

Better to Roam as a Gypsy than Trying to Study Under the Current Conditions

Everyman's cultural discussion

Society is doing us a disservice by trying to turn us into ordinary Finns, says Roma student Veijo Baltzar, in the article below. The Roma issue has been a recurring topic of interest since the beginning of the debate, which has recently made its way to the Swedish press and the Finnish National Broadcasting Council. In this text we get to hear the other side of the debate, the Roma people themselves. The debate on the Roma issue continues.

Attempts have always been made to equate the Gypsy people with unpleasant things. However, it is completely forgotten that as well as Gypsies, we are also Finnish citizens. Yet for some reason the laws of the kingdom only extend to us when we have committed a crime, refuse to do military service, and so on.

And yet if someone slanders us, throws abuse our way, or even refuses to allow us to enter a public space, what does the law do? It turns it's back.

It's about time people woke up and acknowledged that this isn't an issue about colour, but a resentment for those who are different, especially when such different people happen to be a minority.

Tough conditions for alms

In my opinion, Matti Rinne was right when talking about preserving our culture and our flimsy interest in education. It is useless to say that we do not accept civilisation. It is obvious why we believe continuing to roam is more beneficial it to us when one takes into account the tough living conditions which Gypsies are forced into, while also having the expectation that we will receive education hung above our heads. Attempts are being made to deprive us of our personality, so it is better to continue to be on the move than to accept alms.

God created man as an image of himself, but do Finns consider themselves so great that they require us to become a reflection of themselves?

If that is the case, we will always remain lingering behind on the sidelines.

Talja's slogan "Pulling the same rope" comes to mind. If we could also be given a chance and be allowed to feel like we too have a homeland, I am certain that if we too were recognised, we would benefit from it a great deal.

Children's homes and racial discrimination

A lot has been said lately about the Gypsy Mission and their practices. The mission was set up to help the Gypsies, but at some point, things have taken a turn for the worse. I think that it should be evident that isolated children's homes are not in any way positive, especially for those who end up there. Or is it that when these children grow up to be adults they will also be provided with isolated jobs, apartments, etc. This is the greatest form of racial segregation.

As far as the arguments of the executive director of the Gypsy Mission, Veikko Piirainen (IS 11.5) go, they are childish and flimsy. After all, it is quite different whether the Gypsies are together in their own milieu or whether two Gypsies are together. Does Piirainen suggest that if the isolated children's homes also have racial discrimination, that we should make it legal?

I am very surprised that the University of Tampere's study showed that such children's

homes do not isolate children. My belief in research institutes is then badly eroded. Apparently, the research is as narrow as Piirainen says, and nothing can be built on it. However, it is not a good idea to make such information public, it will just make everyone uncertain and thus make things worse.

Finnicization – a disservice

Gypsy children who have grown up in a “secure environment” often face too many difficulties. Why should the Roma people accept them with any less reservation than they have for the Finns when they too aren’t on their side? They are no longer Gypsies, but they aren’t Finns either. Often the result is nervous disorders, which is the base of all forms of entrepreneurship. Depression, for example, can then lead to crime.

Society is doing itself a disservice in trying to turn us into Finns, why? The Finnicized Gypsy has deprived himself of his spirit and personality, and the drive that man needs to get ahead.

The Gypsies need civilisation, but they also need to remain genuine Gypsies. Then they will also retain the ambition that drives them.

Veijo Baltzar,

You say you are being treated badly and if you are mistreated, the law doesn’t care about it. Rarely are you being beaten. The Gypsies are hurting and robbing the elderly, and if you are in public places, you are crouching and behaving as if other people do not exist.

I know a few Gypsy families who live honestly and work, they are honoured to work. They are respected there. If you give value to other people you will see that our attitude towards you changes. You talked about alms, but we ordinary people of working age do not get them either, instead we pay our taxes so that those of you who are fit for work can get assistance.

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