



The Gypsies

Jan Yoors

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"This book is written as a protest against oblivion, as a cry of love for this race of strangers who have lived among us for centuries and remained apart. Thus it is of the nomads that I sing." (Jan Yoors, from the Introduction) At the age of twelve, Jan Yoors ran away from his privileged Belgian family and home to join a wandering band, a *kumpania*, of Gypsies. For ten years, he lived as one of them, traveled with them from country to country, shared both their pleasures and their hardships—and came to know them as no one, no outsider, ever has. In this firsthand, highly personal account of an extraordinary people, Yoors tells the real story of the Gypsies' customs and their never-ending struggle to survive as free nomads.

In a rare publishing event, Jan Yoors' *The Gypsies* became an instant classic upon its original publication. Yoors vividly describes the texture of daily life: Gypsies as lovers, spouses, parents, healers, and mourners; loyalties and hostilities; moral and ethical beliefs and practices; language and culture; and history and traditions behind their fierce pride. The exultant celebrations, daring frontier crossings, yearly horse fairs, and convoluted business deals are brought to life in this memorable portrait of the most romanticized yet most maligned and least-known people on earth. As one reviewer wrote, "*The Gypsies* conveys an understanding of Other that transcends stereotypes and analytical flatness."

The Waveland Press reissue of this extraordinary work includes stunning photographs taken by the author during his travels with European Gypsies.

Titles of related interest from Waveland Press: Gmelch, *Nan: The Life of an Irish Travelling Woman* (ISBN 9780881336023) and Sutherland, *Gypsies: The Hidden Americans* (ISBN 9780881332353).

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