

**YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**INSIGHTS FROM VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY:
A GYPSY COMMUNITY LIVING IN RAJASTHAN**

ERDEM TEPEGÖZ

Istanbul - 2024

YEDITEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

INSIGHTS FROM VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY:
A GYPSY COMMUNITY LIVING IN RAJASTHAN

By

ERDEM TEPEGÖZ

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
Anthropology Department

Supervisor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Güzde Dalan Polat

Jurors

Prof. Dr. Ebru Kayaalp

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Güzde Dalan Polat

Assistant Prof. Dr. Elif Gezgin

Istanbul - 2024

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and that all information in this thesis has been obtained and presented following academic rules and ethical conduct. I have fully cited and referenced all material and results as required by these rules and conduct, and this thesis study does not contain any plagiarism. The necessary permissions have been obtained if any material used in the thesis requires copyright. No material from this thesis has been used to award another degree.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material accepted for the award of any other degree except where due acknowledgment has been made in the text.

I accept all kinds of legal liability that may arise in cases contrary to these situations.

ERDEM TEPEGÖZ

ABSTRACT

INSIGHTS FROM VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY: A GYPSY COMMUNITY LIVING IN RAJASTHAN

The main subject of this ethnographic study is my observation of a Gypsy/Roma community in the Rajasthan region of India, who have abandoned their nomadic lifestyle to settle near a city. This family makes their living by catching cobras in the wild, extracting their venom, training them, and performing snake charming using local instruments called 'Pungi'. I focused this research on how they have turned their cultural practices into a source of economic income.

Using participant observation, I gathered all the information and data from living with this tent-dwelling community and structured it around three main theoretical frameworks. My findings indicated that the cultural elements people acquire and transmit while in flux, which are highlighted by ethnoscape, played a role in the dissemination of cultural codes that this Roma community learned and spread while migrating. I explained in my study that the way this community seeks economic prosperity by utilizing their culture corresponds to the concept of Orientalism, a perspective through which the West continually views this community as exotic. I completed the framework with Lacan's theory. Additionally, all research findings from the field were also addressed and discussed using visual anthropology methodology to analyze how the community's experiences and identities were shaped. This research provides a comparative ethnographic study by observing a community in Rajasthan, the historical starting point of the Gypsies, presenting the global cultural flows, the interconnectedness of Western perceptions and cultural structures, and the changes in the community's cultural dynamics.

Keywords: *Gypsy/Roma, Rajasthan, Migration, Cobra, Visual Anthropology*

ÖZ

GÖRSEL ANTROPOLOJİ KAPSAMINDA RACASTAN'DA YAŞAYAN BİR ÇİNGENE TOPLULUĞU

Hindistan'ın Racastan bölgesinde yaşayan göçebeliği bırakıp kentin yakınına yerleşen bir çingene/roman topluluğu ile yaşadığım gözlem bu etnografik çalışmanın ana konusunu oluşturmaktadır. Doğada kobra yılanı yakalayıp, zehirini alıp onu eğiten ve yerel çalgıları 'Pungi' ile eğittikleri kobralarla yılan oynaticılığı yaparak geçimini sağlayan bu ailenin, kendi kültürlerini ekonomik gelir kapısı haline getirmelerini bu araştırmanın kapsamına oturttum.

Katılımcı gözlem yöntemiyle çadırda yaşayan bu topluluk ile edindiğim tüm bilgi ve veriyi üç temel teorik çerçevede oluşturdum. İnsanların akış halinde edindiği ve birbirine bulaştırdığı kültürel unsurları vurgulayan etno akışların karşılığının; bu roman topluluğunun göç halindeyken öğrendiği ve bulaştırdığı kültürel kodların yayılmasında etken olduğunu bulgularımda belirttim. Batının sürekli egzotik bir bakış açısı ile gördüğü bu topluluğun, ekonomik refah arayışını kendi kültürlerini kullanarak çözmesinin, oryantalizm kavramına karşılık geldiğini çalışmamda açıkladım. Lacan'ın teorisi ile çerçeveyi tamamladım. Ayrıca sahadan alınan tüm araştırma bulguları, topluluğun deneyimleri ve kimliklerinin nasıl şekillendiğini analiz etmek için görsel antropoloji metodolojisi ile de ele alınıp tartışılmıştır. Yazılı bilgi ile birlikte görsel materyalin de teorik çerçevede yorumunu ve sentezini içeren bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu araştırma çingenelerin tarihsel başlangıç noktası Racastan'da bir topluluğu gözlemleyerek, küresel kültürel akışlarını, batılı algıların ve kültürel yapıların birbirine bağlılığını ve topluluğun kültürel dinamiklerindeki değişimi karşılaştırmalı olarak etnografik bir çalışma olarak sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çingene/Roman, Racastan, Kobra yılanı, Görsel Antropoloji

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank my advisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gözde Dalan Polat, for her support and criticism at every stage of my thesis. I am grateful to my exam committee members for their valuable reading and critical comments.

I would like to thank my family and friends who encouraged me intensely during the limited time I had, and who gave me strength throughout the writing process.

Special thanks to all the communities in the Rajasthan region who shared their thoughts and feelings with me, the Guru family, my translator Bipin, and Huseyin Kilic and Goksel, who encouraged me to embark on this journey.

I am very grateful that this community took me in and openly shared with me all their secrets, their culture, and their thoughts. I was able to witness a unique culture and a distinct period in time. I am very happy that Yeditepe University has been with me for years and has played a significant role in this journey.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZET	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER.1	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Research Questions and Aim of the Thesis	3
CHAPTER.2	5
2. EXPLORING THE WRITTEN REALM: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	5
CHAPTER.3	10
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	10
3.1. Ethnoscapes	10
3.2. Orientalism	13
3.3. “Big Other, Small Other”.....	15
CHAPTER.4	17
4. METHODOLOGY	17
4.1. The Anthropologist's Journey: New Frontiers.....	17
4.2. Method and Technique of the Research	19
4.3. Mapping the Landscape: Research Process.....	21
4.4. Visualizing the Invisible within Visual Anthropology	23
CHAPTER.5	26
5. ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING.....	26
5.1. A Journey Through India's Sacred Geography.....	26
5.2. Echoes of a Nomadic Past: Rajahstan Region.....	27
CHAPTER.6	29
6. ETERNAL CITY, ETERNAL NOMADS: RECOGNIZING ROMAN COMMUNITY & GYPSIES	29
6.1. Historical Background and Backstory	29
6.2. We Are Who We Are : Belonging.....	30
6.3. The Rhythm of Gypsy Routine.....	31
6.4. The Temple of Belief.....	33
CHAPTER.7	34
7. CASE STUDIES: GURU’S COMMUNITY.....	34

7.1. A Portraits of a Gypsy Family	34
7.2. Dharma Economist: GURU	46
7.3. Promote Orientalism: Cobra & Snake Charming	50
CHAPTER.8	55
8. FRAMING CULTURE: ETHNOGRAPHIC LENS ON VISUAL MEANING-MAKING	55
8.1. Visual Narratives Cultural Imaginaries	55
8.2. Through the My Lens: Ethnographic Photography & Film Making	58
8.3. Visualizing Ethnography: Photographic Insights and Analysis	60
CHAPTER.9	71
9. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION	71
BIBLIOGRAPHY	75
APPENDICES	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Cover of the book Orientalism	13
Figure 2. My photo from the field research	17
Figure 3. Rajasthan and Jaipur map	27
Figure 4. Historical gypsies illustration	30
Figure 5. Area inhabited by the Gypsy ethnic community	31
Figure 6. Gypsy Family Photo	35
Figure 7. Open kitchen and brick building	38
Figure 8. Open kitchen and womens.....	40
Figure 9. Original Jaga Vansawali.....	42
Figure 10. Ravanata	45
Figure 11. Guru and Pungi.....	46
Figure 12. Guru and Cobra snake	51
Figure 13. 17-18 year old gypsy girl.....	61
Figure 14. The GURU	63
Figure 15. 3 Gypsy Children.....	64
Figure 16. 16 years old wearing a wedding dress	65
Figure 17. A Gypsy woman is cleaning kitchen	66
Figure 18. Gypsy musicians.....	68
Figure 19. A fire burning photo	69

CHAPTER. 1

1. INTRODUCTION

This ethnographic study examines the culture, experiences, and socio-economic conditions of Romani communities in modern India through the concepts of migration and culture. The main focus of this study is the Rajasthan region of India, where I spent approximately one month conducting field research. What I saw and observed, combined with an academic perspective, enabled me to understand today's problems better. My trip to New Delhi and my guide's mention of the Rajasthan region and the Gypsies drew my attention to researching this area. This region held great importance in world history as the land where the Romani, or Gypsies, first emerged. It also attracted my interest because it was where the concept of migration first arose, where societies first began to move, and where the largest communities that still migrate today originated (Fraser, A. 1995). The Gypsy community still living in this region had a life, culture, and survival rituals that they considered separate from both the rest of India and the rest of the world. While doing all this, the lands where I could observe the purest form of the concept of migration they established, its causes and consequences, and its purposes and intentions, would be the lands.

Romani culture is famous for its music, dance, and oral storytelling traditions, which have not only survived for centuries but also adapted to the various geographical and cultural environments in which the Romani people lived. In India, where various cultural expressions are abundant, Romani communities also provide a unique example of cultural resilience and adaptability. This study will explore the social organization and cultural expressions of a Romani family living in Jaipur, including migration patterns, motivations, challenges, and cultural transformations. We can include family structures, kinship networks, leadership roles, religious beliefs and practices, artistic traditions, and the concept of migration. By analyzing these aspects, we can gain insight into identity formation, internal dynamics, economic lives, and interactions with society from a broader perspective.

The family I stayed with as a participant observer is a 16-member family led by a Guru named Raju Nath. Throughout this research, I will refer to this community as the "Guru Family" because, as I will explain in more detail in the following sections, the leader of this community and family, the Guru, embodies many cultural and anthropological characteristics.

This ethnographic study, which includes participant observation, interviews, and research, aims to trace how these individuals' settlement practices and movement shape their social organization, livelihoods, and ethnic identities. The documentation and observation of Romani communities in the Rajasthan region shifting towards a more settled life instead of migrating in recent years demonstrates that the concept of migration is undergoing change today from its main source. I believe that visual anthropology will lead to much richer results and interpretive readings, as it provides a powerful tool for engaging with the multisensory and embodied aspects of culture that may be difficult to capture through text alone. By focusing on visual documentation, this study aims to highlight the structure of the Romani community, from music and dance to ways of living and working. The study will also utilize visual methods such as photography and video to examine the broader social, economic, and political contexts that shape the lives of the Romani.

I will look at this study through three main theories. Of these theories, Orientalism, Ethnoscape, and Big Other, Small Other have taken my research question to deeper points. I will discuss these theories and different perspectives in detail in separate chapters. I think that the theoretical framework of the study, as well as its methodology, is directly related to the content and form of the subject.

I have interpreted the theories that overlap with my study from the perspectives I have identified and examined both the opposing and underlying layers. I frame the theoretical framework of this thesis as a hybrid perspective that intertwines three main theories: Ethnoscape, Orientalism, and Big Other, Small Other, the reflections of which can be found directly in this community. I conclude that these three theories, together with my research question, form a framework that fits into the dilemma of migration and urbanization and creates many new concepts. From this perspective, within the main theoretical framework, I think that culture is on the move and this movement naturally requires change and adaptation. I must say that all the findings and all the cultural details I have described in the case studies, together with an anthropological perspective, create a change and a new migration policy. This community, which is the exact equivalent of Orientalism, does not realize that it is actually in a state of change while commodifying culture. This is where globalization comes into play. Because the world is changing and instead of big movements, there is more centralization and a city-based system model. This anthropological study aims to observe an ethnic community in all its aspects and to bring a perspective on the present and humanity.

1.1. Research Questions and Aim of the Thesis

The main research question of this study is the investigation of the cultural characteristics and changes in the living dynamics of a Gypsy community in the Rajasthan region, the birthplace of the Roma.

In Rajasthan, India, the origin of the Gypsies and the region where they were first born and spread to the whole world, as Fraser notes, I began to form my findings by ethnographically researching a real Gypsy community. While recording their culture and lives, I delved into the substrates and sought deeper questions and answers. In this process, I believe I captured an essence in the research. This essence was my realization that the Gypsies have been undergoing a decision process about migration that has not been widely noticed in recent years. Consequently, I directed my work towards this direction. The most important communities in the history of migration were slowly giving up migrating. They had decided to settle in more permanent locations, even close to cities. I examined how they developed a way of life by performing snake charming and opening their cultural history to tourism. I tried to delve into the depths of this study by questioning how economic reasons began to influence their culture and their own lives.

While experiencing the cultural and life dynamics of this Gypsy community, I sought to understand the dynamics and motivations behind their desire to stop migrating and settle near a city or try to live there for longer periods. What conditions must they have experienced to end a migration ritual, whether for economic, social, or cultural reasons? How can economic processes affect the life rituals and cultures of this ethnic community? I tried to find answers to these questions while living with this community. Their own efforts to understand themselves and the situation they are in allowed me to delve deeper into the research.

I can enrich the main questions as follows. Throughout this research, I will try to find answers to such questions:

What factors influence the decision of the Gypsy community in the Rajasthan region to migrate or stay in the city?

How do the historical and cultural ties of the Romani to their birthplace affect their decision-making processes?

How do government policies and initiatives affect the Gypsy community's decision to migrate or stay in the city?

What are the long-term consequences of the Gypsy community's decision to migrate or stay in the city, both for the community and for the Rajasthan region as a whole?

In what ways can visual anthropology methods enhance the documentation and analysis of the cultural dynamics within the settled Gypsy/Roma community near Jaipur?

In this study, while seeking answers to these questions, I define the main question of this research as finding answers to the current economic and cultural changes experienced by this community, with whom I have had the opportunity to observe by living together, within a theoretical and methodological framework.



CHAPTER. 2

2. EXPLORING THE WRITTEN REALM: LITERATURE REVIEW

When I examined the studies on this subject, I reached a conclusion that I could not have predicted. I saw that while there are very few studies on Gypsies and migration in Turkey, there is not enough field research from the perspective of visual anthropology. Additionally, there are unfortunately very limited resources available on this subject in international thesis studies. While important works were written and thought about this subject in previous years, I could not find many studies in recent years. I believe that this thesis will be cited for more resources in the future.

In this chapter, I would like to begin by looking at the history of the Roma in India, how they have traditionally lived, and why they have been displaced. It will describe the difficulties Roma have faced in meeting their basic needs during migration, the problems of finding a place to live and work, and economic challenges. It will also include how moving to the cities has affected Roma culture and society. Gypsies face the difficult dilemma of losing their traditional ways while struggling to preserve their unique identity.

Investigating the issue of the Romani community, which is a complex anthropological issue with social, economic, and political dimensions, starting with migration and settling in urban areas, is the most fundamental issue for this anthropological study.

"Discussion of how historical marginalization and exclusion shape contemporary Roma experiences" (Hancock, 2002) says his work approaches the Romani people from the following perspective in the literature. Centuries of persecution, enslavement, forced assimilation, and genocide in Europe have created deep social and economic marginalization for the Roma people, which continues to this day. Roma have faced closed doors in education, employment, housing, and other areas of life due to discriminatory laws and practices over the years. Policies that exclude Roma from opportunities have resulted in poverty levels multiple times above national averages.

In line with this idea, "Historical Dictionary of the Gypsies (Romanies)" by Donald Kenrick (2007) is an authoritative and accessible work that offers a comprehensive understanding of the history, culture, and society of the Romani people, also known as Gypsies. It presents an extensive alphabetical listing of key terms, practices, figures, and notable events central to the discipline and study of the Romani. It provides a comparative study of Roma cultures in

a historical context and argues that their migration to other countries has produced new social and marginalized outcomes. In this respect, Kenrick emphasizes that with migration, Gypsy communities are marginalized according to the countries and places they go to, especially in Europe. In fact, when we look at this concept in the context of my work, I can say that there is a change and differentiation for the community I observe who have migrated even within their own lands.

"The Gypsies" by Angus Fraser (1995) approaches this issue from the history of the Romani, from their distant past in India to migrations to Persia, the European continent, and modern state of affairs. Fraser explores the social order, customs, and other components of Romani life. When these facts are taken into consideration, it is evident that they faced great difficulty in migration, but despite this, they continued to migrate throughout history. In his study, he looks at the thesis that migration is a way of life.

"Gypsies in Central Asia and Caucasus" by Elena Marushiakova and Vesselin Popov (2016) provides a more focused analysis of the Romani populations living in the Central Asia and Caucasus regions. The book deals with the general reconsideration of Romani migration, lifestyle, and social formation. Additionally, it stresses the importance of the extreme diversity among Romani populations in terms of their particular ethnic groups and cultures with whom they must communicate. The book also addresses current problems such as Romani identity and the integration of this marginalized group in society, as well as how its minority political elites have started to be abused by other actors seeking support from given areas.

Another important work on this subject is "Gypsies in the City: Culture Patterns and Survival" by Rena C. Gropper (1975). Concerned with the adaptation and social survival of Romani groups in the cityscape, the work closely investigates the cultural patterns that help these people maintain their identity and social unity. The author dedicates significant attention to family and business activity, as well as intergroup relations and their framing with respect to outgroup interactions. Thus, this ethnographic study uncovers the dynamics and dialectics of tradition in the Romani urban world.

One of the most important books on visual ethnography, *Cross-Cultural Filmmaking: A Handbook for Making Documentary and Ethnographic Films and Videos* by Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Taylor (1997), serves as a comprehensive guide on creating documentary and ethnographic films. This book, published in 1997, covers everything from pre-production planning and the actual creation of the film or video to editing and promoting the final

product. The authors place special emphasis on the cultural and ethical aspects necessary for working adequately with "othered" cultures. The techniques, case studies, and knowledge presented in the book are beneficial for both filmmakers and anthropologists. One phrase from the book that I particularly love is: "Implicit in a camera style is a theory of knowledge" (Barbash & Taylor, 1997).

Sarah Pink's *Doing Visual Ethnography* (2007) is another significant work in this field. This book is an informative guide to using visual methods in ethnographic research. It explains how photography, video, and other visual materials can be integrated into the research process to enhance data collection, analysis, and representation. Pink presents several theoretical perspectives to help readers find suitable conceptual frameworks and addresses practical issues related to methodological choices and ethical concerns. The guide, based on numerous examples from diverse case studies, aims to help researchers use visual methods effectively to study cultural phenomena and social interactions more deeply. Additionally, I found an article that provides important references for my study: *The Cultural Heritage of Snake Charmers in India* by J.A. Smith (2020). This article discusses the cultural practice and enterprise of snake charming in India. The author describes its history, cultural specifics, current state, changes in public opinion, commercial and traditional roles, and its portrayal in the media. The article also highlights the difficulties faced by snake charmer communities today, including poverty and cultural loss. It covers initiatives aimed at restoring the visibility of snake charmers through popularization and education. This article will be discussed in more detail in the following sections of my study, particularly focusing on the contradiction of its commercialization today, which I will address comparatively in other chapters.

When examining sources on the interpretation of photography within the scope of visual anthropology, several important works must be mentioned. Susan Sontag's *On Photography* (1977) explores how photography influences our conception of reality and memory, arguing that photographs can misrepresent truth as much as they represent it. This work of criticism opened and fueled debates about the role of photography, its destiny, and its impact on our understanding of image culture, surveillance, media, and modes of representation. It is regarded as a foundational text in photography theory and visual culture, providing an important framework for visual anthropology by showing how readings of photography and reality influence our interpretation of culture.

John Berger, in his seminal work *Ways of Seeing* (1972), argued that art and visual culture create specific "ways of seeing" that are expressions of the reigning ideology at the time. He emphasized the importance of understanding how a viewer's class, gender, race, and historical-political context shape their ways of seeing. I believe that the interpretation of works in this study will also change according to the time, culture, and place in which they are found. Different times and cultures may lead to different research questions and theories, potentially developing deeper theories.

Finally, Roland Barthes' major works, including *Mythologies* (1957), *Elements of Semiology* (1964), *The Fashion System* (1967), *S/Z* (1970), and *Camera Lucida* (1980), are crucial for making comparisons between photographs and thoughts. Barthes, who views photography as a document, is known for his semiotic analysis of many works. Influenced by structuralism and post-structuralism, Barthes summarizes the possibilities of semiotics for cultural and anthropological studies. He argues that signs gain meaning through their relationships with other signs and explains that connotations can express cultural or personal associations of a sign. He also emphasizes that codes are systems of signs with shared meanings and rules among members of a culture or group. In this respect, we can say that the cultural codes of the Gypsies gain meaning through their own representations and personal associations. For example, the rings on women's noses carry a code and meaning in the construction of their identities, attributing significance to these metal pieces.

The literature review aims to critically survey existing scholarly work on Roma migration and urban settlement from anthropological and interdisciplinary perspectives. It identifies major themes, debates, and theoretical frameworks while highlighting areas for further research. The goal is to situate the thesis within current academic knowledge on this complex topic. The limited literature on this subject keeps the focus on certain key works.

Many anthropologists have conducted significant research in India, contributing to the understanding of its diverse cultures, social structures, and traditions. These anthropologists have significantly contributed to the understanding of the diverse and complex lifestyles of nomadic and semi-nomadic communities in India, providing insights into their social structures, cultural practices, and challenges.

Upon reviewing the literature, various opinions and interpretations are encountered regarding topics such as migration and economic reasons for transitioning to a settled life, while mutually questioning cultural and life practices. This subject has been approached from many different perspectives, each with its own value and importance. To better

understand my research topic, I examined all these ideas and integrated them into a comprehensive framework. By utilizing these perspectives, I incorporated my own findings into the theoretical and methodological framework of this study. In fact, unlike the literature I reviewed, I noticed a change in the concept of migration, particularly concerning the Roma. I believe that investigating the cycle of migration breaking and transitioning to settlement will enrich the literature. Additionally, discovering how cultural riches can be transformed into an income model is the most significant emphasis of the study. In the other sections of the thesis, I will convey this difference in the literature I identified along with my own inferences from an academic perspective.



CHAPTER. 3

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section, which forms the core of the thesis, I will explain the theoretical framework I used to approach the original findings. This study encompasses numerous findings, including the historical characteristics of the Rajasthan region, the culture of the gypsies, the concept of migration, the transition from a nomadic to a settled lifestyle, the role of community leaders, and the commodification of culture. While I will examine these findings in detail in a separate chapter, this section aims to understand these phenomena through various theoretical lenses. I will primarily frame this study within the context of three main theories. Rather than adopting a single perspective, I will explore different viewpoints, thereby opening up the study from an intertwined, hybrid perspective. At the end of the chapter, I will present a synthesized framework that blends these theories. Additionally, I will discuss how other theories might explain the subject, beyond the three primary ones. The three main theories I will examine in this section demonstrate how theories directly related to my research topic connect to my main study and how my findings can be analyzed within their frameworks. I will analyze my work through the lens of these three significant theories, which most accurately interpret and frame it.

3.1. Ethnoscapes

Arjun Appadurai is an Indian - American anthropologist and professor known for his work in globalization, modernity, and cultural dynamics. His theories often explore how global culture affects local events. In Appadurai's influential book, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, he introduces a framework for comprehending the commoditized, saturated, and scrambled flows that constitute globalization. It is this flow of mingling between people where different cultures become more, rather than less, entangled with each other. Appadurai identifies five dimensions or "scapes": ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes. Among these five scapes, ethnoscapes is the theory most relevant to my research topic and provides a theoretical framework for my study. "The landscapes of group identity—the ethnoscapes—around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly

territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogeneous" (Appadurai, 1996).

Ethnoscapes refer to the flows of people across various boundaries and borders. The groups included in this category are migrants, refugees, exiles, tourists, and guest workers. We can illustrate the change of region for this group, specifically the Gypsy community, due to migration for better opportunities and living conditions within these flows. This theory suggests that these migration movements are influenced by the increase in transportation and communication opportunities and technological developments. It argues that the blending of cultural elements and the passage of traditions to other geographies are due to these migrations and have survived to the present day. Additionally, while individuals integrate into the places they stay after migration, they also carry the characteristics of the geographies they come from and pass through, contributing to the places they migrate to.

Appadurai states that the movement of people between ethnic geographies challenges traditional notions of identity and belonging. Individuals navigating between their identities and loyalties can lead to a layered and confused perception between new conditions and outdated habits. The flows between people and communities that come with migration are creating new policies and forms of governance by countries and states. These decisions indirectly affect all regions and the entire world. Migration laws and migration policies are increasingly on the agenda as the biggest consequences of migration, both in terms of rights and new rules and laws. Appadurai argues that large communities, such as Indian diasporic communities, exactly correspond to ethnoscapes because these communities maintain strong cultural ties while contributing to the places they migrate to.

There is an opposing view on this issue; many critics believe this has led or will lead to an undue strain on public services such as healthcare, education, and social welfare at a time when the country can least afford it.

The concept of "ethnoscape" involves the blending of cultural elements and their transfer to other geographies, which has been achieved through migration. Roma communities, while enriching their cultures through migration, have also given rise to the concept of commodifying the cultures they learn during their migrations. Becoming aware of this and realizing it—essentially turning their culture into a performance material for monetary gain—is knowledge they have also acquired through migration. The economic income they earn by marketing the cobra dance to tourists has actually given rise to the idea of using their culture as capital. This has been made possible by the new people they meet and the new

knowledge they acquire in the lands they settle in through migration. Romani individuals, on the other hand, may have difficulty securing steady employment due to discrimination and limited access to higher education. This may result in increased unemployment rates among this population group as well as dependency on social welfare. In addition, the different cultural practices and lifestyles of Roma can sometimes lead to misunderstandings and tensions with the urban population, where there is a more extensive body of laws and rules. For a community that is used to living in complete freedom, this can hinder social cohesion and integration. "The presence of Gypsies and Travellers often raises concerns among local populations about increased crime rates, environmental degradation, and the strain on public services" (Richardson, 2006). We must also express that they are subjected to a form of stigmatization. This represents a type of discrimination that can turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy due to social exclusion. In Goffman's work titled *Stigma*, he provides deep insights into the social construction of identity and the dynamics of social interaction. He refers to characteristics associated with race, nationality, religion, or ethnic origin that are devalued by the dominant culture.

In India, the Roma frequently face social stigmatization due to their nomadic lifestyle, different cultural practices, and perceived differences from the settled population. This stigmatization can manifest in various forms such as discrimination, marginalization, and social exclusion. The visibility of the Roma's different cultural practices and lifestyle makes them easily identifiable and subject to instant judgment and discrimination. This visibility can lead to social exclusion and limited access to resources and opportunities. "The visibility of a stigma, then, is a crucial factor in the stigmatized person's social life. The more visible the stigma, the more likely it is to affect social interactions" (Goffman, 1963, p. 48).

He also mentions the negative effects of communities moving with migration and establishing a new order. He talks about the impact of this situation on the problem of rootlessness and being in a state of alienation. If we interpret this through the Gypsy community, their detachment from the concept of geography or the roads they constantly travel and their adaptation to city life will bring new priorities and enable them to adapt to a new way of life. For example, it is now more difficult to go cobra hunting near the city, as it was in the countryside. Consequently, they will gradually begin to lose these skills. Already, Guru's sons are now working part-time in more comfortable jobs (such as transportation or other city-based work), so they no longer want to hunt snakes and struggle with nature like Guru. Ethnoscapes are an important part of Appadurai's general operational approach to

understanding globalization together with migration. They track the fast, chaotic contemporary global movements that bring communities face to face and show the dynamics of today's societies that are not tied to rigid cultural or social identities. What we see through the concept of ethnoscapes is the cultural change, adaptation, and transformation that summarize life in a globalized world. This theory provides very important indicators regarding migration and the decision of Gypsies to settle. While it connects the consequences and interactions of migration to effects such as technology and transportation, it also presents the intermingling of cultures within this theoretical framework. In this respect, I have stated that there is a direct connection with the research topic.

3.2. Orientalism

When theorizing the concept of Orientalism as expressed in Edward Said's work 'Orientalism,' we see that my research question and this study align perfectly. Said critiques the West's study and description of Eastern societies, cultures, and communities, which he labels as 'Orientalism.' This theoretical framework suggests that the Western perspective on the East is not based on impartial information or an objective viewpoint, but rather serves to reinforce Western superiority and justify colonial ambitions, possibly even from a subconscious level. Said argues that this is supported by many culturally constructed images, cultural codes, and exotic ideas.

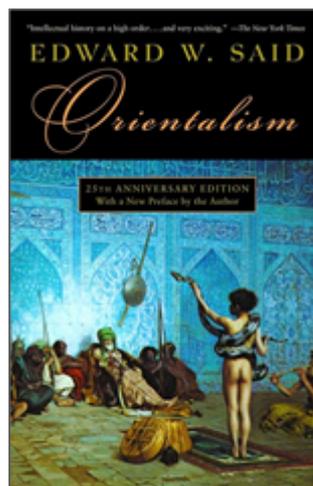


Figure 1. Cover of the book Orientalism

Said posits that Orientalism presents the East as exotic, backward, and fundamentally different from the West. From this perspective, we can infer that this gypsy community is entirely influenced by Orientalism. For example, while they continue their historical cultural

practices, these cultural codes have been commodified in the nearby city of Jaipur, turning them into tourist attractions for Western visitors. The Kalbelia dance, once a ritual performed at their weddings and celebrations, is now showcased in traditional costumes as a tourist show. Similarly, the act of making a cobra dance with a musical instrument called a Pungi is now seen as a romantic and intriguing activity for tourists. To the West, these are perceived as the romantic and exotic adventures of a marginalized community.

"For Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, 'us') and the strange (the Orient, the East, 'them'). This vision in a sense created and then served the two worlds thus conceived" (Said, 1979). In reality, Orientalism positions the West as rational and developed, while depicting the East as underdeveloped, inferior, and different, creating a dichotomy. This has become an effective tool for exerting political and economic control over Eastern societies. I directly observed this effect in the community I studied. This community, which lived nomadically and sourced all its needs from nature and the lands it traveled through, has come to place more importance on money, thinking it would improve their welfare. For instance, I paid three hundred dollars to spend time with, stay with, and observe this community. We negotiated this price through a translator, and we agreed on a mutual value, as they received economic compensation for allowing outsiders to observe their community. Additionally, the guru earning money in the city by performing snake charming for locals and foreign tourists is, in fact, a commodification of their rituals and way of life.

Another interesting point that Said highlights is that despite changes in historical and political contexts, and the West renewing itself, the fundamental premises of Orientalism remain unchanged. Orientalism's persistent nature creates a safe adventure image for the West, with the East always standing as a secure, non-rebellious entity like a child. "The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (Said, 1979).

Said's perspective on Orientalism fits very well with my subject and findings. Therefore, I will establish the main theoretical framework through Orientalism. Additionally, I want to introduce a concept that I believe strongly influences this theoretical framework: the 'passion for adventure'. In my interpretation, this concept means that the East represents a safe adventure for the West – an exotic, romantic, and Oriental safe adventure. When the West wishes to experience something different in another community or culture without disrupting its own order, the East, with its historical roots and underdevelopment, is ready and waiting.

This perspective suggests that the East and its culture stand as a compelling reason for seeking and experiencing adventure in a different or other community.

3.3. “Big Other, Small Other”

According to the Lacanian perspective The Big Other, l'Autre, is the general symbolic order of the society that prescribes societal norms and social and cultural rules, as well as language and legal orders; it is an abstract authority that people internalize to know how to conduct their everyday life. The Big Other may be considered equivalent to symbolic order, which refers to the dimension of language, law, and social systems. It is the figure of social authority and law, the instances responsible for defining the rules of what is acceptable. It is that by which one wishes to be acknowledged and approved of and, hence, that which orders desire. On the other hand, the small other (l'autre) corresponds to other individuals or objects with whom one relates. It is related to the order of the imaginary—a world of images, illusions, and identifications: interaction, rivalry, and identification, for example, in the mirror stage where a baby recognizes an idealized image of him- or herself. The Big Other is dialectically related to the small other; it is through the Big Other that relations with the small others are mediated, desires shaped, and subject formation influenced. To understand the lives of the Romani in India through Lacanian psychoanalysis with the lenses of the "Big Other" and the "small other," such an articulation throws a more sensitive analysis of their social dynamics, identity formation, and cultural interaction. Big Other, therefore, includes the sum total of societal norms, laws, and cultural codes of the dominant Indian society—the constitution—constituting the legal system, social hierarchies, cultural expectations, and the norm of language. This symbolic order encompasses the array of dominant cultural narratives, religious practices, and social norms that the Romani have to find their way through in making claims for incorporation or interaction with the larger society. The Big Other also represents state power, wielded by a common majority of institutions that frame legal status, rights, and social standing for the Roma, who may then go about seeking legitimacy and inclusion within this dominant framework. On the other hand, the small Other represents the individual members of the Romani community and their social connections with themselves and with the large society. The imaginary order that concerns self-images and identifications within the Romani community about their cultural practices, traditions, and internal social dynamics is involved with this small other. The small other stands for the interpersonal relationships taking place within the

Romani community or with the broader Indian society through which members interact with each other as friends, rivals, and in other forms of interactions. Among the Romani community, members relate to, or against, one another because of their social status, skills, or adherence to cultural norms. There is also identification within the larger society involving itself against or for cultural narratives.

This is the dynamism in relation to the Big Other and the small other that structures the lived experiences of the Romani in India. Through subjecting them to the societal norms and legal frameworks within which they relate to one another in their community and society at large, the Big Other intercedes the Romani's relationships with the small other. It is an illustration of how the desires of the Romani people come about under the Big Other but are supposed to be directed at the small other because they wish to maintain their culture while trying to gain recognition and acceptance. Subject formation for the Romani then involves a way of negotiating the demands and expectations of both the Big Other and the small other in shaping their sense of self from their cultural identity vis-a-vis societal structures. More understanding of these issues through Lacanian psychoanalysis gives more insight about how the Romani negotiate their desires, identities, and social intercourses through both their culture and the mainstream Indian society. "The Big Other is the locus of the law and the symbolic order, while the small other is the imaginary counterpart, the reflection of the ego in the mirror stage." (Lacan, 1991)

CHAPTER. 4

4. METHODOLOGY

When considering the methodology, I shaped a roadmap and structure around it. While detailing my research question, I will outline the steps I took, the tools I used, and the approaches I employed in this section. I recorded the methods I used to collect data, how I classified them, and the process I went through at the beginning and end of this research. With all my transparency, all the methodological methods that I contradicted, was surprised by, and wrote the details of are summarized in this section.

In addition, I found the rationales and connection of these methods to the study by experimenting a little. I reused the methods I used before and tried new methods on top of them. From this perspective, in this section, I started with my own anthropological journey and wrote the methods and the process. Then, I emphasized comparatively how visual anthropological methods opened another dimension in the project and clarified within the framework of which methods I approached the subject and the conclusion.

4.1. The Anthropologist's Journey: New Frontiers



Figure 2. My photo from the field research

One of the most important reasons that led me to this research is that my family background is Balkan immigrants and they migrated from Bulgaria to Turkey. I also remember hearing from my grandmother that there was migration from the Caucasus in our family. I think my

awareness and curiosity that drew me to this research stems from these familial reasons. I think this is one of the reasons why I have never been able to feel the sense of fully settling in one place throughout my life. As someone who has lived in Izmir for a while, then moved to Istanbul, then migrated back to the countryside and tried to live in Eski Foça, and finally returned to Istanbul, the city, these processes have actually caused me to have dilemmas between migrating and finding a job and living in the city at every stage of my life. I think the fact that I have been a caravan enthusiast for a long time and lived in a caravan for a long time during the pandemic period is the reason why I am so enthusiastic and interested in this research. Because we know that the concept of caravan was first used by communities from these lands, namely during the Silk Road and ancient Persian civilization. "The Silk Road, a network of trade routes connecting the East and West, was established during the Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) and heavily relied on caravans" (Chen & Liu, 2017, p. 78). From this perspective, even now, the idea of migrating to a rural place where everyone living in the city lives still dominates for me. As a researcher who feels stuck in the city due to the fact that living in the city means finding a job and having better economic opportunities, the feeling of migrating and finding new places and new opportunities always seems more appealing than staying constant. As Balamir said, this research will also allow me to find answers to questions about myself. And perhaps everyone who is in a dilemma about migration, travel, and settlement, like me, will have to discuss this issue with the real owners of the concept of migration. The researcher benefits from quickly gaining insights into the group's inner workings and observing certain nuances that would be imperceptible to an external investigator. (Balamir, 2023, p. 42).

The subject of this journey and migration intensely attracted my interest for this purpose, and the people and regions I encountered directed me towards this subject. The argument that anthropological research is more prominent in the field showed me at the beginning of this study that my questions and answers would become clearer as I delved into the depths of the subject. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on the importance of anthropological research within the discipline. As noted by prominent anthropologist Jane Smith, "Anthropology has always been a field-based discipline, but in the past few decades, we have seen a renewed focus on the critical role that ethnographic fieldwork plays in advancing our understanding of human cultures and societies" (Smith, 2019, p. 23). This sentiment is echoed by fellow anthropologist John Doe, who states that "the most groundbreaking insights in anthropology often come from long-term, immersive research in

the field, where anthropologists can observe and participate in the daily lives of the communities they study" (Doe, 2020, p. 45).

With these inquiries and thoughts, I encountered this story and embarked on the journey. Recording all the information and experiences, photographs, readings, and research I have acquired through this study has definitely provided me with a great perspective and a deep intellectual process. I think everyone who reads this study will gain an observation as if they are living with this community and find their own answer to the dilemma of migration and the city.

4.2. Method and Technique of the Research

I lived with a Roma community in the city of Jaipur in the Rajasthan region of India for a while to conduct anthropological research for a master's thesis on migration and urbanization experiences.

This thesis is based on a total of 1 month spent in both rural and urban areas of the Rajasthan region of India, and 10 days of fieldwork with Roma communities. This journey, which I embarked on at the end of February 2024, was completed by returning to Turkey at the end of March 2024. During this time, I used participant observation as my primary research method. I immersed myself in the daily lives, routines, and special events of a Roma community living in a semi-hilly, semi-forested area close to the city in Jaipur. I learned firsthand about the conditions they live in and the challenges they face. I took extensive field notes and kept a notebook to document my observations and thoughts. Additionally, during this process, I took many photographs and videos. I interpreted and classified these within the scope of visual anthropology. During this process, I learned about the very special moments, economic situations, and thoughts of the leader (called GURU) of this Roma community. I went cobra snake hunting with this group and witnessed the extraction of cobra venom. Moreover, I closely observed how the Roma community, after years of displacement due to migration, has now settled into a semi-settled order in a location close to the city. Living and gaining knowledge that I did not even anticipate compared to all my observations and previous readings suggests that this study will remain as both a visual and literary resource for history.

In addition to my participant observation, I conducted a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 10 Roma adults from diverse backgrounds in terms of gender, age, family structure, education level, and employment status. The interviews focused on their

perceptions of their migration journeys, experiences of settling in cities, and the opportunities and barriers they encountered. With the permission of the participants, I visually recorded some of the interviews with video and photography and transcribed them for thematic analysis. I conducted this study both to explore the community and to understand the people. Geertz argues that the goal of anthropology is to expand our understanding of the diverse ways in which humans create and interpret meaning: "The aim of anthropology is the enlargement of the universe of human discourse" (Geertz, 1973, p. 14).

To gain a broader perspective, I visited the rare secondhand booksellers and bookstores in the Rajasthan region. I accessed and studied notes and writings on the structure of the region and the Roma people that could only be found in these bookstores. Throughout the research, I tried to maintain ethical principles such as respect, transparency, and informed consent in my interactions with Roma participants. I made intense efforts to build closeness and trust, minimally disrupt their lives, protect their privacy, and share findings in accessible ways. However, I continued to be reflexive about the power imbalances and cultural differences that shaped the research encounter. Data analysis involved an iterative, in-depth process of reviewing field notes and interview transcripts to identify recurring themes and patterns, as well as contradictions and gaps. I started by communicating through a translator with the Roma community leader, Guru, who helped me identify the initial participants. Then I asked Guru to introduce me to other community members, aiming to create a diverse sample. The fact that I had already stayed among them for a while soon made the community feel more comfortable and act more freely, as if I were one of them. As Boas said, "The objective of anthropological research is to understand the individual cultures in their historical growth and in their environmental setting" (Boas, 1920, p. 314).

I obtained consent from all community members and offered participants the option to decline recording. I emphasized that participation was voluntary and they had the right to withhold information at any time. On the contrary, they considered it their duty to convey all the information and details they had to me. To ensure proper communication, I worked with a trained interpreter for all interviews. My interpreter, Bipin, was also very helpful to me conceptually because he was an anthropologist. He knew very well what I was doing and my purpose, and that I needed to discuss all the details with them. In exchange for their time and information sharing, I paid the Roma community \$300 to spend time with them, gather information, witness their lives, and conduct interviews. This mediation was carried out by

my interpreter, Bipin. Throughout the thesis, I think I critically reflected on how my identity as a non-Roma academic researcher shaped my interpretations and interactions with participants. When interpreting the photographs I took with my eyes in this study, I also added my own ideas. "Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5).

This reflects Geertz's interpretive approach to anthropology, which focuses on understanding the symbolic meanings that shape human culture.

In addition to the thesis, I am considering presenting the photographs I took in the form of a photo exhibition someday and preparing a visual anthropological documentary from the videos. These additional details provide a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the complex issues and strategies to consider when conducting ethical, culturally sensitive ethnographic research with Roma communities on sensitive topics such as migration and urban integration. With my methodology, I aim to produce rich and contextualized data while respecting and empowering all community members and regional residents.

4.3. Mapping the Landscape: Research Process

I embarked on my journey on February 24, 2024. I had never traveled to India before. First, I arrived in the city of New Delhi and stayed there. Then, I rented a car and made my way to the Rajasthan region. Here, I settled in a hotel in the city of Jaipur. Contrary to my own country, the first thing I noticed was the very poor hygiene conditions and the lack of traffic order. The chaos experienced in big cities was also present in this region and in this medium-sized city like Jaipur. India, famous for its street food vendors, did not evoke any desire to eat with the conditions in which the food was prepared. The lack of hand washing habits by anyone and the preparation and serving of food with their hands, as well as the fact that the sewage system was installed outside throughout the country, seemed to document that the food was really unhealthy. After eating a meal outside in New Delhi, I got a little feverish and didn't feel well, so I went to a hospital and started a short medication treatment. After this incident, I started to be very careful about eating out, especially eating street food. I decided to eat in places like closed restaurants if I could find them, or to make my own packaged products like pasta from the markets, and I solved my food needs this way in the hotel where I was staying. Water was an important problem for the whole country due to the

fact that the sewer system runs above the ground rather than underground. In this respect, tap water is not drinkable and care must be taken for its use. I met my water needs by drinking bottled water. I also used bottled water when brushing my teeth. I only used city water when taking a shower. The Rajasthan region, which I will describe in detail below, is the land where the gypsies first emerged and lived in history. And it's as if they have their own rituals and cultures like a separate autonomous area in India. When I came to this region, I was very impressed by the clothes and the people. The city we can call the capital of this region in a central location is Jaipur. I stayed here and in Pushkar for 20 days. First of all, I stayed in Jaipur and settled in a hotel called Virasat Mahal Heritage near the center. While looking around with a guide, there were many communities with tents on a hill. Gypsies had spread over large areas and established an order of living with tents set up. You could see this with many tent setups around the city center. It caught my attention that there was a community-style tent setup. In fact, later on, we could see small tent-like setups and living environments in the city center as well. These collective tent setups are spread throughout the Rajasthan region in this way. You can see gypsy communities living together with scattered tents on the roads, in intermediate cities and villages.

While wandering with an interpreter in a hilly area 45 minutes away from the city center, I encountered the gypsy family community that was the subject of the research, and after a conversation with them through my interpreter, I started spending time with them. I stayed there for about 1 week. The times I stayed correspond to the middle of March 2024. I have combined all the details of this region and all the observations I have made under separate headings in this research. I spent 7 days with a family of 16 people. This family is led by a leader we call Guru. He makes the decisions. There are 6 males, 5 females, and 5 children. Women remain in the background. The children's ages range from 5 to 15. There are a total of 6 tents. There is one outdoor kitchen, one portable toilet, an outdoor shower and a small animal tent. There is also a house made of bricks and a rough plaster with concrete. This is Guru's house. This house is one of the biggest indications that they are now in favor of settlement. After deciding to stay, they built this concrete house. This community came here about 10 years ago. Before that, they had always migrated and changed places. The areas they migrated were within the region we call Rajasthan. They do not leave this region. They generally do not migrate to other parts of India. In fact, these communities have migrated to many parts of the world in the historical process. They have spread all over the world. Berger (2015) states that the spread of Gypsies to Europe and then to the New World occurred in

the 15th century. Altınöz (2013: 34) states that the Gypsies "first went to Eastern Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries and then passed to Europe."

After Jaipur, I moved to the city of Puskar and visited the intermediate villages in the Rajasthan region. I also stayed in temples and roadside ashrams. Ashrams are sacred places where you can stay and find food for free for 3 days. Since they see you as a guest of God, you can stay in these places for free for 3 days. In India, there are tens of thousands of homeless Indians who live by constantly staying in these ashrams for three days at a time. This process allowed me to visually record this entire region. I obtained information from all the gypsies I met on the roads that includes the details of this research. I always had a notebook with me, a small orange notebook where I took my notes. I also took notes on my mobile phone. My camera and small video camera were always with me, and I completely filled my nearly 2 TB hard drive. This means almost ten thousand photos and nearly 20 hours of video.

Geertz's approach to ethnography involved immersing himself in the cultures he studied, participating in daily life and observing the nuances of social interactions (Geertz, 1983). He believed that anthropologists should strive to understand cultures from the perspective of their members, rather than imposing external theories or categories (Geertz, 1983). Geertz's interpretive approach to ethnography has had a lasting influence on the field of anthropology, encouraging researchers to focus on the symbolic and contextual dimensions of human experience (Geertz, 1973). In this respect, while all these experiences, information, photographs, maps, notes, and videos are used as the main material of this research, an understanding of the community members and a culture has been provided.

4.4. Visualizing the Invisible within Visual Anthropology

The most important reason for including visual anthropology within the scope of this study is as follows. In addition to being a very powerful sub-field, visual anthropology is an important cultural record archive in terms of documenting many depths that we cannot see or record. Moreover, visual anthropology has been evaluated in terms of having very few studies in our country and has been included in the main scope of the thesis to open up a field in this area. Furthermore, the fact that the community I studied has a highly visual culture necessitated the inclusion of visual anthropology in this study. Ethnographic photography and video studies will serve my research from a different perspective, visually

analyzing the underlying reasons behind the writings and investigations and creating a visual ethnography archive.

The importance of visual anthropological discipline comes from its visual power in terms of developing a cultural perspective and its ability to document the meanings beneath the words. Additionally, visual representations can show us how the person, community, or tribe in question perceives and makes sense of their world from a different perspective. It serves as a great tool for us to put ourselves in their place. Moreover, visual media and visual content can overcome language and thought barriers and convey complex ideas and emotions without getting stuck on the barrier of writing and words. It can be a very important recording point in terms of intercultural communication. And visual anthropology can contribute to theoretical developments such as representation and the role of the researcher in knowledge production. With these aspects, I think that supporting this research with visual anthropology will help to better understand the emotions and thoughts of the community that is the subject of my research.

Gypsies, also known as Roman people, are the carriers of a rich tapestry of language, tradition and lifestyle. However, their identity has often been subject to marginalization and misunderstanding. Visual Anthropology is concerned with the role of the visual in the representation of culture and social phenomena and provides an ideal medium to overcome stereotypes and stigmatization of Gypsy culture. In this way, photography and filmmaking help to portray the everyday lifestyles, rituals and practices of Gypsy communities with understanding and compassion. Visual Culture Studies complements this approach with an emphasis on analyzing cultural norms, values, power structures and how they are expressed through visual representation. It invites a critical examination of the images acquired and produced during or in relation to my fieldwork and questions their impact on viewers and subjects. Visual Culture Studies therefore evokes critical reflection on the ethics of representation and the idea of the researcher as the creator of visual narratives. This chapter presents the methodology and characteristics of visual field research with Gypsy communities. By addressing the visual side of the relationship with culture, I also explain the ethical aspect of representation and the potential of visual representation in promoting intercultural understanding. Thus, it also places this ethnographic study within the framework of Visual Anthropology and Visual Culture Studies. "The visual is not just a mode of representing reality but is itself a kind of reality, with its own properties and consequences" (MacDougall, 2005, p. 3).

In this context, and also as a theory, Visual Anthropology addresses the importance of visual perceptions in the process of exploring and understanding human cultures. Visual Anthropology theory focuses on the use of visual materials and objects to capture and describe aspects of cultural practices, beliefs and experiences. The theory also examines the impact of power dynamics and ethical implications in the production and reception of visual representations of cultures. In this respect, all the visual materials I have shot serve this method. "Visual data, whether drawn, photographed, or videotaped, can provide insights that cannot be fully captured through verbal or textual means alone" (Pink, 2007, p. 6). During the field research, I photographed each of the photos I took with the feeling that they were a visual history. Every detail would actually be recorded as a history. We can record hundreds of details that cannot be expressed in words or notes with a camera. There have been many examples where I noticed some details later through photographs that I sometimes could not notice there. If I need to give an example, in the photographs I took in the area where the gypsy community lived, it was something I noticed later that each member of the community I photographed always looked only into the lens without posing each time. This situation always indicated that they were open to society and appeared as they were. They acted the same way they felt and looked. While shooting a video, a woman suddenly got angry with the animals around her and acted angrily even under video recording and tried to keep the animals away. She had acted the way she felt at that moment without waiting for the recording to finish or warning me, without feeling the need to hide it.

From the perspective of visual anthropology, I interpreted the photographs in this study entirely from this point of view. I did not make a classical reading of photographs, because I think that all the photographs in this study are visual documents and artifacts rather than travel or memoirs or records. And these photographs, which carry a lot of anthropological information, can be completely evaluated in this classification and take place as visual ethnographic examples.

CHAPTER. 5

5. ETHNOGRAPHIC SETTING

Understanding the region itself and its structure, analyzing the history and rules of these lands will enable us to provide clearer answers to questions related to this area. From this perspective, it might not have been possible to establish the framework of the research without ethnographically investigating this region and its boundaries. In this regard, seeing where the region and migration started and where it exists within is essential for us to understand how the community moves.

5.1. A Journey Through India's Sacred Geography

I begin this research by getting to know India, which has such a rich culture, as a foundation. The country where the community I observed lives is India. And this country is known for its diversity of cultures and beliefs. I believe that it is necessary to fundamentally understand the country since the main emphases of my research are found in the origins of this country. In all my readings, India was mentioned based on these four fundamental principles: diverse culture, history, spirituality, and food. India is well-known for being culturally rich and deep rooted in tradition, possessing multiple languages, arts, festivals, and foods. With cultural roots that span thousands of years, the country has made impactful creative contributions in the form of art, music, dance, literature, etc. A few notable mentions are Taj Mahal, Jaipur's palaces, Hampi's ruins. From this perspective, the coexistence of so many different beliefs and thought patterns so seamlessly is one of the most important characteristics of these lands. India is truly a center of thought and belief. Additionally, India, which is famous for its ancient dishes and street food culture, has been known throughout its history for its culinary concept. During my own travels, the aromas of food coming from every corner and the abundance of street food vendors caught my attention. Considering the hygiene issues that I thought had been problematic recently, I only sampled a limited number of street foods. They have compared the entire geography of India to a large hand traveling around the world. "The Indian subcontinent may be likened to a gigantic hand, stretching from the snow-clad Himalayas in the north to the green, sun-drenched waters of Cape Comorin in the south" (Thapar, 1966, p. 16). This land actually encompasses such a vast area that many rituals and beliefs come together here. These lands, which have the most diverse concepts of gods in

the world, have also brought together many different forms of belief. In this geography, where you can see a temple on almost every street, I would encounter a new temple at every moment during my travels. I even witnessed many temples in the process of being built. The architectural details and exterior appearances of the new temples give the impression that you are visiting a very old and ancient temple. In fact, when I walked around the market and some buildings, I noticed that every commercial shop had a small corner dedicated to faith.

5.2. Echoes of a Nomadic Past: Rajasthan Region

The origin of my research question lies in these lands. It's a large region with its own unique culture. According to many sources, this region is where migration first appeared and caravans were first used. Since migration and settlement will become more understandable by examining these lands, I am beginning my research by understanding these lands that are deeply connected with migration. I toured the significant parts of this region by car, and its unique texture and clothing really impressed me. You immediately realize that you have come to a geographically and culturally different place. Tents, which you cannot easily see elsewhere in India, are scattered all over these areas. You can encounter many people and communities with tents set up on the roads or in the rural areas outside the cities.



Figure 3. Rajasthan and Jaipur map

If we look at the history and general characteristics of this region, we can say the following: The name Rajasthan comes from Raji. Raji means king or sultan. In fact, Rajasthan means the land of kings and sultans. And most children in this region are named Raj. The most commonly used male name is Raj. Rajasthan, which is India's largest state area-wise, lies in

the northwest part of the country, bordering Pakistan and Indian states of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat. As of 2024, the estimated population of Rajasthan, India, is approximately 85.1 million people (India Growing, 2024).



CHAPTER. 6

6. ETERNAL CITY, ETERNAL NOMADS: RECOGNIZING ROMAN COMMUNITY & GYPSIES

In this section, I address the historical background, daily lives, rituals, and beliefs of the Romani people in the context of cultural anthropology and related studies. With the idea that I cannot better understand the community, which I will discuss in detail as case studies, without researching their history and origins, I describe the Romani people with their fundamental aspects in this section. I have addressed major findings regarding their history and community characteristics. To answer my research question and provide clues, I analyze these essential sources together with their academic references in this section.

6.1. Historical Background and Backstory

The geographical origins of the Roma can be traced back to the Indian subcontinent, particularly to the regions that are now modern-day India and Pakistan. In the early times of the Roma people, their language highlighted this connection with Sanskrit at the center of over 500 related words, and a significant number of Roma words showing similarities to Hindi, Punjabi, and other Indian languages. After the 11th century, due to factors such as invasions and social upheavals, Roma communities split into three branches: Doms, Loms and Roms. And for several centuries the Roma migrated to Persia, the Byzantine Empire and eventually to Europe. The Romani, referred to as Gypsies, are a fascinating and tormented group of people with a unique and intricate background. Once, it was believed that their ancestors left the northern provinces of the Indian subcontinent in the 11th century and then began moving westward through Persia and the Byzantine Empire, until, by the 14th century, they reached Europe. As they entered Europe, the Romani brought with them not only their language, which they speak to this day – Romani, which has its origins in Sanskrit, but also a distinctive way of life and socio-economic system.



Figure 4. Historical gypsies illustration

It is very difficult to give a clear number for the Roma population. According to recent estimates of the Council of Europe and other sources, there are around 10-12 million Romani people around the world. Gypsies are Europe's largest ethnic minority. It is also worth noting that many Romani individuals consider the term "Gypsy" offensive. Although the word "Gypsy" has used for decades, it is usually the product of the same hateful ethnic bias that was once imposed over such customs. However, this figure is likely an underestimation due to issues with self-identification and the societal stigma associated with the community. While it is hard to determine the exact number of gypsies and tribes in India, their numbers exceed million. There are those who claim that the Banjara — a semi-nomadic tribe — are the most populous tribe, surpassing 10 million in India. (Council of Europe) Based on this data, it is currently assumed that there are more than 10 million Romani people in India alone.

6.2. We Are Who We Are: Belonging

How does the Romani community define themselves? This community traces their ancestry to the Romani people, claiming that they belong to the ancient, deep-rooted nomadic tribes and are historically the original natives of Rajasthan, and that their language has remained unchanged since the earliest times. They write all their family trees in centuries-old notebooks called 'Jaga Vansawali'. This notebook, which I will cover in detail in case studies, keeps a written record of all the origins. This detail is also proof of how attached they are to

their past and historical resources. They have a strong sense of identity and family concept. They think that they have maintained their culture for centuries. Traditions such as music, clothing, cobra sorcery and snake hunting are a tradition inherited from ancestors. For example, most women in the community know the historical Kalbelia dance. Inspired by snake figures, this dance has been going on since very ancient times. At the same time, language is an important indicator of identity. Their own dialect contains words belonging to a very ancient culture and Sanskrit sentences and mantras. For example, the Guru, who is in leader with the Romani community, said that he recites mantras with high frequency power before hunting Cobra Snake and preparing Cobra Snake for music. He told me that these mantras were left to him by his father and came from his ancestors. From this point of view, for this community, they historically carry a completely nomadic Rajasthan gypsy identity.

In order to understand the cultures of this community from different perspectives, I will clarify comparative descriptions and analyses through a literature review.

6.3. The Rhythm of Gypsy Routine

The daily life of Romani people, commonly known as Gypsies, is a colorful pattern of traditions, values, and practices passed through generations. Despite significant variance due to geographical location, cultural assimilation, and unique family traditions, several common characteristics define the daily lives of most Romani communities. Firstly, the focal point of Romani society is the family. "The Gypsy family is a close-knit unit that values loyalty, respect, and mutual support above all else" (Smith, 2020, p. 34).



Figure 5.Area inhabited by the Gypsy ethnic community

Extended families living together or in close proximity create strong communities where mutual support and loyalty are key values. Elders have significant power and respect in the community and are responsible for decision-making and integration of cultural traditions. Marriage is usually celebrated at an earlier age, and weddings are a time-consuming and laborious event. Livelihoods-wise, the Romani traditionally assumed various trades and professions that were linked to a nomadic lifestyle. Metalwork, woodwork, horse trading, and fortune-telling made up some of their livelihoods. Modern Romani also practice seasonal labor, including farming, construction work, and craftsmanship. Some Romani families have adapted to urban life and carry out employment in diverse spheres. Thirdly, Romani people have been known for their mobility and itinerant lifestyle due to centuries of migration and persecution. Romani moved across Europe in caravans and wagons, setting up temporary camps as makeshift homes. Currently, most Gypsy people have settled in more stable homes. Depending on the region and economic status, Gypsies inhabit various homes, from traditional vardo wagons to modern-style apartments. Romani culture is not a homogeneous entity, but rather a mosaic of diverse subgroups, each with its own unique history, language, and traditions" (Marsh, 2008, p. 15). From this perspective, the concepts of family and unity are very important for this community, and the journey of life gains meaning together. And within the community, unity and the bonds with other communities are always established. The community I observed in Jaipur was indeed a large group living together without separation, showing love and respect to one another. There was a structure that encouraged loving their children and motivating the youth to stay together, even if they worked or got married. "The bond within a Gypsy family is sacred, with elders respected and children cherished" (Garcia, 2021, p. 90).

They are divided into three main branches based on their historical and cultural differences: doms, loms, and roms (Romani). The main subject of this study is on doms. Doms are commonly found in the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia, living in countries such as Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and India. They typically speak a language called Domari and have been influenced by the regions they inhabit, leading to varying lifestyles and traditions. Traditionally, Doms make a living through professions such as musicianship, blacksmithing, basket weaving, and handicrafts. Loms are mainly found in the Caucasus and Anatolia regions, with communities in Armenia, Georgia, and Turkey. They speak a language called Lomavren, a mixture of Armenian and Indo-European languages, and have been influenced by Armenian and Georgian cultures. Loms traditionally engage in

craftsmanship, musicianship, and trade for their livelihood. Romani people are found in almost every country in Europe, as well as in the Americas, Australia, and other continents. They speak a language called Romani, which belongs to the Indo-European language family and has many dialects. Romani culture is known for its music, dance, and rich folkloric elements. Historically, Romani people have made a living through professions such as musicianship, blacksmithing, basket weaving, fortune-telling, and handicrafts, but nowadays, they work in various professions. These three groups historically migrated from India and spread to different geographies over time, developing unique identities influenced by the cultural and social structures of the regions they inhabit. However, they all share a common origin and are known for their similar nomadic lifestyles and artisan backgrounds.

6.4. The Temple of Belief

Gypsies tribes each have their own specific rituals and beliefs which extend beyond life events and dictate conduct from birth to death. They perform comprehensive rites, including protective rituals of new birth, extensive marriage ceremonies, and rites to ensure the deceased's safety and restful ascension to the afterlife. Romani cosmology is rooted in a dualism of body and soul, wherein the soul is considered pure and the body is potentially polluting. This dualism is expressed in a complex system of ritual purity laws and practices that regulate daily life and social interactions." (Sutherland, 1975, p. 255) A large majority believe in reincarnation. They believe in life after death and that they will come back to the world again. In fact, they think that they will come back to the world with better opportunities in their next life. They have the belief that after experiencing hardships and poverty in this life, they now deserve a good life. The community has many rituals associated with major life events, such as birth, marriage, and death. Babies are celebrated with songs and dances while marriages are associated with a bride price. The dead are cremated because the corpse is pure, and the deceased is impure. Burying a body pollutes the earth. They grieve for several days with a commemorative event conducted on the death anniversary. The Romani notion of purity/pollution is one of the many important aspects of life that regulate their behavior. The body's lower portion is messy, while the upper is pure. "Romani religion is characterized by a profound belief in the supernatural, including spirits, ghosts, and fate. Many Romani believe in the power of curses and the evil eye, and use amulets, talismans, and other protective charms to ward off misfortune." (Fonseca, 1995, p. 87)

CHAPTER. 7

7. CASE STUDIES: GURU'S COMMUNITY

This section, which is the essence of my research, delves into all the details to get to know the community with whom I spent time, made observations, and asked questions to seek answers. We get to know this family, which is the main subject of this study, as if we are staying with them in the same tent area, including where they live, how they live, their food, clothes, thoughts, and fears. I have clearly written all the ethnographic details that impressed, surprised, and excited me. I wanted all these details to be found in the research records as the complete details of a Romani community. Additionally, I tried to understand them and look at things from their perspective for my research question. Therefore, in this section, I was a participant observer in the family dynamics and conditions of this community, the thoughts and personality of their leader GURU, and the place of cobra hunting and snake charming in their lives. Without making these observations, I would not have been able to understand the community's decisions to migrate and settle in the city. Because I deciphered and revealed in this section that the structure of the family, Guru being a snake charmer, this being a reason for migration, and their decisions being predominantly related to snake charming. In this respect, this section has been one that brings to light the reasons for my research question.

7.1. A Portraits of a Gypsy Family

The first time I saw this community from a distance, it looked like a small town set among the trees on a hilly area. It even gave the impression of a fairground. There was no direct road to this area, but it was about 1 km away from the main road. An intermediate dirt path provided access to this location. Upon arrival, you were met with both tents and two small structures made of brick and rough plaster. The entrance was an open gateway; it was not fenced. This area spanned approximately 2-3 acres. The surroundings sloped downwards towards a plain, indicating that the settlement was established on a hilly slope. You could enter the area from the south via a dirt road.



Figure 6. Gypsy Family Photo

As you entered, the first things that greeted you were tents and an open kitchen. I used my smart watch to take some measurements in the area where this community lived. According to these measurements, the altitude was 382 meters, the pressure was 971hPa, the temperature was 22 degrees Celsius, the wind speed was 3 percent, and the humidity was 36 percent. I took these measurements on March 1, 2024, around 3:30 PM. The sunrise was recorded at 6:48 AM, and sunset at 6:31 PM.

This area was divided into three sections, resembling a compound where some parts were closely packed while others had some distance between them. There were a total of five large tents, one tent-made stable, and two adobe houses. The kitchens were outside, with stone-surrounded hearths. They used wood and timber to make fires. I saw a total of three different kitchens in this area: two were inside tents, and one was outside in front of a tent. Behind the outdoor kitchen, there was a stone-built coop housing five chickens. The community had a total of 15-20 animals. My observations included one large cow, 7-8 chickens, 2 roosters, 2 dogs, one caged bird, and one cobra snake. I did not see any cats. In general, I did not see many cats in India.

Clothes are dried on lines strung between trees. Using four closely situated trees, they have created a makeshift shower by surrounding the area with colorful fabric. These showers are outdoors. Since the weather is generally not very cold in any season, they bathe outside. I don't think they bathe frequently; during my stay, I only saw one person take a shower. It was a young man who had come back from work. Around 6 PM, he was washing his head and body with soap and pouring water over himself from a bowl, which he dipped into a bucket of water. Their toilets are also outside and quite portable, with water kept in a bucket.

From what I observed, their cups, toilet habits, and bathing habits, as well as their living spaces, are not very clean. The concept of cleanliness might vary from person to person, but I did not witness even a minimal level of cleanliness. Generally, Indians are stereotypically considered to be an unclean society. British anthropologist Mary Douglas's significant work, "Purity and Danger" (1966), delves deeply into why some cultures are so closely associated with the concept of cleanliness. Douglas insists that such concepts as cleanliness and pollution are not ontologically inherent in things but are "cultural categories". These concepts serve to draw the line between clean and unclean, pure and impure, to help preserve the social order and establish boundaries, to express cultural values. Douglas, in tune with symbolic analysis, says what a culture considers unclean actually reflects the way it perceives its order strategy at a very deep level. She provides an example of it in the Levitical dietary laws or the purity practices in primitive societies (Douglas,1966). Overall, Mary Douglas's concept of the cultural relativity of dirt and purity is a profound analysis of how different cultures form their definitions of cleanliness and pollution. By arguing that these definitions are relativistic and culturally determined, Douglas effectively refutes the existence of absolute categories of purity and impurity. The idea that dirt is matter out of place indicates the fact that what is considered dirty and polluting in one culture could be entirely normal and natural in another. From this point of view, the concepts of purity and impurity are integral parts of a culture's social and moral fabric. Douglas's analysis makes one re-evaluate their perceptions of hygiene and cleanliness: it is clear now that clean and dirty are much larger cultural constructs assigned to a much broader spectrum of social values. This realization forces one to reconsider their preconceived attitudes about purity and evaluate the sophisticated ways in which societies employ and reinforce this concept. (Douglas,1966)

One of the plastered houses belongs to the Guru and his wife. It is a single-story house adorned with stones at the corners and has one door. Inside, there is a double bed in the center, surrounded by bundles and belongings neatly placed against the walls. It almost reminds me of the back room of a village house in Anatolia, Turkey. In most corners of this area, there are pieces of wood. They use these wood pieces to make fires for cooking or to provide light and warmth at night. They produce these by cutting trees they gather from the forest.

Their clothing is very colorful. Almost all of the men wrap a cloth around their heads like a turban. The only exception is the Guru, whose headwrap is much more elaborate and dense. The women dress even more colorfully. Young men wear jeans. All the little girls have 5-6 colorful bracelets on their arms, not made of real gold but usually crafted from string and wire. They wear these bracelets on both arms. Small children have cloth-made teddy bears that they play with.

Despite being in a generally unclean environment, I was surprised to see that all their clothes were colorful and clean. It was clear that they were not wearing these clothes for the first time; they had been worn many times before but still looked clean and vibrant. This indicated to me that they place a lot of importance on keeping their clothing bright and clean, perhaps even more so than their own bodies. Mary Douglas gives an intriguing example of distorted meaning in *Purity and Danger*, referring to Gypsies who have cleaner clothes than bodies. She states that from the Gypsy perspective, cleanliness is about identity and social order where clean clothes symbolize friendly, decent people, and dirty people are associated with foreigners. Overall, clean clothes support group solidarity and degree from outsiders. The Gypsies' behavior reflects their cultural traits – the main factor of importance is cleanliness of the outer, socially significant side. Keeping internal fear intact is important to maintain respect of their own community and avoid staining one's clothes. Thus, the idea of practicality might also influence the situation, as the emphasis on clean clothes rather than the body manifests easier means of maintaining their lifestyle. This reasoning aligns with the second aspect of Douglas's theory that purification and danger are realms of sociocultural order. For Gypsies, clean clothes signify one of the main ways of achieving cultural cleanliness characteristics, a central factor in their cultural logic. Clean clothes serve as a veil to hide the true attitude of the Gypsies to minimize prejudices and reject negative ideas. Therefore, the cleanliness of Gypsies' clothes over their bodies is an example of meaningful cultural practice that is interpreted through the lenses of sociocultural order and social construction. Clean clothes rather than bodily cleanliness in this case are examples of the Gypsies' cultural preoccupation with their appearance and social conduct. The strategy of "keeping up appearances" consists of the four phenomena of image, depreciation, differentiation, and boundaries. (Douglas, 1966)



Figure 7.Open kitchen and brick building

Regarding cleanliness, I noted an interesting situation. During the first days of my encounter with this Romani community, I hesitantly accepted the masala tea they offered in small porcelain cups. I had noticed that these cups were rarely washed, so I would take a sip out of politeness and then discreetly pour the rest at the base of a tree when no one was looking. However, towards the end of my stay, I found myself asking them for masala tea and drinking the entire cup without hesitation. I had gradually acclimated to my surroundings and become more integrated into their world. As Malinowski (1922) noted, "It is through living in the community, participating in its daily activities, and building personal relationships that the anthropologist can gain a nuanced and empathetic understanding of the cultural practices and social dynamics at play" (p. 25) Or, as Geertz might put it, I experienced a shift from being an observer to becoming a participant. "As the anthropologist becomes increasingly involved in the everyday life of the community, their role shifts from an observer to a participant, thereby deepening their understanding and connection with the people they study" (Geertz,1973).

Indeed, I pondered a lot about whether this shift from observer to participant would hinder my ability to express my observations and findings. Initially, I was more alert and detail-oriented, but as I grew accustomed to the place, the people, and the culture, I felt more at ease and in the flow. This gradual acclimatization made me realize the potential for becoming desensitized over a long period. The initial drive to document everything meticulously began to evolve into noting only the non-surprising details towards the end. Experiencing this in the field led me to the conclusion that a field study should have a defined timeframe, tailored to the subject and context. The excitement and exotic feeling of the first days often transition into more systematic and academic records and analyses in the middle

stage. However, towards the end, there is a risk of developing a sense of familiarity and routine, which could dull the observational sharpness.

Hence, I noted that one should not stay too briefly, risking a superficial and touristic perspective, nor too long, which could lead to boredom and desensitization. Of course, the appropriate duration can vary for different anthropologists, depending on their focus and methodology. For example Malinowski argued that "To grasp the native's point of view, their relation to life, to realize their vision of their world, an anthropologist should immerse themselves in the field for at least one to two years"(Malinowski,1922) However, Bernard has pointed out that extended periods in the field can lead to mental fatigue "Extended periods in the field can lead to physical and mental exhaustion for anthropologists, as the constant immersion in a different cultural context can be both demanding and stressful" (Bernard, 2011, p. 240). Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw warned that "Prolonged fieldwork may result in anthropologists becoming overly attached to the community they study, potentially compromising their objectivity and leading to biased interpretations" (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw, 2011).

When most women saw me, they covered their faces with a cloth. I couldn't quite understand this at first. Because this is known as a behavior mostly done by women who have Islamic beliefs. I didn't know that Romani people were had a ritual about this. Later, when I asked, I learned that it was about respect, humility, and maintaining social boundaries. And then, when I gestured for them to uncover their faces while taking their photos, they did. Perhaps I saw for myself the greatest proof that this is not related to a belief, as they uncovered their faces as a stranger when I requested it. Angus Fraser also mentions this issue in his book 'The Gypsies' and states that Gypsy women cover their faces to strangers as a cultural practice for humility and social boundaries. He interprets it as a ritual they perform to maintain the rules of behavior that indicate purity and the boundaries between Gypsies and non-Gypsies. The purity code encompasses various aspects of daily life, including personal interactions, hygiene, and social conduct, all of which are designed to preserve the group's cultural identity and cohesion (Fraser, a.1995).

Everyone has a mobile phone except for the children. It's an old-fashioned phone with buttons, but they have prepaid lines. Because I remember that some of them ran out of credit and couldn't call anywhere. There is no electricity in this living area. It gets quite dark here after the sun sets in the evening. They light fires both because the air gets cooler, to have light, and to cook. At the same time, they sit around the fire they kindle. There was a small

solar panel and a connected battery to charge their mobile phones. They were charging using cables connected to the battery. However, in the kerchief house at the far end of this settlement, there was an electricity connection. And I saw the only television in this room. The children were gathering and watching it during the daytime.



Figure 8. Open kitchen and womens

In this area, cooking is done with pots and pans on a large stone, like marble, placed in the middle of three-sided stacked stones. These pots consist of shiny aluminum-shaped pots. They make a hole by stacking the stones on top of each other and use it as an oven. The thing I emphasized most in my notes was Chapattis, the food they made. Chapattis is an Indian Romani dish. Chapattis – spelled chapatis – are a type of unleavened flatbread that hails from the Indian subcontinent. Chapattis are a major part of the staple diet of many Northern Indian states such as India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Chapattis are simply prepared with whole wheat flour or atta, water, and occasionally a bit of salt. Not only are chapattis a dietary staple, but they also have cultural importance. Chapattis are commonly made fresh each day and served with vegetables, curries, or lentils, and it is part of many cultures to make them. The ability to make chapattis gets passed down from generation to generation and producing them is normally a household job. Although considered a South Asian food, the Indian-descendant Romani people might consume similar kinds of flatbreads.

They make chapatis twice a day, at exactly 7 in the morning and 17 in the evening. Apart from these two time periods, they don't eat anything. They were all vegetarians. They definitely did not eat meat. A cow living in one of the tents lives with them to provide milk. They also consume fruits and vegetables that they mostly collect from the surrounding area. But during my stay there, chapatis were constantly made. It was also the thing that the children loved the most. Some days, I bought and brought chocolates and biscuits for the children. They were very happy. But they had eaten chocolate and biscuits many times before. I couldn't see a refrigerator anywhere. They make and consume everything. There is no stocking mentality. Therefore, the foods are also somewhat determined on that day. In the tent with the kitchen, I saw flour and corn in the basins.

The most consumed beverage is masala tea. Masala tea, which is a spiced tea, contains many different aromas and flavors and is usually drunk hot. Its sweet taste also makes it easy to drink without using sugar. In Indian, the term "masala" refers to a combination of ground spices while "chai" is the Hindi word for tea. The ingredients of masala chai vary, but it typically consists of black tea brewed using strong black tea such as Assam tea, milk, sugar or another sweetener, and a variety of spices whose quantity vary and may include cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, pepper, and nutmeg. The spices are either crushed or putted whole into the boiling tea special with honey; then the milk and tea are boiled together with the crushed spices. Masala chai is rooted in ayurvedic medicine, an ancient Indian healing system that believes the combination of spices have calming and other health benefits.

I think we can interpret the community's desires and realities, that is, their desire to preserve their culture and their drive to adapt to the larger society, through Lacan. It's as if they are stuck between their own culture and commodifying it, and they are caught in a contradiction between their freedoms while wanting to adapt to society. In Lacan's theory, the big Other is the abstract, all-encompassing signifying order, structured norms, laws, conventions, containing the "objective" external reality of which all individuals are a part but are not capable of existing in isolation. (Fink, B. 1995) For instance, a Romani community's big Other would be their shared ways or cultural traditions, ethical codes, processes of authority, and belief systems that hold the community together and form their identity as an exclusive social group. The small other, or objet petit a, is the impossible object of desire that motivates the subject to seek completeness and support the delusion of the self as integral, such as a

Romani individual's ideals, goals, or fantasies that may be actualized or unconscious – a wish for longing, freedom, victory, ritual, or embodiment of various qualities or statuses of esteem to create a unique identity. Lacan demonstrates the inherent inner conflict of the subject that is split between the alienating pressure of the big Other and the impossible aim of desire. This can be seen in a Romani's constant doubt between following a set identity and structures or making a suitable life for oneself, remaining true to antiquity or embracing modernity. Lacan's idea of the gaze, an experience of external dread engendered by the big Other's direct, direct, impartial view is also applicable. Romani people have been subject to various sorts of antagonism and "othering" from the big Other. Thus, the gaze of the big Other would be a judgmental one of shame, imperfection, or inadequacy. At the same time, the Roma community would offer a big Other to its members offering a secure quilt and mirror image but detached from the big Other which is the homogenous culture of Roma on the salt flats of the Sindh. "The gaze is not a seen gaze, but a gaze imagined by me in the field of the Other" (Lacan, 1964/1998)



Figure 9. Original Jaga Vansawali

There was an interesting family archive that I witnessed in this region. It was a genealogy book written in old ledgers. This is called Jaga Vansawali. Jaga Vansawali means a genealogy or family tree. Specifically, it summarizes the lineage and history of the Jaga family. Such records are very important in Indian culture and in these lands. Indian heritage can be explained using the example of gensdawali. It is generally defined as three charts labeled with details of specific usage. Essentially, this genealogical record is used to detail

a family's past over several generations. It can include relevant facts and events such as marriages, children, and even the various achievements of its members. Therefore, Jaga Vansawali records will include genealogical information and events tracing back to the origins of the Jaga clan. Such information would be useful for all individuals of a family. Additionally, I believe it is a very valuable asset for historians and researchers. I was very surprised when I saw this notebook. It had the appearance of an old holy book. The pages were almost about to fall apart. A huge notebook from centuries ago. It had name, surname, date of birth, date of death, caste system, and parents' names written on it. They said that the notebook I looked at was 700 years old. According to my personal opinion, it may be hard to believe, but this is how they conveyed it. It documents names, relationships, births, marriages, and significant events within the family. Some ledgers typically contain narratives about important ancestors, their achievements, and their roles in historical contexts, providing a rich cultural and social history. I learned that they even include information about land and property holdings, migrations, and settlements, highlighting the family's movements and expansions over time. However, the ledger I witnessed only recorded names, surnames, birth and death dates, and the lineage to which they belonged. Traditionally maintained by family guardians, these records hold ceremonial importance and are referred to during significant family events. From what I have learned, many families have recently started using genealogy software to digitize their Vansawalis to preserve and update these invaluable records, ensuring their family heritage is accessible and protected for future generations. When I saw the Jaga Vansawali, I visually noticed that the Gypsies are very loyal to their own memories. Fraser also said the following on this subject: "Genealogical memory is very strong among the Gypsies, whose oral traditions, though they appear to the outsider as an inextricable confusion of fact and fancy, are a vital part of their cultural heritage" (Fraser, 1995, p. 3). These notebooks document that the history of the Gypsies, recorded not only through oral tradition and ritual but also through written records, is an integral part of their identity and sense of community.

This Guru family economically survives through many ways. All the earnings are collectively gathered by the Guru. All the needs of this community are met from the budget collected by the Guru. Food stocks, clothes, beverages, or health expenses, or needs related to houses or the needs of this area, such as animal feed, are purchased for this large family. All the men work. Women only go to work when they find a job. Among the men, Guru makes the cobra dance. I will explain this topic more broadly. In this way, he earns income

through a touristic way. A few of the other men work as tractor drivers. One of them plays music, plays a musical instrument. If there is an entertainment or an event, women dance with the clothes they wear, this is called Kalbelia dance. We can divide this community into three parts. They describe them with these names: Kalbelia, Bhopas, Raika. Kalbelia is the name given to the dance performed by the dancers from these communities. Women perform this local dance wearing local and colorful stone-studded clothes. Sometimes they perform at an event, a touristic night, or at other Romani weddings. Kalbelia dance is a vibrant and fascinating traditional folk dance belonging to the Kalbelia tribe, which is a nomadic group predominantly living in the Indian state of Rajasthan. This dance is tied to Kalbelia people's history as snake charmers, so its cultural component is an integral part of their social and cultural life. Due to this, Kalbelia dance is characterized by the usage of fluid and sinuous gestures, mimicking the flexible move of snakes. Moreover, the performers often demonstrate numerous stressful spins and twirls, emphasizing their gracefulness and flexibility. Mostly, women perform Kalbelia dance wearing particular costumes, which often are black-colored skirts or ghagras, richly ornamentally embroidered and complemented with silver jewelry. This way, the dance underscores the allure and mystery of a snake. It is usually accompanied by the lively rhythm of Rajasthani music, in which the pungi, a wind instrument traditionally made using a gourd, the dholak, a double-headed drum, and khanjari or percussion instrument are primary. Overall, Kalbelia dance is performed on different cheerful occasions, such as festivals, weddings, and other community events and serves as a source of social unification and cultural expression. The dancers' improvisational factor allows every performer to incorporate unique creativity into dancing patterns, so that every dance can be distinguished from the others. In the community, women earn the most income by dancing in this manner. Bhopas are only the music players. There is a local musical instrument called Ravanata that produces a very deep sound, and those who play it and play drums like tambourines are in this group. There are also Raikas, they take care of camels. They do transportation with camels.

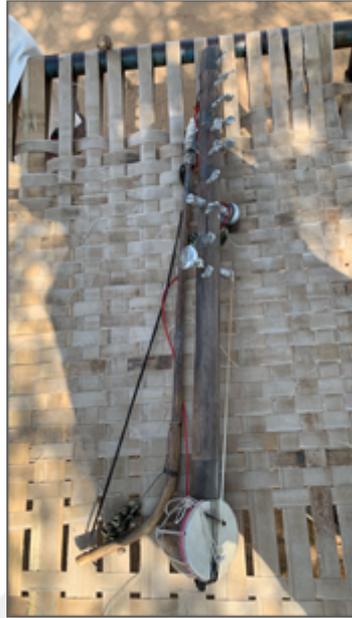


Figure 10. Ravanata

Actually, this community is a community that economically survives through both trade and music and dance. By starting to live near the city of Jaipur, they actually benefit from these tourism resources. In fact, their preference to be so close to the city can be considered as one of these reasons. I can summarize their entire economy under 3 headings. As a result of my observations, they have three main sources of income: Cobra snake charming, making music with an instrument, and short distance urban transport with camels. Tractor driving is a source of income for men when they cannot find a job occasionally or when there is no job related to music or camels. In fact, they obtain an economic income through their own culture. This situation emerges as an economic model that aligns with the concept of orientalism. The concept of commodification of this culture, which will be explained in more detail in the following sections, may contain many problems. Lost cultural authenticity: Cultural materials may have less original meaning and context and are in danger of losing what is truly relevant. In other words, the cost of cultural practices is reduced and adapted to market demands or consumer demands through inflation. By tying into processes like globalization, cultural commodification can result in the dissemination of cultural forms or the stagnation of a more uniform and uniform identity. At the same time, globalization can provide the possibility of exchange, and cultural identity can be asserted on a global scale or contexts. In other words, the commodification of culture is a multi-layered phenomenon that raises questions of authenticity, borrowing, inequality and opposition, alteration and

transformation, globalization, and morals. "As culture becomes increasingly commodified, it is stripped of its intrinsic value and meaning, and instead becomes a means to an end – a way to generate profit." (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1944)

I will elaborate on Cobra snake charming in a separate paragraph. The other second income is making music with musical instruments. As I mentioned in a separate section, Jaipur city is one of the cities that attract tourists in India, and of course, being in the heart of Rajasthan also provides an opportunity for this Guru family. The most basic musical instruments are Ravanata, Dholak, Khanjari, and Pungi. Pungi is a musical instrument mostly used to make the Cobra snake dance. In India, the Gypsies' own local musical instrument is the dholak the instrument, which is a double-headed drum and commonly used in Indian folk music, have significant implications for Indian Gypsies, also called Roma folk traditions. This instrument is unique in that it has a wide range of rhythmic characteristics and is an essential component of backing other traditional songs and dances.

As Fraser emphasizes in his book Gypsy musicians have historically been highly sought after for their exceptional talent and ability to play with great emotion and intensity, making them integral to the musical traditions of the regions where they reside. (Fraser, 1995)

7.2. Dharma Economist: GURU



Figure 11. Guru and Pungi

For most Gypsy communities, Guru means a spiritual leader. For the Gypsies in India, the term "Guru" embodies a wide range of cultural and spiritual meanings. A Guru is a spiritual leader and a religious mentor, who gives moral advice and spiritual teachings to the

community and at the same time serves as a mediator between the tribe and the divine. It means that the Guru gives a prayer, a blessing, and holds a ritual to preserve the day of the tribe and make sure it insures its welfare and wellbeing. Simultaneously, they are people to store and teach tradition and culture, as they are responsible for the preservation of oral folklore and traditions, meaning that they keep the identity of the community. In addition, Gurus are healers because they used medicine and healing knowledge to supply both spiritual and physical help, and as they are often seen as leaders of the community, they lead social and economic processes and make decisions to preserve general community interests. Furthermore, they are mentors and teachers, as they teach young people go perform music and hold dance festivals and learn traditional crafts, meaning that they save their cultural life. The real name of this community's Guru is Raju Nath. He is 65 years old. His beard has turned white. He has a thin body. He gives the impression of a very good person. He always approached warmly. He answered every question. I thought that he is a spiritual person. Rather than giving the impression of a strong and powerful leader, he gives the impression that he has hidden powers. He uses mantras. Words in Sanskrit, an ancient language. It is believed that these have the power of frequency. He captures the Cobra snake by reciting these mantras. The Guru wears a pure white outfit. It's like a suit but loose. He always has a vest on. There are pockets on that vest, and he uses those pockets very often. He has black sandals on his feet. He has a long necklace around his neck. The necklace is made of stones from the Rajasthan region. It's as if he's integrated with the land he lives on. He uses a mobile phone. He has a push-button mobile phone. I mentioned that his outfit is pure white, and frankly, one of the things I find interesting is how it can stay so white in that dust and dirt. And again, while everywhere is so dirty, we can explain how his outfit, especially his white outfit, stays so clean like this. It is only in relatively recent times that the full significance of the Gypsies 'purity code has been recognized: their pollution beliefs can now be seen as a core element of their cultures, serving to express and reinforce an ethnic boundary" (Fraser, 1995, p. 244).

The Guru is the one who makes all the decisions, economically he decides everything in the community. The money is collected by him. He decides on the times of migration. Or their decision to settle here now also passes through his approval. He also performs Cobra dance for tourists at events. He goes to the center of Jaipur and performs a cobra dance show for tourists there. This is a street performance. I also went to the city center with him. On a street with lots of shops, he sat on the ground in the corner as if setting up his shop, took out the

wicker box of the cobra snake from his bag, and started making music with the pungi he took out of his cloth bag. The Cobra snake poked its head out and drew an S movement upwards with slow movements. Passers-by watched for a long time and took photos. And they put money on the cloth in front of him. There were European tourists among them. In fact, this meant that he was selling his own culture economically. This is a ritual and culture for him, but he was using it as an economic and exotic tool. This can be viewed from the perspective of orientalism. We can interpret this situation by looking at Edward Said's important work *Orientalism*. Said argued that Orientalism was not just a field of study, but a framework used by the West to dominate the East, reconstruct it, and have authority over it. He says in his work that this academic and cultural discourse perpetuates stereotypes by portraying Eastern societies as static, exotic, backward, and fundamentally different from the dynamic and progressive West, and legitimizes colonial and imperial ambitions. (Said, 1979).

In his *Orientalism*, Latent and Manifest Orientalism chapter, Edward W. Said explains the latent as the unexpressed, frequently unaware assumptions regarding the Orient and the manifest as the widely held opinions, which are easily identified and articulated Said. Latent Orientalism refers to the unconscious cultural attitudes and stereotypes about 'the Orient' which are profound and consistent through time. It becomes defined by its persistence and steadiness. Said defines it as an "unconscious" in the sense of an "unapproachable positivity". This perspective means that the beliefs are virtually taken for granted and rarely are being questioned. These include the views of 'the Orient' being static, peculiar, regressive, and absolutely different from 'the West'. They continue notwithstanding different information or politics. The second type of Orientalism is Manifest Orientalism. All conscious expressions and writings about the Orient, which means the views that can alter over time, fall into this category. Manifest Orientalism is all cultural expressions that refer directly to the Orient. This category includes, among other things, academic work, literature, novels, and descriptions of non-Western people. Although these representations of the Orient can differ significantly, they can certainly not stand without the assumptions latent Orientalism provided. In other words, the manifest will always be informed by the latent, for example, even when the Orient was portrayed in diverse ways and degrees in literature, it was always that which required the West's help, intervention, or governance. Edward Said's *Orientalism* discusses snake charming as a way of depicting the Orient that Said argues is

not merely exotic but helps strengthen the stereotypes and power relations in culture. In the context of the other discussion of the text, snake charming can be used as an example not merely of a reductive form of knowledge but as a way of highlighting a set of representations of the Orient that make up the subject matter of Said's work. Snakes themselves are used within a context of the irrational and the inexplicable, and they belong to the Orient in the Western imagination. Said suggests that such depictions and practices, such as the "startling spectacle of snake-charmers," reinforce a false narrative of the Orient as a timeless space or cultural form that will never change or modernize, reinforcing the Western need for reform and power over the Orient. These relationships and images are part and parcel of manifest Orientalism, which is the recognition of conscious general attitudes about the Orient dependent upon inheritance from the previous generations. (Said, 1979) In the article 'The cultural heritage of snake charming in India', he made the following notes on this subject. Snake charming is a practice that has fascinated audiences for centuries and is often depicted as a mystical art in which the sorcerer controls the movements of a cobra through music played on a pungi. Its origins date back to depictions in Ancient Egypt and India. The cultural heritage of snake charming in India highlights its significance in local traditions (Smith, 2020).

J.A. Smith's 2020 article, "The Cultural Heritage of Snake Charming in India", sheds light on the multifaceted nature of the art of snake charming, discussing its artistic roots and historical presence in Indian culture. The writer states that snake charmers, also referred to as *saperas*, were an integral part of religious rituals and festivals and played an important role in the Indian folk culture as well. However, the author also argues that the art of snake charming is now on the decline due to the pressure from wildlife protection laws and changing perceptions of the public. The informants revealed that charmers have to face economic hardships, as their way of living is gradually disappearing. The article also includes information about the conservation activities that are conducted today and aims to sustain this dying art through alternatives such as cultural tourism. Hence, the writer explores the techniques used by snake charmers and the knowledge that is passed down from generation to generation, and ethical concerns regarding the use of snakes in their shows. The paper also provides information about non-for-profit organizations and other cultural institutions, highlighting the importance of combining support and regulation in preserving this cultural heritage.

7.3. Promote Orientalism: Cobra & Snake Charming

I went on a Cobra hunt with the Guru. We went about 10 km east of the settlements to a forested and sandy area. He explained how to catch Cobras in the soil, along with his grandson, me, and the translator. First, he looks for traces in the sand. These traces are not very obvious. He reads subtle traces that I normally wouldn't understand. I think it comes easy to him because he's been very used to it for years. By following the traces, he finds the den where the snake is hiding. This den is both the place where it sleeps in the winter and where it is protected. He said he understood that this was not a mouse or another den. There are very small differences between them. When he found the snake's hole, he went to the head of the hole and made a preparation. He took out the musical instrument from his bag, took out the box, and was excited as if preparing for a performance. He said some words. These words are mantras. In other words, Sanskrit words with high frequency. He said that these words relax the snake and cause it to move out of its den due to the vibration. It comes up from very deep. And after these mantras, he took the Pungi and played a sound. This musical instrument is a very famous musical instrument. The most famous instrument in snake charming is the pungi, which is sometimes called the been. The pungi is a gourd with two reed pipes that produce an unbroken, rhythmic sound that is said to affect a snake's behavior. The charmer plays the instrument while moving it through the air, and the snake follows the shape and motion. As a result, they do not react to the music, but to the charmer and the way he or she moves the instrument and themselves.



Figure 12. Guru and Cobra snake

He uses this musical instrument both to catch the snake and to make it dance after catching it. Then the Guru reached into the snake's den, grabbed the snake by its head, and flung it out. He calmly held the moving but dazed snake outside with his hand. He specifically held it by the head and put it in a wicker box with a cloth inside, sealing the mouth of the box tightly. It was a Cobra snake he had caught. I must say it was quite an interesting experience for me, who had never seen a Cobra snake before, even from a distance. I remember being scared. But the Guru was very calm; it's very clear he has done this many times. Cobras are a group of venomous snakes known for their spread hoods, which they raise to intimidate potential threats. They are mainly African and Asian. Cobras come in diverse colors and can measure between 4 to over 18 feet in length. The most popular types include the Indian Cobra, King Cobra, and Egyptian Cobra. Cobras live in a variety of landscapes, including forests, grasslands, and savannas and mostly prey on small mammals, birds, and other reptiles, while the King Cobra preys exclusively on other snakes. Contrary to popular belief, cobras avoid humans and only attack when left with no option. Their potent neurotoxins cause paralysis and death if not treated. Cobras have long held several cultural and mythological implications, mainly originating in India and Egypt.

When we talked to the Guru, he said that Cobras live for more than 100 years. I was very surprised by this information that day, but when I researched later, I read that they live for a maximum of 30 years. And I conveyed this information to the Guru again, saying it is written

everywhere that they live for 30 years. He said, no, some species can really survive for a hundred years. He said that my father was also a Cobra hunter, and I had heard that he caught a cobra at that age. After catching the Cobra, he takes its venom. He drains the venom by pressing its teeth from its head into a metal bowl. This venom is very valuable, but he does not sell this venom. Because when his father was teaching him, he told him that he should never sell the Cobra's venom, otherwise a bond between him and the Cobra could not be established. That's why he said he definitely does not sell it. The venom is Cobra venom is used in various vital fields, such as medical research, production of antivenom and traditional medicine. In research, the enzymes and proteins of the cobra venom are studied for possibility of using them in medicine. Some of the possible applications include the treatments arthritis, chronic pain and cancer while the neurotoxins are examined for the development of drugs that act on the desired neural pathways.

When the Guru extracts the cobra's venom, it becomes harmless. They do not sell this venom, but they produce kohl to use for the eyes. All the women in the community apply this kohl made from snake venom to their eyes like makeup. He also stated that they rub small stones made from this venom inside their eyes and that their eyes see very well and they do not experience any problems. Yes, I did not see anyone wearing glasses or having poor eyesight in the entire community. He said that the Cobra snake drinks milk and eats mice if it finds them. He feeds it milk every day and helps it shed its skin during its shedding periods. Apart from this Cobra snake he caught, he goes to work with his own snake. He said that no one else should bond with the snake. Cobra snakes are deaf. I heard this information there for the first time. He explains the question of how it dances with the sound of Pungi as follows. Pungi is a musical instrument that produces vibrations, not a very soft musical instrument. The snake is enchanted by this vibration and makes different movements, which makes it look like a dance to us. In fact, it does not dance, it is affected by that vibration and takes on a meditative state. That's why snake charmers are also called snake magicians. And he performed a snake charming show for us in their own area. He sat cross-legged on the ground. He put the wicker box in front of him. And he took out the Pungi. He prepared the Pungi. Then he opened the lid of the box. He started blowing the Pungi with his breath. The snake slowly began to stick its head out and come out with curling movements. For a while, it seemed to be watching the musical instrument with its head stretched out. The side of its neck swelled. And sometimes when it bent down, the Guru lightly touched its head with his hand. The Cobra would rise up again. It's a really impressive show. He has been doing this

regularly in the center of Jaipur for a long time. Or sometimes they call him for special events. There are 5-6 snake charmers like this in all of Jaipur. I think there are close to a hundred people in all of Rajasthan. But in recent years, due to government policies, snake charming has been monitored under animal rights and fines have begun to be issued, so he was playing on the streets with more fear and hesitation. This situation, perhaps as Edward Said says, portrays snake magic as a perfect example of the exotic and mysterious qualities of the East. This practice is often emphasized in Western literature and art as a show that fascinates and mystifies Western audiences. The image of the snake charmer reinforces the clichés that the region is a place of strange and fascinating practices, evoking notions of an ancient, unchanged, and exotic East. Orientalist discourse creates and perpetuates a set of cultural stereotypes that depict the East as fundamentally different and inferior to the West by focusing on practices such as snake charming. These images simplify and homogenize different cultures, often transforming them into a single monolithic image of the East, portrayed as backward, irrational, and exotic. Portraying the East as a place where exotic shows are performed serves to legitimize colonial and imperialist efforts. Orientalism, which emphasizes the strange and irrational, implies that these regions are in need of Western intervention and control. This reinforces the idea that the West is civilized and rational, while the East is primitive and in need of Western guidance and governance. And the fact that the West is throwing money into the snake's box while watching this show actually seems to prove all these discourses. This music and snake show is seen by Western audiences as a form of entertainment that can be consumed and enjoyed. A snake, a gypsy, and a local musical instrument. The commodification of cultural practices in this way underscores the power dynamics between the observer (West) and the observed (East). The fascination with snake magic is part of a broader voyeuristic tendency in Orientalism, where the East is seen as a source of pleasure and intrigue for the Western viewer. (Said, 1979)

Additionally, a concept known as the 'cobra effect' originated in India. During the period when India was colonized by England, the English announced that they would reward Indians for every cobra killed in order to control the increasing cobra population. In response, Indians began breeding snakes and establishing farms to increase their numbers and earn more rewards. After some time, as the English economy worsened, they canceled the rewards. Consequently, the Indians released the excess cobras into the city, leading to an even larger cobra population than before, causing greater damage and danger. Due to this story, similar situations are referred to as the 'cobra effect.' We can actually interpret this

action by the Indian communities as a stance against colonialism. For these communities, which quickly adapted to the conditions, the cobra snake serves as a valuable example of turning something into a commodity. This has added the concept of the 'cobra effect' to the literature, which means solving complex problems with careless and incorrect methods.



CHAPTER. 8

8. FRAMING CULTURE: ETHNOGRAPHIC LENS ON VISUAL MEANING-MAKING

Visual ethnography is a field with very few studies produced. In this respect, I am very pleased to approach the subject and my research question from this perspective in this research. The colorfulness of the cultures of Roma communities; the intricate and photographic nature of their clothing, tents, and musical instruments; and the fact that they themselves contain so much visual discourse that cannot be explained in words alone offer a rich field of ethnography. The fact that the subject I deal with contains a lot of visual materials and values made it necessary to address this theme under the heading of visual anthropology. Visual anthropology offers great opportunities to document what cannot be written and to make what is seen beyond the subject of research. In this respect, while explaining the importance of visual anthropology for this study in this section, I will describe where this field stands in my own journey and its connection with the subject I am researching, along with its methods.

8.1. Visual Narratives Cultural Imaginaries

Visual anthropology assesses and analyzes human experiences, cultures, and societies with the help of visual tools such as photography, film, and video. It combines the methods of anthropology with visual communication to study how people represent their experiences or themselves, communicate with others, and make meaning of their lives. The history of visual anthropology can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when anthropologists began to use more and more photography and film to socialize the cultures they studied. However, the subfield became a separate area of anthropology only in the 1960s and 1970s, when it was occupied by cultural anthropologists Margaret Mead and her husband Gregory Bateson. The main goal of visual anthropology is to beautifully record human culture and experience and to provide a more comprehensive and less personalized record of them. Visual anthropologists film and takes photos of community life, ceremonies, events, other culture aspects, and practices to make their records and further analyze them later. In addition, this subfield is concerned with ensuring that the voices of peoples that face marginalization are heard and their stories preserved. Removing marginality and stimulating

empathy and understanding, visual anthropologists create visual memory arts that preserve the culture reality of cultures at risk – those that are not strong enough today and those that are growing. This connection may have a huge positive impact on society because visual anthropologists can tell the community with the help of film and photo not only how it is now but also where humanity came from.

In their book "Cross-Cultural Filmmaking," Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Taylor argue that the dynamics of anthropology are more effective when combined with visual language.

While arguing for the potential of video as a language to enliven people, the authors do not underestimate the factor of culture creating people. In addition to the earlier presented information that video as a universal language can assist in the development of videography throughout the world, Barbash and Taylor mention such factors as the negative ones: "Filmmaking has terrible problems with whatever group is the first to come into disparity. It is likely that American political consciousness for English people weakens polyphony in the conversation within narratives a witness captures".

At the same time, visual anthropology, and more specifically photography and film as research tools, as described in the book by John Collier, Jr. and Malcolm Collier, "Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method," undoubtedly enable the acquisition of unique and valuable information in the study of humanity. The image information obtained through photography makes an important contribution to the method of ethnographic work. Photography allows you to capture social practices and the reality of observation, which remain unattainably elusive to even the most accurate words. As J. Collier states, "Camera shooting at one moment the state of life displays repeats ceaselessly: it freezes the shapes of realism in a moment for careful scrutiny." Thanks to the image medium, wherever the anthropologist looks, they can contemplate the world of others and eliminate the appearance that masks the "different - clarity" inherent in their perspective. However, as the Colliers assert in their work, photographing in ethnographic research requires discipline and systematic work. Photographs should not be taken randomly; rather, they should be composed, arranged, and meticulously identified and cataloged to be included by the researcher in the general ordering of the information. When the shooting is separate and aims at explanations (elucidation), the photographer's image may be needed, and an anthropologist must primarily be a gifted researcher.

When pulled by a skillful hand, a picture is half the amount of research data that provides an analyst with all kinds of experiments compare to photos a resource of authenticity to support and extend the range of data found directly in their notes. Moreover, as is emphasized in the Colliers' work, the photo is the perfect draw for interviewing people. Appearance contains implicit meanings that push peoples' thoughts out when they are faced with a photograph image. Because various photos of the image stimulus resonate in different cultures and peoples, the image is a statement or a letter. The difference in the resonance process was clearly demonstrated by Collier, writing that the Navajo, who have learned to handle photographs in the white people's language for many years, retrieve them from the image of information and in terms of the code of the interpreter from the sound embodiment of the information: the words and sounds. Because a photo is a statement for the Navajo, any photograph, whether direct or emblematic, can be used in a drawing, and not a word, and can be used as evidence of certain facts of reality, as for us, the letter-content fact evidence. From this significant realization, Collier realized that to meet the dictates of the Navajo, the words of Western law cannot prove evidence of the cases. The use of photography in anthropology also has significant philosophical consequences that the Colliers derive from such personal origins. Collier's colloquial experience is strikingly similar to Edward Hall because each culture is studying on its own perceptual earth, with its rules unambiguously determined by its own logical situational directions while obeyed by the merchant. Hall argued that the circumstances were adapted to people while the people exceeded the circumstances: the proportion, quality, and directionality of the relationship determined cultural relativism. Studying the culture's own perceptual gains, the scene emerges under one view and not two looking out on equal terms. Science's true dimensions stand constantly relying on or are invisible determines how much we can see. The Culture of Science or Spoken Anthropology can no longer be absorbed as it is known or as it is within the familiar scene. There are ever-exploring paths, especially through crossing or intersecting cultures, but even this conceptual exercise necessarily requires viewing from elements or categories similar to, but not completely substituting for, experience. Furthermore, with the increasing importance of photography and film as the main source of information about reality, the possibility of applying these data in visual anthropology in the methodology of researching information cannot be underestimated. On the unique value of photography for anthropology:

"The camera is another instrumental extension of our senses, one that can record on a low scale of abstraction. The camera, by its optical character, has whole vision... Unlike the human eye, the camera need not be stuck with a restricted angle of vision." (Collier, 1986)

These observations, derived from Collier's fieldwork with the Navajo, make a powerful and important point about cultural differences in visible perception. For Navajo people, photography is perceived as a fact, primarily because it is. The image is thought of in terms of grounds because the Navajo perceives images as factual reporting. In contrast, they consider language as a code or nature and a form of communication that requires compiling to derive comprehension. This is quite different from what people from West see when examining photos and language; in the Western world, some see the image as a fact, while others see it as a message that they can decode. For researchers working in areas with unfamiliar cultural standards, Collier's observations have significant implications. Her observations imply a requirement for scientists to determine how members of second cultures think about visual images. The people responsible for photographing the images may think that it is clear and factorial, while those who were photographed may see things differently. Without this awareness, researchers can make inaccurate conclusions about the signals and couplets transmitted by their addressees. As Hall says, titled mistakes are common and can result in errors and poor science. This observation points to the importance of the services of turning to the Navajo's native "viewpoint." More widely, this case study points to a more fundamental connection between visual anthropology and cultural perceptions and communication. As the Colliers recommend in the service using photos of the dismissive bystanders to communicate the gap between two sets of serving cultures, photos are enormous fighting techniques that can use the disadvantage of the viewer. "Navajo observers, by projective test, see photographs as literal information and language as coded interpretation. If you do not know this, you can wholly misinterpret the Navajo message." (Collier, 1986)

8.2. Through the My Lens: Ethnographic Photography & Film Making

I've been passionate about photography and documentary for many years and have captured so many incredible moments on camera. My thoughts on photojournalism really began to form when I went to Haiti for the first time right after the earthquake. In Haiti, I captured so many incredible images and had the chance to speak with people about how they were

rebuilding their lives in the wake of the earthquake. I absolutely still archive them. During this incredible trip to Haiti, I had the amazing opportunity to meet and capture images of many different tribes. It was a truly transformative experience that taught me the incredible power of visually recording cultures and sharing them with others. Then, I did readings and research on this subject, which was a truly fascinating experience. And I carried out similar works, which were just as incredible! I also had the incredible opportunity to photograph the Berbers in Tunisia and enter Libya and Syria during the Arab Spring period. I was lucky enough to work with lots of different tribes (Masai and Bushman) and albinos in Africa, and I got to photograph them. Unfortunately, visual anthropology is an area that hardly receives any attention in our country, in this respect, it is almost very difficult to find visual materials and find photography and film works on this subject. While anthropology is a very powerful method for understanding people, its combination with visual arts produces a more impressive result. When I went to India, which is the main source of this thesis, I also did thousands of photographs and video works. I archive and keep them all on record. My aim is to produce visual ethnographic works and keep them as photo exhibitions, documentary films, academic articles, media studies, and research files. I travel with a digital camera, a film camera, a digital video camera, an audio recorder, many lenses, batteries, and a computer. I keep my camera up to date by following the latest technology as much as possible. While processing the photograph, I try to stay as faithful to reality as possible, but I never forget that my priority is to tell a story and interpret it. I argue that photography should not be as objective as a security camera. I think that even the place where the photographer stands to take the photograph has an interpretation and storytelling purpose. In the future, I plan to focus more on visual anthropology and ethnography. There are many new topics that I want to research. I want to go back to Africa. In this regard, the field of anthropology has given me a great discipline and perspective. After I started studying anthropology, I feel that every work I produce is stronger and deeper. I will continue to work to produce important works on visual anthropology.

I have done practical work in visual anthropology. I have created a good visual archive. There is a path I follow while doing these studies. If I am working with a person or a community related to the subject, I always have to keep track of my length of stay. For example, I don't want to return early or late from there or stay too long. I have some signs for this. For example, when I realize that I am taking similar photos, it means it is time for me to return and distance myself from that community. Or, if my astonishment is replaced

by a more analytical perspective, it means it is time to stay a little longer to go deeper. Also, I don't take out my camera too much without getting close to the community for a while and without making them get used to me. I keep it a bit more hidden until they get used to it. I try not to do anything without permission, but sometimes I produce visual documents in order not to miss the moments and things that don't repeat, and then I go and get permission. For example, during the period when I was doing a photography study in refugee camps and trying to document the process of children adapting to life after the war, I faced an important dilemma such as taking photos without permission and staying away from my position when they did not allow it. Within the scope of visual anthropology, based on the idea that storytelling and research will go down in history and serve humanity, I used the method of trying to convince and reassure the subject there and provide trust in some way. Actually, the main method I understood in all my journeys was this: Every person, every community, every culture, every place should be evaluated within itself, and an inquisitive and understanding perspective should be developed instead of prejudices.

I think that through visual anthropology, I establish a communication with the person or the community that I cannot put into words regarding the subject I document. It's as if the camera and the video camera are tools for transferring emotions and thoughts. It's like sealing the emotion and the thought. There is a saying by the important Russian director Tarkovsky on this subject. He says that films are seals on time. Based on this idea, it's like putting a visual seal on culture, behavior, people, and their experiences in order to witness them.

In the recent process where we have entered a digital world, I believe that more content should be produced on digital ethnography and visual ethnography. In this respect, I follow new narrative languages and different visual studies. I watch works with similar subject content at festivals and conduct studies on this topic. My aim is to produce content in this field and to carry out my research within the scope of visual anthropology.

8.3. Visualizing Ethnography: Photographic Insights and Analysis

In this section, I will interpret and analyze the photographs I took during the field research, where I was a participant observer, from a visual anthropology perspective. I will try to document the ethnographic value of the photographs theoretically and methodologically through the fine details, back story, symbols, and cultural codes in the photographs. I will convey how we can use visual anthropology to record culture, capture the unseen, and go beyond writings and notes. I think the analyses in this section are valuable in terms of

establishing a direct link between the research question of the thesis and the visual material. In addition, the photographs here were not made as a classical reading of photography, but as a reading from a purely anthropological perspective. All the details and interpretations on the axis of the concept of visual anthropology have been made theoretically and methodologically through the interpretation of visual ethnography as documentary photography. Cultural codes, details, colors, angles, people, places, time, all fine details and perspectives are interpreted differently from the classical narrative to serve visual anthropology.

I interpreted 7 photographs with visual anthropological discipline:



Figure 13. 18 years old gypsy girl

Inside the tent is a 17- to 18-year-old gypsy girl. She's performing the Kalbelia dance at the same time. The colorful and loose-textured outfit she's wearing is the outfit worn by those who perform the Kalbelia dance. The abundant jewelry and the red henna on her forehead proudly reveal herself culturally. This is a dance costume belonging to a Kalbelia community. It's an outfit that has undergone very little change throughout history. The girl dances in this outfit at weddings or touristic events. The inside of the tent is a living area made of straw mats. A bed, with its covers piled in the corner, and a small number of clothes are found in the back corners. There is a closet at the very back. There is no electricity, but she keeps her belongings in that closet. She stores her makeup supplies. She keeps her jewelry and dance clothes there. The jewelry on her arms is again a local embellishment to

give a rich appearance for the dance. Only the nomadic communities that perform snake charming can perform the Kalbelia dance. It's a dance style that takes place by imitating the movements of snakes. It is inspired by their rubbing, twisting and swaying movements. The female dancers bend and twist their bodies like this, as if they were snakes. Their clothes are usually made of jewels embroidered on black like this. The dance is typically performed to traditional music played with instruments such as the pungi (a wind instrument associated with snake charmers), the dholak (a double-headed drum), and the khanjari (a percussion instrument). The Kalbelia dance is a part of the tribe's cultural identity and is usually performed at festivals, weddings, and special occasions. It is also a source of livelihood for the community. The Kalbelia dance is a fascinating art form that showcases the unique cultural heritage of the Kalbelia tribe and their deep connection to snakes and nature. With this ethnographic photograph, we see both the visual image of the dance culture and the conditions of the tent where a dancing gypsy girl lives, with her happy and proud expression in rich costumes despite the poor conditions.



Figure 14. The GURU

The GURU in the photograph is the leader of the community in my research. He is both an economic and spiritual leader. In the wicker basket in front of him is his living companion, a Cobra. In his hand is a local musical instrument called a Pungi. The Pungi is made from a dried and hollowed-out gourd. Only this instrument is useful for charming snakes. The fact that they do not make these movements or dance to any other musical instrument gives great importance to this instrument. From this point of view, it is also used in religious rituals. It is said that snakes are deaf and move not from the sound coming from this instrument, but from the vibration, and that they enter a meditative trance state. We see this as dancing. There is a small bowl of milk on the ground to the right. He feeds the snake with milk. Even if he doesn't go to work 2-3 days a week, he takes out his cobras, plays something with the Pungi, cleans it and feeds it.

According to Franz Boas's interpretation, he suggests that a person's beliefs and activities should be understood on the basis of that person's own culture. "Cultural relativism asserts

that one must suspend judgment on other people's practices in order to understand them in their own cultural terms" (Boas, 1940). Although snake charming is seen as exotic or dangerous in some cultures, it is a traditional and generally respected art form in its own local context. The GURU also performs this with great pride. For him, this situation reflects a deep cultural heritage and serves as an important source of livelihood.



Figure 15 .3 Gypsy Children

This is literally a true Rajasthan photograph. The colors, a rural background, the combination of camel, pot and mobile phone, 3 children side by side. And their expressions are strong and contain a look that is older than their age, raised by the powerful nature, not the peace of childhood.

Three girls are sitting on a transport trailer behind a camel. Their clothes are vibrant and colorful. The girl on the far left is wearing a dress and holding a mobile phone. There are a total of 3-4 mobile phones in the entire community. She got permission from her family and loves to fiddle with the mobile phone even though she doesn't have internet. They are heading towards the city with the camel. Just like migrating. Beds and blankets are stacked on top of each other. One of the girls is holding a large clay pot. They usually

carry corn or flour in these pots, covering the mouth with a cloth. Their nose piercings immediately catch the eye. Nose piercings are a women's fashion historically associated with Indian culture. I researched whether there is a connection between Ayurvedic medicine and nose piercings. But there is no definitive evidence on this. In this respect, this piercing is a fashion that started in India and spread to the world. From this point of view, this photograph actually shows that the nose piercing is still being used by children in the region where it was first born. They start wearing piercings from childhood. Various forms of piercing later became widespread and can be used in different ways by Aborigines and in Africa. The mix of traditional items (like the clay pot) and modern technology (like the mobile phone) highlights ongoing cultural transitions.



Figure 16. 16 years old wearing a wedding dress

A girl around 16 years old wearing a wedding dress. She is holding a cell phone in one hand. She has a nose piercing. The environment she is in represents the hope and joy of the wedding dress and the concept of family. This is the land where the Guru family, which is the subject of my thesis work, lives. It is a settlement established on a wide area. There is a very interesting scene in the background. On the right side, there is a tent set up, while on the left back side, there is a room made of tiles. This photograph actually

depicts the nomadic community gradually transitioning to a settled order by building houses made of tiles and plaster. Structuralism, described by Claude Lévi-Strauss, focuses on revealing the fundamental structures that shape human thought and culture. Photographs can reveal these structures by documenting patterns, relationships, and dualities within a culture. Here, the girl walking around in a wedding dress can also be interpreted as preparing for the future family structure within her own cultural pattern from a young age. Culture recreates itself in a cycle within itself. "Through the lens of structuralism, photography can elucidate the deep structures of human societies, capturing the recurring patterns and oppositions that constitute the human experience." (Lévi-Strauss, 1963)



Figure 17. A Gypsy woman is cleaning kitchen

A Gypsy woman is cleaning kitchen utensils with great care by rubbing clay on the ground in the sand. Here, after the meal, women clean materials such as pots, pans, plates and glasses

by rubbing them with clay for a long time. Then they pass them through water. Clay has a feature that removes dirt and cleans. Due to its ability to absorb oily substances, clay has been used for many years in nomadic communities to remove dirt and residues. It is easy to find in nature, practical and contains high hygiene. It just needs to be rubbed for a long time. We can also read this photograph in terms of gender roles. A woman in her 40s manages the kitchen work and is engaged in a primitive activity on the ground. Even if this is a daily activity, she is wearing a traditional outfit as if there is a special ritual. No matter how primitive the conditions and hygiene conditions are, the cleanliness and shine of her dress is as surprising as the first day. We can accept this photograph as a visual document of what Mary Douglas said in her work *Purity and Danger* (1966): "The use of clothing is loaded with cultural significance and represents a key method by which order is maintained and displayed". Vivid colors are a spotless dress. Gold necklaces shining on her arms. Gold necklaces are her entire capital, past and future. There has always been a general relationship between gold and gypsies. Gold teeth, gold bracelets, gold necklaces, like gypsies always wearing big gold in movies. This is due to the fact that a few branches of the gypsy community do metalwork. It can also be taken as a response to their interest in bright and colorful objects. In fact, gold serves as a bank for nomadic societies and is an investment tool. Because no matter where you migrate, it is a resource that can be turned into money instantly.



Figure 18. Gypsy musicians

"The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences." (Said, 1978)

Gypsy musicians, also known as Gypsy gentlemen. They are wearing their local clothes, and their mustaches are in a gypsy style - thin and pointed. The one on the left is holding a local musical instrument called Dholak. It belongs to the Rajasthan region, and in this region, gypsies use it at weddings and while playing music. It is a historical double-headed drum. Both ends of the drum are usually covered with animal skin, either goat or buffalo. The skins are tightly tied with strings or metal tensioners to adjust the tension and tune the drum. The contradiction of the man on the right having gold earrings in both ears and wearing Western-style sports shoes on his feet is actually an indication of the intertwining of migration and city life. These two gypsy men are two artists who perform their culture by making music for tourists or at events in the city.

All the details that we see as authentic in the axis of the concept of cultural relativism developed by Franz Boas reflect their cultural identities and practices. Their expressions and stances actually create a complete cultural image. Moreover, this photograph, which shows two men dressed in traditional Rajasthani clothes with a musical instrument, can be analyzed through Said's framework to explore how such images perpetuate or challenge Orientalist views. This photograph is actually consistent with Said's argument that the West often sees the East as a land of timeless, mystical traditions. Two gypsy relatives playing their local music with local musical instruments in local clothes to earn money from Westerners. The multilingual signs in the background point to a touristic environment where local culture is exhibited for Western consumption.



Figure 19. A fire burning photo

I took this photo around 9:00 pm. There is a fire burning from logs in the middle and many people around it. The children in the community are running around even though it is evening. The number of people entering a narrow photo frame is more than 10,

although this is not a group photo, the fact that so many people sneak into the same frame expresses the bond and closeness of individuals to each other. Gathering around the fire is one of the oldest rituals of humanity. Among themselves, they sometimes dance and sometimes tell stories. Lighting a fire also means warmth and light for the Roma. Because there is no source that can illuminate the outside of the areas they live in. As can be seen, her head is covered. And she has a necklace around her neck. She lives with her 4 children, her husband died. Her husband died as a result of a Cobra bite. During a hunt they went on. Guru was not with them. During all my observations, she hardly ever smiled. The photo offers a powerful visual image due to the effects such as vivid clothes, constantly moving children, and the fire transporting the viewer to the space. Women and men are together at the head of the fire. The girl standing at the head of the fire on the right is wearing a white wedding dress. She felt the need to dress up with night music and entertainment and fire. The photo contains a lot of detail and cultural elements. In the flickering light of the fire, stories come alive, binding souls together in a tapestry of shared history and cultural identity.

CHAPTER. 9

9. CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

In this thesis, a Gypsy community living in the Rajasthan region of India is discussed. Through the participant observation method, I lived with this community for a while and had the opportunity to observe their processes and cultural dynamics. I had never had the chance to get to know a Gypsy community for such an extended period and spend time with them before. I encountered a completely different aspect of Gypsy culture than what I knew from movies and books. Significant insights I gained on this journey included their practice of covering their faces due to shyness around strangers, their unique perspective on cleanliness, their greater emphasis on the concept of family than I had expected, and their high level of spirituality. Additionally, experiencing a cobra hunt, spending time with a cobra, and observing it created an important ethnographic awareness. Throughout this experience, I believe I have compiled a significant visual archive about the region and the community by utilizing the tools of visual anthropology. When I began with my research question, I did not expect to arrive at such diverse results or observations. As you get to know a community and spend time with them, you better understand their motivations.

As an anthropology student, the idea of giving up migration and transitioning to a settled life initially led me to believe that the concept and culture of Gypsies would come to an end. From a more romantic perspective, if asked, I would have preferred them to continue migrating. However, as I reflect on the results of this thesis, I understand this community better and can see the reasons for their transition to a more settled life, which is an unfamiliar decision for them. Throughout the study, I aimed to proceed with a theoretical perspective and understand how my observations fit within a historical and anthropological context. As I realized that I was engaged in an ethnographic study, I understood that my perspective needed to delve deeper. Initially, the issue of cleanliness bothered me greatly, but I began to make more focused observations when I recognized that it represented a different cultural form for them. Similarly, instead of viewing cobra hunting and snake charming as mere adventures, I started to question the underlying cultural connections and the meanings these practices held for the community. I think that the methods I employed provided me with significant analytical opportunities in this study.

From this study, I have constructed a theoretical framework around three main theories: orientalism, ethnoscape, and Lacanian theory. With this mixed perspective, these three main perspectives have made important contributions to the main topic of my study and to answering my research question. By integrating these three perspectives, I believe that the theoretical framework of this thesis bridges issues and theories that are still being debated today. By blending these theories with the methods of participant observation and visual anthropology, I believe that I have clarified the academic framework of this study.

The fact that this community has started to use their culture as a source of income to generate economic resources and has discovered ways to transform culture into economic revenue defines the point that this study aims to reach. Their discovery of how to transform their culture into an economic commodity, as emphasized with the concept of Orientalism, has provided them with better economic opportunities and thus more comfortable living conditions. Perhaps the phenomenon of Orientalism has truly convinced a Gypsy community in the East. Cobra magic, Kalbelia dance, playing musical instruments, and transportation within the city with camels symbolize the rapid transformation of their own culture into immediate economic gain. Thus, instead of embarking on an uncertain journey with migration, they now have a clearer urban life ahead of them. Additionally, we can conclude that settling in the city is also used to acquire a more social environment and prevent exclusion.

Belonging somewhere and being known there weakens the effect of alienation and provides a more sheltered existence. When walking on the street with Guru in the city, his brief greetings with those who know him do not seem to be a network obtained through migration, but rather an effort to adapt more to a society as they have started to urbanize. While I was there, there were rumors that cobra charming was banned due to state policies. It was said that there would be a penalty for playing with the cobra snake in the Rajasthan region, as required by animal rights. This situation had quite demoralized Guru. He may have realized for the first time that living in the city requires complying with certain rules when he encountered this ban. However, there are many other areas where he can present the culture of his own community. In this respect, he never expressed that he was considering migrating again.

As a participant observer, I stayed with this community, ate with them, chatted, played with their children, listened to music by the fire in the evening, took photos, shot videos, took a lot of notes, and asked questions. All this ethnographic process came together here as a very intense and detailed study. I detailed the gap in the literature, especially the changing life decisions of the Gypsies in recent years and their use of their culture as an economic commodity rather than a life practice. My aim was to research an argument beyond the dominant conceptions in the literature. While doing this, my goal was to document their culture, habits, and how they were interpreted in the academic past through a community. The contribution of this study to the literature is that it begins to investigate how an ethnic community has changed in the world I now live in and to witness the change in the way they use their culture when studying their culture. By observing a local community in situ, this study provides answers to the change in the concept of culture, while also providing evidence of the transformation of an immigrant community that decided to settle here. While seeking answers to these questions, it not only goes beyond anthropological issues but also records the culture and thoughts of a community, revealing this study both visually and in writing. I believe that the inclusion of this study within the scope of visual anthropology and the acquisition of an important visual archive through the photographs and video works taken is a very important contribution to the literature. While there are very few studies on this subject in our country, it is not very possible to find a visual anthropological study on this subject worldwide. Being a participant observer with this region where an anthropologist went for the first time, this Gypsy group, which is the subject of research for the first time, and a community that has decided to settle in the city for the first time, I think that this thesis may have made significant contributions to the literature as a resource.

I have no doubt that this project and this journey have contributed a lot to me and that this study will affect similar academic research and studies in the future. What I learned, saw, took notes of, and captured after the journey changed me. It changed my ideas. It allowed me to better understand the books written on these subjects and anthropological theories. It gave very important answers to my questioning of whether I should leave or stay in my own city. This not only shows the importance of research and a journey but also emphasizes that it has a direct impact on our lives. To embark on a journey with a question and encounter a community, living with them for a while, getting to know them, recording their voice, culture, ideas, and the changes they have experienced actually serves to create a great academic archive for humanity. In this respect, if anthropology and anthropological

methods, which we use to understand people, culture, and behavior, have helped me to understand myself better, I believe that this anthropological study will make a valuable contribution to the literature in terms of better interpreting history and people and establishing a unity of meaning between the past and the future. Additionally, I see that this study has made an important contribution to the literature. Witnessing a moment when the concept of migration is broken and recording the findings of a migrating community's decision to settle attributes a significance that can be referenced in the literature. This study actually points to an anthropological point as a result of research aimed at discovering an essence. This essence that it captures will provide a resource that has not been exemplified in the literature before in many respects.

On this journey I embarked on with a research question, I discovered an essence that I could not have predicted while getting to know a Romani community. This essence was the same as my research question. To witness and observe firsthand how a Roma community living in the Rajasthan region uses their culture as a tool to improve their level of welfare, and as a result, has settled near the city instead of migrating, forms the essence of this study. And I witnessed the first owners of migration giving up on migration in the lands where this concept was born and originated. I turned this into an ethnographic study, laying out the findings in a multifaceted manner and analyzing them with its methods. The conclusion I reached was exciting for me. It answered many questions and also gave rise to a source for new questions. I am among those who believe that the power of a study is not only in answering the research question and closing the subject but also in giving birth to different questions. In this respect, I think this study answered the initial question from the main source and captured this essence by witnessing a process. And I want to close this thesis with a saying that I love very much: Stories happen to those who know how to tell them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achim, V. (2004). *The Roma in Romanian history*. Central European University Press.

Adorno, T. W., & Horkheimer, M. (1997). *Dialectic of enlightenment* (J. Cumming, Trans.). Verso. (Original work published 1944)

Agar, M. H. (1996). *The professional stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography* (2nd ed.). Academic Press.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.

Balamir, S. (2023). The advantages of insider research: Exploring group dynamics and organizational culture. *Journal of Qualitative Research Methods*, 17(3), 41-48.

Bernard, H. R. (2011). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (5th ed.). AltaMira Press.

Boas, F. (1920). The methods of ethnology. *American Anthropologist*, 22(4), 311-321.

Boas, F. (1938). *The mind of primitive man* (Rev. ed.). New York: Macmillan.

Clébert, J. P. (1967). *The Gypsies*. Penguin Books.

DeWalt, K. M., & DeWalt, B. R. (2011). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers* (2nd ed.). AltaMira Press.

Dirks, N. B. (2001). *Castes of mind: Colonialism and the making of modern India*. Princeton University Press.

Doe, J. (2020). The future of anthropological research. *Journal of Anthropological Studies*, 35(2), 42-50.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*. Routledge.

Dumont, L. (1980). *Homo hierarchicus: The caste system and its implications*. University of Chicago Press.

Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes* (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Fonseca, I. (1995). *Bury me standing: The Gypsies and their journey*. Alfred A. Knopf.

Fraser, A. (1995). *The Gypsies*. Blackwell Publishers.

Fink, B. (1995). *The Lacanian subject: Between language and jouissance*. Princeton University Press.

Fırat, M. (2016). *Çingeneliği anlamının imkânı: Çingeneler üzerine sosyolojik bir araştırma (Malatya örneği)* [The possibility of understanding Gypsyhood: A sociological study on Gypsies (The case of Malatya)] (Doctoral dissertation). T.C. Fırat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Sosyoloji Anabilim Dalı, Elazığ.

Gaudio, R. (2006). *Coffeetalk: Starbucks and the Commodification of Romance*. In J. E. Fischer & M. J. Low (Eds.), *Anthropology in the Marketplace: Consumer Culture in a Globalizing World* (pp. 157-181). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.

Geertz, C. (1974). "From the native's point of view": On the nature of anthropological understanding. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 28(1), 26-45.

Glick Schiller, N. (2009). *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States*. Routledge.

Government of India Economic Survey. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/economicsurvey/>

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Hancock, I. (2002). *We are the Romani people*. University of Hertfordshire Press.

Hannerz, U. (1980). *Exploring the city: Inquiries toward an urban anthropology*. Columbia University Press.

Jones, A. (2018). The cultural significance of cleanliness: A review of anthropological perspectives. *Journal of Cultural Studies*, 32(4), 123-145.

Kenrick, D. (2007). *Historical dictionary of the Gypsies (Romanies)* (2nd ed.). The Scarecrow Press.

Lacan, J. (1991). *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: Book II: The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis 1954-1955* (S. Tomaselli, Trans.). New York: W.W. Norton & Company. (Original work published 1978)

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1966). *The Savage Mind*. University of Chicago Press.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1969). *The Raw and the Cooked: Introduction to a Science of Mythology*. Harper & Row.

Liegeois, J. P. (1994). *Roma, gypsies, travellers*. Council of Europe.

MacDougall, D. (2005). *The corporeal image: Film, ethnography, and the senses*. Princeton University Press.

Malinowski, B. (1922). *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Massey, D. S., & Denton, N. A. (1985). Spatial assimilation as a socioeconomic outcome. *American Sociological Review*, 50(1), 94-106.

Mayall, D. (2004). *Gypsy identities 1500-2000: From Egipcians and moon-men to the ethnic Romany*. Routledge.

Mead, M. (1935). *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*. William Morrow and Company.

Michael, S. M. (1999). *Untouchable: Dalits in modern India*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Mizigar, L. (2020). *My Romani heart: A memoir of spirituality, identity, and belonging*. Romani Press.

Omvedt, G. (1994). *Dalits and the democratic revolution: Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit movement in colonial India*. SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd.

Park, R. E. (1915). The city: Suggestions for the investigation of human behavior in the city environment. *American Journal of Sociology*, 20(5), 577-612.

Petrova, D. (2003). The Roma: Between a myth and the future. *Social Research*, 70(1), 111-161.

Pink, S. (2007). *Doing visual ethnography*. SAGE Publications.

Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530(1), 74-96.

Richardson, J. (2006). *Gypsies and Travellers: Empowerment and inclusion in British society*. Policy Press.

Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism*. Vintage Books.

Sarıkaya, P. (2019). *Toplumsal yansımaların öznesi olarak Çingener ve etnik damgala(n)ma [Gypsies as subjects of social reflections and ethnic stigmatization]* (Master's thesis). T.C. Aydın Adnan Menderes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Sosyoloji Anabilim Dalı, Aydın.

Singh, K. (1991). *The Rajputs of Rajasthan: A Glimpse of Medieval Rajasthan*. Jaipur: Rupa & Co.

Smith, A. (2020). *Gypsy Life: Tradition and Transformation*. New York, NY: Heritage Press.

Smith, J. (2010). *The history and culture of Jaipur*. New Delhi, India: Heritage Publishers.

Smith, J. (2015). Revisiting Mary Douglas: Cleanliness and social order in contemporary societies. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 88(2), 451-475.

Smith, J. (2019). Fieldwork in the 21st century: New challenges and opportunities. In R. Brown (Ed.), *Anthropological Perspectives on Globalization* (pp. 19-30). New York, NY: Routledge.

Smith, J. A. (2020). The cultural heritage of snake charming in India. *Journal of Cultural Studies*.

Steffen, W., Crutzen, P. J., & McNeill, J. R. (2007). The Anthropocene: Are humans now overwhelming the great forces of nature?

Stoller, P. (2012). *The Power of the Between: An Anthropological Odyssey*. University of Chicago Press.

Sutherland, A. (1975). *Gypsies: The hidden Americans*. Free Press.

Thapar, R. (1966). *A History of India*. Penguin Books.

Thorat, S., & Newman, K. S. (2007). Caste and economic discrimination: Causes, consequences and remedies. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(41), 4121-4124.

Tod, J. (1920). *Annals and antiquities of Rajasthan: Or the central and western Rajput states of India* (Vol. 1-2). Oxford University Press.

Toksoy, G. (2012) *Bellek İzleri Kurgudan Kurama Görüntüler*. Kalkedon Yayınları

"Tuncer, S. (2017). *Fotoğrafın Gör Dedığı: Aile Fotoğrafları Üzerine Bir Analiz Denemesi* [What the Photograph Says: An Analysis Essay on Family Photographs]. *Journal Name*, 9(1), 1-11."

Ward, C. (2001). The A, B, Cs of acculturation. In D. Matsumoto (Ed.), *The handbook of culture and psychology* (pp. 411-445). Oxford University Press.

World Health Organization. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.who.int>

APPENDICES

