CHAPTER I

Title:

"The origin of professional affiliations with the semi-nomadic tribes of the Northern India of (Punjab): The Bhands, the Sangis, the RASDHARIS, the BAZIGARS, based on their racial, cultural, traditional, genetic and lexical study".

Professionally, the semi-nomadic tribes of the Punjab are musicians, dancers, Jesters, story-tellers, ballad singers, buffoones, acrobates, rope-walkers, animal-trainers, called the Bhands, the Sangis, the RASDHARIS, the BAZIGARS, all belonging genetically or racially to the third category of the term DOM i.e. DUM/DOM/MIRASIS' clan of the Punjab. Every student of Gypsology is convinced about the Indian, especially the North - Indian Origin of the Gypsies - meaning - The hunters Gipseys themselves claim that

1 People and Races by BRUES. ALICE.M (P.283-284)

2 The Anthropology of the Body of SOUTHERLANDS, ANNE (P.371).

3 The Races of Europe by Ripley. W.Z. (P.368,419).
they are 'ASIATIC-INDIANS' in their ancestry and consider Punjab to be their home-land to which they call 'BAROTHAN'.

DIFFERENT THEORIES REGARDING THE ORIGIN OF THE GYPSYS:

Between the "Collected data of the researchers - regarding the racial and genetic affinities of these two groups of people i.e. the Gypsies and the Semi-nomadic tribes of the Punjab, there are different views. Scholars like MIKLOSICH, FREDRIAC S. HULSE, J. DENIKER, William Z. Ripley, ALICE - M - BRUCE, MOTRICHI DAVID, STEPHEN FUCHS, MANSEFIELD, ANNE - SOUTHERLANDS, Sir GRIRSON, LE-LAND, all have traced the Racial/genetic affinity between the Gypsies and the DUM/DOM - a low strata professionally performing class of the Indian Origin^4 (DOM being the general stock, the Original inhabitants of the Bihar - (Upper India) DUM, being a category of the DOM, who are professional actors and musicians of Punjab.

^4 People and Races by ALICE, M.BRUCE, Pages (283-284).

The Human Species by HULSE, FREDRIAC, S. P. 402.

The Races of Man by DENIKER, J. P. 425.
But a different report is given by the scholars like PROF. BLOCH, YULE and BATALLIARD who agree with FIRDAUSI'S account of SHAHNAMA and an ARABIAN HISTORIAN HAMZA OF ISPHAN, according to which, BAHRAM GAUR invited 20,000 musicians from an INDIAN King, SHAHKALA, for a national celebration - who are courted as ZOTT/LURIS/JATTS - in the ARABIAN DICTIONARY - AL - KAMUS; being of Indian Origin, who, after the BUZANTINE EMPIRE were Captured as prisoners and taken away to Greek - Europe, from where they dispersed to Northern, Western and Central Europe. 

The departure of the LURIS from LURISTAN is also recorded from the Hindukush region and the present day persians are regarded as the prodgeny of the LURIS. This theory shows the Gipsey's belonging to an upper - strata of a class, who, by profession are not the musicians/actors but "the agriculturists/ and the JATS: - 6 The DUMS had been the bards to the JATS as the Bhats are genealogist to the Rajputs. 7 A further research done by KOCHANOVSKY attributes the Gipsey's Origin to the Rajput

5 WANDERINGS of people by HADDON, A.C. P. 1,11.
6 The ABORIGINAL TRIBES OF INDIA by FUCHS, S. P. 1921.
7 A BIOANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE by BHALLA,V. P.4.
clan, who left India, as defeated soldiers, after the battle of TERIAN in 1192 A.D. JATS and Rajputs are genetically and ethnically regarded as equals, through they differ socially'. If this theory is followed then genetically/Racially/professionally, the DUMS and the Gypsies of Europe, have nothing in common, and if they are the JAT/Rajputs of the Northern region, then their affinities might be racial, but, professionally (as actors/dancers/musician) their affinities are only cultural, which means, if the gypsies show any trace of Indian folk – traditional Arts, they are by way of Observance and not by inheritance. Even the bio–anthropological and haemotological study places the gypsies at par with upper STRATA clans and not with the performing groups i.e. the DUM/MIRASIS'.

THE TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THESE PEOPLE LEFT INDIAN REGION ALSO VARY:

According to FIR DAUSI, the gypsies

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8 ON ETHNICITY and INDIAN ORIGIN of GYPSIES OF EASTERN Europe, by BHALLA, V. P.7.
left India as musicians during the 5the Century; While other accounts show their departure during the 7th or 8th/ Century during the ARAB - Expansions: the Taimerlaine's oppression, the TURKISH INVASIONS (1192 A.D.) are some of the circumstances and reasons for which they left their homeland; others being the suppression by the invaders, their brutalities and forced Convertibilities into Islam; or their being captured as prisoners and slaves and forced exiles by the Muslim invaders, they being the professional actor/artists and Islam forbade this activity; or they could have been a group of people forced by the prejudices of the 'Caste-system or as being branded a socially 'Out-Caste' people who had formed a group, but were not ready to leave their own customs, Caste, beliefs, rituals, rites, to which they adhered to, and, as a group left India for good. Not only this, the Lexical elements in the Gypsy's dialects, suggest different regions of India, to which they might have belonged to.

Philologists like GRILLMAN, BRYANT

9 A BIOANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE by Bhalla, V. (P.2).
and POTT find affinity between the SANSKRIT and the Gypsy dialect. While Turner finds it closer to the northern - Central Indian dialect, Miklosich finds it closer to the Dardic - dialect at the same time the gypsy dialect shows a variety of foreign words, taken from the dialects and languages of almost the whole world, though this can be regarded as a later addition, but in India, the different Lexical elements suggest their similarity to the northern region, North West and Central parts of India. But, who these people were, professionally, besides being Indians, is not certain. If their migrational routes are followed closely, it becomes quite obvious, why their traditional arts show an affect of almost the whole of European lore and a touch of different folk - traditions. Though their records show their maximum time being spent at Greece, PERSIA, Italy and Russia, they had been to every country of the world from which they had been exiled or demoted, from time to

9 A BIOANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE by Bhalla, V.. (P.2).

10 LINGUISTIC SURVEY OF INDIA VOL.XI, 1922, P.11.
Their Ritual dances have the traces of Syrian, Grecian, Persian, Spanish, French, Roman, Russian, Hungarian dances, their songs are a mixture of the folk songs of African, Spanish and Irish folk tunes, the church music, and their enactments are not without the impact of Italian commedia technique of improvisations, Roman Ludii - festivals, Intermedii, and the morality, miracle and mystery plays - but as a whole, less of Oriental or Eastern folk traditional forms impact is seen.

DUM/MIRASIS AS THE OUTCOME OF A MIXED RACE:

On the other hand, the DUMS of Northern India, who, according to one data collection of the gypsologists, are regarded as the ancestors of the gypsies/ROMS (though according to another data collection JATS/Rajputs/Hindu Khatris - are regarded as the ancestors of the gypsies/roms) but, the DUM/MIRASIS i.e. the professional performers of the Punjab are,

12 The TRIBAL WORLD and its Transformation by Singh, Bhupinder P. 267, 270.
themselves an outcome of a 'Mixed - Race' of the northern region. In this project, as a professional class of the performers, the MIRASIS/DUMS are the focus of our study, that too of, those chans who belong to the northern region of India. Their racial origin is also being studied. Who actually are the DUM/MIRASIS of the Punjab? Are they the original inhabitants of the Punjab or are they the exiled foreigners, who were branded as heathens or pagans by the christians after the extinction of the Roman empire, who, after being condemned, from their own homeland, came to Persia and, were, later on, called the Nāqāls, (as this is a Persian word and MIRASI is a word taken from ARABIC Vocabulary) who might have, via Iran, reached Indian regions, along with the traders, invaders and scholars, through the Khybar Pass. The church banned theatre in Rome so the performing actors and musicians were condemned as VAGARANTS, and if - these people left Rome to settle down in Persia, after the advent of Islam, as Islam also forbade these activities, under such circumstances, Indian regions, might have provided
them with shelter, as this region encouraged all forms of arts.

The Khybar, the Tochi, the KURRAM, the GOMAL and the BOLAN PASSES were the passes through which the Grecians, the Scynthians, and the Mughal invaders and traders came to India. The term DUM/MIRASIS suggest two races: DUMS belonging to the Hindu origin and MIRASIS/Naqqals having the Muslim Origin. The13 NAQQAL, a muslim name for the DUMS, is a persian word, the other synonyms being the Laooti, the BAKE: the TAMASHAGARS, AND THE MUMSIL. In Persia, they performed in groups as well as a one actor show, along with the Bazigars and the Qalandars. They performed - TAMSEEL - in group, which means to mimic, to imitate, and when only one actor performed - it was called TAM SEEL - INFRADII - later on, a performance with a religious fervour was called" ROZA - Khwan'. 14MIRASI IS AN ARABIC

13 NATAK SAGAR by Illahi, NOOR, OMAR, MUHAMAD, P. 126, 127
word from MIRAS i.e. to inherit or to get remunerations for a service e.g. a village headman, KARNAM or a dancing girl had a right to fees for their work i.e. MIRAS. In the Punjab, the MIRASIS were known by the instruments they played on like the RABABIS, the PAKHAWJIS, The Dholchi, the Naggarchi, the Dhadis. There is a possibility of the DUMs being only Hindus by origin, but due to ISLAMIC expansion they might had been Converted into Muslims and were given the persian name the Naggals, and the ARABIC CASTE of the MIRASIS. Historically speaking many DUMS were Converted into muslims by the request of AMIR - Khusro during Alaudeen Khiljee's time. The KAITHARA Naggals are originally KAYASTH, The Balaniyas Naggals are the Brahmins, the Gujjarattas are the Gujjars and the Nonenal Naggals are from the, Lunia Hindus.

They are all Hindu Castes and this indicates that their Caste is a heterogenous

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15 TRIBES & CASTES of the Central Provinces of India by RusSEL, R.V. & Lal, HIRA, P. 243.
community recruited from different Castes

THE BHANDS AS BELONGING TO THE MUGGALS AND THE SHEIKHS:

According to yet another research, SAYYAD HASSAN, a Courtier, during the time of Taimerlane, founded Bhand Caste, as he wrote a humorous poem, after which he was given the name of Bhana, though he himself was a Sayyad. This follows that Naqqals are both Sheikh and (MUGGALS) and are Shaiyas and SUNNIS. The converted Bhands have the recognized endogamous subcastes: The chenr and the Kashmiri. The Chenr Bhands hold their origin from the time of Taimerlane and Kashmiri Bhands are of recent origin - who were invited repeatedly by the King of Audh. NAZIR-UD-DIN-Haider.

According to some scholars the Bhand is a vernacular from Bhandika meaning a Jester or a Buffoon.
THE BHANDS AS HINDOOS BY RACE:

The Bhand was a person who created HASYA-RASA or laughter and performed at the times of the celebrations of Hindoo rituals. In the primitive - tribal rituals and - magic religious ceremonies, in the tribal dances, in the Vedic literature, in the suktas, in the Rig-Vedas, in the SURUCHI - JATKAS, in the GAMINI SAMYATA, and in the Sanskrit plays the Bhana provided oblique laughter. In the medieval treatises like NRITTNAVALI: SANGEET RATNAKAR, SANGIT SAMYASARA, references are there of performers akin to the Bhands. Some scholars believe that the Bhands were very much there, as performers, during the Indus-Valley-civilization. Bharat refers to PARMATTA, as the deity of the Hasya Rasa in his Natya-shastra. In the vedic times it was the duty of the Bhana/NAT to make people laugh. This shows the Origin of the Bhands/DUM from the Vedic times. On the basis of the collection of the above data this project is left

17 TRADITIONS OF INDIAN Theatre by VARADPANDE.M.L. P. 82-90.
with the following questions

(a) Whether the Bhands/DUM/MIRASIS, are Hindus by Race who had been performing from the Vedic times or, whether they were present even during the Indus-civilization?

(b) Whether they were the foreign tribes, banished from their Countries, as pagans and heathens, after the christian era established, and the Roman Empire extinguished, whether "they were a group of foreign performers, who settled in Persia, but after the advent of Islam, Came and settled in the Northern Regions of India, as Islam forbade all sorts of impersonations imitations and mimicry or whether they were the performers belonging to a mixed Race of Grecians and Romans, who came to India along with traders invadeers and the scholars.

BHANDS AS CONVERTED MUSLIMS:

There are other possibilities, too,
that of their being "Hindoos" by origin, but later on, their being converted into MIRASIS (MUSLIMS).

There is every possibility of the low-caste Hindoos, who were not given social status by their own people, so they embraced Islam, voluntarily and from Bhans, became the Mirasis or the Nagals.

On the basis of the above gathered data, which is based on different Research projects, it may be suggested here, that the European Gypsies left their homeland somewhere between fifth, Seventh and 12th Centuries, and the reasons for their migrations were either the foreign invasions or, their being a group belonging to the professionals (singers, dancers and actors) to low-caste whom their own people did not given any social recognition, or, they were sent as slaves/performers by the victorious foreign Kings to Persia from where, they migrated to other Countries, but the question still remains, whether they were the prodgeny
of the DOM/DUM clans of the Northern India, because - This is the only clan, who were professional performers of a low - caste - or whether they are the prodgeny of the Zots or JATS or the Rajputs. If so, then people of this Caste i.e. Zot/Jats/Rajputs, being by profession, agriculturists and fighters, not the performers of the Punjab, the Gypsies have nothing to do with the performing clans of the Punjab.

Lexically, Racially and genetically too it had been tried to prove, that European Gypsies donot have any affinity with this class i.e. the DUMS of the Punjab and professionally their art shows only cultural affinity' and not any inherited professional or Traditional affinity which is more, by way of observation than inheritance. And regarding the DUM/MIRASIS of the Punjab, historically speaking,

18 A BIOANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE BY BHALLA, V.P.
this is in itself, not a pure race as there had been constant incoming of the foreign invaders, and traders from abroad to the Northern Region and during the time of HARSH VARDHANA, traders and performers would go abroad by sea and land routes to Rome, Europe, JAVA Ceylon, SOPARA, Persia, Afghanistan, Cambay (647A.D.) and after the Roman EMPIRE, and AFTER THE ADVENT of Islam, the performing artists did come, from Rome to Persian lands and from Persian lands to the Northern region of India.

THE GYPSEYS HAVE NO RACIAL OR CULTURAL AFFINITY WITH THE PERFORMING CLANS OF THE PUNJAB:

On the basis of the above discussion it can be suggested that the European Gypsies have no racial affinity with the performing clans - which are semi - nomadic tribe of the Punjab i.e. the Bhands/The DUM/THE MIRASIS.
(b) Their affinity is more with the JAT/RAJPUTS' clans who are not a professionally performing clan, and are agriculturists and fighters by profession.

(c) The DUM/MIRASIS themselves belong to a Mixed-Race, but they are the professional performers, who resided in the Punjab, either as original inhabitants or they were a group of foreigners who were professional performers and got mixed with the DUM/Bhands clans, who lived here.

On the basis of the above collected data, this can be inferred, that Racially/generically and professionally, there is no inherited Racial affinity between the Gypsies of Europe nor is their any genetical/professional affinity between the two clans of performers, though it had been proved, that the Gypsies are the original inhabitants of
India, but they belong to a different race and not to the professional performers i.e. the DUM/DOM CLAN of the Punjab.