifty years from the time that they emerge out of Hungary, or even from the date of the Charter of the emperor Sigismund, they found themselves exposed to the fury and the prejudices of the people whose good faith they had abused, whose purses they had lightened, whose barns they had emptied, and on whose credulity they had lived with ease and comfort. Their inborn tendency to roaming made them the terror of the peasantry and the despair of every legislator who tried to settle them on the land. Their foreign appearance, their unknown tongue and their unscrupulous habits forced the legislators of many countries to class them with rogues and vagabonds, to declare them outlaws and felons and to treat them with extreme severity. More than one judicial murder has been committed against them. In some places they were suspected as Turkish spies and treated accordingly, and the murderer of a Gipsy was often regarded as innocent of any crime.

Weissenbruch describes the wholesale murder of a group of Gipsies, of whom five men were broken on the wheel, nine perished on the gallows, and three men and eight women were decapitated. This took place on the 14th and 15th of November 1726. Acts and edicts were issued in many countries from the end of the 15th century onwards sentencing the "Egyptians" to exile under pain of death. Nor was this an empty threat. In Edinburgh four "Faas" were hanged in 1611 "for abyding within the kingdome, they being Egiptienis," and in 1636 at Haddington the Egyptians were ordered "the men to be hangied and the weomen to be drowned, and suche of the weomen as hes children to be scourgit throw the burg and burnt in the cheeks." The burning on the cheek or on the back was a common penalty.

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In 1692 four Estremadura Gipsies caught by the Inquisition were charged with cannibalism and made to own that they had eaten a friar, a pilgrim and even a woman of their own tribe, for which they suffered the penalty of death. And as late as 1782, 45 Hungarian Gipsies were charged with a similar monstrous crime, and when the supposed victims of a supposed murder could not be found on the spot indicated by the Gipsies, they owned under torture and said on the rack, "We ate them." Of course they were forthwith beheaded or hanged. The emperor Joseph II., who was also the author of one of the first edicts in favour of the Gipsies, and who abolished serfdom throughout the Empire, ordered an inquiry into the incident; it was then discovered that no murder had been committed, except that of the victims of this monstrous accusation.

The history of the legal status of the Gipsies, of their treatment in various countries and of the penalties and inflictions to which they have been subjected, would form a remarkable chapter in the

history of modern civilization. The materials are slowly accumulating, and it is interesting to note as one of the latest instances, that not further back than the year 1907 a "drive" was undertaken in Germany against the Gipsies, which fact may account for the appearance of some German Gipsies in England in that year, and that in 1904 the Prussian Landtag adopted unanimously a proposition to examine anew the question of granting peddling licences to German Gipsies; that on the 17th of February 1906 the Prussian minister issued special instructions to combat the Gipsy nuisance; and that in various parts of Germany and Austria a special register is kept for the tracing of the genealogy of vagrant and sedentary Gipsy families.

Different has been the history of the Gipsies in what originally formed the Turkish empire of Europe, notably in Rumania, *i.e.* Walachia and Moldavia, and a careful search in the archives of Rumania would offer rich materials for the history of the Gipsies in a country where they enjoyed exceptional treatment almost from the beginning of their settlement. They were divided mainly into two classes, (i) *Robi* or Serfs, who were settled on the land and deprived of all individual liberty, being the property of the nobles and of churches or monastic establishments, and (2) the Nomadic vagrants. They were subdivided into four classes according to their occupation, such as the *Lingurari* (woodcarvers; lit. "spoonmakers"), *Caldarari* (tinkers, coppersmiths and ironworkers), *Ursari* (lit. "bear drivers") and *Rudari* (miners), also called *Aurari* (gold-washers), who used formerly to wash the gold out of the auriferous river-sands of Walachia. A separate and smaller class consisted of the Gipsy *Lăeshi* or *Vătrashi* (settled on a homestead or "having a fireplace" of their own). Each *shatra* or Gipsy community was placed under the authority of a judge or leader, known in Rumania as *jude*, in; Hungary as *aga*; these officials were subordinate to the *bulubasha* or *voivod*, who was himself under the direct control of the *yuzbasha* (or governor appointed by the prince from among his nobles). The *yuzbasha* was responsible for the regular income to be derived from the vagrant Gipsies, who were considered and treated as the prince's property. These voivodi or yuzbashi who were not Gipsies by origin often treated the Gipsies with great tyranny. In Hungary down to 1648 they belonged to the aristocracy. The last Polish *Krolestwo cyganskie* or Gipsy king died in 1790. The *Robi* could be bought and sold, freely exchanged and inherited, and were treated, as the negroes in America down to 1856, when their final freedom in Moldavia was proclaimed. In Hungary and in Transylvania the abolition of servitude in 1781-1782 carried with it the freedom of the Gipsies. In the 18th and 19th centuries many attempts were made to settle and to educate the roaming Gipsies; in Austria this was undertaken by the empress Maria Theresa and the emperor Francis II. (1761-1783), in Spain by Charles III. (1788). In Poland (1791) the attempt succeeded. In England (1827) and in Germany (1830) societies were formed for the reclamation of the Gipsies, but nothing was accomplished in either case. In other countries, however, definite progress was made. Since 1866 the Gipsies have become Rumanian citizens, and the latest official statistics no longer distinguish between the Rumanians and the Gipsies, who are becoming thoroughly assimilated, forgetting their language, and being slowly absorbed by the native population. In Bulgaria the Gipsies were declared citizens, enjoying equal political rights in accordance with the treaty of Berlin in 1878, but through an arbitrary interpretation they were deprived of that right, and on the 6th of January 1906 the first Gipsy Congress was held in Sofia, for the purpose of claiming political rights for the Turkish Gipsies or Gopti as they call themselves. Ramadan Alief, the *tsari-bashi* (*i.e.* the head of the Gipsies in Sofia), addressed the Gipsies assembled; they decided to protest and subsequently sent a petition to the Sobranye, demanding the recognition of their political rights. A curious reawakening, and an interesting chapter in the history of this peculiar race.

Origin and Language of the Gipsies.—The real key to their origin is, however, the Gipsy language. The scientific study of that language began in the middle of the 19th century with the work of Pott, and was brought to a high state of perfection by Miklosich. From that time on monographs have multiplied and minute researches have been carried on in many parts of the world, all tending to elucidate the true origin of the Gipsy language. It must remain for the time being an open question whether the Gipsies were originally a pure race. Many a strange element has contributed to swell their ranks and to introduce discordant elements into their vocabulary. Ruediger (1782), Grellmann (1783) and Marsden (1783) almost simultaneously and independently of one another came to the same conclusion, that the language of the Gipsies, until then considered a thieves' jargon, was in reality a language closely allied with some Indian speech. Since then the two principal problems to be solved have been, firstly, to which of the languages of India the original Gipsy speech was most closely allied, and secondly, by which route the people speaking that language had reached Europe and then spread westwards. Despite the rapid increase in our knowledge of Indian languages, no solution has yet been found to the first problem, nor is it likely to be found. For the language of the Gipsies, as shown now by recent studies of the Armenian Gipsies, has undergone such a profound change and involves so many difficulties, that it is impossible to compare the modern Gipsy with any modern Indian dialect owing to the inner developments which the Gipsy language has undergone in the course of centuries. All that is known, moreover, of the Gipsy language, and all that rests on reliable texts, is quite modern, scarcely earlier than the middle of the 19th century. Followed up in the various dialects into which that language has split, it shows such a thorough change from dialect to dialect, that except as regards general outlines and principles of inflexion, nothing would be more misleading than to draw conclusions from apparent similarities between Gipsy, or any Gipsy dialect, and any Indian language; especially as the Gipsies must have been separated from the Indian races for a much longer period than has elapsed since their arrival in Europe and since the formation of their European dialects. It must also be borne in mind that the Indian languages have also undergone profound changes of their own, under influences totally different from those to which the Gipsy language has been subjected. The problem would stand differently if by any chance an ancient vocabulary were discovered representing the oldest form of the common stock from which the European dialects have sprung; for there can be no doubt of the unity of the language of the European Gipsies. The question whether Gipsy stands close to Sanskrit or Prakrit, or shows forms more akin to Hindi dialects, specially those of the North-West frontier, or Dardestan and Kafiristan, to which may be added now the dialects of the Pisāca language (Grierson, 1906), is affected by the fact established by Fink that the dialect of the Armenian Gipsies shows much closer resemblance to Prakrit than the language of the European Gipsies, and that the dialects of Gipsy spoken throughout Syria and Asia Minor differ profoundly in every respect from the European Gipsy, taken as a whole spoken. The only explanation possible is that the European Gipsy represents the first wave of the Westward movement of an Indian tribe or caste which, dislocated

at a certain period by political disturbances, had travelled through Persia, making a very short stay there, thence to Armenia staying there a little longer, and then possibly to the Byzantine Empire at an indefinite period between 1100 and 1200; and that another clan had followed in their wake,

passing through Persia, settling in Armenia and then going farther down to Syria, Egypt and North Africa. These two tribes though of a common remote Indian origin must, however, be kept strictly apart from one another in our investigation, for they stand to each other in the same relation as they stand to the various dialects in India. The linguistic proof of origin can therefore now not go further than to establish the fact that the Gipsy language is in its very essence an originally Indian dialect, enriched in its vocabulary from the languages of the peoples among whom the Gipsies had sojourned, whilst in its grammatical inflection it has slowly been modified, to such an extent that in some cases, like the English or the Servian, barely a skeleton has remained.

Notwithstanding the statements to the contrary, a Gipsy from Greece or Rumania could no longer understand a Gipsy of England or Germany, so profound is the difference. But the words which have entered into the Gipsy language, borrowed as they were from the Greeks, Hungarians, Rumanians, &c., are not only an indication of the route taken—and this is the only use that has hitherto been made of the vocabulary—but they are of the highest importance for fixing the time when the Gipsies had come in contact with these languages. The absence of Arabic is a positive proof that not only did the Gipsies not come via Arabia (as maintained by De Goeje) before they reached Europe, but that they could not even have been living for any length of time in Persia after the Mahommedan conquest, or at any rate that they could not have come in contact with such elements of the population as had already adopted Arabic in addition to Persian. But the form of the Persian words found among European Gipsies, and similarly the form of the Armenian words found in that language, are a clear indication that the Gipsies could not have come in contact with these languages before Persian had assumed its modern form and before Armenian had been changed from the old to the modern form of language. Still more strong and clear is the evidence in the case of the Greek and Rumanian words. If the Gipsies had lived in Greece, as some contend, from very ancient times, some at least of the old Greek words would be found in their language, and similarly the Slavonic words would be of an archaic character, whilst on the contrary we find medieval Byzantine forms, nay, modern Greek forms, among the Gipsy vocabulary collected from Gipsies in Germany or Italy, England or France; a proof positive that they could not have been in Europe much earlier than the approximate date given above of the 11th or 12th century. We then find from a grammatical point of view the same deterioration, say among the English or Spanish Gipsies, as has been noticed in the Gipsy dialect of Armenia. It is no longer Gipsy, but a corrupt English or Spanish adapted to some remnants of Gipsy inflections. The purest form has been preserved among the Greek Gipsies and to a certain extent among the Rumanian. Notably through Miklosich's researches and comparative studies, it is possible to follow the slow change step by step and to prove, at any rate, that, as far as Europe is concerned, the language of these Gipsies was one and the same, and that it was slowly split up into a number of dialects (13 Miklosich, 14 Colocci) which shade off into one another, and which by their transitional forms mark the way in which the Gipsies have travelled, as also proved by historical evidence. The Welsh dialect, known by few, has retained, through, its isolation, some of the ancient forms.

Religion, Habits and Customs.—Those who have lived among the Gipsies will readily testify that their religious views are a strange medley of the local faith, which they everywhere embrace, and some old-world superstitions which they have in common with many nations. Among the Greeks they belong to the Greek Church, among the Mahommedans they are Mahommedans, in Rumania they belong to the National Church. In Hungary they are mostly Catholics, according to the faith of the

inhabitants of that country. They have no ethical principles and they do not recognize the obligations of the Ten Commandments. There is extreme moral laxity in the relation of the two sexes, and on the whole they take life easily, and are complete fatalists. At the same time they are great cowards, and they play the rôle of the fool or the jester in the popular anecdotes of eastern Europe. There the poltroon is always a Gipsy, but he is good-humoured and not so malicious as those Gipsies who had endured the hardships of outlawry in the west of Europe.

There is nothing specifically of an Oriental origin in their religious vocabulary, and the words *Devla* (God), *Bang* (devil) or *Trushul* (Cross), in spite of some remote similarity, must be taken as later adaptations, and not as remnants of an old Sky-worship or Serpent-worship. In general their beliefs, customs, tales, &c. belong to the common stock of general folklore, and many of their symbolical expressions find their exact counterpart in Rumanian and modern Greek, and often read as if they were direct translations from these languages. Although they love their children, it sometimes happens that a Gipsy mother will hold her child by the legs and beat the father with it. In Rumania and Turkey among the settled Gipsies a good number are carriers and bricklayers; and the women take their full share in every kind of work, no matter how hard it may be. The nomadic Gipsies carry on the ancient craft of coppersmiths, or workers in metal; they also make sieves and traps, but in the East they are seldom farriers or horse-dealers. They are far-famed for their music, in which art they are unsurpassed. The Gipsy musicians belong mostly to the class who originally were serfs. They were retained at the courts of the boyars for their special talent in reciting old ballads and love songs and their deftness in playing, notably the guitar and the fiddle. The former was used as an accompaniment to the singing of either love ditties and popular songs or [sic] more especially in recital or heroic ballads and epic songs; the latter for dances and other amusements. They were the troubadours and minstrels of eastern Europe; the largest collection of Rumanian popular ballads and songs was gathered by G. Dem. Teodorescu from a Gipsy minstrel, Petre Sholkán; and not a few of the songs of the guslars among the Servians and other Slavonic nations in the Balkans come also from the Gipsies. They have also retained the ancient tunes and airs, from the dreamy "doina" of the Rumanian to the fiery "czardas" of the Hungarian or the stately "hora" of the Bulgarian. Liszt went so far as to ascribe to the Gipsies the origin of the Hungarian national music. This is an exaggeration, as seen by the comparison of the Gipsy music in other parts of southeast Europe; but they undoubtedly have given the most faithful expression to the national temperament. Equally famous is the Gipsy woman for her knowledge of occult practices. She is the real witch; she knows charms to injure the enemy or to help a friend. She can break the charm if made by others. But neither in the one case nor in the other, and in fact as little as in their songs, do they use the Gipsy language. It is either the local language of the natives as in the case of charms, or a slightly Romanized form of Greek, Rumanian or Slavonic. The old Gipsy woman is also known for her skill in palmistry and fortune-telling by means of a special set of cards, the well-known Tarok [sic] of the Gipsies. They have also a large stock of fairy tales resembling in each country the local fairy tales, in Greece agreeing with the Greek, and in Rumania with the Rumanian fairy tales. It is doubtful, however, whether they have contributed to the dissemination of these tales throughout Europe, for a large number of Gipsy tales can be shown to have been known in Europe long before the appearance of the Gipsies, and others are so much like those of other nations that the borrowing may be by the Gipsy from the Greek, Slav or Rumanian. It is, however, possible that playing-cards might have been introduced to Europe through the Gipsies. The oldest reference to cards is found in the Chronicle of Nicolaus of Cavellazzo, who says that the cards were first brought into Viterbo in 1379 from the land of the Saracens, probably from Asia Minor or the Balkans. They spread very

quickly, but no one has been able as yet to trace definitely the source whence they were first brought. Without

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entering here into the history of the playing-cards and of the different forms of the faces and of the symbolical meaning of the different designs, one may assume safely that the cards, before they were used for mere pastime or for gambling, may originally have had a mystical meaning and been used as *sortes* in various combinations. To this very day the oldest form is known by the hitherto unexplained name of Tarock, played in Bologna at the beginning of the 15th century and retained by the French under the form Tarot, connected direct with the Gipsies, "Le Tarot des Bohémiens." It was noted above that the oldest chronicler (Presbyter) who describes the appearance of the Gipsies in 1416 in Germany knows them by their Italian name "Cianos," so evidently he must have known of their existence in Italy previous to any date recorded hitherto anywhere, and it is therefore not impossible that coming from Italy they brought with them also their book of divination.

Physical Characteristics.—As a race they are of small stature, varying in colour from the dark tan of the Arab to the whitish hue of the Servian and the Pole. In fact there are some white-coloured Gipsies, especially in Servia and Dalmatia, and these are often not easily distinguishable from the native peoples, except that they are more lithe and sinewy, better proportioned and more agile in their movements than the thick-set Slavs and the mixed race of the Rumanians. By one feature, however, they are easily distinguishable and recognize one another, viz. by the lustre of their eyes and the whiteness of their teeth. Some are well built; others have the features of a mongrel race, due no doubt to intermarriage with outcasts of other races. The women age very quickly and the mortality among the Gipsies is great, especially among children; among adults it is chiefly due to pulmonary diseases. They love display and Oriental showiness, bright-coloured dresses, ornaments, bangles, &c.; red and green are the colours mostly favoured by the Gipsies in the East. Along with a showy handkerchief or some shining gold coins round their necks, they will wear torn petticoats and no covering on their feet. And even after they have been assimilated and have forgotten their own language they still retain some of the prominent features of their character, such as the love of inordinate display and gorgeous dress; and their moral defects not only remain for a long time as glaring as among those who live the life of vagrants, but even become more pronounced. The Gipsy of to-day is no longer what his forefathers have been. The assimilation with the nations in the near East and the steps taken for the suppression of vagrancy in the West, combine to denationalize the Gipsy and to make "Romani Chib" a thing of the past.

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