

Critique

Leita Kaldi's "Alternative Education for the Rom" briefly states the plight of Gypsies in the second paragraph:

The Rom face an agonizing dilemma today. Either they will persist as urban nomads, in mobile ghettos, in enclaves of poverty and in prisons, or their cultural traditions will have to evolve to enable them to share in the benefits of this society, to develop a better material and social existence. Education is a basic bridge into contemporary U.S. society and a pioneering effort has been made in Seattle, Washington, to encourage the Rom to step onto that bridge.

Out of the Seattle project may come much that will help solve one of the toughest modern day problems—teaching not only the Rom but all people to read and write. And out of such probing articles to be found in *Explorations in Ethnic Studies* may come the light at the end of the tunnel for which all educators are searching.

Kaldi's study informs us about the Seattle experiment. And though the account is hardly "All You Ever Wanted To Know About Gypsies," it is considerably more than this reader ever knew about these amazing modern nomads who, generally speaking, travel far and wide with minimal English language skills.

In her only note for the work, Kaldi mentions Gypsies' "last 1,000 years" migrations. This may be the only shortcoming in the report. I recall legends placing Gypsies at the crucifixion. The point I raise may, in turn, reflect on the ignorance of this layman. Unfortunately, much of what laymen know about these nomads has been culled from folktales and sensational news stories. Information such as that contained in Kaldi's article is necessary to correct the myths surrounding these people. Her account of the Seattle project goes far in setting the record straight and shows us how these heretofore "rootless" people are beginning to see their aspirations and dreams become entangled in America's upward mobility steeplechase.

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