

CEYLİN AKÇİN | DERİN OKUR | ÖMÜR TURGUT | SELİN BOZKURT | ZEYNEP EMEKSİZ

# THAIPUSAM

## BURDEN OF FAITH

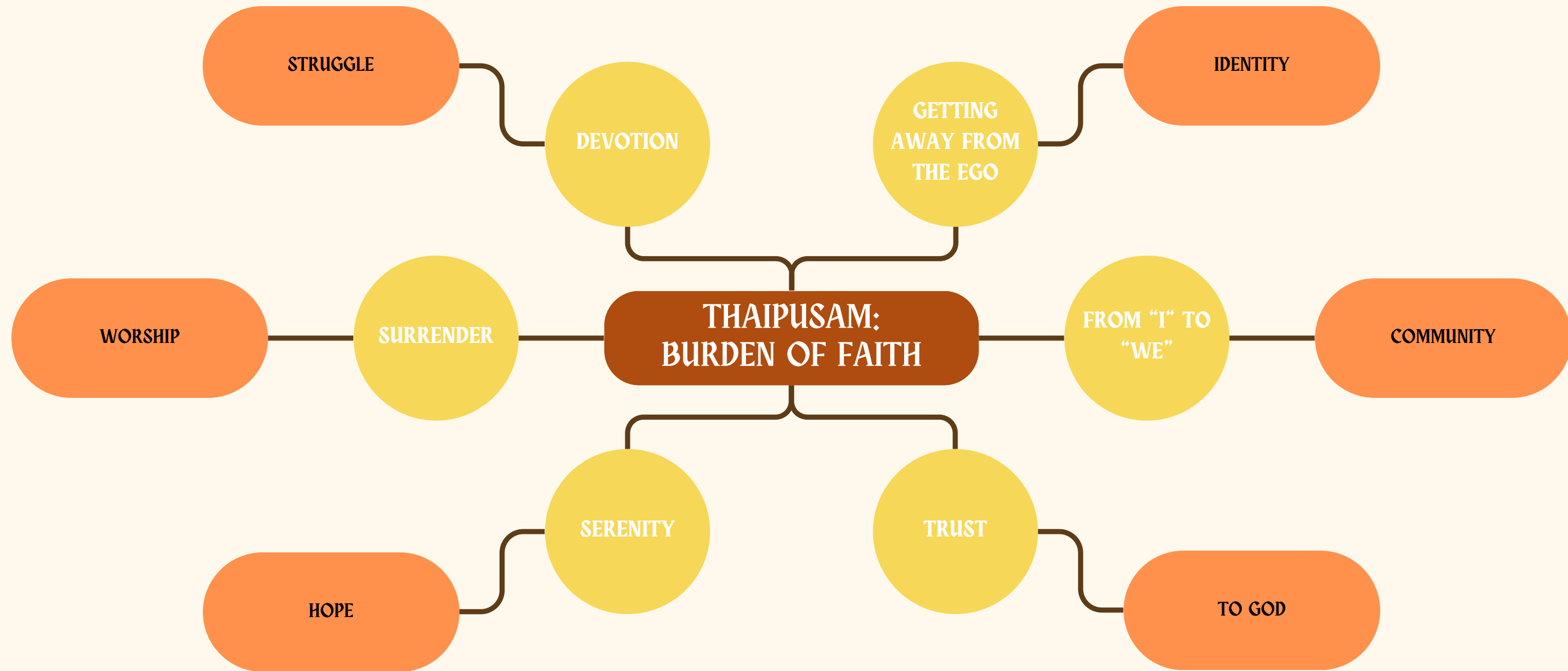
*“Our graduation project, our first  
dive, our discover”*

*Advisors: Alper Kırklar, Tulga Ozan*



İstanbul  
Bilgi Üniversitesi  
İletişim Fakültesi

# THEME & MAIN IDEA



# AIMS & OBJECTIVES

**“WE DID NOT INTEND TO SPEAK ABOUT; JUST SPEAK NEARBY”**

- To explore multicultural coexistence within sacred practices
- To implement Trinh T. Minh-ha's "speaking nearby" approach rather than "speaking about"
- To maintain ethical positioning while documenting intimate religious practices
- To balance observational distance with participatory engagement
- To explore emotional circulation during rituals through affect theory,



# Narrative Format / Storytelling Style

## Documentary Definition:

RE-(Creative treatment of actuality) - Objective recording becomes subjective interpretation

## Why Poetic Hybrid?

Lack of expertise led us to avoid objective narration. When assumptions didn't match experience, we centered subjective experience instead

## Our Goal

Recreating what we felt - Poetic projection of Thaipusam. Transforming failure into opportunity



**Limitation as creative catalyst -  
Sensory truth instead of objective  
truth through artistic style**

# The Research Phase & Sources



# Sources

## Documentaries

- The Journey to Thaipusam: The Piercing, the People, and the Passion
- "Thaipusam" A Devotee's Journey
- A Thaipusam Procession in the 1960s
- Reassemblage From the Firelight to the Screen ( T.Minh-ha Trinh, 1982)

## Books & Articles

- Introduction to Documentary, Bill Nichols
- The Cultural Politics of Emotion, Sara Ahmed
- Strange Encounters, Sara Ahmed
- Thaipusam in Malaysia: A Hindu Festival Misunderstood?
- Strong Spiritual Engagement and Subjective Well-Being: A Naturalistic Investigation of the Thaipusam Festival
- Thaipusam in Malaysia: A Hindu Festival in the Tamil Diaspora
- The Psychobiology of Trance: I: Training for Thaipusam - Ronald C. Simons, Frank R. Ervin, Raymond H. Prince, 1988
- Karupiah, P. (2022). Nostalgia of Thaipusam Celebration During the Covid-19 Pandemic.



# Interviews



Donishia and Kumaran  
Tamil Worshippers



Jaya K. Vel  
Graphic Designer and  
Software company  
owner interested in  
“Murugan” visuals



Malay Worshippers



# Roles & Responsibilities of Group Members



**PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY:** Zeynep Emeksiz, Ömür Turgut, Derin Okur,  
Ceylin Akçin, Selin Bozkurt

**PROJECT ADVISOR:** Alper Kırklar, Tulga Ozan

**EDITOR:** Ömür Turgut, Selin Bozkurt

**SCRIPT WRITER:** Selin Bozkurt

**CAMERA: A Cam:** Ömür Turgut **Osmo:** Derin Okur **Drone:** Selin Bozkurt

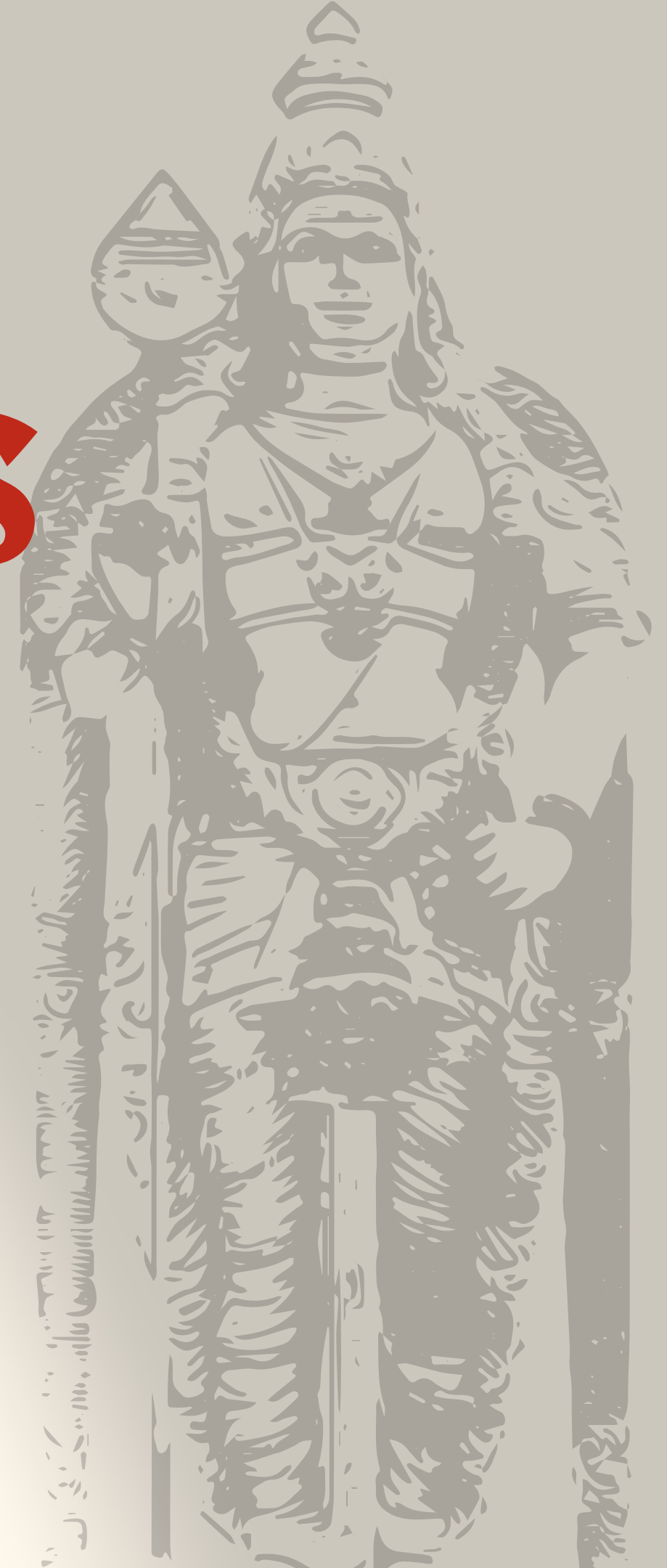
**COLOR:** Ömür Turgut

**SOUND & MUSIC:** Ömür Turgut, Selin Bozkurt (assisted by SUNO AI)

**PRODUCTION ASSISTANS:** Zeynep Emeksiz & Ceylin Akçin

**SOCIAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATION:** Ceylin Akçin

# Self-assessments & Reflections



# Strengths/Weaknesses and Opportunities

## Weaknesses:

- Limited personal experience with camera or editing
- Risk of misunderstanding cultural sensitivities in the narrative
- Lack of a fixer
- Challenging conditions during production
- Limited time

## Strengths:

- **Effective Crisis Management:**  
We quickly adapted and recovered from unexpected issues during filming.
- **Creative Freedom from Amateur Spirit:** Our non-professional background gave us flexibility and boldness in visual choices.
- **Rapid Technical Development:**  
We quickly learned Premiere Pro and handled large files efficiently during post-production.

## Opportunities:

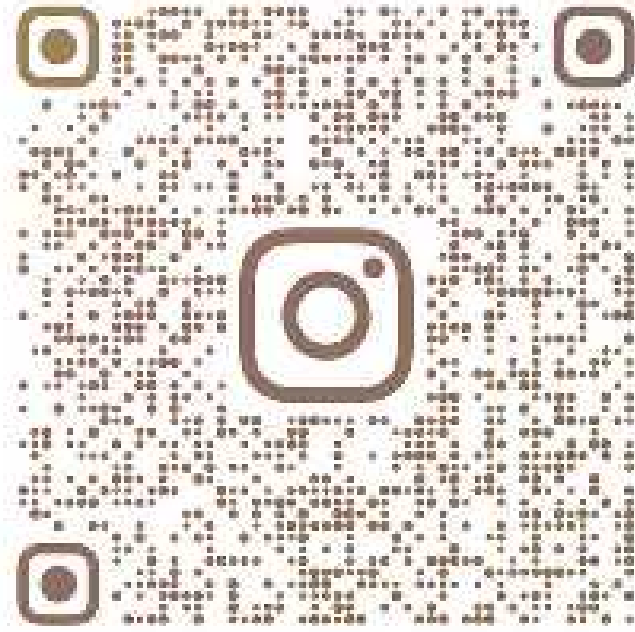
- Learning to adapt quickly under logistical and environmental difficulties
- First-hand experience working without a fixer
- Practical thinking skills
- Improved communication and time management skills

# Project Partners

- **Before The World Changes Travelers Society (Dünya Değişmeden Gezginler Derneği)**
- **İstanbul Bilgi University Faculty of Communication (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi)**



# Project Links:

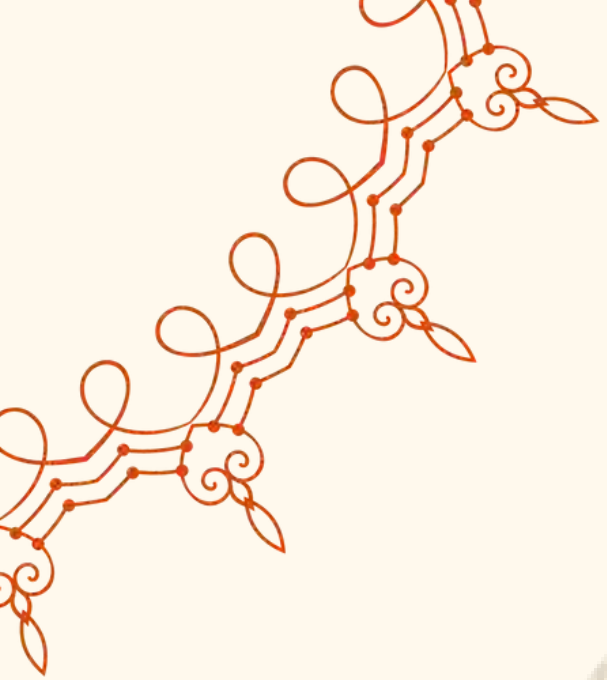


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- [https://www.canva.com/design/DAGXUIXts0s/vCQyyiXjN\\_G40e2xMvSkAA/edit?utm\\_content=DAGXUIXts0s&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAGXUIXts0s/vCQyyiXjN_G40e2xMvSkAA/edit?utm_content=DAGXUIXts0s&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton) □

- [https://www.instagram.com/dd\\_gezginler\\_dernegi?igsh=M7ZycDdyanh6cGx1cw%3D%3D&utm\\_source=qr](https://www.instagram.com/dd_gezginler_dernegi?igsh=M7ZycDdyanh6cGx1cw%3D%3D&utm_source=qr)





**Thank You!**

