

EDITORIAL NOTE

“A People Seen But Little Known”

During its almost two decades of regular appearance, *Nationalities Papers* has endeavored, as is all too well known, to encourage scholarship devoted to national and ethnic minorities in Eastern Europe and the USSR. For the most part, editorial policy left it up to individual scholars to decide which aspect of one of the dozens of peoples inhabiting that part of the world to highlight. The result, quite naturally, was greater attention to some, less to others, and none to the Romani—the Gypsies.

With this issue, *Nationalities Papers* has embarked on a new, more aggressive editorial policy, namely, to focus on a subject that, in general, has received virtually no systematic scholarly attention, the Gypsies of Eastern Europe. Despite the fact that, since 1945, the Gypsies are one of the faster growing ethnic groups in Europe, they have still not captured the interest of enough scholars to satisfy this editor's concern for their absence from the manuscripts submitted to *Nationalities Papers*.

Over the years, Gypsies have remained a people seen but little known. European art has effectively absorbed their presence; yet they remain remote. Though their number increases, government policies have tended to keep Gypsies on the fringe of society. Scholars are aware of their presence but most assign the study of Gypsies a low priority. To date, Gypsy studies are fragmented and sporadic, and far from integrated into the broader framework of the multiethnic societies and nations among whom they reside.

It is hoped this single topic issue of *Nationalities Papers* will help bring about a renaissance of Gypsy studies. The editor is particularly grateful to the individual contributors to this issue for their serious response to the call for articles on Gypsy matters. It is particularly gratifying to include scholars spanning the generations from seasoned academicians to gifted graduate students. *Nationalities Papers* is proud to point out that three of the articles

—those by David Crowe, Ian Hancock and Josef Kalvoda—will appear in a separate collection of essays published by Westview Press. A special vote of thanks is due my editorial assistant Dallas Arnold for helping prepare this expanded issue of the journal.

HRH