

# The Place of Video in Anthropology

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*Anthropology has mostly dismissed data concerning emotions as insignificant, overly subjective and beyond the grasp of scientific inquiry. Focusing on the expressive life of Andalusian gypsies, this article examines ways in which digital video enables researchers to effectively record and analyze individual and collective emotions. Video is not merely a way of recording data. Visual data do not simply “illustrate” ideas from fieldwork. Instead, the very activity of producing a video is an act of research in itself—it is central to the practice of a performative anthropology.* [Key words: Andalusia, Gypsies, emotions, digital video, performative anthropology]

## Introduction

Until recently, anthropologists did not seriously consider emotions as accessible information. Instead, they deemed emotions an insignificant and excessively subjective part of a group's social behavior and therefore impossible to investigate scientifically. However, digital video has provided anthropologists with a sensitive and accurate tool for recording bodily expressions of individual and collective emotions. Video recording permits anthropologists to conceive new fields of exploration under the name *performative anthropology*.

Starting with my own work with Andalusian gypsies using video and, in particular, slow motion, here I examine certain methods for recognizing the importance of the role emotions play in social structure.

The contribution of digital video to research is seldom discussed in the field of general anthropology. Indeed, its heuristic value is rarely taken seriously. In anthropological research, film instead has the same status as an illustration, a drawing or a photograph that complements text in a book. Ethnologists consider filmed images as a means to highlight ideas from fieldwork, ideas which are otherwise set down in notebooks and published in manuscript form. They do not envision producing a film as research in its own right. The minor role of such images has therefore weakened the potential development of visual anthropology.<sup>1</sup>

Traditional anthropology is based on a body of observations believed to lack ambiguity: the institutionalized documentation of laws and rituals along with “indigenous terminology” are meant to provide irrefutable proof of the facts. Yet research techniques using filmed images challenge this assertion because with film ethnological investigation becomes more intimate and spontaneous. Above all, film techniques trouble traditional research because they amass a large quantity of mutually contradictory facts, or facts that anthropologists do not happen to talk about, whether by intention or oversight. Visual documents therefore make possible analyses of an entirely new field of exploration. Using filmed images allows for observing both individual and collective emotions. By revealing an emotional life that has long been ignored, this type of approach encourages a revision of anthropological notions that once seemed solidly established.<sup>2</sup>

## The Gypsies

I witnessed firsthand how emotional nuances might be captured on film while working on a book about Spanish Andalusian gypsies (Pasqualino 1998a). Ethnologists traditionally find this population perplexing because of its apparent lack of organization on the institutional level. It attaches no importance to hierarchy nor to an organized system of relationships, but it lends itself particularly well to performative analysis (Pasqualino 1999).

Gypsies assert and reinforce their collective identity during *juergas*, which are festive family reunions. *Juergas* are punctuated by singing and dancing performances; sound and gesture hold fundamental meaning, despite a perceived sense of confusion. The role of gypsies' emotional life seems so fundamental in *juergas* that I propose inverting the traditional function attributed to ritual performance: rather than being perceived simply as updating and reinforcing a pre-existing social model, the emotional aspects of society should be regarded as decisive acts, as qualities fundamental in building the identity of the given group.

Videos of gypsy *juergas*, shot in slow-motion, reveal a succession of microevents that would otherwise escape observation. Through film, therefore, I establish the fact that during each performance social connections within the community are reactivated in a sequence of metaphorical positions that express a common attitude toward the nongypsy world. The singers' bodies tense up increasingly in a combative position, and then relax, as if people were abandoning themselves. The bodies are also expansive, with heads held high and arms outstretched, due to a unique vocal technique in which gypsies seem to hold their song, their breath, inside their bodies. Little by little, emptied out and lacking air, they seem to collapse. By laying bare their physical decline, gypsy singers express the misery their community suffers, while at the same time feeling empowered with a kind of moral superiority (Pasqualino 1994, 1997).

Gypsies believe that the highest quality singers have inevitably undergone great suffering. When evoking the exceptional talent of deceased singers, gypsies will brag not about their musical talent but about their great pain. Suffering is at the core of the gypsy's being and their art reveals its true nature. When a singer is shaken by violent torment, his or her voice is "sullied," becoming hoarse and harsh, evoking the sound of sobbing.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, far from the theatrical effects of a lyrical repertoire, gypsy song is much closer to the spoken word. Freed of all "feeling of shame," a gypsy singer seems to be confessing to the public. Singing "true" thus implies that the singers openly, compellingly, put all their pain on display. While this feeling of shared pain is not mentioned in traditional research because gypsies are loathe to speak about it, it becomes entirely obvious in filmed documents.

## On Authenticity

In Andalusia, the authenticity of gypsy identity is a controversial subject. Demanding the exclusivity of the "Andalusian soul," the *payos* (non-gypsies) argue with gypsies over the right to claim paternity of the "true flamenco." In fact, the interpretation of flamenco that gypsies themselves consider the "most authentic"—that is, the one used in family reunions—depends, despite their denial, on the outsider's gaze. Through a subtle play of influences, flamenco's success on the international level has not only renewed local activity but has also profoundly transformed the gypsies' repertoire and performances. Among other people, Camarón de la Isla, considered a legitimate heir of "gypsy flamenco" and a show-business celebrity, has brought about change to the "traditional style" by introducing more commercial variations, even to the extent of using electric instruments. The public's infatuation with flamenco has therefore led to changes in local repertoire and interpretations, all the while nourishing and reinforcing gypsy culture.

It is also possible to question the influence of the feeling of suffering, as expressed in 19th- and early 20th-century literature on gypsy culture, which reinforces the image of the marginal, wandering, poverty-stricken hero. Although it is generally recognized that Garcia Lorca was influenced by gypsy flamenco, it is often omitted that he also served as a reference and source of inspirations for gypsy authors.

Given this reciprocity, one might ask if the image of gypsies as tormented souls—as expressed through flamenco songs—was directly inspired by Lorca and his traveling cohorts. Since the 19th century, these cohorts have defined gypsies through the prism of libertarian romanticism. With picturesque literature and painting and, later, through films and advertisements, this romanticism has led to an archetypal image of gypsy flamenco so rich that it has actually helped to transform gypsy culture.

A last example illustrating the difficulty of separating the authentic from the fake is the behavior of the Andalusian gypsies from Grenada. When tourists show curiosity about them they attempt to stage their most "typical" performance: they pretend to live in grottoes and dress in phony, vividly colorful costumes that, in

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fact, have nothing to do with their usual clothes. They reconstruct an image inspired by operettas (such as *Car-men*) and based on popular stereotypes from gypsy folklore. This results in a paradox: forced to play a cheap, shoddy version of themselves to make a living, they find their feelings of 'gypsyhood' intensified. What was false becomes true; the authentic and the artificial seem to play off one another. As Umberto Eco expresses it in his *Travels in Hyper Reality* the "completely real is confused with the completely fake" (1985:6-7). As a result, any filmmaker striving for detached realism can be confronted by a number of thorny obstacles.

### Possible Traps in Staging Films

Although one can approach gypsies' emotions through video better than through oral investigation, in fact their remains the possibility of certain traps. In other words, capturing a performance onscreen in an "authentic" manner still presents certain problems. For instance, the filmmaker's mere presence can potentially destroy the atmosphere. Much of the time, individuals lose their spontaneity in front of the camera and dramatize their gestures and attitudes; their movements become distorted and theatrical. Gypsies often give in to caricatures of themselves, creating roles they think are expected of them.

While I was making my film, this phenomenon was demonstrated repeatedly. One example occurred during a pilgrimage to Fregenal de la Sierra in Extremadura (Pasqualino 2000-2001). Gathering together in small groups around a campfire, the gypsies began joyous singing every time I approached them with my camera. Although they appeared to be acting spontaneously, the situation became entirely contrived. In a more or less conscious manner, they took up the archetypal attitude of nomads, living in nature's midst, happy and carefree whereas in reality they were sedentary and urban city-dwellers suffering great financial hardship. Therefore, the filmed sequences recorded an artificial reality.

Context and surroundings also have great importance; they are never neutral or of minor significance. Even when protagonists become absorbed enough in what they are doing to forget the camera's presence, a performance filmed in its "natural" environment can lead, paradoxically, to distorting reality. In Andalusia, such problems occurred mostly when I was filming gypsy singers in the *peñas* (flamenco circles). Their concerts take place in an artificial setting inspired by operettas—a stage adorned with a table, a few rustic-looking chairs, and a blacksmith's anvil in front of a backdrop painted with a pastoral theme—geared toward tourists seeking

exotic experiences. But in reality, when gypsies sing and dance alone together, the setting is usually quite banal.

Problems with surroundings are so numerous when making a documentary that, paradoxically, one solution for finding authenticity might be to entirely abandon the surrounding context. Filming gypsy performances in a studio, far from any and all décor—that is, placing the singers and the public in front of a neutral background (white or black, for instance)—can create the best conditions for concentrating on the action. In addition, a plain setting most closely approximates the poverty and austerity of the singer's daily environment. The absence of surroundings might also be more consistent with the flamenco ethic, in which the singer wages a solitary struggle with his or her own voice. Filming in a studio can allow a visual investigation that breaks with the narrative structure of classic documentation, while re-establishing a focus on intimacy and the language of emotion.

### The *Saetas*

I chose a different method to show the expression of gypsy suffering in a film on Andalusian *saetas* (Pasqualino 2003b). These are songs sung during Holy Week to statues of Christ and the Virgin Mary which have been placed on luxurious parade floats. Dramatic and mysterious, alive with flamenco tones, *saetas* are "cries of pain," a kind of prayer sung and performed atop a high balcony or in the street among crowds of people.

Holy Week lends itself particularly well to researching collective passions. As an early outpost for Christianity after the lands had been recaptured by the Moors, Andalusia is still marked by a heightened religious attitude. Self-punishment plays an integral role in the community's manifestations of piety; the ordeals people endure can lead to atonement and purification. During the processions of the Holy Saint, *costaleros* (float bearers) struggle to carry on their shoulders objects of crushing weight, voluntarily inflicting brutal wounds on their bodies. This ritual, which is an act of submission to the divine power, is meant to achieve atonement for the congregation's sins during the previous year. Gypsies refuse to participate in this *payo* ritual, which they consider dishonorable. Instead they inflict other punishments on themselves: abstinence, clothing-related constraints (such as wearing the same clothing for weeks or months) or grueling physical challenges such as pilgrimages crawling or on their knees.

Despite their apparent similarities—the desire for self-inflicted injuries—these rituals have very different meanings for *payos* and gypsies. For *payos*, they repre-

sent an exceptional act that goes beyond their regular existence whereas for gypsies they are a kind of paroxysmal expression of their impoverished life. For gypsies, self-inflicted ritual suffering is intended as a prolongation of their daily suffering. It sustains the memory of a past marked by misery, contempt and persecution, and perpetuates their present despair (unemployment, drug trafficking, repression). Self-awareness prevents gypsies from interpreting these punishments as individual acts of penitence. Gypsies collectively perceive themselves as suffering more deeply than payos; they consider suffering central to their gypsy identity. For Andalusian gypsies, Christ, who is portrayed in a theatrical manner as a imprisoned or crucified statue, is the most popular figure in the Christian model. Even though the Church considers gypsy behavior blasphemous, gypsies follow a statue of Christ down the street during Holy Week, dancing and singing to him their songs of pain.

## The Film

My film on this subject was made over a period of ten years, after two years of investigation that led to the publication of a book. I did not intend to duplicate the book's conclusions with the film. Those conclusions were linked to a rational explanation of the cathartic function of the ritual. Rather, I intended the film to deal with understanding the *expressive substance* that animated gypsy ritual. For the film, I chose to interview four gypsies, talented singers with contrasting personalities. I planned first to isolate the individuals then resituate their emotions in the context of the ritual drama lived collectively during Holy Week.

I interviewed the four protagonists on general themes and subjects not directly related to Holy Week, such as male-female relationships, conflicts with payos, financial difficulties, sentimental problems, etc. I also questioned them about their perception of the afterlife and their feelings about saetas. I interviewed singer Maria Solea, the sister of the famous Terremoto de Jerez. Although she had once been a vivacious, flourishing musician, she was now widowed, blind, and nearly prostrate in her apartment. Another gypsy, Diego Agujetas, worked as a mechanic and demonstrated a lack of pathos. During a visit to his country house he spoke of Christ without affectation, as if speaking about a friend. With his tall, emaciated silhouette, his thin face, bulging eyes and nervous gestures, another gypsy, Capullo de Jerez presented a more "typically" gypsy profile. His remarks, which I recorded while we were walking the streets, shifted incessantly and without transition from prosaic observations to mystical speculations about life

and death. Finally, Periquin, a professional guitarist and longtime friend, permitted me to interview him in the context of his daily family life, the television humming, his wife doing housework, his children playing in the corner. In the film, this long opening is intended to situate the saetas sung during Holy Week in gypsies' everyday lives.

My goal was to associate incursions into gypsies' intimate lives with a montage that suggested a certain number of free associations between the film's core subject—which was, strictly speaking, how to interpret the saetas—and the context of the gypsies' profane and religious lives. I wanted to create cinematic tension that would feed the clashes between the different characters while, at the same time, associating words and images with a metaphorical link.

## The Problem with Voiceover

Amid all the confusion of Holy Week, it is difficult to reconstruct the gypsy way of being. Gypsies' emotions are communicated in barely discernible ways: they are expressed in silences, in exchanged glances, in body positions, in a battery of details that seem completely insignificant. I believed that the use of a voiceover narration in my film might overpower such fragile details and therefore decided not to use one. I also wanted to avoid the use of any "staged" footage. Instead I tried to "catch" the voices and attitudes of my protagonists unawares. The film sought to capture the gypsies' intimacy, their power, their happiness and their pain, as sincerely as possible, honestly and directly, and with empathy. Rather than attempting to describe the structure of a ritual, the film was meant to recreate the gypsies' states of mind. As a result of my experience filming, I was able to analyze gypsy social reality much more profoundly than I could have done had I had simply been taking notes in a book.

## Facial Expression

To re-establish the passionate state that animates the singers, I employed certain cinematographic practices: pauses, cropping and close-ups. I also filmed as many scenes as I could in slow-motion. All of these techniques allowed me to highlight emotions considered essential by gypsies themselves.

Among the new investigative tools that video filmmaking offers to anthropology, facial expressions are extremely valuable as they offer the most faithful reflection of emotions. Eisenstein said that a close-up of

a face allowed comprehension of a “pathetic” dimension that was particular to ecstasy. For Deleuze, in a cinematographic work:

First, there is great variety of facial close-ups: sometimes contour, sometimes line; sometimes a single face, sometimes several; sometimes in a series, sometimes simultaneously. They can include a background, notably when there are fields of deep focus. But in all these situations, the close-up has the same power to seize the image from spatial/temporal coordinates, to let pure emotion emerge in its own right (Deleuze 1983:137, *my translation*).

When filming the Christ statue on the cross in my documentary on gypsy saetas I successively cropped different parts of his body and face, obtaining a vision through fragments—bruises on the thigh or chest, hair undone, tears. This deconstruction of the gaze breaks with a classical approach to religious belief, suggesting a reflection on the relationship to the body in the context of Catholic ritual. In another film session, a man spoke about the things that profoundly touched him: his passionate relationship to his mother, God, the afterlife. Moving from the singer’s torso, I filmed his eyes and mouth in slow-motion; there, I found a way to express the gravity of his words, beyond the words themselves. Such devices, whether or not they are borrowed from cinema fiction, can be useful not only as artistic expressions but also as a means to create a deeper understanding of social facts.

## Two Filming Techniques

### 1) The Continuous Shot

Just as close-ups and slow-motion sequences can facilitate observations of intimate situations, so too another type of sequence, the continuous shot or long-take—in which lengthy events are filmed, uninterrupted in real time—can be very effective. In classic documentary cinema, the camera operator’s objectivity is usually guaranteed by the use of shots of modest duration and a minimum of camera movement. A feeling of detachment seems to increase through working with an average rhythm in terms of filming and editing, which, to an extent, become routine, so the spectators do not feel they have been manipulated by special effects such as quick cuts or unusual camera angles. Evidence of the camera operator’s intervention—the ethnologist’s presence on screen, or voice in the audio track, or the visibility of the recording technology—is eliminated to the

greatest possible extent. Ideally, the camera operator’s existence should be completely forgotten. For this reason, a continuous shot is considered too subjective because inevitably the spectator becomes overly conscious of the camera operator’s presence.

However, several recent works have shown that this unspoken rule can, in fact, be positively turned around. In his 2004 documentary *Plan-séquence d’une Mort Criée chez les Tsiganes de Transylvanie* [*Uninterrupted Sequence of a Corpse being Called by Transylvanian Tziganes*], Filippo Bonini Baraldi (2004) used a camcorder to film a mourning scene for one uninterrupted hour.<sup>4</sup> In a small room, in front of the dead body, Tzigane violinists play music that becomes increasingly slow and cheerful while the women build up to funeral lamentations. Depending on the group, certain mourning scenes are commemorated by excellent violinists but few female mourners; in other cases, musicians are few and weeping mourners numerous. Naturally, a mourning ceremony is considered successful when there are both talented musicians and numerous mourners. The objective is to communicate powerful emotion to the public.<sup>5</sup>

In the film, Baraldi studied the relationship between shifts in the musician’s rhythm and the emotional tension visible in their faces. The filmmaker realized that both the violinists and mourners found themselves in the position of “performers,” without the possibility of establishing equal relationships with one another. Coverage of the event was not, of course, comprehensive, as the actual ceremony lasts two days and two nights. However, recording an hour-long, continuous shot permitted the director to recognize three distinct phases, which returned in waves: 1) the violinists undertake a solemn homage to the dead; 2) they seek to magnify the public’s emotion; and 3) the mourners collapse, sobbing.

In the last phase, emotion can be falsified or ritualized, or may lead to genuine feeling. As if lying in wait for emotions, a handheld camera, placed on the director’s shoulder, remains frozen on the faces, following their expressions, and then leaves, often returning to capture mood change. An unhurried traveling motion underlines the solemn tone of the ceremony. At first, the spectators are under the impression that the scene is rather monotonous but little by little their sensitivity is heightened by the film’s deliberate rhythm and the concentration and intensity it creates. Progressively, viewers cannot help but be impressed by the development of the emotional climate.

The scenes are filmed in real time, but the actual time of the ceremony feels as if it has been modified, creating an effect of temporal expansion. Although linked to

what appears as a kind of anecdotal anthropology, the use of uninterrupted sequences reveals microevents and imposes a new conception of fieldwork.

## 2) Slow-motion

The intuitive approach of certain artists can constitute sources of inspiration and reflection for anthropologists. The use of slow-motion, for instance, can be considered advantageous and inspired by certain artistic expressions, notably those of the video artist Bill Viola.

The scene filmed by Baraldi strangely evokes other noteworthy lamentation figures filmed during the same period by Viola. In his film cycle, *The Passions*, which was first presented at the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2003, Viola presented the silent bodies and faces of actors, filmed in slow-motion with a black background under theatrical lighting (Viola 2003). The artist's work consists of recording transformations on the faces of men and women experiencing increasing confusion, the cause of which remains unknown. The people pose in front of the camera, at first serene, then gripped by anguish. The camera records a series of expressions moving from simple compassion to intense despair, recalling the mourners in the Tzigane funerals. The filmed images follow the build-up of emotion step-by-step. While Baraldi uses one continuous shot, Viola uses slow-motion to reveal each step of the physical transformation. The spectator is confronted with a situation captured in real time and, at the same time, with an emotion perceived as being outside time. The extremely precise focus of the images along with the film's exaggerated slow rhythm produce an effect of hyperreality. Here, the artist's technique joins the social scientist's intentions in that the display of passion is captured on film and, regardless of the technique (slow-motion or continuous shot), playing on an unusual slowness. This manipulation of the passage of time produces a perceptual displacement in the spectator that encourages introspective contemplation. This rupture with the usual time in which one sees images on film disturbs the filmic narration. Paradoxically, the reduction of information permits a new gaze, one that is more attentive to the language of emotions.

In the introduction, I posed the question of whether digital video constituted a veritable tool for understanding social groups in anthropological research. While film cannot substitute for oral investigation, the examples cited here are sufficient to demonstrate that video can be indispensable in the study of social situations that transcend what can be heard, that deal with the nonverbal. In addition, the camera has become more accessible, thanks to the development of camcorders. Lightweight

and effective, they permit a kind of observation in intimate situations that the ethnologist would be unable to grasp so precisely with merely a pencil in hand. The essential advantage of a video document over the classic notebook is, in fact, its capacity to record the most fleeting bodily expressions. Such material constitutes vital research. It opens up possibilities for new perspectives on research, a domain that could be named, in keeping with the writings of David MacDougall, performative anthropology, that is, an anthropology refocused on the analysis of performance (1998:81–84).

The cross-reference to the video artist Viola is one example of the interest anthropologists should have in contemporary artists' experimentations. The association of intuitive and empirical methods opens up the possibility for a renewal and a broadening of conventional fields of observation. In my video documentary, the use of slow-motion permitted me to show the central function of ritual actions and individual emotions in the constitution of a given social group. As gypsies further their feelings of belonging to a community during family gatherings, my filming of the juergas reveal the fundamental role of feelings which are shared during singing and dancing performances. These gypsy performances are not, as many have claimed, the obligatory manifestations of a given social organization. On the contrary, they make up its very foundation; they *are* the foundation of pattern and change. On the theoretical level, thanks to discoveries made possible by visual research, here we find a reversal, and in it, the potential to overturn the perspectives of many anthropologists.

## Notes

- 1 The difference between written and visual approaches has at times been interpreted as the contrast between saying and showing. Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson serve as an excellent illustration of this idea, with respect to their different viewpoints about the meaning of photographic materials assembled in Bali. Mead saw the photographs, first and foremost, as the impassive, purely technical output of a neutral recording device; and second, she perceived them on a more theoretical level, as a basis for interpretation. Nevertheless, in *Balinese Character*, photographs are not used as raw material for investigation but to substantiate earlier ethnographic research. As in films later produced by Mead, which were accompanied by a running narrative, she systematically interpreted images through detailed field notes (Bateson and Mead 1942). Bateson, however, considered photos instruments of knowledge from the moment of their very first impression. These alternative positions preceded the two modes of narration, written and visual, with the first seen as rational and the second as

subjective (Brand, Mead and Bateson 1977, MacDougall 1999:290–292). This basis for debate regarding the role of images in understanding social facts has rarely been discussed. In general, anthropologists have used photography and film to corroborate “truths” regarding ethnographic experience.

- <sup>2</sup> The question of images’ scientific role in understanding social facts has often been examined. From the end of the Second World War to the 1960s and ‘70s, the horrors of war, then the destruction of rural zones, fed the systematic need to assemble images in order to preserve the collective memory. In 1952, a film-research institute was expressly created in Göttingen, Germany, to create a film archive. During this period, documentary cinema had a single mission: to transmit to future generations a culture that was disappearing. The use of images with heuristic goals appeared by the 1960s. Seeking to discover the “elementary strategies of social interactions”—that is, the appropriate mechanisms to guarantee a group’s cohesion—the ethnologist Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt filmed populations presumed to be “primitive” and to have no cultural links in common (in Oceania, the Amazon, Africa).

To distinguish common traits and cultural differences, Eibl-Eibesfeldt recorded the play of emotional expressions on the physiognomy—anger, fear, joy—using a motorized camera that allowed him to photograph rapidly. His cinematography complies with the rules for the films produced for the Göttingen Film Institute. They were intended to contribute to a research database by exemplifying work that is utterly devoid of subjectivity. However, the scientific value of such an approach remains questionable. It is no longer acceptable to demand that a sequence of images monitor a “reality” objectively. In fact, such an approach betrays tendentious ideologies. On the one hand, Eibl-Eibesfeldt, applying methods for studying animal behavior, suggested that the populations he was studying were closer to animalism than the Occidental population from which he had come. On the other, the Göttingen Film Institute’s prescriptions furthered a folkloric approach, presupposing that traditions chronicled in the archives made up systems of autonomous signification—that is, detached from all context: social, economic, political, historic, et cetera.

Despite their theoretical slant, these approaches remain interesting, above all because they consider film solely as a mode of anthropological observation. Dedicated to explaining different modes of social organization, conventional anthropology struggles with how to deal with movements made during rituals. Visual recording offers a much more sensitive approach than oral investigations, which have led to certain omissions in anthropological descriptions. The idea that an anthropological revival could come from visual methods has begun to emerge. First, certain situations take on new meaning when seen in film. Second, the potential discourse that is possible between film and written text can introduce different ways of observing and analyzing for ethnologists.

- <sup>3</sup> Despite all the reciprocal influences, payo (non-gypsy) flamenco and gypsy flamenco differ in many ways. To my

mind, these differences establish how Andalusian gypsies distinguish themselves from their neighboring payos, objectively and subjectively. In payo flamenco, a song must be melodic and harmonious. Elocution is meticulous, respecting the importance of lyrics that describe the bucolic landscapes and concrete situations. In contrast, lyrics in gypsy songs contain few detailed descriptions, instead expressing emotional states. The rhythm can also reject musical canons and allow for much improvisation. Certain vocals are thus comparatively lengthy, while the words can be peppered with syllabic ornaments, impromptu pauses, cuts and unintelligible sounds. In addition, the *macho*, the last verse of the gypsy song, is performed with a choked voice. Gypsy singers lose their breath and create surprising effects by very suddenly interrupting their song. They aspire to express strong emotion and create dramatic effects, preferring hoarse, even broken voices to the payos’ lyrical tones. As a result, their songs arouse neither the nostalgic feeling of payo flamenco nor the bittersweet feeling of Portuguese *fado*. They are inspired by despair and rage. While certain writers claim the gypsies are victims of genetic atavism (their vocal cords being less flexible and more rigid than those of the payos), they feel their “dis-harmonious” interpretations evoke the suffering their people have endured (Pasqualino 2003a).

- <sup>4</sup> Baraldi’s film received an award at the ethnographic film festival held at the Museum of Man in Paris, 2005.

- <sup>5</sup> Participants in the mourning were not only family members; all Tziganes can attend funerals. While some participate solely for the sake of the music, many express the desire to share the family’s emotions.

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